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DEALING WITH DEMOGRAPHY. IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES C. 1880-1930 AND THE LITERATURE OF EXCLUSION

Abstract: The article investigates immigration restrictions in the United States circa 1880 to 1930. The emphasis is on the rhetoric and arguments utilized by supporters of limiting the intake. After 1890, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe grew as a proportion of the total. The anticipated resulting demographic change was worrying to traditionalist Americans and to the labour movement. Yet their country had always progressed through arrivals from overseas. How could they formulate mechanisms of exclusion which distinguished between people who were similar to themselves and those who brought something new? The racist conservationist Madison Grant drew upon anthropology and history for his contention that Americans were a great fusion of pioneers from northern Europe. The historian and journalist Lothrop Stoddard continued this line of reasoning. Both were organized supporters of eugenics, a doctrine used to 'fine-tune' racist discourses. Eugenics only became a factor in the last two decades of the period. The labour movement and others had been clamouring for immigration restrictions long before that, roused to action especially by the arrival of Chinese workers. The pamphlet *Meat vs. Rice* by American Federation of Labor leader Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt, originally published in 1902, applied crude racism to limit competition from such entrants in the job market. Society drew a dividing line between those who could become American and those who could not, buttressed by the Naturalization Law of 1870 and the Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882 and 1902. The negative contentions against immigrants from less familiar places had significant influence on the Immigration Act of 1924. The article argues that Yankee intellectuals often had a conception of America as a British republic, in which related peoples were assimilable and valuable too.

Keywords: immigration; demographics; racial bias; anthropology; negative eugenics; mental test

The Transportation Act of 1718, passed by Parliament in Great Britain, led to an estimated 50,000 convicts from the old country being shipped out to the thirteen colonies before 1776. [1 p416] Eight out of ten were male and the majority were transported for resorting to petty theft during times of scarcity. In 1770 there were about 470,000 slaves in the colonies, of which nine out of ten in the South. [2 p369-70] For virtually everyone else America was the land of opportunity. The first census of what had become the United States in 1790 revealed a free population of more than 3 million. Exactly a century later, slavery having been abolished in 1865, almost 63 million people called it home. Hard-working immigrants could save money, buy or obtain land, start careers and raise their children with fewer impediments than they were accustomed to in Europe.

This article is about immigration restrictions and theories which are likely to have influenced the legislation. It asks how arguments opposing immigration were formulated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A number of interest groups were geared towards exclusion. The Immigration Restriction League was founded in Boston in 1894 by lawyers, senators and scholars. It continued to function until 1921, overlapping with eugenics organizations in its final years. Organized labour saw its economic interests as being at risk from further immigration. Language and cultural barriers made recent arrivals harder to unionize. As a society, the United States needed to resolve the question of who could be an American and how much conformity was expected of citizens. The volume and nature of immigration created the impression of permanent flux in the population. New York state on the East Coast, accessible to immigrants arriving by sea from Europe, and California on the West Coast, accessible to those who came from Asia, were disproportionately affected by demographic shifts. The theorists who disdained immigration wanted to maintain a seemingly homogeneous population. They needed a schema to sift further additions according to who was acceptable and who was undesirable.

In 1870 the foreign-born population amounted to 5.57 million people. [3 p463] An exact third of it was from Ireland and 47 per cent in total came from the British Isles. British North America (Canada) accounted for another 8.9 per cent. Most of the others were known to be assimilable: the slightly more than 30 per cent from Germany, 2 per cent from France and over 4 per cent from Scandinavia. The remainder amounted to a little more than 7 per cent and included the newcomers to whom many theorists objected. The 1890 census was still taken before the waves of southern and eastern European immigration had begun in earnest. At this point, the foreign-born population comprised 9.25 million people, significantly higher than it had been in 1870. The Irish share of it had by now declined to just over 20 per cent. The two British Isles provided just over a third of the immigrants. [4 p606-8] Canada made up another 10.6 per cent. The most populous 'foreign' grouping was by now the Germans at 30 per cent of the total, almost as many as the British Isles. Scandinavia had grown to 9.6 per cent of immigrants. France had fallen to 1 per cent or so. That left roughly 35 per cent from all other countries, a fivefold

increase in percentage terms. The establishment of the Immigration Registration League, consisting of influential people often privy to inside information anyway, occurred close in time to the census becoming available in 1895.

