

The Rise and Fall of Anglo-America

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*To the memory of
Bob Warburton, 1938–2002*

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The Rise and Fall of Anglo-America

Introduction

We were submerged beneath a conquest so complete that the very name of us means something not ourselves. . . . I feel as I should think an Indian might feel, in the face of ourselves that were.

— BARRETT WENDELL, IN GLAZER 1959: 390

Today, in a manner unknown since the arrival of the Pilgrims, the cultural center of the American nation is fragmenting. The results of the year 2000 census show Hispanics to be overtaking African Americans as the largest minority, while non-Hispanic whites have declined to just two-thirds of the U.S. population and have become a minority in the most populous state, California. Contemplating their demographic decline, white Americans are engaging in an increasingly bitter, internecine “culture war” that pits liberal against conservative in a polarized political climate. Against a demographic backdrop known as the “Browning of America,” the forces of multiculturalism vie for influence with popular initiatives proclaiming “English Only,” “immigration reform,” and a Christian America.

Few are aware that the culture wars of today may represent the continuation of an earlier theme. A generalized amnesia brought on by today’s information age may be the culprit, though the postmodern penchant for discontinuity and presentism likely hits closer to the mark. Hence the fallacy has arisen that the once bitter conflict within white America between old-stock Protestants and newer-stock Catholics or Jews has little to do with contemporary cultural issues in which “race” is the key cleavage and “white” Americans are the principal reference point. Finally, in a large society like the United States, the tendency is to imagine that the country operates in a social vacuum, with its own “exceptional” dynamic of change.

This book takes issue with each of these claims, asserting that the United States, like most European nations, possesses an ethnic “core” (A. Smith 1986) and that the unraveling of a dominant “American” ethnic group is a recent phenomenon, a juggernaut that largely determines the vector of American cultural change. The direction of this change, I contend, did not crystallize in the 1960s but was actually set in the early

decades of the twentieth century. In contrast to the important recent work of Desmond King (2000a) and Rogers Smith (1997), I consider nativist excess to be a far less distinct feature of the early twentieth century than liberal innovation. I trace this innovation to its sources *within* WASPdom and attempt to deconstruct the notion of a united WASP ethnic actor. It is the internecine schism within the Anglo-Protestant soul, and not inter-ethnic conflict, that is the principal focus of this book. The victory of Anglo-Protestant Americans' liberal alter ego was a sea-change of world-historical significance whose ideological momentum has set the parameters within which today's debates operate.

Hence, by the yardstick of history, questions of immigration and national identity in both the United States and the wider Western world are contested within a comparatively narrow liberal band. Both conservatives and liberals tend to employ the language of Enlightenment liberty and equality (conservatives speak of "equal treatment" and "individual rights," while liberals use the phrases "equal results" and "individual self-esteem"). Few on the conservative side are willing to speak about an "America for Americans" or to describe nonwhite immigrants as "beaten members of beaten breeds" (King 1998a: 131). Those on the Left likewise refrain from mass appeals to an organic social whole based on the native-born working man. Moreover, the notion of an "American" ethnic nation defined in a white or WASP mold is rarely discussed.

Yet it is instructive to note how different things were not so long ago. In the 1920s, the United States consolidated its Anglo-Protestant ethnic character in a series of legislative actions: the Volstead Act of 1920 prohibited the consumption of alcohol; the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 shaped immigration flows around a quota system designed to preserve WASP dominance; and Al Smith, a Roman Catholic of part-Irish extraction, was defeated in his bid for the presidency in 1928. Nativist commentators glowed with praise for a U.S. Congress whose ethnic composition matched that of the Continental Congress of 1787. In communities large and small, powerful Protestant voluntary associations like the Ku Klux Klan, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Masons, and American Protective Association (APA) nurtured the bonds of white Protestant ethnicity and enforced Anglo-American hegemony. Even as late as the 1960s, 90 percent of white Protestants, Catholics, and Jews married members of their own faith.

By the 1960s, as if by magic, the centuries-old machinery of WASP America began to stall like the spacecraft of Martian invaders in the con-

temporary hit film, *War of the Worlds*. In 1960, the first non-Protestant president was elected. In 1965, the national origins quota regime for immigration was replaced by a “color-blind” system. Meanwhile, Anglo-Protestants faded from the class photos of the economic, political, and cultural elite—their numbers declining rapidly, year upon year, in the universities, boardrooms, cabinets, courts, and legislatures. At the mass level, the cords holding Anglo-Protestant Americans together began to unwind as secular associations and mainline churches lost millions of members while the first truly national, non-WASP cultural icons appeared. Not only were barriers to non-WASP ethnic groups virtually eliminated at all levels of American life, but national institutions appeared to be reapplying the idea of communalism in an inverse manner. Namely, minority ethnic communities were now replacing the old Anglo-Protestant *ethnie* (or ethnic group) as the recipient of collective privilege. (For a more detailed definition of *ethnie*, see Chapter 2.)

How did such a stunning transformation take place between the 1920s and the 1960s? A recent article by the late John Higham provides the only sustained attempt to focus on this phenomenon. Higham, arguably the most astute observer of his own ethnic group, notes that the full story of the “shattering defeat” of WASP hegemony between the 1920s and the 1960s “has never been told” (Higham 2000: 51–52). Indeed, the best that the current literature can offer is a series of speculative concluding paragraphs in historical works on the ethnonationalism of the 1880–1925 period, together with a number of more recent treatises on the “decline of the WASP” (Gossett 1953, 1963; Higham [1955] 1988, [1975] 1984; Jackson 1967; Schrag 1973; Christopher 1989; Baltzell 1990; Brookhiser 1991; Lind 1995). There also exists a literature on the rise of multiculturalism, which traces this trend to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s (Gerstle 2001, 1993; Glazer 1997; King 2000; Schlesinger [1991] 1993). In most current analyses, the decline of the WASP is treated as a demographic inevitability of only limited relevance to today’s debates about whiteness and multiculturalism.

This book attempts to fill this gap in the literature by examining the decline of American dominant ethnicity—whether in its pre-1960s “WASP” or post-1960s “white” incarnation—as a sociopolitical phenomenon. To probe into this phenomenon is to raise as many questions as answers. Was the decline caused by demographic forces, notably the fertility differentials between WASPs and others? Perhaps politico-economic factors were paramount, a result of “push-pull” conditions that drew for-

eign labor (and hence voters) to American shores from increasingly non-British or nonwhite sources and propelled their children up the political ladder. Then again, WASP Americanism may have survived by absorbing other white Americans into itself and transmuting into a new “Euro-American,” or “Anglo,” *racial* group. These are the most popular explanations for what happened.

Yet, even in combination, they do not satisfy. Indeed, it is easy to forget that few of the world’s dominant ethnic groups, if any, have yielded to pressure from contending subaltern *ethnies*. Less than 10 percent of the world’s states are ethnically homogeneous, and in a third of states, the majority group constitutes less than half the population (Connor 1994: 39). However, dominant ethnic groups like the Romanians of Romania or the Persians of Iran generally do not feel compelled by political and economic rationality to recognize minority group desires—even when these desires are backed up by a strong territorial claim (which has rarely been the case in the American context). Instead, nation-building, assimilation, or ethnic hegemony has been the typical response, as it has been throughout most of American history.

One example is particularly relevant in this regard. In 1776, on the eve of American independence, Hungary was less than 40 percent Magyar (the dominant group). Convinced of the need for ethnic group action, the Magyars embarked on a project of ethnic assimilation that resulted in their attainment of majority status and the consolidation of their ethnic hegemony within several generations. A similar tale could be told for many other dominant groups, notably the Turks and Malays. On the contrary, American history from the 1920s reads like the usual script in reverse. In 1776, Magyars formed just 40 percent of Hungary’s population, whereas the United States was nearly 65 percent British in ancestry and fully 98 percent Protestant. Today, British Protestants make up less than a quarter of the population and have seemingly abandoned their hegemonic designs. This calls for an explanation that goes beyond the politico-economic.

Accordingly, I contend that the changing “backdrop” of Anglo-Protestant cultural activity was a more important factor than the struggle of subaltern ethnic groups, which, as noted, is a universal phenomenon. In effect, I single out cultural and ideological changes originating from *within* the Anglo-Protestant community as the primary engine of dominant ethnic decline. This is where multiculturalism enters the picture. It has become a potent symbol, a convenient reference point around which

people can situate themselves as “for” or “against.” In analytical terms, however, this term is frequently tossed around with scant regard for conceptual clarity. Hence the typical belief is that the United States has evolved from a melting pot (either nasty or benign) into a multicultural mosaic (of wonderful diversity or fractious fragmentation). More subtle observers of the evolution of American ethnic relations favor an Anglo-America—Melting Pot—Multiculturalism paradigm.

Yet these are flawed models that break down under scrutiny. As an alternative, I outline a divergent interpretation of the trajectory of American national identity and ethnic relations. First, one may speak of a *dominant-ethnic* phase of Americanism, a “vertical mosaic,”¹ marked by white, Anglo-Protestant hegemony and strong ethnic boundaries. “We [WASP] Chestnut Hillers,” recalled Digby Baltzell with regard to his interwar upbringing, “were as isolated from the rest of the city as ghetto Jews” (Baltzell [1982] 1990: 37). The dominant-ethnic phase mentioned by Baltzell was followed by the current *liberal-egalitarian* phase, in which liberal and egalitarian concerns pared the nation’s identity down to its most neutral, Enlightenment essentials. During this second phase, which began in force during World War II and was consummated in the 1960s, previously marginalized ethnic groups attained rough institutional parity with Anglo-Protestants, a development that has been accompanied by a relaxation of *all* ethnic group boundaries. Racial minorities were not as successful as white Americans, but the process of change involved both white and nonwhite groups *simultaneously*.

Thus there was no discrete Euro-American melting-pot phase when reformers targeted marginalized white ethnics while ignoring the concerns of racial minorities. All were swept up in the current of liberal-egalitarian idealism, which began as a trickle in the first decade of the twentieth century and crested in the 1960s. As liberty and equality were refined from the WASP cultural inheritance, these Enlightenment social forces successively turned on their cocoon of Anglo-Saxonism, Protestantism, and finally, Whiteness. Thus multiculturalism and its seemingly contradictory “postmodern” alter ego are less “post” modern than radically modern. Multiculturalism expresses this hyper-individuated logic of liberal egalitarianism and in fact has little to do with a communitarian return to ethnicity.

Chapter 2 examines the development of the Anglo-Saxon myth of origin, the Protestant “voluntary establishment,” and the story of the Yeoman

Republic. It goes on to describe the institutional practices, such as Anglo-conformity and immigration restriction, which constituted the nation along Anglo-Protestant lines.

Chapters 3 and 4 reveal the tension between the ethnocentric and liberal mind-sets of the nineteenth-century Anglo-American psyche. For example, the third chapter pursues the Emersonian paradox of “double-consciousness,” illustrating how prominent nineteenth-century American liberals embraced both universalism and Anglo-Protestant nationalism. Chapter 4 addresses the nature of egalitarianism in the nineteenth century, claiming that reformers and socialists in the Progressive Era were firmly committed to Anglo-Protestant Americanism.

Chapter 5 represents a decisive break: here, for the first time, we consider a truly cosmopolitan² social movement: the Liberal Progressive wing of turn-of-the-century Progressivism. The intellectual evolution of this groundbreaking *cénacle* is traced through the Settlement movement (especially at Jane Addams’s Hull House) and the thinking of a number of largely Chicago-based intellectuals, especially John Dewey. Chapter 6 continues to map the institutional dimensions of early American cosmopolitanism, this time focusing on ecumenical Protestantism. Accordingly, it examines the history of organized Protestant thinking on American national identity. The pattern that emerges demonstrates that mainline Protestant elites gradually abandoned the Protestant crusade in favor of a “left-liberal” posture during 1905–1918.

Chapter 7 shifts the emphasis from equality to expressive individuality. Consequently, this section traces the advent of expressive individualism among the “Young Intellectuals” of Greenwich Village in pre-World War I New York City. These New Yorkers are treated as the founders of an anti-WASP countercultural tradition that extended from the Muckrakers of the 1920s and the New York Intellectuals of the 1930s to the New Left of the 1960s. The following chapter uses survey data to demonstrate how the cosmopolitan ideas of the Liberal Progressives, Liberal Protestants, and New York Intellectuals attained mass hegemony by 1970.

Chapter 9 employs a wide range of evidence demonstrating the waning dominance of Anglo-Protestantism in the United States. I also claim that, contrary to popular belief, ethnicity *as a whole* is largely in decline in the United States and that communal identities are being replaced by more privatized, postethnic forms of belonging. Chapter 10 considers theoretical explanations for WASP decline, while Chapter 11 probes the contours of more recent white “Anglo” nationalism.

The final chapter considers some of the implications of this research. Where *should* the nation go? Here the book outlines a theory of liberal ethnicity which will, I hope, confound champions of simplistic formulas, whether multiculturalist or assimilationist. The idea of liberal ethnicity is offered as a paradigm that can synthesize, yet supersede, both the dominant-ethnic and liberal-egalitarian models. The quest for an unhyphenated American national identity is a chimera that ignores the importance of all (including WASP) ethnic ties. Americanizers would do better to focus on privately hewing a new, substate American ethnic group.

Although multiculturalism is an appropriate response to American diversity, it ought to be considerably reformed—divorced from its adversarial, anti-WASP past to appeal to a wider, more centrist constituency. It must lose its asymmetrical properties, and it should be framed as a global, rather than a specifically American, idea. A cultural revival unleashed by this shift in worldview may lead to an enrichment of American life: to a qualitative Americanism based on culture rather than a quantitative Americanism based on the ephemera of politico-economic success.

I

The WASP Ascendancy

The Rise of Anglo-America

Imagine, my dear friend, if you can, a society formed of all the nations of the world . . . people having different languages, beliefs, opinions: in a word, a society without roots, without memories, without prejudices, without routines, without common ideas, without a national character, yet a hundred times happier than our own.

—ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA*

Alexis de Tocqueville's optimistic description of the new American Republic in the 1830s has been uncritically accepted by most scholars, American or otherwise, ever since. Recent examples include Seymour Martin Lipset ("The First New Nation"), Wilbur Zelinsky ("American nationalism has been international in character from the outset") and Liah Greenfeld ("the Ideal Nation") (Zelinsky 1988: 115; Greenfeld 1992: 438).¹ Are these authors, Tocqueville among them, correct in viewing the United States as a cosmopolitan civilization based on eighteenth-century liberalism? This chapter argues that they are not. It does so in two unique ways. First, it brings together the disparate historical literature on American Anglo-Saxonism and white Protestant "nativism." Second, it casts this material, which necessarily spans the history of the United States itself, within the purview of recent theories of nationalism.

Ethnicity describes the set of sentiments and actions related to a sense of identification with an ethnic group, or *ethnie*—a community that believes itself to be of shared ancestry (Francis 1976: 6; Eriksen 1993: 12; A. Smith 1991: 21). Dominant ethnicity refers to the social action of an ethnic community that is politically, economically, or culturally dominant within a nation-state (Doane 1997: 376). Often, the dominant ethnic group furnished the "core" myths, symbols, memories, and homeland maps that gave birth to the modern nation (Smith 1991: 39). In this chapter, I attempt to locate the origin of America's Anglo-Protestant ethnic core, framing the U.S. case within a more general model. The mytho-symbolic cores of ethnic groups are typically created through a break with the parent stock (fission) or through the melting together of

the myths of several groups (fusion) (Horowitz 1985: 64–70; Connor 1994: 214–216). Once in place, ethnic groups usually maintain these cores, policing symbolic boundaries while admitting new members. New entrants assimilate into the core, transmuting into co-ethnics over time (Barth 1969: 20–25; Francis 1976: 28–31, 93–94).

The “American” ethnic group, for example, emerged through fission from an English Protestant parent stock and used methods of dominant conformity to accrete diverse immigrant populations to its mytho-symbolic core while maintaining ethnic boundaries. Similar processes were at work in this era among new groups like the Taiwanese, Afrikaners, Anatolian Turks, and Ulster Protestants. What complicates this otherwise simple picture is (1) the reflexivity of American society represented by its high standard of recordkeeping and (2) the nature of American liberalism, which occasionally presented itself in the form of cosmopolitan rhetoric.

The latter should not lead us to believe that Americans saw themselves as a liberal cosmopolitan civilization. On the contrary, for Americans, liberalism served as a symbolic border guard reinforcing their sense of particularity. The notion that a cosmopolitan idea can be used for particularistic purposes should not come as a surprise, for, as John Armstrong shows, ethnogenesis was nowhere more prevalent than along the medieval border between Christianity and Islam. These two universal ideas formed the boundary symbols that distinguish Christian ethnies like the Croats and Spaniards from Islamic groups like the Bosnian Muslims and Berbers (Armstrong 1982: 54–92). In this respect, the American ethnie’s liberalism was a universalist idea that distinguished it from illiberal ethnies both on its southern and northern borders and in Europe.

Although the symbol of liberalism reinforced American ethnic particularism, the underlying theoretical conflict between liberalism and ethnicity should not be overlooked. There was this tension in American culture that gave serious consideration to both liberal principles *and* ethnic boundary defense and furiously tried to marry the two. In the next chapter, I focus on this dualism by presenting a less selective analysis of the writings of the authors who are most often used as exemplars of America’s cosmopolitan exceptionalism.

American Ethnogenesis

The Colonial Period

The principal reason the United States developed a dominant ethnic group is chronological: the first inhabitants to keep written records and establish the institutional matrix of contemporary American society were English Protestants. Wilbur Zelinsky describes this phenomenon, as it pertains to cultural geography, as the doctrine of First Effective Settlement, whereby “in terms of lasting impact, the activities of a few hundred, or even a few score, initial colonizers can mean much more . . . than the contributions of tens of thousands of new immigrants a few generations later” (Lewis 1990: 84; Zelinsky 1973: 14–15). David Hackett Fischer’s writings outline a similar theme. He notes that the United States began as a collection of cultural regions based around core English settler ethnies. The Puritans dominated in New England, the Quakers in the Middle Atlantic states, southern English Cavaliers in the coastal South, and Anglo-Scottish Presbyterians in the Appalachian hinterland (Fischer 1989: 787).

Since most of this “colonial stock” had arrived in the seventeenth century from Britain, it is not surprising that on the eve of revolution the American white population was *over 60 percent English, nearly 80 percent British, and 98 percent Protestant*. Colonial America, though relatively homogeneous ethnically, did of course embrace great sectarian diversity. Without question this diversity (as in Scotland and England) powered a pluralism that resulted in the *de jure* separation of church and state, as well as the toleration of Catholics and Jews (Bruce 1990: 99–100). Yet American Protestantism could draw on several points of unity to cement its *de facto* position at the nation’s cultural center. The first was its non-conformity: Quakers, Mennonites, Congregationalists, Huguenots, and Baptists were conspicuous in this regard (Zelinsky 1973: 13). Even the Anglicans, supposedly an established church, were far less hierarchically organized in the United States than in Britain (Brookhiser 1991: 26).

Protestant identity also fed off a tradition of anti-Catholicism that was well established in Britain by the early eighteenth century, forged as it was through protracted warfare with France and fanned by a stream of popular pamphlet literature (Colley 1992: 40–42). In the American colonies, the French and Indian War of 1754–1763 helped to ignite these inherited British anti-Catholic sensibilities. The treatment of French-

speaking, Catholic, Acadian refugees illustrates the degree to which an exclusive Anglo-Protestant consciousness operated in this period just prior to independence, for “at no time were the Acadian exiles given more than grudging acceptance” (Dormon 1983: 16–17).

In the decades following independence, America’s Protestant unity—which the treatment of the Acadians underscored—would begin to crystallize around a Protestant “voluntary establishment” centered on the major theological seminaries (Hutchison 1989: 4, 303). Later, this interdenominational unity was expressed through voluntary associations such as the anti-Catholic American Protective Association (APA) and ecumenical bodies such as the Evangelical Alliance for the United States (1847), precursor to the Federal Council of Churches (1908) (Roof and McKinney 1987: 85–87; Schneider 1989: 99–100; Jordan 1982).

In the meantime, the four ethnic regions of Anglo-America faded into purely cultural entities, with each region acting as a vehicle of assimilation, molding successive waves of immigrants into a particular cultural pattern. This process was accompanied by the rise of a New England–influenced, pan–Anglo-Protestant ethnicity that transcended regional boundaries. The spread of New England cultural ideas during 1725–1825 is a testament to its influence. The first important New England export was the Great Awakening of 1725–1750 led by, among others, Jonathan Edwards. This Protestant revival movement spread like wildfire across the colonies from New England to Georgia and has been described as the first instance of American self-consciousness (Guelzo 1997: 144; Wood 1997; Heimert 1966).

The neoclassical movement, most visible in the realm of architecture, is another New England inspiration that took flight around the turn of the nineteenth century. Though strongest in New England and upstate New York, it also swept through the South, which is evident in the names of cities like Athens (GA), Augusta (GA), and Alexandria (VA). Meanwhile, an increasingly vibrant intercolonial trade pattern helped erode entrenched regional and state identities (Savelle 1978: 484). Some evidence for this blurring of identities is provided by the eighteenth-century standardization seen in the vernacular architecture of American farmers in both North and South (Zelinsky 1988: 226–227).

The American Revolution

Important as they are, none of the pre-Revolutionary integration movements was as significant as what followed. The American Revolution of

1776–1783 quite simply changed the American colonists' terms of reference. The Revolution, however, did not emerge *ex nihilo* but rather had roots in the colonists' sense of "British-American" self-consciousness (Kaufmann 2002). The Proclamation Acts of 1763 and 1774 were particularly incendiary for they erected barriers to what the colonists (now known as "Americans") perceived as their destiny of Anglo-Protestant, millennial, westward expansion. The Proclamation Acts were seen as part of a British Grand Design which was rumored to include the installation of an Anglican bishop and the eradication of American liberties. "A bare-faced attempt against the success of the Protestant religion," was how the *Pennsylvania Packet* described the legislative events of 1774 (Hastings 1997: 75).

Upon its success, the Revolution began to be woven into a new American ethnohistory in which a nation of small-farming Davids had vanquished the Imperial Goliath. A Russian observer noticed that every American home contained a likeness of George Washington that was worshiped like Orthodox icons were in his homeland (Zelinsky 1988: 32). Meanwhile, chroniclers like Yale president Timothy Dwight, Jonathan Edwards's grandson, saw Washington as a latter-day Joshua leading his flock into the Promised Land (O'Brien 1988: 30).

Many would agree that an American sense of community had developed, complete with heroic mythology, but most would label this a civic national process rather than an ethnic one. Yet from the outset, the words and actions of Americans indicate that a growing sense of American ethnicity flowed alongside the civic rhetoric. An ethnic response grew out of a sense of isolation that Oscar Handlin calls "the horror." This rootless condition was occasioned by the colonists' incessant migration, coupled with the existential meaninglessness they encountered while living in alien surroundings (Handlin 1957: 130). Anthony Smith and Régis Debray draw our attention to this phenomenon more generally, noting the ways in which people seek to achieve a measure of this-worldly immortality through identification with an *ancestral* community rooted in land and kinship (A. Smith 1986: 175). The result is ethnogenesis.

Rogers M. Smith has dubbed this response "Ascriptive Americanism." The French and Indian wars of the 1750s and early 1760s had driven home the differences between the English-speaking, Protestant American colonists and their nonwhite, Catholic/pagan, and French/Indian-speaking "other." Furthermore, the Proclamation Acts had stymied what the Anglo-Protestant colonists deemed to be their providential mission to settle the Catholic-occupied trans-Allegheny West. Accordingly, Smith

holds that many Americans were unaware of liberal rights theories and were only persuaded to revolt by the religious and cultural arguments that designated them a chosen, white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant people (R. Smith 1997: 72–86; 1995: 237–239). For Alexander Hamilton, the Quebec Act of 1774, which retained the laws and customs of the French in Canada (despite the presence of thousands of British Protestant residents), reflected the fact that British monarchists and French Catholics were united in their support for hierarchy and tyranny against the republican Americans:

This act [Quebec Act] makes effectual provision not only for the protection, but for the permanent support of Popery. . . . What can speak in plainer language, the corruption of the British Parliament, than its act; which . . . makes such ample provision for the popish religion, and leaves the protestant, in such disadvantageous situation that he is like to have no other subjects in this part of his domain [Canada], than Roman catholics; who, by reason of their implicit devotion to their priests, and the superlative reverence they bear to those, who countenance and favour their religion, will be the voluntary instruments of ambition; and will be ready, at all times, to second the oppressive designs of administration against the other parts of the empire. (Hamilton [1768–1778] 1961: 170, 175)

A sense of divine election is common to many ethnic groups, especially Protestant groups, and it appears that the Americans were no exception (O'Brien 1988: 59–61; Moorhead 1994: 165; Armstrong 1982: 81–90; Hastings 1997: 74). It is also significant that a set of symbolic border guards (what Anthony Smith calls cultural markers) were being used to distinguish the “Americans” from surrounding populations. The Americans were considered to be *white*, in contrast to the Natives and the black slaves; they were *Protestant* and *English* (in speech and surname), unlike the “papist” French and Spanish; and they were *liberal* democrats, in contrast to the British.

The Anglo-Saxon Myth

The American ethnic has always been closely tied to its Whig origins, and the work of Whig historians helped to define the genealogy of the new Republic. The idea that the pre-Conquest Anglo-Saxons had known a primitive form of freedom that had its roots in the German forests had

emerged in England by the sixteenth century. Seventeenth-century figures such as the great common law jurist Sir Edward Coke, in resisting royal power, “frequently asserted that English liberties were inherited unchanged from the ancient constitution of their sturdy Anglo-Saxon ancestors” (R. Smith 1997: 48–49). Some of the more radical variants of the theory held that the Anglo-Saxons carried a desire for freedom in their veins and had a destiny to realize this impulse. John Wilkes and Edmund Burke, for instance, were well-known eighteenth-century exponents of this notion, with Burke noting that an English continuity existed “from Magna Carta to the Declaration of Right . . . derived to us from our forefathers” (Haseler 1996: 34). These ideas found a very responsive audience across the Atlantic. Eighteenth-century “Real Whig” historians such as James Burgh and Catherine Macaulay stand out in this regard. These interpreters of English history witnessed the direct assimilation of their work into the American independence movement. In Reginald Horsman’s words,

The various ingredients in the myth of Anglo-Saxon England, clearly delineated in a host of seventeenth and eighteenth-century works, now appear again in American protests: Josiah Quincy Jr., wrote of the popular nature of the Anglo-Saxon militia; Sam Adams stressed the old English freedoms defended in the Magna Carta; Benjamin Franklin stressed the freedom that the Anglo-Saxons enjoyed in emigrating to England; Charles Carroll depicted Saxon liberties torn away by William the Conqueror; Richard Bland argued that the English Constitution and Parliament stemmed from the Anglo-Saxon period. . . . George Washington admired the pro-Saxon history of Catherine Macaulay and she visited him at Mount Vernon after the Revolution. (Horsman 1981: 12)

Were these prominent Americans merely expressing an abstract ideological exuberance that happened to have an English historical referent? Liah Greenfeld appears to take this stance, arguing that Americans equated Englishness with Liberalism and no more (Greenfeld 1992: 409). Yet such an argument cannot explain the infatuation with the Anglo-Saxons displayed by both pre-Revolutionary pamphleteers and the statesmen of the new Republic (R. Smith 1997: 72–86). Most explicit in this regard was U.S. president and founding father Thomas Jefferson, who proclaimed to John Adams after drafting the Constitution in 1776 that the Americans were “the children of Israel in the wilderness, led by

a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; and on the other side, Hengist and Horsa, the *Saxon chiefs from whom we claim the honour of being descended, and whose political principles and form of government we have assumed*" (Horsman 1981: 22, emphasis added).

Notice that Jefferson distinguished between Americans' ideological and genealogical inheritance, both of which he saw as deriving from the Anglo-Saxons. The idea that the Anglo-Saxon English had self-selected themselves through immigration to escape the British (Norman) yoke to bring the torch of freedom to America was a quintessential myth of ethnogenesis (Ross 1984: 917; Gossett 1953: 82). Accompanying purified religion and purified liberty, therefore, was a purified American genealogy. In this manner, one similar to the Québécois, Afrikaners, and Ulster Protestants, the Americans were performing a feat of particularistic fission from the mother stock which would form the basis for an entirely new ethnic group.

Meanwhile, the Anglo-Saxon myth came to be grafted onto American experience by the mid-nineteenth century. For instance, the New England town meeting was likened to the Anglo-Saxon tribal council, and the statements of Tacitus regarding the free, egalitarian qualities of the Anglo-Saxons were given American interpretation (Goldman 1992: 246). The most widely read American historians of the late nineteenth century—George Bancroft, William Prescott, John Motley, and Francis Parkman—helped popularize the myth, as did English literature scholars (Ross 1984: 917; Gossett 1963: 201–203). Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century utterances by American elites such as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson provide further evidence that the Anglo-Saxon myth was a historicist force in the American conscience collective.

"The fathers followed Boon[e] or fought at King's Mountain," thundered Theodore Roosevelt in 1889. "The sons marched south with Jackson to overcome the Creeks and beat back the British; the grandsons died at the Alamo or charged to victory at San Jacinto. They were doing their share of a work that began with the conquest of Britain, that entered on its second and wider period after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, that culminated in the marvelous growth of the United States. The winning of the West and Southwest is a stage in the conquest of a continent" (Roosevelt 1889, I: 26).

Less clear is the extent to which the Anglo-Saxon myth penetrated down the social scale. This is a similar question to that posed by Eugen Weber or Walker Connor: what proportion of the population must hold

a particular myth of descent for a category of persons to be considered ethnic.² In the American case, although we do not know how many were aware of the Whig formulation of the Anglo-Saxon myth, unless totally isolated from other groups, they were conscious of their WASP cultural markers (White race, “Anglo-Saxon” in speech and surname, Protestant in religion).³ Furthermore, the Yeoman (independent farmer) representation, which was strongly connected with Anglo-Saxonism, definitely had popular resonance and has been described as “*the* myth of mid-nineteenth century America” (H. Smith 1950: 135; Hofstadter 1955: 24–25).

Finally, many Anglo-Americans were conscious of their descent from the various Anglo-American regional groups.⁴ Hence we cannot consider the ethnic Americans to be a merely etic (other-defined) category like the eighteenth-century inhabitants of Ukraine and Slovakia (A. Smith 1986: 30; 1991: 21). Rather, this was a self-conscious ethnic category whose elite held to an Anglo-Saxon myth of descent.⁵

Anglo-Conformity

The Barthian process of assimilation that has maintained ethnic boundaries throughout history had an early start in the United States. An American, Milton Gordon, was perhaps the most articulate exponent of this process. From American experience, he formulated three models of interethnic relations: Anglo-Conformity, the Melting Pot, and Cultural Pluralism (Gordon 1964: 85). The Anglo-Conformity model describes a situation of dominant conformity in which alien populations are transformed into members of the host ethnîe, as occurred after 987 in France or after 1778 in Hungary. The Melting Pot model involves a process of ethnic fusion in which the host population forms only one element of an emergent ethnîe—akin to what occurred in post-1917 Mexico or post-1066 England. Finally, the Cultural Pluralist Model implies the existence of the kind of multiethnic patchwork that held sway in, for example, the Ottoman Empire or the Swiss Confederation. Which model best described the United States? According to both Gordon and Will Herberg, interethnic relations followed a pattern of Anglo-conformity (Gordon 1964: 89; Herberg 1955: 34). Immigrants were to be made into American WASPs by absorbing American English, American Liberty, and American Protestantism and, ultimately, by intermarrying with Americans.

This Anglo-conformity had its roots in the pre-Revolutionary era with

the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge among Germans. Founded in the mid-eighteenth century by Benjamin Franklin and Anglican minister William Smith, the society pursued what it called the “anglicization” of Pennsylvania’s large German population (Kerman 1983: 8, 36). After the Revolution, attempts to have federal laws printed in German (1796) and to gain official status for German in schools and courts (1837) were rebuffed. The result was a gradual assimilation of Pennsylvania’s German population. This assimilation was especially pronounced among the Mennonites, whose close theological affiliation with the Quakers rapidly created an “extended cousinage” among the different ethnies of eastern Pennsylvania (Fischer 1989: 423). Other groups that underwent assimilation included the Welsh and Scots, whose languages were all but dead in America by the early nineteenth century, as well as the Huguenots, who in the nineteenth century disappeared entirely.

More important still was the WASP form to which these non-English groups were assimilating. The anglicization of surnames, for example, is evident among Pennsylvania Dutch families like the Carpenters (originally Zimmermanns) and Rittenhouses (once Rittinghuysens). Among the Huguenots were revolutionary Paul Revere, whose surname reflects a change from the French Rivoire, and John Greenleaf Whittier, whose mother’s family had originally been called Feuillevert. Indeed, Huguenot descendant John Jay, like John Randolph, James Otis, and Jedediah Morse, considered his people “essentially English” in ancestry in the same way outsiders like Tocqueville did (Higham 1999: 46).

A halt in immigration also contributed to the assimilation process. The War of Independence brought immigration to a virtual standstill, and during the 1793–1814 period, only three thousand immigrants arrived per year. It was as a result of this hiatus that the various ethnic groups in the new country drew closer together and lost their differences. As Richard Burkey puts it, “although pockets of European ethnicity still remained, by 1820 the great majority of the citizens of the new country were subscribing to a new ethnicity-American; only the racial groups were excluded from membership” (Burkey 1978: 170). Though armed conflict with Britain ceased after 1815, American ethnic nationalism fed off struggles with the nation’s Catholic neighbors, viewing the successful colonization of Texas (1836–1845) and the defeat of Mexico (1846–1848) as evidence of an ethnic teleology (Horsman 1981: 235).

Romantic Nationalism in the United States

“When we see, among the happiest people in the world, groups of peasants directing affairs of state under an oak, and always acting wisely, can we help but despise the refinements of those nations which render themselves illustrious and miserable by so much art and mystery?” (quoted in Taylor 1989: 361). With characteristic aplomb, Jean-Jacques Rousseau expressed the *zeitgeist* of a new cultural movement known as romanticism which took root in eighteenth-century Europe and proved especially influential in the following century. Based on the idea of nature as the source of power and wisdom, it carried within it a critique of rational, civilized modernity.

In Germany, romantic scholars like Herder, Hegel, or Fichte developed the idea that nations are organic outgrowths of nature whose natural destiny is to express themselves through independent statehood (Kohn 1994: 165). This perspective led intellectuals to espouse a similar vision in other countries. Hence emerged “the romantic vision of the scholar-intellectual, redefining the [ethnic] community as a ‘nation’ whose keys are unlocked by the ‘scientific’ disciplines of archaeology, history, philology, anthropology and sociology . . . disciplines that aptly express the spirit of the new *Gesellschaft*” (A. Smith 1986: 161).

Scholars in America, like their European counterparts, participated in these romantic nationalist activities. Earlier, we described the interest in Anglo-Saxon liberties, which predated the Revolutionary era. This proto-romantic line of thinking had inspired Jefferson to tell English radical John Cartwright “that he hoped Virginia would divide its counties into wards of six miles square, for these ‘would answer to the hundreds of your Saxon Alfred.’ In each of these wards Jefferson wanted an elementary school, a militia company, a justice of the peace, a constable, responsibility for the poor and roads, local police, an election of jurors, and a ‘folk house’ for elections” (Horsman 1981: 23). Jefferson’s vision glorified the Yeoman, or independent farmer, as the cornerstone of the Republic, and he believed that the nation gained strength from the Yeoman’s contact with nature.

In the early nineteenth century, American romantics embraced Jefferson’s vision but at the same time endorsed a bombastic, expansionist Americanism, exemplified by the view that the American continent was to be settled by the surging energy of the “primeval” Anglo-Saxon race. Walt Whitman captured this spirit of ethnic chauvinism well when he

exclaimed: “What has miserable inefficient Mexico . . . to do . . . with the mission of peopling the New World with a noble race?” (Horsman 1981: 235).

Whitman’s interest in Anglo-Saxon philology, part of a widespread literary movement in the 1850s known variously as Gothicism or Anglo-Saxonism, can be explained as a more introspective variant of the Anglo-Saxon theme. This resulted in a vogue for using Anglo-Saxon-based words in one’s writing. “It is the common opinion, that the language has deteriorated in consequence of the multitude of foreign admixtures,” proffered educator John Seely Hart of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1854 to his Smithsonian Institution audience. By contrast, “In the Lord’s Prayer . . . the only Latin words are *debts*, *debtors*, *deliver*, *temptation*, and *glory*. Among the writers who come nearest to the translators of the English [King James] Bible in the purity of their English, are Shakespeare and Addison. If in any of these writers, we were to substitute for the Saxon words the corresponding Latin synonyms, we would instantly perceive a falling off in expressiveness” (Hall 1997: 144–145).

The romantic *zeitgeist* also suffused the myth of the Yeoman Republic, which appeared to be in jeopardy for the first time and gave rise to a nostalgic response (H. Smith 1950: 130). Thus the Gothicism of Whitman, Poe, Emerson, and others was characterized, in the 1850s, by a nostalgic sensibility that scorned the expansionist, utilitarian industrialism of the new America (Bernbrock 1961). Washington Irving’s *Rip Van Winkle* (1819) and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Ambitious Guest* (1835) provide early examples of this thinking.⁶ Both works lament the Yankee’s acquisitive attitude, which has left him blind to nature’s more sublime virtues. In a similar vein, in *Among the Hills* (1869), John Greenleaf Whittier wrote:

Our yeoman should be equal to his home,
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,
A man to match his mountains, not to creep,
Dwarfed and abased below them. (Marshall 1988: 269)

In the minds of romantic nationalists, the new economy, which increasingly bound farmers to agents from urban centers, undermined their independence and, by extension, that of the Yeoman Republic. Cities were viewed as sinful, and nature, once scorned as a source of depravity and treated in utilitarian terms, came to be lauded as a regenerative force for the nation (Miller 1967: 207). This sentiment even animated radical

Boston socialist Wendell Phillips, who in the 1860s proclaimed: “My idea of a civilization is a very high one, but the approach to it is a New England town of some two thousand inhabitants, with no rich man and no poor man in it; all mingling in the same society . . . That’s New England as it was fifty years ago. . . . [The] civilization that lingers beautifully on the hillsides of New England, nestles sweetly in the valleys of Vermont, the moment it approaches a crowd like Boston, or a million men gathered in one place like New York, it rots” (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 119).

The Republican Golden Age

The theme of the Golden Age, first invoked by Hesiod, has been a near-universal among ethnic groups. It represents an idealized period in the past when the collective was seen to be united and heroic. Typically, the romantic nationalist views the present as an age of decline and seeks to use the myth of an idealized past to revive the virtues that supposedly characterized the national ethnic group during its Golden Age (A. Smith 1986: 192). The nostalgia that pervaded the writings of many mid-nineteenth-century Americans may thus be considered a form of romantic yearning for a purer, more “natural” Golden Age Republic. This nostalgia eventually fired the ethnic nationalist phenomenon known as nativism, which proved so potent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

“American” Ethnicity Defined

The Anglo-American myth-symbol complex that had arisen by 1820 and had spread widely by 1850 can be summarized as follows. The “Americans” believed that:

- They were an elect who shared a covenant with God to spread Liberalism and Protestant Christianity throughout America and the Western Hemisphere, an event that would herald the millennium on earth.
- They were destined to spread across the West to the Pacific (at the very least), and theirs was a chosen land, a New Israel that at the same time served to regenerate the freedom of the American people.
- Their material and political success showed them to be a chosen people, an elect descended from the pre-Norman, freedom-loving Anglo-Saxons described by Tacitus.

- They knew themselves by the cultural markers of the white race, [American] English language/surname, nonconformist Protestant religion, and Liberal ideology.
- Their founding fathers included the Puritans and the leaders of the American Revolution. Virtually all the main figures in this ethnohistory (that is, John Winthrop, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson) were of English Protestant origin.
- They were an egalitarian, independent, self-improving Yeoman people: a grassroots pioneer constituency from which organically flowed the American spirit of democracy and pure Christian morality.
- The era of the Yeoman Republic, described by Jefferson in an allusion to both the Bible and King Alfred's Anglo-Saxons, constituted a Golden Age for America, to which it should return.

The Protestant Crusade: Responding to Catholic Immigration

The events of 1776–1815 were followed by a period of rapidly rising immigration, a flow that was increasingly Catholic, reflecting its origins in Ireland and the German states. Numbers began to pick up substantially after the War of 1812, increasing the proportion of population growth attributable to immigration from 3 percent in 1810 to over 30 percent by 1851. More important, British immigration to the United States was running at a mere 20 percent of the total, substantially less than the numbers arriving from Ireland and Germany. For the first time in its history, most of the immigrants to the Protestant United States were now Catholic (Easterlin et al. 1982: 2). Generally speaking, Irish immigrants were attracted to the industrial cities of the North and the Germans to the Midwest. The concentration of Irish Catholics in cities like Boston and New York made them particularly noticeable: Boston was a quarter Irish as early as 1844. By 1853 it was some 40 percent Irish, and over half were foreign-born (Burkey 1978: 244). And all this was occurring in the city that housed the Puritan elite that saw America in its own image.

Native-born reaction began almost immediately, especially in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Religious commentators like Lyman Beecher warned that the new immigrants were instruments of papal design who had to be converted immediately through the growing American public school system. An anti-Catholic press also took root in the 1830s, beginning with the New York *Protestant*. Meanwhile, popular discontent with Catholic immigrants was given a more sinister twist, with church-burning,

looting, and mob violence against Catholic priests becoming endemic in several northeastern cities. As the Catholic population increased from 3 to 7 percent, the anti-Catholic response gained in fervor. Books outlining the evils of Catholicism such as Maria Monk's *Awful Disclosures* became huge sellers, mobilizing hundreds of thousands of readers. The 1840s bore witness to a veritable No-Popery industry, carried out through pulpit and penny press alike (Billington 1938: 5–6, 106–108, 220–233).

These currents in American civil society formed what John Hutchinson would describe as a movement of cultural nationalism, a development that gave birth to the more political Know-Nothing movement (Hutchinson 1987: 16; A. Smith 1986: 192). The Know-Nothings, so called because of their secretive ways, developed out of a series of 1840s parties, the earliest of which were the American Republicans, who enjoyed instant success in the 1844 congressional elections where they fielded candidates. Patriotic organizations like the Order of United Americans were also influential in the Know-Nothing movement, and, by 1854, the American Party (Know-Nothing Party) had united its disparate local movements into a national organization.

In the spring elections of that year, the party tore a path through the existing political landscape. As Ray Allan Billington writes, “The result was phenomenal. Whole tickets not even on the ballots were carried into office. Men who were unopposed for election and who had been conceded victory found themselves defeated by some unknown Know-Nothing” (Billington 1938: 387). The Know-Nothings had won Massachusetts and Delaware, polled well throughout the Northeast, and even did well in parts of the South. In areas where immigrants had settled, the party was especially strong. For instance, in Massachusetts, all but one of the 377 state representatives were Know-Nothings. Many other New England state legislatures showed similar tendencies.

The Know-Nothings' legislative goals were to (1) prevent Catholics from running for public office; (2) restrict the franchise to those who could read and write English; (3) impose a 21-year residency requirement for voters, and (4) implement a 21-year probationary period for immigrants (Billington 1938: 410–413). The goal of the Know-Nothings was to protect the Protestant marker of American ethnicity, a sentiment best expressed by an essayist in a Know-Nothing journal who wrote that “the grand work of the American Party is the principle of nationality . . . we must do something to protect and vindicate it. If we do not it will be destroyed” (Kaufman 1982: 13). In the mid-1850s, even Catholic news-

papers agreed that a Know-Nothing president was an inevitability. It took the intervention of a great regional issue, slavery, to divide the Know-Nothings, destroying them and channeling their concerns into the new Republican Party (Silbey 1985: 111–112).

The Age of Populism: Ethnic Defense after the Civil War

The Civil War distracted the old forces of Anglo-American ethnic defense while drawing Irish and German immigrants closer to the national center. However, at war's end, WASP forces began to regroup under the aegis of Populism, a grassroots movement that consisted of two discrete sections of the national population. The elite was made up of intellectuals and political figures, largely of old-stock New England lineage. They subscribed to a Jeffersonian view of America and were concentrated in the Boston area, the intellectual hub of the Republic and home to the "Brahmin" cultural elite. Also in the vanguard of ethnic defense were elite Protestant clergymen, troubled by their declining influence over an increasingly secular, industrial society. The counterparts to the Brahmin elite and their clerical comrades-in-arms were the rural masses (Hofstadter 1955: 144–145, 151–153). Here one sees a recurrent theme—namely, that whenever the northeastern "WASP" elite make common cause with their less prestigious but more numerous provincial kin, Anglo-Protestant ethnic nationalism revives. When the two entities drift apart along sectional or class lines, dominant ethnicity declines.

An examination of American demographics in 1890 illustrates why ethnic defense adopted a populist tone. In that year, three in four native whites lived in rural areas, and just 8 percent were in cities of more than 100,000 people. By contrast, 58 percent of the foreign white stock was urbanized, and fully one-third lived in cities over 100,000 in population (Easterlin et al. 1982: 20). The growth in the foreign stock after 1890 was matched by a growing diversity of immigration sources. Increasingly, Southern and Eastern Europeans were replacing the more "assimilable" Germans, Irish, and Britons in the migration flow. Thus increased urbanization occurred in tandem with a declining British Protestant population (Fig. 2.1), elements of cultural change that added fuel to the Populist fire (Taeuber and Taeuber 1958: 114).⁷

Reaction by rural, native-born, Protestant America against its foreign, urban "other" began in the 1860s with the formation of the Patrons of Husbandry, known as the Grange. The movement began in New York State in 1868, quickly spreading through other states. Spurred on by a

sense of vanishing rural self-sufficiency that was exemplified by reliance on urban-based banks, railroads, purchasing agents, and Catholic migrant laborers, the Grange accumulated three hundred branches in New York State alone by 1874. The Grange identified independent farmers as the “caretakers of the Republic” and equated capitalists and urbanites with corruption and impurity. Indeed, in 1868, a prominent member of the Grange directly referred to America’s northern rural communities as the “realms of the Anglo-Saxon people” (Summerhill 1993: 603).

On the East Coast, meanwhile, Boston “Brahmin” writers joined in the romantic attack. James Russell Lowell and Charles Eliot Norton were especially prominent in this regard, with Lowell recalling the days when Cambridge (MA) had been “essentially an English village” and Norton celebrating the fact that his Ashfield (MA) retreat was a town that contained “but one Irish family” and was thereby a more suitable place to “write Massachusetts idylls or a New England ‘Arcadia’” (Solomon 1956: 13).

The list of other Brahmins opposing the new America included prominent figures such as historian Francis Parkman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology president Francis Walker, and Harvard professor Henry Adams. Adams had even conducted a special seminar in Anglo-Saxon studies during 1873–1874 and later funded a doctoral seminar on this subject with his own money, taking up a tradition established by Thomas

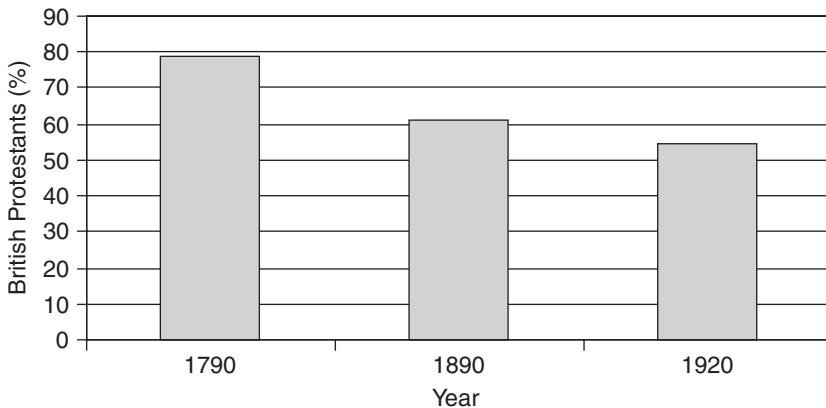


Figure 2.1. Percentage of U.S. white population of British Protestant descent, 1790–1920 (Fischer 1981: 871; Easterlin et al. 1982: 19).

Jefferson at the University of Virginia earlier in the century. Adams's work inspired many others, like Herbert Baxter Adams of Johns Hopkins, and was eagerly received by Adams's Harvard students, including Henry Cabot Lodge (Gossett 1963: 103). Among these Brahmins' clerical counterparts, Social Gospel preacher Josiah Strong was the most visible, with his 1885 *Our Country* racking up sales of 175,000 by 1916 (Asmus 1987: 19). *Our Country* was but one of the tracts warning Americans that they would be overwhelmed by foreign immigrants as the Romans were by the Goths and Vandals. Another was W. F. Phelps's periodical, *The Menace*, which had a staggering circulation of 15 million in 1915 (Anderson 1970: 104).

Jack London's *Valley of the Moon* (1913) provides an example of ethnic nationalism in the literary field. In this novel Saxon Brown, the protagonist, engages in a nostalgic lament for the passing of a nation built upon the "folk migrations" of her self-sufficient, pioneering Yankee ancestors. In the novel, London follows in the footsteps of Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Fenimore Cooper, William Cullen Bryant, and Walt Whitman, ushering in a second American Golden Age: the nineteenth-century era prior to the closing of the frontier and the rise of urban, immigrant America (Kaufman 1982: 37). A nostalgic tone even made its appearance in the writings of liberals like William Dean Howells, whose *Vacation of the Kelmyns: An Idyll of the Mid-1870's*, written at the turn of the century, lamented the passing of Yankee New England a century after independence. Barrett Wendell, another contemporary liberal, bemoaned that "we [Anglo-Protestants] were submerged beneath a conquest so complete that the very name of us means something not ourselves. . . . I feel as I should think an Indian might feel, in the face of ourselves that were" (Glazer 1959: 390).

As in the Know-Nothing period, the Populist era was one in which currents of cultural nationalism took on a political bent, embodied in patriotic organizations like the million-member American Protective Association of the 1890s (Anderson 1970: 102). These nationalist sentiments began to find a political outlet in the 1880s with support from the agrarian Grange and Alliance movements. By 1892, the People's Party (Populist Party), drawing on Alliance and Grange support, had mounted a third-party challenge, gaining 8.5 percent of the vote, and by 1896, the Populists had claimed the leadership of the Democratic Party, fielding William Jennings Bryan as their candidate.

In his famous Cross of Gold speech, Bryan castigated urban America: "The great cities rest on broad and fertile prairies. . . . Burn down your

cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms, and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country” (Hofstadter 1955: 35). Bryan was just as adamant in his opposition to American imperialism in the Philippines and Latin America, believing that it would undermine the ethnic basis of the American nation-state: “Are we to bring into the body politic eight or ten million Asiatics,” asked Bryan, “so different from us in race and history that amalgamation is impossible?” (Love 1997; Moorhead 1994: 158). Though not primarily concerned with ethnic defense, the Populists and their Progressive successors of 1900–1914 did have this (nativist) plank in their platform, reflected in the native-born, Protestant background of virtually all Progressive leaders (Hofstadter 1955: 144–145). William Jennings Bryan’s bid for the presidency ultimately failed on economic grounds, but others emerged to take up the torch of Anglo-American Populism.

The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, for instance, had called Bryan the “greatest Klansman of our time” in reference to his vision of America. The Klan had re-emerged in 1915 in the South but quickly moved away from its southern, antifederal, racist roots and took on ethnic nationalist form. Downplaying the importance of southern regionalism and stressing the Anglo-Saxon-American axis, the Klan rode a wave of popularity that shifted its power base out of the South and into white Protestant states like Indiana, Colorado, and Oregon (Higham [1955] 1988: 287). In its political activity, the Klan concerned itself less with local immigrants and blacks, of which there were usually few, and more with broader national themes (Hofstadter 1955: 292).

The strength of the Klan movement in the 1920s is exemplified by the case of Indiana, in which over a quarter of the state’s white men were members. As Leonard Moore explains, the Klan movement thrived best in homogeneous communities that had undergone rapid socioeconomic change. Indiana’s Klan activities, unlike those of its southern predecessor, focused less on the intimidation of local ethnic minorities than on social activities like picnics and parades which “engendered a sense of community . . . [and] drew together disparate social groups through a powerful appeal to white Protestant ethnic identity” (Moore 1985: 296).

Americanization Movements

One consequence of old-stock alienation was a heightened emphasis on Anglo-conformist acculturation, with Anglo-Saxon nationalism taking the

form of Americanization programs designed to impart liberal, Protestant values and American English culture to the newcomers. Many had viewed the Anglo-conformist process as a success in the nineteenth century, with one 1920s writer commenting that few of native stock knew what proportion of their blood was English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, or German (Lewis 1928: 389). Twentieth-century immigrants were viewed as a more difficult problem, however, causing Americanization to reach a crescendo in the 1910s and 1920s as wartime hysteria and anti-immigrant populism reached panic levels. The slogan became “100 percent Americanism” and was exemplified by private and government initiatives like the “America First” campaign of the Bureau of Education, the Committee of One Hundred of the National Education Association, or the Conference on Methods of Americanization held in Washington (King 2000: 90).

Patriotic societies like the Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution, the American Legion, and the Grand Army of the Republic played key auxiliary roles in spearheading the Americanization effort. Commemoration activities and organized school patriotic rituals were at the forefront of this drive (O’Leary 2001). Patriotic organizations, whose membership was predominantly old-stock Protestant, reflected the Anglo-Protestant worldview. Protestant fraternities like the Freemasons were likewise involved. Their membership was almost exclusively WASP, and in some areas more than half the recruits to local Ku Klux Klan branches were Masons. The *Masonic Review* put it best when it announced that “the battle is on which will decide whether the Pope or American citizens will rule America” (Dumenil 1984: 13, 122, 125, 145–147).

The Americanization theme had the full force of presidential backing, with Woodrow Wilson telling some newly naturalized citizens that ethnic identity was not compatible with being a “thorough American” (Drachsler 1920: 191–192). Theodore Roosevelt’s view of the matter exemplified the Anglo-conformist process. In his words: “the representatives of many old-world races are being fused together into a new type,” a type that “was shaped from 1776 to 1789, and our nationality was definitely fixed in all its essentials by the men of Washington’s day” (Gordon 1964: 121–122).

Reinterpreting the Anglo-Saxon Myth

In addition to trying to accrete newcomers to their WASP core, old-stock Americans attempted to reinterpret their ethnic myth of descent to ex-

plain the immigration process. In the nineteenth century, for example, American intellectuals widely believed that their Anglo-Saxon blood dominated among mixed-ethnic offspring, while the American environment biologically altered the foreigner, rendering him an Anglo-Saxon.⁸ Other thinkers reflected the thought pattern of generations of writers who held contradictory visions of America. For example, Ralph Waldo Emerson simultaneously called the United States “the asylum of all nations” while remarking that “The inhabitants of the United States, especially of the Northern portion, are descended from the people of England and have inherited the traits of their national character. . . . It has been thought by some observers acquainted with the character of both nations that the American character is only the English character exaggerated” (Goldman 1992: 264).

These ideas were reconciled by what Emerson called “double-consciousness,” a dualist state of mind that allowed liberal cosmopolitanism and ethnicity to exist in the same space. John Higham ascribes this phenomenon to the optimistic temper of the age (Goldman 1992: 284; Higham [1955] 1988: 133; R. Smith 1995: 238–239). In the next chapter, I undertake a more extensive analysis of this phenomenon, demonstrating its pervasiveness in the intellectual life of nineteenth-century America. The product of a confident Anglo-Saxonism intertwined with a robust liberalism, this was a golden age of cultural efflorescence for Protestant ethnicity, manifested in museums, universities, urban design, and literature (Higham 1997: 253).

With the passing of the nineteenth century, however, the optimism that had fueled double-consciousness drained away and writers became ever more convinced that the foreign-born were displacing the natives instead of invigorating them. Greater numbers of American intellectuals were losing faith in the assimilating powers of their Anglo-Saxon ethnic, and the groundswell of Populist agitation that had been building since the Civil War burst into a political movement for immigration restriction (Higham [1955] 1988: 266). Here we can see how rapid, diverse immigration had exposed the contradictions that nourished the “cosmopolitan nativism” of American ethnicity (Kaufmann 2001a). From this point in the late nineteenth century, the instability inherent in the liberal American ethnic would be exposed and would force Americans to choose between a liberal, cosmopolitan future and an ethnic, Anglo-American one. Needless to say, the ethnic Anglo-Saxon option proved more popular—at least in the first instance.

The Immigration Restrictionist Movement

Intellectually, the connection between American dominant ethnicity and immigration restriction runs through Thomas Jefferson, who helped inaugurate the study of Anglo-Saxon at the University of Virginia in the early nineteenth century, to Henry Adams, who instituted a program in Anglo-Saxon studies at Harvard in the 1870s, and finally to Adams's student, Henry Cabot Lodge, who helped defend the Anglo-Saxon character of America on the floor of the U.S. Senate and led the movement toward ethnic quotas in U.S. immigration policy.

At the mass level, although no polls were conducted on the subject until 1937, editorial opinion suggests that immigration had never been popular (Simon 1985: 221). Its principal backers were large businesses who wished to maintain low wage levels in their factories. Unopposed in the nineteenth century, this business lobby came under attack from both organized labor and patriotic organizations in the early twentieth. Patriotic organizations proved to be extremely important social actors. The first patriotic societies emerged during the Know-Nothing Era. After the Civil War, such societies multiplied, the most noteworthy being the Grand Army of the Republic, formed by Union officers in 1866, the Sons of the American Revolution (1876), and the Daughters of the American Revolution (1890). The last-named was initially composed of members of Revolutionary families and spearheaded campaigns of historical preservation, commemoration, Americanization, and immigration restriction (Zelinsky 1988: 105; Asmus 1987: 13–14; O'Leary 2001). As a united front, the coalition of patriotic societies helped pressure the government to bar Asian immigrants (in the Acts of 1904 and 1907), and by 1921, President Harding had signed America's first ever law restricting European immigration. This law decreed that European immigration would be based on a 3 percent quota allocated to each nation based on their share of the 1910 immigrant population.

Since the immigrant population in 1910 was considerably less British and Protestant than the U.S. population stock, the patriotic societies continued to push for more exclusive measures. This pressure led to the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, which initially based the immigration quotas on the 1890 immigrant stock. The bill passed overwhelmingly, 323 to 71 in the House and 62 to 6 in the Senate. Interestingly, the 1924 Act did not satisfy the patriotic societies, which wanted the bill based on the existing U.S. population so as to give the British a larger share of the total

inflow. By 1929, their pressure had triumphed, and a more exclusive national origins principle went into effect, its aim being to freeze the ethnic composition of the national population. The 1929 legislation thereby demonstrated that Anglo-Protestant dominance in Congress was robust enough to trump even the most powerful (Irish, Scandinavian, and German) ethnic interests (Divine 1957: 46).

The case of House reapportionment is similarly instructive. Seats in the House of Representatives had been reallocated on the basis of the national census (performed by the executive branch) every ten years since 1791 (Redenius 1982: 515). Thus it was nearly impossible for a session of Congress to break from this iron-clad precedent. However, in 1921, the unthinkable happened: dissatisfied with a 1920 census that showed the urban population (places over 2500 people) to have eclipsed rural numbers for the first time in American history, the rural-dominated House of Representatives refused to yield to reapportionment. On the floor of the House, debate was heated, with a number of legislators drawing upon themes that resonated with the ethnic imagery of the Anglo-Saxon Yeoman Republic. "It is not best for America that her councils be dominated by semicivilized foreign colonies in Boston, New York [and] Chicago," thundered Kansas Republican Edward C. Little to the rapturous applause of the House. Cyrenus Cole of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, put the matter just as succinctly: "A home on the farm stands for something more than a tenement in a city. From the time when the poet's embattled farmers fired the first shot heard round the world the toilers of the land have been a large part of the safety and security of American institutions" (Eagles 1990: 38, 49).

The immense pressure of congressional precedent meant that rural northern Republicans and southern Democrats could not forestall reapportionment indefinitely. However, many House members made strenuous attempts to justify inaction, claiming that the winter census had missed many in the countryside or that wartime demobilization had led to a temporary surge of urban population that would soon reverse itself as a "natural" pattern took root (Schmeckebier 1941: 120). Therefore, owing to the effects of Anglo-Protestant unity across party lines, reapportionment did not take place until 1932—a full 20 years after the reapportionment of 1912 (Eagles 1990: 89). This helped speed up the passage of such measures as the National Origins Quota Act, against the wishes of urban-based ethnic groups.

Post-1920s Hegemony

After the flurry of legislative activity in the 1920s, the United States settled into a phase of stable, Anglo-Saxon hegemony in which immigration control and Anglo-conformity were institutionalized. In the immigration restrictionist arena, the national origins principle was maintained, though the executive would periodically attempt to gain exemption from the quotas for designated groups. As a result of national origins legislation, the proportion of Southern and Eastern European immigrants dropped from almost 80 percent to barely 20 percent in the three decades after 1920. Later, the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act reaffirmed the commitment to national origins legislation, castigating the failure of the law to achieve a complete freeze on ethnic change (Fitzgerald 1987: 188). In terms of Anglo-conformity, the same attitudes operating to maintain immigration restriction prevailed. Americans' national mood reflected the sense of stable Anglo hegemony that the 1924 Act and years of low immigration had ensured. As Nathan Glazer put it:

In the later '20's the Quota Act took its toll, then the depression began and nobody wanted to come, so for a long time American public opinion lived in the consciousness and expectation that America was completed. . . . No one expected that America would again become an immigrant society.⁹ (Glazer 1988: 2-3)

In the 1930s, there ensued a period of regionalist cultural revival, when American intellectuals and reformers looked to the golden age of the Anglo-Saxon Yeoman "folk" for inspiration. Proud Dust Bowl southerners en route to California and honest rural Yankees taking on corrupt urbanites were common cultural themes as urbanization and industrial collapse cast a pall over the nation (Gerstle 1994: 1068; Dorman 1993: 23).

The ethnic, Anglo-Saxon dimension was even more clearly in evidence in the Southern Appalachian region, now touted as an authentic American heartland. This region was romanticized because it appeared to embody the virtues of the old America: classless, rural, and, most important, homogeneously "old American" in ancestry. Originating with the efforts of Protestant reformers, an entire Southern Appalachian industry developed in the 1930s which included annual folk festivals, regional art revivals, home furnishing publications, and radio shows. Emerging from this cultural revival in the early 1940s were some of the first self-consciously

“American” ethnocultural styles. One example was bluegrass folk music and another was the “Southern Highland” style of home furnishing. In a 1942 article, the editors of *House and Garden* magazine explained the style’s popularity. The Southern Appalachian region, it claimed, served as a source for designs “as American as corn bread and smoked ham. . . . They search down into our race roots. They carry on an ancient heritage” (Becker 1993: 23).

After World War II, Anglo-Saxon Protestant rhetoric continued to flow in the populist campaigns of southern politicians. George Wallace’s gubernatorial inauguration speech of 1963, as did the speeches of several other segregationists, resounded with talk of the “Great Anglo-Saxon Southland” (Wallace [1963] 2002). In addition, the newly coined WASP elite in the largest cities maintained its hegemonic influence into the 1960s by dominating corporate boardrooms, university executives, private clubs, exclusive suburbs, elite universities, and preparatory schools (Baltzell 1964; 1990). Throughout the ethnically mixed cities and towns of the northern and western states, those of old-stock background dominated the upper echelons of society, and WASP ancestry functioned as a status marker (Warner and Lunt 1941; Atherton 1954: 278–280).

Meanwhile, enough of a mass-cultural Anglo-Saxonism remained to convince most writers in the 1950s and early 1960s that Will Herberg and Milton Gordon were correct in stating that even those of immigrant stock tended to conform to a WASP ideal type based on figures like Lincoln and Washington. Peter Schrag reiterated this theme, commenting in 1973 that the American motion picture industry, though composed of large numbers of Catholics and Jews, reinforced the Anglo-conformist process by portraying non-Anglo-Saxons in secondary roles, with WASP (or imitation-WASP) figures given the all-American lead parts. For Schrag, “the genuine American was [presented as] John Wayne, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable and Gregory Peck, a mythic man who transcended particular films or plots or situations” (Schrag 1973: 37).

This chapter rejects the view that American national identity is exceptional because it has always lacked an ethnic core. In fact, an American national ethnic group had crystallized by 1820. This “American” myth-symbol complex had many advocates in both civil society and politics. The Anglo-Americans sought to incorporate new immigrants into their ethnic group, and when the inflow appeared to pose a challenge to the congruence of American ethnic and nation, a defensive response occurred. Starting in

the 1830s in New England and spreading nationwide, ethnic defense in both its Anglo-conformist and immigration restrictionist forms enjoyed almost unbroken strength until the 1920s. The period from the early 1920s until the mid-1960s witnessed the institutionalization of this sentiment and can be characterized as a period of stability in which the dominant ethnic group felt confident that it could mold the white United States into a truly “American” ethnic nation.

Limited Liberals: “Double-Consciousness” in Anglo-American Thought, 1750–1920

The United States was born in bourgeois revolution (Lipset 1996: 90–91). The individual liberty that became a symbol of American dominant ethnicity was accompanied by a *laissez-faire* attitude toward immigration. Immigrants fortified the new Republic against a supposedly tyrannical, hostile outside world. The newcomers’ diverse origin in northwestern Europe showed the American way to be blessed and confirmed the belief in American election. The myth of the United States as an asylum for the oppressed also had currency, springing, as it did, from the Puritan conviction that New England served as a refuge from Royalist tyranny. The notion of an asylum was likewise current in the heterogeneous Quaker-influenced colony of Pennsylvania, which William Penn had opened up to a multiplicity of ostracized Protestant sects from Germany and the British Isles (Jones [1960] 1992: 6, 13, 16, 67; Baltzell [1982] 1990).

Such thinking was frequently more rhetorical than substantive, and when confronted with the dizzying realities of relaxed ethnic boundaries, nineteenth-century American liberalism shrank from the abyss. The idea of the American nation as a truly global melting pot, much less a pan-European one, had few defenders in the nineteenth century. Essentially, the liberal position in that era was an optimistic, expansionist Anglo-conformism that accepted the immigrants, provided they looked like Anglo-Protestants and assimilated to the WASP mytho-symbolic corpus.

Assimilation, in this sense, meant acculturation to American English, liberalism, and, ultimately, through marriage or conversion, to American Protestantism. This liberal (though still ethnic) program of nation-building did not go unchallenged. Indeed, defensive Anglo-Saxon nationalists sought to control immigration so as to ensure that inflows reflected the character of the population stock. Defensive Anglo-Protestant ethnicity thereby shared with its more liberal counterpart the aim of molding

a people in the WASP image. The liberal perspective dovetails nicely with the kind of porous, assimilative ethnicity described by Fredrik Barth and best exemplified at the time by the Zulus and Magyars.¹ To repeat: in the nineteenth century, American liberalism did not escape the Anglo-Protestant cage of myths and symbols in which it was embedded.

The Advent of “Double-Consciousness”

Even so, the few cosmopolitan statements from radical liberals of the antebellum era, though circumscribed, proved significant grist for the ideological mill of a new generation of liberal thinkers that emerged around the turn of the twentieth century. An examination of these statements is therefore warranted, as is an understanding of their dualistic, contradictory nature which Emerson described as double-consciousness. The art of double-consciousness lay in balancing notions of “race” and “rights,” in other words (Anglo-Protestant) ethnicity and liberty. This flexibility of mind can arguably be traced to the Old Testament, which is so central to the American low-church Protestant tradition. For instance, the Old Testament tends to name the Jews as a people chosen by God:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. (Exodus 19:5–6)

Yet, despite the predominantly ethnic tone, the selective reader can tease out some universalist passages, such as:

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. (Gal. 3:6–9; in O’Brien 1988: 4–6)

The New Testament is considerably more universalist in tone, and the combination of pre- and post-Christian influences reinforced the sense of double-consciousness on the “race/rights” question prevalent among American Anglo-Protestant thinkers from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

Another important factor governing the operation of race/rights du-

alism was the low degree of reflexivity² common to much pre-twentieth century social thought—a factor related to the low standard of surveillance and record-keeping—about which we shall later say more (Kaufmann 2001a). As a result, foreign commentators tended to slip into the clothing of dualism almost as easily as did Americans. French-born settler Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, for example, is often quoted to provide an example of America's cosmopolitan nationhood. This is not surprising, for Crèvecoeur waxed eloquently in 1782 about Americans' "strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country" (Kohn 1957: 3). The archetypal American apparently left "behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners," while on American soil, "individuals of all races are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world."