The article will follow the literature of exclusion into the 1920s when the well-known Immigration Act of 1924 came into force. The 1920 census uncovered 13.92 million foreign-born. Ireland was third in the stakes, having slipped back to 7.5 per cent. [5 p318] All immigrants from the British Isles collectively made up 15.6 per cent, half of what the proportion had been in 1890. Another 8 per cent from Canada increased the traditional origins of the population somewhat. As in 1890, Germans were the largest group of immigrants at just over 12 per cent. Scandinavia stood higher than before at 8.5 per cent. France again accounted for 1 per cent. Consequently, the remainder, including the second largest group the Russians, constituted 55 per cent of all immigrants. The nationalities seen as less assimilable were thus in a majority among new arrivals. Anti-immigration feeling rose noticeably in the early 1920s. [6 p89] Considering that the entire population was more than 106 million people in 1920, 7.5 million inhabitants originating in unfamiliar parts of the world nevertheless did not impinge on the fundamentals of national identity. Allowing 'foreigners' the opportunity to make the United States their home too, could even entail advantages. In 1869 the polymath Francis Galton noted that America possessed little of the higher culture and was dependent on Britain for first-rate works in art and the humanities. [7 p40] In 1893 the Czech composer Antonin Dvorak suggested that an American tradition of music might be founded on black melodies. [8 p121] Stretching the boundaries of what was conceived as American might permit the country to escape from the shadow of its colonial past. Of course, that was exactly what numerous long-standing Yankees wished to avoid at all costs. They wanted self-government but saw themselves as a derivative of an older civilization.

I

To whom citizenship may be conferred and how easily say much about how welcoming a country is and what the boundaries are for joining its civil life permanently. The first American Naturalization Law of 1790 allowed free white men with two years' residence to become citizens. It reflected that the country was young and in need of a larger population. Citizenship was limited to the free because a bondsman would not necessarily be able to fulfil the requirements incumbent upon a national, such as defending the state against outside aggression. The Naturalization Act of 1870 followed from the defeat of the Confederacy in 1865, allowing foreign-born people of African nativity or descent to become citizens. It was a logical step in view of the slaves becoming free. The length of residence required was 14 years, which had been established in 1798 by an amendment to the original naturalization law. There was no provision for bestowing citizenship on Asian people.

Chinese immigrants had begun arriving in California in the 1850s, finding their place in the job market as labourers. An estimated 300,000 of them were admitted in the next thirty years until the flow was severely restricted by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. It banned entrants from China unless they were merchants, government officials, students, teachers, visitors or US citizens. Designed to last for ten years, the Act was renewed once and then superseded by another Chinese Exclusion Act of 1902, which remained in force until 1943. The courts were specifically instructed not to naturalize Chinese people already in the country on the state level and that any laws in contravention of this were hereby repealed. The Act of 1882 was the first major federal law restricting immigration. The justification given was that the presence of Chinese workers endangered the wellbeing of certain communities in America.

The Chinese were well-disciplined, hard-working and frugal. Leland Stanford, the Californian railway magnate, declared in 1865 that without Chinese labourers the transcontinental railway could not have been built. It had been a decision by Congress that the network should be constructed, implying that the legislators needed to keep the facts in mind. [9 p27] The Chinese were nevertheless competing for jobs on price and American workers did not relish being displaced in this manner. In an act of ethnic solidarity with those who had lost out as well as defending future opportunities for themselves, they began bad mouthing the Chinese workers. Racism often emerges in such situations and trivial differences may be blown out of all proportion. Friedrich Engels, as a radical journalist and writer, painted a highly prejudiced picture of the competition English workers had to endure from Irish immigrants in his *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. [10 p90-4] A possible equivalent in the United States was the pamphlet *Meat vs. Rice* by American Federation of Labor leader Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt. They are not household names like Engels and their booklet had no loftier aim than excluding the Chinese from the labour market and, if possible, America. Even so, the rhetoric of the two works aligned in this respect. Gompers and Gutstadt vilified the Chinese for the same reason that Engels had criticized the Irish: to protect the well-being of American or British workers respectively.

An 1885 law prohibiting entry to 'contract labourers', immigrants who already had a job lined up in the United States, was passed at the behest of the labour movement. It was meant to reduce the supply of labour, thus helping to keep American wages high. Few Asians belonged to the American public in the early twentieth century. It was therefore possible to launch broadsides at them without much fear of retaliation. The metonymy *Meat vs. Rice* sought to portray American working-class manhood as natural and desirable, in contrast to what was actually Chinese precarious employment. Meat was a valued foodstuff, whereas rice may have come across as alien and cheap. The pamphlet, published in 1902, was used as a Senate document. It was republished by the Asiatic Exclusion League, a California-based pressure group, in 1908. Arguments against immigration could be vicarious, tailored to the audience and the level of politeness required.

With restrictions on immigration from Asian countries, however, little subterfuge was needed. In 1907 and 1908 came the so-called Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan. The Japanese government had become aware in 1906 that their nationals were segregated in the schools of California. Outraged by this, it sought redress from Theodore Roosevelt's government. Correspondence between the two established a concord whereby the federal government would use its influence towards ending the segregation. In return, Japanese workers would not be issued passports to travel to America. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 defined skilled, unskilled and mining occupations as 'labouring'. Restrictions on the Japanese and Chinese were therefore partly motivated by the interests of American workers. The Asians were often seen as temporary additions to the labour market, rather than as future compatriots. After all, legislation at the time meant that they could not become American citizens except by birth.

Meat vs. Rice was a lengthy diatribe again Chinese immigration. [11 p3-6, 12, 16, 18-9, 27, 14] Many of its arguments are summarized in the table below, alongside those in a similar but much shorter pamphlet *The Mongolian Problem in America* by W. K. Roberts, until recently an American customs officer in China. [12 p3-4]

Table 1. Anti-Oriental features in two pamphlets published in San Francisco by organized labour.

Feature	*Meat vs. Rice*	*The Mongolian Problem*
Orientals not welcome	X	X
Birth rates		
Miscegenation		
Organized crime	X	
No conception of civic duties	X	
Unfair competition	X	X
Taking control	X	
Overcrowding	X	
Immorality	X	
Opium use	X	
Spreading disease	X	
Appeal to US nationalism	X	X

Many of these were standard themes relating to unwelcome outsiders. The only one specific to this particular ethnicity was the element about opium addiction. The allegation was that the drug was spreading from hardened Chinese to American women and girls. [11 p20] Opium might be a Chinese vice equivalent to alcohol among white workers, though it is somehow understandable that hard and demanding lives require a form of escapism.

Gompers and Gutstadt could not lay claim to being intellectuals, but utilized the works of academics such as the Australian historian Charles H. Pearson. Their pamphlet

was not of utmost probity since both Gompers and Gutstadt might be reckoned as outsiders themselves. Both were first-generation Jewish immigrants. [13 p8] Perhaps they saw themselves as assimilable, while Orientals were too alien to become American. The originator of the melting-pot idea, the British playwright Israel Zangwill, was also Jewish. [14 p22] The 1908 printing of *Meat vs. Rice* included warnings that Japanese people were a similar 'menace' today. [11 p4] Thus East Asian looks and cultural traditions trumped the higher economic status of the Japanese, whose country had copied Western industrial practices after 1868. The only group of East Asians who could not be kept out were Filipinos, who had citizenship stemming from their homeland becoming an American colony in 1899.

II

Visible differences made Orientals the first targets for exclusionary mechanisms. The science of anthropology extended the reach of race into public debates. It was possible to operationalize the research findings into justifications for restrictions on immigration. Published in 1899, William Z. Ripley's tome *The Races of Europe* was a response to earlier scholarship attempting to find the cradle of 'the white, the Indo-Germanic, Caucasian, or Aryan race'. [15 p55] Ripley wrote that it was a mistake to locate this in the Caucasus and no other such homeland is likely ever to have existed. His alternative was to discern three main races in the Old Continent, called Teutons, Alpines and Mediterraneans, living in respectively the north, middle or south. Colouring provided a distinguishing feature and cranial index was another. When measuring the breadth of the skull as a ratio of its length, rates of 0.8 and above were brachycephalic, while 0.75 and below were dolichocephalic. [15 p37] The longer skull of the dolichocephalic Teutons separated them from the brachycephalic Alpines with a rounder skull. [15 p121] The complexion and colour of the hair then separated Teutons from Mediterraneans, who like them were dolichocephalic. A synonym for Teuton was Nordic and many popularisers preferred this term because they did not wish to purport German anthropological origins to the United States. Ripley conceived Europe as a patchwork of physically varied types just as it became important to scientifically ward off people of northern European descent from newcomers arriving from other parts of the continent.

Whatever Ripley's scholarly intentions, his work would have an impact on addressing the changing nature of immigration to the United States occurring from the 1890s. *The Races of Europe* occasionally commented on immigration to America, though without any vituperation. Nor was it an elegy to Nordic people. Quoting a French and an Italian social scientist, Jacques Bertillon and Enrico Morselli respectively, it was proposed that this ethnic group was more prone to divorce and suicide than people of Latin descent. [15 p519] Neither of these practices was condoned by nineteenth-century society. The reason given for the higher divorce rate was that Nordics had a habit of brooding over ills suffered, which could eventually lead to a household being dissolved by a judge. Being

cold-blooded and reserved, they eschewed an immediate release of tension to which many Latins would resort, possibly including violence. Similarly, introspection and the rational mind of Nordics were associated with suicide. The higher the proportion of Nordic bloodlines in a country, the greater the propensity to suicide, according to Morselli. Emile Durkheim investigated this notion in *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897) and dismissed it, except that he agreed the suicide rates were highest in Scandinavia.