Notwithstanding the effusiveness of his rhetoric, Crèvecoeur's enthusiasm for the new mixed-origin American was a posture conditioned by both romantic millenarianism and Crèvecoeur's outsider status in his adopted homeland. A French nobleman who came to America to fight alongside Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham in the Seven Years' War against the British, Crèvecoeur settled in upstate New York and later joined the Loyalist cause. Having twice picked a losing side, and forced to flee by the victorious Patriots, Crèvecoeur penned his classic *Letters From an American Farmer* in 1780, which was well received and abetted his return as French consul to the United States—where he lived for just seven more years before permanently joining his compatriots in France (Daniels 1998: 29–30).

Crèvecoeur was only too well aware of the Anglo-Protestant nature of America. First of all, he employed the Anglo-Saxon pseudonym Hector St. John for his *Letters* rather than his real name, Michael-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur, illustrating the Anglo-conformist atmosphere prevalent at the time. We should also remember that Crèvecoeur "was as firmly convinced of the Englishness of America as any American of British descent," remarking that an English traveler in America would feel pride that his fellow nationals "brought along with them [to America] their national genius, to which they [Americans] principally owe what liberty they enjoy and what substance they possess" (Greenfeld 1992: 408–409).

Some 50 years later, another Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, fell prey to the same kind of thinking. At times, Tocqueville appears to be exhorting his readership to behold a new futuristic nation, "Imagine, my dear friend, if you can, a society formed of all the nations of the world

. . . people having different languages, beliefs, opinions: in a word, a society without roots, without memories, without prejudices, without routines, without common ideas, without a national character, yet a hundred times happier than our own.” However, in most instances, we see a different side to Tocqueville’s futuristic Americanism. “There is hardly an American to be met with who does not claim some remote kindred with the first founders of the colonies,” he reflected, and “as for the scions of the noble families of England, America seemed to me to be covered with them” (Tocqueville 1835, 1994, I: 173–174). Tocqueville also repeatedly referred to the Americans as the “English race in America” or the “Anglo-Americans,” indicating that, like Crèvecoeur, he felt the terms were basically interchangeable. Like those before and many after him, it seems that Tocqueville’s cosmopolitan view of America was merely a rhetorical tool used only in his more visionary moments.

The Revolutionary Generation

Thus far we have considered the writing of two French-born figures whose roots lay outside the Anglo-American ethnic core. However, the opinion of the Revolutionary generation, including the founding fathers, falls neatly into the same pattern of dualism. Thus, as early as 1751, Benjamin Franklin declared that it was hardly

necessary to bring in Foreigners to fill up any occasional Vacancy in a Country; for such Vacancy . . . will soon be filled by natural Generation . . . And since Detachments of English from Britain sent to America, will have their places of Home so soon supply’d and increase so largely here; why should the Palatine Boors [Germans] be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion. (Franklin [1750–1753] 1961: 232, 234)

Franklin later added that “[our] Land owners will have no cause to complain if English, Welsh and Protestant Irish are encouraged to come hither instead of Germans” (Kerman 1983: 24–25). Commenting on the same matter in 1753, Franklin continued to castigate the Germans, remarking

that “Those who come hither are generally the most ignorant Stupid Sort of their own Nation . . . unless the stream of their importation could be turned from this to other colonies . . . they will soon outnumber us.” However, at the conclusion of this passage, he appears to change his tune, suggesting that:

I am not for refusing entirely to admit them into our Colonies: all that seems to be necessary is to distribute them more equally, mix them with the English, establish English Schools where they are now too thick settled . . . I say I am not against the Admission of Germans in general, for they have their Virtues, their industry and frugality is exemplary; They are excellent husbandmen and contribute greatly to the improvement of a Country. (Franklin [1753] 1961: 483, 485)

Thomas Jefferson concurred with this liberal view in 1817, writing that he wished to keep the doors of America open so as to “consecrate a sanctuary for those whom the misrule of Europe may compel to seek happiness in other climes . . . where their subjects will be received as brothers and secured against like oppression by a participation in the right of self-government” (Kohn 1957: 138). He was also known to exclaim: “I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past,” or, in writing to Joseph Priestley in 1800, “[The] Gothic idea that we are to look backwards instead of forwards . . . and to recur to the annals of our ancestors for what is most perfect in government, in religion and in learning, is worthy of those bigots in religion and Government, by whom it has been recommended, and whose purposes it would answer” (Gossett 1963: 127; Kohn 1957: 150–151).

Yet it is precisely the force of Jefferson’s futuristic liberalism that renders his Anglo-Saxonism so surprising. Here it may be seen that Jefferson’s liberal cosmopolitanism was part of a dual consciousness wedded to an American Anglo-Protestant ethnicity, something evident in his utterance: “Has not every restitution of the antient Saxon laws had happy effects? Is it not better now that we return at once into that happy system of our ancestors, the wisest and most perfect ever yet devised by the wit of man, as it stood before the 8th century?” (Horsman 1981: 22). On the immigration question, he was also capable of sustaining a highly defensive argument, musing that European immigrants would infuse the American Republic with “their spirit, [and thereby] warp and bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass” (Spalding 1994: 40).

The race-rights tension similarly did not escape Alexander Hamilton, another key founding father, who at once supported the civic nationalist idea of attracting respectable Europeans who “would be on a level with the First Citizens,” while expressing his reservations about non-British immigration by comparing foreigners in America to foreigners in Rome:

Among other instances, it is known that hardly anything contributed more to the downfall of Rome than the precipitate communication of the privileges of citizenship to the inhabitants of Italy at large. . . . And how terribly was Syracuse scourged by perpetual seditions, when, after the overthrow of the tyrants, a great number of foreigners were suddenly admitted to the rights of citizenship. (Spalding 1994: 39; Jones [1960] 1992: 68)

Hamilton’s ethnic concept of the nation is perhaps most clearly reflected in his belief that “The safety of a republic depends essentially on the energy of a common national sentiment . . . and on that love of country which will almost invariably be connected with birth, education and family” (Spalding 1994: 39–40, 43).

The Limits of Cosmopolitanism in Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Letters

The individualist literary phenomenon known as the American Subversive Style, already in place by the 1820s, foregrounds the tension between dominant ethnicity and American liberalism which we have been discussing (Reynolds 1988: 202). This new liberal-individualist spirit infused the work of mid-nineteenth-century writers like Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Herman Melville, and, later, the James brothers, Henry and William. Figures such as these, though they dealt with American themes, were attracted to self-exploration and technical experimentation (Crunden 1994: 75, 165; Porsdam 1987).

The important point about the nineteenth century’s subversive-expressive spirit was its modest spurning of New England Americanness in favor of an inward-looking spiritual art. Even so, a recasting of America along radically cosmopolitan lines was generally unthinkable to nineteenth-century writers.³ Henry James’s cosmopolitan individualism, for example, had little impact on his disdain for the “vast contingent of aliens” whom he saw as debasing Anglo-American culture (Greenfeld

1992: 469). In their shift from Puritanism to Transcendentalism, the new protomodernist intellectuals often neglected to reproduce the imagery that sustained the myths and symbols of American dominant ethnicity.

This was not a rebellion, but it was a disengagement. As such, these protomodernists represented the first wisps of an emerging stratum of “organic” intellectuals who would later usher in the decline of the mechanically solidaristic “old American” *conscience collective*. These genteel nineteenth-century writers, many of whom were baptized in New England’s version of American culture and its mission, could not easily “imagine” a new cosmopolitan nation shorn of its Anglo-Saxonnness. Their ambiguity on this subject comes across in the same kind of double-consciousness that the founders displayed.

For example, Herman Melville waxed poetic about Americans as “not a nation, so much as a world . . . the heirs of all time. . . . On this Western Hemisphere all tribes and peoples are forming into one federated whole” (Hollinger 1995: 88). Yet, when Melville was in a less ebullient mood, he would retreat from futurism into a “gothic” nostalgia and look favorably upon No-Popery as an expression of popular culture. Whitman displayed a similar ambiguity, speaking of America’s universal humanism while admiring Maria Monk’s No-Popery invectives and claiming to be influenced by its populist content (Kohn 1957: 152; Reynolds 1988: 65, 142–143).

The lineaments of double-consciousness were likewise exposed by the debate over the roots of English. For example, Whitman, influenced by Anglo-Saxonist philology, wrote in *Leaves of Grass* (1855) that “the Anglo-Saxon stock of our language [is] . . . the most important part, the root and strong speech of the native English for many centuries,” later adding that “I think the Saxon has an element no other language has” (Bernbrock 1961: 42, 190). These statements were in keeping with his 1840s query: “What has miserable inefficient Mexico . . . to do . . . with the great mission of peopling the New World with a noble race?” (Horsman 1981: 235).

Like so many others, however, Whitman could display a more generous, cosmopolitan frame of mind, as when he speculated about the evolution of the English language. “Like the American nation, it [English] gathers to itself the elements of power from the four corners of the globe,” Whitman wrote. “The colonies of Plymouth-rock and Jamestown have grown into a mighty nation; and one of the forms of growth, has been the adoption of the citizens of other nations. So the Anglo-Saxon has

grown into the present English by the free adoption of words from other languages” (Bernbrock 1961: 47).

Horace Greeley, a contemporary of Whitman’s who was both a Fourierite⁴ individualist and a Republican radical, might be expected to have solidly backed a liberal-cosmopolitan position toward ethnic and racial minorities. He certainly gave an indication of this backing when he pressed the Republican leadership in 1856 not to nominate a Know-Nothing, William Johnson, for vice-president as this would alienate the foreign-born. Greeley also supported suffrage for New York’s blacks in 1846 against the overwhelming majority of opinion both inside and outside his party (Foner 1970: 248, 262–263). Even so, Greeley was still capable of expressing his opinion of the Irish as “deplorably clannish, misguided and prone to violence.” He also fell into the practice of calling on northern blacks to prove themselves economically before devoting their energies toward securing political equality, and he criticized the activism of black political leaders (Foner 1970: 298; Silbey 1985: 71).

Despite ample evidence of dualism on the race-rights question before his time, it is Ralph Waldo Emerson’s pronouncements that provide us with the richest lode of evidence for the existence of double-consciousness (a term, as noted earlier, which Emerson coined) in the Anglo-American psyche. With regard to immigration, for instance, Emerson is known to have remarked:

How much more are men than nations. . . . The office of America is to liberate, to abolish kingcraft, priestcraft, caste, monopoly, to pull down gallows, to burn up the bloody statute book, to take in the immigrant, to open the doors of the sea and the fields of the earth . . . This liberation appears in the power of invention, the freedom of thinking, in readiness for reforms.

On the subject of the nation’s identity, he was just as emphatic, calling the United States in 1846 “the asylum of all nations . . . the energy of Irish, Germans, Swedes, Poles and Cossacks, and all the European tribes, of the Africans and Polynesians, will construct a new race . . . as vigorous as the new Europe which came out of the smelting pot of the Dark Ages” (Curti 1946: 202–203). Emerson’s exuberance is noteworthy, especially in as much as he declared the following at about the same time: “It cannot be maintained by any candid person that the African race have ever occupied or do promise ever to occupy any very high place in the human family . . . The Irish cannot; the American Indian cannot; the Chinese

cannot. Before the energy of the Caucasian race all other races have quailed and done obeisance.” A thorough reading of Emerson shows that these pronouncements were the rule and not the exception throughout the antebellum period. The beginnings of this thinking can be traced to 1822, when Emerson observed:

I believe that nobody now regards the maxim “that all men are created equal,” as any thing more than a *convenient hypothesis or an extravagant declamation* . . . for the reverse is true,—that all men are born unequal . . . The least knowledge of the natural history of man adds another important particular to these: namely, of what class of men he belongs to—European, Moor, Tartar, African? Because Nature has plainly assigned different degrees of intellect to these different races, and the barriers between are insurmountable. (Goldman 1992: 242–244, emphasis added)

Emerson’s reaffirmation of the genealogical link between England and America continued into the 1850s, when he concisely argued that immigrants did not affect the ethnic composition of the United States:

So far have British people predominated. Perhaps forty of these millions [in the Empire] are of British stock. Add the United States of America, which reckon (in the same year), exclusive of slaves, 20,000,000 people . . . *and in which the foreign element, however considerable, is rapidly assimilated*, and you have a population of English descent and language of 60,000,000, and governing a population of 245,000,000 souls. (Emerson [1856] 1902: 25–26, emphasis added)

What makes Emerson unique is less his contradictory beliefs (which were the norm in his day) than his valiant attempt to explain the contradiction, which gives us a unique window into the liberal psyche of nineteenth-century American liberalism. As Anita Goldman explains, Emerson, like John Stuart Mill, often conflated race with culture and advocated liberal and ethnic nationalist theories in tandem.⁵ Of Emerson, she notes that, “although rights and race represent contradictory views of the self and nation, the two concepts are not at cross purposes in Emerson’s writings. . . . The incessant elaboration upon this condition of double-consciousness in Emerson’s writings—his affirmation of ties which are both distinctively racial and which express his commitment to liberal ideals—has clear applicability in the field of American nationalist thought” (Goldman 1992: 284).

The preceding discussion of secular double-consciousness in American thought during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries illustrates how Anglo-American thinkers expressed the latent tensions between their dominant ethnicity and their commitment to liberal-egalitarian principles. We shall now examine how the thinking of religious and secular figures in the latter half of the nineteenth century tended to run along the same dualistic paths that had been carved out by their predecessors.

Double-Consciousness and American Protestantism

The conflation of “race” and “rights” by mid-nineteenth-century American writers also characterizes the writing of Protestant religious elites. The engine of double-consciousness within this stratum was its optimistic, self-improving providentialism, which tended to personalize social problems. This innerworldly approach, with its neglect of social and economic forces, remained strong into the late nineteenth century. The fact that an optimistic, traditional *weltanschauung* coincided with a tremendous growth in church membership gave Protestant denominations added confidence.

Despite the more settled, class-divided nature of Protestantism in the late nineteenth century, the momentum of a century and a half of frontier revivalism and expansion remained (Herberg 1955: 122–123). Methodist pastor Daniel Dorchester brought this spirit alive in 1895, boasting that evangelical Protestants outnumbered Catholics ten to one, while the Protestant churches’ recent rapid expansion provided proof that “[t]he great heart of the Church [is] pulsating with an unequaled velocity.” This was no idle talk. Protestant church membership had tripled between 1860 and 1890, and the period between 1890 and 1920 witnessed a membership growth rate that continued to outstrip that of the nation’s rapidly expanding population (Handy 1971: 79–80, 117).

In combination with the individualistic approach to faith characteristic of the evangelical, the evident success of the Protestant church and its home (U.S.) missionary activity led to an optimistic faith in the power of the Gospel to reform both individual souls and society. The arena of church-state relations illustrates this well: Protestant leaders of the late nineteenth century, especially Baptists and Methodists, continually rejected calls to write Protestant religiosity into the Constitution, yet they emphatically asserted that “the government of these United States [is] necessarily, rightfully, and lawfully Christian” (Handy 1991: 10). Here again we see the tension implicit in the pattern of double-consciousness:

Anglo-Protestants wanted their tradition to be supreme, but their universalist liberal commitments would not countenance boundary-defending measures of legislative origin.

Witness the lack of enthusiasm for the National Religious Association's (NRA's) Christian [constitutional] Amendment displayed by many prominent churchmen in the 1870s. Such a move would have been too explicit, smacking of both religious establishment, which evangelicals historically feared, and a lack of faith in the power of the Gospel. Although they rejected the NRA's efforts, the American Protestant elite sympathized with their motive to make the United States a "Christian"⁶ nation. Beneath the respect for separation of church and state, therefore, was the undeniable zeal to transform the infidel into the (Protestant) Christian.

To this end, Protestant leaders used every instrument at their disposal to ensure that social pressure was brought to bear on legislators and opinion-makers. In effect, a Protestant "voluntary establishment" was being unleashed, which led to conformity at the civic level, influenced political and legislative discourse, and shaped practices in the nation's public schools.⁷ But, as Robert Handy explains, "the goal of a Protestant civilization was to be realized by persuasion only—so most Protestant leaders sincerely believed" (Handy 1971: 55; 1991: 26; Goodheart 1991: 135–136).

Anglo-Saxonism and American Protestantism

The emphasis on individualism and voluntarism that characterized the evangelical position on church-state relations also held with respect to the relationship between Anglo-Protestant ethnicity and the American nation. Immigrants, even if Catholic, should not be excluded by legislation, but rather were to be converted to "true" Christianity and transmuted into (Anglo) Americans by the new nation's liberal democracy, free land, and Anglo-Protestant culture.

The roots of this voluntarist posture were certainly in place by the 1840s, when Catholic immigration led to a strong spirit of cooperation among various Protestant denominations. Protestant leaders, though vehemently opposed to Catholicism, nevertheless eschewed immigration restriction, their hands stayed by their liberal inheritance. Buoyed by a sense of divine election, these clergymen confidently predicted that they could effect a new reformation on American soil and convert the immigrants to the "American" faith (Billington 1938: 280; Jordan 1982: 21–25).

The public school was assigned a leading role in the fight for the ethnic

transmutation of the immigrant. Thus Samuel Bowles, in an editorial in the Springfield (Massachusetts) *Republican*, declared in 1866: “The only true and, in the end, effective engine against Popery is enlightened education. For the education of a well-balanced mind cannot be satisfied with the senseless forms, which go to make up all that Popery is” (Demerath and Williams 1992: 43; May [1949] 1967: 42). At the denominational level, evangelical Protestants maintained a similar optimism: the Catholic immigrant would see the light and convert to the “national” religion (Moorhead 1994: 147).

Protestant optimism flowed seamlessly into Anglo-Saxon optimism, for in the same manner as the education of Catholic immigrants would lead them to the true faith, it would subsume them in the Anglo-Saxon race. This was confirmed at a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in 1887, when Samuel Harris, the Episcopal bishop of Michigan, proclaimed, to rapturous applause:

The consistency of the divine purpose in establishing our evangelical civilization here is signally illustrated in the fact that it was primarily confided to the keeping of the Anglo-Saxon race. . . . Refusing to depart from its own type, it has compelled other people to conform to that type and constrained them to accept its institutions, to speak its language, to obey its laws.

In conclusion, Harris reinforced the pattern of liberal ethnicity that had come to be so firmly established by his time, writing that “it has come to pass that . . . [while] *our nation is composite, it continues to be homogeneous*, obeying the laws of Alfred and speaking the language of Shakespeare and Milton” (Handy 1971: 105–106, emphasis added). Harris was merely recycling thoughts that Josiah Strong had brought to the fore a few years earlier. As Strong had insisted, “During the last ten years [1875–1885] we have suffered a peaceful invasion by an army more than four times as vast as the estimated number of Goths and Vandals that swept over Southern Europe and overwhelmed Rome.” On the other hand, Strong reaffirmed the optimistic convention that “the Anglo-Saxon race is to be, is, indeed, already becoming, more effective here than in the mother country. The marked superiority of this race is due, in large measure, to its highly mixed origin” (Strong [1885] 1963: 42, 210).

A final pillar of traditional American Protestant ideology was that immigration was evidence of American election and that all tribes would gather in the United States for the new millennium. “In the gathering of

all nations and races upon our shores,” exclaimed Baptist Home Missionary Society superintendent Hubert C. Woods in 1889, “do we not witness the providential preparation for a second Pentecost that shall usher in the millennial glory?” (Davis 1973: 44–50). In making this triumphalist assertion, Woods was indulging an American Anglo-Protestant proclivity for millennial thinking—a rhetorical device that in no way precluded a deeper belief in the sanctity of the United States as an ethnic, Anglo-Saxon nation. This combination of cosmopolitan millenarianism and dominant ethnicity imparted a unique flavor to the Protestant clergy’s variant of double-consciousness.

Double-Consciousness and American Historiography

The position of the clerical Anglo-Saxonists neatly harmonized with secular currents of thought ascendant at the time, illustrating how closely intertwined the two traditions were in American life. With regard to the secular currents, John Higham observed: “the Anglo-Saxonists were pro rather than con. During an age of confidence almost no race-thinker directly challenged a tolerant and eclectic attitude toward other European groups. Instead, Anglo-Saxon and cosmopolitan nationalisms merged in a happy belief that the Anglo-Saxon has a marvelous capacity for assimilating kindred races, absorbing their valuable qualities, yet remaining essentially unchanged” (Higham 1955: 33).

The early pages of Theodore Roosevelt’s *Winning of the West* (1889) give us a sense of this optimistic, *laissez-faire* ethnicity: “Some latter-day writers deplore the enormous immigration to our shores as making us a heterogeneous instead of a homogeneous people; but as a matter of fact we are less heterogeneous at the present day than we were at the outbreak of the Revolution. Our blood was as much mixed a century ago as it is now” (Roosevelt 1889, I: 21). Historians like Roosevelt hold a key position in the ethnic community in that they are responsible for creating its ethnohistory, a narrative that tells a story, inspires the people, and gives them a sense of shared ancestry (A. Smith 1986: 25–26). Such ethnohistories may employ universal techniques and theories, but they do so only within a distinctly particularist framework of collective memory. Whig history, Romanticism, Teutonism, Scientific Racism, and Social Darwinism were all influential, but each was used selectively to help bolster the narrative of Anglo-Protestant America.

The nature of the American historical narrative changed somewhat be-

tween 1875 and 1925, but it was not until the 1930s that a new generation of historians began to interpret the United States as a truly cosmopolitan melting pot. Historiography during the 1875–1925 period therefore completely reflected the double-consciousness of liberal American ethnicity. As Edward Saveth notes, the Anglo-Protestant historians who dominated the American academy combined a belief that the United States was an Anglo-Saxon country which ought to defend its ethnic boundaries with the universalist idea of the United States as a refuge for the world's oppressed and a composite melting pot (Saveth 1948: 13–14). Theodore Roosevelt exemplified these contradictions, stressing the importance of preserving the dominance of the “native stock” while enthusiastically embracing non-WASP immigrants and even nonwhites (Gerstle 2001: 47–65). To reiterate, it is necessary to understand that liberal and Anglo-Protestant attitudes were not opposing viewpoints, but part of the same myth-symbol complex of dualistic ethnic beliefs whose contradictions were obscured by a giddy, expansionist spirit of optimism (Higham [1955] 1988: 33, 133; R. Smith 1995: 238–239).

Double-Consciousness and the Frontier Thesis

American ethnonationalist historiography in the late nineteenth century was based on the Anglo-Saxon myth, an American version of the Teutonic germ theory, which ascribed the origin of democracy and liberty to primitive tribes in the German forests. Employing a mix of Teutonism and Social Darwinism, Herbert Baxter Adams, John Fiske, John W. Burgess, and James K. Hosmer drew parallels between ancient Anglo-Saxon institutions and those of the village life of contemporary New England, such as the town meeting or “folk-mote.” Meanwhile, the most popular nineteenth-century American historians—George Bancroft, William Prescott, John Motley, and Francis Parkman—helped popularize the myth among a wider audience (Ross 1984: 917). The theory was widely popular in 1891; as one observer reported “so wide has been its acceptance, and so strongly installed is it in the minds both of students and readers that it may seem more bold than discreet to raise the question regarding the soundness of the theory” (Saveth 1948: 26).

This consensus would not remain unchallenged for long. The principal point of controversy was the role of the American frontier. Many Anglo-Saxonist historians, notably Francis Parkman and Nathan Shaler, had assigned considerable weight to the frontier as an influence on the nation.

Nevertheless, neither seriously challenged the ancestral claims of Anglo-Saxonist discourse. Rather, the first to do so were writers inspired by the saga of Western expansion who wished to repudiate the influence of Europe and the European-influenced eastern seaboard in order to enhance American particularity.

The key figure in this process was Frederick Jackson Turner. As a doctoral student in 1889 at Johns Hopkins University, Turner adopted Herbert Baxter Adams, a prime exponent of Anglo-Saxonism, as his mentor. Turner had other influences, however, most notably Woodrow Wilson, who happened to be lecturing at the university at the time. Turner and Wilson became good friends and had many discussions, drawn into friendship by common experiences. As Ray Billington puts it, “Wilson was an unreconstructed southerner, Turner a staunch westerner; both resented the condescending disrespect with which their homelands were viewed by easterners. They also talked much of the nature of nationalism, a subject always dear to Wilson’s heart. . . . One significant point emerged: they agreed that the role of the West as a nationalizing force had been neglected by historians” (Billington 1971: 30–31).

Wilson believed that the American environment was a significant influence on the nation’s institutions, although he refused to part entirely with the Teutonist interpretation. Adopting Wilson’s views and those of future president Theodore Roosevelt, Turner finally pushed the environmental interpretation to its conclusion and attempted to refute the Teutonic origins theory, thereby undermining one basis for the Anglo-Saxon myth. According to Turner’s new “frontier thesis” presented in 1893, “in the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics.” Turner conceived of American society as a melting pot in which “all gave and all received and no element remained isolated” (Saveth 1948: 26).

Turner’s pronouncements differed little from those of Emerson in their essentially symbolic nature and rhetorical amplification. The best evidence for this similarity lies in the specifics of Turner’s writing. For instance, despite talk of Americans as a “new product which held the promise of universal brotherhood,” Turner repeatedly singled out the Anglo-Saxon, Scotch-Irish, and German elements as central to the national enterprise and the frontier experience (Turner 1920: 23, 68, 92, 102–105, 164, 349, 351).

Although Turner occasionally referred to the Anglo-Saxons as the “native stock,” his definition of the nation had definitely expanded to include

the previously marginalized Germans. Meanwhile, Turner consciously spoke of a composite rather than a purely Anglo-conformist idea of America. This must therefore be considered somewhat of a departure from conventional Anglo-Saxonism. Another feature of Turner's writing that helped to further differentiate his views from those of his predecessors and endow them with a less dualistic feel was his experience of the American melting pot, which he considered representative of the new America. Born near the frontier at Portage, Wisconsin, in 1861, Turner as a child had many encounters with immigrants from Northern and Western Europe who formed a third of his hometown's population (Billington 1971: 14).

Turner's work proved a major break in the paradigm shift from Anglo-Protestant America to Liberal America, but Turner himself did not successfully make that break, turning his back on the "large immigrations of the eighties" of Southern and Eastern Europeans (Turner 1920: 351). Turner's inspiration was Western Regionalism, and his scientific tools were Lamarckianism and environmentalist theories of race formation. The desire to see a unique American type, different from the Briton and based on the Western experience, led Turner to interpret the frontier environment as a race-shaping one. However, Turner's limited taste for the consequences of his liberal universalism meant that his cosmopolitan Americanism tended to evaporate in the light of its practical correlates.

For example, many of Turner's later writings indicate that he envisaged an essentially Anglo-Protestant, rural America, albeit with a more inclusive definition of dominant ethnicity than his Anglo-Saxonist colleagues. In many ways, therefore, Turner helped narrate the new distinction between the "old" stock, now encompassing all of Northern and Western Europe, and the "new" immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. Hence, by 1900, he was explicitly criticizing the newer immigration, for both its diversity and its urbanity, claiming that the closing of the frontier and the new immigration had "effects upon American social well-being [that] are dangerous in the extreme" and deploring the "peaceful conquest of the old stock by an international army of workers" (Saveth 1948: 132, 134). Evidently, Turner had merely emphasized one part of his inherited American ethnic mythology (frontier, liberty, agrarianism) without jettisoning the other symbols (Protestantism, Nordic whiteness).

Even so, while Turner's national type had not yet broken from its WASP cultural moorings, he had challenged the Anglo-Saxon myth, thus providing the ledge from which others, inspired by liberal universalism,

could climb to reach a cosmopolitan viewpoint. Historiography after Turner continued to become more “scientific” and less narrative in structure, and the first hints of a critical attitude toward the Puritans emerged among historians Edward Channing and Charles Francis Adams. Though both accepted the tenets of the Anglo-Saxon myth, their relatively cavalier attitude toward their ancestors proved a novelty in turn-of-the-century historiography. This period also occasioned the first critiques of agrarian Americanism. E. W. Howe’s *Story of a Country Town*, Hamlin Garland’s *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891), and Jason Edwards’s *An Average Man* (1892), for instance, portrayed the West as a land of “avaricious land speculators, greedy railroad builders, and money-hungry mortgage holders rather than sun-tanned yeoman farmers . . . a land of poverty and despair,” while the agricultural press increasingly shied away from its formerly bombastic Yeomanism (Billington 1971: 74; Heinze 1988).

These aberrations aside, the general tone of American history in the *fin-de-siècle* period reflected the well-grooved pattern of cosmopolitan-tribalist dualism. In Saveth’s estimation, the attitude toward immigrants was highly ambiguous: “we find that the historian generally took for granted the superiority of the old stock; was suspicious of the immigrant as a social and religious innovator; welcomed him as an economic asset; extended some sympathy to the better intentions of the nativists; and hoped that the immigrant would conform to the Anglo-Saxon institutional pattern” (Saveth 1948: 200).

In the nineteenth century, the Anglo-Saxon myth of descent lost intellectual currency, even as the WASP boundary markers remained defended. Thus by the 1920s, statements by secular intellectuals invoking Americans’ “Anglo-Saxon” origins were increasingly rare.⁸ In this respect, the Turner thesis began the process of transforming Anglo-America from an Old World to a New World entity. Anglo-Protestant Americans would be the descendants of New Englanders, Scotch-Irishers, and Virginians, would identify with WASP boundary symbols, and would refer to themselves as “Anglo-Saxons,” but would not trace their origins back into the Teutonic mists of time.

American ethnicity had lost a degree of holistic unity and had severed its contact with the Old World, but in no sense did this change indicate a significant decline of dominant ethnicity. As Turner’s statements reveal, the Turnerian revolution should be viewed less as a victory for cosmopolitanism than as a refinement of American dominant ethnicity, which rendered it a more native American product. Therefore, in 1900, liberal

thought operated firmly within the WASP fold, trapped by a double-consciousness that precluded a truly universalist Americanism.

Explaining the Contradiction of American Double-Consciousness

It can be reliably asserted that among Anglo-American elites, there existed a broad consensus that: (1) affirmed the Anglo-Saxon basis of the American nation while engaging in universalist millennialism; (2) embraced Anglo-Protestant conformity while cleaving to the idea of a voluntary society of free individuals; and (3) envisioned a futuristic ethnue emerging in the United States from the fusion of the world's peoples while simultaneously affirming America's historic Anglo-Saxon purity. The tension inherent in these precepts arose, as mentioned, from the conflict between the liberal-individualist (cosmopolitan) and Anglo-Protestant (particularist) components of the American myth-symbol complex.

The idea that Germanic and Celtic elements could be absorbed, Protestantized, anglicized, and recombined into a new Anglo-Saxon compound helped many Anglo-Americans come to grips with the pre-1880 immigration. In analytical terms, however, this assimilationism must be clearly distinguished from the phenomenon of double-consciousness, which approved of Slavic, Mediterranean, and Asiatic immigration while cleaving to the idea of the American people as ideal-type Anglo-Saxons. An ideology of Roman-style imperialism, with the Anglo-Saxon as the imperial prototype, may give a semblance of theoretical coherence to such a position. Yet even if Anglo-Americans were possessed of a Romance imperialism, this ideology cannot by any means absolve the dualistic statements of the period of logical difficulty.

Instead, a good case can be made that ethnic ("race") thinking in the nineteenth century was largely a muddled, incoherent enterprise, characterized by superlatives. Anglo-American providentialism might be singled out as the solvent of logical bonds, yet this is only part of our answer, since dualistic conceptions of race and ethnicity existed outside the United States at this time. Take the seminal, oft-quoted essay, "Nationality," penned by Lord Acton in 1862. In its pages, Acton, an Englishman, appears to champion the mixture of ethnic groups in one society: "Christianity rejoices at the mixture of races, as paganism identifies itself with their differences, because truth is universal and errors various and partic-

ular.” Accordingly, nation-states “in which no mixture of races has occurred are imperfect; and those in which its [ethnic diversity’s] effects have disappeared are decrepit” (Acton [1862] 1996: 31, 36).

Several paragraphs later, however, Acton performs an apparent *volte-face*, which makes it clear that ethnic mixture that is not territorially segregated results in an undesirable state of affairs:

The vanity and peril of national claims founded on no political tradition, but on race alone, appear in Mexico. There the races are divided by blood, without being grouped together in different regions. It is, therefore, neither possible to unite them nor to convert them into the elements of an organized State. They are fluid, shapeless and unconnected, and cannot be precipitated, or formed into the basis of political institutions. (Acton [1862] 1996: 35)

Acton was also quick to emphasize that his multiculturalist prescriptions should not be translated into a belief in the equality of cultures. On the contrary, in multinational states, “inferior races are raised by living in political union with races intellectually superior. . . . Nations in which the elements of organisation and the capacity for government have been lost . . . are restored and educated anew under the discipline of a stronger and less corrupted race” (Acton [1862] in Birch 1989: 28).

Even Count Arthur de Gobineau, that apostle of Nordic superiority and race-thinking, qualified his beliefs in the 1850s by adding, “It would be unjust to assert that every mixture is bad and harmful. . . . Artistic genius, which is equally foreign to each of the three great [race] types arose only after the intermarriage of white and black. . . . Although the whites are the most beautiful of the original races, the most beautiful people of all have come from the marriage of white and black” (Gossett 1963: 343–344).

With Acton, as with Crèvecoeur, Tocqueville, and others, we see that universalistic beliefs about liberty and equality can coexist with dominant ethnicity if logical constraints are relaxed. All of this suggests that the dualistic logic inherent in the American Old Testament heritage was strongly augmented by the general absence of reflexivity characteristic of much nineteenth-century social thought. In other words, the logical license in which many pre-1920s social thinkers indulged helped to sustain the double-consciousness of nineteenth-century America (Giddens 1994: 34; Higham [1955] 1988: 10–11). In a reflexive age like the post-1945

period, this luxury became impossible to uphold: methodological rigor became institutionalized, even in public discourse, while typological distinctions became increasingly refined and concrete.

At the same time, advances occurred in methods of surveillance and record-keeping, as with the first large-scale study of America's ethnic composition, which took place in the 1920s. As a result, ethnic, linguistic, ideological, and territorial boundaries came to be defined in a much more precise manner than they had been in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Brubaker 1992: 30). This explains why immigration to Britain, France, Canada, Switzerland, and Germany, which occurred on a large scale in all these nations at the turn of the century, remained essentially uncontrolled until World War I (King 2000a; Hollifield 1994: 147; P. Martin 1994: 197; Jost 1986; Holmes 1988). Therefore, far from being exceptional in its tolerance, the United States was actually a *pioneer* in the field of immigration restriction!

A final explanation for double-consciousness, which is strongly related to the low reflexivity of the period, is the conflation of race and culture. The late nineteenth century was an age in which the laws of heredity had yet to be discovered. Hence it was often believed that cultural change could facilitate racial change. Traditional beliefs that darker races would "whiten" under the impact of Christianity were extended to include other elements of Anglo-American civilization. For example, physician Benjamin Rush, signatory to the Declaration of Independence, believed that blackness was a disease, like leprosy, that could be cured with proper treatment (Perea 1997a: 159). Similarly, Savannah doctor Eugene Corson, writing in 1877, claimed that black Americans would throw off their "ill-adapted" skin color with education, a process he likened to "the running of a dirty stream into a pellucid lake which eventually clears leaving no trace of mud" (Harper 1980: 215). Similar tendencies could be observed in turn-of-the-century Brazil, where, in an age in which genetics was in its infancy, "whitening" emerged as the paramount ideal of the intellectual elite (Skidmore 1993: 46).

The environmentalist scientific ferment of the era was conducive to such beliefs. Many eighteenth-century Enlightenment figures believed that racial differences were conditioned by climate, such that racial diversity within a particular climatic zone would tend to disappear over the generations. "There are many reasons for presuming," offered the Comte de Buffon, "that as . . . colour is originally the effect of a long continued heat, it will be gradually effaced by the temperature of a cold climate; and

consequently, that if a colony of Negroes were transplanted into a northern province, their descendants of the eighth, tenth, or twelfth generation would be much fairer, and perhaps as white as the natives of that climate” (Buffon [1748–1804], quoted in Eze 1997: 24).

In the nineteenth century, a key figure of the environmentalist school was Lamarck, who influenced Frederick Jackson Turner. Lamarckian thought postulated that the inheritance of acquired characteristics was possible—which would have enabled immigrants of all races and creeds to metamorphose into Anglo-Protestants. Environmentalist theories of homogenization, coupled with a low degree of reflexivity, provided Anglo-Americans with the intellectual smoke and mirrors needed to obscure their contradictory beliefs. So it was that in the crucible of loose logic and underdeveloped science, liberal universalism and dominant ethnicity fused—their contradictions rendered unproblematic.

The dualistic thought that characterizes nineteenth-century Anglo-American debates illustrates how liberal cosmopolitanism remained limited—confined within the boundaries of American dominant ethnicity. However, intellectuals are selective in their inspiration. Thus what is important about American universalist rhetoric is not its consistency, but the mere fact of its existence since the Revolution. Consequently, these utopian pronouncements inspired future liberals, who screened out the ethnocentric passages to extract a cosmopolitan residue better suited to their political mission.

Conservative Egalitarians: The Progressive Mind in the Nineteenth Century

I do not know whether you . . . realize how rapid the decline in the birth rate is, how rapid the drift has been away from the country to the cities . . . there is good reason to fear that unless the present tendencies are checked your children and mine will see the day when our population is stationary, and so far as the native stock is concerned is dying out.

— PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT, UPON
SURRENDERING THE PRESIDENCY TO
WILLIAM H. TAFT, 1908 (DYER 1980: 158)

The degree of logical license exhibited by many nineteenth-century “cosmopolitan tribalists” should not suggest that a *complete* social consensus existed with respect to American immigration policy. Indeed, two minority groups within the nineteenth-century American population had more definite views on the matter: big business and native-born labor. Both grew tremendously in importance after the Civil War, throwing the struggle between the two into sharp relief. The larger of these constituencies was organized labor, based in the cities and towns of the small but growing industrial sector. The second of these constituencies, the new capitalist class, was numerically less significant but politically more powerful. Not surprisingly, the two groups repeatedly locked horns over the issue.

Organized Labor and Immigration

Most of the concessions that the early Workingmen’s Party had won by 1840 from government and business were concentrated among the skilled, native-born working class, a group that increasingly distanced itself from the claims of unskilled immigrant workers. As a consequence, Workingmen’s parties were generally in the forefront of restrictionist agitation in the nineteenth century (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 65;

Higham [1955] 1988: 45). For example, the urban laboring class provided important support to the Native American and Know-Nothing political movements, and its members were active supporters of nativist voluntary organizations such as the Order of United American Mechanics (OUAM).

“The interests of our mechanics and working men and women, who have been sorely pressed by unfair competition and combinations of pauper Europeans, will receive attention at our hands,” announced the editors of the OUAM journal, the *Republic*, in 1851, “and we . . . shall strive ever to keep alive . . . the latent fires of patriotism that dwell in their hearts” (Billington 1938: 338). In point of fact, elections throughout the Northeast showed that the Know-Nothing Party drew its heaviest support from urban Anglo-Protestants in cities of heavy immigration, with rural voters more preoccupied with the slavery issue (Foner 1970: 107; Silbey 1985: 149).

In the urban Northeast, native-born labor’s stance quickly embroiled it in conflict with native-born capital. Consider antebellum Baltimore: conservative Anglo-Protestant merchants, allied with immigrants, opposed the native-born working-class-supported Know-Nothing Party (Towers 1993). The same coalition came together in late nineteenth-century Worcester, Massachusetts. Once again, elite Protestant Republicans and Irish Catholic Democrats united against the forces of defensive ethnicity represented by middle and working-class Anglo-Protestants, whether Democrat or Republican. To quell dissent within their party, Republican elites accused their populist wing of racism and ethnic bigotry. Clearly, the capital–labor split was responsible for divisions regarding dominant ethnic defense: both large-scale capitalists and Irish Catholic workers favored immigration, while Anglo-Protestant laborers and small-scale merchants opposed it (Kolesar 1987).

Meanwhile, on the West Coast in the late 1870s, the racial dimension of labor conflict resulted in a different working-class alignment that breached the WASP barrier but was explicable in the same ethnocultural terms. This time, rather than direct their energies against the European immigrant, Anglo-Protestant workers united with those of Irish and German background under the banner of Denis Kearney’s Workingmen’s Party to oppose Chinese immigration. Once again, they encountered opposition from elite Protestant Republicans and were vigorously denounced by Protestant clergymen, big business, and the mainstream press (outside the West).

“With few exceptions employers considered them [Chinese] beneficial

as a flexible supply of labor,” wrote Elmer Sandmeyer, “but those whose only capital was their ability to work were almost unanimous in their opinion that the Chinese were highly detrimental to the state [of California]” (Sandmeyer 1939: 33). Despite the countervailing actions of much of the eastern elite, the Workingmen were successful in securing a ten-year moratorium on Chinese immigration in 1882, an event that one historian calls “perhaps the most successful labor-based political movement in American history” (Lind 1995: 70; Davis 1973: 20; Lane 1984: 13).

More labor opposition was soon to come. “We poor, native-born citizens are pulled around same as dogs by foreign people,” complained a midwestern carpenter in 1886; “it seems as though everything is coming to the very worst in the near future unless free immigration is stopped.” As this remark suggests, native-born labor consistently opposed immigration during the nineteenth century (Roediger 1991: 148–149; Higham [1955] 1988: 47). However, since the Anglo-Protestant majority remained a largely rural element throughout the century, and since many unionized workers were of immigrant stock, the strength of their opposition is often obscured. Unionized “old immigrant” workers, for instance, were sensitive to the threat of nativism and occasionally displayed an ambivalent attitude to immigration (Higham [1955] 1988: 49–50). Therefore, unions could unequivocally weigh in behind the restrictionist movement only when non-“white” competitors could unite “white” workers (Roediger 1991: 136–140).

The West Coast agitation against Chinese immigration was an early example of how “white” organized labor could unite behind immigration restriction. After 1880, the construction of Southern and Eastern European immigrants as non-“white” again proved a foil for restrictionist sentiment, helping to weld unionized workers of Northern/Western European ancestry with those of Anglo-Saxon background (Roediger 1991). The Knights of Labor were the first to draw on this fervor. This organization grew out of the violent struggles between native-born labor and their capitalist/immigrant strike-breaking foes in the coalfields of 1870s Pennsylvania. The Knights’ agitation eventually led to a series of labor-driven legislative measures at both the state and federal level in the 1880s, such as a strict ban on contract labor and the restriction of foreign-born workers from certain types of employment (Higham [1955] 1988: 46–49).

With the decline of the Knights in the 1890s, the American Federation

of Labor (AFL) moved in to take up the slack, advocating immigration restriction soon after its inception (Divine 1957: 8; Higham [1955] 1988: 71). The AFL had come of age in seven short years around the turn of the twentieth century, with membership swelling from 256,000 in 1897 to 1.7 million in 1904. Its stand reflected a native-born and old-immigrant membership, based in the skilled craft unions (Lane 1984: 12–13). Since the AFL did not organize unskilled workers, as part of its mandate it saw the need to draw a line between its “American” membership which needed wage protection and the “foreign” workers who were brought in by capitalists to bring wages down.

AFL leader Samuel Gompers, though an English Jew, felt himself part of the “old” immigration, and his philosophy mirrored the mood within his organization: “[The AFL’s purposes require] the maintenance of American institutions as they are and only immigration restriction [can] make this possible.” Gompers also added that the new workers “could not be Americanized,” and he upheld the principle that “the maintenance of the nation depended upon the maintenance of racial purity” (Gompers, quoted in Leinenweber 1984: 245; Higham [1955] 1988: 321–322). To that end, Gompers and the AFL worked to ensure passage of the increasingly restrictionist legislation that culminated in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act.

Big Business, Elite Developmentalism, and Immigration

The attitude of large commercial interests toward immigration stood in stark contrast to that of organized labor. The most significant group to favor liberal immigration policies in the nineteenth century, commercial and manufacturing interests exerted a disproportionate influence on American politics through campaign financing and, arguably, through corruption (Foner 1970: 38; Higham [1955] 1988: 37). These interests, based largely in the Northeast, had always been exceptionally effective at attaining policies favorable to themselves (Sellers 1996: 322). Obvious sources of business influence, like the Federalist Party in the early nineteenth century, were merely the visible edge of this phenomenon. Commercial forces were also able to prevail within administrations that espoused producerist self-sufficiency and abhorred wage labor.

The “elite developmentalist” wing of the Republican Party under Thomas Jefferson provided the vehicle through which commercial interests could steer government policy against the agrarian current of Yeoman

Republicanism¹ (Sellers 1991: 40, 59–63). Andrew Jackson’s avowedly anti-elitist, agrarian message also failed to stem the spread of capitalist labor relations because of the influence of the “entrepreneurial wing” of Jacksonian Democracy (Stokes and Conway 1996: 9). By the 1850s, the reincarnated Republicans felt secure enough to openly embrace the market in their official platform² (Ashworth 1996: 128–148). This commercial interest constantly rubbed against the nativist sympathies of the Republican electorate. Support for continued Irish Catholic immigration in antebellum America, for example, was ensured, as we saw in the cases of Baltimore and Worcester, by the backing of the Republican elite, which prevailed against native-born Republican and Democratic opposition.

The rationale behind business’s position was relatively straightforward: immigrants lowered labor costs and generated new demand for goods and services. In some cases, this effect was direct: steamship companies and railroads profited from transporting European immigrants, while agricultural and manufacturing firms gained leverage against labor by employing immigrants (with lower wage expectations) in their fields and factories. In other cases, business support came from a more generalized belief that immigration was good for growth and prosperity (Higham [1955] 1988: 13, 114–115, 203).

Commenting on the relationship between immigration and labor costs, for example, a New York merchant boasted that machinery and immigration made the American capitalist as independent of American workmen “as the imported slaves made Roman patricians independent of Roman laborers” (Bell [1943] 1962: 58). Others were no less direct: “All I want in my business is muscle,” declared a large employer of labor in California in the 1870s. “I don’t care whether it be obtained from a Chinaman or a white man—from a mule or a horse!” (Gossett 1963: 294). Interest-driven universalism was further fanned by the contest between a rapidly expanding American trade union movement and a more self-aware, consolidated big business sector³ (Lane 1984: 10–11).

The general tenor of business support may be further discerned from the editorial pages of its press: “The wave of Asiatic immigration will cover the Pacific slope . . . and why not,” argued the *New York Herald* in 1870, inveighing against those who would restrict Chinese immigration. “They [Chinese] are intelligent, industrious, frugal. . . . Shall a race of these qualities be ruled out of a constitution that has taken in the depraved, slothful, stupid and brutal African? . . . If it falls to our lot to give to the human family that unity which it has lost—to make it one in

language, one in religion, one in nationality—we shall not as a people, have lived in vain. . . . I say Welcome to John Chinaman!” (Harper 1980: 219).

Pro-growth politicians were no less equivocal. Mancur Olson has argued that collective action often takes the form of “distributional coalitions” designed to further the interests of a particular subgroup in society (Olson 1982: 168). Large business may be considered the best example of this phenomenon, but coalitions of status-seeking political elites can form a similar kind of cartel—though they are deeply embedded within the political system. Hence in nineteenth-century America, national and state-level politicians wooed newcomers to bolster their regional armies (during the Civil War), increase their power (in numerical and economic terms), and please their business constituency.

The Sewardite, expansionist wing of the Republican Party was an important channel, though by no means not the only one, for these interests. In 1864, for example, in reaction to labor shortages, the Republican Party enacted a statute that encouraged the importation of contract labor, while its 1864 convention “reaffirmed the historic role of the United States as an asylum for the oppressed of all nations, and endorsed a ‘liberal and just immigration policy, which would encourage foreign immigration’” (Foner 1970: 236–237). After pressure from native-born labor led to a *de jure* repeal of the contract labor statute, the government turned to other sources to procure more workmen, notably China. The Burlingame Treaty of 1868, for instance, cleared the way for unrestricted (voluntary) immigration from China, which increased until pressure from white workers in California forced its termination some 15 years later (Fitzgerald 1987: 77; Lind 1995: 66; Higham [1955] 1988: 45–46).

State governments, north and south, used all manner of schemes to lure immigrants after the Civil War. Such schemes were enhanced by the fact that executive power over immigration was primarily a state responsibility prior to the mid-1880s (Fitzgerald 1987: 71, 84–85; Higham [1955] 1988: 17–18, 43). The new trend was especially noticeable in the South: “We have thrown our doors wide open,” thundered Colonel Chilton, general manager of the Southern Interstate Convention in 1888. “[We] want good, worthy Immigrants to people our lands and reap the harvest which will surely follow well directed effort in this land of promise” (Harper 1980: 191).

Southern elites, not least KKK-founder Nathan Bedford Forrest, favored Chinese immigration as a means of containing black labor demands

after the Civil War. This pro-growth attitude continued into the latter half of the century (Gyory 1998: 33; Lind 1995: 66). In fact, the southern states best known for their Anglo-Saxon homogeneity and Protestant conservatism were in the forefront of immigration boosterism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and fought to defend against the growing mood of restriction building in the North and West in the late 1880s and early 1890s.⁴ This alignment should serve to dispel the myth that humanitarianism, as opposed to *laissez-faire*, was the preeminent motive behind the pro-immigration drive of the mid-nineteenth century.

The discussion in both this and the previous chapter has attempted to show that double-consciousness was the pervasive attitude among nineteenth-century American elites. At the extremes, large businesses and their political allies leaned toward the *laissez-faire* side of the Anglo-Saxon/Liberal equation, while native-born labor favored its more ethnic, exclusivist premises. Yet the worldviews of even these social actors had yet to realize their cosmopolitan or ethnonationalist *finale*. The result was a general consensus of dualism, expressed as a developmentalist, *laissez-faire*, Anglo-conformity. These parameters held firm into the 1880s, at which time the opinion-making segments of American society initiated their pivotal abandonment of *laissez-faire*.

The Case of Chinese Immigration

The question of Chinese immigration originated with the California Gold Rush of the 1850s and accelerated following federal approval of contract labor importation (1864) and the Burlingame Treaty (1868). The issue provides important insight into the libertarian tenor of mid-nineteenth-century Progressive thought, which differed greatly from the liberal-egalitarian cast of much twentieth-century cosmopolitanism. Generally speaking, radical liberals in the northeastern United States prior to 1900 affirmed two basic principles: individual liberty and equal opportunity. This meant a repudiation of legislated immigration restriction and even, in New England, the spurning of antimiscegenation laws (Sandmeyer 1939: 79, 87, 93; Delgado and Stefancic 1997).

This willingness to follow the principles of liberty and equality to their logical legal conclusion did not extend into the social realm. Hence radical Republicans like William Seward, Charles Sumner, and Salmon P. Chase, who backed equal rights for blacks and favored Chinese immigration,

fervently believed in the separation of the races and in the homogeneity of the nation (Foner 1970: 291–296; Lind 1995: 68). Those who argued in favor of a *laissez-faire* approach to Chinese immigration did so in the firm belief that the spontaneous forces of divine providence and evolution would keep Chinese numbers in the United States to a minimum. Finally, liberal attitudes toward Chinese immigration tended to materialize east of the Rockies, in both North and South (where there were essentially no Chinese), while the legislative acceptance of marriage between blacks and whites was supported only in those northeastern states with virtually no black population.

The rationale behind the *laissez-faire* worldview in the nineteenth century was that legal and political controls should be shunned in the name of liberty, but that moral suasion was acceptable. More to the point, the self-identity of the nineteenth-century American liberal remained Anglo-Protestant. Even radical Republicans like Chase, Seward, Greeley, or William Lloyd Garrison associated almost exclusively with Anglo-Protestants and identified their social circle as a mirror of their national society. Regarding Catholics, for instance, Garrison wrote to Theodore Roosevelt that the unification of Italy (1870) and the capture of Rome was a victory for humankind. He described Rome's influence as the "overshadowing curse of Christendom" (Garrison [1868–1879] 1981: 185).

The Protestant Churches and the Chinese Question

Any discussion of opinion-making in nineteenth-century America must begin with the Protestant churches, whose influence leapt well beyond the pew. Though it had lost influence in the mass media by the late nineteenth century, Protestantism continued to hold sway over education at that time, especially higher education,⁵ which meant that its views were of central importance in the intellectual life of the nation (Bass 1989: 49, Voskuil 1989: 73).

The Protestant church's views on immigration reflected the prevailing elite consensus. Owing to their optimistic Anglo-Saxonism and identification with the politico-economic elite, Protestant clergymen generally opposed demands for immigration restriction. This applied not only to "kindred races," but even to those from further afield. Hence when Chinese laborers were brought in to break a strike in North Adams, Massachusetts, in 1870, Protestant papers unanimously backed the practice of importing Chinese labor and castigated the unions for their opposition.

The Congregationalist, for instance, lauded the Chinese for their quiet, respectful work ethic and their willingness to work for “considerably less than those for which the Anglo-Saxons, or the Celts, whom they have displaced, have refused to work.”

In the opinion of the *Christian Advocate*, the case for *laissez-faire* was even clearer: “The demand for labor is all the time in excess of the supply, and the result of this state of things has been to render the laboring classes capricious and despotic, and, in many cases, improvident. . . . This arrogance and inefficiency have at length produced their natural results, and employers of labor are looking about them for a better class of laborers, and, because the Chinaman seems likely to respond to this demand, the monopolists of labor raise an outcry against him” (May [1949] 1967: 56–57).

The West Coast’s significantly larger Chinese population, which numbered 70,000 by 1880, fed a much higher temperature of Chinese-white industrial relations than on the East Coast. Yet even in the West, the Protestant elite continually railed against the anti-Chinese agitation of white workers (May [1949] 1967: 96). Part of their criticism was leveled at the workers’ barbarous violence against the West Coast Chinese community. However, an equal measure of criticism was directed against the unions’ lack of optimistic idealism. For Baptist writer Oliver Gates, the actions of the unions were tantamount to an attempt to thwart God’s divine plan (Davis 1973: 19, 24–25). Therefore, rather than blaming capital and the Chinese, white California workers were advised to call upon their inner resources to raise themselves and their civilization. Only when the churches perceived immigration as a moral and religious threat were the churches willing to endorse restriction (May [1949] 1967: 57).

Secular Intellectuals

The distinction between secular and religious thought in the late nineteenth century was, of course, a largely spurious one. Lines of influence tended to run back and forth between Protestant theology and secular science in universities, seminaries, and the media. Accordingly, those outside the official Protestant church tended to share similar attitudes toward issues like Chinese immigration. S. Wells Williams, for example, in a paper delivered before the American Social Science Association in 1879, pleaded for the government to uphold its treaty obligations with China and its traditions of asylum and free migration. Yet the liberal Williams con-

tented himself with legislation and politics. Hence the *social* effects of Chinese immigration, Williams assured his audience, would be limited. Like other champions of unrestricted immigration, he maintained that the Chinese were not as numerous as some claimed, were largely seasonal workers, and would probably return home (Williams 1879: 10–12; Seward 1881: 1–13; Coolidge 1909: 16). Finally, Williams assuaged his audience by invoking the Protestant destiny of America:

To my own mind, there is no fear of a great or irresistible immigration, and the reasons for its increase are less now than when the country was first opened. Thirty years have passed since the providence of God placed this region [California] under the control of a Protestant nation. (Williams 1879: 30)

Pro-Chinese commentators also countered their critics' claims that the Chinese were unassimilable by arguing that the Chinese could simply serve as a flexible labor force socially separated from the American population. "Do we ask the clod-hopper from Ireland, the operative from England, the peasant from France, or Italy, or Germany, into our drawing-rooms," inquired George Seward, a former American minister to China, "and [do we] invite them to marry our daughters?" (Seward 1881: 253–254).

Commentators of the day were just as tenacious in arguing that it was wrong to interfere with the providential hand of God which had served America so well: "Why have we to make a better plan for the Almighty than He has made for Himself," complained George Seward. "Can we not be just above things and leave consequences to take care of themselves?" (Seward 1881: 254). Popular preacher and Protestant intellectual Henry Ward Beecher concurred with Seward and Williams, provoking fury in the San Francisco press by insisting that the white residents of California should refrain from trying to impede the will of God and the evolution of nature (Sandmeyer 1939: 30).

One final point concerns the relationship between anti-Catholicism and the Chinese question. There was no obvious compatibility between the two positions on religion and race. In fact, considerable animosity existed between many anti-Catholic nativists and the anti-Chinese forces. The alignment was influenced by partisan lines: just as antebellum Republicans were relatively pro-black and anti-Catholic, so postbellum Republicans were often pro-Chinese and anti-Catholic. For instance, post-Civil War Republicans like General Ulysses Grant and President Rutherford Hayes

consciously exploited northern anti-Catholicism and inveighed against Catholic influence in the school system, but neither carried the banner of Chinese exclusion (Holt 1996: 241; Knobel 1996: 176).

In a similar manner, Republican liberals like Beecher, Sumner, and Garrison, all of whom championed both Chinese and European immigration, were no friends of Catholicism (Sandmeyer 1939: 90; Garrison [1868–1879] 1981: 185, 397–398, 557). Northeastern anti-Catholicism was stirred up in analogous fashion by the fact that Denis Kearney, leader of the California anti-Chinese movement, was an Irish Catholic, while Catholic priests in California were the first religious figures to come out against Chinese immigration (Sandmeyer 1939: 36; Higham [1955] 1988: 31; Garrison [1868–1879] 1981: 558). As Henry F. May put it, “the Irish had never been as hospitably received as the Chinese” (May [1949] 1967: 123–124). Even in the next century, some who accepted the need to restrict European immigration would continue to remain hostile to the principle of Chinese exclusion (Coolidge 1909: 490).

In keeping with their anti-Catholic, pro-immigration attitude, *laissez-faire* reformers tended to be unimpressed by the claims of labor. In a letter to socialist W. G. H. Smart in the 1870s, Garrison expressed the prevalent view of his radical-liberal contemporaries:

I cannot feel any heartrending emotions . . . in contemplating the condition of a people [workers] who are not under despotic or dynastic sway . . . who are free to make their own contracts and sell or employ labor according to the law of supply and demand. . . . You express the conviction that the present relation of capital to labor is ‘hastening the nation to its ruin,’ . . . I entertain no such fears. Our danger lies in sensual indulgence, in a licentious perversion of liberty, in the prevalence of intemperance, and in whatever tends to the demoralization of the people. Abhorring all injustice, class legislation and usurpation of power. . . . William Lloyd Garrison. (Garrison [1868–1879] 1981: 388–389)

The Social Gospel Movement and Immigration Restriction

In 1885, Congregationalist intellectual Josiah Strong opened his chapter on the perils of immigration with a sobering observation:

Political optimism is one of the vices of the American people. . . . We deem ourselves a chosen people, and incline to the belief that the

Almighty stands pledged to our prosperity. Until within a few years probably not one in a hundred of our population has ever questioned the security of our future. Such optimism is as senseless as pessimism is faithless. (Strong [1885] 1963: 41–42)

Strong's work was as much the signal as the catalyst for a new mood. The latter half of the 1880s laid to rest the hegemony of optimistic, *laissez-faire* developmentalism. Attitudes toward immigration and unchecked urban expansion among the American cultural elite soured as it became apparent that evolution and divine providence were not having their desired effects. Some attribute the decline of liberal attitudes toward immigration to the development of an antiradical mood among American elites (Higham [1955] 1988: 69–70). Yet such a position fails to consider the important blend of ideological and theological change that powered the shift in sensibility. These changes, particularly those in the theological sphere, were central in producing a more restrictionist mood.

This shift began in the 1880s, when an *avant-garde* of socially oriented Christians began to alter the prevailing clerical worldview. The product of their vision has been labeled the Social Gospel movement, one of the most significant intellectual developments in American history. This movement was a theological sea-change that embraced new perspectives on social organization drawn from secular thought. It reflected a new recognition that the burgeoning social ills of industrial America could not be overcome merely by addressing the moral deficiencies of individuals. Hence the use of the Gospel to save souls had to be complemented by the use of Christian ethics to reform institutions.

The movement had its tentative origins in the activities of mid-nineteenth-century Christian reformers. But it was only with the emergence of Washington Gladden, a Congregationalist intellectual, that Social Christianity was born. In the late 1870s, Gladden set forth his ideas, which called for an activist Christianity to confront the social problems of the cities with institutional, as opposed to purely individual, methods. "It goes without saying that we must manage in some way to convince the wage-workers that the churches are not on the side of capital in the struggle now going on," urged Gladden. "The law of supply and demand, the principles of competition, are exalted as if they were supreme over all conduct; and when we see them working misery and ruin before our faces, we are exhorted to let it all alone; it is the operation of nature and must not be interfered with. The operation of nature it is, no doubt; but of a

fallen and disordered nature, that constantly needs restraining” (Gladden 1891: 176, 244).

Gladden rapidly gained the support of a growing band of theological innovators. Social Gospel ideas began to make headway in the 1880s, and figures such as Richard T. Ely, an Episcopalian layman and economist, and Congregationalist preacher Josiah Strong quickly became its chief standard-bearers. Strong was perhaps the most influential figure in the movement and used his position as secretary of the pan-Protestant Evangelical Alliance to advance the tenets of the Social Gospel in the 1880s and 1890s (Handy 1971: 122, 157; Jordan 1982: 143–144, 168–170).

A second thrust of the movement, linked to its belief in social efficacy, was a reversal of Protestantism’s historically benevolent view of nineteenth-century capitalism. Increasingly, Protestant thinkers began to take labor’s side, and many called for significant reform of the capitalist system to ensure social cohesion. Some even called for socialism. This change of heart, from individualism to collectivism, was an important factor in leading the churches to adopt a more organic view of society which jettisoned the assumptions of *laissez-faire*. One consequence was a more critical appraisal of the nation’s expansionist ethic and, accompanying this appraisal, a critique of its immigration policy.

Of course, practical imperatives had already forced the hand of some California clerics on the immigration issue. These individuals felt intense pressure from their congregations to change their stance on Chinese immigration. Renegade Baptist minister I. S. Kalloch, for instance, was elected mayor of San Francisco in 1879 on the anti-Chinese Workingmen’s ticket (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981). Another important Baptist clergyman who supported restriction was Granville Abbott, an Oakland pastor whose liberal views on immigration gradually changed during 1880–1882. Abbott’s perspective tended to emphasize the growing split between Eastern and Western views of the Chinese: “Abbott contended that if the Chinese were as numerous on the East Coast as in California, contesting for jobs and reducing wages to starvation level, easterners who frowned on the anti-Chinese agitation would be more willing to let the workers of his state defend their own interests” (Davis 1973: 20, 26–27).

The Baptist leadership in the East, however, was quick to shoot back at the likes of Kalloch and Abbott, warning that any clerical supporter of anti-Chinese forces would be considered a black sheep. At the Baptist Home Missions Society convention in 1882, Abbott’s attempt to win the leadership over to his restrictionist views proved a spectacular failure. Ab-

bott's opponent, Judson Thomas, drew on many of the familiar arguments of *laissez-faire* cosmopolitanism, claiming that the United States was a composite nation, that it had a duty to take in the immigrant, and that American workers required no protection against the Chinese (Davis 1973: 29–31).

Nevertheless, the tide of events was running against Thomas. By 1892, cosmopolitan attitudes at the same convention had markedly softened, and immigration restriction had become universally accepted. A major reason for the change of heart was the introduction of social issues into Baptist convention discussion in 1882. "With awareness," notes Davis, "sometimes came fear; with enthusiasm for [the] Christianization of society came a hatred of anything that would prevent this goal . . . Failure in efforts to win the stranger would for a season lead to aggressive demands to shut him out" (Davis 1973: 34–35, 64). Developments followed the same path within the Methodist camp:

As the history of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Methodism shows, many evangelicals were won over to the liberal cause of labor unions . . . at the expense of another old liberal commitment, an open door to immigrants. Using an argument relevant to American culture ever since, labor unions helped to convince the faithful that labor's just cause was impossible unless the source of cheap labor which forced wages down to impoverishment, the immigrant, be kept out. (Jordan 1982: 147)

It is no coincidence that Social Christianity and immigration restriction became linked in the 1880s, for it was during this period that the Social Gospel perspective on the immigration question was developed and disseminated. The connection first appeared in Josiah Strong's *Our Country* (1885), a Social Gospel *tour de force* that was labeled the "Uncle Tom's Cabin of city reform" by the New York magazine, *The Nation*, in 1916 (May [1949] 1967: 116; Strong [1885] 1963: preface).

Similarly, for Samuel Loomis, the growing split between the native-born Protestant capitalist class and its foreign-born proletariat constituted a social division that civic reformers should immediately seek to close. Richard T. Ely, another early Social Gospel figure, stressed the need for a collective Christian ethic to heal the breach between capital and labor, an aim that several of his high-profile students felt would be best advanced by a sharp restriction of immigration (May [1949] 1967: 116–117; Higham [1955] 1988: 40–41). Washington Gladden, a former supporter

of Chinese immigration in the 1870s, exemplifies the change from *laissez-faire* to collectivism: he reversed his stance on this issue in the 1880s, lamenting the decline of Protestant influence in the schools, and pointing to the pauperism and immorality engendered by urbanization and both European and Asian immigration (May [1949] 1967: 57; Gladden 1891: 291, 296). Finally, Walter Rauschenbusch, an influential New York progressive theologian, expressed the latent view held by many Protestant clergymen that the genius of American civilization lay with its independent farmers; the loss of this invigorating tie to the land, he said, was leading to social decay:

In the old English village the woodland and pasture were common to all. . . . Only those entitled to a share in the common land were citizens with full political rights. This institution is one of the marks of the Aryan race and underlay the freedom and virility of the people . . . our national homestead system was like the old village commune . . . [now] thousands of our best young farmers are passing over our northwestern boundary to Canada to escape the conditions. . . . Already the current of immigration, which no longer finds a ready outlet to the land, is choking our great cities. Already the industrial laboring class is gasping under an increased pressure. (Rauschenbusch 1908: 221–225)

The work of Loomis, Strong, and Ely was extremely well received in the 1880s, selling in the hundreds of thousands and effecting a major change of consciousness on the immigration issue. The *Congregationalist* was but one important denominational organ influenced by the new Social Gospel ideas. Because of their ties to commercial interests, the high-status Congregationalists were among the last to embrace restriction (Davis 1973: 94–95). However, following the lead of their Baptist peers, the editorial board at the *Congregationalist* altered its views on the subject of immigration, in favor of restriction, between 1887 and 1891 (May [1949] 1967: 123–124). By the 1890s, the switch from *laissez-faire* to collectivism was complete, which led to the curious blend of egalitarianism and dominant ethnicity, which so confounded Thomas Gossett:

Some of the most advanced thinkers among the clergymen of the time betrayed a curious attitude toward race. At the worst, we find a tremendous blind spot in the sympathies of figures like Horace Bushnell, Theodore Parker, and Josiah Strong, who are justly re-

nowned for their willingness to champion unpopular causes and to speak out for the weak and helpless . . . the fact that the Social Gospel did not produce even one opponent of Strong's racist ethic is significant. Whereas the Social Gospel ministers spoke out openly and fearlessly against other injustices of society, they said nothing with real meaning about racial justice. (Gossett 1963: 196–197)

Gossett is correct in his appraisal of the facts. However, his use of a twentieth-century liberal frame to understand Social Gospel attitudes leads him to misinterpret nineteenth-century WASP views on the race issue. In general, Anglo-American elites retained their dominant ethnicity throughout the nineteenth century. The economically conservative were Anglo-imperialist, favoring immigration as a means of containing labor demands and fueling Anglo-American political power. By contrast, those of a progressive bent were supporters of an Anglo-organicism in which imperialist adventures would be minimized, equality of outcome (on the Yeoman model) reinstated, and social divisions muted (Beisner 1968; Love 1997). The debate can perhaps best be summed up as a contest between the proponents of *laissez-faire* and the advocates of “conservative-egalitarianism.”