In 1916 Madison Grant, a zoologist and conservationist, recorded his indebtedness to Ripley in the preface to what would become his most famous book, *The Passing of the Great Race*. The title alone revealed the pessimistic outlook of Grant, a scion of a wealthy and prominent family. He took an intellectual approach to the subject of immigration. Grant's work contained his version of European history, such as where particular peoples had settled and what ethnicity they were, interspersed with commentary about the implications of immigration for America. As a prime destination for overseas migrants, the United States had the luxury of choosing its own population. Grant supported the curtailment of immigration from any country which was not Nordic. In 1909 he had become a vice-president of the Immigration Restriction League. [16 p74] His belief was that old-stock Americans were dying out or losing their control over society. Eugenist Henry Fairfield Osborn provided a scientific justification for the book's contentions, based on August Weismann's experiments showing that acquired traits are not inherited. Assimilation was deemed impossible for the latest arrivals. Dutch, French, German and Scandinavian immigrants had learnt to speak English and gradually adopted American ways, but the inclusion of southern and eastern Europeans caused 'degeneracy'.

Due to the multinational and multiracial nature of American society, its version of eugenics aligned closely with racism. It takes time to establish oneself in a new country, even one with many opportunities. Therefore, the descendants of early settlers were on average wealthier and more influential than the Irish and Germans who had started arriving in sizeable quantities in the 1850s. The latter in turn outranked Italians and subjects of the Habsburg Empire, who had arrived in significant numbers from the 1890s. As the British and early settlers had come from north-western Europe, newer arrivals in the 1850s from the continent's north or middle and the most recent ones from the south and east, a rudimentary racial theory lay there for the taking. Grant utilized Ripley's categories, fashioning them and European history to make out that the first and second waves of immigrants had been Nordic, unlike the latest one. History came in useful in turning Britain into a 'Nordic' country. Grant classified it as such by reason of its being settled by Angles, Saxons and Jutes in the fifth century. Turning Ireland into a Nordic country was a conundrum, but it had suffered Viking invasions and been colonized by English Protestants and Lowland Scots. Though the facts were selective, Grant essentially worked from outward appearances and the Irish were pale. He categorized Poland as a Nordic country perhaps because many Poles are blond. Osborn noted that Grant was 'never before a historian'. [17 pVII]

In fact, Grant's object was to stand up for his own country, which he regarded as a repository for blond or light-haired bloodlines. He claimed that New England from colonial times had been more Nordic than England itself. [17 p74] Since Nordics were 'a race of soldiers, sailors, adventurers, and explorers' they might leave their ancestral home in greater numbers than their fellow subjects. [17 p198] In Grant's case, racism was combined with an extreme form of eugenics. It would be beneficial to begin by sterilizing the criminal, the diseased and the insane before moving on to 'weaklings' and perhaps ending with 'worthless race types'. [17 p46-7] He joined eugenics organizations like the Galton Society when it was founded. [14 p188] Grant repeatedly took aim at Polish Jews in his book, explaining that they were unassimilable due to their physical appearance and mentality. [17 p14, 81] New York, where Grant always lived, was becoming a 'cloaca gentium' in which Jews, although speaking English and unethically adopting the names of the colonial stock, were pushing the latter to the kerb. They had no means of understanding the ideals or religion of old-stock Americans.

Grant's hometown was especially affected by immigration, which in part explains why he was so worried about racial amalgamation and pessimistic about the future. Being on the East Coast and enjoying excellent maritime links, it was the main destination for ships carrying emigrants from Europe. In 1900 New York had a population of 3.5 million, making it the second largest city in the world after London. More than eight in ten were first or second-generation immigrants. [9 p361] Aspects of cohabitation may have presented a challenge to many who had roots in the city. There were 'nearly twice as many Irish as in Dublin, about as many Jews as in Warsaw, and more Italians than in Naples or Venice.' [9 p62-3] It was not just patricians like Grant who resented this. Organized labour was losing its control over the supply of manpower due to an almost unlimited pool of reserve workers being available. When some recent immigrants allowed themselves to be used as strike breakers, it was perhaps inevitable that racism and prejudice should form part of the response from American workers.

For Grant who valued trees and the habitat of animals, it did not represent a seismic shift to be concerned about the human stocks of his nation. Distinguished families like his had set the tone for how America was run. The labour movement too feared its influence would wane with outsiders entering industry. There was an assumption that their preferences need not be justified extensively as they struck a chord with the people. Grant admitted that Mediterraneans might be intellectually superior to Nordics and were certainly more artistic, but this did not change his attitude towards racial amalgamation. [17 p198] Grant applied the concept of Nordicism as a convenient unifier of the American population as it had existed traditionally. The vital call to action came on the penultimate and final pages. Sentimentalism and outdated notions were sapping America of its strength. It had already become an 'asylum for the oppressed' and was fast heading towards a racial abyss. [17 p228] The colonial stock, which he described as 'the great race', was evaporating in the melting pot and would soon exist only as a memory.

It was one of those occasions when a book, whatever its faults and inaccuracies, encapsulated the zeitgeist. *The Passing of the Great Race* had touched a nerve. It went through four editions in six years. Consequently, it would have substantial influence on immigration legislation. In 1921 Calvin Coolidge, not considered to be particularly racist during his tenure as president 1923-1929, wrote an article in *Good Housekeeping* entitled 'Whose country is this?' It showed signs of Grant's thinking such as: 'The Nordics propagate themselves successfully. With other races, the outcome shows deterioration on both sides.' [6 p104] Such views could even be extended onto the world stage. Just like Henry Fairfield Osborn had introduced *The Passing of the Great Race* and linked it to eugenics, Grant passed the baton on to his associate Lothrop Stoddard, who advocated eugenics globally.

III

Stoddard was an historian and journalist. His *The Rising Tide of Color* was published in 1920 with an introduction by Grant. Interestingly, as Stoddard shared Grant's elite background, the book combined the rhetoric and concerns of the labour movement with a commitment to 'world eugenics'. Stoddard exhibited the maps from the book at the Second International Congress of Eugenics in New York in 1921. [18 p55] It also contained long quotes from the hereditarian arguments of Prescott F. Hall, one of the Immigration Restriction League's founders. Stoddard described recent arrivals as 'the alien hordes of the European east and south'. [19 p263] He also included a new eugenic argument apart from the obvious racial and demographic ones. The preponderance of the new elements on the East Coast had resulted in the decline of the birth rate of the old stocks. This had not been replicated in the mid-West or southern states, largely untouched by such migration. [19 p256-7] The interpretation was that the colonial stocks reduced their breeding to spare their younger children the competition from the newcomers. Elder sons usually received more of the family's resources, while younger ones and daughters might well be embroiled in the same economic sphere as first or second-generation immigrants.

Grant's introduction revealed his hopes that Nordic workers would realize the economic danger posed by southern and eastern Europeans as well as Orientals. [19 pXX-XI] Democracy worked reasonably well if the population was homogeneous. [19] With his total defence of white societies, Stoddard's aims were not at odds with the labour movement's. He even explained how the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union in London were facing competition from Chinese workers. [19 p296] The British socialist H. M. Hyndman was referenced on historical Asian migration into Europe. [19 p237-8] Stoddard believed that the Chinese Exclusion Act was successful. [20 p43, 45] However, the Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan did not cover farmers. Their numbers were growing due to sending for their wives or contracting marriages in their homeland. By dwelling on geopolitics and race in tandem, Stoddard ventured off the beaten track. Like Grant before him, he viewed the First World War as a 'civil war' between Europeans. He

blamed it on Europeans not understanding the anthropological categories discovered by Ripley. [21 p12] Stoddard nonetheless classified Germans as primarily Alpine, with only a small minority being Nordic. [19 p202] Thus they were not ideal immigrants in America, whereas Grant had classified them as Nordic. These were not completely outré opinions. Woodrow Wilson, president 1913-1921, had supported the ban on Chinese and Japanese workers in his first campaign for the highest office in the land. [19 p286-7]

In his next notable work, *The Revolt against Civilization* (1922), Stoddard contributed to a renewed discourse about immigrants as radical agitators, occasioned by Wilson's Red Scare 1919-1920. [22 p25, 55] *The Revolt against Civilization* concerned how 'under-men' were turning to Bolshevism in an attempt to bring down the established order. Stoddard gave sociological reasons for why such people were disproportionately Jewish. Jews did not feel completely at home inside their respective polities and revolutionary sentiments included an international outlook. [23 p151-2] They were analytical enough to find faults with society and might be tempted by high positions in the Bolshevik forces. Since the United States had taken a million Jews between 1898 and 1910, it was well-known that many were refugees from oppression in Tsarist Russia or had faced similar persecution elsewhere in eastern Europe. [24 p19]

Stoddard's reasoning was mostly based on anthropological categories. He viewed the old colonial stock as the superior strain in the population. Southern and eastern Europeans were 'decidedly inferior' and black people, according to the prejudices of the time, stood lowest of all. [23 p62-3] Eugenics vouchsafed methods of fine-tuning which Stoddard applied. Those who had arrived recently from the same parts of northern Europe as the Yankees were less highly selected than before. Therefore, they were only second in rank. The country was now rich and a magnet for people who simply wished to earn money, rather than possessing the pioneer spirit. [25 p69] American eugenists were nonetheless highly attuned to ethnicity. In Europe the question of the birth rate concerned merely which elements in a unitary people should be encouraged to reproduce, but in America eugenics was tied up with demographic change. [23 p112] The composition of the population was thought to have wide-ranging implications for ideals, institutions and national character.