At this juncture, it must be emphasized that the Anglo-Protestant cultural elite had made an epochal break from its political and economic counterparts. Yet, contrary to what some suggest, business did not abandon its pro-immigration stance (Higham [1955] 1988: 315–318; D. King 1998b: 192). Organized Protestantism's antiradicalism should not disguise their embrace of labor's cause: their support was for reform, not revolt, and as such they opposed *both radicals and capitalists* as saboteurs of the Kingdom of God. This explains why both antiradical and anticapitalist reasoning lay behind Social Gospel arguments against immigration. On this reading, industrial violence, such as the Haymarket Riot of 1886 and the Pullman strike of 1894, galvanized progressive Protestant restrictionism because of its effect on the social organism and not because of its adverse effect on the capitalist class.

The Social Gospel Movement and Progressive Reform

Socialism was another province in which the new mood of restriction took root. Henry George, the leader of a party that embraced both land reform and socialism, voiced his concerns over immigration as early as

1883. He was followed by a number of more sophisticated Christian socialists. Laurence Gronlund and Edward Bellamy were leading avatars of this new synthesis, and their ideas were greeted without the kind of social opprobrium that would confront twentieth-century American socialists. Gronlund's *Co-operative Commonwealth* (1884) and Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1887) set the intellectual tone during the Social Gospel era.

Gronlund had little time for the tenets of *laissez-faire*, assailing the optimistic premises behind evolutionism. "Though Society is truly an organism," he admitted, "the evolution of Society does not take place precisely like the growth of plants or animals. The former is the result of efforts *consciously* put forth" (Gronlund 1884: 262). Gronlund also supported the Workingmen's Party and attacked the nation's "overgrown cities," which he insisted "may fairly be compared to a man whose belly is steadily increasing in bulk, out of all proportion to the body, and whose legs are constantly growing thinner" (Gronlund 1884: 119, 274).

Bellamy's *Looking Backward* sold 210,000 copies in 1889, with demand reaching 10,000 copies a week by December of that year (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 208–210). Bellamy's main characters all bore Anglo-Saxon names and casually spoke of "backward races" (Bellamy [1887] 1967: 184, 187). *Looking Backward*, with its philosophy of economic nationalism, soon furnished the basis for the first native-born American socialist movement, known as the Nationalist movement, which took root in 1889. Nationalist clubs appealed to middle-class Protestant intellectuals, and the movement displayed an eclectic mix of secular socialist and Protestant ideas.

As regards dominant ethnicity, Bellamy's work was emphatically aimed at old-stock America, as became evident in the increasing distance that Nationalist clubs began putting between themselves and the secular, German immigrant-dominated Socialist Labor Party, whom they considered atheist, violent, foreign, and sexually deviant (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 216–217). The Nationalists also saw themselves as morally upright patriots, and, in the run up to the 1892 election, they threw their support behind General James Weaver's People's Party, a group that courted rural Anglo-America and felt any hint of alien influence would be a hindrance to their electoral aspirations.

Other socialists maintained the same "left-conservative" orientation. The Christian Labor Union, led by Congregationalist minister Jesse Jones of Massachusetts, provides a good case study. Jones, for instance, was

pleased at the harsh treatment meted out to anarchists and proclaimed that “the red flag . . . is not the emblem of freedom and the standard of humanity;—but it is the emblem of fury and the standard of anarchy. . . . It never sprang up among *American-born people*, and never can” (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 230, 232, emphasis added).

The theme of racial or ethnic universalism was noticeably absent from other segments of the American left, such as Burnette G. Haskell’s California socialists of the 1880s. Haskell, of New England origin, was unique in that he led a party composed largely of native-born workmen. He was a highly effective labor organizer throughout the West. His economic egalitarianism did not incline him toward any notion of an international brotherhood of workers. Hence his impassioned defense of white western workers was linked with a campaign against the immigration of “cruel, relentless, deceitful, tricky, avaricious, sensual” Chinese workers, which he blamed on an “aristocracy” of West Coast capitalists (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 166, 184). In the final analysis, the American socialism of the late nineteenth century, consisting of Haskell’s socialists, Bellamy’s Nationalists and William Bliss’s Christian socialists was virtually unanimous in the conservatism of its attitudes on issues pertaining to dominant ethnicity. This viewpoint both influenced and reflected the Anglo-organic conception of community developed by Social Gospel reformers.

The “First Disillusionment” and Immigration Restriction

The final factor accounting for attitude change among the *fin-de-siècle* Anglo-Protestant elite was their failure to convert immigrants from Catholic countries to Protestantism. Yet this failure, termed by Edwin Gaustad the “First Disillusionment” of American Protestantism, did not occur until quite late in the nineteenth century (Gaustad 1989: 37). To understand this disillusionment, one must appreciate that foreign immigration prior to the Civil War had not been accompanied by a major surge of Catholic influence because Catholic immigrants from Germany and Ireland remained largely unchurched in the antebellum period. Protestant optimism was further buoyed by the strong growth of the Protestant church in the nineteenth century (Herberg 1955: 151–152). Protestant leaders were thereby slow to apprehend the social dynamics at work in the rising industrial centers of the Northeast.

By the 1870s and 1880s, however, clarion calls began to sound within seminary and church walls, resounding with the message that the new

urban proletariat was staying away from the church in droves. In response, in the 1870s and 1880s, prominent clergymen began to realize that home missions in the cities were failing to register the successes that their rural counterparts had attained because of labor's alienation from the churches. In Pittsburgh and Allegheny (Pennsylvania), for example, church surveys in 1888 found that business, salaried, and professional people made up over 60 percent of Protestant male attendees—a segment of the population that represented a mere 10 percent of the two cities' populations (Bell [1943] 1962: 62–66).

The labor–immigrant–Catholic equation, which seems obvious today, was less apparent in the late nineteenth century. After all, German, Scandinavian, and even Irish migration in rural America came easily into the arms of Protestantism. The rapid post–1865 growth of the Catholic Church was therefore decisive, driven by a new, organized, Americanized Irish leadership. So successful was this new Americanized church that it enrolled six million new communicants between 1880 and 1900, a 100 percent increase. Moreover, of 12 million American Catholics in 1900, five-sixths were urban immigrants (Bell [1943] 1962: 7; Abell 1960; Handy 1991: 17).

The resistance of the “urban frontier” to the evangelical techniques of the rural Protestant church stanching the flow of Protestant triumphalism and came as a shock to an increasingly complacent and sedentary Protestant leadership (Herberg 1955: 123–124). Realizing, at last, that the new immigrants would not be converted to the “old time religion,” many Protestant clerics turned reactionary, espousing immigration restriction. Even Dwight Spencer, Baptist formulator of the concept of America's divine universal mission, changed his attitude between 1887 and 1895. Gone was the idea of a synthesizing Anglo-Saxonism. Instead, Spencer strongly agreed with others in the Home Missions Society that immigration was a papal plot to subjugate the United States.

Baptist papers displayed a similar change of attitude: “An immense amount of twaddle has been uttered on this immigration question,” thundered the once pro-Chinese *Boston Watchman* in 1891. “Speakers at our National Anniversaries have time and time again referred to the ‘Divine Providence’ that has brought the scum of Europe to our shores. It would be well for these gentlemen to distinguish between ‘Divine Providence’ and the cupidity of steamship and railroad companies” (Davis 1973: 70, 85).

The important point to be drawn from D. B. Davis's study of Baptist attitudes is that Protestant failure and Catholic success with the new im-

migrants, rather than race theories, led mainline Protestant leaders to distinguish between “old” and “new” immigrants (Davis 1973: 86–87).

Dale Knobel adds that it was principally the activity of “old” immigrants and their children that threatened Anglo-Protestant elites and roused them to action (Knobel 1996: 195). Certainly, the change from northwestern to southeastern European sources was significant, but this shift was slow to materialize: only in 1896, for example, did Southern and Eastern European immigration eventually predominate over the “old” sources in Northern and Western Europe (Jones [1960] 1992: 152–154). The threat to the Protestant marker of dominant ethnicity posed by organized Catholicism was paramount: it augmented the Social Gospel perspective and helped consolidate Anglo-Protestant restrictionism.

The Wider Progressive Movement

The Social Gospel movement helped influence broader political and social currents. To some extent, the Populist movement felt its influence, and many reform-minded Protestants backed General Weaver’s People’s Party in 1892 and William Jennings Bryan’s Populist-Democrats in 1896. Later, Social Gospel currents flowed into the political movement known as Progressivism, which flourished between 1896, when Populism fell, and 1917, when the United States entered the war in Europe (Handy 1991: 99). In the early years of the new century, Progressivism proved a mass movement capable of capturing the hearts and minds of many Americans, including presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.

The Progressive movement’s egalitarianism, which embraced the poor, workers, and women, did not draw on secular socialism for inspiration, but instead looked to the Bible and the Jeffersonian American past for inspiration. In concert with this orientation, Progressivism was marked by a moralistic Americanism that yoked together platforms such as welfare provision, labor reform, and female suffrage with campaigns to promote patriotism, temperance, observance of the Sabbath, and immigration restriction (Link and McCormick 1983: 99). In this regard, the Ku Klux Klan merely represented the fringe element of a wider Progressive mentality that concerned itself with reform causes whose linkage we find unusual today. “By the mid-1890’s, in states like Massachusetts,” writes Dale Knobel, “temperance organizations, women’s voting-rights leagues, and outright nativist societies were involved in cooperative lobbying efforts” (Knobel 1996: 211; Link and McCormick 1983: 53–55).

A mainstream figure in the Progressive movement’s early phase was

Frances Willard, leader of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Willard had linked her cause with that of labor leaders like Terence Powderly and advocated both women's rights and the rights of workers (Bell [1943] 1962: 48; Higham [1955] 1988: 41). Both imperatives, she felt, would be best advanced by a Protestant, Anglo-Saxon society. On this reading, immigrants from "backward" Catholic countries constituted a major threat. Hence in the 1890s Willard called for a more "stringent immigration law prohibiting the influx into our land of more of the scum of the Old World," and she expressed the hope that prohibition could heal sectional wounds, thereby "weld[ing] the Anglo-Saxons of the New World into one royal family" (Rose 1996: 26; May [1949] 1967: 127). Meanwhile, suffragettes justified their case by arguing that woman suffrage would bolster the old-stock American vote. One political offshoot of the connections between women's groups and dominant ethnicity was the development of a voter's literacy test, which accompanied the extension of the franchise to women in 1920 (Knobel 1996: 211).

That the Progressive movement drew its principal strength from Anglo-Protestantism is readily apparent from the backgrounds of several hundred reform leaders, whom George E. Mowry and Alfred Chandler found to be "socially secure and well-educated men and women of Anglo-Saxon Protestant stock who lived in cities" (Link and McCormick 1983: 5). Theodore Roosevelt exemplifies this leadership: as a New York Protestant of mixed Dutch and British ancestry, he identified strongly with the mission of what he termed the "old pioneering [Anglo-Saxon] stock" (Dyer 1980). Very often, Progressive reformers were in the vanguard of the move to the suburbs, where they aimed to re-create the moralistic, rural, Anglo-America that many had either known or been taught to revere in childhood (Baltzell 1964; Lowenthal 1985; May 1988). With respect to ethnic dominance, Progressive policies regarding Americanization, immigration restriction, and political reform helped maintain Anglo-Saxon hegemony. For example, rural areas wielded a disproportionate amount of political power, while literacy tests and naturalization requirements prevented immigrants from voting.⁶

The years after 1918 witnessed the decline of reform sentiment in general throughout the land. Yet Progressivism did not disappear. The enactment of the National Origins Quota on immigration (1924), laws prohibiting alcohol (1920), and legislation in favor of women suffrage (1920) provide examples of some of the legislative successes scored by the Progressive movement in its late stages (Mowry 1967: 91–103; R. Miller 1958: 33).

American Socialism in the Progressive Era

As noted earlier, nineteenth-century egalitarianism is associated with a conservative position on the immigration and national identity questions. This “left-conservative” cluster of beliefs, first introduced by native-born labor and Social Christianity, eventually attained paramount importance within the political movement known as Progressivism. Can a similar claim be made for egalitarian movements outside the Progressive mainstream? If so, this would strengthen the argument advanced here that the “left-liberal” outlook characteristic of the modern American left had yet to make its mark.

Since Fourier and Marx, universalism has been a hallmark of socialist thought. Hence policies relating to the maintenance of ethnic boundaries—like immigration control and Americanization—would be expected to run counter to socialism’s notion of an international brotherhood of equals. Yet, in the American case, egalitarian praxis did not develop as a coherent program. Instead, it progressed in fits and starts, and advanced furthest in class terms, with matters of race or ethnicity occupying a “blind spot” on the list of left priorities (Gerstle 1994: 1044). With regard to dominant ethnicity, therefore, until the early 1920s, American socialism reflected the attitudes prevailing in American society.

This brief survey of Progressive-Era egalitarianism suggested that a left-wing orientation in economic matters was often affiliated with a populist, romantic, ethnic nationalist stance on cultural issues. When reformers expressed themselves on the matter of immigration and national identity, they tended either to embrace immigration restriction or to employ the dualistic rhetoric of double-consciousness. Socialist thinkers of the late nineteenth century, like Lawrence Gronlund or Burnette G. Haskell, followed suit. The first decade of the twentieth century would change little in this regard: Anglo-organicist socialism continued to gain force after the defeat of Bryan’s Populist Democrats in 1896, coming together as a series of Christian socialist movements organized by prominent Protestant clergymen.

More importantly, Christian socialists flocked into the Socialist Party of America, rapidly transforming it from a foreign institution into a native one. The 1908 party roster showed a membership that was 71 percent native-born American, with 17.5 percent of “Old Immigrant” (Northern and Western European) origins (Leinenweber 1984: 244). The new membership also reflected Protestant influence, with over a quarter of party leaders coming directly from the Christian socialist movement.

The Socialist Party of America

The 1900–1912 period witnessed rapid growth in Socialist Party of America (SPA) membership, from 10,000 to 135,364. It is interesting, therefore, to examine the nature of socialist attitudes toward dominant ethnicity at the height of the party's popularity. The subject of immigration brought this debate to the fore. The Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907 had passed a resolution condemning immigration restrictions based on race or nationality and called for the organization of immigrants for political and economic rights. However, the SPA, both in a 1908 resolution and at its 1910 Congress, failed to implement this resolution, opting instead to exclude those from Asian and other “backward” countries.

Some American socialists were quite frank about their opinions. In the words of leading U.S. Marxist Ernest Untermann: “I am determined that my race shall be supreme in this country and the world. For this reason I am in favour of the [restrictionist] report adopted by the [1910] committee” (Leinenweber 1984: 249). In addition, prominent socialists of Anglo-Saxon background, like Jack London or Robert Hunter, drew parallels between Marxist and racial evolutionary theory, claiming that an influx of peoples less historically advanced than the Anglo-Americans would retard the advent of socialism in the United States. Even Victor Berger, a Jewish SPA leader and one of only a handful of socialists ever elected to Congress, felt that the new immigration threatened Americans' cultural heritage (Pittenger 1993: 169, 172–173). He reconciled his Jewish immigrant identity with such a statement by claiming that he was an immigrant who came “imbued not only with Socialism but also with the right kind of Americanism” (Leinenweber 1984: 253).

More common than outright restrictionism, however, was the posture of another party leader, Morris Hillquit, who paid lip service to the universalist ideals of the Stuttgart Resolution while maintaining an ethnically exclusive focus. Consequently, Hillquit, who also favored Asian exclusion, gave a 1911 address before the House of Representatives referring to Slavonians, Italians, Greeks, Russians, and Armenians as “modern white coolies” and drafted a party resolution opposed to “the mass importation of workers from foreign countries, brought about by the employing classes for the purpose of weakening the organization of American labor, and of lowering the standard of life of American workers.” However, the same resolution went on to say that “the party is opposed to the exclusion

of any immigrants on account of their race or nationality, and demands that the United States be at all times maintained as a free asylum for all men and women persecuted by the governments of their countries on account of their politics, religion or race” (Leinenweber 1984: 251).

This bit of double-consciousness fit in well with American tradition, allowing a liberal myth to exist while clamping down on its supposedly deleterious practical effects. A similar pattern could be observed in Europe.⁷ The restrictionist position was reasserted during the SPA’s 1912 Congress with a report from the party’s committee on immigration that “made the 1910 majority report seem pro-Asiatic in comparison” (Leinenweber 1984: 262). Attitude change would come only as the party lost its native-born/old immigrant majority. This occurred rapidly, with party membership cascading from 135,000 to 11,000 between 1913 and 1922. The decline was the result of several rifts, the most important of which pitted a coalition of native-born and “old” immigrants against “new” immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe—a division occasioned by the growing proportion of foreign-language federations in the SPA. This proportion, negligible in 1912, reached 41 percent in 1917 and 53 percent in 1919 (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 309–310). In response, in 1919 the party, controlled by native-born municipal socialists, expelled most of the foreign-language federations (Leinenweber 1984: 263).

The sudden emergence of a restrictionist mood in the late 1880s and the legislative success that this thrust engendered some 40 years later cannot be explained by simply referring, as many American writers have done, to the aberrant, “foreign” influence of race theories (Welter 1987: 58; Higham [1955] 1988: 149–157). Instead, developments within the American context must be taken into account.

The theological revolution known as the Social Gospel movement was the first such development. It galvanized the process of ethnic closure by concentrating Protestant minds on this-worldly social factors such as the rise of the industrial city, capital–labor conflict, and the importance of legislation—forces that they had traditionally been loath to consider. The disillusionment of Protestant reformers with Catholic resistance and growth provided a second, separate thrust that augmented the influence of the early Social Gospel on Anglo-American ethnic defense.

The upshot of such developments was the deflating of *laissez-faire* cosmopolitan optimism among the Anglo-Protestant elite. This resulted in a loss of confidence in their ethnic group’s ability to transmute foreign im-

migrants, of whatever stripe, into WASPs and to thereby maintain “American” ethnic boundary markers. The logical consummation of this process therefore pointed inexorably toward legislative solutions in the form of immigration restriction along ethnic lines.

Looking across the breadth of egalitarian thinking at the turn of the century, one finds a unanimity of ethnocultural conservatism that seems strikingly out of place today. The radical implications of American egalitarianism for matters of race, ethnicity, or nationality therefore remained untapped, contained within the dominant ethnic parameters of white Anglo-Protestantism. Consequently, at the turn of the twentieth century, both liberty and equality remained limited in their logical and practical development. Nevertheless, a paradigm shift of seismic proportions lay just over the century’s horizon.

II

The Cosmopolitan Vanguard, 1900–1939

Pioneers of Equality: The Liberal Progressives

Until the twentieth century, the logic of individualism and egalitarianism was contained within the strictures of Anglo-Protestant Americanism. However, the first crack in the double-consciousness paradigm appeared soon after, among Liberal Progressive intellectuals and social workers in Chicago and New York, cities that lay at the confluence of American and European streams of thought. Cosmopolitan variants of liberty and equality—even those sourced from abroad—were held to resonate with the symbolism of the American creed and were translated into a new theory of national identity.

The Anarchist Roots of Cosmopolitan Americanism

In tracing the lineage of universalism, one is inevitably drawn to early American anarchism, which represents the purest expression of Enlightenment liberty and equality. Individualist anarchists occasionally combined their philosophy with a belief in (spontaneously generated) equality of outcome, though their ideas on the cultural front tended to remain cloudy. Operating outside the parameters of national debate and hostile to the state and its identity, they failed to develop a cosmopolitan theory of the American nation. Meanwhile, the many libertarians whose social connections might have enabled them to advance a cosmopolitan vision (figures like Paine, Jefferson, and Emerson come to mind) tended to retain a pride in the mythical individualist heritage of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism.

In the United States, anarchism has a long pedigree that begins with the antinomian heresy in Puritan Massachusetts (Schuster 1970: 14, 23–24, 37, 43). More than a century later, Tom Paine stood out as the most radical of the Revolutionary generation, and his persona served as the

nexus for highly developed ideas of individualist anarchism, radical egalitarianism, and thoroughgoing secularism. It is in this context that we can understand his path-breaking cosmopolitan belief that “The world is my country. All mankind are my brethren” (Salins 1997: 20). Paine’s belief that “Europe, not England is the parent country of America,” was in keeping with his eighteenth-century radical views (Kaufman 1982: 2; Paine [1776] 1976: 76, 99).¹

The generation of anarchists that followed Paine targeted the American nation-state itself. In the early nineteenth century, for example, David Low Dodge published the first American pamphlet “directed expressly against the war system of nations.” Somewhat later, the developing logic of liberal-individualism among anarchists collided with the idea of American homogeneity. In the 1820s, the Scottish-born abolitionist, Frances Wright, set the precedent by becoming an early advocate of interracial sexual relations. Wright believed that if blacks attained equality with whites, the two races would amalgamate. In her view, the Anglo-American fear of interracial sexual relations was both hypocritical—owing to the actions of white slave-owners—and unreasonable. Yet Wright’s thinking, though advanced, was hardly free of ambiguity and duality. On the one hand, she looked to the day when Louisiana’s population would be entirely mulatto while interracial sexual relations became a national norm. On the other hand, she believed that the upper southern states should send their blacks to the lower South, so that the upper South would become white, the lower South black (Eckhardt 1984: 88, 98, 100).

Wright was also not immune to public sentiment. For instance, to put her principles into practice, she established an anarchist commune at Nashoba, on the Tennessee frontier (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 36). Blacks—some of whom were purchased out of slavery—and whites lived side by side at the commune, though interracial sexual relations did not officially take place until 1827. This news erupted when James Richardson, a leading white resident, revealed to a Baltimore abolitionist newspaper that he was living with a mulatto woman. The news caused such a scandal that it destroyed Nashoba’s reputation and turned Wright into a social outcast. Faced with this opprobrium, Wright eventually married and renounced her belief in miscegenation² as unsuited to the American context (Eckhardt 1984: 143, 251; Lane 1972: 32).

Few are known to have taken up Wright’s ideas, though the early nineteenth century provided the backdrop for several other anarchist communal experiments, most of which took root in the theologically fertile

“Burned-Over District” of western New York State. Some of these experiments attacked the racial policies of the American government. One key anarchist figure was John Humphrey Noyes, whose Perfectionist doctrine decreed that man should seek the perfection of Christ on earth (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 105). Noyes believed that the millennium would begin with the overthrow of the American nation and its government, which he accused in 1837 of being “a bloated, swaggering libertine, trampling on the Bible—its own constitution—its treaties with the Indians—the petitions of its citizens: with one hand whipping a negro tied to a liberty-pole, and with the other dashing an emaciated Indian to the ground” (Schuster 1970: 54). Noyes, a pioneer in sexual liberation, was later charged with adultery and retreated to his Oneida commune where he would preach the merits of free love, sexual freedom, and, oddly, eugenics. As a consequence, it was left to others to pursue the antinationalist path implicit in anarchism.

Among those who chose to do so was William Lloyd Garrison, an acquaintance of Noyes and a major figure in the antislavery movement. Garrison’s band of nonresistant anarchists accepted only the authority of the Bible. “Love, they declared, was not only omniscient, but omnipresent. The brotherhood of man was a reality, and internationalism, not Nationalism its embodiment. Hence they could ‘allow no appeal to patriotism, to revenge any national insult or injury.’” In line with these sentiments, Garrison declared to all in 1831, “My country is my world, my countrymen are mankind” (Schuster 1970: 71; Rocker 1994: 84; Salins 1997: 20).

A radical abolitionist, Garrison also spoke out against setting up a colony in Liberia for American free blacks. He was among the small minority of antislavery commentators to argue against colonization, and even within this group, he was almost unique in arguing the case from a humanitarian perspective:

Let me briefly examine the doctrine of colonizationists. They generally agree in publishing the misstatement, that you are strangers and foreigners. Surely they know better. They know, that, as a body, you [black Americans] are no more natives of Africa than they themselves are natives of Great Britain. . . . our colored population are not aliens; they were born on our soil; they are bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.” (Garrison [1832] 1968: 12)

Although Garrison was a pioneer of cosmopolitan thinking, his influence must be kept in perspective. He certainly had the ear of the radical wing

of Republicanism on the slavery issue, but in other respects his views were anathema to most members of his party. Consider the agnostic tenor of his religious beliefs, conveyed in a poem called “Worship,” which must have been highly controversial in its day:

Mosque, synagogue, cathedral, are the same,
Differing in nought but architectural style:
Avaunt, then, Superstition! In God’s name,
Nor longer thy blind devotees beguile! (Garrison 1852: 115)

Garrison was not free of double-consciousness: he had little good to say for either Catholics or Irishmen, and he was an advocate of temperance. It is also doubtful that he supported a mulatto alternative to the free-soil, white, national vision of Seward and other radical Republicans (Foner 1970: 291–296). Overall, although a few radical anarchists of the early nineteenth century discarded their national allegiance and Anglo-Protestant attachments, most of them did not do so. Instead, the majority of anarchists cherished the mythical connection between Anglo-Saxonism, Protestantism, Americanism, and radical liberty. They thereby looked to the Declaration of Independence, Jeffersonian antistatism, and nonconformist Protestantism to buttress their libertarian convictions.

In the late nineteenth century, for example, Benjamin Tucker, a leading individualist-anarchist, admitted that he was nothing more than an “unterrified Jeffersonian Democrat.” As Schuster notes, this extended to pride of ancestry: “The Individualist Anarchists . . . crystallized the traditional individualism and lawlessness of America into a universally applicable, systematic philosophy. *And they were conscious of their heritage.* Almost without exception they were the descendants of old New England families, particularly of Massachusetts, and in some cases of Revolutionary War heroes” (Schuster 1970: 88, emphasis added).

Making a similar point, German radical-liberal Rudolph Rocker claims that individualist-anarchism was a native American product and an outgrowth of pioneer tradition. In his view, “They [American individualist-anarchists] were all ‘one hundred percent American’ by descent, and almost all of them were born in the New England states. As a matter of fact, this [anarchist] school of thought had found literary expression in America before any modern radical movements were even thought of in Europe” (Rocker 1994: xx, 50).

The importance of the link between anarchism and Anglo-Americanism is that the radical tradition did not necessarily point in a cosmopolitan

direction, but, as with radical figures such as Thomas Jefferson, Horace Greeley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walt Whitman, often reinforced ethnonational pride. Even Tom Paine, the committed cosmopolitan, had nothing but disdain for Catholicism, which he used to slur Monarchism, remarking that “a man hath good reason to believe that there is as much of king-craft, as priest-craft in withholding the scripture from the public in Popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the Popery of government” (Paine [1776] 1976: 76). From the foregoing, it should be evident that even in exceptional cases like those of Paine, Garrison, or Wright, anarchist logic did not wipe clear all traces of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant attachment. Evidently, the cosmopolitan paradigm had yet to fully dislodge its cognitive ballast of dominant ethnicity.

Anarchist Developments in the Late Nineteenth Century

The heyday of the anarchist commune in the early nineteenth century gave way to a more settled, urban libertarianism in the latter half of the century (Curry and Valois 1991: 35; Rocker 1994). The new expressive-individualists drew strength from their liberal contemporaries in Britain as well as from unorthodox founding fathers like Paine, Jefferson, and Franklin.

Another line of development was represented by the Free Religious Association, founded in 1867 by former Unitarian minister Francis E. Abbot. The new association welcomed a range of exiles: liberal Unitarians and Universalists, progressive Quakers, progressive Jews, and many Transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Wendell Phillips (Radest 1969: 58). In breaking with Unitarianism, the most liberal Protestant sect of his day, Abbott sought to promote a new “religion of humanity,” which privileged free thought in place of Christian dogma. The Association platform was especially significant for its acceptance of non-Christian vantage points—a central feature of its 1868 platform (FRA [1868] 1875: 358–359). This religious eclecticism opened up new vistas of cultural cosmopolitanism that eventually found expression in a novel theory of American identity.

In practical terms, the FRA’s main achievement was to provide support for the National Liberal League, which mobilized opposition to the Christian Amendment (making Protestant Christianity the nation’s official religion) and Comstock censorship law in the 1860s and 1870s (Goodheart 1991: 134–137). This involved maintaining a definite stand against *in-*

stitutional, though not societal, dominant ethnicity. “The very thing they [the National Religious Association] propose to do is make the government Protestant, Evangelical, Puritan,” complained John Chadwick, a member of the FRA who opposed the Christian Amendment (Chadwick 1875: 319).

The FRA’s membership encompassed a diversity of viewpoints. Nearly all rejected the dictates of traditional Christianity, and many championed religious pantheism, but the group’s individualist heritage guaranteed that Anglo-Protestant attachment was also to be found: “There is no other ‘manifest destiny’ for any man,” announced Rutgers College president Merrill Gates in 1886, referring to the idea of Liberty. “[T]o this we [liberals] stand committed, by all the logic of two thousand years of Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon history, since Arminius . . . made a stand for liberty against the legions of Rome” (Arieli 1991: 173).

The co-presence of traditional Anglo-Protestant Whiggery with anarchic individualism, mythically connected since Independence and exemplified in the persona of Emerson, is explained by the New England connections which many FRA liberals enjoyed. This liberal community, Yehoshua Arieli remarks, encompassed the FRA, the Boston Radical Club, and the American Social Science Association, and expressed itself through journals like the *Nation*, *Harper’s Weekly*, the *Springfield Republican*, and the *New York Evening Post* (Arieli 1991: 168–169).

The double-consciousness of this circle was especially striking. FRA founder Francis Abbott, for instance, declared that “the fellowship of Free Religion is as wide as humanity itself. All who are born of woman are brothers and peers in virtue of their common nature. . . . The object of the Christian Church is to *christianize the world*. . . . But the supreme object of Free Religion is to *humanize the world*” (Abbott 1875: 256–258; 1873: 12–13). However, Abbott revealed his intellectual lineage to Emerson by also avowing: “The rest I need comes no longer from spiritual servitude, but must be sought and found in the manly exercise of freedom. It is to those who feel this Anglo-Saxon instinct of liberty stirring in their hearts that my words are addressed,—not to those who feel no galling pressure from the easy yoke” (Abbott 1875: 264).

Similarly, William J. Potter combined an admiration for the “Saxon spirit of free enquiry” with a remarkably egalitarian take on comparative religion:

Why should the Jew take the name of the Christian, more than the Christian the name of the Jew? Or, in India, why should that

growing and already vigorous sect of native Hindus, who . . . profess a pure theism, adopt the Christian name more than Christians theirs? . . . In China, too, and in Japan . . . the intelligent and thinking class . . . will not be so likely even as Hindus to change their religion for Christianity. . . . They will hardly adopt a religion that degrades Confucius and Buddha into the position of blind heathen guides, unworthy of confidence, and deifies a prophet of another race. (Potter 1875: 210, 218–220)

In support, several other Free Religious associates of the 1870s embraced this brand of religious exchange (Longfellow 1875: 91; Radest 1969: 11). Others retained their Protestant millennialism but saw merit in aspects of Chinese culture and immigration (Channing 1870: 21–22).

Overall, the chief intellectual innovation of the Free Religious Association was its humanistic, experimental embrace of non-Christian religions. This brought the notion of a non-Anglo-Saxon, post-Protestant American nation within reach of a subsequent generation of American thinkers. Even so, we should bear in mind that FRA members at this point had failed to fully relinquish their Anglo-Protestant psychic redoubts, and none spoke of stripping the nation of its implicitly white, Anglo-Saxon, or Protestant heritage. Instead, the leap from dualistic idealism to cosmopolitan praxis awaited the arrival of a seer from outside the Protestant fold. The name of this remarkable individual was Felix Adler.

Felix Adler and the Contributions Idea

Adler, of German-Jewish origin, was born into a family whose patriarch, Rabbi Samuel Adler, was a leading figure in American Reform Judaism. The rise of Reform Judaism in the German states during the first decades of the nineteenth century led to an intellectual divorce between Jewish religion and its ethnic myths and symbols. The new theology, inherently anti-Zionist, taught that the Jews were not chosen to return to Israel, but were instead elected to spread the word of a universal faith that would unite the world's peoples in monotheism. The new teaching had great appeal for upwardly mobile Jews seeking to reconcile their faith with assimilation to German society. Now, they could be Germans of the Jewish faith rather than members of the Jewish nation resident in the German states (Kraut 1979: 24–26).

In the United States, the spectacular socioeconomic success of the German-Jewish community provided fertile ground for the spread of Re-

form teachings. Samuel Adler was a community leader poised to head up the vanguard of American Reform Judaism. At the 1869 Philadelphia Reform Convention, Adler and other authors of the Philadelphia Platform reiterated their message that the “messianic mission of Israel was not to restore the old Jewish state . . . but rather to spread monotheism around the world and unite all people under God” (Kraut 1979: 6). Felix Adler’s innovation was to take the ecumenism of his father’s Reform Judaism to its radical pinnacle with the foundation of the universalist Ethical Culture Society. In a landmark address on “Races and Religions” in December 1878, young Felix insisted that the Jews should not only spread the word but should universalize themselves out of existence when the task was complete:

The perpetuity of the Jewish race depends upon the perpetuity of the Jewish religion . . . So long as there shall be a reason of existence for Judaism, so long the individual Jews will keep apart and will do well to do so . . . when this process [of evangelization] is accomplished . . . the individual members of the Jewish race [will] look about them and perceive that there is as great and perhaps greater liberty in religion beyond the pale of their race and will lose their peculiar idiosyncrasies, and their distinctiveness will fade. And eventually, the Jewish race will die. (Kraut 1979: 122–123)

Adler’s realist logic brusquely exposed the tension between Reform Judaism’s manifest universalism and its latent ethnicism. Under his influence, Anglo-Protestant thinkers would turn the same cast-iron logic toward their own group and call for its termination as forthrightly as Adler did for the Jews. Adler’s message is significant because it no longer sought to prepare Jews for assimilation into their host society but rather urged them to embrace a universalist, post-ethnic Utopia (Kraut 1979: 134).

With the passage of several years, Adler’s ideas evolved to more fully embrace non-Jews. No longer was the work of spreading the universal faith to be restricted to Jews, and no longer would the Jewish race be the only one to die (Lissak 1989: 145–146). With time, and with the ideological aid of another Reformed Jew—albeit strongly Zionist—Israel Zangwill, Anglo-Protestant intellectuals would adapt the new variant of Adler’s ideas to their own situation.

The cross-fertilization of Adler’s Reform Jewish ideas with those of radical Protestantism occurred in the 1870s—a landmark conjunction that both players recognized. Some Jews had joined the Free Religious As-

sociation soon after its inception, and in the early 1870s, a Free Religionist expressed the following view: “The old Hebrew faith has not been stagnant . . . so that now between the most advanced Jews and the most progressive portion of Christendom there is scarcely a shade of difference in theological belief” (Potter 1875: 218). Adler returned the favor, urging an audience at his Reform synagogue in 1873 to “Listen to the clear, metallic notes that ring from the pulpits of the Free Religionists. . . . Do you not hear the great humanitarian doctrines of Judaism re-echo in their words” (Kraut 1979: 82–83). In 1878, Adler assumed the presidency of the Free Religious Association, injecting many vital new elements into its fertile, but underdeveloped, millenarian arsenal. This act inaugurated the Protestant-Jewish secular alliance that was to prove so potent an intellectual force in the twentieth century.

The new Protestant-Jewish secular intellectuals began to exert influence through the nonsectarian universities. These institutions, though nominally Protestant, typically contained many secularists. Cornell was probably the brashest example. Its founders, Ezra Cornell and Andrew White, consciously attempted to establish an institution that operated free of dogmatic influence. On this note, they hired Felix Adler in the mid-1870s to teach in their Hebrew and Near Eastern Studies Department. One of the first Jewish appointees within the American higher education system, Adler gave pantheistic lectures that exposed the secularism of Cornell’s mission and soon aroused a storm of indignation among both the townspeople of nearby Ithaca and the less radical staff within the university—who together forced Adler’s ouster a few years later (Kraut 1979: 99–102).

Even so, the secular sympathies of some within the elite of American higher education began to have an influence. Associations of professional social scientists, based on the German model, had been formed soon after the Civil War, injecting a powerful countervailing force into American higher education. By the 1890s, government and private foundation sponsorship, in concert with internal pressures, conspired to loosen the Protestant stranglehold over institutions of higher learning (Persons 1987: 28–29; Bass 1989: 49–53; Jarausch 1983). The result was a scholarly environment more amenable to post-Protestant influence.

The University of Chicago was one institution in which post-Protestant thinking developed, notwithstanding the strong residues of its Baptist past. The presence of Thorstein Veblen (Norwegian), Theodore Dreiser (German), and Franz Boas (a German Jew) on the staff at Chicago in the

1890s testifies to the openness of that university in accepting figures from outside the Anglo-Saxon fold (Hyatt 1990: 30). Furthermore, new arrivals like John Dewey in the Philosophy Department (1894) and W. I. Thomas in Sociology (1896) laid the basis for the University of Chicago's New Social Science emphasis on pluralism and relativism. This was also the period in which Felix Adler returned to academia, joining the Philosophy Department at Columbia just after the turn of the century (Persons 1987: 45; Westbrook 1991: 119).

Anarchism Meets Progressivism

The Progressive movement provided a gateway for cultural radicalism to enter the American mainstream. This statement may appear puzzling since I earlier stressed that Progressive ideas, which stemmed from Social Gospel sources, tended to reinforce American dominant ethnicity by emphasizing the importance of social cohesion. This is no doubt the case, but while the Progressive movement's early interpreters (such as William Jennings Bryan and Josiah Strong) tended toward social conservatism, the movement also contained liberal potential. The theological underpinnings of the Social Gospelers, for example, were influenced by currents of liberalism and critical rationality first unleashed by the Enlightenment. At its radical fringes, the same Enlightenment thought led to eighteenth-century Deism (as in the case of Jefferson) or, a century later, to outright atheism or agnosticism (Taylor 1989: 401–403).

The liberation of mind required to accept the importance of this-worldly forces and rational, legislative solutions was one source of radical potential latent within the Social Gospel. The other was the movement's avowed commitment to equality, especially with respect to the redistribution of wealth and power. The polemics against the ills of industry and the missions to the poor which sprang up as a result of the Social Gospel's call for social reform exemplified the new egalitarian *zeitgeist*. This change in sensibility brought Social Gospel thinkers and their Progressive counterparts closer to the spirit of secular humanitarianism—an event that was to transform their view of the immigrant and the immigrant's role in the American story.

Prior to the early 1890s, the universalistic radical potential within Progressivism lay hidden within its “left-conservative” intellectual matrix. However, the best educated, most critical minds within Progressivism were beginning to form a vision of their society that embraced univer-

salistic left-liberalism, or “liberal” Progressivism. Once again, Felix Adler and the Ethical Culture Society appear to have been the innovators of the Liberal-Progressive approach.

Adler had continued the activities of the Ethical Culture Society throughout his sojourn from academia, and he was among the very few expressive individualists to embrace Social Gospel-style social reform. For instance, he took his place on the Committee of Fifteen, which helped defeat the Tammany Hall Democratic machine and elect reformer Seth Low as mayor. During Low’s tenure as president of Columbia University (1891–1901) and mayor of greater New York (1901–1904), he distinguished himself by his favorable treatment of Jews, Catholics, and blacks.³ The important point to take from Adler’s participation in the Low campaign is that, in partaking in this 1890s Anglo-Protestant reform venture, Adler was unwittingly crossing two elements, Progressivism and anarchism. These later furnished the basis for a Liberal-Progressive cosmopolitan compound.

Meanwhile, the nonsectarian social reform that flowed from the philanthropic activities of Ethical Culture in the 1880s raised many eyebrows: “It seems strange to hear that these [Ethical Culture-funded] nurses are directed to leave religious comfort to religious teachers,” remarked a reporter early in the decade. Although much of its membership was Jewish, most of the recipients of Ethical Culture charity work were Catholic immigrants from poor New York wards (Radest 1969: 38–39). By the late 1880s, several members of the Ethical Culture Society—which had reached its zenith of nearly 700 souls—became the first secular individualists to become involved in the American Settlement movement (Radest 1969: 122; Kraut 1979: 183).

The Settlement Movement

The Settlement movement began in London, England, in 1884 with the establishment of Toynbee Hall by Samuel Barnett, an Anglican clergyman. Based on ideas drawn from Christianity and the John Ruskin–William Morris brand of romanticism, the movement sought to reunify the social organism by bringing together upper middle-class idealists, eager to overcome alienation and acquire meaning, and the urban poor, with their “spiritual need” for dignity and culture. An outgrowth of British Christian socialism, the Settlement movement quickly caught on among Social Gospel reformers in the United States. Stanton Coit, an American Ph.D.

student and resident at Toynbee Hall during 1886, first brought the movement's ideals to New York's impoverished Lower East Side in the same year. His Settlement soon influenced others, especially in the Northeast and upper Midwest. The American movement grew rapidly after 1891, from 6 Settlements to 74 in 1894, 100 by 1900 and over 400 by 1910 (Davis 1967: 6–7, 12–13).

Most Settlement workers were of WASP origin, and nearly all were active members of liberal mainline Protestant denominations. Settlements were typically housed in buildings inside urban ghettos staffed by volunteers from the suburbs. They provided social services ranging from art exhibits, university extension courses and lectures to kindergarten classes and rooms for social functions. In this way, they played a role of “higher philanthropy” in culture that complemented the “lower philanthropy” of charitable organizations that dealt with more pressing needs. In some cases, Settlements achieved the critical mass needed to become a force for political and civic reform. Nevertheless, while Settlements abounded throughout the nation, only a select few were able to exert any degree of political influence, though the National Federation of Settlements, formed in 1911, provided a platform for all Settlement workers (Davis 1967: 234). In addition, among the cities in which Settlements attained influence, just two stood out for their transethnic view of America: New York and Chicago.

In both cities, interaction between intellectuals and Settlement headworkers provided the matrix within which the new cosmopolitan idea of America germinated. This is not surprising, given the highly intellectual nature of the Settlements. The Settlements were not almshouses, but rather residences occupied by upper-middle-class “workers,” whose profile was that of an idealistic, Anglo-Saxon, university-educated young suburbanite (male or female) in his or her mid-twenties. In a period when university education was reserved for a privileged elite, some 90 percent of Settlement workers had attended a university, 80 percent had attained a bachelor's degree, and over 50 percent had done graduate work. In addition, many had traveled abroad (Davis 1967: 33).

The religious zeal that animated the wider Progressive movement was not as pronounced among Settlement workers. Although most Settlement workers certainly adhered to Protestantism, they were mostly members of more liberal northern sects, and many were influenced by the New Social Science⁴ movement in the universities⁵ (Baltzell 1964: 161–163; Szasz 1982: 43; Bass 1989: 49). Moreover, although many Settlements in the

South were essentially converted missions, those in large northern cities (especially New York and Chicago) drew as much inspiration from the romantic humanism of the movement's founders as from Christianity and made a conscious effort to avoid trying to convert or uplift those who patronized their facilities.

The Settlement workers' romantic-humanitarian ethic led them to interpret Protestant Christianity in a very peculiar, almost secular, way. In Miva Carson's words:

There were many shades of opinion concerning religion in the Settlement. In general, though, the Settlement workers' aversion to denominational proselytism was tied to their consensus on the meaning of social Christianity: it transcended doctrinal differences to embrace communicants of every faith. The values embedded in the Protestant culture most of them sprang from inevitably shaped the Settlement idea, which can be seen as the final flowering of Victorian middle class culture. On the other hand, the tolerant pluralism of social Christianity reflected the waning influence of evangelistic concerns in the religion of genteel and urbane Americans and laid the groundwork for the advocacy of cultural pluralism that became a hallmark of the American Settlement movement. (Carson 1990: 57–58)

The pluralistic view of America mentioned by Carson developed gradually as several key Settlement leaders adapted the tenets of egalitarian humanism to their polyglot, culturally charged context. These Settlement leaders sought to affirm the dignity (i.e., human equality) of every individual they encountered. Catholic and Jewish immigrants in inner-city New York and Chicago were thus considered just as worthy of respect as Protestants in rural or suburban districts. To put the immigrants (as individuals) on an equal symbolic footing with the natives, a concept of the nation was required that would not violate the human dignity of the immigrants by denigrating their culture.

Americanization along Anglo-conformist lines, which obliged the immigrants to forget their past, shed their cultural practices, and forswear loyalty to their new nation, was considered humiliating to their sense of dignity. The ideological solution, therefore, entailed two fundamental changes to the American identity. First, immigrants' culture was to be encouraged: it would be treated as a "gift" to the American amalgam. Second, the American nation would be implored to shed its Anglo-Saxon ethnic core and develop a culture of cosmopolitan humanism, a harbinger

of impending global solidarity. This solution would affirm the dignity of the immigrant while at the same time enriching the host culture and propelling it toward its destiny. The new Liberal-Progressive approach to American national identity pushed the logic of equality to its cultural apogee, and it was in Chicago that this pluralist Americanism first entered mainstream politics and confronted its dominant ethnic arch-rival.

The Liberal Progressives

The Growth of Liberal Progressivism in Chicago

The social environment in 1890s Chicago provided a textbook case for Social Gospel reformers. With a population of one million, Chicago had doubled in size in a decade and would do so again by 1900. Its population was three-quarters foreign-born (mostly German and Irish Catholic, but with growing numbers from elsewhere) and highly stratified by class (Westbrook 1991: 83). Alerted to the new social divisions within their society by the spirit of the Social Gospel, the youth of upper-middle class WASP residents of Chicago were roused to action in the form of Progressive activities like the Settlement.

The Settlement workers' college education, lack of a traditional social role, Settlement philosophy, and polyglot surroundings constituted a unique kind of social environment. In effect, the constellation of phenomena that made up the Settlement experience simultaneously brought young people into contact with the most advanced liberal-egalitarian ideas and with the practical implications of those ideas for American national identity. The result was the eclipse of any cognitive space for a dualistic consciousness to exist between cosmopolitan rhetoric and practice.

The Settlement experience thereby provided an acid-test of practical universalism. An Anglo-American Settlement worker who proclaimed his belief in a cosmopolitan nation while engaging with the polyglot, immigrant "other" could not be accused of any dualistic longing for an Anglo-Protestant America. Jefferson and Emerson did not go this far, while Frederick Jackson Turner merely endorsed a limited melting pot encompassing Northern and Western Europeans of rural residence willing to subscribe to a highly Anglo-conformist Americanism.

The Role of Jane Addams and John Dewey

Jane Addams, head since 1896 of one of the largest American Settlements, Chicago's Hull House, was a key figure in pioneering the new

cosmopolitan-humanitarian mindset. Her accomplishments were astounding. By World War I, Addams—who was described as a “saint” by the media—led a Settlement with 9,000 members that sprawled across a Chicago city block. Her intellectual development was only slightly less rapid—arising from her egalitarian desire to see immigrants’ culture respected and her liberal urge to see them develop their individuality and join the American mainstream. In a series of articles between 1904 and 1912, Addams repeatedly articulated the idea that Anglo-Saxon Americanism be dropped in favor of a cosmopolitan national concept (Lissak 1989: 31). This notion was informed by Addams’s experiences at Hull House, which, for her, provided a microcosm for a prospective new world order:

I would cite the indications of an internationalism as sturdy and virile as it is unprecedented which I have seen in our cosmopolitan neighborhood: when a South Italian Catholic is forced to make friends with an Austrian Jew representing another nationality and another religion, both of which cut into all his most cherished prejudices, he finds it harder to utilize them a second time and gradually loses them. He thus modifies his provincialism. . . . When, therefore, I became identified with the peace movement. . . . I hoped this internationalism engendered in the immigrant quarters of American cities might be recognized as an effective instrument in the cause of peace. I first set it forth with some misgiving before the Convention held in Boston in 1904 and it is always a pleasure to recall the hearty assent given to it by Professor William James. (Addams 1910: 307)

Addams’s background helps to explain her attitudes. The daughter of the richest man in the Illinois town of Cedarville, Addams was brought up in a liberal Quaker household in which secular learning was encouraged. Like Vida Scudder and Ellen Gates Starr, two other cosmopolitan-minded Settlement pioneers, Addams traveled to Europe and attended a liberal arts college (Carson 1990: 41). As with so many other young, educated Protestant women, her attempt to find a role for herself commensurate with her education proved an intellectual stimulant. Alienated from traditional gender roles and traditional religion, these women were eager for new models, roles, and ideas to live by. When the Settlement philosophy came along, Addams and her friend Ellen Starr, both financially and intellectually independent women eager to prove the worth of their education, were readily converted (Davis 1967: 35–37).

University expansion was also underway at this time, often under nom-

inally clerical auspices, and the conflict between professors' theological and secular roles was intense. This was the case for John Dewey, another key figure in Liberal Progressivism whose stature is confirmed by the 1920s press, which bestowed upon him the honor of being "America's public philosopher."

Born and raised in multiethnic Burlington, Vermont, Dewey was urged to enter the ministry by his mother, a doctrinaire Calvinist and social reformer. Dewey never took up the call of the faith, partly because of his other major influence, Alice Chipman Dewey, his wife whom he met while teaching at the University of Michigan in 1884. Alice was a strong-willed woman raised by a freethinking maternal grandfather who was an honorary member of the Chippewa tribe. "A champion of Indian rights, [her grandfather] imparted to his granddaughter a disdain for social conventions and a critical social conscience as well as a fiercely independent and self-reliant character." Her independence helped confirm Dewey's anti-establishment leanings, so that, by 1893, Dewey declared that the church should "universalize itself, and thus pass out of existence" (Westbrook 1991: 34–35).

A year later, Dewey, who had been involved in church work teaching Bible classes, broke completely with his Congregationalist faith when he moved from Michigan to take up a philosophy post at the University of Chicago (Feffer 1993: 30). During his ten-year residence in that city, Dewey had the opportunity to interact with some of the most progressive liberal-egalitarian thinkers and activists, including Jane Addams. As early as 1893, Dewey was conducting lectures at Hull House, and his encounter with the Addams's Settlement work greatly excited him (Westbrook 1991: 84–85). From the Dewey–Addams connection sprang many of the cosmopolitan tenets of Chicago Liberal Progressivism.

The Influence of Ethical Culture

The cosmopolitanism which Dewey and Addams jointly heralded can be partly explained by their individual biographies. However, both figures drew their ideas primarily from the pluralism of William James and Felix Adler, who together must be credited as the intellectual revolutionaries behind Liberal Progressivism. They helped to transplant cosmopolitan ideas out of their Jewish-messianic context and re-root them in the American atmosphere. No longer would worldwide Jewry lead the globe toward its cross-cultural *finale*. Instead, an avant-garde of enlightened lib-

erals from all ethnic groups (in this case, Anglo-Protestants and Jews) would usher in the new age in the one land in which intercultural contact was already occurring on a grand scale: the United States.

The lines of influence run from Ethical Culture, the fount of Jewish cosmopolitanism, to Liberal Progressivism, which represented the first flowering of Protestant cosmopolitanism. The connections began with Anglo-Saxon converts to Ethical Culture, including William James in the 1890s (Radest 1969: 69). By this time, James was an established figure on the American intellectual scene; his philosophy of pluralism was one of the first uniquely American contributions to the philosophical literature. James believed that no overriding philosophy or theology held the key to life's existence; rather, each individual would find the truth by combining a number of different worldviews. The syncretistic philosophies of individuals in their everyday lives and the marvelous religious diversity of the globe were offered as examples of the truth of pluralism (Durant [1926] 1961: 516–517).

As in the case of James, Ethical Culture had a direct bearing on the ideas of Liberal Progressivism. Dewey and Addams, for instance, were active in the Ethical Culture movement, maintained close personal contact with Felix Adler and regularly lectured at local Ethical Culture Society branches⁶ (Carson 1990: 18). Meanwhile, Adler remained intensely interested in the Settlement movement (Kraut 1979: 185). Through Adler and James's ideas, Dewey and Addams were awakened to the possibilities inherent in Adler's cosmopolitan vision. "The [immigrant] contribution idea [of American nationality] was greatly influenced by the writings of William James and Felix Adler," remarks Rivka Lissak (Lissak 1989: 157, 166).

By the second decade of the twentieth century, Dewey had universalized Adler's version of the Jewish "mission theory" to encompass all groups. Specifically, Dewey advocated that each American ethnic group [not merely the Jews] "maintain its distinctive literary and artistic traditions . . . that it might have the more to contribute to others." Dewey also promoted cultural mixing, "to see to it that all get from one another the best that each strain has to offer from its own tradition and culture . . . so that it shall surrender into a common fund of wisdom and experience what it especially has to contribute."

As an old-stock New Englander, Dewey was more sensitive than Adler to the history of double-consciousness and to the particular tensions within the Anglo-American pantheon. It is therefore significant that

Dewey added to his interpretation of Adler the caveat that “the dangerous thing is for one factor to isolate itself, to try to live off its past and then to impose itself upon other elements, or at least to keep itself intact and thus refuse to accept what other cultures have to offer, so as thereby to be transmuted into authentic Americanism.” Dewey specifically singled out the Anglo-Saxons as guilty of this ethnic hegemony when he proffered that “neither Englandism nor New Englandism, neither Puritan nor Cavalier, any more than Teuton or Slav, can do anything but furnish one note in a vast symphony” (Lissak 1989: 156). Meanwhile, Addams endorsed Adler’s “law of levitation” whereby the spiritually advanced (i.e., Jewish or Anglo-Saxon) were duty-bound to uplift the less advanced peoples toward a universal humanism. Addams viewed the spiritually advanced peoples as those of the West and the spiritually advanced class as the educated middle class, which formed a chosen, “better element” in society with a duty to enlighten the rest (Lissak 1989: 19, 170).

This does not mean that Addams was a cultural chauvinist. On the contrary, she merely echoed Adler and William James’s views that an ethnic group’s contribution to civilization stemmed from the individual capabilities that happened to arise in that ethnic by historical circumstance. Cultural evolution, James noted, was an accidental process, and moral progress was a value that outweighed group survival. This reaffirmed Felix Adler’s cardinal dictum that particular ethnic groups had a duty to sacrifice their corporate existence for the progress of humankind. In the case of the United States, the dominant Anglo-Saxon group had no case for preservation but instead needed to devote itself to bringing forth the new cosmopolitan humanity. Adler’s influence extended beyond his invention of the idea of immigrant contributions: he also developed the practical program to put it into action. For instance, his 1906 address to the New York Ethical Culture Society branch proposed that immigrants’ cultures should be preserved during Americanization, a course of action that was later implemented in New York’s Madison Street Settlement (Lissak 1989: 167, 170–171).

Adler’s immense ideological influence was matched by the popular appeal of another Reform Jew, Israel Zangwill. A playwright who came to the United States from England, Zangwill wrote *The Melting Pot*, which was a great success in 1908 when it first appeared in the United States. Among its most eager supporters were Hull House Settlement workers, who used Zangwill’s work to inspire their immigrant clientele (Lissak 1989: 146). Zangwill’s drama followed the travails of a Russian-born

Jewish composer who immigrates to the United States. The composer, David Quixano, saw America as a great pot in which all of the ethnic antagonisms of the Old World were shed as differences “fused into one group signifying the brotherhood of man.” David hoped to compose a symphony (akin to a symphony of ethnic voices) to express his vision of the United States as a divinely inspired crucible. In the end, David marries his gentile spouse (with reluctance issuing from both sets of parents), and the *finale* is accompanied by Zangwill’s “American” symphony (Gordon 1964: 120).

Zangwill’s vision of the United States is fully articulated by David, who gushes: “America is God’s crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming! . . . Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.” Zangwill’s theme, reiterated in a book of the same name, was similar to Adler’s: American Jews should give up their ethnic particularity, join the melting pot, and help inaugurate the nation of an impending new age (Sollors 1986: 66). Their heritage would not disappear, instead it would be preserved in the universalist “moral and ethical precepts” of the new American nation (Lissak 1989: 147).

It is easy to view the cosmopolitan idealism of Adler and Zangwill as solutions to their personal identity crises as Jews. Adler was a lapsed Reform Jew with a liberal-humanist worldview, whereas Zangwill, though an ardent Zionist, had married a gentile. Psychoanalysis aside, it is significant that the thinking of these outsiders to the Anglo-American tradition resonated so well with their Protestant contemporaries. This was no coincidence: the American intellectual tradition had a homegrown heritage of radical individualism and universalist millenarianism, from the Puritan antinomians and Thomas Jefferson to the Transcendentalists and the Free Religious Association. The introduction of Reform Jewish messianism merely filled in the details of a picture whose outlines had already been sketched.

The end product was a liberal, evolutionist cosmopolitanism. The optimistic American belief in progress saw humankind as emergent from a parochial state toward an outward-oriented teleology based on universal brotherhood, humanitarianism, and equality. These ideas, in turn, became influential among evolutionary liberals of the next generation. For example, New Englander Talcott Parsons’s highest evolutionary state for society was based on the Deweyan concept of voluntary association (Par-

sons 1964: 353–355). As Anthony Smith comments, “An evolutionary view of humanity saw history in terms of growth: growth in scale, in population, of technology, of knowledge, of mastery of nature. In this perspective, even the largest nation was but a staging post in the ascent of humanity. That is why the normative functionalists came to see in America the very type of assimilative continental modernity that heralded a unitary globe of fused cultures” (A. Smith 1990a: 2).

The Reform Activity of the Liberal Progressives

The Liberal Progressives, drawing on their eclectic mix of influences, quickly became active in pragmatic reform activity, displaying a Deweyan propensity to act their philosophy out through practice. For instance, in Chicago, Hull House followed Felix Adler’s integration policies, seeking to preserve immigrant culture so as to ease the immigrant’s adjustment into the host society. There, a folkloric “Labor Museum” was set up to display various immigrant art and craft traditions. The museum hosted a range of cultural exhibits and gatherings while teaching the immigrants to preserve their ethnic traditions.

These activities should not lead to snap conclusions. They were not the result of an ideology of cultural separatism. Rather, the Liberal Progressives were believers in individual-centered Americanization (defined purely in terms of humanism) and, following University of Chicago sociologist W. I. Thomas, posited that ethnic particularity would vanish in three generations (Persons 1987: 54). Hull House was thus an institution of humane, cosmopolitan assimilation: a place where an emphasis on the universality of the American nation would provide the continuity between the immigrants’ pasts and their new nation. Their homeland’s struggle for liberty was an American struggle for liberty; their homeland’s culture was part of American culture. America thus conceived was a universal nation of humanistic individuals, not a *conscience collective* (Lissak 1989: 25–33).

Hull House humanitarianism also manifested itself in political activity such as the Immigrant Protective League, formed in 1908 as a benevolent association for new immigrants. The League soon engaged immigration restrictionist forces when Grace Abbott of Hull House testified in front of a 1912 congressional committee against an immigrant literacy test. Designed to bar immigrants from nontraditional sources, the test was vetoed by President Taft, who later claimed that Abbott’s testimony had persuaded him to do so (Davis 1967: 93). Also during that year, Addams

lobbied, without success, for a change to the naturalization act which would remove the demand that immigrants forswear allegiance to their homeland before swearing allegiance to the United States. Despite this setback, Addams, highly esteemed by the public and by successive Progressive administrations, managed to attain influence as a representative of Liberal-Progressive views within the Americanization movement.

Addams was, for example, a member of the National Committee of One Hundred of the Federal Bureau of Education, established in 1916 to oversee the Americanization movement. Although Addams and her fellow Liberal Progressives wielded limited influence within the movement, they represented a solid humanitarian opposition to the prevailing consensus. As Lissak observes,

The crucial issue . . . when examining the Liberal Progressives' views in relation to the Americanization movement is what role they expected the Anglo-American strain to play in the harmonious orchestra of America. Liberal Progressives clearly rejected Anglo-Saxon racism and chauvinism, prejudice and ethnic discrimination; they criticized the underlying assumption, typical of Anglo-Americans, that the United States was "an imaginary homogenous Anglo-Saxon population." (Lissak 1989: 179–180)

The egalitarian vision also permeated the Liberal-Progressive view of American history, and in 1915 the Liberal Progressives tried to convince the American Education Association to include the cultural contributions of various immigrant groups in the national history curriculum. Resistance to such a plan stalled it, but Chicago's public schools finally adopted it in 1927. This addition to the mainstream school curriculum did not usher in a major shift toward cosmopolitan historiography, but it was a first, important step, and it antedated the work of America's first pluralist scientific historians by some ten years (Lissak 1989: 58, 178–180).

The Marginality of Liberal Progressive Cosmopolitanism

The Chicago Liberal Progressives' stand on dominant ethnicity was not widely shared. They soon found themselves marginal not only to American society, but to the Progressive mainstream as well. Social workers in the Protestant church castigated the Liberal-Progressive approach to city reform for its secular relativism (Davis 1967: 151). Even within the Settlement movement, liberal attitudes toward dominant ethnicity were not

unequivocally held: many Settlement workers favored immigration restriction, and a sizable contingent, led by Robert A. Woods of Andover House in Boston, believed in an Anglo-Saxon America.⁷

The divide was best illustrated by the conflicting statements of two German-Jewish residents of University Settlement in New York, which was possibly the most radical Settlement in the nation. The difference in their prognoses is striking. One of these residents, Walter Weyl, contended in 1912 that “many of the people who are opposed to a practically unregulated immigration are the very ones seeking to promote the welfare of those immigrants who are already in.” The other resident, Lillian Wald, countered in 1915 that “it is significant that few, if any, of the men and women who have had extended opportunity for social contact with the foreigner favor a further restriction of immigration” (Davis 1967: 90). The fact that Settlement workers in most areas remained close to their Protestant roots further suggests that the Liberal-Progressive attitude should not be generalized to the level of the entire Settlement movement.⁸

Universalist Socialism

Divisions within the Settlement movement had their counterparts in the American socialist movement. As mentioned, socialists, whether secular or religious, generally did not extend their egalitarian principles into the cosmopolitan arena before 1910. Yet, as will become obvious, a universalist approach survived among a minority of individuals, chiefly those influenced by Liberal-Progressive thought. The most important figure in this regard was Eugene V. Debs, a native-born American (albeit of Alsatian-immigrant descent) from Indiana.

Debs was a popular labor organizer noted for his humanitarianism and a major force in the Socialist Party of America (SPA) during its first two decades. Debs’s socialism led him to support the Stuttgart resolution (see Chapter 4), which endorsed nondiscrimination in national immigration policies. Hence, during the 1910 Party Congress, Debs unsuccessfully challenged proposals favoring immigration restriction, calling them “utterly unsocialistic, reactionary, and in truth outrageous.” He added: “If socialism, international revolutionary socialism, does not stand staunchly, unflinchingly, and uncompromisingly for the working class and for the oppressed masses of all lands, then it stands for none and its claim is a false pretense and its profession a delusion and a snare” (Leinenweber 1984: 252–253).

Meanwhile, Debs was the motive force behind the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), dubbed the “Wobblies,” which managed to organize as many as 40,000 workers between 1909 and 1917. Many of these workers were unskilled immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe spurned by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) (McCormick 1990: 113). Debs was not alone in his internationalism. A significant minority within the SPA leadership during the 1905–1915 period were internationalist in spirit, notably Tommy Morgan, Tom Lewis, and Frank Cassidy, a phenomenon demonstrated by their willingness to take in foreigners as equals and endorse free immigration (Vecoli 1980: 270).

Another important believer in universalist socialism was William English Walling, one of the few socialist thinkers to press for racial and ethnic justice. Walling believed that the SPA’s views on immigration were part of a reactionary plot to split the international socialist movement. Significantly, Walling also assailed the SPA for its minimal effectiveness in drawing black support and along with Jane Addams and other Liberal Progressives, helped to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 (Pittenger 1993: 178–179).

Walling contended that evolutionary theories (Marxist or racist) were flawed, and he was an early advocate of the relativism of Franz Boas, which emphasized the importance of environment in shaping national character and intelligence while casting theories of racial hierarchy into relativistic doubt (Hyatt 1990: 110). Walling opposed the inequality of scientific racism and sought to defend what he saw as the American democratic tradition. Furthermore, he traced the roots of his thought to the Enlightenment “rights of man” tradition and was one of the few defenders of bourgeois democracy within the ranks of the SPA. Not surprisingly, these views led him to be roundly castigated by his fellow socialists (Pittenger 1993: 183–185).

Some of the sources of Walling’s thought—the liberal humanism of the Enlightenment, John Dewey’s Pragmatism, and the environmental determinism of Franz Boas—are clearly linked to Liberal Progressivism. These ties were no accident, for Walling was a resident of New York’s University Settlement and was deeply involved in the movement. In many respects, then, we see in Walling the epitome of early twentieth-century liberal-egalitarian thought, a new synthesis that he would ride toward its final incarnation as avant-garde left-modernism.

Walling proved prescient in this progression: by the 1920s, American socialism had become enmeshed with expressive radicalism and the New

Social Science of cultural relativists such as Boas and Dewey (Baltzell 1964: 162). The change was captured nicely in fellow progressive socialist Max Eastman's novel, *Venture*, in which the IWW's Bill Haywood squares off against an old guard SPA socialist. The SPA member proclaims that she is "a socialist, but . . . an Anglo-Saxon and not a German socialist," while Haywood, the protagonist, replies that the workers cannot wait for (Anglo-Saxon) evolution and instead demand (Marxist) revolution. In this way, the IWW (and their New Intellectual supporters) were portrayed as daring cosmopolitan innovators and the SPA as a stuffy WASP establishment. Dewey's association with young socialist Max Eastman (his student) and the socialist-leaning *New Republic* (Dewey was an editor) further demonstrates that socialism had become ensnared in the tentacles of Liberal-Progressive thought. Once outsiders, relativist, cosmopolitan New Intellectuals like Walling and Eastman were apparently now in the vanguard of a new American socialism (Pittenger 1993: 123, 125).

The New Liberalism: Universalism in the Intellectual Mainstream

Universalizing tendencies had breached the WASP barrier among socialists, and the trends set in motion by the New Social Science inevitably made an impact on the academic mainstream. The leading figures in the New Social Science movement were John Dewey and Franz Boas. Dewey's influence (and that of the Liberal Progressives) permeated the University of Chicago's Sociology Department after World War I, with W. I. Thomas and Robert Park serving as the Chicago School's leading lights. Boas, meanwhile, and his relativist school of anthropology at Columbia University (which included rising stars like Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict in the late 1920s and 1930s), helped put firm conceptual distance between the ideas of biological race and anthropological culture. The influence of the New Social Science was such that by 1930, American social scientists had abandoned racism as a credible theoretical framework (Gleason 1992: 156–157).

American historians, though lagging some years behind their social science colleagues, also abandoned ethnocentric historiography with remarkable swiftness (Kennedy 1977: 94–96; Plumb 1969). This change actually began in the years after 1925, which witnessed a growing retreat from romantic history writing—the only remaining practitioners being the immigrant "filiopietist" ethnohistorians.⁹ Evidence of the emerging

sensibility can be gleaned from the pages of contemporary professional history journals. “In the early twenties,” Kathy Scales observes, “there are, for the first time, a number of articles on particular ethnic groups among colonial immigrants, and from 1932 to 1935 the same kind of emphasis is seen on the contributions of particular ethnic groups to the Revolution” (Scales 1991: 285).

The fact that even defenders of the teaching of American mythic history abjured the privileging of “old Americans” in the nation’s historical narrative demonstrates the magnitude of the change that had already occurred by 1935. For instance, Howard Mumford Jones, after defending the need for a mythic history to inspire the nation, added: “‘Old Americans’ (hateful phrase!) tend to take the point of view that American history is their private possession because they were here first. Aside from the fact that the only persons entitled to the benefit of this silly argument are the Indians, the assumption is not even true’ ” (quoted in Scales 1991: 287–288).