It did not mean that social class was neglected. Stoddard recommended methods which were controversial at the time, namely birth control. He believed that it had been a mistake to make information on contraception difficult to obtain. [23 p119-20] The result was that high fecundity continued to be prevalent among the masses, while the cultured classes had made the effort and thereby had reduced their numbers. Theodore Roosevelt popularized the term 'race suicide' in an American context in 1909. Between 1905 and 1909, there had been more than thirty-five articles published on the topic in general magazines. [26 p40] 'Race suicide' affected especially what was seen as valued members of the community. In what can scarcely be reckoned the most accurate model, the biologist Charles Davenport calculated that two hundred years hence a thousand Harvard graduates would only have fifty descendants. This contrasted with the same

number of Romanians in Boston by then having become a hundred thousand. [23 p113] It symbolized the lowering of standards in terms of social class, with Davenport seeing the two terms as fixed. He did not take into account that they might well overlap in the future, nor that Romanians would become Americanized and marry outside their ethnic group. More prosaically, in 1891 the economist Francis Amasa Walker, who belonged to the Immigration Restriction League, had observed that immigrants were breeding at a higher rate than native-born Americans. [27 p72]

Purely racist allegations were enough to challenge and thwart immigrants from what was perceived as alien places. Nothing they brought with them was considered valuable. Willingness to work hard and interest in 'passing' as Americans could instead be seen in a negative light. Foreign religions, cultural practices and divided loyalties were seen as suspect traits. 'I do not believe in hyphenated Americans,' wrote Roosevelt in a book of 1918, though also making clear that 'transplanted or second-rate Englishmen' were no better. [28 p202-4] Eugenic validation then solidified the arguments through either stating that their birth rates were too high, that they reduced the birth rates of long-time citizens or that they could never be assimilated since their heredity was too different. A few humanitarians and melting-pot enthusiasts, like Roosevelt, existed, but the only groups to benefit economically from immigration were steamship owners, industrialists and capitalists. It is true that they had clout. They may have been an influence on presidents Grover Cleveland and William Henry Taft vetoing legislation requiring the passing of a literacy test for admission to the country in 1897 and 1913 respectively. Attaining the presidency is often connected to the ability to raise revenue for campaigning from capitalists.

IV

A literacy test aimed to restrict immigration from countries which had less developed educational systems. Illiteracy was thought to be higher in southern and eastern Europe than in the core countries where long-standing Americans originated. The debate could be conducted in terms of wanting thrifty and energetic new additions to the country. Someone who had not learnt to read their own language by the age of sixteen did not come across as such. The proposal was less openly discriminatory than the Immigration Act of 1882, which prevented physically and mentally incapacitated migrants from entering. The Immigration Act of 1891 required entrants to undergo a medical examination to determine their fitness to land on American soil. In contention was whether they carried infectious diseases, sometimes picked up during the voyage in steering class, or were physically disabled in any way. Every member of a family had to pass these medical tests, raising the bar for success. Apart from the check-up the emigrant was asked questions designed to weed out ex-convicts, polygamists, rabble rousers and anyone who had been dependent on doles in their homeland or was suspected of potentially being so in the United States. Those with more money, evidenced by a first or second-class passage, were only liable to a cursory medical exam before being free to step ashore. [9 p44]

Was there already a theoretical underpinning to the restrictions regarding mental and physical ability, character and race? Eugenics was not unknown in the United States in 1882 and 1891. However, it had not yet been institutionalized in the American Breeders Association (founded 1903), Race Betterment Foundation (founded 1914), Galton Society (founded 1918) and American Eugenics Society (founded 1926). Charles Davenport had not yet made his study trip to London to meet Francis Galton and Karl Pearson, which occurred no later than 1902. [27 p45, 311] Ideas of preserving society from unproductive members or malefactors are older than eugenics. Eugenics, a scientific theory of heredity, was not at the heart of the 1882 or 1891 immigration legislation. Weismann only showed, to the satisfaction of contemporary biologists, that heredity could not be altered in 1883 in Germany, and it took time to filter into American debates.

Eugenics started to matter after further restrictions had been passed in 1917. At that point the literacy test was introduced over Woodrow Wilson's veto two years earlier. The 1917 Immigration Act prevented further migration from an 'Asiatic Barred Zone', including British India and the Dutch East Indies, and extended the categories of disabled people who were not allowed to enter. Immigrants sixteen years or older had to be able to read a passage in their own language. After 1917 eugenists like Harry Laughlin sought to gain ownership of who exactly were disabled, epileptic, insane or psychopathic. [14 p188] They attempted to anchor it in heredity, which required fuller investigation of kinship than was possible on Ellis Island, the main processing centre for immigrants in New York's harbour. This could be achieved through attaching a eugenics advisor to American consulates in Europe.

In the late 1910s and in the 1920s this desideratum became a reality. Nearly 80 per cent of would-be emigrants from eleven European countries, were screened for their fitness to be received in the United States. [14 p205] Only three of them were in southern or eastern Europe (Italy, Czechoslovakia and Poland) but the literacy test might be an impediment to emigration from these. The investigations at the consulates were not wholly to the detriment of potential emigrants. Burning bridges by selling one's home and purchasing passages to the New World was a risky endeavour as one could end up being turned away at its gates. [9 p56] The implemented system barred about eighty-eight in every thousand applicants from emigrating. It did not continue beyond the mid-1920s due to funding restrictions and difficulties arranging bilateral agreements with emigrant countries. After all, as nativists in the United States correctly reasoned, it happened to be in the interests of European countries that their 'surplus' population moved overseas. Eugenics also lost momentum in the United States after 1929 as the Great Depression began to bite. That cataclysmic event proved that poverty or ill health was not necessarily caused from within. [29 p344]

The case for eugenics had been buoyed in 1923 when Carl Brigham's *A Study of American Intelligence* was published. It was based upon mental tests administered during the First World War and indicated that southern and eastern Europeans were less intelligent than Americans of Nordic descent. [30 p10] Brigham, a psychologist at

Princeton University, was a close friend of Robert Yerkes, who had been responsible for testing large swathes of American recruits 1917-1918. These were group tests of intelligence called Army Alpha, for literate English-speakers, and Army Beta for illiterates and those who did not speak English. The data deriving from the project was analysed in Brigham's study including whether ethnic groups differed in measured intelligence. White Americans attained a mental age of 13.77 years and black Americans 10.41 years. Among the foreign-born the English topped the list at 14.87 years, Germans achieved 13.88 years, Irish 12.32 years and, as had been assumed, Greeks scored 11.90 years, Russians 11.34, Italians 11.01 and Poles 10.74. [31 p124]

Brigham originally believed this verified the tenor of what Madison Grant had claimed. [31 p180-1] He gave credit to *The Passing of the Great Race* in the preface and also relied on Ripley's division of Europeans into Nordics, Alpines and Mediterraneans. The main results, known in 1919, attracted attention and repeated agonizing. [32 p222-4] Brigham's refinement in terms of group differences was a separate development. A social explanation of the new data might have been attempted. A test in English naturally favours those who speak it well. Both Army Alpha and Army Beta measured familiarity with Anglo-American culture. People from the countryside in eastern or southern Europe may not yet have acquired an understanding of revolvers, gramophones or tennis. If someone was illiterate or did not speak English despite living in the United States, it suggested that they had not undergone rigorous schooling. The exam-taking situation in itself was often unsatisfactory due to crowded rooms, unclear instructions and many recruits being unaccustomed to the concept. Brigham himself recanted in 1930 and began warning against individual results being aggregated by group membership. [26 p17]

Like most psychologists studying individual differences, Brigham had interacted with the eugenics movement. However, there was variation within this school of thought as well. [6 p78-9] William McDougall, a British psychologist who had been part of Francis Galton's inner circle, emigrated to the United States in 1920, when he became a professor at Harvard. In 1905 he had been interested in whether intelligence varied between races and the effects of miscegenation. [33 p69] He reacted to the United States' army intelligence tests in a series of lectures in Boston in 1921. The ominous title *Is America Safe for Democracy?* stemmed from the average mental age of thirteen found for citizens of his adopted country. McDougall quoted research showing ethnic and social differences in intelligence and stated he was convinced by it. [34 p63-7] However, he also used contrary results obtained by K. T. Waugh and presented at the American Psychological Association. They showed no overall difference in intelligence between American, Chinese and Indian college students. There were disparities on individual items within the battery, sometimes to the disadvantage of a group which nevertheless made up for it on other items. McDougall drew social conclusions from the data: Indian lack of will-power, operationalized from the test item 'concentration of attention', might be the reason why their country had been colonized by the British. [34 p68, 70] Indians were still of good mental capacity as proved by the sum total of the tests. If American, Chinese and Indian students did not

differ in overall intelligence, it surely implied that wider tasks or a different set of questions potentially could eliminate differences between European ethnic groups.

Such enquiry was of the future. The bare bones of the army tests did give nativists useful ammunition for immigration restriction based on the desirability of newcomers from various countries. This overlapped with the concerns of eugenists. The unique contribution of eugenics to the debate was to recommend probing into the heredity of potential immigrants. The exclusion of obviously disabled people as well as felons, dole recipients and those with learning difficulties was merely a beginning from their point of view. Immigrants, said Harry Laughlin in 1920, needed to match the physical, mental and moral qualities which Americans sought. This should be evaluated on a family basis, rather than with regard solely to the individual. It would help prevent the entry of 'tainted' germ plasm which might break out in later generations. [14 p189] Family pedigrees were highly useful in this matter. Leading up to the passing of the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924, charts of the genealogy of inadequate families were on display in the halls of Congress to remind legislators of the social costs of harbouring 'deviants'. [35 p47]