The rise of fascism in the mid-1930s helped galvanize the more pluralistic worldview outlined above. “The confrontation with Nazism [had] induced a shift in liberal sensibilities,” argues Gary Gerstle, “that was, in the 1930’s, subtle but would, in the 1940’s, achieve seismic proportions. The magnitude of this shift can be discerned in the outpouring of books on racial problems and religious prejudice during the 1940’s. Causes that had languished on the liberal agenda—civil rights . . . and immigration reform—were now embraced” (Gerstle 1994: 1070).

Gerstle correctly asserts that cultural issues pertaining to ethnicity and race became more prominent with the rise of fascism and war (Gleason 1992: 165–166). Yet the crucial shifts in consciousness that he describes *were already in place by the early 1930s*, providing a vital substratum that conditioned the American response to fascism. In the words of E. Digby Baltzell, “the central ideas of the New Social Science, largely developed before the First War . . . finally came into their own as the dominant view of man and society, in the course of the thirties . . . they now shared John Dewey’s faith in the plasticity of human nature” (Baltzell 1964: 270–271).

As the 1930s progressed, Anglo-Saxon ancestralism came to be totally eclipsed within American academic historiography. Marcus Lee Hansen, a student of Frederick Jackson Turner, consummated this process with his immigrant-centered interpretation of American identity (Saveth 1948: 202, 204–208). Steeped in the new left-liberal thinking of his day,

Hansen took issue with aspects of Turner's thesis. Insisting that Turner had overemphasized the role of the frontier and underemphasized immigrant contributions, Hansen, described as "America's first transethnic historian," stated in 1938 that the American, though influenced by the British strain, was also a product of the world's cultural diversity. No longer the province of Anglo-Protestant pioneers, the American story would increasingly revolve around the experience of urban immigrants, arriving by steamship to forge a new industrial civilization (Shenton 1990: 252). Hansen's position was supported by fellow historian T. C. Blegen, who observed that scholarship post-Turner revealed "a new emphasis . . . an emphasis that took into account the varied backgrounds of the racial elements that lend color and richness to the epic of America" (quoted in Saveth 1948: 219).

Hansen and Blegen, though pioneers in the field of American historiography, should not be accorded too much significance. Nor should American socialists. Rather, the rise of cosmopolitan Americanism must be traced to the turn-of-the-twentieth-century activity of the Liberal Progressives, who distilled anarchist and Social Gospel influences into a coherent and grounded program. Their egalitarian ethics, infused with a strong dose of secular liberalism, gave birth to the archetypal modern American vision: that of a universal, humanistic, melting pot nation, drawn from all corners of the world, in which the Anglo-Saxon was but one influence among many.

Cosmopolitan Clerics: The Role of Ecumenical Protestantism

The Liberal Progressives finally shattered the contradictions of double-consciousness during 1900–1910. At the same time, the pioneering role played by these Victorian humanitarians must be placed in its proper perspective. Secular Settlement workers and practitioners of the New Social Science in the elite universities did not have the ear of the wider national culture until World War II. Instead, this privilege belonged to the Protestant churches, whose tentacles reached into every hamlet in the country.

Divisions within the Social Gospel Movement

The Social Gospel movement provided the seedbed from which both conservative and liberal variants of equality could emerge. The mainstream of the movement was conservative on many cultural fronts, but increasingly a more liberal strain of thought was emerging.¹ The first outlet for a more liberated Social Gospel was, as we saw, the liberal wing of the Settlement movement, which was staffed mostly by liberal Protestants rather than secular atheists. Another outlet for the rising volume of left-wing religious liberalism was provided by home mission agencies. These played a role analogous to that of the Settlement, and, not surprisingly, their approach to questions of immigration and national identity closely paralleled that of the Settlement movement.

Home Missions and the New Immigration

The Social Gospel movement, which germinated in the theological seminaries of the nation, quickly expanded outward in the late nineteenth century, embracing philanthropic activity designed to bring about social

healing. These charitable projects had their roots in interdenominational organizations like the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and in the extracurricular activities of home missions in American cities. Protestant agencies often targeted immigrant populations with the intent of gaining converts. The mainline denominations even joined forces to win the immigrant, training pastors in foreign languages in order to expedite dealings with local populations.

This optimism proved no match for history: significant headway was made only among ethnic groups (Scandinavian, German, British) with a traditional affinity for Protestantism (Bell [1943] 1962: 141, 181–182). Furthermore, the overall numbers involved were insignificant. As with the Settlement movement, however, close contact between Anglo-Protestant and immigrant Americans provided a catalyst for more sympathetic attitudes to develop toward previously despised Southern and Eastern European groups.

As a result of their ready conversion, Scandinavians and Germans were easily accepted into the Protestant fold earlier in the century. Now, a small chorus of voices began to be heard which championed the immigrant as a valuable contributor to American society. This group naturally included the small contingent of Southern and Eastern European ministers and laypersons, some of whom made their presence felt at meetings of the Baptist Home Missions Society in the 1890s and early 1900s. Yet, arguably more important were the pastors who ministered to ethnic churches, mostly men of German descent.

These pastors had developed an affinity for their Slavic congregations and sought repeatedly to defend them. For instance, Henry Gleis, a Baptist preacher and the son of German immigrants to Texas, defended his Slavic parishioners' during 1908–1910. He contended that the social environment in both the Old World and the New was molding the new arrivals in negative ways and that Slavic immigrants were capable of becoming loyal Americans (Davis 1973: 116–121). This stance induced a change in attitude within the Protestant church intelligentsia toward the European immigrant. As Davis writes of the Baptists: "In this [Baptist] corner of American Protestantism, one may observe a complete about-face in attitude, from hostility toward the foreigner in the late eighties and nineties to mutual respect by the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century" (Davis 1973: 127–128).

As already noted, there was a parallel between the Settlement reformers and their mainline counterparts in liberal Protestantism. The interaction between "new" immigrants and Anglo-Protestant figures, whether Settle-

ment leaders like Jane Addams or Protestant home missionaries, seems to have elicited a newfound sympathy for the foreigner. To be sure, the Protestant mainstream lagged a few years behind in catching the new “left-liberal” spirit. Even so, for Protestant elite attitudes to have come round to liberalism by 1905–1910 puts them very much at the crest of cosmopolitan attitude change.

This change was reflected in the Protestant leaders’ posture toward the Settlement movement. Although some still denounced Jane Addams’s position on Americanization in 1905 as “dangerous as dynamite” and condemned her lack of religious instruction, other figures advocated the emulation of her approach (May [1949] 1967: 226; Davis 1973: 147–151). A similar process occurred within the Protestant press. The formerly conservative Boston *Watchman*, a Baptist organ, completely reversed its position of 1905, when it editorialized against ethnic hatred and argued that the virtues of foreign cultures be taught to American schoolchildren. This approach, they argued, would produce a “cosmopolitan outlook” and reinforce the idea that no ethnic group could claim to dominate the American nation. Other denominations soon followed suit: Presbyterian spokesmen altered their line between 1904 and 1913, eschewing dominant ethnicity for the doctrine of universal brotherhood. In 1908, Congregationalists first spoke of the positive qualities of the new immigrants, and, in the same year, a Methodist writer repudiated his previously negative statements on immigration restriction (Davis 1973: 160–161).

The Contact Theory in Sociological Perspective

The parallels between the Settlement movement and liberal Protestantism might suggest that close contact with new immigrant groups automatically led to sympathy. Indeed, in both Settlements and home missions, more positive attitudes crystallized after close personal relations were formed with immigrants during 1900–1910. Yet as Forbes notes, such a theory is far too simple (Forbes 1997). Certainly, close contact with the “other” was important, but Anglo-Protestants had been interacting with non-Anglo immigrants in numerous ways since the founding of the Republic. The difference now lay in the new left-liberals’ preconceptions. Instead of approaching the foreigner with fear or loathing, the left-liberal Anglo-Saxon reformer exhibited humanitarianism—albeit from a position of superiority. This differing preconception was the result of an ideological shift which cannot be explained by social interaction.

Not everyone was so open-minded, however. Settlement workers, as

we have seen, were evenly divided between those who became more conservative, did not change their position, or adopted a more liberal view of immigration. The same can be said of home missionaries. Though some began to empathize with the new immigrants, others had the opposite reaction. To take but two examples, both John Wallace and Henry Morehouse, missionaries who proselytized among the Slavs of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and the French Canadians of Maine, respectively, returned with more negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration (Davis 1973: 76, 115).

Despite the above exceptions, the continued failure to convert the immigrant after 1910, a record increasingly at odds with the success of the Catholic Church, played almost no part in the attitudes of elite Protestants toward immigration! The only explanation of this pattern is that Protestant leaders were beginning to sacrifice traditional evangelism at the altar of humanitarian ethics. Liberal theological seminaries started the process by organizing Settlements in which religious belief played little role. Andover Theological Seminary in Boston, for instance, affiliated with a Settlement of the same name, as did Union Theological Seminary in New York. This symbiotic relationship led to the development of the “institutional church,” which functioned in the same way as did the Settlements. First federated in 1894, the institutional churches emphasized educational, recreational, and philanthropic functions while asking little or nothing of recipients in the way of religious commitment (Handy 1991: 104–105; Cavert 1968: 30; Bell [1943] 1962: 85–86, 248–249).

Overseas Missions: From Christian Civilization to Humanitarian Internationalism

The overseas missionary activity of American Protestantism underwent the same evolution toward relativism, tolerance, and cosmopolitanism that had begun in the home missions, though the process took somewhat longer. In the nineteenth century, this attitude was nowhere in evidence, with attitudes resembling those of the antebellum period when Anglo-Saxonism and the cry of Manifest Destiny went hand in hand as the American standard proceeded into Mexico (Horsman 1981). Josiah Strong’s *Our Country* (1885) was very much in this tradition. Although Strong argued that no race should literally displace any other, he also spoke eloquently of the providential destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race to Christianize and Anglo-Saxonize the world (Strong [1885]: 215–216).

Washington Gladden was yet another Social Gospel figure who preached the message of Anglo-Saxon mission, declaring in 1894 that all would be governed by “Christian” principles (Moorhead 1994: 150–153). These views were nearly universal within the ranks of American Protestantism.

The World Parliament of Religions, an exhibit staged at Chicago as part the Columbian Exposition of 1893, highlighted this mood. The exhibit was the first opportunity for many Americans to experience religions outside the Judeo-Christian orbit: “For seventeen days running, thousands of spectators jammed the Hall of Columbus hoping to catch a glimpse of the colorfully garbed savants and swamis who had traveled from all parts of the earth to describe the faiths of their homelands” (Wacker 1989: 253). Nonetheless, the event was more a parade than a two-way cultural exchange (Clinchy 1934: 139).

The immediate reaction of most Protestant visitors was to speak derisively of the world religions as “heathen faiths,” while Protestant missionaries spoke of how their “sturdy” race would enable them to fulfill their chosen destiny and bring God’s truth to the rest of the world. Opinion at this point tended to reflect that of Benjamin Warfield, a Presbyterian professor at Princeton Theological Seminary who argued that God permitted the heathen religions to exist for the same reason as he permitted the Old Testament law: “as a demonstration of their incapacity” to save. Even Lyman Abbott, a member of the liberal wing of Protestant thought, maintained during the World Parliament that while “we recognize the voice of God in all prophets and in all time, we believe no other revelation . . . equals that which he [Christ] has made [in this] one transcendental human life” (Moorhead 1994: 151; Wacker 1989: 257–279).

The Evangelical Alliance of the 1890s was an ecumenical vessel that attempted to unite various Protestant denominations in their “Christianization” of the world, and its president, Josiah Strong, continually stressed the importance of missionary expansion (Strong [1885] 1963: 201). The Spanish-American War of 1898 provided an early testing ground for a newly mobilized institutional Christianity, and it witnessed the cooperation of Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. “We agreed to moderate denominational zeal,” explained ecumenical clergyman Dr. Charles Thompson in 1899 in reference to Puerto Rico, “to go into the island as a band of brethren” (Cavert 1968: 73).

At first, the war divided the American populace, but the churches quickly closed ranks in support of imperialist expansion. In 1899, Wallace Radcliffe, moderator of the General Assembly of the Northern Presbyte-

rian Church, stated the majority's case for expansion as follows: "I believe in imperialism, because I believe in foreign missions. . . . If the nation multiplies its sails, we must write on every one of them glad tidings of great joy. We have come into the kingdom for such a time as this. The imperialism of the Gospel is the emancipation of humanity" (Moorhead 1994: 156).

The short duration of the Spanish-American War seemed to confirm that Christianity was on the verge of "civilizing" the world. For Lyman Abbott, "it is the function of the Anglo-Saxon race to confer these gifts of civilization, through law, commerce, and education, on the uncivilized people of the world. . . . Barbarians have rights which civilized people are bound to respect, but they have no right to their barbarism" (Handy 1971: 127–128). The interpenetration of religious and national themes also functioned at the political level. Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson, for instance, employed the biblical language of election to garner support for their particular campaigns. Thus President McKinley, defending his actions against the Spanish in 1898, claimed that "there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace to do the very best we could by them as our fellow men for whom Christ died" (Moorhead 1994: 155).

Religious leaders concurred. "I cannot doubt," proffered Washington Gladden in 1909, "that because of these benign interventions of our national government the people of many of the eastern lands must be more ready than they have ever been to listen to the message of the gospel of Christ" (Handy 1971: 142). The efforts on behalf of Christian civilization also stirred the imaginations of missionaries. A total of 150,000 attended the first Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York in 1900, which was addressed by President McKinley. Meanwhile, the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, guided by figures like John R. Mott, Sherwood Eddy, and Robert E. Speer, enrolled thousands of enthusiastic recruits from colleges throughout the nation. The net effect of these efforts was a golden age of missionary activity, highly identified with Anglo-Saxon civilization, which surged until World War I (Cavert 1968: 38; Handy 1971: 126–131).

The Mott–Eddy–Speer lay leadership attained great influence by strengthening the links between the religious and secular elite. As noted, McKinley's endorsement of the missionary process was reciprocated by clerical approval of expansion. Less well known are the links that existed

between leading church figures like Robert Speer and John R. Mott, and political, business, and educational elites. For example, during 1900–1920 Mott and Speer regularly vacationed with leading members of the East Coast establishment. The resort at Mount Desert Island, for example, off the Maine coast, brought Protestant leaders into contact with university presidents like Low of Columbia and Eliot of Harvard, and, more importantly, linked them with philanthropists such as John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, and Henry Ford (Hutchison 1989: 8–10).

Surveying the strength of the Christian-civilization link in the United States in 1911, J. Ross Stevenson, soon to be president of Princeton Theological Seminary, told a Student Volunteer Movement audience: “I am sure all would agree that during the last quarter century there has been the most marvelous advance in the Kingdom of God that the Church has ever witnessed.” Speaking to the assembled young missionaries, he added a note of inspiration for the future: “We are dealing with the prospective leaders who are to have a part in a service which is destined, I believe . . . during the next quarter century to be the greatest one that has ever been witnessed in the history of the Kingdom of God” (Handy 1971: 138).

The Transition to Tolerance in the Missionary Establishment

The success of the overseas missionary enterprise in the pre-World War I years depended largely on a unity of purpose between theological liberals and conservatives. To be sure, theological liberals were ascendant and dominated the clerical “Protestant Establishment” by 1920 (Hutchison 1968: 11; 1989: 14; 1992: 3). However, the rift between liberal-modernists and conservative-fundamentalists, which is so prominent today, was submerged in the missionary enterprise until the mid-1920s (Wuthnow 1989: 28; Szasz 1982: 92, 107). This split emerged primarily as a conservative reaction against the growing relativism of the Protestant establishment.

The First Cultural Relativists

The development of a more relativistic view of Protestant civilization among liberal clergymen proceeded steadily after 1910. Change developed along two fronts. First, a new desire emerged to disassociate Chris-

tianity from Western, particularly Anglo-Protestant, civilization. Somewhat later, liberal Protestant thinkers began to eschew the entire overseas missionary project as imperialistic and to accept the relativity of spiritual truth.

Sherwood Eddy and Arthur J. Brown, secretary of the board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, were on the leading edge of this consciousness revolution. Thus, in the first decade of the twentieth century, Eddy complained of his “superficial . . . often imperialistic, Anglo-Saxon” peers. He also attacked the condescending attitude that Westerners, including some missionaries, held toward the Chinese. Around the same time, in 1907, Brown criticized his faith’s tendency to take on “some of the characteristics of the white races [while] missionaries, inheriting these characteristics, have more or less unconsciously identified them with the essentials.” Brown rejected such a link and pleaded instead for a system of indigenous churches for overseas peoples, which would marry their traditional cultures with the principles of the Gospel (Handy 1971: 136).

The Spread of Universalism

Universalism gained ground rapidly among elite Protestants. The change can be gauged from organized Protestantism’s response to World War I. Whereas support for the Spanish-American War was virtually unanimous, many American clergymen opposed U.S. participation in the Great War in 1917. This new position is clearly delineated in the writings of William Adams Brown, a Presbyterian theologian at Union Theological Seminary who was charged with drawing up the position paper of the Federal Council of Churches (FCC), the American ecumenical Protestant body, in 1917. Brown, on behalf of the FCC, spoke of American Protestantism’s duty to overcome “the forces that would prevent the union of the nations in a commonwealth of free peoples.” The FCC also pledged itself “to hold our own nation true to its professed aims of justice, liberty and brotherhood” (Cavert 1968: 91). Immediately after the war, Brown described the shift that had taken place:

Noticeable among the effects of the war has been the loss of confidence in Western leadership. . . . Asiatics and Africans fought in Europe against white men during the war and have carried back to their homes a very different report of the state of European civilization

from that which has been given to them by missionaries. (Handy 1971: 191–192)

By the end of the war, even former figureheads in the missionary establishment were denouncing the imperialism of Western culture. Robert E. Speer, for instance, in a highly unpopular speech at Columbia University in 1918, claimed that the United States needed to rise above “pure national individualism” to embrace “universal ideals and the universal spirit” (Moorhead 1994: 162). In the same year, the American Council of the World Alliance for International Friendship backed Speer’s position, issuing a statement that called for a new Christian unity to transcend racial and national boundaries (Cavert 1968: 100). These arguments were also reflected on the home front, where the denominational leadership of the Protestant mainline generally opposed loyalty oaths for German Americans and other “enemy aliens” (Davis 1973: 169–172).

At this point, Sherwood Eddy and other members of the Protestant elite in the FCC further distinguished themselves by giving strong backing to the League of Nations, criticizing the Senate’s unwillingness to support it. Evidence of liberal Protestant support for the new internationalism can be discerned from several sources. First, a survey of almost 18,000 leading ministers in 1919 illustrated their backing for the League. Second, the major Protestant bodies conducted a nationwide campaign of speeches to canvas support for the League, which drew a total audience of over 33,000 ministers and 700,000 laypersons (Miller 1958: 320–323). Finally, 12.5 million of the 13.8 million letters dispatched to the International Conference on the Limitation of Armament (1921) came from those affiliated with the Protestant church (Cavert 1968: 100, 105).

Convincing evidence of the Protestant clerical elite’s new internationalist ethos appears in the change in rhetoric between the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 and the International Missionary Conference held at Jerusalem in 1928. During the first conference, participants (largely American or British) waxed lyrical about the “grandeur” of their faith marching on to the “conquest of the five great religions of the modern world.” A paper at the 1910 conference entitled “The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions” confirmed this stance and received little attention. Eighteen years later, the issue of interreligious contact was a top priority, and imperialist thinking had all but disappeared (Wacker 1989: 263). The internationalism of the Wilsonian era is often, correctly, contrasted with the self-confident jingoism

of previous administrations like those of McKinley, Taft, or Roosevelt (Lasch 1979: 206). However, it is less well known that the newly liberalized elite of organized American Protestantism may have been the most important driving force behind this internationalism.

In the years to come, members of that elite would take cultural relativism even further. Speer, for example, argued in the late 1920s that the church did not have a mandate to “impose beliefs and practices on others in order to manage their souls.” Just as impressively, Sherwood Eddy, who had evangelized to some 140,000 people in 1914 alone, now echoed Speer’s sentiments: “After the World War, religion became for me a social experience. The war destroyed the faith of the old world for multitudes of us who were in it” (Xing 1996: 52). This point of view was consummated by William Ernest Hocking in his collaborative study, *Rethinking Missions: A Laymen’s Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (1932). In its pages, Hocking cast doubt on the dictum that Christianity was destined to replace other religions and in the process provoked a firestorm of debate (Wacker 1989: 259, 262–264).

The growing inclination to “construe the missionary enterprise in therapeutic rather than imperialistic terms” foreshadowed the exodus of liberal Protestants from the missionary effort. The “religious depression” of the 1920s and early 1930s struck the first blow, with student volunteer activity plummeting by a whopping 1,000 percent. By 1960, foreign missions were the exclusive province of conservative Protestants (Handy 1960; 1971: 201).

The change in missionary policy in China is illustrative in this regard. Where once the mainline Protestant missionaries and the YMCA sought “the evangelization of our mother country and the world in this generation,” the new mood emphasized cultural accommodation, racial brotherhood, and international cooperation (Xing 1996: 49, 52). This change of mind stemmed partly from Sino-American interaction. Chinese intellectuals railed against Anglo-American cultural conceit during 1922–1924, and Anglo-Protestant missionaries responded by attempting to synthesize Protestantism with Chinese culture and traditional philosophy (Xing 1996: 66–67).

The great shift occurred during the early 1920s. In 1920, Protestant church literature tried to sell the Christian message to the Chinese by stressing the Christian nations’ superiority in both material and moral terms. A few years later, the tune had changed. For instance, in an essay entitled “The Evolution of a Missionary’s Thought,” in the 1925 issue of *The Life* (a Christian Fellowship journal), John L. Childs of the YMCA

revealed the transformation that had taken place in mainline Protestant thinking:

In my opinion a third view which is now largely held by missionary workers will also have to be modified, namely the view which holds that in Christianity we have a final and complete revelation of moral and spiritual truth and that because of its inherent supremacy Christianity has the right to be the exclusive religion of the world. It is one thing to say that Christianity has its important contribution to make to the progress of the human race, and it is quite another thing to assert that the values which are found in Christianity are so unique, and completely satisfying, that it possesses the obvious and inherent right to displace all other religions. (Xing 1996: 72)

Neither Sino-American interaction nor Anglo-immigrant interaction in the home missions and Settlements of the United States adequately explains the transformation in Protestant thinking. Rather, the intellectual evolution of Protestant thought, under the influence of cultural egalitarianism (i.e., relativism), helped to render the missionaries more receptive to their host society. As Grant Wacker states, the sense of “terminal ambiguity” brought on by relativism had, by the late twentieth century, rendered the idea of mainline-Protestant foreign missions anachronistic (Wacker 1989: 267, 274). Evidently, the new liberal universalism had dampened the evangelical fervor that had propelled the interdenominational Protestant “crusade” for well over a century (Link and McCormick 1983: 113).

Ecumenical Protestantism

“My sub-title—‘The Ecumenical Century,’” writes English theological scholar Horton Davies, “has been selected to emphasize . . . the decisive difference between the *competitive* character of nineteenth and the *cooperative* character of twentieth century Christianity” (Davies 1965: 5). Davies’s argument is especially valid for the American case, where denominational rivalry had already begun to wane by the late nineteenth century.

The move toward a more ecumenical attitude among the Protestant denominations could be attributed to two motives. The first is Protestant solidarity: a more united Protestantism, for instance, might better coordinate missionary and institutional efforts so as to avoid overlap. Protestant organization could also enhance Protestant influence in the political arena and, most importantly, could serve as a more effective bulwark

against Catholicism. In this sense, ecumenical Protestantism would be expected to buttress a sense of Anglo-American dominant ethnicity.

On the other hand, the second motive, the centrifugal thrust of ecumenical Protestantism contained within it the potential to produce ethnic *decline* by overlapping broader sectarian boundaries. Once one erases the boundary between, say, Methodism and Congregationalism, it is no longer inconceivable that the boundary between Protestantism and Catholicism may be similarly transgressed. Where the centrifugal force of ecumenism stops is largely dependent on the nature of that ecumenism. If the ecumenical force is put forth as a universal ethical principle, it is likely to lead to ethnic decline, but if ecumenism is driven by considerations of sectarian solidarity, dominant ethnicity will be strengthened. The pattern that emerges in the American case seems to back the contention that cultural solidarity, in the form of Anglo-Protestant dominant ethnicity, was the engine of ecumenism in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth, however, ethical universalism came to the fore as the overriding ecumenical force.

Ecumenical Protestantism in the Nineteenth Century

Ecumenical movements are as old as the first religious schisms (Neill 1967: 17; McNeill 1967: 30, 49). In the United States, ecumenical ideas also have a long pedigree. The story of the Disciples of Christ provides an early example. First entering onto the scene on the Pennsylvania frontier in 1809, this Protestant sect “aimed to effect a union of Christians by persuading them to abandon their denominational names and organizations and come together simply as ‘Disciples’ on the sole basis of the Bible and [to] return to the practice of the primitive church” (Cavert 1968: 18). Throughout the nineteenth century, a number of individuals and groups preached the idea of transcending sectarian divisions, but these were less significant than the Protestant voluntary associations that embraced members of various denominations. An early example, the American Tract Society, was followed in the 1820s and 1830s by societies for the promotion of temperance, peace, antislavery, and, of course, anti-Catholicism. Later in the century, a good deal of cooperation in missionary activity was in evidence, especially on overseas missions (Cavert 1968: 20–27).

Anti-Catholic or nativist voluntary associations were among the most popular expressions of Protestant ecumenical feeling in the nineteenth century. In addition, the Evangelical Alliance, an anti-Catholic organiza-

tion whose first American branch appeared in 1847, was the first ecumenical body to emerge. Indeed, the rebirth of the Alliance in 1866 occurred largely as a response to the growing threat to Anglo-Protestant dominance posed by Irish Catholic immigration (Schneider 1989: 99–100; Jordan 1982: 42, 70).

American Ecumenism in the Twentieth Century

The Social Gospel movement of the late nineteenth century accentuated the ecumenical trend within Protestantism. The need for missionaries and social workers to exchange ideas, and for denominations to avoid over- or underchurching particular areas, appears to have been the early motive behind the new mood of cooperation. As the twentieth century approached, interdenominational cooperation became more important and was embodied in the first truly national ecumenical organizations: the Open and Institutional Church League (founded 1895) and the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers (founded 1901) (Cavert 1968: 37–41). By 1908, this activity had led to the establishment of the Federal Council of Churches (FCC), a truly national Protestant federation whose membership may well have encompassed over half the nation's population (Schneider 1989: 97).

The FCC and Dominant Ethnicity

As discussed earlier, the Protestant establishment gradually embraced open immigration during 1905–1910, partly under the influence of Liberal-Progressive ideas. Not surprisingly, this change was mirrored in the FCC's activity. Since the FCC was not founded until 1908, it is instructive to examine the ecumenical efforts that led to its creation. These efforts originated with the Evangelical Alliance. Although the Alliance lasted at least in name until 1944, the FCC effectively absorbed its energies in 1908. Indeed, Robert A. Schneider notes that the Evangelical Alliance was the “immediate forerunner” of the FCC, providing it with many committed personnel and with its twin aims: Protestant unity and social reform (Schneider 1989: 99–100).

The story of the liberalization of the FCC begins in 1903, when plans were laid for an Interchurch Conference on Federation to be held in the fall of 1905. At this point, signs of a more universalistic orientation were nowhere to be seen. Thus the “Letter Missive” that was sent to the de-

nominations spoke of the need for “the great Christian [i.e., Protestant] bodies in our country [to] stand together.” In addition, the letter had a clearly Social Gospel emphasis: it remarked on the problems of “the saloon . . . Sabbath desecration . . . the relation of labor to capital, the bettering of conditions of the laboring classes . . . [and] *the problem created by foreign immigration*” (Cavert 1968: 42–43, emphasis added).

The 1905 conference was a great success, assembling delegates from 29 denominations at New York’s Carnegie Hall. Here again, Catholics were considered to be outside the ecumenical pale (Jordan 1982: 187). This meeting launched the Plan of Federation that gave rise to the FCC in 1908. However, by 1908, Protestant intellectuals had already begun to distance themselves from the cultural heritage of Anglo-Saxon nationalism which had been present in the voluntary associations, the Evangelical Alliance, and other major ecumenical organizations up to 1905. The FCC’s 1908 mission statement spotlights the change: in contrast with the 1905 document, it made no mention of either immigration or Catholicism as sources of Protestant concern (Cavert 1968: 54–56).

The year 1910 revealed a fuller realization of the new ecumenical spirit, for in that year, Episcopalian leaders, seeking to leap over the Protestant boundary, proposed a World Conference on Faith and Order. According to Samuel Cavert, a participant and chronicler of the ecumenical movement in the United States, “within the first year [of Faith and Order planning], informal contacts were made with a few Eastern Orthodox leaders in the United States and with Cardinal Gibbons, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Baltimore” (Cavert 1968: 84, 86). The more effusive among the post–World War I liberal Protestant clerics also spoke glowingly of the rising spirit of ecumenical cooperation. Among their visions were world brotherhood, world democracy, and a union of Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox into one united Christian body (Szasz 1982: 88).

Early in the following decade, the shift in outlook was complete, and the statements of the day appear decidedly modern.² Thus at the FCC’s Fifth Quadrennial Meeting in Atlanta (1924), it was resolved that “the assumption of inherent racial superiority by dominant groups around the world is neither supported by science nor justified by ethics. The effort to adjust race relations on that basis and by the use of force is a denial of the Christian principles of the inherent superiority of ethical values and the supreme worth of personality. As it applies to the relations of white and Negro people in America it is a philosophy that leads only to suffering and despair” (Landis 1941: 30; W. King 1989: 125).

Interestingly, ecumenical Protestantism, in supporting internationalism, turned its back on the Old Testament, with its particularist passages. As a result, the favored source of legitimation for Christian universalist discourse was the New Testament passage, “In Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free”³ (Landis 1941: 29; Nawyn 1981: 61, 146; R. Miller 1958: 291, 305). For example, the World Council of Churches⁴ Oxford conference (1937) on Life and Work decreed that Christianity “is commissioned to call all men into the Church, into a divine society that transcends all national and racial limitations and divisions. In its services of public worship, in its more informal fellowship, and in its organization, there can be no place on any pretext whatever for exclusion or compulsory segregation because of race or colour. In Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free” (WCC 1964: 12).

The Interfaith Movement

The increasingly transcendent ethical outlook of the elite mainline Protestant clergy in the first two decades of the twentieth century helped it surmount not only ethnic and racial distinctions, but also the religious boundaries of Christendom itself. From this voyage of tolerance emerged the Interfaith movement. Interfaith was a concept that sought to bring communicants from different religions together in common understanding. Included in its American agenda were the ideals of tolerance, religious diversity, and, for the most radical, ecumenical union.

“Of eventual Protestant and Roman Catholic union the American proponents have been few and far between,” writes Don Yoder, referring to the nineteenth century. Those exceptional figures who espoused such cooperation in the late nineteenth century were either fringe modernists or Protestant converts to Catholicism⁵ (Yoder 1967: 225). Perhaps the earliest American manifestation of interfaith cooperation was a Central Conference on Social Reform of 1893, organized by the Union for Practical Progress—an offshoot of the Ethical Culture Society. This conference brought Roman Catholic and Jewish societies, the Knights of Labor, and Protestant ministers together in an effort to secure progressive municipal legislation. A remarkably advanced idea for its time, the Conference collapsed almost immediately as a result of religious dissension, with just 20 of 450 delegates remaining to carry on the work of the Conference in 1894 (Bell [1943] 1962: 104–105).

Nevertheless, a new idea had been born, and the Federation of East

Side Workers, formed in New York in 1894, counted Catholics and Jews among its largely liberal Protestant members (Bell [1943] 1962: 186–187). Similar cooperation between members of religious groups occurred in turn-of-the-century Settlements, particularly in New York, where Jewish social reformers like Walter Weyl, Felix Adler, and Lillian Wald worked alongside Protestant colleagues for shared ends (Davis 1973: 86). The mantle of the Liberal-Progressive interfaith pioneers was next picked up in 1908, when the Religious Education Association was formed: its largely Protestant membership made room for a limited number of Catholics and Jews (Clinchy 1934: 141). Liberal-Progressive cooperation did not extend to proposals for church union but helped create a climate of humanitarian openness that would prove influential in the following two decades.

The Interfaith Movement and World War I

Cooperation between Americans of different faiths had always been a means to a pragmatic end rather than an end in itself, and this pattern continued with the advent of war in 1917. Large-scale war demanded an organized chaplaincy to serve overseas, and the FCC rose to the challenge. Prior to the war, the FCC had sought to improve its chaplaincy program, and, by the fall of 1917, an FCC initiative had produced the General War-Time Commission of the Churches (Schneider 1989: 108–109). This new body, chaired by Robert E. Speer, distinguished itself by liaising with its counterparts, the National Catholic War Council and the Jewish Welfare Board, through a special interfaith committee.

This committee included several key figures in the Protestant clerical establishment, especially Robert E. Speer, William Adams Brown, and John R. Mott. Also on the board were a Jewish rabbi and Father John Burke, the committee's Catholic chairman. Among the committee's first actions was to protest the regulation that prescribed the wearing of a cross as the official insignia of the chaplaincy. In response, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker⁶ banned the use of any religious insignia by chaplains, whether Jewish or Christian (Cavert 1968: 96–97). Such action was unprecedented and demonstrates the degree to which the cultural climate had changed since the Spanish-American War. In the years to follow, the FCC carried on its interfaith project, pursuing joint social reforms with its Catholic and Jewish counterparts. These reforms ultimately led to the end of the Open Shop clause and eliminated the 12-hour day (R. Miller 1958: 215).

The Goodwill Movement

The end of hostilities in 1918 ushered in two new developments. On the one hand, the white Protestant masses became increasingly isolationist and ethnonationalist: the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, the Bolshevik Scare of 1919–1920, and the Johnson-Reed Act (1924) represented the efflorescence of this new mood. On the other hand, the interfaith spirit, embodied in the cooperative efforts of the General War-Time Commission, bore fruit in the 1920s in the form of the Goodwill movement. This initiative provided the first example of an interfaith movement whose sole purpose was to work for interreligious harmony.

The term *Goodwill* seems to have appeared first in an American Protestant ecumenical statement in 1918 that declared that the church ought to “pray for [the] recovery of its lost consciousness of its essential unity and universality in Christ, establishing in its membership the feeling of a fellowship that transcends the barriers of nation and race . . . [it] should build in all its branches throughout Christendom a worldwide fellowship of *Goodwill* and reconciliation” (Cavert 1968: 100, emphasis added).

With the revival of the Klan and rising Red Scare agitation and immigration restrictionism, the spirit of Goodwill was incarnated in the form of an American Committee on the Rights of Religious Minorities. This body, comprised of representatives from Catholicism, Judaism, and Protestantism, issued the first interfaith appeal in American history on December 24, 1920, protesting the new mood of “racial prejudice and religious fanaticism” (Kraut 1989: 212). This proclamation was followed by several other statements, including an FCC warning against the grave consequences of the “hooded bands” roaming America (Kraut 1989: 199).

Protestants in Conflict: The Mainline Establishment and Anglo-Protestant Nationalism

As the previous FCC statement indicates, mainline Protestantism raised substantial opposition to the Ku Klux Klan, and it must be counted as a vital factor behind the Klan’s rapid demise. Protestant papers in both the North and the South unanimously attacked the Klan throughout the 1920s and castigated clergymen who backed it as un-Christian. The editors of *Christian Work*, for instance, declared that a “religious revival under the auspices of the Klan reminds one of the ‘Christian’ mob in Russia or Poland . . . howling for blood in the Jewish quarter.” After attacking the

Klan, the editors called for an investigation of the KKK by the Department of Justice (R. Miller 1958: 137–146).

Meanwhile, at the local level, Protestant ministers teamed up with civic leaders and journalists to denounce the hooded order. Even where a city was run by the Klan, as in post–World War I Indianapolis, Protestant leaders, civic elites, and city journalists mounted an impressive show of anti-Klan strength—most in evidence at war commemorations in which Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant clergy gave joint addresses (Bodnar 1992: 84–85). Elsewhere in the nation, pastors who sympathized with the Klan were “drummed out of their own churches . . . virtually every denomination publicly and officially denounced the Klan, and, with the exception of Chicago, opposition to the Invisible Empire was almost everywhere spearheaded by Protestants.” Where the Klan was too powerful, liberal ministers often chose to be forced from their pulpits by their congregations rather than back Klan principles (Jackson 1967: 99, 150, 247).

In the midst of the struggle against Protestant nationalism, the FCC played a pivotal role. It had emerged from World War I in a more prominent position, recognized throughout the nation and the world as the official representative of American Protestantism (Wacker 1989: 109). Its Commission on Race Relations (1921) and its Commission on Goodwill between Christians and Jews (1923) soon established the FCC as an opinion leader in the fight for liberal-egalitarian race and ethnic relations. The Goodwill committee proved especially successful and gave rise to the National Conference of Jews and Christians (NCCJ) in 1928. This trifaith body held numerous Goodwill seminars across the country, published Goodwill literature, hosted interfaith social activities, and pursued interfaith social reform initiatives. One such initiative occurred in 1933, when a Goodwill team consisting of Father John E. Ross, the Reverend Everett R. Clinchy, and Rabbi Morris Lazaron toured the country to speak against religious intolerance (Herberg 1955: 258–259; Kraut 1989: 214).

The Goodwill Spirit and the Evangelical Impulse

Proselytization proved yet another traditionalist casualty of the new humanitarian spirit of Protestantism. The conversion issue had become a red flag for Jewish and Catholic leaders who harbored suspicions about the true intent of Goodwill gestures. In 1929, the Reverend Robert A. Ashworth of Yonkers, New York, explained the Protestant mainstream’s position in the following manner:

Christianity is in essence a missionizing religion. It seeks to propagate itself. I do not see how Christianity can relinquish that element without irreparable loss. On the other hand, missionary effort which results in ill-will rather than goodwill defeats its own aims. I know of no gain great enough to compensate for the loss or destruction of goodwill. (Kraut 1989: 202)

The Goodwill movement was never centralized in one body but instead existed as a congerie of related organizations pursuing similar objectives. Throughout its existence, it drew support primarily from members of the civic and religious Protestant elite—something that Catholic and Jewish Goodwill figures acknowledged.⁷ Among the movement's participants, for instance, were many of the most prominent theological scholars and FCC "establishment" figures, as well as former president Theodore Roosevelt, former secretary of war Newton D. Baker, and Secretary of State (and future Chief Justice) Charles Evans Hughes (Kraut 1989: 196–198). So ubiquitous were the movement's activities in the 1920s that Rabbi Hyman Enelow was led to remark (in 1924) that "there are so many committees coming into existence for the diffusion of Goodwill, that I hope [Jews] won't be killed with kindness before the Messiah has arrived" (quoted in Kraut 1989: 203).

Other evidence detailing the rise of a Protestant Goodwill spirit in the 1930s and 1940s has been documented. In 1938, for instance, the FCC admitted its first non-Protestant members. Meanwhile, at the local level, Kenneth Underwood's late 1940s study of Holyoke ("Paper City"), a community of 54,000 in Massachusetts, showed that Protestant clergymen demonstrated a greater concern for religious tolerance than their Catholic colleagues. For instance, only the Protestant churches bothered to educate their parishioners about other religions, and interfaith initiatives, like a 1936 attempt to establish a NCCJ chapter, were all sponsored by Protestants (Underwood 1957: 161–163, 176).

In the decades to follow, the Goodwill spirit became strongly institutionalized in American life. The conferences, tours, and pamphlets of the 1920s and 1930s were thus followed by a Brotherhood Week, launched in 1934 during Washington's birthday, which came to be observed on "a constantly expanding scale" nationwide. Campus organizations promoting tolerance, public holidays, civic events, the struggle against communism—all came under the sway of the Goodwill movement. Even religious broadcasting slots were apportioned by a tripartite Religious

Advisory Council of the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), beginning in 1928 (Voskuil 1989: 82).

As Will Herberg wrote in the early 1950s, “virtually every civic enterprise possessing any moral, cultural, or spiritual aspect is today thought of, and where possible organized, along interfaith—that is, tripartite—lines . . . the very notion of tripartite arrangement is something that increasingly commends itself to the American mind as intrinsically right and proper because it is so obviously American” (Herberg 1955: 259–261).

The Interfaith Movement and American Universalism

The rising momentum of Protestant Goodwill heralded a change in the way American national elites perceived their nation. In practice, this meant that during the period from 1918 to 1955, the concept of national identity held by Anglo-Protestant university administrators, intellectuals, federal bureaucrats, and the federal executive underwent a shift from a WASP conception to a more pluralist construct (Herberg 1955: 261–262; Hutchison 1989: xiii; Cavert 1968: 122).

The idea of a nondenominational nation owed much to the philosophy of the Goodwill movement, as is shown through the writings of prominent Goodwill spokesmen. Everett R. Clinchy’s *All in the Name of God* (1934) is an archetypal statement of the Goodwill movement. Another key Goodwill document is the collaborative treatise entitled *The American Way: A Study of Human Relations among Protestants, Catholics and Jews* (1936), edited by Newton D. Baker, Carlton Hayes (Catholic scholar), and Roger W. Straus (Jewish industrialist). This document emerged out of the 1935 meeting of the NCCJ at Williams College.

Several threads run consistently through the arguments of these religiously inspired works. First, Goodwill and ecumenical Protestant commentators agreed that the United States had a history of ethnic and religious intolerance, which was being perpetuated by patriotic societies and discriminatory legislation (Clinchy 1934; Baker et al. 1936: 138). Newton D. Baker, in the introductory pages of Clinchy’s essay, was thereby moved to make the charge that “even in America there have been subtle transplantations of some Old World prejudices. . . . Unhappily our immigration laws have not excluded these immigrant prejudices . . . so that while the record seems clear, the fact is that scattered all through our American life we find vestigial remains of the Old World religious wars and of its racial antipathies” (Clinchy 1934: 10–11).

Second, it was argued that by advocating practices of dominant ethnicity, the United States was imitating the intolerant practices of other nations and was therefore betraying its calling. “Majorities have been, through the centuries, almost universally intolerant,” declared Carlton Hayes, “Minorities, on the other hand, have always been anxious for toleration” (Baker et al. 1936: 114). “England for Englishmen, America for Americans, Germany for the Gentiles, the hotels and theaters for white people only—these are slogans that remind us of the worship of the Tauric Diana,” added Harry Overstreet, a City College of New York professor (Baker et al. 1936: 93). Finally, Everett Clinchy summed up the ethos of American dominant ethnicity: “A survey of the history of human relations in America has revealed recurrent efforts to establish a cultural monism. The majority group has repeatedly sought to dominate the life of the nation. When there has not been open antagonism, there has been cool, cautious, calculating condescension. . . .” (Clinchy 1934: 178).

Condemnation of dominant ethnic practices contrasted with praise of cosmopolitan societies. Hence the third thrust of the pamphlets argued that, despite the blots on its record, America could call upon a liberal tradition. Drawing on this tradition, its proper mission should be to lead the world toward a higher stage of liberal evolution, culminating in a cosmopolitan worldview. Empires were cited as examples of cosmopolitan societies, not as models but merely to illustrate that ethnonationalism was not a universal force in history. “There can be no fully civilized world until the arrogant independence of political sovereignty can be subordinated to the welfare of human life as a whole,” wrote one ecumenical commentator. “We are far from that now, *but everywhere the most civilized minds are thinking in the new patterns of world relationships*; and the day will come when that will be the pattern of thinking for all of us” (Baker et al. 1936: 94, emphasis added).

The plea for an internationalist outlook received reinforcement from virtually all the writers surveyed here. Yet Goodwill writers were not intellectual pioneers, but rather popularizers of existing ideas. Consequently, the influence of Liberal-Progressivism suffused the thought of the movement. Everett Clinchy, for example, cited the pluralist ideas of John Dewey on several occasions, paraphrasing Dewey’s notion that “individuals give freely to others of the peculiar value, essence, quality, and contribution of the group to which they belong, and receive freely the corresponding treasures of every group, and this without violence to the complete uniqueness of any group.” Clinchy added that he believed all

three religious communities in the United States to be just as “American” as each other (Clinchy 1934: 139–140, 177; Kraut 1989: 200).

The Affirmation of Pluralism

The Protestant desire to transcend divisions of race and religion in the name of a humanitarian “international mind” might lead one to believe that they sought the cultural homogenization of mankind. This was not the case. From the beginning, the leaders of both the ecumenical and Goodwill movements took great care to defend cultural and religious pluralism, and these writers made serious attempts to grapple with the tensions in their thinking. This should come as no surprise because their Liberal-Progressive forebears also advocated the retention of immigrant culture even as they sought to develop a composite American “world nation” (Lissak 1989: 174–176).

Carlton Hayes sounded the pluralist alarm with particular alacrity: “To blot out by force any historic religious culture is to impoverish the world,” he declared, “by disregarding history and the spiritual in man, what is now regarded as a cure for human ills is almost sure to prove, sooner or later, worse than the disease” (Baker et al. 1936: 149–150). Everett Clinchy agreed, citing the pluralist phraseology of Horace Kallen. “The more thoughtful among American youth think in terms of cultural pluralism,” Clinchy began. “The progress of the United States depends upon the frank recognition of the fact that its population is composed of individual groups. . . . The tone, the color and the value of the emerging human picture depends not on this or that feature, but on the *ensemble*” (Clinchy 1934: 175, 178). The ambiguities of the Goodwill position, in tension between universalism and pluralism, came to the fore when the issue of intermarriage was addressed. On the one hand, writers spoke of the hardship and social dysfunction such marriages could bring, but on the other, there was talk of how intermarriage of various kinds could lead to “much needed cross-fertilization” (Baker et al. 1936: 135).

In analogous fashion, the World Council of Churches attempted to come to grips with the knotty matter of intermarriage. At the Oxford Conference on Life and Work in 1937, its statement on race relations declared: “Each race is rightly grateful for its own heritage and possibilities [and] . . . desires to preserve its own identity. What it chiefly desires is not opportunity for inter-marriage, but recognition of its dignity within the family of mankind. . . . As to the desirability or undesirability of wide-

spread admixture of the races, the authorities are sharply divided” (WCC [1937] 1964: 10).

Goodwill Conceptions of American National Identity

Emerging from the torrent of ecumenical and Goodwill writing was a consensus that the United States was a plural rather than an Anglo-Protestant nation which offered new opportunities for realizing the national motto, *e pluribus unum*. At the same time, liberal Protestant spokespeople, together with their Jewish and Catholic colleagues, agreed on the importance of common projects of national identity. Everett Clinchy spoke of the need for social reform initiatives that might provide a “moral equivalent of war,” which would bind Americans of different faiths together (Clinchy 1934: 154). Henry Noble McCracken and Herbert L. Seaman of the NCCJ’s executive added that Americans had to look for shared values that underlay their religious traditions. “We must emphasize our common humanity,” offered McCracken, “our common love of liberty, and our mutual understanding” (Landis 1941: 5).

These humanistic values, which centered on the need for politico-cultural liberty and equality, were aired in other quarters as well. The charter of the American Good Will Union spoke of how all religious groups might find common ground in the American Constitution and its related ideal of the Golden Rule. Frederick Kershner of Butler College, Indiana, explained the matter even more directly: “The essence of the Christian message as I understand it is the ethical gospel of righteousness, goodwill and universal brotherhood; this, I take it, is the ethical content of Judaism.” Finally, Protestant layman John Foster Dulles spoke of how America’s major religions, though theologically divided, tended to agree on the practical matter of social ethics. All of this was thus taken to confirm the existence of a Judeo-Christian ethical foundation for American national unity (Kraut 1989: 200).

Will Herberg’s *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (1955) is considered the pivotal work signaling a new pluralist epoch in the American self-conception. But however seminal Herberg’s statements, he merely picked up the banner that Goodwill advocates had carried for some 30 years and gave it a conservative twist:

In the last analysis, Protestant and Catholic and Jew stand united through their common anchorage in, and common allegiance to, the

American Way of Life. . . . After all, are not Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism in their sociological actuality, alike “religions of democracy?” . . . The unity of American life is a unity in multiplicity; it is a unity that is grounded in a “common faith” . . . American culture-religion is the religious aspect of Americanism, conceived either as the common ground of the three “faiths” or as a kind of super-religion embracing them. (Herberg 1955: 258, 279)

The Limits of Liberal Protestant Efficacy

The success of the interfaith project was largely attributable to the efforts of the post-1920 Liberal Protestant “establishment,” but for every successful liberal initiative there was a liberal failure. These failures are as revealing as the successes and may be assigned to the growing split within American Protestantism that first opened up in the 1920s. Prior to this time, the modernist/fundamentalist (or liberal/conservative) theological divide did not possess anywhere near the salience it does today. Part of the reason for its increased salience is that theological positions came to be linked to particular ideological positions.

The Rise of Fundamentalist Self-Consciousness

Analysis of the Social Gospel movement shows that no such alignment existed in the early Progressive Era when a “left-conservative” politics characterized American liberal sects. Certainly, socially minded and individualist sects had their differences on economic issues, but, on the whole, unity prevailed and fundamentalism was not a significant force until the 1920s⁸ (Roof and McKinney 1987: 234; Szasz 1982: 84–106; Handy 1982: 14–15). After this date, however, growing opposition to the liberal “establishment” (see Hutchison 1968: 11), which had become dominant at both the denominational and ecumenical level, spurred many conservative Protestants to leave and form their own counterestablishment parallel organizations (Nawyn 1981: 137–138; Handy 1982: 14–15; Cavert 1968: 106–107, 138; Silk 1989: 278–280; Szasz 1982: 84–106; Wuthnow 1989: 28).

Accompanying a newly resurgent theological conservatism was a more confident ideological conservatism, in both fundamentalist and mainline churches. Resistance to elite liberalism came to be established in many ways. Fundamentalists were an obvious source of opposition, and from

the 1920s until the 1960s, their positions encompassed both political and theological conservatism. Billy Sunday, a popular national fundamentalist preacher, exhibited this behavior in the 1920s by attacking Wets (those favoring legal alcohol), immigrants and Catholics (R. Miller 1958: 186; Baltzell 1964: 266; Burner 1968: 93). Carl McIntire picked up Sunday's banner in the 1940s, calling Catholicism the greatest enemy of freedom and liberty that the world has to face today [1945]" (Noll 1987: 87). And in April 1960, the National Association of Evangelicals betrayed its lineage when it opposed, in principle, the election of any Catholic (principally, of course, John F. Kennedy) to the office of president of the United States (Silk 1989: 292).

Lay-Clergy Dissonance in Mainline Protestantism

Less evident was conservative opposition among the mainline Protestant masses, who remained with their (ostensibly liberal) denominations but opposed the views of the FCC and, occasionally, of their pastors.⁹ Provincial clergymen were a further source of opposition, which accounts for the discrepancy in ideological position between seminary and pulpit that was noticeable by 1920. Hence the Lynds, in their second study of Muncie, Indiana, in 1935, found that many local ministers either did not refer to wider social issues or began to denounce those who did as unrepresentative of the mass of (patriotic) American church members (Lynd and Lynd 1937: 311–312; Hutchison 1992: 3). At the same time, the FCC's rising profile after World War I spawned a growing recognition of its economic and cultural liberalism. This soon "escalated into a steady barrage of virulent conservative criticism" and, in Robert Schneider's estimation, led the FCC to be "widely identified by friend and foe with the social and political liberalism of any given decade" (Schneider 1989: 110; R. Miller 1958: 29).

Two points need emphasizing here. The first is that elite Protestantism as a whole was in the liberal-egalitarian vanguard with regard to cultural issues. The second is that limits to the march of liberal Protestant "establishment" influence appeared from the beginning of the FCC's political life. The FCC, for instance, along with denominational elites, had backed the League of Nations, which failed to get congressional approval in 1919 (Handy 1971: 186). The Protestant establishment also vehemently opposed the National Origins Quota immigration act of 1924, which was subsequently passed. The opposition of the Protestant establishment to

the new law was so extensive, and pervaded all of the denominations so completely, that Robert Moats Miller exclaimed: "A list of the men who publicly opposed the exclusion measure [1924] would read like an honor roll of American Protestantism. Much the same could be said of the religious press" (Davis 1973: 188–190; Landis 1941: 30; R. Miller 1958: 291–292).

Failure left the Protestant mainline leadership undaunted. In 1925, for instance, 160 representatives from 28 denominations attended the National Study Conference on the Churches and World Peace, which decried against immigration restrictions, economic oppression, and Western imperialism (W. King 1989: 125). Two years later, mainline Protestant spokesmen came out in support of the accused anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti (who were subsequently hanged) and consistently criticized the anticommunist propaganda of the newspapers during 1919–1930. The FCC's position simultaneously caused it to run afoul of patriotic societies over such issues as loyalty oaths for teachers. In response, the patriotic societies branded the FCC and the Protestant establishment as communist and worthy of investigation (R. Miller 1958: 147–148, 166–172, 189–198).

The FCC had long resolved to "speak *to*, as well as for" its membership. Because of the professional background of FCC delegates and staff—most of whom were educators, researchers, and managers rather than preachers—cognitive dissonance from the laity was easier to maintain (Schneider 1989: 114; R. Miller 1958: 114–115). In following its conscience, however, the Protestant reform establishment incurred the wrath of a growing number of Protestant communicants who were becoming aware of its liberal profile on the issues of the day.

A FCC-sponsored conference held at Delaware, Ohio, in 1942 illustrates the point. It called for an end to war fever and nationalism while criticizing American race relations. In addition, it advocated an American foreign policy that would end "the sovereign power of the nation-state" and lay the basis for a world political order. In response, publications like *Time* assailed the FCC for criticizing the United States while "the Japs [sic] were taking Java.' . . . the only positive thing *Time* could say about the conference was that it failed to move as far to the left 'as its definitely pinko British counterpart' (the Malvern conference)" (W. King 1989: 125–127).

FCC-sponsored initiatives demonstrated the reality of the clergy–laity gulf. In the wake of the Delaware conference, for example, FCC speakers

toured 77 cities in the United States to generate support for their “Mission on World Order.” The response of the Protestant masses ranged from contempt to indifference (W. King 1989: 127). A similar result dogged the efforts of the reform elite to aid refugees from Nazi Germany during the 1930s. The American Christian Committee for German Refugees (ACCGR) was the interdenominational Protestant body charged with securing lay support for refugee resettlement in 1934. It was backed by the mainline press and leadership and by the FCC—which threw its resources behind the ACCGR.

ACCGR fund-raising and resettlement appeals were seeds that fell on stony ground. Just a small fraction of the nation’s Protestant churches responded to appeals, often citing immigrant disloyalty or the “flood of refugees” as a reason for nonparticipation in the program (Nawyn 1981: 143). Of similar significance was the cynical attitude of many rank-and-file Protestants, who had come to dismiss the Protestant reform establishment as radical and “who expected the FCC to make pronouncements on various matters to which little attention would be paid” (Nawyn 1981: 157).

In response to their poor performance, the ACCGR and its FCC backers were forced to emphasize that many of the refugees were in fact Christians who had been branded “non-Aryan” (Nawyn 1981: 145, 167). Even so, the only really successful response from the mass of the Protestant churches came when the ethnic origin of the immigrants was deemed less foreign. As Nawyn writes:

With the decision by Congress, in the summer of 1940, to admit children evacuated from Britain into the United States, the Women’s Commission began to receive requests for the children. Indeed, as the regular [Jewish] refugee resettlement program languished, there were more offers to take British children than there were children to place, causing [ACCGR organizer] Caldwell to grumble that “everyone is willing to take British children while [Jewish] refugees were harder to place and much harder to stir up enthusiasm about.” (Nawyn 1981: 144)

The ACCGR’s failure, which stood in stark contrast to the far more successful efforts of Jewish self-help agencies, prompted its backers to search for reasons for their failure. “It never seems to have been . . . acknowledged publicly,” explained William Nawyn, “that the real reason for the ACCGR’s failure to reach the monetary goals it set for itself lay not first

of all in a lack of publicity or proper organization [of which it was accused], but in the apathy of the general membership of the Protestant denominations” (Nawyn 1981: 180). Taking stock of the results, some of the more realistic members of the reform establishment simply could not conceal their disappointment. FCC executive Henry Smith Leiper, for example, castigated American Protestants for their “amazing indifference” and “meager response” to the plight of refugees. Leiper even went as far as to say that American Protestants’ behavior, which placed race above faith, was helping to confirm Nazi principles (Nawyn 1981: 150).

Attempts by the American Protestant leadership, including its press, to obtain more liberal immigration and refugee provisions from the Roosevelt administration met with similar failure. An early legislative battle on this issue took place around the Wagner-Rogers bill, which called for 20,000 Jewish children from Germany to be admitted outside normal quotas. Protestant spokesmen from the reform establishment took the lead on this issue, pressing their case in numerous Senate hearings. Faced, however, with determined opposition from patriotic societies and an un-receptive Congress, the measure had to be withdrawn.

By contrast, the Hennings bill—proposed around the same time—which provided for “mercy ships” to evacuate children from “safe” zones in Europe, was a resounding success. As William Nawyn explains: “Although phrased broadly, it was meant largely for the benefit of British children. . . . Public opinion polls had indicated that the American people supported the idea; perhaps this explains the president’s [FDR’s] support.” The ethnocultural implications of the polls that Nawyn referred to were striking: they showed 83 percent of Americans to be opposed to admitting European refugees outside the quotas, while demonstrating that 67 percent backed the Hennings proposal to bring women and children to the United States from England (Nawyn 1981: 23–27).

Elite Protestantism in the Consensus Era

As this analysis shows, the Protestant reform establishment, despite considerable effort, consistently failed to change policies designed to defend American dominant ethnicity during 1917–1941. This pattern was so pervasive that the Protestant elite scored a policy success only when they took a mainstream or conservative stance. Prohibition, for example, was backed by the major denominational organs and was given the FCC’s stamp of approval into the 1930s, even though these bodies vehemently

denounced those who practiced religious bigotry to smear Al Smith's candidacy. This temperance activity garnered the FCC a good deal of popular support and proved politically successful (Cavert 1968: 106; R. Miller 1958: 49–56).

In the 1940s and 1950s, the Protestant intelligentsia seemed to realize more of its aims and was drawn closer to the center of American political life. This success occurred because several of their planks were especially popular, though for different reasons than intended. The most important issue in this respect was communism. Some influential Protestant intellectuals, including Reinhold Niebuhr and Norman Thomas (leader of a socialist third party), had been drawn to communism in the 1930s and were thereby the subject of FBI suspicion (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 245; R. Miller 1958: 108–111). Early in the following decade, owing to the excesses of the Stalinist regime, the FCC and the World Council of Churches forthrightly condemned Soviet communism as contrary to Christian principles. The “consensus” ideology that blossomed after World War II brought both liberal and conservative anticommunists together in the name of “freedom.” This paved the way for a meeting of the minds between the Protestant establishment, with its religious liberalism, and the cold war American majority, with its agenda of economic and political freedom.

The new alignment brought the Protestant establishment a shower of praise. *Time* magazine, an old foe, even ran feature articles in 1948 on leading Protestant establishment figures like John Foster Dulles, Reinhold Niebuhr, and G. Bromley Oxnam, coverage that continued into the early 1960s (W. King 1989: 129; Voskuil 1989: 80). This more favorable attitude gave the Protestant elite unprecedented access to the corridors of power. Protestant figures like Oxnam, Niebuhr, and Dulles (a layman who later served in the Truman and Eisenhower administrations) became involved with leading statesmen like General George Marshall and President Harry S Truman, helping to generate support for campaigns like the European Recovery Plan and United Nations (W. King 1989: 128–129).

Protestant involvement in the formation of the United Nations is particularly interesting. World political bodies had been a pet project of organized Protestantism since the failed League of Nations in 1919. Until 1945, such initiatives were summarily rebuffed, but in the changed postwar climate they became more acceptable. This was because organized Protestantism had become a highly visible, and hence very useful, symbol

of the free world and was viewed in a more positive light by the public. The new WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, formed in 1946, exemplified the newfound status of the Protestant establishment: "The Commission was granted observer status at all open meetings of UN agencies and consultative status with UNESCO, the Economic and Social Council and the Food and Agriculture Organization. Commission offices cultivated close ties with UN delegates and received all unrestricted UN documents." Commission officers were also extensively involved in UN conferences and commissions (W. King 1989: 135–136).

The 1940s and 1950s witnessed a continuation of Protestantism's move to the center, and its defense of civil liberty continued to safeguard its improved public standing. Several issues illustrate the point. The first involved Franklin Roosevelt's appointment of a "personal envoy" to the Vatican in 1940, at the rank of ambassador. The FCC strongly protested this action as an act that privileged one religion above the others and thereby violated the historic principle of the separation of church and state. This reaction was accompanied by an unprecedented Protestant mass protest, as popular anti-Catholicism and FCC civil libertarianism joined forces. "In the public debate that followed," Samuel Cavert recalls, "an impressive united stance of the Protestant bodies appeared. The Southern Baptist churches, ordinarily aloof from movements of cooperation, found themselves informally associated with the Federal Council on this issue. On no public question had Protestants been so close to unanimity" (Cavert 1968: 170).

Roosevelt managed to weather the storm of criticism over the papal envoy, but when Harry S Truman tried to renew the link with the Vatican in 1950 by finding a successor to Roosevelt's envoy, Myron Taylor, Truman was greeted with a flood of protest from all parts of the nation. The FCC (now National Council of Churches [NCC]) lent its moral authority to this protest, was joined by non-NCC denominations, and therefore helped to challenge the president's intentions, eventually forcing him to back down. A similar story could be told about the issue of public funding for parochial schools: the FCC/NCC, backed by Protestant public opinion, helped to ensure that Catholic schools did not receive such funding (Kraut 1989: 223; Cavert 1968: 214; Handy 1976: 402; Noll 1987: 87).

Liberal-Egalitarian Continuity

The new concordance between the FCC/NCC and the Protestant masses could be read as a sign of a more compliant Protestant establishment that had abandoned its historic role of liberal moral leadership to act as a passive representative of American Protestant opinion (W. King 1989: 138). Yet this would be a rather short-sighted assessment. The NCC, for example, incessantly prodded the nation to better the condition of blacks, and Protestant activists were virtually the only whites on the front lines of the civil rights struggle until joined by secular students in the mid-1960s (Silk 1989: 295).

Immigration was another issue that set the Protestant establishment against the current of public opinion. Thus in 1954, in the wake of the WCC conference on “racial and ethnic tensions” at Evanston, Illinois, delegates sought to promote international migration and urged “nations of immigration” like the United States both to end “discrimination on the grounds of nationality” and to adopt more generous refugee admittance policies (WCC 1954: 21–24). Elite Protestant voices could also be heard at congressional hearings, where religious leaders called for more liberal immigration legislation in both 1952 and 1964 (Fitzgerald 1987: 221).

The preceding discussion should illustrate that organized Protestantism in the United States did not change its tack. Rather, elite and rank-and-file Protestants achieved unanimity of opinion because civil libertarianism dovetailed nicely with dominant ethnicity (in its anti-Catholic guise) during the 1940s and 1950s. The saga known as the Sanger incident, in which Protestant churches in a Catholic-controlled town defended birth-control advocate Margaret Sanger’s right to speak, reinforces this view. Even Paul Blanshard’s *American Freedom and Catholic Power* (1946), supposedly an anti-Catholic work, based its premises on liberal, rather than parochial, arguments (Bellah and Greenspahn 1987: 44). Indeed, Catholicism was apparently rising to the defense of conservative American values. Conversely, for Protestants, secular tolerance and expressive liberty seemed to have replaced 100 percent Americanism, divine election, and temperance as cardinal points of orientation (Herberg 1955: 252; Dolan 1987: 81).

The flipside of this development is that the anticommunism of Senator Joseph McCarthy and the resolute stand against communism taken by John F. Kennedy (who failed to rebuke McCarthy when the U.S. Senate

voted to censure McCarthy) were indicative of a new trans-sectarian nationalism that replaced the old Anglo-Protestant brand. Based primarily on the defense of Christian values and capitalism, the new nationalism also allayed the fears of many conservative Protestants with regard to Catholic loyalty¹⁰ (O'Brien 1988: 35–37; Handy 1976: 403; Baltzell 1964: 286–287). Even fundamentalist preacher Billy Graham altered his view of Catholics after JFK's assassination, calling Kennedy a "Baptist president" (Noll 1987: 88, 90).

The Protestant Intelligentsia and Lay Attitudes: Statistical Evidence

Elite Protestants generally "led" their flock in ideological terms toward a more liberal and egalitarian position on the dominant ethnicity issue. This position of moral leadership is also postulated to have opened up a value gap between clergy and laity. Jeffrey K. Hadden's *The Gathering Storm in the Churches*, which surveyed thousands of Protestant clergy and laity in the late 1960s, confirmed this gap as a matter of statistical fact. Consider the issue of white Protestant racial attitudes: 33 percent of lay Protestants supported clerical and student involvement in the civil rights issue as against 64 percent of Protestant clergy; 89 percent of lay Protestants attributed blacks' lack of success to blacks themselves, as compared to just 35 percent of clerics (Hadden 1969: 139–141). Finally, nonparish staff (i.e., NCC bureaucrats, seminary professors, etc.) were more liberal on the race issue than were parish clergymen, highlighting the Protestant intelligentsia's vanguard role¹¹ (Hadden 1969: 205–206).

What impact did the liberal clerical elite have on its congregations? The answer is little. Hadden's findings showed that rates of white Protestant church attendance did not have any significant bearing on white Protestant attitudes toward race. Furthermore, region, education, and age, rather than strength of religious conviction, were the main predictors of lay attitudes (Hadden 1969: 129, 144–146). A survey of the liberal-leaning Protestant Episcopal Church generated similar results, finding that most parishioners and many priests tended to be unaware of the church's stand on particular issues. A strong elite–mass opinion gap was likewise apparent.

Similarly, thousands of parishioners, clergymen, and bishops nationwide were queried about their attitudes toward the repeal of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act in 1952. To the question, "The immigration laws should be changed so that the quota system does not favor

certain nations as opposed to others,” fully 42 percent of parishioners disagreed, while only 23 percent of clergy did so. Furthermore, 37 percent of parishioners agreed that “[t]he United States has already admitted too many refugees since the end of World War II,” whereas just 8 percent of clerics concurred¹² (Glock et al. 1967: 148, 171). The more liberal views of younger clergy (as revealed in Hadden’s study) may be attributable to the influence of the Protestant reform establishment.¹³ Although one must conclude that liberal Protestant activism in the 1910–1950 period had little direct impact on average lay attitudes, clerics may have exercised some influence on younger generations of parishioners.

The mainline Protestant intelligentsia moved in step with the leading secular apostles of liberal-egalitarianism, actively seeking to end Anglo-Protestant hegemony in the United States. Furthermore, the Protestant reform “establishment,” consisting of denominational executives, ecumenical Protestant bureaucrats, seminary professors, religious journalists, and Protestant social workers, regularly advocated positions that were opposed by the white Protestant masses. After World War II, many of the Protestant intelligentsia’s aims dovetailed with those of the wider public. However, this shift was more incidental than deliberate—the evidence shows that organized Protestantism continued to tread the same cosmopolitan path it had blazed prior to World War I.

In the two decades after 1950, many white Protestants would adopt values that were more congruent with those of its religious elites. The Protestant intelligentsia had an important impact on this process, even as their influence on the views of the Protestant masses remained slight. As a respected moral force that was far closer to the American tradition than either the secular anarchists or Liberal Progressives, they drew cosmopolitan ideas toward the center of American life. In so doing, they helped legitimate the thinning of the WASP myth-symbol complex, hastening the divorce between the “old American” ethnic group and its nation.

Expressive Pathfinders: The New York Modernists

The older America, whose voice and spirit were New England, has . . . gone beyond recall. Americans of British stock still are prevailingly the artists and thinkers of the land, but they work, each for himself, without common vision or ideals. They have no *ethos* any more. The older tradition has passed from a life into a memory.

—HORACE M. KALLEN, 1915 (QUOTED IN KALLEN 1924: 104–105)

The Liberal Progressives and ecumenical Protestants leveled the intellectual barriers preventing the emergence of a universalist America. Politically, the identity of these Victorian humanitarians was secure: they were university educated and considered themselves a “better element,” a historical advance guard that would lead mankind toward a higher stage of civilization. Yet such ethical progress obscured an underlying cultural confusion: their chief mode of self-expression remained a Milquetoast, genteel Christianity—a meager symbolic repertoire.

Lacking this carrot, and beaten only by the stick of Liberal-Progressive moralism, American intellectuals would probably not have been so attracted to a project of cultural change. In this sense, the genteel Liberal-Progressive vision was limited. The task of completing the epic of American cosmopolitanism would ostensibly reside with a new generation. Under their tutelage, the logic of expressive individualism implicit in liberalism was driven to its theoretical endpoint. It would thenceforth be their imperative to carve out a subcultural *communitas* in which liberal apostates from the dominant ethnic community could regain a sense of continuity, wholeness, and enchantment. Thus it was that the New York avant-garde came to preside over the final liquidation of Anglo-Protestant influence in progressive intellectual circles—overseeing its replacement with cosmopolitan modernism.

The Precursors to American Modernism

The spirit of expressive individualism—as with that of egalitarian radicalism—had its tentative origins with the anarchists of the early nineteenth century. The connection between individualist anarchism and modernism runs through the prominent nineteenth-century American literary family, the Jameses. The father, Henry James Sr., was a Transcendentalist and Fourierite who raised his children, Henry Jr. and William, in a cross-cultural, relativistic environment. This probably accounted for Henry’s “international” state of mind and William’s relativistic philosophy—which induced his student, Horace Kallen, to present the first pluralist theory of American ethnic relations (Carson 1990: 101; Crunden 1994: 164; Peyser 1992; Porsdam 1987; Postiglione 1983: 98–99).

Another phenomenon characteristic of early cultural individualism was travel in Europe and participation in a cosmopolitan milieu. Henry James Jr. led this kind of life, roaming Europe and meeting leading avant-garde writers in Europe, particularly France and England, in the 1870s (Crunden 1994: 166–167). In the art world, a good early example is James McNeill Whistler, the only American who exhibited at the *Salon des Refusés* in Paris during 1863 and 1864. Whistler’s source of inspiration was more direct: while an aimless West Point dropout in the 1850s, he was enchanted by Henri Murger’s novel *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1848). As Robert Crunden writes, “This was the life he wanted: happy poverty in the Latin Quarter of Paris, affairs with beautiful models—above all a life devoted to art, lived among fellow artists—that was his appointed destiny. He departed for a life that was as much like that in Murger’s novel as he could manage” (Crunden 1994: 161–162). What we see here is the powerful attraction that cultural liberty and cosmopolitanism possessed for certain young Americans. This modernist power vied strongly with Anglo-Protestant symbols for the affections of American intellectuals and eventually triumphed when the old WASP symbols came to be viewed as ethically illegitimate.

The First Modernist Rebels

John Dewey, Jane Addams, and other Liberal Progressives developed the first variant of American cosmopolitanism in Chicago, where they were highly influential. Nonetheless, in the same city, a small band of cultural entrepreneurs were beginning a rebellion that would complement and

revamp the Liberal Progressives' ethical gains, giving them a firmer basis in aesthetics and lifestyle. The activities of these rebellious aesthetes took place in the area around the old 1893 fairgrounds, a magnet for bohemians because of its cheap rents and access to downtown. The new literati, dubbed the "Chicago Poets," consisted of a combination of mid-western suburbanites and "refugees" from small-town Protestantism, such as Floyd Dell, of Davenport, Iowa and Sherwood Anderson, of Clyde, Ohio. Nor were these isolated cases: as it happens, tiny Davenport contributed several other figures to prewar modernism.¹ By 1912, the "Chicago Renaissance" had its own organ, *Poetry*, and came to dominate an important literary journal, *The Dial*, as well as the *Literary Review* of the *Chicago Evening Post* (May 1959: 252–259).

Influencing these Chicago bohemians and their fellow "Young Intellectuals" in New York were a series of European ideas that found fertile soil among a new generation of middle-class youth, newly cognizant of the limits of their puritanical, Anglo-American *conscience collective*. In Henry F. May's words:

Above all the American Rebellion drew on the recent European Liberation, with its new, somewhat mystical promises of a wide-open future, free from nineteenth century gloom, doubt, and materialism. Self-expression, creative freedom, and spontaneity were often suggested by a hidden encounter with Nietzsche or Wells and confirmed by a chance acquaintance, often secondhand, with Bergson. The European Liberation provided new methods and new forms for old discontents: the [American] Rebellion put in words many of the long latent resentments against Eastern, upper-class, Anglo-Saxon cultural monopoly. (May 1959: 251)

In this manner, Puritanical morality and Anglo-Saxon culture were fused together as an "Other" to be overthrown in the name of cultural liberty. This mission had its brief "renaissance" in Chicago, an efflorescence that quickly gave way to the scene in burgeoning New York, the entry point for modern European ideas where the Young Intellectuals would establish their first beachhead in the battle against Anglo-Protestant culture (Lasch 1966: 320).

The New York Anglo-Saxon Cultural Milieu

New York occupied a special position in the American literary world because, as early as 1860, it had been the commercial center of printing and

publishing. Just as important was the attraction it provided to an impressive roster of literary figures: Walt Whitman, William Cullen Bryant, James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, William James, and Horace Greeley were among the many who resided in the city (Bender 1987: 141, 156). Despite its commercial primacy and attraction for writers, in terms of ideas, nineteenth-century New York played second fiddle to Boston and was very much an outpost of New England civilization.

This status was reflected in what George Santayana in 1911 labeled the “genteel tradition” of New York’s cultural life, with its stress on Anglo-Saxonism, New Englandism, and cultural nationalism. This tradition, at its height in the 1880s and 1890s, was represented by the powerful journal, *Century*, with its 1880s circulation of 250,000. The genteel Anglo-American cultural establishment faced a few nineteenth-century adversaries like Walt Whitman but remained preeminent into the twentieth century. It was also comfortably ensconced in two institutional bastions: Columbia University and the Academy of Arts and Letters. Formed in 1904, the Academy was very much cast within the old New England Anglo-Saxon tradition, a foundation-stone of dominant ethnicity. As Bender notes, “Many of these [Academy] men were united by a commitment to Anglo-Saxonism in literature and life; they were deeply worried about democracy, immigration, and modernism” (Bender 1987: 219). Notwithstanding its grandeur, the formation of the Academy of Arts and Letters did not result in the institutionalization of dominant ethnicity but instead marked the end of an era as the adversary culture, so weak in the era of Whitman, expanded greatly and came to explore new facets of cultural radicalism.

The Rise of New York’s *Avant-Garde* Community

As in Chicago, the radical literati congregated in a “bohemian” section of New York. There, small circles of nineteenth-century literati had resided in an area in the northeast portion of the city, and, following Murger and Puccini, adopted the term *bohemian* to describe themselves (Bender 1987: 220). Nevertheless, the flavor of New York’s bohemia had none of the radical overtones of its progeny, smacking “more of the quaint and the curious than of outright revolt against social mores.” This difference emerges distinctly in William Dean Howells’s *The Coast of Bohemia* (1899), in which the characters, members of a New York art colony, do nothing more risqué than smoke cigars and soon proceed to lives of re-

spectability (Fishbein 1982: 59). A major figure in New York's nineteenth-century literary avant-garde, Howell would help convey the essentially genteel nature of the city's cultural radicalism.

This scenario swiftly changed in the 1890s as a new clique centered around the figure of James Gibbons Huneker began to form on the fringes of an immigrant neighborhood, Tompkins Square. Huneker attacked the New York literary establishment, and his publication, *Mlle New York*, "introduced New York and American culture to such major European modernists as Ibsen, Shaw, Strindberg, Strauss, Debussy, Schönberg, Cézanne and Mause" (Bender 1987: 220–222). Next came the bohemian migration to Greenwich Village, located in a relatively tranquil zone between New York's two skyscraper districts.

This movement began in 1907, at which time social reformers and Italian immigrants dominated the area. Led by Max Eastman, a former student of John Dewey, the migration came to include key notables like Floyd Dell, Randolph Bourne, Alfred Stieglitz, and the Hapgood brothers, Hutchins and Norman. During 1910–1912, the bohemian community in the Village reached a critical mass, and a thriving countercultural force, the "Village Renaissance," was born. Its defining ethos included both cultural liberation and egalitarianism, but *cultural liberation* was by far the more important of the two. In the words of Daniel Aaron, "'Released personality,' 'expression of self,' 'emotion,' 'intuition,' 'liberation,' 'experiment,' 'freedom,' 'rebellion,'—these phrases and words connote the prevailing spirit of the 'new' magazines, books, and plays as well as the manifestoes, art exhibitions, and political rallies between 1912 and 1917" (Aarons 1961: 8–9).

A quick sketch of the Village scene during its heyday of 1912–1917 illustrates this new spirit. Blazing a liberating path in the visual arts was Alfred Stieglitz, whose "291" studio was actively displaying the latest in modern art and photography (Abrahams 1986: 171; Bender 1987: 228). Mabel Luhan Dodge's salon was another point of reference for the movement: within its walls, individualist-minded Anglo-Americans experimented with black jazz, hallucinogenic drugs, and free love, while also hearing "delivered disquisitions on sex, penology, anarchism, birth control, poetry and modern art—anything, in short, that came under the heading of opinion" (Aarons 1961: 13; Fishbein 1982: 45–48). Another fascinating personality was Carl Van Vechten, who journeyed to Harlem in pursuit of an unspoiled, "pagan" black culture, free of puritanism, whose jazz and dancing were performed in Mabel Dodge's salon, where

it shocked Dodge and her audience (Fishbein 1982: 45, 162–163). Meanwhile, in the performing arts, George Cram Cook's Provincetown Players were busily crossing new boundaries, and the experimental theater as a whole reveled in new techniques of symbolism, suggestion, and atmosphere (Fishbein 1982: 54, Bell 1976: 62). In their liberating zeal, the Villagers left practically no field of art or literature unscathed.

In terms of cultural markers, dress was of great importance. The Village style tended to emphasize freedom and understatement as modes of rebellion against the pretensions and conformities of upper middle-class "uptown" New York society. For example, Floyd Dell substituted a flannel shirt for his stiff "high collar and black smock," Randolph Bourne sported a long black student's cape, and Van Wyck Brooks "delighted in holes in [his] trousers and the bottoms of [his] shoes" (Abrahams 1986: 8). Bolstered by an ethic of inner nature, which corresponded to the irrationalist vitalism of Henri Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Expressivists like Friedrich Schiller and Friedrich Hölderlin, the Young Intellectuals flaunted their hedonistic ethos as a symbol of liberation. They even went so far as to seek out Greek and other paganisms as sources of legitimation (Fishbein 1982: 36–44; Taylor 1989: 385–389; Bell 1976: 63).²

A Surrogate Ethnic?

The cultural liberation experienced in the Village was simultaneously a community-generating force. This notion may appear paradoxical insofar as artistic innovation is often equated with alienation, and, to be sure, the Villagers did experience a certain alienation from their own Anglo-American society. Yet, in the very act of rebellion was forged a sense of unity based on the shared values of expressive individualism (liberation) and egalitarianism (relativism), expressed through an aesthetic of modernism and a bohemian lifestyle.

Victor Turner has argued that the experiences of marginal groups in all societies, from the tribal to the modern, can result in a feeling of liminality, or threshold crossing, which concurrently generates an intense feeling of *communitas*, or spiritual communion. Rites of passage in tribal societies present one instance of the liminality–*communitas* symbiosis. Millenarian religious movements that cut across tribal and national divisions and the counterculture of the Beats and Hippies represent more modern versions of the same phenomenon (Turner 1990: 147–148, 152–153; B. Martin 1981: 49–52).

Interacting in the theaters, salons, clubs, and literary cooperatives, Greenwich Villagers imagined themselves as part of a larger worldwide avant-garde, with a glorious, heroic past and a discrete set of boundary-marking myths and symbols. Their peculiar modes of dress, cosmopolitan tastes, urban residence,³ and cultural capital facilitated such imagining and acted as an integrated “symbolism of anti-structure” (B. Martin 1981: 25, 79). The result was the formation of an imagined community with a clear “figurative nucleus” of boundary symbols that graphically represented the ideas of the avant-garde.⁴

The New York prewar avant-garde developed its consciousness through journals, most notably *The Masses*, *Seven Arts*, and, at least initially, the *New Republic*, each of which had a circulation of over 10,000. All three were staffed by left-wing modernists, nearly all of whom were Anglo-Saxons or Jews. This cross-fertilization—traceable to the Ethical Culture-Free Religion axis of the 1870s and 1880s—produced a new communal identity, an avant-garde left-modernism that drew Jew and Anglo-Protestant alike away from the traditions of their ancestral heritage (Hollinger 1985: 63). As Thomas Bender writes, theirs “was a vision of urbanity and cosmopolitanism that proved itself congenial both to Anglo-Saxon radicals and to the emerging Jewish intellectuals” (Bender 1987: 247). We have already noted how the Villagers looked back to ancient Greek paganism as a usable past. This was followed by the avant-garde’s formulation of a bona-fide “ethnohistory.”

The appearance of this kind of communal narrative is apparent from the remarks of Joseph Freeman of the radical *Liberator*, who felt that he and his friends were “no longer, culturally, Jews.” Instead, they were “Westerners initiated into and part of a culture which merged the values of Jerusalem, Egypt, Greece and ancient Rome with the Catholic culture of the Middle Ages, the humanistic culture of the Renaissance, the equalitarian ideals of the French Revolution, and the scientific concepts of the nineteenth century.” To this mix they added socialism, which seemed to them “the apex of Western culture” (Hollinger 1985: 64).

Edmund Wilson’s *To the Finland Station* (1940) can be read as a mature work in this genre. His volume traces out an *avant-garde* narrative based not on impersonal modes of production, but on a whole series of vibrant personalities and events, ranging from Michelet and the Paris Commune to St. Simon, through Fourier, Owen, Marx, Bakunin, and Trotsky to Lenin. One repeatedly gets the sense of an intergenerational, cosmopol-

itan *communitas* of marginalized revolutionaries (Wilson 1940; Baltzell 1964: 261). This appears starkly in Wilson's glowing praise of Michelet's *Histoire de France*: "There is no book that makes us feel when we have finished it that we have lived through and known with such intimacy so many generations of men. And it makes us feel something more: that we ourselves are the last chapter of the story and that the next chapter is for us to create" (Wilson 1940: 35).

Specifically, the avant-garde identified with the seminal creative figures of each historical tradition—the outsiders, revolutionaries, and heretics whose martyrdom in the service of humanity had assured their immortality. Thus this rising status group could see itself as part of a venerable tradition with a history and destiny that began with Socrates' drink of hickory poison: an ideological myth of descent that promised meaning, belonging, and continuity. Charles Taylor describes the avant-garde self-perception as

the opposition of the visionary artist and the blind, or "philistine," "bourgeois" society. . . . United to a historical narrative of advancing discovery, it can yield the idea or myth of the avant-garde. Some are destined to move ahead of the huge advancing column, to strike out on their own. Their work is not, cannot be understood in their own time. But much later, the rest will catch up, and the original few will be recognized and celebrated after death. (Taylor 1989: 424)

Paradoxically, the New York avant-garde even framed their struggle in religious terms. For instance, the Village modernists who contributed to the *Masses* repeatedly cast Jesus in the role of revolutionary: "The first socialist, friend of sinners and criminals, a workman-agitator, this Christ allowed radicals to fuse their old religious faith with their newly acquired political beliefs. Christianity, not church dogma but the living faith of Jesus, became a prop of socialism" (Fishbein 1982: 126–128).

Several writers have remarked that the American intellectual avant-garde comprises an ethnic group (Anderson 1970: 137–138; Novak 1971: 35–38; Greeley 1971: 120–134). Indeed, the American avant-garde, or modernist status group, possessed many of the trappings of ethnicity: shared values (egalitarianism, liberalism), shared symbols (modern art), a shared homeland (various "bohemian" urban neighborhoods), and a heroic past with its own myth of descent, golden age (nineteenth-century Paris), and

grand destiny—that of the avant-garde and its struggles on behalf of humanity. The creation of this modernist communal narrative thereby provided a touchstone around which future generations could rally and an ontological substitute for the dominant ethnicity many of the radicals had left behind (see Figure 7.1).

	American Dominant Ethnicity	Avant-Garde Community
Boundary Symbols	U.S. English language, British Surname, North European Phenotype, Protestantism, Liberalism and Egalitarianism, American Landscape	Egalitarianism, Modernism, Urban Residence, Cosmopolitan Education/Experience
Communal Narrative/ Myth of Descent	Pilgrims, Puritans, Founding Fathers, American Revolution, Pioneers, Settlers	Myth of the Outsider in History, Myth of the <i>Avant-Garde</i> (from Socrates and Christ to 1789, 1848, 1917, 1968 ^a and more)
Territory	United States	Scattered Urban Enclaves Worldwide
Art Form	New England and Appalachian Traditions	Modernist
Iconic Figures	Yeoman, Pioneer	Progressive Outcast, Revolutionary, Marginalized Masses
Myth of Immortality	Communal Eternity	Humanity's Eternal Gratitude, World-Historical Recognition
Destiny	White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Liberal-Egalitarian Millennium	Expressive-Egalitarian Utopia

a. The addition of the student revolts to the myth came later in the century.

Figure 7.1. A surrogate ethnief?: The New York avant-garde.

The Village Modernists' Antipathy to Anglo-Saxonism

By its very nature, New York modernism was in conflict with puritanical Protestantism, which, as one of the WASP cultural markers, implicated American dominant ethnicity. The tradition of expressivist opposition to Anglo-Protestant ethnicity probably began with H. L. Mencken, a “muck-raking”⁵ social critic who assailed Puritanism as moralistic, aesthetically barren, and an impediment to American intellectual development. Mencken also took on the Anglo-Saxons, describing them as meddlers and moralizers with no culture. As Charles Alexander writes, “by the twenties Mencken’s diatribes against American conventions had made him virtually the high priest of the continuing revolt against the Genteel Tradition” (Alexander 1980: 34–35, 111).

Mencken’s anti-WASP sentiment had two sources: his German background and, probably more important, his sympathy with modernists such as James Huneker, whose *M’lle New York* was a formative influence on Mencken (Bender 1987: 221). Mencken’s line is easily identified in the writing of many Young Intellectuals like Floyd Dell, who in 1906 proclaimed that Puritanism (which he identified with Anglo-Saxonism) was stifling man’s inner nature: “Amusement is a law of life. We must accept it or ignore it. If we ignore it, we must suffer the consequences” (Fishbein 1982: 34). Randolph Bourne, a central figure in American cosmopolitanism, was another pre-World War I Villager who heaped scorn on his ethnic tradition, equating “Anglo-Saxondom” with “masculine domination.” Feminism, he hoped, with its soft, emotional style, would act as an instrument of liberation for the “hard, hierarchical, over-organized” nature of Anglo-American society (Abrahams 1986: 69).

The Beginnings of Avant-Garde Cosmopolitanism

Just as cosmopolitan Americanism germinated in Chicago where the Anglo-Protestant egalitarianism of Jane Addams and John Dewey met the downtrodden diversity of the ghetto, so it was that early New York bohemia brought Anglo-Saxon modernism in contact with immigrant multiculturalism. In Bender’s words,

Not only was the city moving into closer touch with continental intellectual currents, but its rapidly increasing immigrant districts were giving lie to any Anglo-Saxon definitions of the city and its

culture. To the considerable extent that New York deviated from the Anglo-Saxon norm, the young embraced it. Immigrant New York, somewhat romanticized in Hutchins Hapgood's *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (1902), captured the imagination of the young. Here was a life more real and authentic than their experience of growing up, whether in the Midwest or in the bourgeois neighborhoods of New York and its suburbs. (Bender 1987: 229–230)

Hutchins Hapgood's biography provides a good case study of this phenomenon. Puritan by descent, Hapgood moved to New York from the sleepy midwestern town of Alton, Illinois, against which he consciously rebelled. After a stint at Harvard, Hapgood joined the New York *Commercial Advertiser*, in 1900. The dynamic broadsheet was edited by muckraker Lincoln Steffens. Yet Steffens's style failed to deviate from the Progressive tradition of realism that had spurred Jacob Riis's brilliant Social Gospel-era exposé of lower east side conditions, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). Riis's work, with its stern style, was an important piece of urban investigative journalism. However, it treated the Jewish ghetto as a social sore in need of reform, and it helped to focus attention on the undesirable consequences of immigration for the American body politic. Hapgood's *Spirit of the Ghetto*, which appeared in 1902, therefore formed an important counterpoint to the posture of Riis and other Progressive reformers. In his preface, Hapgood wrote:

The Jewish quarter of New York is generally supposed to be a place of poverty, dirt, ignorance and immorality. . . . Well-to-do persons visit the "Ghetto" merely from motives of curiosity or philanthropy; writers treat it "sociologically," as a place in crying need of improvement. . . . I was led to spend much time in poor resorts of Yiddish New York through motives neither philanthropic nor sociological, but simply by virtue of the charm I felt in men and things there. East Canal Street and the Bowery have interested me more than Broadway and Fifth Avenue. (Hapgood [1902] 1967)

The authenticity of the New York urban experience for the bohemian exile was complemented by Greenwich Village's cosmopolitan atmosphere. Diverse ethnic eateries abounded, and several multiethnic festivals were held in which radicals took turns wearing the masks of other cultures, as with the Greek dancing of Isadora Duncan or the Italian posing of Alfred Stieglitz (Abrahams 1986: 9–10, 94–95). From the ferment of this multiethnic, experimental *pastiche* emerged a new American con-

sciousness, which would eventually find expression in a new vision of the nation.

The National Vision of the Young Intellectuals

Felix Adler and Israel Zangwill, in their universal humanism, had envisioned a melting pot concept of America that influenced the Liberal-Progressive dream of a nation of equal, freely associating individuals bearing the heritage of all mankind. On clear display, therefore, was the resonance of the vision of these Jewish cosmopolitans with the universalizing aspirations of the Anglo-American reformers. Similarly, in the case of the Village modernists, their quest for cultural experience led them to the “homeless mind” of the cosmopolitan Jewish experience, though they favored the perspective of Horace M. Kallen and his fellow Zionists.

Kallen, a student of William James’s, was a well-respected figure whose thinking bore the imprint of both ethnicism and cosmopolitanism and whose organicism (“men cannot change their grandfathers”) incurred the wrath of many Liberal Progressives. Therefore, while both Liberal Progressivism and Kallen’s pluralism criticized Anglo-Saxon America and its Anglo-conformist tradition, they differed in their prescription for a new, cosmopolitan America. Accordingly, instead of the abstract melting pot society of Adler and Dewey, Kallen set forth a multiethnic vision.

In a landmark essay, “Democracy Versus the Melting Pot,” published in *The Nation* in February 1915, Kallen chastised the Anglo-Saxons for their dominance, while proclaiming their influence to be in irreversible decline. “The older America,” he said, “whose voice and spirit were New England, has . . . gone beyond recall. . . . The older tradition has passed from a life into a memory” (Kallen 1924: 104–105; Postiglione 1983: 103). Kallen also attacked the Liberal-Progressive melting pot theorists, underscoring the point that ethnicity is a primordial force, not to be melted down, and he predicted that no new Euro-American ethnic type was likely to form since “in historic times so far as is known no new ethnic types have originated, and from what is known of breeding there comes no assurance that the old types will disappear in favour of the new. . . . Biologically, life does not unify; biologically life diversifies” (Kallen 1924: 115, 119–120). Finally, Kallen expressed his political vision of America as a “democracy of nationalities, cooperating voluntarily and autonomously through common institutions in the enterprise of self-realization through the perfection of men according to their kind” (Kallen 1924: 123).

Kallen was joined in his pluralistic Americanism by Walter Lippmann, a well-known figure in Village Renaissance circles and a founding editor of the *New Republic*, who denounced President Wilson as a provincial and the pre-World War I United States as a “Nation of Villagers” in his *Drift and Mastery* (1914). In particular, Lippmann singled out for harsh treatment the Populist-Progressive view of a folk nation based on the Yeoman Republic⁶ (Hollinger 1985: 47; Kallen 1956: 53).

The first Anglo-Protestant modernist to seize upon the Lippmann-Kallen vision was Randolph Bourne, who readily acknowledged the influence of his Jewish peers, especially Kallen (Bourne [1917] 1964: 128). Probably the most influential thinker to emerge from the Village milieu, Bourne began his career as the intellectual spokesman for the emergent American youth culture (Blake 1990: 63). Unsatisfied with his limited role, Bourne, an embodiment of the new adversary culture, soon turned his attention to weightier matters, notably opposition to World War I and redefinition of America’s national identity.

In a pathbreaking article in the respected *Atlantic Monthly* in July 1916, Bourne presented his formula for a “Trans-National America,” a notion that puzzled the *Atlantic’s* editor Ellery Sedgwick, whose Anglo-Saxonist assumptions were so unconsciously held that he failed to sense a threat from Bourne’s ideas.⁷ Yet Bourne’s views certainly posed a threat, for his transnational viewpoint was devoted to the Kallenesque idea that the American destiny lay in becoming the first “international nation,” a *caesura* that required the elimination of its Anglo-Saxon nature:

The Anglo-Saxon element is guilty of what every dominant race is guilty of in every European country: the imposition of its own culture upon the minority peoples. The fact that this imposition has been so mild and, indeed, semiconscious does not alter its quality. And the war has brought out just the degree to which that purpose of “Americanizing,” that is, “Anglo-Saxonizing,” the immigrant failed. (Bourne [1916] 1964: 112)

Bourne added that increasing world travel was already opening the minds of young Americans to the new cosmopolitan spirit, while recent immigration provided the United States with an unprecedented opportunity to create the first “international nation” as a veritable “cosmopolitan federation for national colonies” (Bourne [1916] 1964: 117).

Up to this point, Bourne had followed the Kallen line. However, Bourne’s radical modernism embraced ideas of ethnic determinism and communal authenticity only insofar as these attacked the Anglo-Saxon

hegemonic culture he detested. What happened next, therefore, was a subtle twist of Kallen's ideas in which the Anglo-Saxon was implicitly excluded from Kallen's "federation of nationalities" and placed in a special position: that of cultural consumer. Hence whereas Kallen held a Herderian, organicist view of ethnicity that included the Anglo-Saxons, Bourne considered ethnicity a cultural good to be experienced by a modernist cultural consumer. He bestowed this role upon young Anglo-Saxons, whom he subconsciously hoped would rise above Kallen's ethnic parochialism.

In effect, *where ethnic minorities are given a traditional role, Anglo-Saxons are implored to be cosmopolitan*. Thus, Bourne simultaneously lauds the traditions of the Jew "who sticks proudly to the faith of his fathers and boasts of the venerable culture of his," while imploring young Anglo-Saxon Americans to

Breathe a larger air. . . . [for] in his [young Anglo-Saxon's] new enthusiasms for continental literature, for unplumbed Russian depths, for French clarity of thought, for Teuton philosophies of power, he feels himself a citizen of a larger world. He may be absurdly superficial, his outward-reaching wonder may ignore all the stiller and homelier virtues of his Anglo-Saxon home, but he has at least found the clue to that international mind which will be essential to all men and women of good-will if they are ever to save this Western world of ours from suicide. (Bourne [1916] 1964: 113–114, 118)

Bourne's view, combining the ethnic authenticity of Kallen's organic vision with the individualist rebelliousness of radical modernism, had great appeal for radical Anglo-Americans in revolt against their own culture. In Bourne's writing, the freedom for individual creativity and the quest for cultural experience demanded by modernism are satisfied by the seemingly paradoxical coupling of Anglo-Saxon ethnic destruction with minority ethnic revival. At the same time, the equality of all ethnic groups is assured while the Anglo-Saxon power center is humbled, satisfying the imperatives of egalitarianism. Emerging from Bourne, therefore, was a new radical (left-modernist) vision of the nation, which rapidly became paradigmatic among avant-garde intellectuals in the United States.

The Expressive Rationale of New York's Modernist Left, 1918–1936

The interwar period illustrates how an American *intellectual tradition* based on expressive modernism took root in New York. Emphasizing

individualism and cosmopolitanism, this new tradition came to actively oppose both dominant ethnicity and state socialism. The philosophical trajectory of New York radical journals is particularly revealing in this respect: the journals demonstrate that American modernists, when forced, chose expressive liberation above the class struggle and judged egalitarian doctrines according to a cosmopolitan standard (Aarons 1961: 50, 57; Fishbein 1982: 197, 203).

In the meantime, legions of young Americans, including leading literary lights like Ernest Hemingway, Ezra Pound,⁸ and F. Scott Fitzgerald, were flocking to the avant-garde banner. Simultaneously repulsed by Prohibition and the genteel Protestant tradition while attracted by the liberating appeal of bohemian modernism, they followed in the footsteps of Whistler and James and left for Europe in droves, forming what has been called the “Lost Generation” (Crunten 1994: 190–191, Allen 1961: 122). This new breed of literati venerated rebels like Bourne and Lippmann and gave substance to the urban “revolt against the village,” which flew in the face of Americans’ traditional praise of rural and small-town virtue.

This tradition was also yoked to a definite sense of intellectual elitism—akin to Jane Addams’s notion of upper middle-class intellectuals as a “better element.” For instance, in the mid-1920s, H. L. Mencken referred to the American masses as “serfs and goose-steppers,” or the “booboisie.” Walter Lippmann concurred, remarking in 1926 that “the dogma of majority rule contains within it some sort of deep and destructive confusion.” Other mid-1920s New York thinkers like Van Wyck Brooks (“the apotheosis of the average”) or Matthew Josephson (“the well-fed, indifferent masses”) expressed similar sentiments (Mowry 1967: 2, 216).

The popularity of Sinclair Lewis’s *Main Street* (1920), which sold over half a million copies during the 1920s provides a barometer of the spread of urban cosmopolitan attitudes. Lewis’s novel told the story of Carol Kennicott, a city woman whose marriage condemned her to a claustrophobic lifestyle in a midwestern town. In a typical passage, Carol exclaims to a visitor, “I am sick with the Village Virus. Will you please tell me what people are saying and playing in New York?” (Lewis [1920] 1994: 307). Elsewhere, the theme of cultural pluralism as an antidote to Anglo-conformist Puritanism appears. For instance, Carol scorned the (Anglo) townsfolk as being of “standardized background . . . scornful of the living. . . . A savourless people, gulping tasteless food . . . and viewing themselves as the greatest race in the world.” Later, upon dis-

covering the Scandinavian immigrant element in town, Lewis describes Carol's reaction:

For the first time in Gopher Prairie Carol had found novelty. She . . . reveled in the mild foreignness of it. But she saw these Scandinavian women zealously exchanging their spiced pudding and red jackets for fried pork chops and congealed white blouses . . . being Americanized into uniformity. . . . Their sons finished the process . . . and the sound American customs had absorbed without one trace of pollution another alien invasion. And along with these foreigners, she felt herself being ironed into glossy mediocrity, and she rebelled, in fear. (Lewis [1920] 1994: 247)

For the first time in its history, a considerable number of Anglo-American intellectuals openly disparaged the traditions of their own ethnic group.

The “New York Intellectuals”: The Cosmopolitan Torch Is Passed

Central to our argument is the notion that the pre-World War I New York avant-garde valued expressive individualism and cosmopolitanism above all else. After the war, and coming of age in the late 1930s, a new generation of New York thinkers emerged to carry their torch. This group sported a larger Jewish contingent (owing to New York's changing demographics), but its intellectual lineage came from the Young Intellectuals and carried forth their mantras (Aarons 1961; Wald 1987: 15, 27–45). In David Hollinger's estimation, these new intellectuals were formed from an *equal* fusion of Jewish and Anglo-Saxon radicalism and should be considered a united community, if not a surrogate ethnic. Nor was there an asymmetry of influence: the two groups of ethnic exiles influenced each other in dialectical fashion (Hollinger 1985: 58, 63). Cardinal among their beliefs was the dictum that all attempts at collective representation, whether ethnonationalist or state-socialist, were to be shunned.

The nerve center of the new cosmopolitan enterprise was a congerie of literary journalists based in New York around the *Nation*, *Partisan Review*, and the *New Republic*. Joined by their artistic fellow-travelers just prior to World War II, this group helped forge a hegemonic postwar intellectual culture. Emerging in the 1930s, these thinkers exercised increasing influence in American intellectual life and were simply referred to as the “New

York Intellectuals.” As both David Hollinger and Terry Cooney remark, the group’s overriding goal was modernist cosmopolitanism, and their ideological somersaults from the 1930s to the 1950s are understandable only if one sees their various positions as a means to achieving this end (Cooney 1981: 598).

As evidence, consider the New York Intellectuals’ relationship with Soviet communism. It carried a strongly positive charge during the period when the Soviets were seen to be progressing toward modernism and internationalism. Indeed, *Partisan Review*, a central organ of the New York Intellectuals, had been formed in 1934 during the apogee of pro-Soviet intellectualism. This euphoria proved short-lived as Stalin rose to prominence in the party after Lenin’s death. The Moscow Show Trials, news of which reached the West by 1936, involved a crackdown on anti-Stalinist factions, an action in which modernist intellectuals and Jews figured prominently as victims.

For the New York Intellectuals, Stalinism marked a retreat from their ideas of progress, which were essentially Western and cosmopolitan. In staking this ground, these New York modernists were returning to their intellectual roots in the pre-World War I Village. As Terry Cooney puts it, “The Moscow trials confirmed for Phillips, Rahv, and others assumptions that they had been making all along. On one side of the fence stood cosmopolitanism, internationalism, secularism, rationalism, urban complexity, intellectual sophistication, artistic creativity, and progress; on the other fell ethnic and regional particularism, nationalism, religious mystification, emotionalism, rural narrowness, simplification, populist politics, popular writing, artistic stagnation, and reaction” (Cooney 1981: 595–596; Bell 1980: 134).

In concordance with the cosmopolitan worldview went the cosmopolitan version of socialism: “True socialism, as the New York Intellectuals understood it, promised an invigoration of intellectual life, an opening up of culture to a larger audience, and the free circulation of ideas. Stalinism had demonstrated how thoroughly this vision could be corrupted and how easily cultural life could be restricted in the name of radicalism” (Cooney 1986: 257). Not surprisingly, in 1937, *Partisan Review* broke away from the American Communist Party, a shift that was predicated largely on the Russian party’s abandonment of modernist-cosmopolitan ideals. This was accompanied by an exodus of other American artists and literati, hastened after 1939 by the Nazi-Soviet pact (Egbert and Persons 1952: 422; Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 323).

American artists responded no less swiftly. In 1940, for instance, modernist Stuart Davis of the American Artists Congress expressed the new sentiment in succinct terms: “I oppose the totalitarianism of Nazism. I oppose the totalitarianism of Communism. I support the social need for individual freedom of expression as manifested in the so-called bourgeois democracies” (Doss 1991: 278). It appears then that the New York avant-garde tradition of cosmopolitan individualism had beaten off its communist challenger. While doing so, it took aim at another collectivist foe: dominant ethnicity and its “regionalist” companion culture.

The Assault on Anglo-American Populist Art

The New York avant-garde had rejected communism in part because of its emphasis on realist art, which the Soviets claimed the proletarian masses would be better able to comprehend. Another form of realist, popular art they opposed originated closer to home with artists and writers inspired by traditional American themes. This school of art and literature, known as Regionalism, sought to draw on the American landscape, its history and folk culture, in an attempt to generate an authentically native “American” culture and reconstruct an American sense of national community.

Portraying the common people, often in starkly realist forms, the Regionalists were part of the generation that rejected genteel New England culture. However, Regionalism contained many connections with the genteel tradition. First, there was the shared focus on American particularity and cultural nationalism. Second, there was the common root in the “old American” dominant ethnics. Whereas the genteel tradition emphasized the patrician Anglo-Saxonism of New England, the Regionalists displayed continuities with the Yeoman populism of Jefferson, Jackson, Bryan, and Theodore Roosevelt. The Regionalists are therefore related to the genteel tradition in the same way that Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis is related to the Anglo-Saxon myth: they are both populist reactions to northeastern patrician influence but remain within the orbit of Anglo-Protestant ethnicity.

Regionalists fell into several categories, ranging from the more traditional to the more radical. The more radical among them portrayed urban America in all its diversity, experimented with modern forms, and sought out the folk cultures of the native Indian, New Mexican Hispano, and black American (Dorman 1993: 35, 185, 302).⁹ These strands were but

detours, however, from the main focus of Regionalism: namely, the Anglo-American folk culture of southern Appalachia, the West (or Midwest), and even New England. Key practitioners included the visual artists of the American Scene,¹⁰ notably Grant Wood, Steuart Curry, and Thomas Hart Benton; writers like Henry Nash Smith, Willa Cather, Allen Tate, Hamlin Garland, and Robert Frost; and several other circles of historians and social scientists (Dorman 1993: 284–285). Unlike the cosmopolitan intellectuals of the northeastern cities, many Regionalists based themselves in the vast hinterland of rural and provincial America where they sought to capture the nation's essence.

The immense public resonance of Regionalism was exemplified by American Scene art. In the 1930s, it was widely disseminated through public products and architecture by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal administration and was popularized among consumers by Henry Luce at *Time-Life* Publications and through Reeves Lewenthal's Associated American Artists' lithographs (Doss 1991: 156–162, 170–175). As Charles Alexander writes,

More than in any other area of American culture, nationalistic attitudes dominated American visual art in the thirties. . . . The thirties was probably the last decade in which a majority of America's painters and sculptors struggled to communicate with a broad, unsophisticated public. More than at any time since the Armory Show [of 1913], Americans painted and sculpted in readily recognizable images and symbols. (Alexander 1980: 177)

The reaction among the avant-garde was predictable: they opposed the Regionalists as reactionary populists. For instance, Thomas Hart Benton was already a dissident in the art world of 1933 and in 1935 attracted the ire of the New York branches of the socialist John Reed Club and the Artist's Union. The depth of anti-Regionalist feeling may be gauged by the ferocity of criticism Benton received from his *Partisan Review* critics of 1937–1938. Meyer Schapiro, for example, declared: “The appeal to national sentiment should set us on guard, whatever its source. And when it comes as does Benton's with his conceited anti-intellectualism, his hatred of the foreign, his emphasis on the strong and masculine, his uncritical and unhistorical elevation of the folk, his antagonism to the cities, his ignorant and violent remarks on radicalism, we have good reason to doubt his professed liberalism” (Cooney 1981: 597).

Schapiro also assailed the “reactionary character” of Frank Lloyd Wright's populist vision of America and his co-author Baker Brownell's

“Nazi enthusiasm and vagueness about the folk . . . which he opposes to the landless immigrants with their ‘unnatural’ and un-American urban interests” (Cooney 1981: 597). Meanwhile, Mary McCarthy, also of *Partisan Review*, criticized Regionalist Maxwell Anderson’s commercial success, declaring that it came not from intellectual competence, but from an appeal to “old-fashioned American symbols” (Cooney 1981: 597; Doss 1991: 118–125). The New York art world of the 1930s was similarly disposed toward Regionalism, a subjectivity Stuart Davis underscored by attacking the entire Regionalist school as fascist and racist.

In response, Benton and his supporters (who represented the majority sentiment among the American art-consuming public) vilified both the New York radicals and abstract artists as being elitist and remote from the concerns of average Americans. This debate turned especially nasty when Thomas Craven, Benton confederate and art critic for William Randolph Hearst’s *New York American*, described Alfred Stieglitz, a prominent Village radical, as “a Hoboken Jew without knowledge of, or interest in, the historical American background” (Alexander 1980: 119–120; Doss 1991: 118).

The New York Intellectuals and the Emergence of Intellectual “Consensus”

The significance of the intellectual attack on populism, whether Anglo-Saxon or Soviet, lay with the collective self-realization this struggle produced among the avant-garde. The New York Intellectuals became acutely conscious of themselves as upholders of liberal cosmopolitanism in a centralized, manipulable mass society. The closely affiliated art world followed suit, with social engagement abandoned in favor of “art for art’s sake,” to which was added the myth of the avant-garde:

What this position ultimately meant was a repudiation of the effort—launched by the Progressives and sustained throughout the twenties and thirties—to establish some kind of rapport between the artist and the public. Henceforth, novelists and poets would write only for one another, and the dream of finding a place in an organic American community gave way to a celebration of the homeless intellectual, forever alienated and uprooted, the eternal exile without hope of return. (Pells 1973: 342–343)

The behavior of the New York Intellectuals during this period can be viewed as a retrenchment, in which they fell back upon their modernist

symbolic resources and centered their concerns around the defense of cultural liberty in the bourgeois, democratic West. Yet, paradoxically, in the midst of this isolation were sown the seeds of national reengagement, albeit at an elite level. Specifically, the avant-garde came to view the United States as the focus for its social ideals, and the American government began to view the avant-garde as a bulwark against communism. Later, this complementarity would result in increasingly close cooperation between the New York avant-garde and the American government.

The Literary Avant-Garde and the Rediscovery of America

Rising fascism and an illiberal Soviet communism in the 1930s helped crystallize the New York Intellectuals' interest in the United States (Alexander 1980: 273). This feeling was legitimated by the flight of many top European intellectuals to America, particularly New York. New York, it appeared, was to become the world's new intellectual center. No longer would one have to take refuge in Europe from American parochialism as had been the case since the days of Whistler or the Jameses. Instead, Europeans would come to America, particularly New York, to seek the most sophisticated, cosmopolitan culture the world had to offer.¹¹

From the late 30s on, New York and the United States were to become part of avant-garde mythology, accepting the torch of progress from a Paris (and Europe) under fascist and communist occupation. In this manner, New York was seen as a center of cultural revival, while Paris became the subject of golden age nostalgia. This explains cultural critic Harold Rosenberg's invocation of the myth of the avant-garde, lamenting the "Fall of Paris" in 1940 and calling the French city a "cultural Klondike," the home of "searchers of every nation" in which the "lone individual, stripped [of national bonds, was] yet supported on every side by the vitality of other outcasts" (Hollinger 1985: 68–69).

Rosenberg should not be viewed as a simple pessimist, for implicit in his nostalgia for Paris was the exciting prospect of being at the center of the postwar intellectual world and safeguarding the flame of civilization. In Rosenberg's writing, we can discern an enthusiasm for a New Paris akin to the enthusiasms the Puritans displayed for a New Jerusalem or New England. Other voices, notably that of Alfred Kazin, vied with Rosenberg's in championing the new vision of America. Speaking of "a new cosmopolitan culture," Kazin drew on the same ideas that Randolph Bourne had articulated in 1916 (Hollinger 1985: 68–69).¹² What oc-

curred, therefore, was an attempt by the new avant-garde “ethnic” community to *replace the Anglo-Protestants as the culturally dominant group in the nation*, an event that was to hasten the WASP-to-Cosmopolitan shift in the nation’s identity.

The avant-garde’s timing could not have been better, for just as the New York Intellectuals were abandoning Europe and communism, there occurred a rapid growth in academic and publishing opportunities, fueled by a resurgent American economy (Baltzell 1964: 336–339). Entering the professorial gates of elite universities, the New York modernist renegades found that American academics were not entirely the stuffy, genteel Anglo-Saxons of stereotype, but included many inquisitive minds, eager for new ideas (Cooney 1986: 256–257). Upon their influx into the universities and mainstream media, the New York Intellectuals received respect and status and were poised to exercise profound influence on some of the nation’s leading cultural institutions.

This influence soon extended into the political realm. Convinced of America’s liberal cosmopolitan virtue, many American literary intellectuals rallied behind their government’s cold war anticommunism. The culmination of this process was the formation of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF) in 1951, a highly influential organization backed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which counted many New York Intellectuals (especially from the *Partisan Review* clique) as members (Pells 1973: 294–295; Wilford 1994: 215, 221–223). As the heir to the New York Intellectual tradition, the ACCF had enough prestige to serve as an organizing body for the newly established liberal intelligentsia that held sway in the American intellectual world from the 1940s until the 1960s (Hollinger 1985: 58).

Consensus in the Art World

Trends in the visual arts mirrored those in literature and social science. Thomas Hart Benton said it all when he lamented that World War II had destroyed “that national concentration on our American meanings out of which the images of Regionalism grew and in which the movement found its justification and its successes” (Doss 1991: 282). This transition, which actually began prior to World War I, flows through the career of Jackson Pollock, a protégé of Benton’s in the 1930s who abandoned Benton’s Regionalism to become a pioneer of abstract expressionism in 1938 (Doss 1991: 328). As mentioned, the new position emerging in the art world

was that realism was dangerous and that the most radical position was to reject mass man. The upshot was art for art's sake: dedicated purely to self-expression and experiments in technique.

The paradox was that the new cold-war American nation had appropriated the artistic declaration of independence represented by abstract expressionism, often with the artists' complicity. This process followed a wave of adulation for modernism from mainstream public institutions, with major museums and the State Department beginning to patronize contemporary abstract art. Corporate America, notably *Time-Life* and Lewenthal's Associated American Artists, followed suit, moving away from their former engagement with the Regionalism of the American scene. Abstract expressionism even became commodified: "Home design tastemakers got into the act . . . turning the drip style of Pollock's canvases into tasteful wallpaper, floor tile, and fabric design" (Doss 1991: 364).

Pollock's abstract expressionism represented an epiphany of cultural liberation, the very value that had come to symbolize the new American consensus. In this way, the avant-garde *ethnie* had begun to make its symbols coterminous with the nation's, marking a first step toward cultural hegemony that was nicely congruent with the aspirations of the cold war American executive: "Through the auspices of the State Department, abstract art was exhibited throughout postwar Europe to promote America's creative freedom, in direct contrast to the Soviet Union's style of Socialist realism" (Doss 1991: 366).

The new liberal value consensus, in which artists, writers, academics, and the U.S. government were united, was social democratic, cosmopolitan, and modernist, signifying to many the emergence of a "Vital Center" (Schlesinger 1949) or an "End of Ideology" (Bell 1960)¹³ (Doss 1991: 334–335). Consensus Americanism can thus be viewed as an intellectual earthquake that elevated the new avant-garde "ethnic group" to a position of cultural hegemony. Intellectual leadership, whether clerical or secular-romantic, has always been a mainstay of ethnic consciousness, and its withdrawal is devastating to the group involved (Smith 1986: 103–105). In capturing Anglo-America from the top down, the American avant-garde left American dominant ethnicity rudderless. It was now only a question of time before cosmopolitanism would achieve the institutional inertia necessary for it to triumph as a mass phenomenon.

The Institutionalization of the Modernist Aesthetic

The consensus era of the late 1930s and 1940s marks an important phase in the diffusion of modernism into the American mainstream. In this period, a wider spectrum of society adopted ideals of liberalism and egalitarianism, symbolically transfigured into the modernist aesthetic. Liberty was often suggested by fluidity, speed, and experimentation, whereas equality was represented by simplicity and modesty. In this manner, liberal-egalitarianism came to be symbolized by a figurative nucleus of modernist lifestyle images (Moscovici 1984: 38–39). This nucleus of symbols displaced the agrarian-regionalist-republican WASP *mythomoteur* as the prevailing aesthetic, thereby redefining American culture as modernist. In this way, the culture of the pre-World War II New York avant-garde came to mass fruition in the latter decades of the twentieth century, carried forth, ironically, by the marketplace and its consumer culture.

There were two broad phases in the institutionalization of American modernism. The first, “smart” phase begins in the 1920s among educated urban youth and the upwardly mobile professional classes, drawing upon the hedonistic and futurist elements of the Young Intellectuals’ cultural repertoire. The second, “alternative” phase takes off in the 1960s, and champions the more radical values of the Young Intellectuals which were bypassed in the first phase of cultural diffusion. I will outline the first stage in this discussion and the second in the next chapter.

Cultural and Structural Preconditions for Change

The first phase of aesthetic institutionalization was abetted by structural changes that increased the size of the urban middle class of salaried professionals, managers, salespeople, and office workers from 750,000 in 1860 to 4.4 million by 1910. We can also discern an increase in leisure time as the average American workweek declined from 66 hours in 1850 to 55 in 1914 (Norris 1990: 10; Schlereth 1991: 29, 141). The 1920s was also the first decade in which automobiles and radios came within the reach of most Americans and liberated some of them from the confines of small-town, Protestant mores (Lynd and Lynd 1937: 263; Allen [1952] 1961: 109–110). The movies (post-1900), popular magazines, and spectator sports also provided new outlets for leisure time that bore an ambiguous relationship to dominant ethnicity and created new “micro”

narratives that may have helped to displace the Anglo-American meta-narrative (Ingham 1987: 55; Peterson 1964: 362).

It would be a mistake, however, to ascribe too much significance to these structural developments. More important is the content of the messages these new formations carried. Bell is correct to point out that the compression of space opened up by high-speed transportation and the aesthetic created by skyscrapers made of reinforced concrete influenced the modernist creed (Bell [1976] 1996: 106–107). Lewis Mumford's excited early 1900s description of his native New York as “[i]mmense, overpowering, flooded with energy and light,” brings this home. However, such impressions were largely the province of a modernist literati that had been primed by its liberal-Victorian cultural inheritance to take such an accommodating view of modernity (Blake 1990: 25, 44, 48). The genteel, nineteenth-century Episcopal background of many early modernist intellectuals, for example, incorporated an affinity for consumption and a looser adherence to the Puritan code of conduct (Atherton 1954: 19).

Juxtaposed against the Episcopal upper middle class were city dwellers from middle or working-class Protestant backgrounds, who responded to modernity in a very different manner than their cousins. A good indication of the split is provided by two key cultural developments of the 1920s, Prohibition and the revival of the Klan. According to Kenneth Jackson, of Klan members in the 1920s, “50 per cent . . . resided in metropolitan areas of more than 50,000 persons. No fewer than . . . 32 per cent . . . resided in metropolitan areas which in 1920 contained more than 100,000 persons.” Both of these figures demonstrate that, proportionately speaking, *urban white Protestants were far more likely to join the Klan than their rural counterparts*. In addition, urban klaverns exercised disproportionate influence at the state and national level and were the source of most of the Klan's leadership (Jackson 1967: 236, 239).

It is also significant that “very few men of wealth, education or professional position” were Klan members. Instead, the main source of Klan support came from non-unionized blue-collar workers of Baptist, Methodist and other low-church Protestant denominations (Jackson 1967: 241). Educated, professional, liberal Protestants generally opposed the Klan, and many were said to “fear the mask more than the robe” (Jackson 1967: 64, 82, 163).

A similar polarization arose around the Prohibition issue. In the Northeast and upper Midwest, higher-status WASPs in the 1920s consistently voted with immigrant groups against the temperance of their middle-class,

low-church ethnic brethren¹⁴ (Buenker 1973: 189, 193–194). Opposition to Prohibition among the upper middle classes gradually developed as more liberal currents of thought suffused their status culture, leading them to abandon traditional Protestant organizations. Consider the case of the multimillion member Women’s Christian Temperance Union. Joseph Gusfield has produced evidence that its leadership shifted from predominantly upper middle class in 1880 to largely lower middle class in 1925. One consequence, claims Gusfield, was a decline in the prestige of Puritan values (Gusfield 1963: 182; Rose 1996: 54, 66).

It is also significant that the anti-Prohibition crusade was influenced by libertarian ideas that garnered strong backing from big business. The elite status of the anti-Prohibition forces was reflected in its leadership, which rapidly opened up a “glamor gap” between itself and its dry opponents. Thus Pauline Morton Sabin, head of the Women’s Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR), was a New York socialite and divorcée whose second husband was a Wall Street financier. Both featured regularly in the city’s gossip columns and smart magazines. Where once female opponents of Prohibition (until the early 1920s) had been castigated as deviant, by the late 1920s, the ranks of WONPR included many of the nation’s elite women. In Maryland, for instance, “fully half of the women in WONPR leadership positions . . . had their own *Who’s Who in Maryland* entries or were married to men prominent enough to be included in the *Who’s Who*” (Rose 1996: 74–81; Kyvig 1979).

Modernism Goes Mainstream: The Influence of the Young Intellectuals

Colin Campbell writes that outbursts of bohemianism are often followed by periods of creative consumer boom. In this manner, we can understand Malcolm Cowley’s remarks that the consumption ethic of his day emerged in the 1920s from Greenwich Village (Campbell [1987]: 201, 206; Cowley, 1951). For instance, the cultural shift that brought respectability to alcohol consumption and helped to discredit the temperance movement can partly be attributed to the influence of best-selling avant-garde authors like Sinclair Lewis in the 1920s, who in turn drew on the aesthetic rebellion of the Young Intellectuals. Similarly, the spread of jazz began with Villager Carl Van Vechten’s trips to Harlem during the pre-World War I Village Renaissance. His predilection for “slumming” quickly caught on with the New York *haute-bourgeoisie*, which inaugurated a consumer-

driven “jazz age” in the 1920s and 1930s (Crunden 1994: 209–210). In those years, whites “went up to Harlem” to patronize cabarets where they listened to jazz, danced, and watched risqué revues (Osofsky 1987: 253).

Similar trends could be discerned in the realm of the “cultural intermediaries”—fashion, art patronage, architecture, publishing, fashion, movies, and product design (Featherstone 1991: 43). For example, Frank Crowninshield, who founded the “smart” magazine *Vanity Fair* in 1913, was a driving force behind the pathbreaking New York Armory Show of modern art. Meanwhile, figures from Greenwich Village bohemia like James Gibbons Huneker and Norman Hapgood contributed to *Vanity Fair* and other smart magazines like *Cosmopolitan* or *Esquire*, both of which were also founded during this period (Douglas 1991: 21, 98). Generally speaking, the smart magazines were highly innovation-conscious, acting quickly to embrace cultural novelties like modernism.

As George Douglas notes, the appeal of these magazines was to a metropolitan leisure class that was not shy of ostentatious displays of wealth and that possessed a sense of self-identity. Prior to this period, popular American magazines like the *Saturday Evening Post* “were fearful of tampering with a culture and a way of life that had strong agrarian roots, [and] ties to an older (if largely imaginary) Jeffersonian ideal. Most of them wanted to exude an aroma of the older and more settled Americanism . . . until well into the twentieth century” (Douglas 1991: 19). A similar shift was in order in advertising: by the late 1910s, “smart” appeals had replaced more traditional techniques. A decade later, the more streamlined aesthetic of futurism had clearly emerged in advertisements (Norris 1990: 158; A. Smith 1991: 179).

The collaboration between corporate America and the nation’s avant-garde artists was reinforced in several other respects. First, modern artists like Edward Steichen and Charles Sheeler also designed advertisements, influencing trends in that growing profession. The change can be seen on the pages of *Life*, the mass-circulation national news magazine, which increasingly used modernist techniques on its covers and enthusiastically covered phenomena like the 1939 New York World’s Fair and the rise of modernist interior decoration. In a striking passage, an Austin engineering company ad proclaimed 1930 to be the “modernization year in industry” and showed stylized skyscrapers against a starlit sky, with the shadows of factories in the foreground. The caption beside the picture reinforced the sense of a new dawn:

Mighty buildings rear their heads into the clouds . . . sturdy ships of the air drone away to distant ports . . . new products appear overnight on counters and in salesrooms everywhere. It is a dramatic age in which industry plays a lead role, for back of all the romantic pageant are the wheels that must turn, ever faster, to set the pace of progress. (A. Smith 1991: 178, 182, 384)

Feeding off the same energy, many futurist artists took inspiration from the automobile industry: “Let Ford be President,” urged Matthew Josephson, “let him assemble us all into a machine. . . . Let the wheels turn more swiftly” (A. Smith 1991: 111). Seizing upon these artists’ enthusiasms, the Ford Motor Company in the late 1920s sponsored the Precisionists’ work and used their photographs in its internal publications like *Ford News*. The culmination of this expression was the Ford exhibit at the 1939 New York World’s Fair, which featured the work of Ford-oriented American futurists (Oldenziel 1988: 50; A. Smith 1991: 129). Not to be outdone, General Motors’ *Futurama* exhibit at the same fair used similar-minded artists to depict a high-tech consumer paradise of the future (Doss 1991: 155).

The modernization of the nation’s cultural intermediaries was similarly evident in product design and architecture, both of which featured a new futurist, “streamlined” aesthetic. This began with the Loewy pencil sharpener (1933) and rapidly spread with such icons as the DC-10 airliner (1934), Chrysler Airflow automobile (1935), Empire State Building (1937), and Sears Coldspot Refrigerator (1935). The 1939 New York’s World’s Fair, with its futurist symbols, the Trylon and Perisphere, and its consumer exhibits, like GM’s *Futurama*, confirmed that the modernist aesthetic had attained mass acceptance. Ayn Rand’s novel, *The Fountainhead* (1943), frames the contrast between popular tradition and the new modernism, demonstrating how the traditional Anglo-American aesthetic of neoclassicism and neocolonial regionalism came to be replaced by a futuristic functionalism (A. Smith 1991: 354, 373; Ewen 1988: 145; Rand [1943] 1946).

Even in the nation’s midwestern heartland, by the mid-1930s, the Lynds recorded a “struggle between the old pride in localism, in being Middletown [Muncie], and the opposed pride in being *en rapport* with the ‘newest,’ the ‘smartest,’ the ‘most approved by the right people in the outside world’ ” (Lynd and Lynd 1937: 378–379). Part of the new trend in mass culture was a shift toward an urban subject matter with urban

heroes. The imago of the “private eye” emerged for the first time in the 1920s out of an evolutionary trajectory that transformed cowboy into railroad detective and, finally, urban detective. In that decade, magazines offering a diet of detective fiction emerged, circulating in the millions (Robertson 1980: 165; Fishwick 1985: 182–83). Consequently, newsstand sales of popular periodicals in Muncie, Indiana, in the 1931–1935 period showed that urban fiction, in the form of motion-picture and detective periodicals, outsold more traditional “Western” theme periodicals every year (Lynd and Lynd 1937: 258).

The content of mass public culture underwent similar changes. A magazine content analysis, for instance, reveals that between the 1900s and the 1920s, the majority of biographical articles shifted from a concern with politicians, businessmen, and professional people toward movie stars, sports heroes, and radio “personalities.” The significant trend, the author noted, was away from the heroes of production and culture toward the idols of consumption and leisure (Mowry 1967: 20). By the end of the 1920s, Stuart Ewen observes, “the stylization of marketplace was in full swing” with popular magazines taking over the “high style artists formerly used only by exclusive style journals [smart magazines] such as *Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar*” (Ewen 1988: 47). Slowly but surely, what Daniel Boorstin refers to as the “gossamer webs” of modernist consumerism began to knit the nation together across ethnic lines (Boorstin 1973). A subsequent study of the change in children’s exemplars helps us to understand the ontological implications of these changes for American national identity (see Figure 7.2).

The Young Intellectuals of 1912–1917 were driven to cosmopolitan Americanism by their desire for cultural liberty, though theoretically they aimed to realize an inclusive blend of universal liberty and equality. These elements were also present among the “ethical bohemians” of the Settlement houses, though in their case egalitarianism took precedence. The “lyrical left” in Greenwich Village created a culture and lifestyle from its principles in which cultural individualism and egalitarianism were figuratively transformed into modernism. This functioned as a cultural boundary marker of the avant-garde lifestyle community—the surrogate for a lost Anglo-Saxon ethnicity. So whereas a Liberal Progressive could wield only the abstract stick of egalitarian morality, the avant-garde Young Intellectual could wed a meaningful lifestyle to those principles. Consequently, the Liberal Progressives were left behind as an avant-garde be-

cause they failed to develop the aesthetic resources needed to accompany their ethical development. This gap emerges clearly in the criticism meted out to the Liberal Progressives by several prominent New York expressivists¹⁵ (Abrahams 1986: 65; Gerstle 1994: 1048; Bender 1987: 309).

During the interwar period, the New York Intellectuals continued the modernist assault on Anglo-Protestantism, retaining the Young Intellectuals' inclination to privilege liberty over equality when the two conflicted. This approach became increasingly evident during the early cold war era when the *Partisan Review* clique threw its weight behind the new universalist America, spurning the doctrinaire socialism and proletarian art of the Soviets. The result was a liberal "consensus" among radical American intellectuals that endorsed mixed capitalism and unlimited expressive freedom. The aesthetic influence of the New York avant-garde thereby reinforced the ethical impact of Liberal Progressivism on the educated mainstream. Hence the complementarities between the two groups' ideologies: cosmopolitan Americanism, universal liberalism, and humanist egalitarianism emerged as the "consensus."

The cultural residue of this intellectual consensus was twofold. First, there emerged an American avant-garde identity, a surrogate community of "history and destiny" to which a growing number of estranged Anglo-

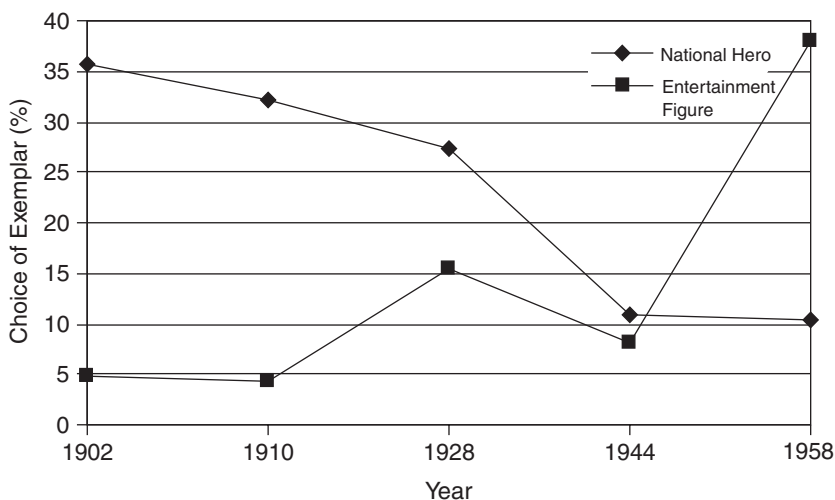


Figure 7.2. From national identity to pop culture: Changing children's exemplars, 1900–1960 (Zelinsky 1988: 37).

Saxon (or potential Anglo-Saxon) intellectuals could defect. Next, this surrogate ethnic trumped its WASP competitor, achieving hegemony among the nation's cultural and political elites. This began in the 1920s with the "smart" aesthetic consumer trend and continued into the 1930s as an ethical revolution that gripped the consciences of many well-educated Americans. As a consequence, the American myth-symbol complex was purged by the nation's cultural leaders of its white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant components. With this intellectual backing removed, American dominant ethnicity had only its less educated, traditionalist population to fall back on, a constituency that would decline markedly in the decades ahead.

III

The Fall of Anglo-America

Cosmopolitanism Institutionalized, 1930–1970

Consider the dismay that provincial Protestants must have felt . . . most threatening of all was the inescapable recognition that the leaders who had customarily spoken for the Protestant masses . . . were giving way to faceless bureaucrats in the business world [and] cosmopolitan secularists in the universities.

—JOHN HIGHAM, 1997

The period between 1900 and 1917 ushered in a great wave of cosmopolitan Americanism, articulated by the Liberal Progressives, ecumenical Protestants, and Young Intellectuals and based on the foundations of expressive liberty and cultural equality. The interwar period extended the thinking of these actors throughout the nation's intellectual stratum. In effect, the moral compass of the nation's elite received a magnetic shock that altered educated Americans' deepest sense of what it meant to be a good person. At the same time, a cosmopolitan aesthetic that privileged expressive freedom linked American intellectuals, well-to-do consumers, and corporate businesspeople with the federal government. The new mood resulted in a stripped-down national identity consisting purely of the symbols of liberty and equality inherited from the Constitution. In this sense, the post–World War II United States would incarnate the liberal ideal of the transethnic, civic nation.

Cosmopolitan Thought and the Federal Government

World War II, as never before, generated an impressive amount of government-sponsored activity directed toward ameliorating relations between American ethnic and religious groups. Pluralist academics, together with their interfaith religious colleagues, churned out numerous pamphlets urging education as a remedy for intergroup tensions (Higham [1975] 1984). The Progressive Education Association's Committee on Intercultural Education (1937), the Common Council of American

Unity, and the U.S. Office of Education's "Americans All" broadcasts on the contributions of particular ethnic groups (1938–1939) represented the front end of this new effort (Savage 1999; Gleason 1992: 164–166; Glazer 1997: 88). That cosmopolitanism was integral to the new Americanism is evident from the spate of universalist works emerging in the 1940s and 1950s.

As early as 1943, Republican presidential nominee Wendell Willkie penned a best-seller entitled *One World*, which bore the impress of cosmopolitan-humanist ideas of both Liberal-Progressive and ecumenical Protestant origin. His conclusions echo those of the post-World War I generation of Protestant elites: "We must come to a better understanding of what is happening in the East . . . of their loss of faith in Western imperialism and in the superiority of the white man," Willkie wrote (Willkie 1943: 89). He also shone the light of humanitarian reform on the United States itself, criticizing its failure to live up to its ethical standards while celebrating its new, streamlined identity based solely on the common denominator of liberalism:

Our nation is composed of no one race, faith, or cultural heritage. It is a grouping of some thirty peoples possessing varying religious concepts, philosophies, and historical backgrounds. They are linked together by their confidence in our democratic institutions as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and guaranteed by the Constitution for themselves and their children. The keystone of our union of states is freedom. (Willkie 1943: 157)

Although the ethical and religious egalitarianism of ecumenical Protestantism and Liberal Progressivism appears to have been the clearest influence on Willkie, elements of modernist thought, reminiscent of Bourne or Kallen, were also apparent:

Minorities are rich assets of a democracy . . . minorities are the constant spring of new ideas, stimulating new thought and action, the constant source of vigour. Our way of living together in America is *a strong but delicate fabric. It is made up of many threads.* . . . It serves as a cloak for the protection of poor and rich, of black and white, of Jew and gentile, of foreign- and native-born. Let us not tear it asunder. (Willkie 1943: 159–160, emphasis added)

Two decades later, an American of Irish Catholic origin felt confident enough to crown the postwar mood with a new catch-phrase, America as

a “nation of immigrants.” John F. Kennedy’s short book bound together eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cosmopolitan utterances, disembedding them from their context of double-consciousness and seamlessly placing them alongside invented traditions from the post-1930s period, like Emma Lazarus’s poem at the base of the Statue of Liberty (Kennedy 1964: 1–3, 68, 77). Kennedy concluded with an attack on the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 and outlined his blueprint for the nation—which displayed the same blend of pluralist cosmopolitanism and melting pot universalism that had characterized Progressive thought on American identity for some 40 years:

The ideal of the “melting pot” symbolized the process of blending many strains into a single nationality, and we have come to realize in modern times that the “melting pot” need not mean the end of particular ethnic identities or traditions. Only in the case of the Negro has the melting pot failed to bring a minority into the full stream of American life. (Kennedy 1964: 67)

Other titles soon caught the cosmopolitan spirit of the times. The best known include Carey McWilliams’s *Brothers under the Skin* and Edward Steichen’s 1950s photo exhibit in the Museum of Modern Art, *The Family of Man*. In David Hollinger’s view, the scientific, humanistic, religious, and political discourse of the day was exuberantly universalistic and the new, international-style, United Nations building in New York was taken as a symbol of the universal nation, America, which would prefigure a new global solidarity (Hollinger 1995: 52–55).

Such sentiments are certainly present in John Higham’s *Strangers in the Land* (1955), a critique of American nativism. In this important work, Higham was directly inspired by ecumenical Christianity and consensus liberalism. For example, he introduced his work with a universalist biblical passage redolent of the Interfaith movement.¹ Looking back on *Strangers in the Land* some 30 years later, Higham betrays a clear lineage to the cosmopolitanism of both the New York Intellectuals and the New Liberals influenced by the Liberal Progressives: “In the late 1930’s I had become convinced, by reading European history and the antiwar novelists of that period, that nationalism was the bane of the modern world. . . . I was drawn to the kind of progressive thought—distinctly socialist rather than communist—that looked forward to the fraternity of peoples rather than the solidarity of a class.”