Albert Johnson, a Republican congressman, socialized with many eugenists. In 1923 he became the honorary president of the Eugenics Research Association. [6 p108] In 1921 Congress had agreed an emergency quota act, restricting annual immigration to 3 per cent of any nationality among the foreign-born appearing in the census of 1920. It paved the way for the Immigration Act passed in April and May 1924. This Act was firmly aligned with the discourse of hindering immigration from what was seen as the hinterlands of Europe. The principle on which the emergency quotas were based endured. No more than 2 per cent of the total shown for that nationality among the foreign-born in the census of 1890 could be admitted. As discussed, before 1890 the sources of immigration had largely been the British Isles, Germany, Canada and Scandinavia. Under a provision of the 1924 Act, those who could not be naturalized in the United States were not accepted as immigrants either. In the Naturalization Law of 1870, it was impossible for Asians to be made American citizens. When Calvin Coolidge, by now president, signed the Act on 26 May 1924, he openly stated that he disagreed with its exclusion of Japanese immigrants. [9 p180] He said that in the main he agreed with its provisions and therefore would be signing it into law.

The implementation of the Immigration Act of 1924 was not as smooth as its supporters would have liked. Various stalling measures and delays made it less effective than envisaged. Then, in 1927, the principle was adjusted so that it became the national origins of the population in 1890 which counted, rather than the actual immigrants. [14 p204-5] Although this skewed the selection even more towards Great Britain, it made the task of determining quotas harder. In early January 1927, the government said it had not been able to ascertain the figures. Later that year, Congress passed a resolution delaying the implementation of the quotas by a year. The occurrence was repeated in 1928, before they finally took effect in 1929. The new president, Herbert Hoover, used the 1890 census as planned, but in 1931 the quotas were revised according to the 1920

census. Nevertheless, immigration restrictions of a wide-ranging type had been imposed. The 1924 Immigration Act would apply until replaced by the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

V

This article has investigated racist and eugenic literature in an attempt to understand the reasoning behind immigration restrictions in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Racism clearly had a direct effect, while eugenics was used as an 'optional extra' to fine-tune mechanisms of exclusion. The two are nevertheless separate categories. [30 p59] Only racism existed fully in 1870 when the Naturalization Law applicable in this period was passed. Yet by its provisions Asians could not be naturalized, and it was not expected that many black people would arrive. The two main opponents of immigration examined here were intellectuals and the labour movement. The former were much more likely to use eugenics to support their case, while racism was common to both.

Rezime

U radu se istražuju ograničenja imigracije u Sjedinjenim Državama oko 1880. do 1930. godine, sa naglaskom na retorici i argumentima koje su koristili pristalice ograničavanja priliva imigranata. Posle 1890. godine, rastao je procenat doseljenika iz južne i istočne Evrope. Očekivana rezultirajuća demografska promena bila je zabrinjavajuća za tradicionalističke Amerikance i za radnički pokret. Pa ipak, njihova zemlja je uvek napredovala zahvaljujući dolascima iz inostranstva. Kako su mogli da formulišu mehanizme isključivanja koji su pravili razliku između ljudi koji su slični njima i onih koji su doneli nešto novo? Rasistički konzervacionista Medison Grant oslanjao se na antropologiju i istoriju za svoju tvrdnju da su Amerikanci velika fuzija pionira iz severne Evrope. Istoričar i novinar Lotrop Stodard nastavio je ovu liniju razmišljanja. Obojica su bili pristalice eugenike, doktrine koja se koristila za „fino podešavanje" rasističkih diskursa. Eugenika je postala faktor tek u poslednje dve decenije tog perioda. Radnički pokret i drugi su mnogo pre toga tražili ograničenja imigracije, podstaknuti na akciju posebno dolaskom kineskih radnika. Pamflet „Meat vs Rice" vođa Američke federacije rada Semjuela Gompersa i Hermana Gutštata, prvobitno objavljen 1902. godine, sadržavao je grubi rasizam sa idejom da ograniči kinesku konkurenciju na tržištu rada. Društvo je povuklo liniju razdvajanja između onih koji su mogli postati Amerikanci i onih koji nisu mogli, potkrepljeno Zakonom o naturalizaciji iz 1870. i Zakonima o isključenju Kineza iz 1882. i 1902. godine. Negativni stavovi protiv imigranata iz manje poznatih mesta imali su značajan uticaj na Zakon o imigraciji iz 1924. godine. Iznosi se tvrdnja da su intelektualci iz severnih delova SAD često shvatali Ameriku kao vrstu britanske republike, u kojoj su srodni narodi bili vredni i koji su mogli biti asimilirani.

Ključne reči: imigracija; demografija; rasna predrasuda; antropologija; negativna eugenika; mentalni test

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