Several pages on, the Liberal-Progressive connection emerges into the

open as Higham distances himself from 1960s radicalism, proffering that “the cosmopolitan strain [of American nationalism] was present in the Progressive movement” (Higham [1955] 1988: 339–340). In bringing cosmopolitan ideas into the mainstream, writers such as Higham were participating in an intellectual sea-change which Michael Lind claims prompted elites to recast the American narrative along universal lines. This national story embraced what Lind calls a “generic Christianity,” in place of Protestantism, rejected both Anglo-Saxonism and Nordicity, and redefined America as a nation of immigrants. To hold the polity together, post-1930s elites looked to Gunnar Myrdal’s “American Creed,” an overarching ideology of liberal democracy shared by diverse ethnic groups (Lind 1995: 90).

The Process of Elite Institutionalization

The emergence of the American Creed as the centerpiece of American nationality pointed Anglo-Saxon and Protestant symbols toward the exit of the American national stage. This took place over the space of some 30 years, as large segments of the American elite appropriated the expressivist, cosmopolitan heritage of the modernist avant-garde and the egalitarian mantras of the Liberal Progressives and ecumenical Protestants. How might we explain the penetration of new ideas into these formerly ethnically conscious bastions of privilege? Mario Diani contends that social movements tend to succeed to the extent that leaders of a movement possess “social capital,” in the form of social ties to the mass media, corporate cultural intermediaries, and the state intelligentsia—where dominant interpretations of reality are generated (Diani 1997: 136).

In the American case, the steady post-1930s growth of the secular higher education system, mass media, and federal government helped to increase the social capital (in the form of influence and connections with the elite) of cosmopolitan movements—whether Liberal Progressive, ecumenical Protestant, or expressive-modernist. The result was a thinning of American identity: the Anglo-Protestant ethnic core was abandoned, bringing the ethical universals of liberty and equality to the fore. Accompanying the new consensus was a corresponding rise to prominence of the symbols of liberal universalism, exemplified by the nation of immigrants’ narrative and the reinterpretation of the Statue of Liberty.

The Statue of Liberty myth provides a good case study of the shift to a post-WASP, consensus-liberal vision of America. In current parlance,

the Statue of Liberty is viewed as a symbol of the openness of America to immigration, and the plaque at its base by Emma Lazarus, which urges other nations to “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses,” is believed to be organically connected to the statue and its liberal-universalist narrative. Unfortunately, reality is not so simple. Lazarus’s poem was not present when the statue was inaugurated in October 1886. Nor did President Grover Cleveland make any mention of the statue’s significance for immigrants in his acceptance speech (Perea 1997a: 47).

Some Americans, especially Protestant clergymen, greeted the gift of the statue cautiously. In addition, the statue was often viewed less as a beacon to immigrants than as a guardian of American purity. As for Emma Lazarus’s oft-quoted poem, it was first erected on an interior wall of the immense statue in 1903 owing to the financial contribution of one Georgina Schuyler. Schuyler had donated the bronze plaque in memory of Lazarus, an obscure poet of Jewish ancestry whose work she admired. Not until the 1930s did the contemporary myth of the statue as a beacon to immigrants arise—exactly the period in which the cosmopolitan ideas of America’s organic intellectuals were starting to win wider elite acceptance. In turn, this attitude change prompted officials to relocate Lazarus’s obscure poem to its current position at the base of the statue (Higham [1975] 1984: 73–78; Perea 1997a: 48–51).

The new doctrine rapidly established a foothold in the nation’s school history texts. “The notion that America was a ‘melting pot’ entered the majority of the texts during the forties,” writes Frances FitzGerald. “In the forties and fifties, it was the catch phrase for all discussions of the immigrants, and the Statue of Liberty was the illustration beside them” (FitzGerald 1979: 80). I am not suggesting that Lazarus’s ideas, or the statue’s universalist interpretation, were *entirely* unacceptable prior to the 1930s. However, before this time, universalism had its place—a place it was forced to share with Anglo-Protestant symbolism.

Cosmopolitanism, Immigration Policy, and the Cold War Intelligentsia

The acceptance of cosmopolitan liberalism by the U.S. executive and its top officials followed closely upon the conversion of the academic mainstream. This marked the beginning of an increased penetration of post-WASP Americanism into the broader sphere of national life. In terms of policymaking, change on the immigration front began soon after World War II, with President Truman and the State Department actively op-

posing the “nativist network” of patriotic societies that sought to limit immigration from nontraditional sources so as to reinforce American dominant ethnicity.

World War II had lent urgency to the change: it had resulted in the state’s redefinition of immigration as a security issue. During the war, American diplomats and top military personnel urged Congress to eliminate its racial bans against Asian immigration because Japanese propagandists were using these laws against the United States in China (Fitzgerald 1996). Given the chauvinistic behavior of the Japanese and Germans, this interest-driven hypothesis provides a questionable explanation for the changes that took place—changes that continued to gain momentum after the war. An alternative view might hold that liberals in the federal bureaucracy and executive seized upon the exigencies of war to legitimate liberal value change.

Indeed, the entire atmosphere accompanying the intelligentsia’s opposition to ethnically defensive immigration laws seemed to resound with consensus liberalism and its internationalist outlook. For instance, in 1944, immigration commissioner Earl Harrison told a convention of social workers that the “international implications” of American immigration policy had to be considered. A year later, as the United Nations Organization was being founded in San Francisco, his successor boldly asserted that “there is no reason why the new concept of international cooperation should not extend to our policy with respect to immigration” (Divine 1957: 157).

Similar concerns animated the Truman administration and the diplomatic corps after World War II with respect to the Third World, and their actions married moral and practical sentiments to a new executive philosophy. As a result, the internationalist outlook of idealistic, university-educated mandarins received the backing of realists as well. These developments spurred the growth of a new “immigration policy network.” Consisting of foreign policy bureaucrats, activist legislators, and liberal interest groups, this network proved a highly significant milestone on the road to the eventual repeal of National Origins Quota legislation. In time, this new group was able to win concessions from Congress, tilting the balance of power on the immigration issue away from the “nativist network” of patriotic societies and the American Federation of Labor (Fitzgerald 1987: 157–162).

Truman’s attitude, and that of the State Department intelligentsia at large, reflected the influence of the cosmopolitan conception of America

first developed by the Liberal Progressives, Protestant elite, and New York avant-garde. Reverberating throughout the elite universities and journals, which influenced the intelligentsia, these ideas produced a new vision of the American nation, whose myth-symbol complex was stripped of its Anglo-Protestant accoutrements to reveal its liberal-egalitarian essentials.

The national project was similarly altered: what was once a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant mission now became redefined as a universal mission of liberal humanism on behalf of the “free world.” This comes across well in President Truman’s 1952 speech accompanying his veto of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act (subsequently overridden by Congress). Note Truman’s invocation, toward the end of the passage, of the American Creed, Lazarus’s poem, and the ecumenical “Jew nor Greek” New Testament passage:

Our immigration policy is . . . important to the conduct of our foreign relations and to our responsibilities of moral leadership in the struggle for world peace. . . . The [McCarran-Walter] bill would continue, practically without change, the national origins quota system. . . . The idea behind this discriminatory policy was, to put it baldly that Americans with English or Irish names were better people and better citizens than Americans with Italian or Polish names. . . . Such a concept is utterly unworthy of our ideals. It violates the great political doctrine of the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal.” It denies the humanitarian creed inscribed beneath the Statue of Liberty proclaiming to all nations: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” It repudiates our basic religious concepts, our belief in the brotherhood of man, and in the words of St. Paul that “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Truman 1952 in Ziegler 1953: 97–99)

During the debates over McCarran-Walter in 1952 (which continued the spirit of the 1924 quota law), the new liberals in the American executive, including President Truman, tried everything they could to change the thrust of the Act. In this they failed, though Truman’s 1953 presidential commission (made up of immigration policy network members) voiced its criticism of the Act (Fitzgerald 1987: 217).

Despite the failure of the immigration policy network to stop McCarran-Walter, they achieved a number of notable successes during the

1940s and 1950s—backed by both Republican² and Democratic administrations—which demonstrated their new, if limited, power. These achievements included the repeal of the racial ban against Asians in 1946 and passage of the first refugee bill in 1953, which allowed the executive to temporarily exceed a certain nation's quota by “mortgaging” future quotas for present needs, as was done for Hungarians in 1956 and Cubans several years later (D. King 1998b: 246–247; Fitzgerald 1996: 186–189; Divine 1957: 153–155; Fitzgerald 1987: 211–213).

During the late 1950s, the balance of power shifted even further toward consensus liberalism as cosmopolitanism gathered strength—so much so that when Senator John F. Kennedy moved to amend McCarran-Walter in 1957 by removing the “mortgages” and allowing various groups of Displaced Persons to gain citizenship, leaders of the restrictionist forces like Senator James Eastland of Mississippi “acquiesced to the legislation to foreclose the possibility that the carefully crafted package of goods might lead to opening up reconsideration of the McCarran Act” (Fitzgerald 1987: 219).

As Keith Fitzgerald sees it, the national elites—federal administrators, congressmen involved in cold war policy, and experts from academia—came to dominate the immigration policy process after World War II when responsibility for immigration shifted to the State Department. Added to this change was committee representation from a new set of interest groups like Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal advocacy group founded by old-stock Philadelphians, most of whom were listed on the city's social register (Baltzell [1982] 1990: 88). Instead of arguing over the nature of the quotas (qualitative or quantitative), the terms of debate changed to reflect opposing sides within the State executive.

Consequently, instead of debating the “qualitative” (i.e., ethnic) impact of immigration on the American nation, the new discourse merely pitted internationalist liberals against anticommunist liberals over the admission of so-called subversives. Both sides were actively engaged with state policy and had agreed to foreclose the possibility of maintaining ethnically exclusive selection criteria (Fitzgerald 1996: 202–203). Hence the field of debate was narrowed. It was the *interpretation* rather than the questioning of universalism that now counted in immigration policy. What had once been a matter of debate within the executive between dominant ethnicity and universalism had become a mere internecine struggle between two faces of the new liberal consensus.

To be sure, vestiges of dominant ethnicity remained, particularly in

Congress. For example, as shall become clear later, southern Democrats and midwestern Republicans wielded a disproportionate influence in both the Senate and the House, aided by the malapportionment of population between congressional districts. For these individuals, the arrival of the new cosmopolitanism, popular among the university-educated elite of both the Republican and Democratic parties, proved a tremendous shock.

This split within the Democratic party first emerged during its 1928 convention. Although the convention was held in Houston and Al Smith, a Catholic of part-Irish extraction, chose a southern running-mate—only the second southerner to run on the national ticket since the Civil War—the convention divided along sectional and religious lines (Burner 1968: 200–202, 224). Franklin Roosevelt’s administration also failed to contain the division between its southern/rural/Anglo-Protestant and northern/urban/immigrant wings. Republicans were no less divided. This time, the entry of internationalist-minded, university-educated figures like Wendell Willkie, who tried to broaden the party’s appeal among northern Catholics, brought out the social divisions within the party. The new breed of East Coast Republicans represented the rising professional and managerial upper-middle classes of the northern cities and tended to combine an endorsement of free enterprise with a cosmopolitan stance concerning matters cultural (Mowry 1967: 127, 228).

Nevertheless, malapportionment artificially inflated the representation of rural America in Congress and by the mid-1930s spawned the first congressional alliance of conservative southern Democrats and western Republicans under the leadership of Martin Dies (R-TX). In Dies’s words, the political process was being manipulated by “men from the big cities which . . . are politically controlled by foreigners and transplanted Negroes, and their representatives in Congress have introduced insidious influences into the New Deal.” Passage of the McCarran-Walter Act was greatly facilitated by the power of the conservative bloc, which frustrated Truman’s culturally liberal agenda. Only in the late 1950s, when the Eisenhower administration “modernized” the party from the top down, did Truman’s cosmopolitan objectives see the legislative light of day. These included measures designed to promote the civil rights of urban blacks and liberalize the nation’s immigration policy (Mowry 1967: 121, 241, 243–247). Even so, this cosmopolitan legislative agenda would not be completed until after Supreme Court-ordered congressional reapportionment took place in the early 1960s.

Cosmopolitanism and the Cold War Print Media

As with the executive, consensus liberalism, with its cosmopolitan orientation, rapidly changed the nature of print media opinion pertaining to issues of dominant ethnicity. With few exceptions, mainstream periodicals opposed the immigration of Southern and Eastern Europeans during 1900–1945. The *Atlantic Monthly*, for example, which had long been in favor of qualitative restriction, published its first cosmopolitan piece in 1953 and has remained culturally liberal on immigration ever since (Simon 1993: 134). Another example comes from the *Saturday Evening Post*, which “suddenly, and with no reference to its own history on the topic [of immigration] . . . carried an editorial in the early part of the 1960s that claimed, ‘We are all immigrants, except for the American Indian’ ” (Simon and Alexander 1993: 80).

Among the high-volume news weeklies, *Reader’s Digest*, with a circulation of 14.5 million in 1963, provides a useful barometer of change. Its articles on the immigration issue had expressed opposition to the number and diversity of immigrants and refugees until 1953, when it published an article favoring the removal of the anti-Asian ban in the name of better Asian-American relations. From then on, little was heard of “qualitative” restriction (Simon and Alexander 1993: 170).

Public Opinion after World War II

Consensus liberalism, which came of age during the 1940s, performed the rare service of uniting intellectuals and the public service intelligentsia behind the same set of values. Yet such ideas, though politically influential, failed to attain a hegemonic position in national life because they were the province of educated elites. Immigration policy was an area in which the university-educated elite held unusually great power, while majority sentiment remained largely unharnessed because of its dispersed nature³ (Simon and Alexander 1993: 246; Olson 1982: 34–35). Even so, the immigration policy network was unable to score a legislative victory over quota legislation because it lacked even a modicum of popular, dominant group support.⁴ In order for cosmopolitanism to triumph on a wider level, a structural change was required. The realm in which this change took place was that of advanced education.

The Education Explosion

The first notable growth of the American education system occurred at the secondary school level after 1930 with attendance soaring from 51 percent in 1930 to 92 percent in 1970. The largest rise took place in the decade 1930–1940, but the rise was steep in all decades prior to 1970. It had long been the case that a large proportion of Americans graduating from secondary school went on to attend a tertiary institution, so the increase in the number of secondary school graduates led to a corresponding increase in those attending college (Caplow et al. 1994: 477). Meanwhile, the imperatives of the new “postindustrial” economy necessitated a larger postsecondary education sector (Bell 1973: 116–118). A third force driving the college boom was the implementation of the G.I. Bill, passed in 1948, which represented the first large-scale government funding of higher education and helped many war veterans attend college (Caplow et al. 1994: 473; Scales 1991: 368; Christopher 1989: 47).

The most immediate effect was a more educated population: the median education of an American rose from 8.6 to 12.7 years between 1940 and 1988, with the largest increase taking place during 1960–1970, when it rose nearly 20 percent, from 10.6 to 12.1 years (Caplow et al. 1994: 478). More to the point, the number of 18-to-24-year-olds in college rose *from 15 percent in 1950 to nearly a third in 1970* (Delli Carpini 1986: 29). As the proportion of youth attending college rose, so did the sheer numbers of youth, a result of the postwar baby boom. The combined impact of higher per capita attainment and a larger youth population greatly swelled the numbers attending college in this period (Lipset and Ladd 1975: 2).

Education and Value Orientation

The education explosion, particularly its postsecondary phase, exposed a larger segment of the American population to the values of one of its most liberal segments: college professors. As previous chapters have demonstrated, historical evidence from the interwar period indicates that liberal cultural attitudes had spread among American intellectuals. Early survey evidence from the 1930s and 1940s found professors to be “much more liberal or radical on various socioeconomic issues than those in all other occupational groups” (Lipset and Ladd 1975: 17–20; Lipset 1996:

179). Carnegie Foundation surveys of faculty values taken between 1969 and 1989 reinforce this finding—especially for practitioners in the social sciences and humanities (Lipset 1996: 183; Boyer 1989: 143).

The Legacy of the New York Intellectuals

A left-liberal orientation may have characterized American academics in the twentieth century, but the universalist scope of their principles owed much to the cosmopolitanism of the New York Intellectuals. This group spread its ideas through a series of influential journals of opinion and reportage, which tended to circulate in the 10,000–100,000 range in the 1920s and 1930s and 20,000–200,000 during the early 1960s (Schacht 1966: 1, 69). In the 1920s and early 1930s, the *Menorah Journal*, *New Masses*, and *Partisan Review* fulfilled the leading role. During the mid- to late 1930s, *Partisan Review* was joined by the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, *Commentary*, and *Politics*.

Finally, a “second generation” of New York Intellectuals made its appearance in the 1940s and 1950s, oriented around *Commentary*, *Partisan Review*, and the *New York Review of Books* (Bell 1980: 127–128). The influence of the New York group was also facilitated by their ascent into the educational and journalistic establishment, an event prompted both by university expansion and, for some, the relaxation of anti-Semitic hiring quotas after World War II (Bell 1980: 134–135, Baltzell 1964: 336–339). With regard to the New York Intellectuals’ magazines (such as *Partisan Review*), universities subsidized them as traditional sources of funding dried up, costs rose, and universities expanded⁵ (Wilford 1995: 18, 108). Consequently, the cosmopolitan discourse of this intelligentsia was, in David Hollinger’s estimation, “institutionalized in the liberal arts divisions of several major universities. . . . So influential was this intelligentsia during the forties, fifties, and sixties that most Americans who thought of themselves as ‘intellectuals’ were either members of it, or part of its audience” (Hollinger 1985: 58).

The New York Intellectuals secured their authority through their proximity to the centers of the rapidly expanding publishing industry. This gave them consulting opportunities, allowed them to influence young editors, and hence “enabled them to dictate a large portion of the national high cultural agenda” (Wilford 1995: 6). Even as the universities expanded, the esteem of the New York Intellectuals grew. A guide to their magisterial presence in the rapidly expanding academic world of the 1960s

and early 1970s is provided by Charles Kadushin, who surveyed American academics, writers, and editors in 1969. Kadushin's respondents were asked to name the most prestigious American intellectuals. The majority of those they chose were based in New York and had connections to the New York Intellectuals group (Kadushin 1974: 30–31, 34, 41; Bell 1980: 127–128). The persistence of the New York Intellectuals' legacy indicates that the cosmopolitan views they expressed in the 1940s and 1950s were held in high esteem by the expanding media and professorial elite of the 1960s.

The Growth in National Communications

Paralleling the rapid growth of American postsecondary education during 1950–1970 was the growth and centralization of national communications. Most significant was the trend in television coverage: *in 1950, just 9 percent of households had TV sets; by 1965, 93 percent did* (Caplow et al. 1994: 313). This rapid expansion of television necessitated large amounts of capital concentration, thereby giving birth to a national media network centered in New York and Washington.

To be sure, Henry Luce's *Time-Life* chain of magazines and the national radio networks were already national and centered in the urban Northeast by the 1930s. However, television's readily accessible visual message had greater cross-class and interregional penetration than printed matter or even radio. By 1970, Americans were watching nearly 20 hours of television per week, and by the early 1980s, 50 million daily viewers tuned in to the evening news on the three leading stations, ABC, CBS, and NBC (Caplow et al. 1994: 420–422). Their exposure to the values and outlook of the New York/Washington/Hollywood elite thereby took on great significance. As one author put it, "the cultural gap between rural America, the main streets of small-town America, and urban metropolitan areas has been considerably narrowed, and the influence of new metropolitan styles created in New York or Los Angeles spreads far more rapidly than it once did" (Lichter et al. 1986: 9, 11).

The Relationship between Media Nationalization and Values

The relationship between national elites and the masses has often been considered in terms of nationalist mobilization. Under this paradigm, nationalism and the symbols of dominant ethnicity are strengthened by the

expansion of the media as local loyalties are reoriented toward the nation (Deutsch [1953] 1966: 96–98; Laczko 1995: 31). The effects of communication centralization on American values can be shown to differ, however, if we conceive of the national media elite in the same way as the high-status professoriate: as a more intellectualized, socially idealistic constituency. Indeed, the evidence from surveys of national media personnel appears to bear this out (Lipset and Ladd 1975: 310). For example, a 1979–1980 study of 238 journalists at the most influential media outlets (television and print) found that 54 percent self-identified as liberal and just 17 percent as conservative. They were therefore far more liberal than the general population, just over a quarter of whom considered themselves to be so. Lichter and his associates also sampled the 1982 Columbia Journalism School class and found that 85 percent of students identified themselves as “liberal” (Russell and Megard 1988: 135; Lichter et al., 1986: 21).

Summary of Elite Effects

The data we have reviewed from studies of the professoriate and national media elite seem to corroborate the idea that increased exposure to social idealism brought on by higher education and, vicariously, by a higher-educated media, socialized a larger proportion of Americans into a liberal worldview. The question this begs, however, is why critical views would tend toward an urban, cosmopolitan version of left-liberalism. After all, was it not Wendell Phillips, as idealistic an American as has existed, who proclaimed in the 1860s: “My idea of a civilization is . . . a New England town of some two thousand inhabitants” (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 119).

No necessary connection exists between utopian idealism and urban cosmopolitanism, something which Lipset and Ladd fail to realize. Utopian civilizations may be neoclassical (early nineteenth-century New England), medievalist (Counter-Reformation), rural-primitive or futuristic (schools of the Machine Aesthetic), and may involve an emphasis on order (Plato) or freedom (Antinomians). In the case of the twentieth-century United States, why was the social ideal one of cosmopolitan, urban left-liberalism? This issue is especially vital inasmuch as America’s intellectuals long criticized American civilization for failing to live up to an agrarian, republican ideal.

This brings us back to the Liberal Progressives and Young Intellectuals,

who extended the realm of egalitarianism and liberalism beyond the WASP ethnic boundary, revising these ideas along urban, cosmopolitan lines. The result, in the 1950–1970 period, was that a large number of American college students were socialized into the cosmopolitan worldview of the “organic”⁶ Young Intellectuals and Liberal Progressives, often via their New York Intellectual successors.

Value Change among the Mass Public

The structural changes that gave rise to the expansion of higher education and the nationalization of the media during 1950–1970 also prompted liberalizing value changes that reached beyond the media and professorial elites. This does not mean that value changes occurred across the entire spectrum of beliefs. Generally speaking, cultural attitudes underwent liberal and egalitarian change, but economic attitudes remained relatively stable, probably reflecting instrumental considerations.

These trends are prominent in *Generations and Politics*, a landmark study of American value change involving a longitudinal national-level survey of high school seniors and their parents, undertaken in 1965 and 1973. Observing the value positions of youth and parents across five cultural issues, M. Kent Jennings and Richard Niemi concluded that opinions had changed radically, in a more liberal direction, over that period (Jennings and Niemi 1981: 100, 160). However, the reasons for the change had less to do with period events than with the changing education (and educational aspiration) levels of the younger generation. Within similarly educated groups from both generations, change was limited (Jennings and Niemi 1981: 261, 267–269).

Aggregate Value Changes

The findings of the *Generations and Politics* team are borne out in larger surveys undertaken by the National Opinion Research Organization (NORC), the American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO/Gallup), the General Social Survey (GSS), and other major organizations (Mayer 1992: 18; Putnam 2000: 352). Rather than deal with the full range of questions, we shall instead look explicitly at the queries that provide indicators of liberal and egalitarian attitudes toward dominant ethnicity, namely, certain aspects of the race, immigration, and religion questions. Also, where possible, responses for whites and Protestants will be isolated.

Of course, these are not perfect indicators: they do not address the question of dominant ethnic liberal-egalitarianism directly, and they fail to stratify the responses by ethnic background. Nevertheless, the trends in the data are so strong that such faults do not alter the general interpretation.

The first broad area in which value change occurred was race. In 1944, for example, 52 percent of whites agreed that “white people should have the first chance at any kind of job” by 1972, just 3 percent did. More importantly, the number of white Americans opposed to black–white intermarriage fell from 94 percent in 1958 to 56 percent in 1983. On the question of legal sanctions against interracial marriage, white approval fell from 60 percent in 1963 to 38 percent in 1972 to 11 percent in 1998 (Mayer 1992: 366, 368, 371).

Among white Protestants in the early 1980s, a majority of members of Liberal Protestant denominations (73 percent) and Moderate Protestant denominations (60 percent) were opposed to laws against interracial marriage. Even among Conservative Protestants, a near-majority (47 percent) were opposed. Thus a clear majority of white Protestants were opposed to laws prohibiting interracial marriage (Roof and McKinney 1987: 198–199). In all cases, a liberalizing trend became visible in the late twentieth century. Moreover, the sharpest value changes occurred during the period from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, precisely the period in which national media coverage and higher education were in rapid expansion.

Turning to the matter of tolerance for religious intermarriage, a somewhat similar, if less dramatic, relaxation of boundary-defense occurred. Evidence from the early 1960s suggests that nearly three-quarters of Protestants were either strongly or mildly opposed to Protestant-Catholic intermarriage. The figure for Catholics was nearer 50 percent (Broom and Glenn 1966; Anderson 1970: 131). Between the mid-1960s and 1983, however, attitudes underwent rapid change. Unfortunately, the national survey data is not stratified by race or religion, but it does indicate a general liberalizing trend that likely encompasses all races and denominations (see Figure 8.1).

In addition to questions regarding interracial and interreligious marriage, we would expect the American population to manifest liberal and egalitarian opposition to the system of national origin quotas. Changes in this area are difficult to gauge owing to the paucity of poll data and different questions asked, but a liberalizing trend is noticeable. In 1947, for example, 72 percent opposed admitting Jewish/European refugees in

excess of their quota. By 1953, opinion appeared to have softened somewhat: 47 percent favored allowing 240,000 East European refugees into the country outside their quotas, while 48 percent were opposed.

Continuing the liberal vector, in 1957, 42 percent approved of 5,000 recently arrived Hungarian refugees being allowed to settle in the United States, while just 43 percent opposed this quota exemption. By 1965, in the midst of debates over the Hart-Celler immigration reform Act, attitudes appeared to be at their most generous: 51 percent of the public approved of the shift to a “color-blind” policy based on job skills, while just 32 percent were opposed to eliminating the National Origins Act (Simon 1985: 36–40).

Recent polls have tended to focus on respondents’ attitudes toward the quantity of immigrants admitted. On this question, the American public has always favored a decrease in the number of immigrants. However, since 1965, opinion has become increasingly restrictionist (see Figure 8.2). At first glance, this may support the interpretation that dominant ethnicity in the United States, though in decline between 1925 and 1965, has experienced a recent resurgence. This would be a hazardous conclusion on several counts. First, as discussed in the next chapter, dominant ethnicity is a multidimensional construct in which attitudes toward immigration play only a partial role. Second, the steep, unprecedented, high-

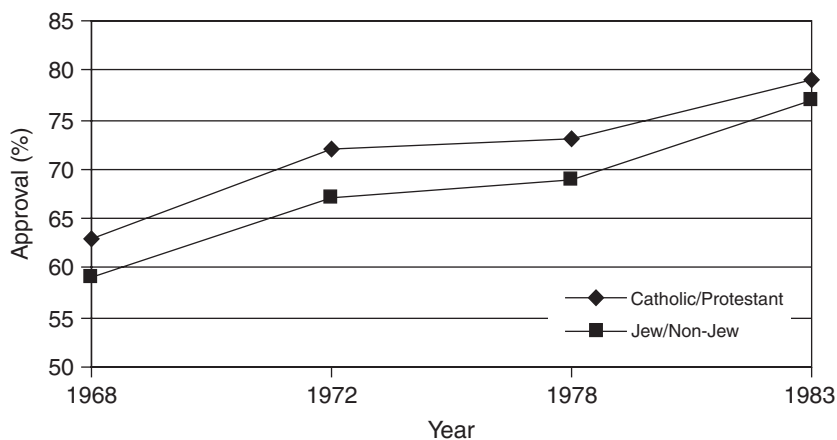


Figure 8.1. American approval of inter-faith marriage, 1968–1983 (Mayer 1992: 382).

profile increase in non-European immigration after 1965 is a period effect that may have masked latent attitude liberalization.⁷

Finally, and most importantly, white respondents are no more restrictionist in attitude than nonwhites. Thus in 1980, in the midst of a recession, 79 percent of blacks and just 64 percent of whites agreed that “immigration should be halted until the unemployment rate in the United States drops” (see Figure 8.3). Regarding the matter of citizen identity cards (used to screen for illegal immigrants), 74 percent of nonwhites approved of the idea, as against just 63 percent of whites.

Recent surveys continue to support the contention that white antipathy (i.e., dominant ethnic sentiment) is not the chief engine of restrictionism. In 1992, for instance, a poll found that 74 percent of “Anglos” felt that there were “too many immigrants” in the United States. However, this sentiment was shared by 79 percent of Puerto Ricans, 75 percent of Mexican Americans, and 65 percent of Cuban Americans (Latino National Public Survey, December 1997). Similarly, an NPG/Roper poll in January 1996 found that 70 percent of respondents favored a level of immigration below 300,000 per year. Blacks were most favorable (73 percent), Anglos somewhat less so, and Hispanics least favorable (52 percent) (NPG Roper Poll, January 1996). In the next chapter, we shall see that a similar pattern characterizes opinion on both the Official English issue and California’s controversial Proposition 187.

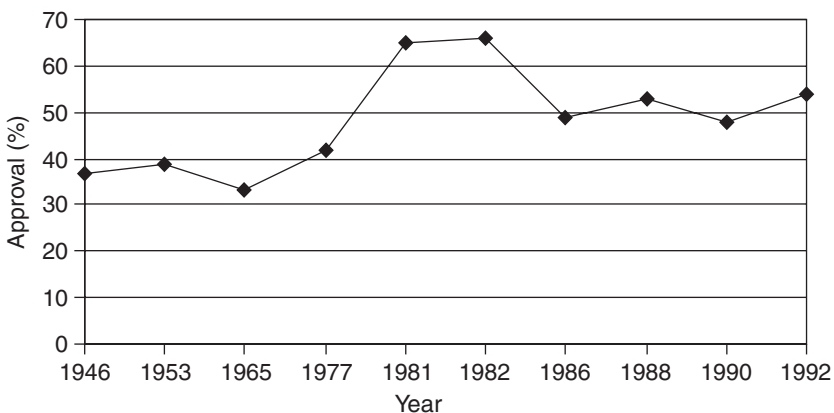


Figure 8.2. Opinion favoring reduced immigration, 1946–1992 (Simon 1993: 41; Roper 1992).

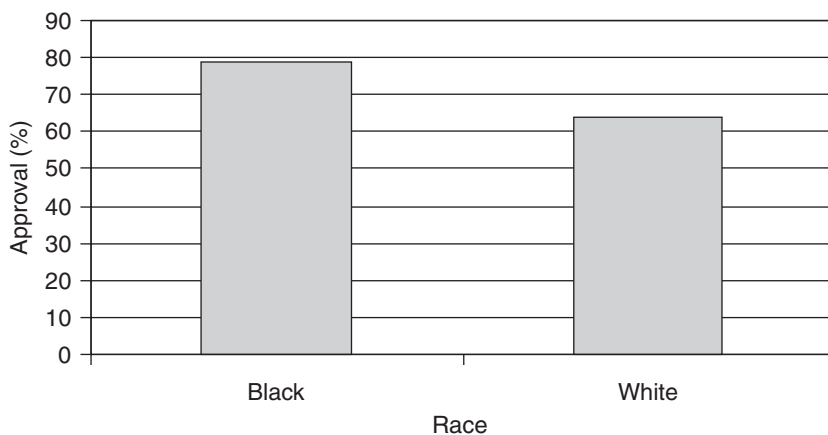


Figure 8.3. Opinion favoring reduced immigration, by race, 1980 (Simon 1985: 43–44).

Education, Social Location, and Attitudes

Generally, on matters of cultural boundary defense, American opinion became more liberal during 1950–1970 ostensibly because larger numbers of Americans identified with cosmopolitan ideals through exposure to the national media and higher education system. This was partly the result of the liberal messages they were receiving and partly the result of a shift in their self-perception from working to middle class:

The early postwar period . . . was a time when increasing proportions of Americans identified with the *working class*, instead of the middle class . . . by the mid-fifties the percentage of Americans identifying with the working class was twice as large as that self-identifying with the middle class. But then there was a reversal, and there began a slow upward drift, approaching and then surpassing the point where half the American population identified itself as middle class. . . . The relationship of self-designated social class to achieved education . . . is fascinating, suggesting that essentially, as the distribution of education has shifted upward . . . the distribution of perceived class has also shifted upward. . . . Presumably, the level of education one attains is closely linked with one's social class. (Caplow et al. 1994: 42–43)

Caplow et al.'s point is that class identity is more closely tied to education than to economic attainment. In a sense, therefore, the education revolution was also a status revolution in which larger numbers of people began to view themselves as members of an educated middle class, with the attendant cosmopolitan ethical commitments seen to be associated with this status. The education revolution also raised the social capital of cosmopolitan social movements like the New York avant-garde, whose membership gained access to a wider social network in American society.

In keeping with the institutionalization thesis, the university-educated segment of the population would be expected to be more liberal on cultural issues. This would back the findings of a 1967 Gallup survey, which found that the racial nationalist George Wallace drew disproportionately upon the support of less educated, working-class, and rural whites. The same survey found that those identifying as “strong working-class” supported Wallace to the tune of 44 percent, “weak working-class” gave him 33 percent support, and “strong middle class” just 15 percent (Lipset and Raab 1970: 360, 365). Not surprisingly, more recent data support the status–attitudes link. For example, in 1980, a Gallup poll asked respondents to state whether they favored “halting immigration.” The numbers of those who answered in the affirmative, broken down by education, show that the college educated are far more liberal in this area than other Americans (see Figure 8.4). With regard to interracial marriage, the same general pattern emerges (see Figure 8.5).

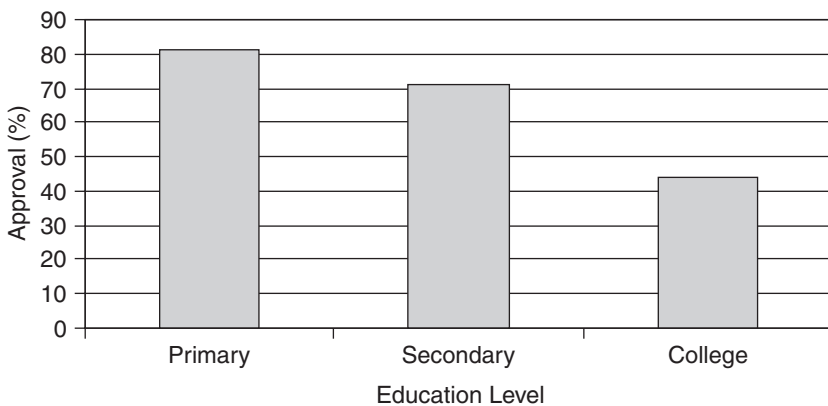


Figure 8.4. Americans in favor of halting immigration, by education level, 1980 (Simon 1985: 40).

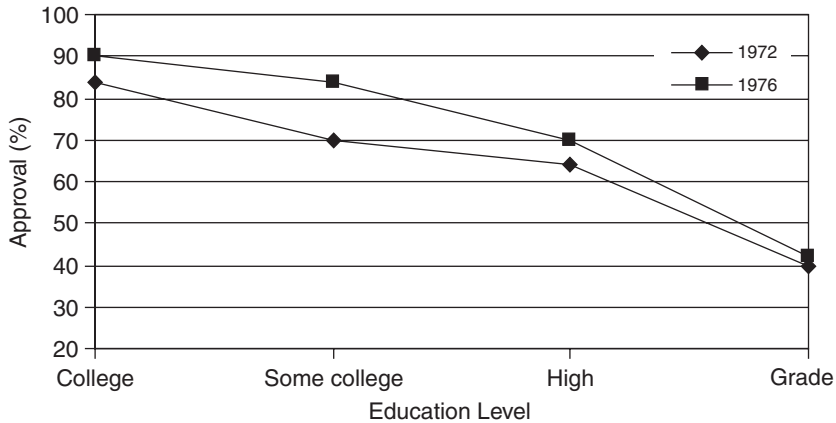


Figure 8.5. White approval of interracial marriage, by education, 1972 and 1976 (Mayer 1992: 216–217).

In terms of the association between religion and nation, 20 percent of the American public sampled during 1975–1977 agreed that “the United States was meant to be a Christian nation,” whereas 73 percent felt that the United States was meant to be “a country made up of many races, religions and nationalities.” Among the “influentials” surveyed (a number comparable to the general public sample), just 8 percent defined the United States as Christian, while 85 percent saw it as “a country made up of many races, religions and nationalities.” (McClosky and Zaller 1984: 24). In addition, a 2002 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations survey found a 46-point gap in opinion between 2,800 randomly selected members of the public and 400 “opinion-formers” over the question of whether immigration represents a “critical threat to the vital interests of the United States” (Beck and Camarota 2002). Similar findings, showing the better-educated to be more liberal, have been obtained for other immigration, religious-tolerance, and racial boundary-oriented questions (McClosky and Zaller 1984: 32; Mayer 1992: 223; Simon and Alexander 1993: 44).

Period Events and Prosperity

The preceding analysis has identified the structural expansion of both higher education and the national media as the dynamic of value change.

A competing hypothesis is that period effects, that is, major events, were the prime determinant of change. Yet such a stance cannot explain why many value changes observed in the United States were also observed in Western Europe, where several key period effects differed (Delli Carpini 1986: 135; Inglehart 1990: 96). In a similar vein, the inadequacy of period explanations is intimated by the larger value changes witnessed among youth since period effects tend to appear as uniform impacts across age categories in the form of aggregate shifts (Jennings and Niemi 1981: 388).

An alternative hypothesis for explaining value change is that high levels of physical and economic security in the developed world after 1945 led to a greater “postmaterialist” value orientation among post–World War II age cohorts (Inglehart 1990: 177). Ron Inglehart claims to have found a significant positive increase in postmaterialism in Western Europe and the United States from survey data (Inglehart 1990: 96). Although this relationship appears to be robust, the same question must be put to Inglehart as was put to Lipset and Ladd, namely, which postmaterialist values are significant and why? Interestingly, Inglehart’s postmaterialism measure includes questions about liberty and equality, which arguably explain much of what passes for “postmaterialism” (Inglehart 1990: 74–75, 252, 262).⁸

The importance of liberalism and egalitarianism as historical-cultural factors, independent of wealth-driven postmaterialism, may also account for Inglehart’s finding that “in non-Western societies, cultural change shows patterns that are very different from those it displays throughout the industrialized West” (Inglehart 1990: 7). Indeed, one can hardly describe wealthy societies like Nauru or Kuwait as bastions of postmaterialism. Finally, Inglehart’s explanation for the decline of religious and nationalist idealism in the West—that economic security eliminates the need for cultural security—is highly questionable (Inglehart 1990: 185). In fact, it might be more accurate to say that idealisms of one sort (religious/ethnonational) have been replaced by idealisms of another sort (liberal, egalitarian), which have become institutionalized through cultural action.

The Development of a Modernist Cultural Elite

The principal carriers of the new cosmopolitan values are the well-educated strata, a category that has expanded greatly since the end of World War II. To see this trend in better detail, I will draw upon a two-

dimensional model first advanced by Daniel Bell (slightly modified here) to explain value divisions in American society (see Figure 8.6).

In Bell’s scheme, education is the prime determinant of cultural values. Notice that while well-educated public (and private) sector employees differ in their “left-right” economic stance, both embrace the modernist ideas of the “New Left” where cultural questions are concerned. This would help explain why the private-sector journalists examined were to the right of the professoriate on economic questions. Empirically, Inglehart found a similar relationship to obtain with his data: postmaterialist respondents tended to divide along an economic dimension but shared a relatively positive score on a “New Politics” dimension that captured sociocultural values (Inglehart 1990: 274–277).

Educational status also plays a role *within* the American elite leadership. In a more recent study of American elites, Robert Lerner, Alther Nagai, and Stanley Rothman wrote that in terms of ideological orientation, “The elite occupational groups align closely with Daniel Bell’s ‘pre- versus post-Modernism’ cultural divide (1976).” Accordingly, labor leaders scored closer to military and (fundamentalist) religious leaders than media elites

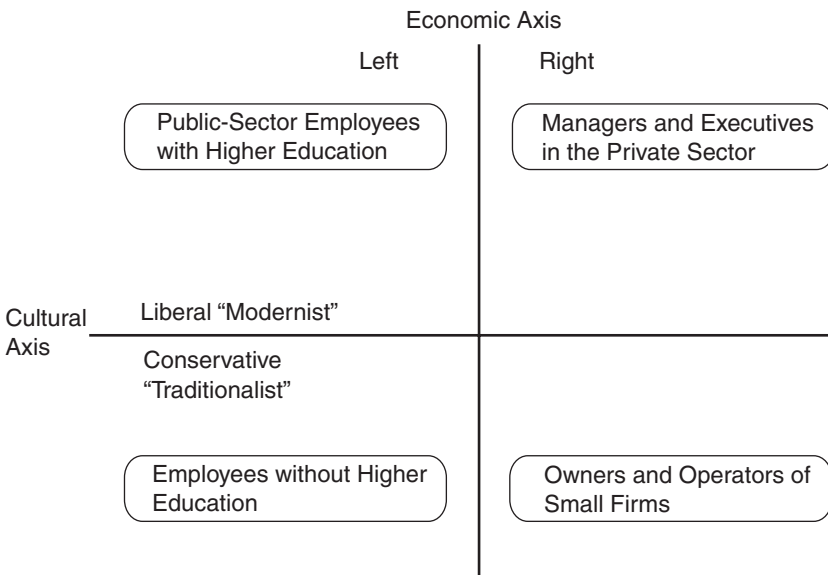


Figure 8.6. The American value structure (Bell 1980: 161; Betts 1988: 150).

in their cultural conservatism, while media elites placed to the right of labor leaders on economic issues (Lerner et al. 1996: 51). When viewed from the point of view of this thesis, “traditional” members of the majority group, whether on the left or right, would tend to endorse dominant ethnicity whereas “modernists” would oppose it.

Looking at American data, McClosky and Zaller have empirically confirmed the four-way diagram shown in Figure 8.6. The more sophisticated (i.e., educated) the respondent, the more likely he or she is to embrace the democratic values of liberty and equality. Their findings have subsequently informed the growing literature on democratic elite theory (Ven-groff and Morton 2000: 360; McClosky and Zaller 1984: 258, 260–261). Exploring the same themes, Byron Shafer and William Claggett used a national sample of nearly 8,000 which divided the U.S. population into four equal-value sectors and examined the educational composition of each sector. Their results are shown in Figure 8.7.⁹ (Liberalism and egalitarianism are mutually exclusive economic positions but are culturally complementary.)

		Economic Axis	
		Left (egalitarian)	Right (liberal)
Cultural Axis	Modernist (lib-egalitarian)	HS Dropout: 10.5% HS Graduate: 24.2% College Grad: 46%	HS Dropout: 19.3% HS Graduate: 22.3% College Grad: 31.4%
	Traditionalist (illib.-inegalitarian)	HS Dropout: 29.3% HS Graduate: 27.9% College Grad: 13.4%	HS Dropout: 40.9% HS Graduate: 25.6% College Grad: 9.2%

Figure 8.7. Educational composition of American value sectors (Shafer and Claggett 1993: 76–77).

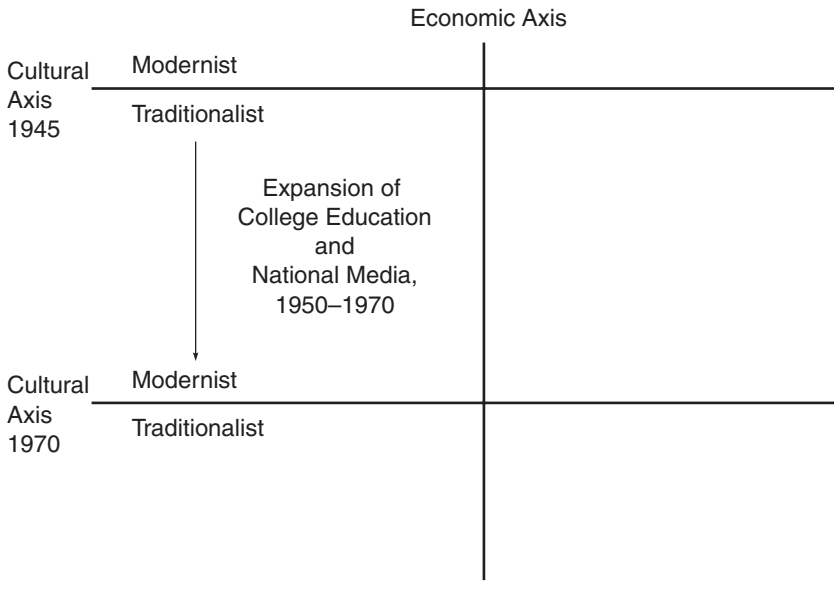


Figure 8.8. The impact of education expansion on the American value structure, 1950-1970.

This data shows that modernists are far better educated than traditionalists. We are now in a position to show how the value structure of American society changed to cause the decline of dominant ethnicity. Looking at Figure 8.8, we can see how increasing education (correlated with expressive individualism) prompted cultural modernization, increasing hostility toward dominant ethnicity.

Expressive Revolution: The Second Phase of Modernist Aesthetic Institutionalization

This chapter has offered evidence of significant ethical change in the second half of the twentieth century, but a similar story could be told on the aesthetic front. In effect, the rise of the new universalist ethic in post-World War II America was matched by an accompanying development in the aesthetic sphere: liberty and equality, abstract philosophical principles, came to be figuratively translated into symbol. As noted, the hedonistic and techno-futurist facets of modernism were the first to be taken

up by the American mass culture of the 1920s and 1930s. Cosmopolitanism was another dimension of modernism that attained acceptance by 1940, albeit among a limited strata of educated, urban elites.

Nevertheless, the more threatening symbols of the Young Intellectuals, such as drug use, unconventional dress, and sexual promiscuity, did not emerge as mass phenomena during modernism's "smart" expansion phase. In the 1960s, however, these forces burst upon the scene, carried by a wave of alternative youth cultures that reinforced the modernist gains of the 1920s. Talcott Parsons coined this new cultural ferment the "expressive revolution" (B. Martin 1981: 2, 15–16; Parsons 1975). In truth, the new 1960s ethos represented the flowering of the efforts of the Beatnik movement of the late 1940s and 1950s.

One theme of this second wave of expressive turmoil was a renewal of the early Villagers' quest to find countercultural influences from subordinate groups like blacks, ethnics, the underclass, and deviant youth. Following in the footsteps of their pre-World War I Village forebears, hedonistic modernists like the Beats drew black blues and soul, youthful rock'n'roll, underclass attire, substance abuse, and sexual practices into their cultural repertoire (Delli Carpini 1986: 17, 24–27; Hebdige 1979: 27–28).

The new modernism's attempt to differentiate itself from the white Protestant cultural center lent added strength to the cosmopolitan interpretation of American identity. This spirit is exemplified in Norman Mailer's *White Negro* (1957), a romantic celebration of the uninhibited lifestyle of the black "hipster" that recalled Carl Van Vechten's romantic *Nigger Heaven* of the 1920s. The hipster, according to Mailer, knew that one had to "exist without roots, to set out on that uncharted journey into the rebellious imperatives of self. . . . One is Hip or one is Square" (Curry and Goodheart 1991: 197; McClay 1994: 270–271).

The Beat phenomenon proved to be merely the opening salvo in the commercialization of left-wing modernism, a trend that embarked on a meteoric ascent with the "hippie" movement of the 1960s. The hippies, directly linked to the Beats through Allen Ginsberg, proclaimed an anarchist cosmopolitanism reminiscent of Fourier, prophesizing a "love generation" and an "epoch of liberation, love, peace, compassion, and [the] *unity of mankind*" (Kaiser 1988: 204; Jamison and Eyeran 1994: 160, emphasis added). What is important here is that modernism's lowbrow phase, despite its populist accent, continued the adversarial narrative of anti-WASP cosmopolitanism.

The Institutionalization of Left-Modernist Counterculture

Earlier, activities of the Young Intellectuals were shown to have heralded the “smart” consumerism of the 1920s. The bohemian ferment of the Beats, Pop Artists, and Hippies produced a similar result, validating Daniel Bell’s observation that the modernist sensibility of the “New Left” avant-garde, which was taken to its apogee in the 1960s, became institutionalized in American society. Accordingly, the motifs of the 1960s counterculture became ingrained in the tissue of American mass culture. As Bell so masterfully writes: “the life-style once practiced by a small *cenacle* . . . is now copied by many . . . [and] this change of scale gave the culture of the 1960’s its special surge, coupled with the fact that a bohemian life-style once limited to a tiny elite is now acted out on the giant screen of the mass media” (Bell 1976: 54).

The change of scale mentioned by Bell and confirmed by others (e.g., Siegel 1986; Featherstone 1991; or Campbell 1987) showed up in various ways. In a study of gentrification in New York’s SoHo district, for example, Sharon Zukin found that the number of artists working in New York jumped from a few thousand in the 1960s to about 100,000 at the start of the 1970s, leading to the collaboration of corporate and artistic actors in such projects as the gentrification of SoHo (Featherstone 1991: 46; Zukin 1982a, 1982b). Meanwhile, the hippie movement mushroomed during 1967 into a nationwide phenomenon that encompassed millions (Anderson 1995: 171–176, 241–245). These observations have been confirmed by survey data, which illustrate popular approval of that behavior associated with the counterculture, notably, premarital sex and the use of narcotics, increased dramatically in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Caplow et al. 1994: 443, 450). Significantly, a U.S. high school survey of lifestyle and politics in 1967 showed that the ethical (“left”) and aesthetic (“counterculture”) components were highly correlated (Ennis 1992: 305–306).

Two other significant developments in the massification of left-modernism were the explosive growth in blue jean sales and the expansion and transformation of the rock music industry in the 1960s. Rock’s share of the music market jumped from 20 to 50 percent during this decade, spawning phenomena like the rock festival (Ewen 1982: 114, 243–245; Ennis 1992: 345). Over 300 rock festivals were held in the 1960s, culminating in the Woodstock Festival, attended by more than a million young people in 1969. This event was viewed as a defining moment for

both the counterculture and the wider American “baby boom” generation, heralding left-wing modernism’s arrival at the cultural center (Anderson 1995: 174, 277–278; Kaiser 1988: 26; Ennis 1992: 350).

The New Master Frames

By the end of the 1960s, the modernist avant-garde breached the remaining defenses of traditionalism in the American bourgeoisie, and the ensuing fashion mechanism quickly drew the new styles into the mainstream, remaking the nation’s mass culture. The resultant cultural trends therefore yield a similar pattern to that observed for the American value structure. This is the familiar division in economics between left and right, as well as the cultural division between modernists and traditionalists (see Figure 8.9).

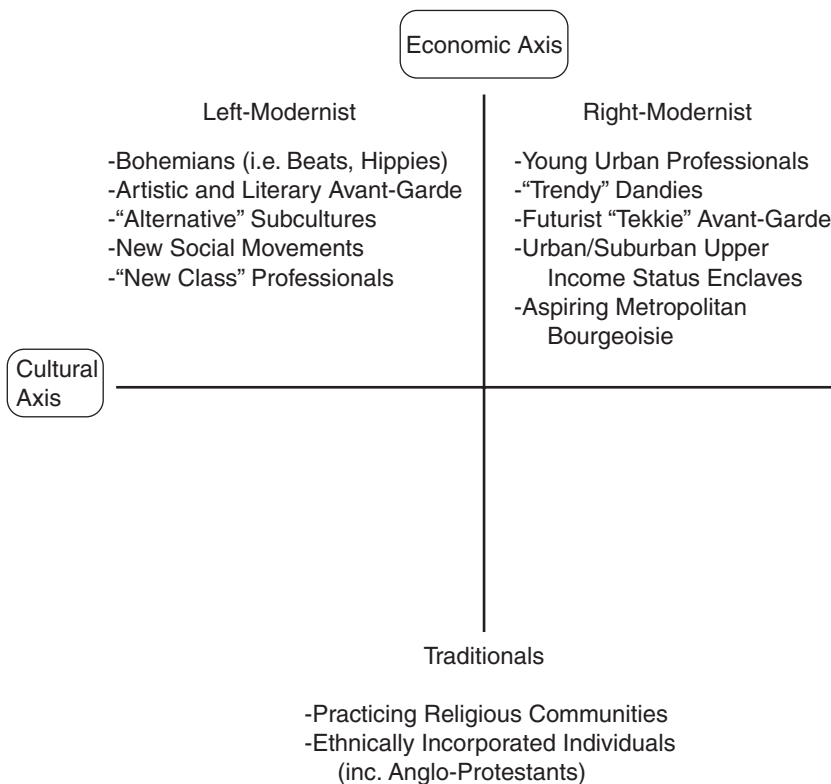


Figure 8.9. The American cultural structure.

The “right-modern” (i.e., modernist bourgeois or “BoBo”) category is probably the most numerous and includes the mass of generally unself-conscious, future-oriented consumers who possess fragmented identities based on work, leisure, and status, but lack a strong sense of corporatism. These are the contemporary heirs of the “smart” modernists of the 1920s, albeit with significant accretions from the 1960s wave of expressive modernism. “Yuppies,” “trendy” dandies, “tekkie” futurists, golf buffs, and sailing enthusiasts might be considered prime exemplars of this cultural segment (McCracken 1988: 121; Vidich and Bensman 1995: 264–270). Indeed, a recent study claims that fully 14 percent of those born between 1946 and 1964 can be counted as “yuppies,” a figure rising to 50 percent if one includes “psychographic yuppies” (Bush and Burnett 1986: 27). The “traditionalist” group is smaller in number than the right-moderns and includes all of those for whom ethnic or religious meaning systems are of primary salience. The “traditionalist” identity itself carries little weight, as opposed to its constituent ethnic and religious subgroups.¹⁰ Finally, the “left-modern” group exists as the smallest numerical entity.

Each of these three categories may be perceived as master frames,¹¹ which either exist as self-conscious “imagined communities” or, if not, encompass subgroups that do so. The nature of American society’s master frames varies in many ways. Some are fragmented and disunited (right-moderns), others are moderately cohesive (left-moderns), while some are very cohesive (traditionalist subgroups). Some are antagonistic toward dominant ethnicity (ethnic minority traditionalists, left-moderns), while others are favorable (dominant ethnic and religious traditionalists). Overall, however, the cultural institutionalization of modernism expanded the “modern” categories, whether of the left or right, at the expense of the traditional. Therefore, the large-scale institutionalization of modernist culture in American society, which accompanied the value changes of 1950–1970, hastened the decline of dominant ethnic identity (see Figure 8.10).

The discussion in this chapter provides a link between the pre-World War II expansion of cosmopolitan Americanism, encompassing the intellectual elite, and the diffusion of these ideas among a wider stratum after 1945. Between the early 1930s and 1950s, universalist ideas of liberty and equality spread from the intellectual elite to the better-educated sections of the political and economic elite: the mass media, executive, judiciary, and top bureaucrats.

Even so, the institutionalization of liberal and egalitarian hegemony in the cultural sphere was only achieved between 1950 and 1970 owing to

a structural change in American society. The G.I. Bill and the rise of an affluent postindustrial society increased the demand for higher education. University education and national television coverage expanded. This placed a larger segment of American society in contact with intellectually hegemonic cosmopolite ideals. The consequent “liberalized” strata, culturally modern in orientation, expanded with the growth of the higher education system, leading to large-scale value change. This tide swept dominant ethnic conceptions of the nation to the margins of American society, allowing the modernist avant-garde status group to occupy the cultural center.

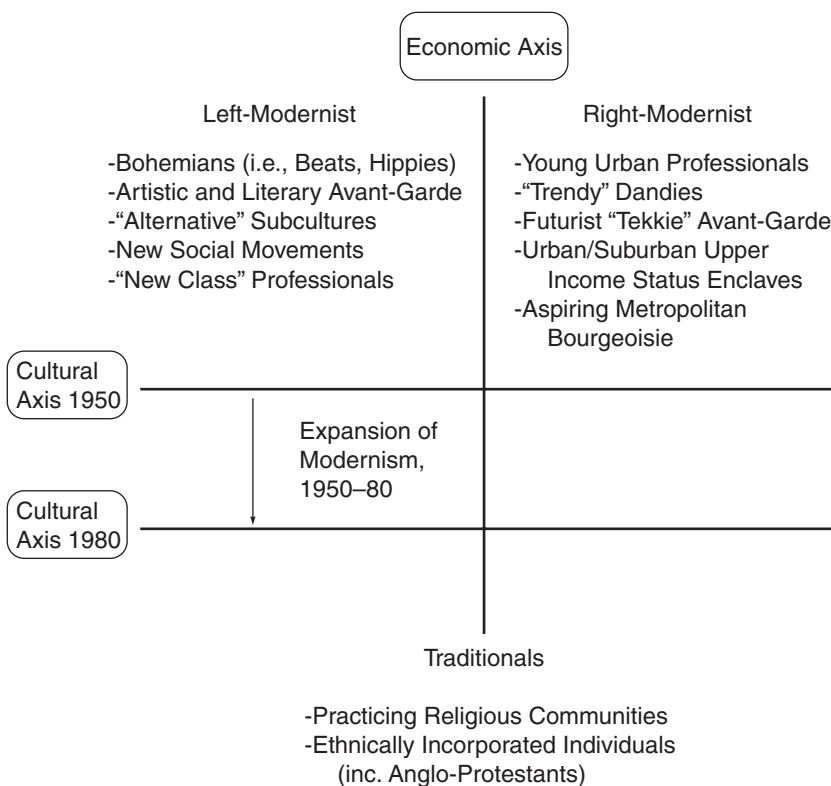


Figure 8.10. The impact of education expansion on the American cultural structure, 1950–1980.

The Decline of Anglo-America

In those days [pre-1940] the fashionable families in Chestnut Hill were homogeneously WASP and predominantly Episcopalian . . . Chestnut Hill, like so many other neighborhoods throughout the city [of Philadelphia], is far less homogeneous today than it was fifty years ago. . . . Every time I visit Chestnut Hill and take those beautiful, wooded walks, I think about how much the entire city has changed in the last fifty years.

— E. DIGBY BALTZELL, 1988 (BALTZELL 1990: 33–34)

The avalanche of institutional universalism that convulsed the nation during 1940–1970 led to a decline across all dimensions of American dominant ethnicity. One manifestation of this decline is demographic: the WASP proportion of the population fell steadily owing to a more diverse and voluminous immigrant stream. This could not have been predicted in 1924, when the enactment of National Origins Quota legislation forced a sharp rise in the proportion of migrants from Northern and Western Europe. In a similar manner, immigration sources generally followed liberalizing policy changes during the 1950s and 1960s. Hence the proportion of Northern and Western European immigrants increased in the three decades beginning 1920, 1930, and 1940 but decreased in the 1950s. This decrease can be attributed to the executive exemption provisions of that decade, which allowed groups like the Hungarians to enter in numbers far in excess of their quota.¹ The following decade, 1960–1970, ushered in the color-blind Hart-Celler Act of 1965, which further relaxed WASP boundaries, admitting a far higher proportion of non-white² immigrants (see Figure 9.1).

Ethnic Identity Change

Fredrik Barth's model of ethnic boundary maintenance asserts that ethnic boundaries can be retained in the face of substantial population inflows by assimilating new immigrants into the dominant culture and its ancestry myth (Barth 1969: 20–25). Thus in the American case, Anglo-conformist

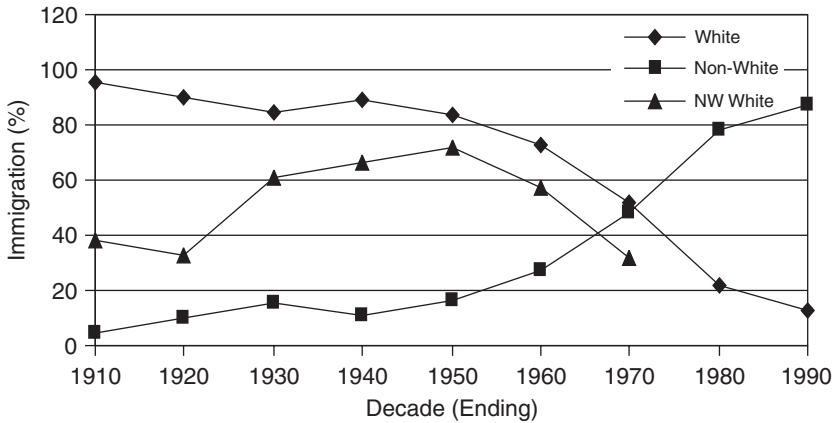


Figure 9.1. Immigration by “race,” 1900–1990 (Easterlin 1982: 14–17; Simon 1993: 10. Note that the designation “NW White” refers to northwestern European whites).

transmutation could be employed to maintain the ethnic composition of the population, despite a more diverse genetic inflow. However, the census data on ancestry demonstrate that this did not occur. Instead, the combination of new immigration sources and native-immigrant fertility differences reduced the proportion of self-identified whites, white Protestants, and British Protestants in the population.

The decline in the British and Irish Protestant population is notoriously difficult to measure because of both the paucity of good data and changes in survey questions. Nevertheless, the rough trend seen in Figure 9.2 indicates that the proportion of British Protestants has declined markedly—from roughly 65 percent of the total in 1790 to about 25 percent today.³ Notice that the process of decline accelerated during the twentieth century, though it has stabilized recently owing to slower aggregate rates of national population growth. Examining the data more closely reveals that the proportion of Anglo-Protestants dropped by only 6 percentage points between 1920 and 1950, but fell by about 12 percent between 1950 and 1970 (see Figure 9.2). It would be interesting to speculate on the reasons for these shifts, since demographic change alone is unlikely to be able to explain them. Besides variation in survey technique, one answer may lie with Anglo-conformist pressure—which might have led multiple-ancestry respondents to exaggerate their Britishness in 1950.

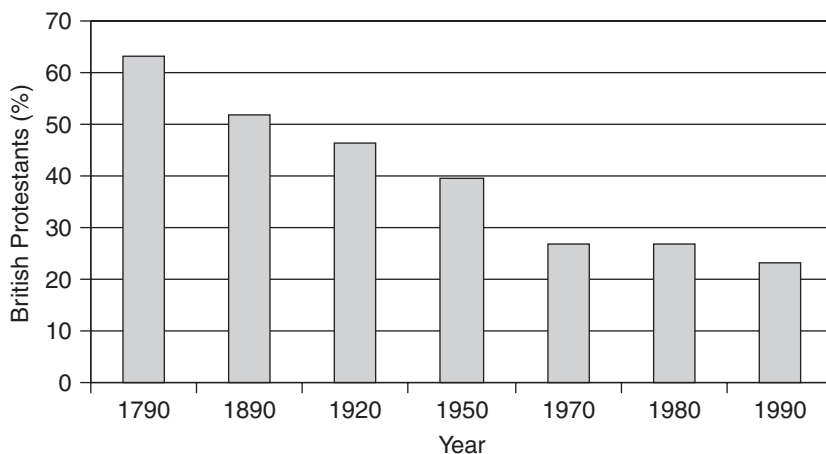


Figure 9.2. The decline of the WASP?: British Protestants as a percentage of the population (Ward 1982: 56–57; Fischer 1989: 871–872; Weed 1973: 7; Lieberson and Waters 1988: 34; *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1996).

Protestant Decline

Looking at the Anglo-Protestant decline from a religious angle reveals a similar pattern. Between 1926 and 1950, Protestant churches grew by 64 percent, a considerably faster rate of increase than Catholicism’s 53.9 percent (Herberg 1955: 259). This suggests that Protestantism’s affiliate population was extremely robust prior to mid-century. However, those identifying as Protestant soon began to drop, falling from 70 percent to just 57 percent of the population between 1947 and 1987 (Caplow et al. 1994: 286). During 1947–1962, Protestant numbers held relatively steady. However, between 1962 and 1982, the numbers fell steeply, from 70 percent to 57 percent. Two sources of loss were apparent: first, a large increase in Catholic numbers (owing in no small part to the new Hispanic immigration), and second, a surge in the secular/nonaffiliate population, which heavily scored the ranks of liberal and moderate “mainline” Protestants⁴ (Roof and McKinney 1987: 19, 168–169).

Whites

The Hart-Celler Act opened up American immigration to nontraditional sources, and as a result migration from “nonwhite” parts of the world

picked up strongly after 1965. Immigrants, now as in the past, tend to have higher fertility rates than native-born Americans. Consequently, the new immigration rapidly began to alter the characteristics of the American population. Non-Hispanic whites, for example, fell from 85 to 69 percent of the population between 1960 and the year 2000 (Figure 9.3).

The change was particularly striking in states with high immigration figures, like California, New York, Texas, and Florida. California, for example, was 85 percent non-Hispanic white in 1960, but whites now comprise a minority of just 47 percent of the total, a situation reached ten years ahead of the forecasted date (*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1994; U.S. Census 2001a). Just as important are the changes expected in the next 50 years. Currently, non-Hispanic whites comprise around 65 percent of the American population aged 5 or under but make up 95 percent of those 65 and over (U.S. Census 1996, no.25; Bouvier 1992: 39–40). Furthermore, this pace of change is not destined to abate: in 1996, the U.S. Census Bureau predicted that, by 2025, non-Hispanic whites would form just half of the under-5 population (*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1996, no. 25).

The U.S. Census Bureau and several other organizations have also made

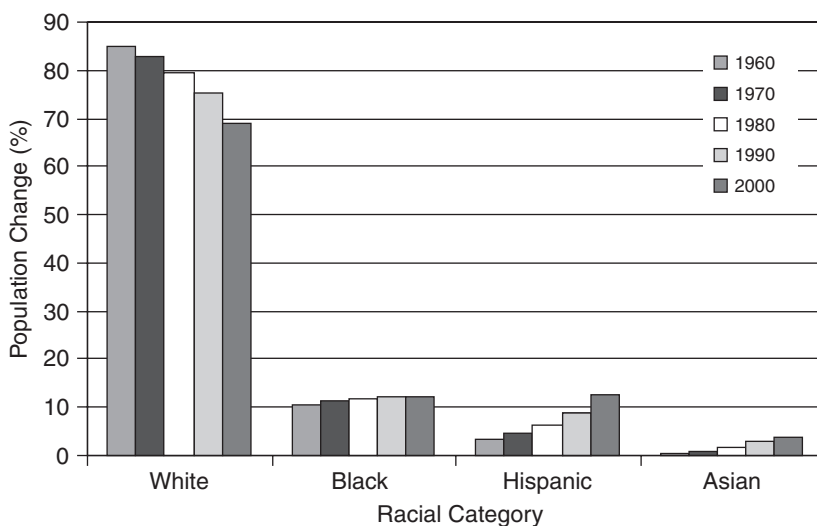


Figure 9.3. American population change by racial category, 1960–2000 (*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1996, no. 22; U.S. Census 2000).

projections for the overall population for periods between 2000 and 2050, using a relatively standard set of parameters.⁵ Demographer Leon Bouvier provides three population scenarios based on different sets of assumptions. Although variation in parameters affects the outcome somewhat, the overall trend remains similar: the non-Hispanic white population is destined to decline to between 50 and 60 percent of the total by the middle of the twenty-first century (Bouvier 1992: 38). Zero immigration would put the figure at just over 60 percent, indicating that fertility differentials form a significant element of the American population picture. Strikingly, recent projections suggest that, as a result of below-replacement fertility, non-Hispanic whites will begin to decline *in absolute numbers* by the year 2034! This will contrast sharply with the positive fertility of all other groups, including the long-standing Native Indian/Eskimo and black populations (U.S. Census Bureau Report [P25-1130] 1996).

Once again, certain states are expected to undergo greater population change. California will likely be the leader in this regard. Its non-Hispanic white population is expected to drop below 40 percent by 2030—a figure that conceals a much lower percentage for younger age groups (Martin and Bouvier 1992: 297). Under this scenario, whites will be hard-pressed to retain their present position as the dominant players in the state's power structure (Figure 9.4).

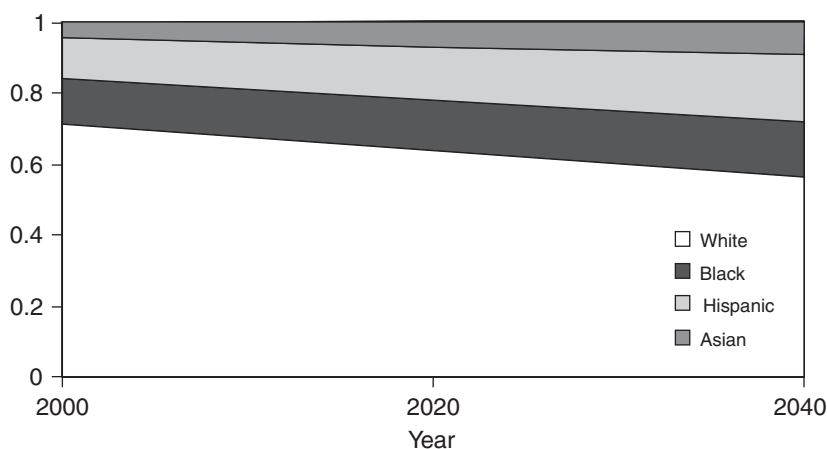


Figure 9.4. California's population by racial category, 1970–2040 (Martin and Bouvier 1992: 297).

Demographic strength is an important component of dominant ethnicity. However, a waning of demographic power may be offset by a waxing of the qualitative influence of the dominant ethnic group. For instance, in 1890 the United States had roughly the same proportion of British stock as did English-speaking Canada in 1980, while the American nation-state at independence had the same proportion of British stock as Australia does today. However, Anglo-Protestant hegemony in the United States of 1776 or 1890 was far more complete than it is in contemporary Australia or English Canada, illustrating the importance of qualitative factors. Hence I will next address qualitative WASP decline.

Qualitative Indicators of Anglo-Protestant Decline

“Protestantism in America today presents the anomaly of a strong majority group with a growing minority consciousness,” declared Will Herberg in the early 1950s, before the demographic decline of white Protestantism took place (Herberg 1955: 250). The shrinking proportion of the American population that identifies as white, Protestant, and British provides us with a good quantitative starting point for asserting that dominant ethnicity has declined in the United States. Nevertheless, white Protestants still make up close to half the national population. In other nation-states (Iran or Fiji come to mind), this demographic strength would be more than enough to assure cultural hegemony. Therefore, of greater importance are the *qualitative* changes that Herberg noticed, traceable to the 1920s and 1930s, which altered the position of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants in civic life. The qualitative decline of American dominant ethnicity has been driven by equality and liberal-individualism, each of which confronts it in a different way. Egalitarianism undermines the idea of *dominance*, while expressive individualism tends to corrode all forms of *ethnicity*.

Egalitarian-Driven Decline

Cultural Dominance

Tri-faith pluralism, which originated with the egalitarianism of the Goodwill movement, was a key ingredient in undermining Protestant hegemony. How else can we explain the relative acceptance of Jewish claims

for equal representation on the nation's symbolic podium, despite the Jews' miniscule demographic and political weight? William Hutchison best summarizes the importance of qualitative developments when he posits that the twentieth-century decline of Protestant America occurred well after the influx of immigrants had altered the demographics of the nation. In his estimation, Protestants at mid-century

were forced to confront a religious diversity that had been real, yet blithely or stubbornly unacknowledged, since at least the middle years of the nineteenth century. By way of response, the churches strove to maintain their historic status and perform what they confidently believed were God-given responsibilities. One sees in retrospect, however, that they were also negotiating an epochal and quite fundamental transition, a transition from Protestant America to pluralist America. *The problem was not a loss of adherents*. Proportional losses in relation to Catholics or non-Christians, particularly in the urban centers, were among the facts of life that demanded recognition. But that phenomenon was not new, or even accelerated, in this era; far more startling changes in the statistics had occurred many years earlier, between the Revolution and the Civil War. (Hutchison 1989: vii, emphasis added)

The adverse effects of the new egalitarian, "post-Protestant" mood for WASP hegemony were foregrounded by changing patterns in the media's coverage of organized Protestantism. Protestant influence in education had greatly atrophied by the 1920s, but Protestant "establishment" clerical figures still garnered impressive media attention into the 1950s. Thereafter, matters began to change. Dennis Voskuil's content analysis of selected issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* between 1933 and 1984 illustrates how the balance of coverage began to shift away from mainline Protestants in favor of Catholics and others after the 1940s and 1950s (Voskuil 1989: 78–79). And since the early 1960s, coverage of all religious issues in these two important publications began to decline to a point of insignificance.

Trends in popular culture followed a similar trajectory, reducing the Anglo-Protestant imago to parity with those of other ethnic groups, as Peter Schrag sardonically commented in his 1973 work, *The Decline of the WASP* (Schrag 1973: 71–72). One of the first signs that the WASP had begun to share the American spotlight with newer ethnic groups came with the emergence of pluralistic wartime propaganda films⁶ and postwar

novels.⁷ Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, James Jones's *From Here to Eternity*, Harry Brown's *A Walk in the Sun*, and John Hersey's *A Bell for Adano* were all postwar books that framed American society as a mixture of diverse, equal ethnic groups. "Like many wartime films," writes Richard Alba, "these novels depicted military groups that contained American ethnic diversity . . . and showed ethnics as the moral equals of those of 'old stock' origins" (Alba 1985a: 143; 1985b: 79–80; Gerstle 2001: 220–239). Herbert Gans adds that East European Jews, key players in the motion picture industry, began to include explicitly Jewish material in their offerings in the 1970s, while, at the same time, the industry "upgraded" ethnic characters to center-stage roles (Gans 1979: 5–6, 9, 11).

"History Against Memory": Historical Narrative and the Public School System

The shifts in popular culture were similarly reflected in the time-hallowed realms of historiography and children's historical fiction. Throughout the nineteenth century, history texts in American public schools extolled the virtues of rural life, attacked the shortcomings of Catholicism, and, by the 1880s, declared the "Aryan" or "Caucasian" race to be superior (Elson 1964: 47–53, 67–68). The Anglo-Saxon also received high praise in nineteenth-century texts, while American national genius was linked to its Puritan, New England ancestry. Moreover, contrary to the accepted view, nineteenth-century American schoolbooks praised England as second only to the United States in virtue (Elson 1964: 106, 168–169). In the final analysis, therefore, the myth-symbol complex of the "American" ethnic was strongly affirmed. In Elson's words, for high school texts,

The American, the ideal man, is of the white race, of Northern European background, Protestant, self-made, and if not a farmer at least retaining the virtues of his Yeoman ancestors. As race becomes an increasingly significant way to think about human beings, the English are exalted to a position just below the Americans. . . . Essentially, racially, they are superior. . . . Yet the American population is not identical with the English because the American environment sieved the English population. The weak would not come, and only the pure of heart could survive. The American is a distilled Englishman. (Elson 1964: 340)

The period between 1910 and 1930 represents a transitory phase, for toward the end of the 1920s, texts in the established mold began to share space with a growing number of works influenced by the Liberal Progressives. There is little question, however, that most continued to affirm the Anglo-Saxon basis of American identity. The most popular reader of the period, David Saville Muzzey's *American History* (1911), became an immediate best-seller and was the leading text in American schools, read by over half the nation's pupils during the period 1911–1961. Muzzey's work, like others in the 1910s and 1920s, reinforced the idea of a native-stock "us" and immigrant-stock "them." History texts of the 1920s also tended to refer to the assimilation of immigrants as a "problem" for American society and were virtually unanimous in their support for immigration restriction (FitzGerald 1979: 59, 78–79).

The shift away from a dominant-ethnic interpretation of the American story did not occur overnight but followed closely on the heels of the new progressive history. Since high school history texts almost always involved an academic author, academic trends could percolate relatively rapidly into the schools. It is also significant that John Dewey, a major Liberal-Progressive figure, was a cardinal influence on progressive education (FitzGerald 1979: 172–173). Thus as early as 1916, Dewey expressed his wish that "our teaching of American history in the schools would take more account of the great waves of migration . . . and [make] every pupil conscious of the rich breadth of our national make-up." Accordingly, in 1927, a new school history curriculum developed by the University of Chicago was launched based on Dewey's original pluralist ideas and was adopted in Chicago's public schools (Lissak 1989: 58).

By 1930, the first Liberal-Progressive books favorable to immigrants appeared on the nationwide market, central among which was Harold Rugg's *An Introduction to Problems of American Culture* (1930). Rugg called for intergroup tolerance and expounded upon the virtues of the immigrants—their labor, their customs, and their "fine arts"—much as Jane Addams might have done. His was also one of the first readers to speak of the United States as a "melting pot." Rugg was similarly instrumental as an activist in the National Education Association (NEA), a professional educators' body influenced by John Dewey's Liberal-Progressive ideas, which came to exert considerable influence over course content. Originally a driving force behind the Americanization movement of the 1900–1920 period, the NEA changed course to embrace liberal ideals soon after (O'Leary 2001: 162, 177). In FitzGerald's words, "By

about 1930 the writ of the NEA had run through the schools” (FitzGerald 1979: 79–82, 175).

Professional historiography, as noted earlier, had adopted many of the tenets of Liberal Progressivism by the 1930s, with Marcus Hansen and T. C. Blegen leading the way (Shenton 1990: 252; Saveth 1948: 219). This ferment, shorn of its socialist *accoutrements*, produced the new “consensus” American history based on the melting pot idea, the American Creed, and the universal-liberal mission of the United States. The new crop of historians, trained in the consensus mold in the late 1920s and early 1930s, soon took an active role in disseminating their work to a younger audience. Richard Hofstadter, Merle Curti, Henry Steele Commager, Oscar Handlin—all either wrote or collaborated in the writing of school history texts (FitzGerald 1979: 20). Consensus texts tended to be more nationalistic than their predecessors but more universalist in tone and less concerned with defining the nation along WASP lines. When the Liberal-Progressive texts of the early 1930s were attacked by patriotic societies as subversive, the more acceptable “consensus” school moved in and occupied the pedagogical center. The period 1930–1950, therefore, witnessed the blossoming of a more nationalistic, yet less WASP, brand of history.

That said, the new history did not filter down to the school system unchallenged, demonstrating the “history versus collective memory” dynamic much commented upon by Pierre Nora, among others (Nora 1984; Halbwachs [1950] 1980; Hutton 1993). David Muzzey’s text continued to enjoy wide circulation. In the 1955 edition, his readers learned the following:

America has been called the “melting pot” because of these millions of people of foreign speech and customs who have been thrown in with our native colonial stock to be fused into a new type of American. Some students of society (sociologists) think that the process has injured our country by introducing a base alloy. Others point to the benefits which the brains and the hands of the immigrants have brought. There is much to be said for each side of the question. (FitzGerald 1979: 80–81)

Not surprisingly, the post-1925 changes in the school curriculum came under swift attack from the advance guard of Anglo-American collective memory: the patriotic societies. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), for example, decreed in 1926 that its local chapters should

“see that our school boards are not allowing our public school system to be used for the dissemination of propaganda.” In consequence, starting in the 1920s, the DAR pressured school boards to drop liberal texts. A 1937 article in *The Nation* reflected the heat of the debate, declaring that only two of hundreds of new history texts (largely produced by professional historians) seemed to meet “DAR prejudices.” The DAR-approved works, such as *The Story of Our American People*, by Professor Charles Horne, bore the Anglo-Protestant stamp of Theodore Roosevelt’s *Winning of the West*. Horne described the Anglo-American pioneers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a “chosen race,” a “strong and clever folk, resolute and earnest . . . were established in America and received stern training in its wilderness. They were built up into a sturdy company indeed, well fit to be ancestors of a new race, the ‘Americans’” (Strayer 1958: 69–70).

The DAR undertook to circulate thousands of copies of Horne’s volume, and when this effort appeared to have limited effect, it embarked on a campaign for teacher oaths of allegiance and focused its efforts on suppressing “un-American” texts. These campaigns, begun in 1936, were strongly resisted by teachers and professors, united under the mantle of the National Education Association (NEA). This body’s growing membership, over 600,000 strong by 1957, eventually enabled it to outdistance the DAR (in the late 1950s) and ensured that educators ultimately won the struggle to teach a more liberal curriculum (Strayer 1958: 69–71). Nevertheless, the furor generated by the DAR led to the elimination of left-leaning texts like Rugg’s in the 1939–1955 period—although this bolstered *civic* nationalist “consensus” history rather than Horne and Muzzey’s brand of Anglo-Protestant *ethno*history (FitzGerald 1979: 36).

Another facet of the shift in qualitative Americanism can be gauged from the changing portrayals of American life in children’s historical fiction. Although most children’s fiction of the 1945–1965 period privileged the “old American” as the national archetype, the treatment of minority ethnic groups was considerably more benign than it had been in previous decades (Scales 1991: 416–419). Conservative writers were, for the first time, forced on the defensive. For example, in 1942, Walter Edmonds bemoaned the “moralistic” taboos regarding the portrayal of ethnic and racial minorities that “drained” children’s books of life. In a similar mode, Alice Dalgleish, in a 1945 piece for *Publishers’ Weekly*, further complained that racial and religious tolerance, though currently a big issue in children’s fiction writing, could lead to moralistic overkill: “We have been

reading a good deal about stereotypes . . . that we have built up a myth of ‘Protestant Anglo-Saxon superiority’ ” (quoted in Scales 1991: 385–387).

During the period between 1930 and 1960 the explicit articulation of Anglo-Protestant Americanism ceased. However, behind the universalist rhetoric, the Herberg-Gordon notion of Anglo-conformity still reigned supreme. Boundaries had been breached, but the WASP core was proving more resistant. Typical “Americans” were always represented as being of North European phenotype and having Anglo-Saxon surnames. In both literature and history, non-WASP groups, white or otherwise, were discussed in terms of their peripheral “contributions” to the broader American story. This changed rapidly in the early 1960s, however, when the black-dominated Detroit and Newark school boards, at the urging of local NAACP chapters, dropped a history text for its allegedly positive portrayal of slavery. This action provided the spark that ignited a wildfire of school textbook revision that swept much of the nation, bringing *all* ethnic and racial minorities toward the center of American history:

In the space of a year or two, the political wind veered a hundred and eighty degrees. For the first time in publishing history, large-scale protests came from the left and from non-white people, *and for the first time such protests were listened to*. . . . What began as a series of discreet protests against individual books became a general proposition: all texts had treated the United States as a white, middle-class society when it was in fact multiracial and multicultural. And this proposition, never so much as suggested before 1962, had by the late sixties become a truism of the educational establishment. (Fitz-Gerald 1979: 39, emphasis added)

The abrupt changes in school history textbook content, culminating in multiculturalism, represented the final realization of liberal-egalitarian logic. Of course, history writing and literature are only two mirrors of society, but the changes wrought by the cosmopolitan juggernaut were also inscribed on society’s other institutions, notably the university.

The Decline of Anti-Semitism on Campus

Discrimination against Jews had been a central facet of academic life in the period between 1919 and the end of World War II. As was the case

in corporations and country clubs, Jewish entry was explicitly restricted by quotas. “Almost all . . . private Eastern colleges, as well as other types of institutions all over the nation, had some kind of covert or overt restrictions on the number of Jewish students admitted,” noted E. Digby Baltzell (Baltzell 1964: 211). Nowhere was this more evident than at Columbia University in the early 1920s, where president Nicholas Murray Butler’s use of a redesigned application form sank Jewish numbers from 40 to 20 percent within two years (Bender 1987: 288–289).

Jews were also largely excluded from tenure appointments at the top universities. At Yale, for example, Daniel Bell tells the story of how Elliot Cohen, a founding editor of *Commentary* (a mainstay journal of the New York Intellectuals), was denied a position in Yale’s English Literature Department during the Depression years. According to Bell, a leading staff member told Cohen: “Mr. Cohen, you are a very competent young man, but it is hard for me to imagine a Hebrew teaching the Protestant tradition to young men at Yale” (Bell 1980: 132–133). The lead set by prestigious institutions like Yale, Harvard, and Columbia legitimated these policies among institutions nationwide (Sacks 1997: 398; Synott 1986; Baltzell 1964: 212).

In view of these developments, it is striking how quickly policies changed. “Throughout the thirties and well into the forties,” remarked Baltzell, “our major universities were still staffed almost entirely by old-stock Protestants. . . . In every field and department, however, the changes since the war have been tremendous.” The field of sociology provides a good barometer of change. Prior to 1945, all presidents of the American Sociological Association (ASA) were white Christians, nearly all of Anglo-Protestant ancestry. However, since World War II, “the society [ASA] has elected its first Negro president, and the presidency has by now had several Jewish incumbents” (Baltzell 1964: 336–337). Another WASP scholar, Theodore Wright, later reflected that “in my own discipline, Political Science, I calculate that the percentage of WASPs in the most prestigious university departments . . . has dropped by half in a generation” (Wright 2004, forthcoming).

The decline in anti-Semitism was reflected on the streets of America’s new suburbs, in which ethnic identity was increasingly irrelevant: “By the time I was an adolescent [early 1950s], Jews were just as white as the next person,” writes Karen Sacks of her upbringing in postwar Long Island, New York. “Instead of dirty and dangerous races who would destroy U.S. democracy, immigrants became ethnic groups whose children had

successfully assimilated into the mainstream and risen to the middle class. In this new myth, Euro-ethnic suburbs like mine became the measure of U.S. democracy's victory over [Nazi] racism" (Sacks 1997: 400–401).

Economic Decline

In the economic realm, as in the cultural, a similar leveling of inequalities between WASP and non-WASP ethnic groups occurred. This was not always the case, as C. Wright Mills commented in 1956:

Almost everywhere in America, the metropolitan upper classes have in common, more or less, race, religion and nativity . . . the model of the upper social classes is still "pure" by race, ethnic group, by national extraction. In each city, they tend to be Protestant; moreover Protestants of class-church denominations, Episcopalian mainly, or Unitarian, or Presbyterian. (Mills 1956: 60)

In 1950, for instance, 85 percent of those in top corporate positions were Protestant; this was an extremely small decline from the figure of 89 percent recorded at the turn of the century. Even in 1968, 88 percent of the 790 directors of the 50 largest American corporations were "apparent" WASPs. A similar tale emerged from analyses of the *Who's Who* listings of elite personnel in science, government, education and the military in the 1950s and early 1960s (Anderson 1970: 143–145).

Nevertheless, the dominance of the American power elite by white Anglo-Protestants, as this thesis might suggest, has declined markedly since the late 1960s. "For twenty years, the de-WASPing of the ruling elite in America has proceeded at a breathtaking pace," writes Robert Christopher (Christopher 1989: 41). Christopher's 1989 assessment provides an interesting sequel to Baltzell's observations of 1964 that WASP hegemony in the military, political, and economic realms of American life was complete. In the nation's clubs and boardrooms, and in the upper echelons of show business, television, philanthropy, literature, education, and the military, Christopher powerfully demonstrates that ethnic origin (among whites) has virtually ceased to function as a status group boundary. In fact, by the 1990s, Robert Lerner and his co-authors could write: "There are roughly the same proportion of WASPs and Jews at the elite levels of the federal civil service, and a greater proportion of Jewish elites among corporate lawyers." Moreover, these authors found that Jews outnumbered WASPs 58 to 21 among television elites, 48 to 25 among

“public interest” elites, and 40 to 21 among legal elites. The same study also found that, in stark contrast to the Jews, WASPs were not over-represented within the ranks of the national elite (Lerner et al. 1996: 21–25).

Nowhere is the transition to “post-WASP” America more evident than in the corporate world. For example, in 1986, a Korn/Ferry International survey of 4,300 top U.S. managers found just 53.8 percent to be Protestant, down from 68.4 percent in 1979. Another study found no more than 40 percent of America’s millionaires to be even loosely defined WASPs. On the other hand, close to 40 percent were Jewish, Italian, or Greek in ancestry (Christopher 1989: 88, 92). From a position of overwhelming superiority in the late 1960s, Protestants had become under-represented in the highest echelons of corporate America by the late 1980s. The case of Springfield, Massachusetts, illustrates the changes that have taken place. The first Catholic bank president in Springfield didn’t take up his post until 1968, but by the 1980s, “two of the city’s largest corporations could each have Catholic CEOs, neither of whom knew it of the other” (Demerath and Williams 1992: 57).

At the mass level of socioeconomic attainment, the same egalitarian trend appears. Surveys of 1939 and 1940 showed that Protestants earned considerably more than Catholics nationwide (Anderson 1970: 147). This disparity vanished by 1980 (see Figure 9.5). Even among nonwhites in 1979, Middle Eastern/North Africans, Cubans, and many Asian groups had achieved parity with British Americans, as had black women⁸ (Lieberson and Waters 1988: 137–138; Alba 1990: 9).

1980 Figures	English	Irish	Italian	German	Polish	French
Male unemployment (percent)	2.8	3.0	3.1	2.7	3.0	3.1
Per capita income	\$8,242	\$8,534	\$9,126	\$9,069	\$9,790	\$7,958
Persons per family	3.12	3.23	3.25	3.19	3.13	3.27
Percent below poverty line	11.3	9.6	7.3	8.1	7.0	10.7

Figure 9.5. Socioeconomic characteristics for selected ethnic groups, 1980 (Battisella 1989: 139–140; Lieberson and Waters 1988: 142).

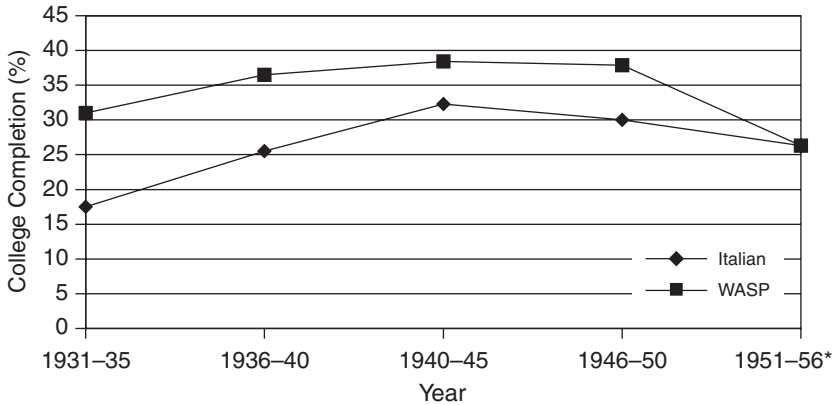


Figure 9.6. Males completing 4 years or more of college, by birth cohort, Italians and WASPs (Alba 1985b: 127. *The 1951–1956 cohort is one year longer and includes 23-year olds, which skews the overall results downward, but not in such a way as to affect the comparison made here.).

Education

“Whereas we observed that northwestern European groups enjoyed a distinctive educational edge over the SCE European populations around the turn of the century, this gap has completely disappeared,” remark Stanley Lieberson and Mary Waters (Lieberson and Waters 1988: 250). Educational attainment by birth cohort perhaps provides the definitive litmus test of socioeconomic mobility, and the loss of Anglo-Protestant dominance in this area is striking. To take a paradigm case, Figure 9.6 shows the educational convergence of British and Italian-American males by birth cohort. An identical pattern could be presented with regard to Italian-American women or for most other ethnic groups.

Political Decline

In terms of political influence, the 1960s was a symbolic decade because it bore witness to the election of the nation’s first Catholic president, John F. Kennedy. Though certainly an important breakthrough, Kennedy’s election masked the fact that Congress was overwhelmingly dominated by Protestants. In 1967, for example, 80 percent of senators, 78 percent

of state governors, and 70 percent of representatives were Protestant (Anderson 1970: 146). Since that time, however, the situation has altered dramatically (Figure 9.7). Blacks have also made great strides toward equal representation, though some distance still remains to be traveled before parity with whites is attained (Figure 9.8).

Along with the legislative branch, the executive and judiciary also served as bastions of Anglo-Protestant hegemony (Anderson 1970: 146). The administration of Franklin Roosevelt began the process of appointing more Catholic⁹ federal judges: a jump from 3.7 percent of appointees during the Harding–Coolidge–Hoover era in the 1920s to 26 percent of appointees during Franklin Roosevelt’s administrations of 1932–1945 (Baltzell 1964: 231). Roosevelt’s “brain trust” of advisers and his policies also reached out, more strongly than ever, to urban Catholics (Mowry 1967: 94, 95, 103). Nevertheless, as Figure 9.9 shows, the first real breakthrough for Catholics and Jews, in terms of executive power, came with Kennedy’s election in 1960. Since that time, Protestant influence in the cabinet, whatever the party, has been on the wane (Caplow et al. 1994: 564).

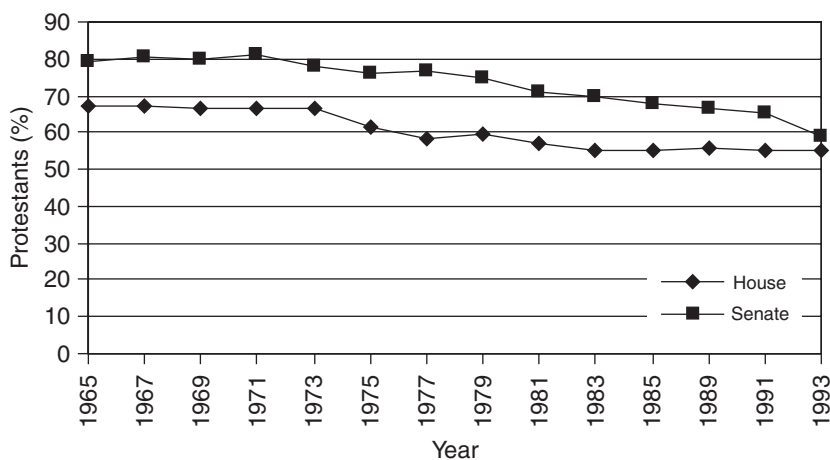


Figure 9.7. Percentage of Protestants in Congress, 1965–1993 (Ornstein et al. 1994: 34–37).

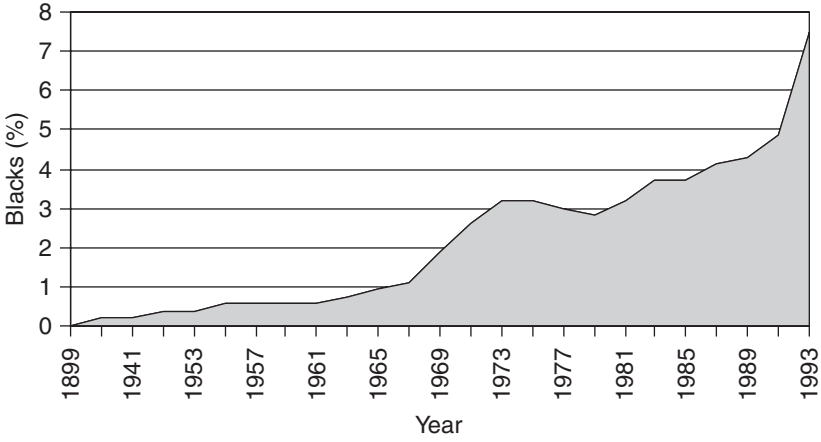


Figure 9.8. Percentage of blacks in Congress, 1899–1993 (Ornstein et al. 1994: 38–39).

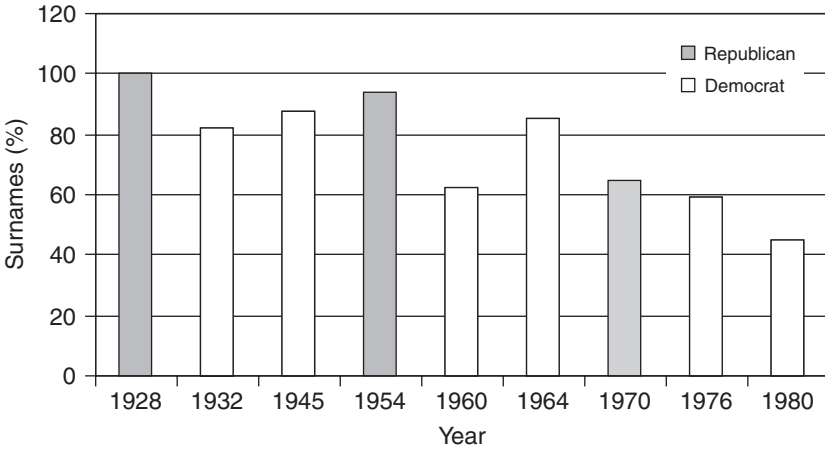


Figure 9.9. Percentage of Anglo-Saxon surnames in cabinet, 1928–1980 (Caplow et al. 1994: 564).

The Role of Expressive Individualism in WASP Decline

The Growth of Expressive Individualism

“Expressive individualism,” writes Robert Bellah, “holds that each person has a unique core of feeling and intuition that should unfold or be expressed if individuality is to be realized” (Bellah [1985] 1996: 333–334). This form of individualism, which sprang from the expressivist romanticism of the nineteenth century, had long influenced American thinkers from the Transcendentalists to the New York Intellectuals (Taylor 1989: 374–390; Blake 1990: 6). The activities of the Young Intellectuals in Greenwich Village form part of this Anglo-American tradition. However, only after World War II, especially in the post-1960s period, did an expressive-individualist sensibility spread to larger segments of the population.

A number of indicators seem to back up the contention that expressive individualism gained ground during the 1960s. For one thing, between the late 1960s and early 1980s a marked liberalization occurred in attitudes toward illegal drug use, premarital sex, and all forms of erotic expression (Caplow et al. 1994: 432–436). The lyrics of the modern rock song celebrated these changes and also stressed the ecstasy of liberated, future-oriented individualism.¹⁰ Moreover, the period from the 1950s to the 1980s witnessed a general shift toward more independent living, especially among youth: besides a marked decline in kinship networks, there occurred an increase in nonfamily living and a dramatic rise in the proportion of one-person households, which rose from 11 percent in 1950 to 24 percent in 1987 (Caplow et al. 1994: 46–50). Alex Shoumatoff described this new phenomenon as it appeared in New York:

The greatest concentration of single people in the world, the world capital of rampant individualism, is New York City. In 1980 . . . thirty-four percent of the city’s entire population fifteen years old or older, had never married, and 349,373 of the 706,015 households in Manhattan had only one person in them. Manhattan actually had even more “singles” than that, because many of those counted had roommates who were also single but who didn’t appear on the census rolls; and some “never-marrieds,” as well as some of the divorced and the widowed who had not remarried, were living with their parents or with other kin. (Shoumatoff 1985: 190)

Emile Durkheim was one of the first social scientists to develop a theory of the effects of individualism by studying differentials in suicide rates. In this sense, the American data are instructive. Suicide rates have increased substantially since the 1950s, particularly among the young, males, and whites (Caplow et al. 1994: 511, 517; Putnam 2000: 261). A related phenomenon, of similar importance, is the growth of the psychotherapy industry (Bellah 1996: 121). A recent study demonstrates the point: 40 percent of Americans were found to belong to “support groups” of some kind, with 5 percent belonging to groups specifically concerned with self-help (Putnam 1995a: 71–72).

The self-help movement is much more than merely a psychological response to a changed technoeconomic environment. In many ways, it affirms the tenets of expressive individualism incubated by the Young Intellectuals of Greenwich Village. Hence the expressively oriented Human Potential movement of the 1960s gave self-help a strong boost, while the spate of new books that emerged by the end of that decade carried overtly individualistic titles like *You!* or *Looking Out for Number One* (Curry and Goodheart 1991: 199–200; Ennis 1992: 363).

These books stressed the importance of self-expression and the contingency of cultural communities: “You are moving away. Away from institutional claims and other people’s agenda. . . . If I could give everyone a gift for the send-off on this journey, it would be a gift of portable roots. . . . For each of us there is the opportunity to emerge reborn, authentically unique” (Taylor 1992a: 14; Giddens 1991: 70–72). The essential point to take from this discussion is that the discourse of expressive individualism spread from its avant-garde sources during the 1960s to encompass a larger segment of society. As we shall see, this had important repercussions for American ethnicity.

Ethnicity and the Ideology of Expressive Individualism

For expressive individualists, ethnicity compels individuals to conform to collective modes of representation, thereby obscuring individual authenticity and inhibiting consumer choice. Carriers of expressive-individualistic ideas will thereby experience ethnicity, dominant or otherwise, as “confining” and regressive, a force to be transcended in the name of postethnic identities based on shared choices. For example, Jews and Anglo-Saxons in the interwar New York intellectual community were united by their shared rejection of ethnic ties in favor of a postethnic

“avant-garde” identity (Bell 1980: 131–132; Bender 1987: 325; Novak 1971: 37).

Milton Gordon surmises that this transethnic perspective is especially characteristic of intellectuals, whose shared interests—and, I would argue, shared individualist ideology—bring them together. Charles Anderson corroborates Gordon’s claims, adding that “the evidence now available suggests that academic intellectuals . . . do exhibit extremely weak ties to the religious community; instead they tend to participate in and identify with groups consisting of persons from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Academics with Protestant and Jewish origins tend to be weaker in religious community than those with Catholic backgrounds” (Gordon 1964: 224; Anderson 1970: 137–138).

Although some expressive-individualist intellectuals have assailed ethnicity, expressivists have reasons to support “exotic” forms of it. Recall that modernism, the aesthetic correlate of individualism, places a premium on diversity of experience. As a consequence, the loss of ethnic diversity might be viewed as a narrowing of the possibilities for experience, and hence the richness of choices available for the individual to realize his or herself. To circumvent this dilemma, the expressivist response has been to embrace the ethnicity of the “other,” while rejecting it for the self. In aggregate, this individualism results in a transcendent attitude toward the “bland” WASP background culture but endorses a conservationist posture toward what are perceived to be more interesting “foreground” ethnic cultures.

This explains the stance of the quintessential American expressivist, Randolph Bourne, who urged his Anglo-Saxon peers to become cosmopolitans of “international mind,” while excoriating Jews who give up their traditional faith (Bourne [1916] 1964: 113–114, 118). The expressivist tradition, therefore, has given birth to two different strains of individualism. The first, which I categorize as universalist individualism, urges the transcendence of ethnic ties in the name of an abstract individuality—a position associated with Israel Zangwill and the early Liberal Progressives. In contrast, the second tradition, here termed cosmopolitan individualism, champions ethnicity as a means of increasing the diversity of experience available to the expressive self (Buruma 2001: 23–27).

In truth, modernism happily blends the two modes. As evidence, consider the easy coexistence of (universalist) abstract art and (cosmopolitan) ethnocultural *pastiche* under the rubric of modern art. Arnold Toynbee sees the two forces, which he describes in turn as “futurism” and “cultural

promiscuity,” as being historically concurrent (Toynbee 1962, 5: 384). Similarly, for Daniel Bell, the cosmopolitan “mingling of strange gods”¹¹ and the abstract expression of cubist painters and functionalist architects can both be subsumed under the mantle of the modernist aesthetic.

Universalist Individualism: The Melting Pot Modernists

Recently, the authors of several high-profile works have expressed the universalist perspective, championing expressive liberty as a solvent of parochial ethnic bonds and attacking what they view as the confining, backward nature of American multiculturalism. Foremost among these authors is David Hollinger, who articulates his stance in his recent work, *Postethnic America* (1995). Another apostle of this creed is Werner Sollors, whose *Beyond Ethnicity* (1986) approvingly quotes postethnic thinkers from Israel Zangwill at the turn of the century to “cosmopolitan” consensus figures like David Riesman and Talcott Parsons in the 1950s and 1960s.¹² In addition to warning about the parochialism inherent in ethnicity, Sollors lauds ethnic mixture and—in a rare multiculturalist departure—remarks that ethnic blending allows those of multiple ancestry numerous “possibilities for playfulness” in creating their authentic selves (Sollors 1986: 252).

Several recent polemics against multiculturalism of liberal nationalist origin also draw on the expressive argument. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., for example, in *The Disuniting of America* (1993), maintained that “[Europe] is the unique source of those liberating ideas of individual liberty . . . human rights and cultural freedom that are our most precious legacy.” Not surprisingly, Schlesinger also registered his approval of interethnic/interracial marriage, ethnic decline, and the melting pot concept in general (Schlesinger [1991] 1993: 127, 133).

Cosmopolitan Individualism: The Multicultural Modernists

The recent surge of support for universalist individualism does not mean that it has won the day. Indeed, a strong argument can be made that multiculturalism is the official ideology of the American nation, manifested in school and university curricula, social science and humanities discourse, and the political and legal systems (Glazer 1997: 33, 147; Lind 1995: 98). However, here one must be careful. Many of the provisions of *institutional* multiculturalism grew out of the egalitarian desire to use

the tools of state to raise the socioeconomic standing of black Americans, women, and other underprivileged groups (Glazer 1997: 121; D. King 1998b: 303–304). As a result, many multiculturalist arguments merely advocate the inclusion of minority perspectives and minority content into the mainstream culture and back ethnic strategies for procuring greater political and economic power for subaltern groups (Glazer 1997: 20; Kymlicka 1995; Taylor 1992b; R. Smith 1993, 1997).

This “loose-bounded”¹³ multiculturalism, characteristic of individual-centered cosmopolitans, is analogous to what Stanley Fish calls “boutique multiculturalism” and must be differentiated from the strong multiculturalism contained within “tight-bounded” ethnic strategies (Fish 1998: 69, 73). Those who advocate illiberal methods of ethnic boundary-maintenance (like proscriptions against intermarriage or interethnic contact) can be found only among a small cadre of avowedly ethnocentric intellectuals, not among the cosmopolitan-individualist mainstream whose influence is critical to multiculturalism’s success (Glazer 1995: 137–138; Gerstle 2001: 349). Ultimately, then, most multiculturalist arguments about power and inclusion resemble those of the pluralists (Horace Kallen excluded) in the early part of this century. Jane Addams, John Dewey, Randolph Bourne, Sinclair Lewis, Everett Clinchy, and the crafters of the World Council of Churches’ statements on race relations can all be fitted into this paradigm.

Moreover, the reigning normative posture among *progressive* American intellectuals from the 1920s onward was arguably pluralist, despite the commonly held belief in the assimilationist sympathies of pre-1960s social thinkers.¹⁴ Post-1920s progressives tended to applaud ethnocultural diversity while denouncing dominant-group attempts at homogenization. Yet, they simultaneously approved of the cosmopolitan attitudes and interethnic contact that pose such a great danger to the survival of ethnic groups in America. “The traditions of pluralism and assimilation blurred into a rosy haze,” remarks John Higham, “in which differences were praised in principle but never looked at very closely” (Higham [1975] 1984: 220–221; Gleason 1992: 56–60, 161–162; Lissak 1989: 172, 174–176).

It is also significant that progressive opinion, from the turn of the twentieth century onward, *did not exclude black Americans from its vision*. Nathan Glazer is correct in his assessment that blacks did not figure centrally in the thinking of early pluralists and melting pot cosmopolitans. He is also correct to assert that the *mass* of the American native-white population,

including many of its elites, welcomed white immigrants aboard the vessel of sociological nationhood before blacks (Glazer 1998). However, where black communities were present, progressive thinkers like the Liberal-Progressive reformers, ecumenical Protestants, and Modernist radicals consistently attempted to include them.

The Ethical Culture Society, for example, tried to entice blacks to participate in Settlement activities, beginning in the late nineteenth century (Radest 1969: 123). Jane Addams was also interested in black inclusion. Hence she noted with satisfaction that W. E. B. Du Bois's lectures had been well received by an Italian-immigrant audience at Hull House and hoped that the Mediterranean immigrants could lead Americans to be more tolerant of blacks (Addams 1910: 255–256). Later, Addams tried to persuade members of the Mexican and black communities in Chicago to join her Settlement but was bitterly disappointed by the prejudiced reaction of white immigrant groups toward this initiative—a reaction that she attributed to the Americanization process (Addams 1930: 282–284).

Blacks were similarly earmarked to join the new “melting pot.” Accordingly, Israel Zangwill argued in 1914 that black Americans, who had contributed their music and dance to both white Americans and the world were destined to amalgamate with the rest of the American population (Sollors 1986: 72). Finally, let us not forget the involvement of New York Settlement figures such as William English Walling (NAACP founding member, 1909) or Seth Low (trustee of Tuskegee Institute since 1907) with the black community, nor the groundbreaking activities of the FCC's Committee on Race Relations (1921). We would also do well to remember that the Anglo-Saxon radicals of the Village Renaissance introduced white America to the richness of black jazz and dance and celebrated the openness of black American society as an antidote to Puritanism. Thus in myriad ways, pre-World War I radicals and Liberal Progressives sought to welcome both immigrant white and native-born black into the fabric of a new cosmopolitan America.

The key shift was predicated on the repudiation of America's Anglo-Protestant ethnic heritage in the name of liberal-egalitarian radicalism. The self-esteem and richness of *all* non-Anglo-Saxon cultures, whether black or immigrant white, was celebrated as soon as the new non-WASP vision of America was promulgated in the first decade of the twentieth century. One might therefore argue that the crucial turn came in the 1890s with the pluralist Americanism of Felix Adler and William James. Sixties multiculturalism merely institutionalized and re-labeled their ideas.

As regards the radical-progressive vision, there was little or no lag period in which immigrants were admitted into the American symbolic pantheon while racial minorities were excluded. Once the pluralists had erected the Anglo-Protestant as “Other,” all minorities were swept up into the “Oppressed/Culturally Rich” category. Similarly, today several writers have pointed out that multiculturalism’s unity is largely sustained by reference to a “moral center” consisting of the WASP (or white) Other (Greeley 1971: 124; Bonnett 1997: 177–178; Ceaser 1998: 142–146).

To repeat: the connections between the Liberal-Progressive brand of cosmopolitan pluralism and today’s individual-centered “boutique multiculturalism” are extremely robust. Indeed, it would be difficult to discern much difference between the two ideologies, despite the passing of three quarters of a century. Today, many American opinion-makers *are* multiculturalists. Yet, like their interwar predecessors, their desire for diversity does not spring from the tight-bounded ethnic determinism of a Johann Gottfried von Herder or Horace Kallen—they would be horrified by Kallen’s idea that “men cannot change their grandfathers” or by Herder’s belief in the immutable, organic division of humanity (Kallen 1924: 122; Schmidt 1993: 155; Breuilly 1994: 104–107). Instead, a diversity of both ethnic *and* transethnic groups, each with fluid boundaries, is championed. This makes sense as both an egalitarian and a modernist strategy: it abets the modernist quest for authenticity and experience, and it complements the egalitarian drive to weaken dominant groups while supporting less powerful ones.

Consequently, multiculturalism, for the American intellectual mainstream, is a liberal-egalitarian strategy that might be better labeled diversitarianism or “soft multiculturalism” (Gerstle 2001: 349). In the last instance, it repudiates all hard ethnic boundary-maintaining mechanisms while stressing the brotherhood of man, the richness of intermarriage, and the possibilities for personal growth inherent in hybridity, liminality, and marginality. The conjoint celebration of hybridity and multiculturalism is especially evident among those of radical, “cosmopolitan-multiculturalist” bent like Lisa Jones, Michele Wallace, and Greg Tate (Willis 1995: 212). Paradoxically, multiculturalist ideology thus constitutes a powerful force for *inclusion* and ethnic interaction, which tends to result in the *erosion* of ethnic boundaries (Glazer 1997: 20).

Walter Wallace is therefore correct when he refers to multiculturalism as a “halfway house” or transition point toward ethnic dissolution (Wallace 1997: 153). Its practitioners, beginning with Jane Addams, probably

wished to retain ethnic diversity. Yet their support for the cosmopolitan imperatives of developing “international minds” and encouraging intermarriage, as well as their efforts to raise the socioeconomic standing of ethnic minorities, had the opposite effect. Thus, in the end, assimilation to a modernist, multiply-constituted *pastiche* logically proceeds from “soft” multiculturalism—largely as unintended consequence.

In the face of these developments, soft multiculturalism can offer little resistance. Moreover, cosmopolitan individualists themselves, with their *bricolage* of diverse identity choices, are not personally threatened by ethnic decline. Therefore, should intermarriage endanger the ethnic diversity of the United States, American multiculturalists would never criticize the former practice. Just as the pluralists of yesteryear expressed their admiration for multiethnic offspring like Al Smith or Fiorello LaGuardia, soft multiculturalists will swiftly praise the growth of the mixed-race population. In summary, it should be evident that expressive-individualist ideology, in both its universalist (“melting pot”) and cosmopolitan (“multiculturalism”) variants, tends to weaken ethnic bonds.

Expressive Individualism and the Decline of Ethnic Association

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, citing a typology first proposed by Don Handelman, identifies four degrees of ethnic incorporation: category, network, association, and community. According to this schema, ethnic incorporation strengthens as ethnic group members move beyond mere self-categorization and begin to network and form associations along ethnic lines (Eriksen 1993: 43–44). One of the principal effects of expressive individualism is to reverse the ethnic incorporation process and direct individuals toward privatized or transethnic social activity.

In the American case, ethnic association was an important form of activity for all groups. Among Anglo-Protestants, the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution and other hereditary societies directly served this function. More important, however, were fraternal societies like the Odd Fellows and Masons, and service clubs like the Rotary and the Lions. Kenneth Underwood’s study of Holyoke, Massachusetts, in the 1940s, for instance, found that the Rotary Club, though officially non-sectarian, counted only 15 Catholics among its 142 members—this in a community that was 80 percent Catholic (Underwood 1957: 236). Charles Anderson, writing in the late 1960s, remarked that while the main fraternal societies “usually have no formal Protestant ties . . . [they]

traditionally have been white Protestant strongholds” (Anderson 1970: 118–19).

Catholics and Jews, meanwhile, originally associated within their respective ethnic societies. The high point of ethnic association, however, was reached in 1914. From that point on, “All the institutions of ethnic culture weakened. Lodges declined, ethnic ceremonies and theaters faded, saloons closed, and in their churches and newspapers a younger generation of priests and editors began to encourage a greater use of English.” After World War II, ethnic neighborhoods became increasingly working class as more mobile white ethnics moved to the suburbs. Though integrated institutionally by Americanized Catholic churches, Democratic Party branches, and AFL-CIO locals, ethnic neighborhoods began to crumble substantially from the 1960s as working-class whites departed the city centers in a second wave of suburbanization (Higham 1999: 52–55).

In Protestant communities, changes were similarly in the offing. Robert Putnam has dramatically catalogued the decline in American connectedness, or “social capital” since the 1960s (Putnam 2000). In membership terms, Protestant-influenced fraternal societies have fared especially poorly: the Masons, to take a prominent case, have lost 39 percent of their membership since 1959, and heavy declines were also recorded for the Lions, Elks, Shriners, and Jaycees in the 1970s and 1980s (Putnam 1995a: 70; 1995b).

Symbolic Ethnicity

The erosion of ethnic organization in the United States indicates that, in addition to the waning of Anglo-Protestant communalism, ethnic organization *per se* is in decline in the United States. What researchers have begun to discover is that the nature of white ethnicity in the United States has, to borrow Handelman’s phraseology, shifted from group to category. Members of ethnic categories know themselves by their symbolic boundary markers, but they lack structural organization.

In the United States, the process of ethnic de-incorporation has proceeded beyond the “ethnic category” formulation, for, as Eriksen remarks, members of ethnic categories are at least taught about their ancestral origins and group narrative, and continue to base some of their interactions with others upon ethnic premises (Eriksen 1993: 42; Handelman 1977). However, it appears that for white Americans, the myth-symbol complex and group narrative that are standard fare for ethnic categories now serve

only as repositories from which a subset of symbols may be drawn. Moreover, these select symbols may be synthesized with American symbols and complemented by new creations in order to minimize friction between ethnic tradition and modern American lifestyles.

Herbert Gans has labeled this form of social behavior “symbolic ethnicity.” In his estimation, “Symbolic ethnicity can be expressed in a myriad of ways, but above all it is characterized by . . . a pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behaviour.” For example, Jews in the United States may choose not to attend services at the local synagogue except on occasion, they may no longer participate in Jewish occupational networks, their children may marry outside the group, and they may choose not to observe kosher customs (Gans 1979: 9; Zenner 1985: 123–124). These processes demonstrate that white Americans who are conscious of their ethnic origin manifest a lower degree of ethnic activity today than previously. This decrease in ethnic incorporation often leads to transethnic social action, which typically results in interethnic marriage, a key step on the road to what David Hollinger calls postethnicity.

Interethnic Marriage

The high rate of interethnic marriage in the United States is a relatively recent phenomenon. For example, a landmark study in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1940 demonstrated that intermarriage rates were remarkably low for many ethnic groups at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1900, New Haven’s Jews, Italians, and Poles were completely endogamous groups, and even the Irish (80 percent) and Germans (60 percent) tended to marry within the group (Herberg 1955: 45–46; R. Kennedy 1944: 332–333). According to Herman Lantz, parish records in “Coal Town,” West Virginia, indicated a very low rate of interethnic marriage in the 1950s, and he discovered that many native-born Anglo-Protestants were strongly against the practice. One working-class Anglo-Protestant woman, when asked about intermarriage, replied: “The feeling was strong against intermarriage among the Americans. I think they [Anglo-Protestants] just preferred our own breed of people.”

Other respondents in Coal Town stressed that the Catholicism of the European immigrants was the biggest barrier (Lantz 1958: 57–58). Similarly, in the Muncie, Indiana, of the mid-1920s and 30s, the Lynds found that religion was a key factor: Catholics and Protestants tended to shun

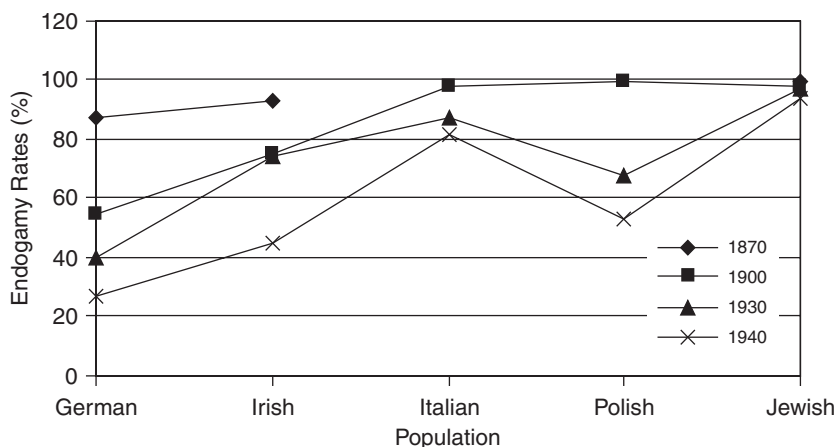


Figure 9.10. Endogamy rates, New Haven, CT, 1870–1940 (Kennedy 1944: 335).

intermarriage with each other (Lynd and Lynd 1937: 114). In fact, nationwide, the religious census of 1957 showed 91 percent of Protestants to be endogamously married (Anderson 1970: 132–134).

Despite strong proscriptions against interethnic marriage, it began to occur after 1900, although the religious boundaries between Catholicism and Protestantism remained largely intact (Herberg 1955: 30). Thus in New Haven in 1900, older groups like the Germans and Irish started to lose their high rates of endogamy, and 40 years later, even Southern and Eastern European groups began to follow suit (Figure 9.10).

The melting pattern evident in New Haven by World War II proved a harbinger of things to come. Large differences in the proportion of mixed-ancestry individuals between younger and older age cohorts indicates that interethnic marriage was becoming increasingly prevalent by mid-century.

Interethnic Marriage in the Contemporary United States

“We’re all Italian around here, aren’t we, Mrs. O’Brien?” This humorous anecdote was related by an Italian-American social scientist being led on a tour of an “all-Italian” section of Philadelphia, a city whose largest ethnic group in 1980 was the “multiple-ancestry” category. Philadelphia is not unique in this regard (Yancey et al. 1985: 46). Among whites in 1980,

there was no major group in which a majority of marriages took place within the ethnic (Lieberson and Waters 1988: 173). The result is an increasingly mixed population.

For example, among those of Italian origin in 1980, 43 percent were of multiple ancestry. More significant is the diachronic perspective: just 5.9 percent of those over 65 years of age are of mixed ancestry as against 81.5 percent of those under five years of age (see Figure 9.11). For Richard Alba, “Italian Americans are on the verge of the twilight of ethnicity,” poised to join a larger Euro-American group and maintaining only a weakened, symbolic identification with Italian ethnicity (Alba 1985a: 152).

For Northern/Western European groups, those of mixed ancestry comprise an even larger majority of the total. Figure 9.12 illustrates the trend, showing that “older” groups like the English, Germans, or Irish have a greater proportion of mixed-ancestry individuals than newer arrivals like the Italians or Greeks.¹⁵ Among the Irish, for instance, only 25.7 percent were of single ethnicity in 1980, and, among older groups like the English, the numbers are not only low but are considered to be underestimated due to the unreliability of responses. On this note, Stanley Lieberson writes: “Little more than half of the respondents giving English, Scottish and Welsh in 1971 reported a similar response a year later. Thus inconsistency varies in a systematic way: the older stock white populations

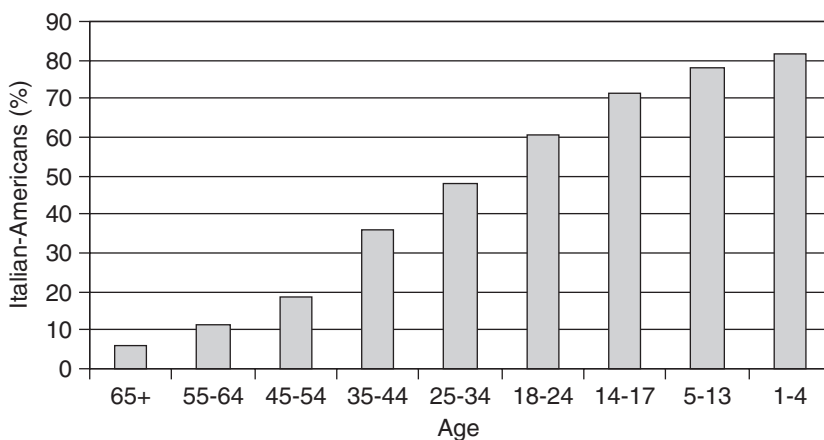


Figure 9.11. Percentage of Italian-Americans of mixed ancestry, by age group, 1980 (Battistella 1989).

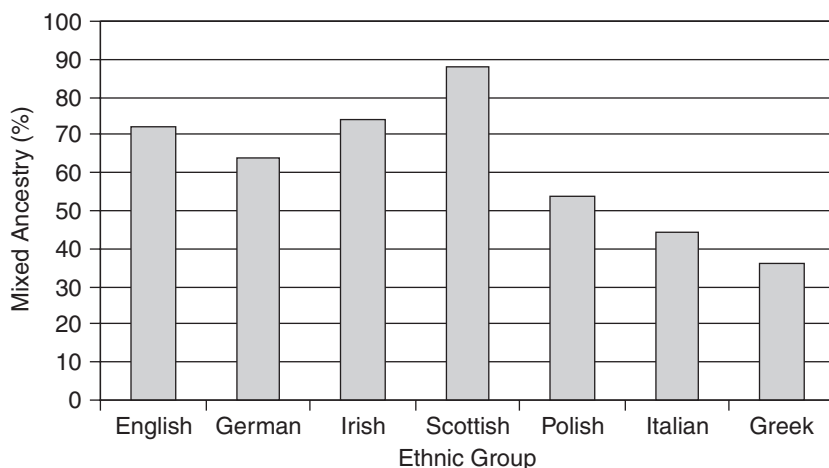


Figure 9.12. Percentage of mixed ancestry, by ethnic group, 1980 (Lieberson and Waters 1988: 45).

from Northwestern Europe, containing substantial components with many generations of residence in the United States, have much lower levels of consistency than either blacks or whites from relatively more recent sources of immigration such as Italians or Poles” (Lieberson 1985: 175).

Interracial Marriage

Recent figures showing a marked increase in marriage across ethnic lines can be extended to patterns of interracial marriage. Postwar data shows that the proportion of interracial marriages began to increase slowly after World War II, partly as a consequence of a 1967 Supreme Court decision striking down antimiscegenation legislation in 16 states. Nationwide, in 1960, just 0.12 percent of married couples were interracially married¹⁶ (Kitchen 1993: 101; Furlong 1972: 113; Burma 1972: 132). By 1995, this had changed: the census recorded that 2.5 percent of marriages crossed a racial boundary (see Figure 9.13). This national rate conceals great differences by racial group. Over half of Native Americans and Japanese Americans married outside their group while African Americans remained highly endogamous. Hispanic–white intermarriage is significant

but lower than that between whites and Asians (Lieberson and Waters 1988: 228–232; Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan 1990; Kitchen 1993: 124; Spickard 1989).

This intermarriage is having predictable consequences for the nation's ethnic composition. The year 2000 census, in an unprecedented and controversial move, allowed respondents to tick more than one racial background. The results show that, like golf star Tiger Woods, fully 2.4 percent of Americans are now of multiracial origin, a figure several times higher in diverse states like California. Demographer Barry Edmonston projects that this figure will reach 21 percent of the population nationwide by 2050, with higher rates projected for younger cohorts and for those in high-immigration states (U.S. Census 2001a; Stanfield 1997).

The growth of Hispanic and Asian populations in the United States has undoubtedly helped to spur the increase in transracial nuptials noted above. However, the change in dominant group attitudes toward interracial marriage between 1950 and 1980, which we reviewed in Chapter 8, also appears to be a significant factor (Spickard 1989). A recent test of this thesis, linking intermarriage data from the 1990 census with attitudinal data from the 1990 General Social Survey, showed that “overall . . . localities with more positive [white] attitudes towards minorities” recorded higher interracial marriage rates (Heron 1997: 11).

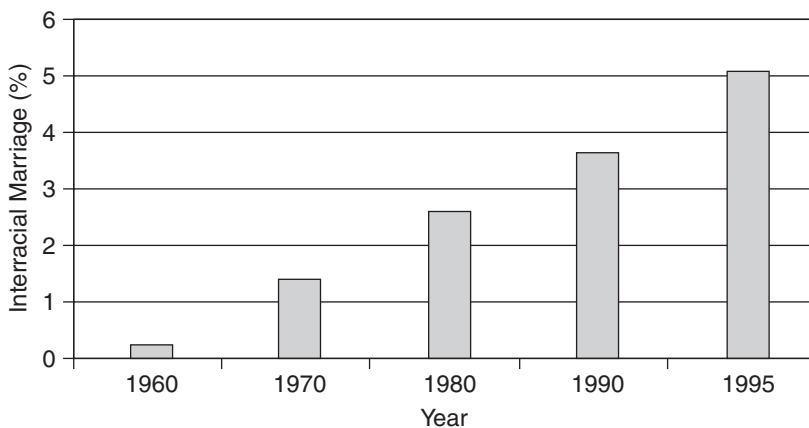


Figure 9.13. Interracial marriage in the United States, 1960–1995 (Furlong 1972: 113; U.S. Census 1996, no. 62).

Exoticism and Ethnic Choice

Rising rates of interracial and interethnic marriage and the increasing incidence of inconsistent or mixed-ancestry responses to the census provide us with evidence that ethnicity's influence over primary group interaction, especially among the native-born, is in decline. The principal reason for this recent blurring of ethnic boundaries is the institutionalization of an ethos that calls upon individuals to transcend communal commitments in pursuit of a chosen self.

Another way in which expressive individualism affects ethnicity concerns its companion, the modernist aesthetic, which values the new and different. Interestingly, in line with the ethos of modernism, white Americans have tended to identify themselves with ethnic groups whose culture differs the most from the "bland American" norm (Crispino 1980: 102; Van Esterik 1982: 217; Waters 1992: 89). Peter Schrag was one of the first to pinpoint this new phenomenon: "the option of becoming a WASP is no longer as attractive as remaining a hyphenated Pole or Italian," remarked Schrag in 1973. "A lot of third-generation Americans, moreover, are trying to reclaim the religious and ethnic affiliations which their fathers tried to disown a generation ago . . . even for those who live in the spirit of the melting pot, the WASP option remains thinkable only in the obsolescent terms of another age" (Schrag 1973: 154). Schrag's observations are confirmed by the statistical decline in the esteem accorded British ancestry between 1926 and 1977¹⁷ (Waters 1990: 83).

The trend toward diminished Anglo-Protestant conformity continues to the present day—so much so that Italian appears to be the most popular ethnic "option" exercised by multiple-ancestry individuals. For example, among those of Italian-Scottish mixture who simplified their ancestry response on the 1980 U.S. census, Italian was chosen 3 to 1 over Scottish. English remains more popular, but even here, Italian predominates 3 to 2 (Waters 1990: 32–35). Novelty and experiential richness, factors related to expressive individualism, were major reasons cited by respondents for favoring Italian as an ancestry choice (Waters 1990: 142–143). Perhaps further research in this area might examine whether the rate of anglicization of non-British surnames has declined in the past 50 years in response to the same forces.

Voluntary Ethnicity

The aforementioned trends point to a decline in Anglo-Protestant conformity. Even so, symbolic ethnicity may represent a less radical form of ethnic decline than voluntary ethnicity. Voluntary, or optional, ethnicity describes a situation in which individuals of mixed ancestry choose to play different ethnic roles in different social situations (Pieterse 1997: 380–381). “Passing” and ethnic entrepreneurialism are two forms of this activity. All of this suggests that the level of ethnic commitment¹⁸ for mixed-ancestry individuals is less complete than for single-ancestry individuals. In other words, ethnically inspired social activity will occur over a narrower spectrum of activities in the individual’s lifeworld (White and Burke 1987: 314–315).

Postethnicity

The blending of ancestries through interethnic marriage, coupled with the transformation of ethnicity into a symbolic element of personal lifestyle, has led not only to symbolic and voluntary ethnicity, but also to the growth of *postethnic* feeling (Hollinger 1995: 39–47). Used here, the term *postethnic* refers to the phenomenon of individuals whose ethnic background is unknown, or at the very least, is of little or no importance as a determinant of their social action. One indication of this is the 10.7 percent of Americans surveyed in the General Social Surveys of 1972–1980 who could not name any ancestries at all, the nearly 3 percent who merely replied “American,” or the one-third inconsistency rate obtained in a follow-up questionnaire undertaken a year after the 1972 survey (Lieberman 1985: 172–174). A similar degree of fluidity and inconsistency has recently been reported in ethnographic research conducted in suburban California (Waters 1990: 48).

Recent research also backs up Gans’s contention that ethnic sentiment wanes as succeeding generations draw on an increasingly thin repertoire of ethnic myths and symbols from a proliferating number of traditions (Gans 1994: 579–580). Richard Alba’s research in the Capital Region of upstate New York, for instance, found that the importance of ethnic identity to an individual declines with the number of ancestries possessed and with the number of generations lived in the United States. “Complexity probably does not serve well the purpose of instilling an ethnic identity that is more than superficial,” states Alba. “In the long run, intermarriage

does diminish ethnic identity” (Alba 1990: 68, 205–206, emphasis added). The end result of such a process, as this theory would predict, is culturally modernistic: an individual chooses symbols from a cosmopolitan array of both ethnic and lifestyle options to create his or her authentic self. Theoretically speaking, a nation of symbolic ethnic “samplers” represents the consummation of the twin traditions of universalist and cosmopolitan individualism, in which ethnicity has been completely transcended by the project of the self.

American Religion: A Comparative Case

Ethnicity and religion are functionally related because both provide historical narratives, myth-symbol complexes, and collective identities to their membership. Indeed, religion is often a symbol of ethnicity, and ethnicity often underpins religious denominationalism (Niebuhr [1929] 1987: 106–108; Roof and McKinney 1987: 117; P. Smith 1991: 34). Therefore, America’s religious profile would be expected to manifest many of the same features as its ethnic profile. Not surprisingly, this is precisely the case.

Take the fact that, by 1980, less than half (43 percent) of American adults responding to a Gallup survey replied that they had always been members of the same denomination. Generally speaking, Protestants switch more than Catholics or Jews, and Protestant denominations typically lose 40 percent of their membership through this process (Roof and McKinney 1987: 165). Individual liberty has penetrated American religion in other ways: for instance, those claiming membership in a church or synagogue fell from 76 percent to 65 percent between 1947 and 1988.

Meanwhile, those with no religious affiliation grew from 3 percent, in the turn-of-the-century cohort, to 13 percent of the 1958–1965 cohort (Roof and McKinney 1987: 236). In addition, 76 percent of church members in 1978 endorsed the following principle: “an individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any churches or synagogues” (Roof and McKinney 1987: 56). Robert Bellah describes this phenomenon as “Sheilism,” named after a respondent who adheres to no particular religious creed, but instead posits the existence of her own private, agnostic faith (Bellah [1985] 1996: 221). Some also consider religious television to be an indication of religious privatism, though this is a matter of dispute among sociologists of religion¹⁹ (Wuthnow 1989: 116–136).

As these trends might suggest, interreligious marriage is commonplace in contemporary America. Considered a pillar of American social reality until the 1970s, religious endogamy has faded considerably since then, washing away the tripartite walls of Herberg's "triple melting pot" thesis.²⁰ In 1950, Ruby Kennedy found that Protestant in-marriage was 70 percent in New Haven, though Protestants formed just 20 percent of the population (Kennedy 1952). Even in 1967, Charles Anderson's research showed that 77 percent of Protestants (who made up 35 percent of the population) in "Catholic City" married their co-religionists, while 63 percent of Catholics in "Protestant City" married endogamously (Anderson 1970: 134). Recent census research suggests that religion is a more important factor than ethnicity in determining the choice of a mate, but this data also demonstrates that roughly half of young Jews and Catholics marry outside their faith. Since 88 percent of Catholics and 94 percent of Jews married within their faith in 1957, the new data effectively demonstrates that major changes have occurred in the last 40 years (Alba 1990: 14–15; Lieberson and Waters 1988: 234–235; Greeley 1972: 169).

By the 1960s, religious switching, religious intermarriage, and declining religiosity were complemented by the growing disjunction between ethnicity and religion, an event symbolized by the merging of once-distinct ethnic denominations (Roof and McKinney 1987: 126). Another religious pattern that approximates developments in the field of ethnicity is symbolic religiosity. This phenomenon manifests itself in the disaggregation of the symbolic core of religious *mythomoteurs*. Not content to choose between denominations, individuals now want to choose among the symbols and rituals of a particular religion(s) to construct more authentic self-identities. Seen in this way, religious symbols become merely an addition to the "Diderot unity" of individual lifestyle choices²¹ (McCracken 1988: 119, 123–124).

Such activity also seeks to avoid the more onerous obligations imposed by a complete set of religious practices by detaching religious symbols from their context and adapting them to more privatized settings (Gans 1994: 585). In summary, American religion manifests the same privatizing tendencies that are found in American ethnicity: growing religious intermarriage, symbolic religiosity, and postreligiosity.

In previous chapters, I mapped the trajectory of egalitarianism and expressive individualism in the United States and saw how these forces came

to be institutionalized, greatly affecting the attitudes of white Anglo-Protestants toward other ethnics. In this section, egalitarianism and expressive individualism are shown to have effects that patently go beyond opinion, cutting to the core of the *structures* of American ethnicity. First, WASP structural dominance has markedly declined under the pressure of egalitarian forces. Second, ethnic boundaries have loosened as a result of expressive individualism.

In combination, these post-1945 developments give the lie to conventional assumptions that the United States has evolved along an Anglo-conformist—melting pot—multiculturalist trajectory. Instead, largely the reverse is evident: a shift, beginning after World War II, from a *dominant-ethnic* pattern—consisting of a “vertical mosaic” of tightly bounded ethnic groups dominated by Anglo-Protestants—to a *liberal-egalitarian* pattern in which ethnic hierarchies are largely flattened²² and ethnic boundaries considerably relaxed. Large-scale immigration since 1970 and increased minority assertiveness may convey an impression of multicultural vitality, but beneath this veneer lies a modernity whose acids are more corrosive of ethnicity than ever before. Of course, the biggest losers of all have been WASPs, whose decline, on all fronts, may be considered almost terminal. A white, English-speaking, “Anglo” category remains, but, as we will discover in the next chapter, this identity retains its salience and boundedness primarily among a minority of marginalized whites.²³

Cultural Modernization: Making Sense of Anglo-America's Demise

Dominant ethnicity has declined substantially in America. Two factors have been responsible: expressive individualism and cultural egalitarianism. These social forces share Enlightenment origins but generally operate independently. The ideology of equality seeks to level hierarchies of status, power, and wealth between groups, thereby attacking the *dominant* nature of dominant ethnicity. Individual liberty, in its positive form,¹ tends to corrode the *ethnic* dimension of dominant ethnicity—treating ethnic communalism as an obstacle to the realization of the authentic individual self. This does not, however, prevent expressive individualists from exploring ethnic cultures *exotic* to their own experience, which are celebrated—from the standpoint of the cosmopolitan² outsider—as resources for the construction of self. “Exile is in fashion,” notes Ian Buruma. Eva Hoffmann adds that in postmodernity, we have come to value the qualities that exile demands, namely, “dislocation, disorientation, self-division. . . . Within this framework, exile becomes, well, sexy, glamorous, interesting” (Buruma 2001: 23). The argument may be graphically portrayed as shown in Figure 10.1.

Cultural Modernization

The first point to notice about this liberal-egalitarian thesis is that it posits a theory of *cultural modernization*, from ethnic to transethnic identity. All of the classical social theorists—notably, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim—concerned themselves with modernization but tended to reduce their explanations to processes of rationalization and functional differentiation.³ Most postwar and contemporary social theorists have voiced similar ideas (see Riesman et al. 1950: 17–18; Adorno 1990: 275–282; Habermas 1990: 346–347; Beck 1992: 217–218; Giddens 1990: 38–39). For, as

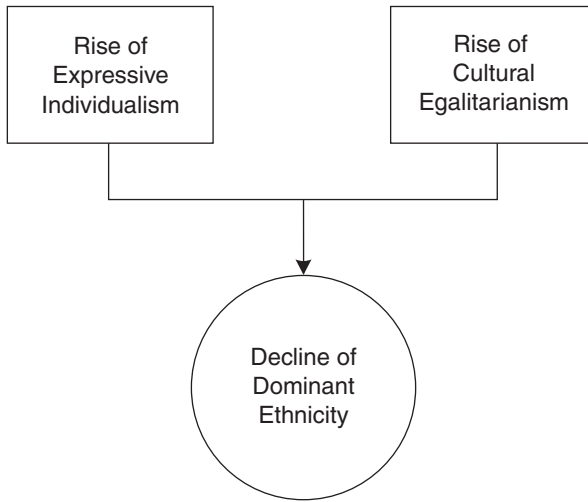


Figure 10.1. Theoretical perspective.

Karl Mannheim commented, “Most attempts to describe the general development of modern thought tend to pay exclusive attention to the growth of rationalism. The result is a picture quite incompatible with historical facts and the world as we know it”²⁴ (Mannheim 1957, quoted in Campbell [1987] 1989). In this work, I have attempted to demonstrate that change in the realm of ideas has been the principal source of social power.

Thus the necessary cause of change must be traced to the dynamics of expressive individualism (i.e., positive liberalism) and egalitarianism, whose evolution and power have been charted by Charles Taylor and Robert Bellah, among others (Tocqueville [1835] (1994), I: 6–7; Marshall 1950; Taylor 1989, 1992; Bellah [1985] 1996). The most complete expression of these ideas in grand theoretical form appears with Daniel Bell’s notion of the three “axial principles” of modernity: *rationality* in the economic sector, *equality* in the polity, and antinomian *individualism* in the culture (Bell 1973: 115). Here, in addition to rationality, are two independent sources of modernizing change: equality and expressive individualism. One corrective to Bell’s brilliant formulation remains to be inserted—namely, that rationality, equality, and individualism are not strictly tied to the structural sectors that Bell outlines but are instead as-

pects of social relationships in all three sectors. Thus egalitarianism is not merely to play in the polity but influences the culture as well.

To reiterate: Bell, Taylor, Bellah, and Tocqueville all stress the central role of extrarational factors in the modernization process (see Figure 10.2). Expressive individualism and cultural egalitarianism are the principal drivers of cultural changes that lead away from segmental (“blood-soil”) self-conceptions to more differentiated, “virtual” forms of identification. In our example, the development of cultural equality and expressive individuality led to the decline of dominant ethnicity in the United States.

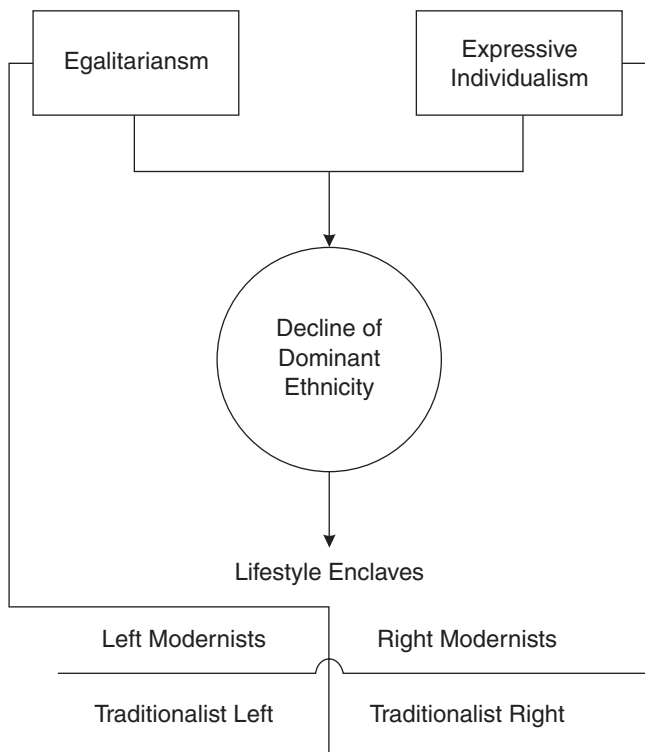


Figure 10.2. The cultural modernization paradigm.

Social Action

Cultural modernization explains why social change occurs, but our argument also bears theoretically on the question of *how* change takes place. This necessarily involves social actors, for all social forces are shaped by individuals and groups, who in turn are influenced by the social forces they create (Coleman 1986: 346–347; Giddens 1984: 281–282). The principal actors in this case may be considered to be, with post-Marxist modifications,⁵ what Antonio Gramsci calls “organic intellectuals”—creators of ideologies who, unlike their traditionalist counterparts, seek to make a sharp break with the past. These thinkers institutionalize their worldview by capturing the loci inhabited by “traditional intellectuals”—the individuals responsible for the smooth transfer of hegemonic ideology from generation to generation. Should the organic intellectuals succeed, they can begin the process of inaugurating a new form of hegemony based on nontraditional ideas (Swingewood 1984: 211; Gramsci 1971: 6–7).

When this happens, the newly institutionalized value set begins to structure the parameters of status competition (Stinchcombe 1968: 117–118). In the American case, for example, a vanguard of organic liberal-egalitarians like John Dewey and Jane Addams were able to influence the opinions of America’s “traditional intellectuals,” the Protestant clerical elite, by 1920. Somewhat later, during the 1920s, the expressive-individualist avant-garde, centered in New York, succeeded in drawing a wider circle of young, urban cultural intermediaries: journalists, artists, designers, writers, and media producers, to its banner. In the 1930s, both streams of thought attained hegemony among educators (especially at the top American universities), and, by the 1940s and 1950s, this liberal force proceeded to capture the hearts and minds of the upper federal bureaucracy, judiciary, and executive. It was also in this period that “political correctness” on the race issue emerged as a hegemonic norm in “emancipated” circles (Riesman et al. 1950: 259, 280).

Expansion of the federal government and military in the 1930s and 1940s, as well as the national television media and higher education (from the 1960s), endowed these organic ideas with social force, at which point they achieved the degree of institutionalization described above. By the 1960s, even Congress had joined in the chorus of voices working to end Anglo-Protestant hegemony. In under 50 years, both cultural egalitarianism and expressive individualism had become hegemonic, replacing Anglo-Protestantism as the dominant national ideology.

In order to generalize from this story, the decline of Anglo-Protestantism in the United States must be placed in the context of a more general decline of British Protestant ethnic hegemony (Bruce 1998). In Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and Canada, for example, the cultural hegemony of the WASP population has waned in parallel with American developments. The synchronous decline of sectarianism in Britain, Canada, and the United States is especially striking. Take the case of the Canadian Orange Order. This fraternal association, which promoted Protestantism and the British connection, was as prominent in English Canada in 1900 as in Northern Ireland (IGCW 1903). When membership turnover is taken into account, close to a third of English-speaking Canadian males passed through the organization between 1870 and 1920. Numerous prime ministers of Canada, provincial premiers, and Toronto mayors were members into the 1950s, all of which makes the organization's sharp decline in two waves (post-1920 and post-1960) remarkable (Houston and Smyth 1980).

The northwest of England evinces a similar pattern: sectarianism began to lose its appeal to the upper middle classes by 1900 (Ingram 1988). Liverpool's Protestant working class continued to support its community's hegemony over the substantial Irish-Catholic minority, but over time, the Orange Order faded, with sectarian politics in terminal decline by 1970 (Waller 1981). A similar pattern characterizes Scotland, where an upsurge of anti-immigrant Protestant ethnic politics in the 1920s and 1930s was followed by a decline to the point, by the 1970s, that the Unionist Party and Protestant religion had a limited impact on the political landscape (McCrone 1992: 159).

Aesthetic and Ethical Modes of Action

Expressive individualism, cultural egalitarianism, and dominant ethnicity express themselves in both ethical and aesthetic forms. As Serge Moscovici notes, ethical values are often symbolically transfigured into aesthetic forms that allow complex ethical messages to be more readily absorbed and emotionally resonant (Moscovici 1984: 38–39). Charles Taylor has described this process as a symbiotic “epiphany” of the ethical and aesthetic (Taylor 1989: 419). In this manner, the Protestant church and Anglo-Saxon pioneer have served as aesthetic exemplars of American dominant ethnic values. On the other hand, American egalitarians have often chosen simple living and working-class attire as symbols of their

solidarity with the oppressed, while the expressive-individualist avant-garde has expressed itself through modern art and unconventional lifestyles (Ewen 1982: 214; Abrahams 1986: 8–9).

My argument therefore rests on both aesthetic and ethical social action. Aesthetic action, taking the form of a symbolic contest between dominant ethnic and liberal forms, constitutes one arm of this paradigm. Dominant ethnicity manifests itself as the Anglo-American myth-symbol complex, while the ethics of expressive individualism and egalitarianism are carried forth in the form of an avant-garde, “left-modernist” social movement, whereby “left” symbolism stands for equality and “modernism” expresses individuality. Postmodernist writers touch on many of these strands but erect a misleadingly conservative “modern” straw man which they claim to have transcended. In fact, the American case demonstrates that cultural transgression was a continuous theme throughout the twentieth century. On this reading, the recent advent of postmodernism is little more than the latest instantiation of modernism, which is constantly in the process of negating itself in the pursuit of novelty, difference, and individuation (Waters 1996: 139; Huyssen 1990: 362). This perspective chimes well with those that perceive our condition to be one of advanced modernity rather than postmodernity (Bell 1980; Featherstone 1991: 8; Giddens 1991: 27–29).

A “Conflict Functionalist” Approach

The three social forces—liberalism, egalitarianism, and dominant ethnicity—are complex factors. All tend to possess an internal algorithmic sequence whose unfolding “logic” is, to a degree, independent of other changes in the social environment. The logical implications, practical strategies, and popular dissemination of new ideas take time to develop. New ideas grow by interacting with older ones and embedding themselves in new institutions and social situations. It is only with this developmental paradigm in mind that we can understand Newton’s comment that he had been able to see further than others only by standing on the shoulders of giants. In the same cumulative way, the apostles of cosmopolitan Americanism only gradually broadened the frontiers of their worldview—a process that took generations and was forged in interaction with new immigrants.

This is not a return to functionalism. First, liberty, equality, and dominant ethnicity are forces that do not transcend history: they were created

in time and may be destroyed. Second, their operation may be observed. Constitutions and edicts, art and architecture, literature and folk belief—all contain the algorithmic “programs” that allow dominant ethnicity, individualism, and egalitarianism to reflexively respond to the environment. Third, these operators do not seamlessly interact but rather are *constantly in conflict* with each other.

Obviously, there is no necessary evolutionary *telos* for any of these forces. Ethnicity theorists are deeply divided between “revivalists” and “evolutionists.” The revivalists consider ethnicity to be a persistent social force, while the evolutionists treat it as a transitory phenomenon thrown up by improved communication systems between smaller clan units that will disappear with the extension of those communication systems beyond the confines of the ethnic.⁶ I cleave to neither approach. Dominant ethnicity in the United States has declined since 1925, but it has not disappeared and may indeed revive. A similar state of affairs holds with respect to expressive individualism and cultural egalitarianism. No irreversible direction of human evolution should be deduced from the fact that certain changes have occurred over the past 50 to 100 years.

The Rationality Argument: A Reconsideration

A number of alternative hypotheses would doubtless be proposed to explain the chain of events catalogued in this book. The “push-pull” analogy has been a commonplace in immigration and ethnic studies for decades. In brief, this rationalist theory asserts that excess demand for labor in the United States and excess supply in particular source regions led to mass immigration and demographic change in the American population. Subsequently, the rising non-WASP population, in looking out for its rational interests, used its newfound demographic weight to wrench power away from the dominant group.

There is some merit to this argument. Business (“pull”) interests were incredibly powerful determinants of federal government policy, particularly in the nineteenth century, ensuring that immigration continued to flow unchecked into the United States. “Push” factors also played a role insofar as northwestern Europe began producing proportionately fewer emigrants by 1900. Surely, however, many Asians in 1900 were unsuccessfully “pushing” for access to the United States. In both the 1880s and early twentieth century, the United States erected barriers to immigration based on ethnic criteria at a time when labor demand (“pull”) was high.

On the other hand, 40 years later, in the midst of a more mature, less labor-intensive economy, the gates were reopened. This defies the rationality argument.

Of similar importance, the sociopolitical situation of *both* new immigrants and black Americans began to improve in a roughly parallel trajectory (albeit from different base levels) after World War II. What caused this change? Under a push-pull scenario, it is difficult to explain why blacks, a long-standing subordinate group, should improve their political status roughly in step with Catholics, a subaltern group of more recent provenance. Closer analysis of this march to power reveals that the most significant explanation for the shift is that the dominant group relaxed its hegemonic grip and generated its own internal momentum for reform. This emboldened ethnic minorities, producing a more activist resistance that created powerful synergies with WASP liberals, resulting in ethnic and racial justice.

Naturally, the rising rate of immigrant naturalization, education, and voting—a power harnessed by Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal Democrats, played a role in eroding WASP hegemony. The efforts of a resurgent CIO, which reached out to Southern/Eastern Europeans in the 1930s in a way the declining AFL never did, was vital. So too was the Irish-dominated Catholic Church, which along with the CIO and local Democratic machine, served as the chief avenues of national integration for many Catholic Americans. Events like World War II, the cold war, the civil rights struggle, and the Vietnam conflict were vital in catalyzing and mobilizing mass opposition to the ethnic definition of the American nation. All of this would suggest that mass mobilization of minorities from “below,” coupled with some key events, drove social change (Gerstle 2001; Higham 1999).

Events and mass movements evoke an emotional intensity that incremental changes do not and hence provide tempting explanations for change. Indeed, they are very important to our story. But are they the primary source of dynamism? Comparative and counterfactual analysis can help us evaluate this prospect. Consider American “sister” societies like Australia, Canada, and Britain. In these nations, as in most of Western Europe, similar “diversifying” changes (i.e., “color-blind” immigration, multiculturalism) occurred in step with those in the United States. This occurred in the absence of significant ethnic constituencies with an interest in multiculturalism and open immigration.⁷

One would hasten to add that Vietnam, the civil rights movement, and

the need to act as a cold war exemplar were hardly the engines of domestic policy change in these societies. On the other hand, all of these nations drew upon the same reservoir of liberal ideas derived from the Western experience: ideas that germinated on both sides of the Atlantic and followed broadly similar evolutionary trajectories. This explains why the shift from ethnic to civic nationalism is an emphatically Western phenomenon that has little resonance even in developed non-Western societies like Estonia, Japan, Singapore, or Kuwait (Joppke 1999).

Several writers have remarked that democracy, by facilitating majority rule, often promotes dominant-group aspirations and does not ensure a liberal regime of ethnic justice. More to the point, many “liberal” policies actually emerge outside the democratic arena from the committed action of elites⁸ (Zakaria 1997: 28, 35, 38; Mann 1995: 44–64; Marshall [1950] 1992). In the next section, I consider a classic example of this liberal activism to highlight the elites’ salient role in prompting Anglo-American ethnic decline.

The Impact of the Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court has a mandate to interpret the American Constitution and thereby the power to challenge legislation created at the national or state level. Though the U.S. Congress can contain the Supreme Court’s power, this requires a unanimity of opinion in the executive and Congress that is often difficult to achieve. As a result, the Supreme Court can act as a liberal, extrademocratic body, to protect or advance the rights of minorities against the will of the dominant-ethnic group.

The Supreme Court and Racial Equality

This is precisely what happened after 1950. A series of important cases during this period helped to undercut many of the privileges of Anglo-Protestant Americans, rendering the United States a more egalitarian and loose-bounded society. The pattern of Court decisions on the cultural front between 1889 and World War II was one of quiescence. At the turn of the twentieth century, for instance, the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* (1889) upheld the constitutionality of all immigration restrictions, including Asian exclusion. Several years later, the Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) upheld the right of state au-

thorities to segregate black and white public facilities (Bell 1997: 599). Slowly, however, the tide began to turn, albeit modestly, with decisions like *Gaines v. Canada* (1938), which watered down the *Plessy* provisions, and *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), which addressed voting inequities between blacks and whites. Meanwhile, the executive and the Justice Department launched a series of initiatives in the 1940s that desegregated federal institutions such as the armed forces and strove to ensure fair employment practices (D. King 1998a: 22, 41; Baltzell 1964: 279).

The case that established the judiciary as a weapon of egalitarian activism was *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which outlawed the practice of racial segregation in all public facilities. This case provides an early example of how elite opinion can influence public policy and engineer dominant-ethnic (or racial) change. Presided over by the more liberal-minded Court of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the 1954 decision invoked the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment to desegregate and empower blacks (Mendelson 1972: 1227; Ross 1997: 94). From 1964 onward, judicial activism became an established tool of progressive racial policy. Legislation ordering desegregation became more explicit from this point onward, and the Court declared state antimiscegenation statutes illegal. Later, it took steps to rectify inequality of outcome by upholding the principle of affirmative action (Ross 1997: 264; Canon, Schousen, and Sellers 1994: 24).

Reapportionment, Redistricting, Gerrymandering, and the Supreme Court

A dominant group may use numerous techniques to maintain political power over a nation-state. In nineteenth-century America, for instance, overtly discriminatory suffrage legislation prevented nonproperty holders, women, and racial minorities, at one time or another, from accessing the levers of power. After the Civil War, blacks and new immigrants were legally entitled to vote, but numerous obstacles lay in their path. In the post-Reconstruction South, literacy tests, intimidation, and poll taxes were the favored means of keeping blacks at bay (Butler and Cain 1992: 29). In the North, however, the voice of Catholics and immigrant-stock Americans was curtailed by more subtle tactics—malapportionment, districting, and gerrymandering—which ensured that Anglo-Protestant rural districts held the lion's share of power in Congress between 1910 and 1964 (Erikson 1972; Eagles 1990).

Into this breach stepped the newly activist Supreme Court. Court activism is by no means new in liberal English-speaking societies, but the U.S. Supreme Court's record in reapportionment cases had, up until the early 1960s, been unequivocal: redistricting was considered a matter outside the Court's jurisdiction. Precedents in this regard had been set in the *Wood v. Brown* (1932) and *Colegrove v. Green* (1946) cases. In the words of Justice Felix Frankfurter, speaking for the majority in the 4–3 decision of 1946: “[The question of redistricting is of] a peculiarly political nature and therefore not meant for judicial interpretation. . . . Courts ought not to enter this political thicket” (Butler and Cain 1992: 26–27).

Despite this setback, the winds of change began to blow in favor of congressional redistricting when Justices Frankfurter, Stanley Reed, Harold Burton, and Sherman Minton were gradually replaced, in the 1950s, by Justices Arthur Goldberg, Potter Stewart, William Brennan, and Byron White (Mendelson 1972: 1227). This change in personnel allowed more liberal opinions to hold sway in the landmark decision in *Baker v. Carr* (1962). This case established that unequal-population districts violated the Equal Protection Clause. In 1964, *the Wesberry v. Sanders* and *Reynolds v. Sims* cases established that the standard for equal protection would require nothing less than complete equal-population redistricting. States were granted just a short period to comply with the new Court order—which mandated the redistricting of both state and national districts (Butler and Cain 1992: 27–29; Rush 1993: 11–13).

Results of Redistricting

Redistricting immediately cut down on the degree to which the populations of congressional districts deviated from the norm (see Figure 10.3). This led to a noticeable drop in the number of rural representatives and a concomitant rise in metropolitan (urban and suburban) representation (see Figure 10.4). In ethnic terms, the changes were no less dramatic: Jews, Catholics, and blacks all gained substantially as seats were reapportioned in favor of the metropolitan population (Ornstein et al. 1994: 34–35, 38–39).

Of similar importance is the decline of Protestant (particularly rural southern) influence on House committees and subcommittees (see Figure 10.5). Previously, southern representatives and their northern Republican allies could unite in defense of cultural policies that ran along traditional, Anglo-Protestant lines. Now, metropolitan congressmen from outside the

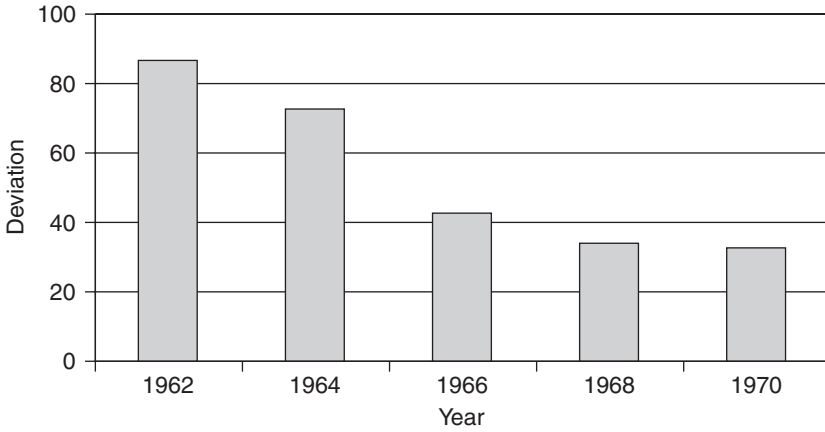


Figure 10.3. Standard deviation of Northern District population (000s) (Erikson 1972: 1235).

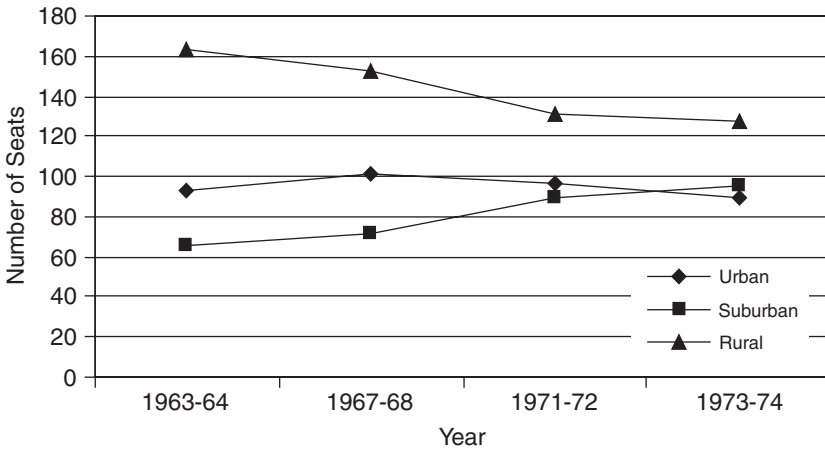


Figure 10.4. Seats in House of Representatives, by geographic type, 1963–1974 (Schwab 1988: 20).

South, a considerable portion of which were not Protestant, controlled most of the committee and subcommittee chairs that determine the fate of over 90 percent of federal bills (Schwab 1988: 143–146).

The Supreme Court provides a conduit for liberal and egalitarian ideas to shape policy, shielded from the democratic pressures of the legislature and executive. We have already seen how Court action broke the power of a bipartisan “conservative coalition” of Anglo-Protestant rural representatives by ordering House redistricting. These moves in turn facilitated the passing of more liberal legislation on civil rights and immigration in the late 1960s and led to a more equitable distribution of power between dominant and subaltern ethnic groups.

More recently, the egalitarian logic of Supreme Court decisions has come full circle, changing the terms of reference of redistricting from “one person-one vote” to collective rights. This time, however, instead of championing the collective rights of rural America (on behalf of the ethnic majority), the Court has attempted to advance the collective rights of ethnic minorities. Specifically, the *Thornburg v. Gingles* (1986) decision held that a minority group can claim a “discriminatory effect” if “its preferred candidates are usually defeated as a result of bloc voting by a white majority” (Canon, Schousen, and Sellers 1994: 24). In combination with the 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act, these provisions pro-

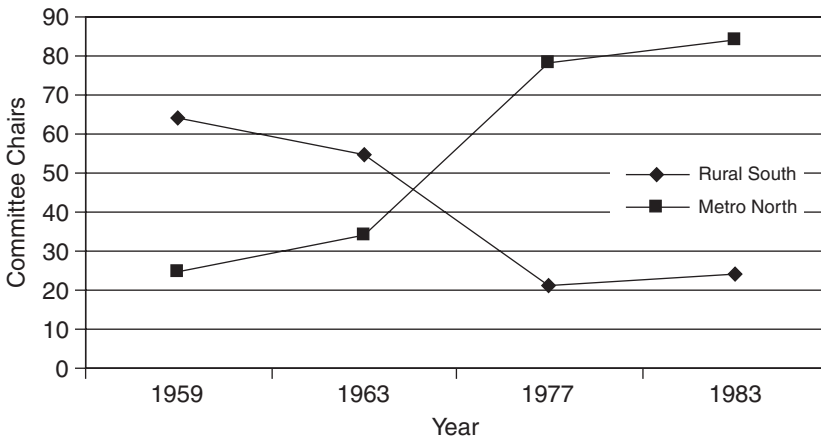


Figure 10.5. House committee chairs, by region, 1959–1983 (Schwab 1988: 147).

vided for “affirmative redistricting” to create districts whose makeup is as close to 65 percent nonwhite as possible.

The new directives had an immediate impact in states where minority groups constituted a significant proportion of the population but were too geographically dispersed to dominate a seat based on “one person, one vote.” In many areas, black districts were mandated by the Justice Department (Butler and Cain 1992: 113–116). One of the more controversial cases involved the creation of a black majority district in North Carolina in 1991–1992. The new district, dubbed the I-85, ran parallel to Interstate Highway 85, snaking its way in a thin line from north to south in order to maintain a black majority while enhancing the electoral chances of the Democrats. Although North Carolina Republicans challenged this incongruous district as unconstitutional, the I-85 redistricting plan was nevertheless upheld by William Rehnquist’s Supreme Court in 1992 (Canon, Schousen, and Sellers 1994: 30).

The example of the Supreme Court has been used to demonstrate that extralegislative liberal institutions can be used to great effect by elite actors seeking to advance their aims. Hence cultural modernization sets the parameters by which subsequent politico-economic rationality operates. In this case, decisions affecting the relationship between Anglo-Protestants and ethnic/racial minorities were directly set in motion by the decisions of a largely WASP elite. Minorities played only a limited part in the early stages of this drama. This points to liberty and equality, not minority-group rationality, as the engine of change. Henri Tajfel has theorized that a conflict between ethnic and ethical values can lead to “exit” from an ethnic group or “voice” for change to occur within it. He also suggests, following Albert Hirschman and Richard Hofstadter, that individualism is conducive to “exit,” an important American tradition (Tajfel 1981: 297–298; Hirschman 1970: 112). The post–World War II activity of the Supreme Court validates Tajfel’s proposition and, in turn, supports my contention that forces of dominant-ethnic decline emerged from *within* Anglo-Protestant America rather than from external factors associated with the economic and political rationality of commercial and ethnic minority interest groups.

American Whiteness: Dominant Ethnicity Resurgent?

He commutes to L.A., but he's got a house in the Valley. . . . / He says "Honey . . . with the crime and the smog these days this ain't no place for children," / So he packs his bags, to try his hand, this might be his last chance / He's gone Country, back to his roots. . . .

— POPULAR COUNTRY AND WESTERN HIT, "GONE COUNTRY," ALAN JACKSON, WRITTEN BY ROBERT LEE MCDILL, 1994

Dominant ethnicity has not *disappeared* in the United States though it has been relegated to a marginal position in American society. Furthermore, *nondominant* Anglo-Protestant ethnicity persists as an important demographic presence in the United States. Nearly 20 percent of the American population claims some British ancestry, close to half the population are white Protestants, and whites make up over two-thirds of the total. However, as I attempted to illustrate in Chapter 9, this demographic preponderance (which is waning) has become increasingly detached from discourses of national identity in the United States.

Those who posit that whiteness or WASPness continues to operate as a form of "hidden" dominant ethnicity or unconscious racism tend to rely on pre-1970 examples or to read dominant ethnicity into civic nationalist movements and popular culture in a highly contentious manner (Doane 1997: 384–385; Ringer and Lawless 1989: 76; Ross 1997: 29; Flag 1997: 87; Giroux 1997: 306–313). If one considers that whites comprise close to 70 percent of the population, it is not surprising that mass-market cultural production emits an aura of whiteness (Coleman 1996).

The same holds for lifestyle and subculture imagos in which the median or stereotypical individual is white. An investigation of high school subcultures in Los Angeles, for example, showed that most allegedly "white" subcultures did not seek to reproduce whiteness as a boundary and were proud that they included members of racial minority groups. Even in an

inner-city school where whites were a minority, they eschewed the conscious articulation of their whiteness (Perry 1997: 8, 10, 19). Similarly, young suburban women of mixed Asian-African or European-African descent at the University of California, Berkeley, have been found to possess white identities by virtue of their identification with “white” values such as individualism. This suggests that their suburban peers are accepting them as white (Twine 1996: 213–214). Overall, these examples indicate that many white subcultures are racially porous and do not seek to perpetuate white racial boundaries. Indeed, the reverse appears to be the case.

A similar lack of empirical substantiation holds for hidden dominance. A study of college students in Indiana, for example, showed that blacks and whites substantially agreed upon the cultural traits comprising blackness and whiteness—which points to interaction, rather than domination, as the agent of racial labeling. The study also demonstrated that significantly more whites identified with “black” traits than the reverse (White and Burke 1987: 322, 328). Moreover, white students who identified with their whiteness possessed lower self-esteem than other whites. By contrast, among blacks, the reverse relationship held: those who identified as black tended to possess higher self-esteem than their racial peers (White and Burke 1987: 325–326). These examples suggest that white racial boundaries are not being actively reproduced by many young whites (least of all successful whites) and that in the post-1970 period, the notion of hidden ethnicity lacks a solid empirical foundation.

White Identity

Commenting upon the frequency of interethnic marriage between white ethnic groups in the United States, Richard Alba has suggested that a new “Euro-American” ethnic may be forming. Strengthened from within by intermarriage and shared norms, and united from without by the growing demographic and numerical presence of nonwhites, Alba argues that this new ethnic group will become increasingly self-conscious in the decades to come. However, Alba oscillates on the nature of the new Euro-American group. On the one hand, he sees a *white* ethnic group united against the growing presence of nonwhites (Alba 1990: 312–313, 316–319). On the other hand, he appears to view the immigrant experience, economic self-sufficiency, and upward mobility as the new group’s chief *mythomoteur*. This points to a more inclusive, class-like constellation. Thus Alba concurs with Herbert Gans that Asians and other upwardly mobile

ethnics could enter this group in the future, perhaps in order to maintain the cultural and political power of the light-skinned population (Gans 1994: 588–589; Alba 1990: 312).

The possibility of a “racial melting pot” scenario does exist, but recent studies of white identity seem to suggest that a status-divided society based on wealth, education, and the modern versus traditional ideological divide will take precedence over racial divisions. In this scenario, the upper status, “new class” group (wealthy, educated, modern) will absorb talented members of all racial groups, much as Digby Baltzell advocated in 1964. Intermarriage and shared social ties will cement the unity of this fluid, post-Fordist elite. Lying beneath this status group will be a lower-status majority characterized by static real incomes, high school or two-year college education, and more traditional racial/cultural attitudes. It is in this lower status order, where expressivist and egalitarian norms lack the power and social capital to overturn traditions of collective memory, that racial, ethnic, and religious identity will remain salient.

Baltzell remarked that northeastern WASPs were becoming both more liberal and more reactionary. This “bipolar trend,” he added, “indicates not only a loss of confidence but a certain amount of guilt and self-hate” (Baltzell [1982] 1990: 87). Interestingly, electoral studies from the 1970s bear out Baltzell’s contention that there has been a “significant amount of opinion polarization in this [WASP] group”: well-educated and wealthy northern white Protestants splintered toward liberal and conservative extremes, in contrast to the unidirectionality characteristic of other groups. However, much of this polarization occurred along generational lines. Young upper-status WASPs, for instance, were the only white population segment, apart from Jews, to become increasingly liberal after 1950 (Nie et al. 1976: 260–267).

By contrast, the northern white Protestant working class became more conservative. Naturally, there are exceptions to the rule on both sides, with some ethnically conscious members of the upper strata fiercely clinging to their identity, while some less privileged individuals seek to cross racial boundaries and absorb cosmopolitan norms. On the whole, however, the status division between “cosmopolitan” and “traditional” Americans seems likely to emerge as the salient social chasm in U.S. society. This division, reviewed at the end of Chapter 8, rests on a foundation that is solidly backed by survey data.

It is striking, for instance, that upper-status whites rarely articulate their whiteness, are the most liberal on ethnic/racial issues,¹ and are loath to

socialize on explicitly racial grounds. Euro-American clubs and a Euro-American website certainly exist, but remain institutions of limited importance and are careful to present their message in a relatively detached manner (Perry 1997: 1; OSWAC 1998). Nor is it clear that many subculture and lifestyle groups bear an explicitly white stamp. Charles Gallagher makes a strong case for the racialization of whites in the face of campus identity politics (Gallagher 1997: 6–10). What also emerges from his account, however, is the degree to which white students cling to norms of color-blindness and refrain from articulating their white cultural identities. I would submit that this is largely the result of universalist norms that act as a powerful brake on the racial articulation of educated whites. Whiteness apparently represents an “empty symbol”² for many upper-status whites, taking on importance only as a psychic last resort, and, even then, only in extremely racialized environments.

Juxtaposed against the relaxed nature of racial boundary-defense among upper-status Americans is the strength of such boundaries among lower-status whites. Survey data clearly bears out this relationship, which is brought to life in Jane Gibson’s study of the impoverished white community of “Shellcracker Haven,” Florida. Gibson’s research illustrates how whites who have little contact with the black community nevertheless maintain a strong antipathy toward African Americans (Gibson 1996: 387). Another possible sign of the vitality of white working-class identity is provided by Country and Western music, whose share of record sales fluctuated between 10 and 18 percent of the total in the 1990s (R.I.I.A. 2001). Country music’s audience, since its inception in the 1920s and 1930s, has been almost entirely white and is younger, more rural, and less educated than the nation as a whole (Ennis 1992: 140–141, 169–171; CMA/Simmons 1997).

The music also bears a close relationship to the time-honored Anglo-American narrative of rural white identity. The music’s lyrics, after all, continue to celebrate the twin themes of populist-individualism and nostalgic, rural, antimodernist nationalism (Sample 1996: 86–87; Ching 1997). Among metropolitan youth, there is even an indication that country music listeners constitute a distinct lifestyle group—one of the few youth subcultures to explicitly identify with white identity and traditionalism³ (Perry 1997: 3–4). The connection to earlier narratives of “old American” ethnicity is reinforced by the association between Anglo-Protestant surnames and country music⁴ (Alba 1990: 365; Feagin 1997: 27).

Residential Patterns

Michael Walzer (1983: 39) observed that “the distinctiveness of cultures and groups depends upon closure,” with boundaries intrinsically linked with understandings of community. Hence, if boundaries are not established at the political border, they tend to develop informally within the state—in our case, through “white flight” to suburbs and more homogeneous regions. Most suburban whites live in relatively homogeneous neighborhoods (Spigel 1997: 236). However, the growing influx of successful Hispanic and Asian immigrants has resulted in a decline in the homogeneity of American suburbia, prompting a new “white flight” from the increasingly multiethnic suburbs of the major coastal cities.

Examining recent migration trends in large metropolitan areas, demographer William Frey concludes that native-born whites (as well as blacks) are tending to leave high-immigration metro areas. “When one ranks the greatest-gaining immigrant magnets and the greatest-gaining domestic-migration magnets, there is only one city on both lists,” remarks Frey. California and New York, the highest immigration states, attracted two million and one million immigrants, respectively, during the 1990s. However, the metro areas of these states were the greatest domestic migration losers, with New York City and Los Angeles each losing an enormous 1.5 million domestic migrants in the eight years after 1990. Metropolitan areas in the Southeast and non-California “New” West were the biggest gainers, with fully 71 percent of the New West’s growth originating in California and 65 percent of the Southeast’s from New York and New Jersey (Frey and DeVol 2000: 19–21).

Some new domestic migrants are mobile, lifestyle-oriented, and culturally liberal (Frey 2000: 2). But this is only part of the story. Take the “rural renaissance” of the 1990s, which reversed a long-term decline in rural population. This phenomenon was largely powered by the “white flight” of *lower-status whites with children* from high-immigration metropolitan areas, where a majority of residents aged 18–35, as well as a majority of service and blue-collar employees, are now non-Hispanic whites (Frey 1996: 758–759; 1998: 230).

The nature of the flow of native-born whites out of high-immigration metros tends to support our basic contention that whites with higher-status (i.e., education, wealth) are more cosmopolitan in outlook than their lower-status counterparts. We may even surmise a long-run scenario in which lower-status whites retreat to a rural, interior ethnic “homeland,” while upper-status whites pursue their modern lifestyle orientations in the

nation's more dynamic, increasingly hybridized, white-minority cities. This suggests that white, "Anglo" ethnic identity will become an increasingly rural and lower-status discourse, holding little sway over the main currents in American politics.

Whiteness as a Political Force

Culture is a notoriously difficult terrain to map, as is evident from the previous discussion. However, most commentators who assert that a resurgence of dominant-group ethnicity is taking place support their claims with evidence of Anglo-American political activity. The most prominent exemplars of this ferment are the Official English and Immigration Reform movements.

The Official English Movement

The Official English movement developed as a backlash against federally mandated initiatives to promote bilingual and multicultural education in the nation's public schools—initiatives that sought to execute the provisions of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (NEA 1996). The increase in the foreign-born population since the 1960s had given bilingualism a strong push, rendering multilingualism a reality. In reaction, during 1981–1990, ten states in the South and Midwest adopted Official English by statute, a move that was engineered by conservative political elites in state legislatures.

Meanwhile, in 1983, a grassroots organization, U.S. English, sprang up to spearhead the cause of Official English in states with less sympathetic political elites. As a consequence, Official English measures were placed on the agenda of several state legislatures outside the South. During 1986–1988 in Florida, Arizona, California, and Colorado, state legislators, who for political and ideological reasons were sensitive to Hispanic concerns, refused to pass Official English measures. However, all of these states have a popular initiative mechanism that allows measures to be brought to a referendum. Public opinion strongly favored the idea of English Only, and the referendum process enabled the citizens of these states to force their legislatures to pass measures declaring English to be the state's official language. To date, 27 states have adopted English as their official language, and U.S. English has enrolled close to 1.8 million members (Tatalovich 1997: 78; U.S. English 2004).

The Official English movement also made headway at the federal level

within the Republican Party. For instance, Republican senator and presidential frontrunner Bob Dole told the 77th convention of the American Legion in 1995 that “[a]lternative language education should stop and English should be acknowledged once and for all as the official language of the United States . . . we must stop the practice of multilingual education as a means of instilling ethnic pride or as therapy for low self-esteem or out of elitist guilt over a culture built on the traditions of the West.” House Majority Leader Newt Gingrich (R-GA) also threw his weight behind an Official English bill (Tatalovich 1997: 92, 98; NEA 1996).

Despite these apparent offensives, the Official English movement has encountered stiff opposition in Congress. In 1998, Republican representative Gerald Solomon introduced an amendment that would have made English the official language of the United States. However, the bill was defeated 238 to 182 in favor of a bipartisan amendment that would merely “promote the teaching of English.” At the same time, House representatives voted 209–208 to approve a measure that would allow Puerto Rico to join the United States as the fifty-first state. The annexation of this Spanish-speaking enclave would undermine the legitimacy of an “English Only” United States and is bitterly opposed by U.S. English.

Even so, many Republicans, including Newt Gingrich and former Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed, backed the Puerto Rico bill as the Republican establishment increasingly stressed the need to reach out to Hispanic voters (Roman and Akers 1998). Subsequently, U.S. English backed bills 123 (in the House) and S.323 in the Senate, which aimed to designate English as the official language of government. This passed 259–169 in the House but died in the Senate before the end of the legislative session. Since 1981, over 50 official English bills have been tabled. Four measures have passed at least one chamber, and Steve King (R-IA) is sponsoring a similar bill for the 108th Congress which has attracted 103 sponsors (US English 2004).

OFFICIAL ENGLISH AS DOMINANT ETHNICITY? Those who claim that the Official English movement is a manifestation of ethnic antipathy rarely cite the actions, positions, or official statements of English Only organizations. Rather, they base their case on the links between Official English proponents and immigration restrictionist organizations. Thus English First is linked to organizations that have established the U.S. Border Control, while U.S. English maintains connections with the Fed-

eration for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), which has lobbied for tighter restrictions on both legal and illegal immigration (ACLU 6, 1996).

Finally, observers point out that John Tanton, chairman and founder of U.S. English in the 1980s, was president of Zero Population Growth (an opponent of further immigration) during 1975–1977. He is also an advocate of a moratorium on immigration in order to assimilate post-1965 immigrants (Tatalovich 1997: 87–88). In addition, the director of English First, Larry Pratt, is secretary of the Council on Inter-American Security, which issued a report “implying that Hispanics are a national security threat and that bilingual education promotes cultural apartheid” (ACLU 6, 1996).

Both U.S. English and FAIR were co-founded by John Tanton, and opponents of Official English measures have regularly exposed this link. In the battle over the Arizona Official English measure, opponents spoke of the bill as “racist” and labeled Tanton’s views tantamount to Nazism. Furthermore, they claimed that a number of contributors to U.S. English, FAIR and Zero Population Growth held eugenicist or racist beliefs. The adverse publicity forced the resignation of Tanton and two high-profile U.S. English supporters, Walter Cronkite and Linda Chavez, and adversely affected the English Only referendum vote (Tatalovich 1997: 87–88).

OFFICIAL ENGLISH AS A CIVIC NATIONALIST MOVEMENT The evidence amassed by those who label Official English an ethnic nationalist movement must be considered highly tenuous. Without doubt dominant ethnic concerns lay behind the founding of English Only, and a significant proportion of its activists likely possess a white nationalist agenda. However, the movement’s popular support, moral legitimacy, and political momentum could never be sustained if the movement’s message was restricted to whites. Indeed, the most obvious rebuttal to the claim that English Only is an ethnonationalist phenomenon is the degree to which racial minorities have backed Official English.

Most members of racial minority groups in the United States, including most immigrants, are proficient in English and are therefore prospective members of an Official English constituency. The Proposition 63 (California’s Official English bill)⁵ vote, for example, showed that 72 percent of Anglos, 67 percent of blacks, and 58 percent of Asians favored the measure, though a majority of those identifying themselves as “liberal,”

whether Hispanic or Anglo, were opposed. However, a year after passage of the bill, a poll found that 67 percent of blacks, 67 percent of Asians, and 64 percent of Hispanics favored the passage of Proposition 63 (Tatalovich 1997: 90). Also, the chairman of U.S. English, Mauro Mujica, is a Hispanic immigrant to the United States, and the organization was co-founded by Senator S. I. Hayakawa (R-CA), a Canadian immigrant of Japanese ancestry (Stefancic 1997: 120–121).

By contrast, Official English has been opposed by mainstream religious groups, liberal organizations like the ACLU, professional organizations like the National Education Association, and large segments of the political establishment of both the Democratic and Republican parties. Hispanic and Asian mobilization has played a role in this opposition, but minority pressure is arguably a lesser force in the debate—as shown in the Florida case, where Cubans were “reluctant players” in the fight to oppose Official English legislation during the 1988 referendum (Tatalovich 1997: 85).

Overall, then, although more whites support English Only than non-whites, both proponents and opponents of Official English legislation have substantial representation from all of the major American racial groups. Many Official English activists may support the notion of an Anglo-American nation, but this does not mean that Official English can be considered a dominant ethnic actor. If the movement were to embrace a more ethnically exclusivist position, it would greatly endanger the substantial legislative progress it has made. Official English is thus better conceived as a civic rather than an ethnic nationalist organization.

The Immigration Reform Movement

The principal American immigration reform organization, the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), was founded in 1978. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., it counts over 70,000 individuals as members. FAIR lists its goals as, first, “to end illegal immigration” and, second, “to set legal immigration at the lowest feasible levels consistent with the demographic, economic, and social realities of the present.” Its platform stresses that immigrants should not be selected on an ethnic basis, but rather because of their economic skills, refugee status (this based on a “fair share”), or nuclear family connections. Furthermore, it states that “determining its own immigration and population policy is the sovereign right and responsibility of every nation” (FAIR October 1997).

FAIR supports a moratorium on immigration, stressing both cultural and economic motives. “A temporary respite from continued high levels of immigration,” argues a FAIR statement, “would facilitate the assimilation of these newcomers into the economic and social mainstream. It would also alleviate some of the intense pressure that has been placed on vital social institutions” (FAIR March 1997). Finally, FAIR serves as a rallying point for grassroots immigration reform activity and as an important nerve center for immigration restrictionist politics. Liaising with the Congressional Immigration Reform Caucus, FAIR’s legislative activity involves regular testimony in Congress and FAIR representatives delivered over 5,300 media appearances in 2003 (FAIR 2004). Its political activity is also important at the state level, for it has been informally linked with efforts like California’s landmark Proposition 187 campaign (Stefancic 1997: 130).

Immigration restriction has long been an important pillar of the dominant-ethnic defense, and it is therefore unsurprising that many should link the activities of the Immigration Reform organizations with ethnic nationalism. Many writers suggest that beneath the ostensibly fiscal and civic agenda of the immigration reform effort lurks a hidden racist or ethnonationalist agenda (Johnson 1997: 180; Chavez 1997: 73). Concrete evidence for this charge is that FAIR has received US\$1.1 million from the Pioneer Fund, the “world’s leading backer of race-IQ research.” This makes FAIR the second largest recipient of Pioneer Fund contributions (Stefancic 1997: 128). In addition, the Proposition 187 campaign, a controversial California initiative that attempted to bar illegal immigrants from receiving social services, was arguably driven by white concerns about retaining ethnic hegemony. As evidence: one can state that contributions for the Proposition 187 campaign came almost entirely from whites, with 58 percent of individual contributions coming from retirees, a largely white group (Stefancic 1997: 128).

Grassroots organizations involved in funding and launching the 187 campaign, notably the Voice of Citizens Together (VCT), Americans Against Illegal Immigration (AAII), or Stop the Out-of-Control Immigration Problems of Today (STOPIT), similarly betrayed their white, Anglo nationalism (Johnson 1997: 178–179). The VCT website, for instance, is replete with references to the Mexican *reconquista* and to *reconquistas* in the United States. As an example, Mexico Consul General Angel Pescador Osuna is quoted out of context. “We [Mexicans],” he says, “are practicing *la reconquista* in California” (VCT March 1998).

Meanwhile, Glenn Spencer, founder of VCT, told an Arkansas immigration reform group: “There is going to be a civil/Mexican war in the near future,” adding that “There is a clear and present danger to the sovereignty of the United States” (VCT February 1998). Similarly, Ruth Coffey, director of Stop Immigration Now, a California grassroots organization, warned of the perils of multiculturalism and commented: “I have no intention of becoming the object of ‘conquest,’ peaceful or otherwise, by Latinos, Asians, blacks, Arabs or any other groups of individuals who have claimed *my country*” (Chavez 1997: 68, emphasis added).

At the municipal level, in Monterey Park, an inner suburb of Los Angeles with a non-Hispanic white (Anglo) population of just 25 percent in 1980, the connections between English Only, Immigration Reform, and Anglo concerns have surfaced. Between 1986 and 1990, in the face of a large influx of Chinese residents to Monterey Park, City Councillors Barry Hatch and Frank Arcuri, both Anglos, mobilized municipal opposition to residential and commercial expansion in the city on behalf of established white residents. Both English Only and Immigration Reform figured strongly in their program, which was defeated by a multicultural coalition in 1990 (Horton 1995: 81–100).

IMMIGRATION REFORM AS A CIVIC NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

The discourse of immigration reform groups and the nature of their funding bodies demonstrate that Anglo ethnic concerns have provided the momentum behind the immigration reform drive. However, as with the English Only movement, political legitimation for immigration reform proposals contained in Proposition 187 had to be secured by a broader civic nationalist message. This was demonstrated early in the campaign, when fully 86 percent of respondents to a *Los Angeles Times* poll approved of 187. However, a sustained attack on the measure by the media (which labeled the proposed legislation racist), coupled with street demonstrations by opponents, cut into support for the bill. To counter such pressure, 187 supporters repeatedly stressed the economic and civic aims of the movement (Johnson 1997: 179). In the end, Proposition 187 passed with 59 percent support, over the protests of large elements of the state’s elite.⁶

Whites were the strongest backers of the measure, 64 percent of them voting in favor. However, the campaign did not sharply split the population along racial lines. As with the English Only movement, significant support came from racial minority groups: 57 percent of Asians and 56

percent of African Americans supported it. Even a third of Hispanics gave their assent (Chavez 1997: 63; Tatalovich 1997: 93). The transracial appeal of immigration restriction is also borne out in nationwide opinion polls (see Chapter 9), which consistently show blacks to be more restrictionist than whites, with Hispanics only slightly less so.

Anti-immigration sentiment is similarly a factor among interest groups without a cultural agenda (e.g., environmental organizations). Environmentalists are divided on the immigration issue because immigration is projected to increase the American population from its current level of roughly 250 million to between 300 (low) and 430 million (high) by 2050 (Heer 1996: 118). Californians for Population Stabilization, formed in 1986, is the chief outlet for immigration-restrictionist environmentalism, but the mainstream Sierra Club is also riven by tensions. As evidence, in a recent plebiscite, Sierra Club members voted 3 to 2 against the idea of a “reduction in net immigration.” Grassroots organization was vigorous on both sides of the debate, with the anti-immigration forces mounting a well-funded campaign, which was in turn challenged by the Sierra Club leadership (Associated Press, April 25, 1998). The Sierra Club has always stood firmly against population growth (SUSPS 1998). However, it is conceivable that the high level of education, and hence cosmopolitan orientation, of Sierra Club members, led to a value conflict that stayed their restrictionist hand. A similar disjunction between attitudes toward population growth and immigration has been noted in Australia (Betts 1988: 73–75).

In short, the immigration issue encompasses a wide range of concerns; hence sentiment in favor of its restriction cannot simply be attributed to a resurgent white dominant ethnicity. This opens up a space of legitimacy for immigration reformers. Thus “rainbow” support for immigration restriction among various racial groups, when coupled with civic nationalist policies like more stringent border control, numerical limits, and a tightening of the family-sponsorship category, provide the ethical foundation required for politicians to campaign on an immigration reform platform.

Political Initiatives

In 1992, immigration was not on the political agenda, but in 1994, Pete Wilson championed tougher measures against illegal immigration and threw his backing behind Proposition 187. This strategy was a decisive factor in Wilson’s gubernatorial victory. Sensing the popular mood for

restriction and mindful of challenges from Wilson and Pat Buchanan, a member of the populist wing of the Republican Party, Bob Dole also adopted a tougher line on immigration in the 1996 presidential campaign.

The fact that immigration restriction is on the political agenda also ensures that the era of immigration liberalization, which may be said to have encompassed the 1965–1990 period, has probably passed. For example, in 1994, a bipartisan Commission on Immigration Reform, which included testimony from “town hall”-style public forums, delivered a report recommending measures designed to cut immigration, both legal and illegal (Muller 1997: 114). The report, which advocated a cut in legal immigration from the current 830,000 to 550,000 per year, was initially greeted positively by President Bill Clinton (Tatalovich 1997: 95).

In the same year, Clinton proceeded to end the 30-year-old policy of granting automatic asylum to Cuban refugees. He also removed the special protection accorded to Salvadorian refugees (Heer 1997: 69–70). In 1996, these measures were followed by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA). This Act increases the size of the border patrol, facilitates deportation, and increases the penalty for employers who use illegal immigrant labor. At the same time, the measure does not address legal immigration, and it vests a great deal of discretionary authority in the hands of the attorney general, which will allow greater scope for a flexible interpretation of the new law (FAIR July 1996).

The post-1990 political and civic progress of Official English and Immigration Reform has been steady. However, a closer appraisal of the two movements emphasizes that dominant ethnicity is a factor only at the leadership level. Moreover, the discourse of these movements and the broad support accorded both by racial/ethnic minorities should serve as a cautionary note for those who see in Official English and Immigration Reform evidence of dominant-ethnic resurgence.

Religious Nationalism in the United States: A Note on the Christian Coalition

Evangelical Protestants have been connected with American dominant ethnicity throughout American history and, as noted in Chapter 6, have resisted the liberalizing trend of the Protestant church on this issue since the founding of the FCC. More recently, evangelicals have exercised a large degree of influence in national elections through the efforts of the

Christian Coalition, a 1.5 million-strong organization, founded by Virginia evangelist Pat Robertson in 1989 (Christian Coalition 1995).

The Coalition's support base overlaps that of ethnic nationalists like Pat Buchanan and is largely composed of white, Protestant cultural conservatives.⁷ While it is tempting to conclude that the rise of the Coalition represents a revival of Protestant nationalism along 1920s Klan-like lines, this is not the case. On the contrary, whether for ideological or tactical⁸ reasons, evangelical leaders have long abandoned Protestant sectarianism as a central element in their guiding vision (Bruce 1998: 178). Billy Graham's career reflects this trajectory. In the 1950s, this Protestant evangelist crossed swords with the Catholic Church on many occasions and joined the chorus of those who questioned John F. Kennedy's Americanism. However, by the 1980s, Graham had held a crusade at Catholic Notre Dame University, met with Pope John Paul II, and was attracting strong support at his meetings from the ranks of Catholic America (Noll 1987: 90). More recently, the Christian Coalition leadership has opposed nationalist measures like Proposition 187 and Official English and has testified against measures designed to narrow the family reunification provisions of U.S. immigration policy (Muller 1997: 128; Roman and Akers 1988; O'Sullivan 1997).

All of these changes suggest that Coalition concerns should be considered purely ethical. Reinforcing this suggestion is the Christian Coalition's mission statement: "The Christian Coalition is leading a growing new alliance of evangelicals, Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Jews, African-Americans and Hispanics who are working hard for common-sense legislation that will strengthen families" (Christian Coalition 1997). In many ways, the perspective of the Christian Coalition elite reflects the growing consciousness of an interfaith, "religious" social group, which Robert Bellah claims is "not based primarily on differences between Catholics, Protestants, and Jews but . . . [on] differences within each of the great communions and to some extent between secularists and all the religions" (Bellah and Greenspahn 1987: 229; Wuthnow 1989: 178). Former Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed, for example, proclaimed a new, nondenominational religious Americanism (along Herbergite lines) that would embrace ethnic, religious, and racial diversity:

It was the religious values of our people that made this nation a refuge for the poor, the outcast, and the downtrodden. America has lifted its lamp beside the golden door of entry to all immigrant

groups, particularly Jews, and to victims of persecution the world over. We are part of that legacy. Let me be clear: the Christian Coalition believes in a nation that is not officially Christian, Jewish, or Muslim. A nation where the separation of church and state is complete and inviolable. Where any person may run for elective office without where they attend church or synagogue ever becoming an issue. A nation where no child of any faith is forced by government to recite a prayer with which they disagree. But like our founders, we also believe that we are a deeply religious nation. (Reed 1995)

In summary, the activism of the Christian Coalition, despite the demographics and attitude profile of its support base, should not be considered ethnonationalist in any significant sense.

Civic Nationalist Discourse

The Official English and Immigration Reform movements have not garnered the direct support of many elite commentators. However, the principles of an English-speaking United States and of reduced immigration have earned their share of civic nationalist intellectual backers. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a long-standing “consensus liberal” historian, is an important figure in this regard. Schlesinger’s position, elucidated within the pages of his *Disuniting of America* (1993), though critical of the Official English movement, argues that “a common language is a necessary bond of cohesion in so heterogeneous a nation as America . . . institutionalized bilingualism remains another source of the fragmentation of America, another threat to the dream of ‘one people’ ” (Schlesinger 1993: 109–110). For Lawrence Fuchs, proponents of the English Only movement, though overstating the case, nevertheless bring attention to the importance of English proficiency in fostering a strong civic national culture (Fuchs 1985: 470–472).

Similarly, Seymour Martin Lipset states that an emphasis on multiculturalism tends to muzzle meritocracy, learning, and free speech. Lipset also worries about the breakdown in civic participation evinced by opinion polls in recent years (Lipset 1996: 206–208, 283). This position finds an echo in Francis Fukuyama’s recent comparative work on societal trust. In this work, Fukuyama criticizes multiculturalism for stripping away a “common language” of civic nationalism, which he believes is

central to the problem of maintaining public trust. “There has always been a central cultural tradition that gave coherence to American social institutions,” argues Fukuyama. “That culture, originally the attribute of a particular religious and ethnic group, later became deracinated from those ethnoreligious roots and became a broadly accessible identity for all Americans” (Fukuyama 1995a: 270).

In Peter Salins’s estimation, the multiculturalist challenge to the assimilation model threatens to inaugurate an era of interethnic conflict akin to that experienced in the Balkans and other conflict zones (Salins 1997: 13). As a corrective, Salins calls for a return of state-promoted civic assimilation to such values as the work ethic, the English language, and a liberal-universalist American Idea. He also endorses Richard John Neuhaus’s call for a “civic nation” to combat what he sees as the ethnic nationalism of both multiculturalists and neo-nativists (Salins 1997: 220–223).

Although most civic nationalist commentators endorse significant levels of legal immigration, they remain resolutely opposed to the illegal variety (Salins 1997: 206–208, Neuhaus 1995: 62; Glazer 1995a: 80, 1995b: 58). Even Spencer Abraham, the outspoken pro-immigration senator (R-MI), has backed the government’s commitment to combat illegal immigration (*The Economist* 1996). There is also a general view that legal immigration must be reformed, though not terminated: “In this age in which real income does not rise, in which corporate downsizing affects the stable middle class,” writes Nathan Glazer, “. . . one wonders why additional strains should be placed on the American social fabric. I think one of the great yearnings of Americans today is for more stability. One thing that immigration inevitably brings is a lack of stability” (Glazer 1995b: 59–60).

Finally, some civic nationalists call for much stricter controls on all immigration. Michael Lind, for example, argues against the effects of “massive immigration overburdening the institutions of assimilation” (Lind 1995: 347). He also states the issue in class terms: “During the years that the political class has been almost unanimously in favor of present or higher levels of legal immigration, an overwhelming majority of Americans of all races have favored restriction, a fact that speaks volumes about the alienation of the American ascendancy from the majority’s interests and concerns . . . like free-market globalism, immigration is an issue that pits the affluent top 20 percent against the wage-earning majority below” (Lind 1995: 207–208).

Lind’s book commands a modicum of support even among the edu-

cated classes he criticizes: of 18 reviews of his book listed in Library of Congress files during 1995–1996, nine were mixed, five positive, and four negative. This support extends to those who have traditionally flinched at immigration restriction. As Stephan Thernstrom remarked, “*The Next American Nation* has been applauded . . . widely by reviewers on the left” (Thernstrom 1996: 103).

Dominant Ethnicity Today: The White Nationalist Phenomenon

Although civic nationalists in the United States comprise the most prominent intellectual outrider of the antimulticulturalist backlash,⁹ a small number of white ethnonationalist voices have also joined in the chorus. The largest component of these Anglo ethnic nationalists endorses the belief of civic nationalists that the United States is a nation with a European cultural heritage in which English language and traditions play a special role. They agree that multiculturalism, bilingualism, and affirmative action must cease, and they share the beliefs of the majority of civic nationalists who recommend that the state take stronger measures to curtail illegal immigration¹⁰ and promote the assimilation of immigrants.

The true divide between ethnic and civic/liberal nationalists, therefore, is not strictly over the issue of immigration, but over the importance of maintaining a white majority in the United States. For the ethnic nationalists, whites must remain the numerical majority in the United States, for it is they who are the custodians of America’s Anglo-European ethnic continuity. This makes the predicted “browning” of America’s population their banner issue. An early statement calling for a return to an Anglo-Protestant United States was that of Drew L. Smith. His *Legacy of the Melting Pot* (1971), besides proposing the mass emigration of black Americans and U.S support for apartheid, opined that the United States was founded as a British offshoot and should remain a “white nation” grounded on “racial integrity” (Smith 1971: 78–79, 210).

More recently, a series of less radical writers have assailed American immigration policy for its ethnocultural consequences. Lawrence Auster was the first, and most articulate, of the new defensive ethnonationalists. In a pamphlet entitled *The Path to National Suicide* (1990), Auster expressed alarm over the demographic direction in which the American nation was headed. After reviewing demographic predictions showing that whites will become a minority by the mid-twenty-first century, Auster laments that “the pre-1880 population from northern Europe—the orig-

inal racial and cultural base of the U.S.—will have become a vanishing minority” (Auster 1990: 25–26).

In a later chapter, Auster expresses his concerns in more ethnic terminology: “the [ethnic] identitarian impulse toward comfort and safety is a positive and unconscious discrimination, a discrimination ‘in favor of.’ It is a component of the ‘radius of identification and trust’ that Lawrence Harrison identifies as the basis of a happy community” (Auster 1987: 70). Expanding somewhat, Auster proceeds to argue that the United States has a well-founded right to preserve its distinct European ethnic character:

No one questions the right of Arabs to have an Arab nation; of China to be a Chinese nation. . . . But the United States, which has . . . drawn most of its people from the nations of Europe, is to be denied even this conglomerate, but distinct, identity. We must absorb all the peoples of the world into our society and submerge our historic character as a predominantly Caucasian, Western society. (Auster 1990: 71–72)

Auster’s call for ethnic maintenance and Euro-American ethnic hegemony has been reiterated by a select group of like-minded intellectuals, based, in the 1990s around the New York conservative periodical, *The National Review*. An article in this magazine by Peter Brimelow in June 1992 amplified Auster’s arguments. Two years later, *National Review* editor John O’Sullivan concurred with Brimelow’s assessment, adding that the United States “is a nation like any other” and that its identity should embrace the idea of an “ethno-cultural solidarity” based on Anglo-European lines (O’Sullivan 1994).

Brimelow’s best-selling anti-immigration tract, *Alien Nation* (1995), more fully elucidates these ethnonationalist concerns. “A nation . . . is an interlacing of ethnicity and culture,” declares Brimelow. “The American nation has always had a specific ethnic core. And that core has been white” (Brimelow 1995: 10). After making the case for a moratorium on immigration and the mass deportation of illegal immigrants, Brimelow adds: “It is simply common sense that Americans have a legitimate interest in their country’s racial balance. It is common sense that they have a right to insist that their government stop shifting it. Indeed, it seems to me that they have a right to insist that it be shifted back” (Brimelow 1995: 264). Chilton Williamson, another member of the *National Review* circle, has gone so far as to assert that post-1865, non-WASP immigrants de-

based American culture by infecting a high-minded, homogeneous, rural society with rootless, low-brow, mass culture (Williamson 1996: 57–59, 198–201). He decries current U.S. immigration policy and predicts ethnic warfare, submitting that ethnic ties constitute a primordial force (Williamson 1996: 118, 142).

A related congerie of ethnic nationalist arguments, spearheaded by *Washington Times* columnist Samuel Francis, took root in the 1980s in the pages of the conservative Rockford Institute journal, *Chronicles* (Francis 1995: 176). Francis continues to deliver anti-immigration broadsides on a regular basis in his column, often broaching the issue (from an ethnoculturalist perspective) several times every month.¹¹ Francis's writing has also had an influence on the one national political movement that has provided an outlet for white ethnonationalist sentiment in the United States: Patrick Buchanan's America First campaign.

Buchanan's movement, part of the culturally conservative wing of the Republican Party, espouses a "time out" on immigration, both legal and illegal, and calls for a national referendum on the issue (Buchanan 1995). Although Buchanan addresses religious fundamentalism and economic nationalism more often than he does immigration, sometimes the issue of Anglo-European dominant ethnicity appears to take center stage, as when Buchanan declared: "Today, illegal immigration is helping fuel the cultural breakdown of our nation. That cultural breakdown, which you and I have recognized and sworn to fight, is the single most important factor which has impelled me to run for President" (Buchanan 1995).

Addressing the topic in more depth in a series of widely circulated essays, Buchanan zeroed in on the crucial issue of dominant-ethnic decline:

Consider the change in our own country in four decades. In 1950, America was . . . 90 percent of European. . . . By 2050, according to the Census Bureau, whites may be near a minority in an America of 81 million Hispanics, 62 million blacks and 41 million Asians. By the middle of the next century, the United States will have become a veritable Brazil of North America. If the future character of America is not to be decided by our own paralysis, Americans must stop being intimidated by charges of "racist," "nativist," and "xenophobe"—and we must begin to address the hard issues of race, culture and national unity. (Buchanan 1996)

Buchanan's movement, as noted, occupies the populist, culturally conservative wing of the Republican Party, a faction that demonstrated

its potency in both the 1992 and 1996 Republican primaries. In 1996, for instance, Buchanan won the New Hampshire primary and did well in Iowa, despite his low-budget campaign and the opposition of the Republican establishment. Overall, some estimate that his message appeals to between a fifth and a third of the Republican primary electorate (Lexington 1996). More importantly, Buchanan's cultural crusaders among rank-and-file Republicans represent merely one segment of his support. Of greater significance is Buchanan's appeal to disenfranchised middle- and lower-income whites, a constituency that transcends party divisions. This renders Buchanan's supporters a possible "swing" force, despite his poor 1 percent showing in the 2000 election.

Ethnic Nationalism: New and Old

Despite the undoubtedly ethnonationalist tenor of the appeals made by contemporary white nationalists, a number of differences separate today's dominant ethnicity from its 1920s counterpart. First, contemporary American ethnonationalism tends to embrace Catholic and, arguably, Jewish whites in a way that would have been unthinkable in the 1920s. For instance, old-stock patriotic societies like the Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution no longer argue for qualitative restriction based on ethnicity or race (Nelson 1997; Chapman 1997). That an Irish Catholic like Pat Buchanan is the leader of a nativist movement while a Jew like Dan Stein captains the leading immigration restriction association further indicates how much things have changed.¹² Furthermore, racism and eugenics (Charles Murray aside) is not on the ethnonationalist agenda, and the idea of a return to a national origins quota system for immigration stretches credulity beyond any reasonable limit. Even the Ku Klux Klan is now open to those of Southern and Eastern European descent!

Perhaps the only firm link between the ethnonationalism of the present and the old Anglo-Protestant hegemony is the Christian Identity movement, an extremist organization with connections to the British Israelism of the nineteenth century. This brand of ethnic theology, first expounded in the United States in 1871, posits the Anglo-Saxons as the descendants of the lost tribes of the Israelites and as God's true elect (as opposed to their Jewish impostors). Here it is quite possible to trace both a *discursive and an organizational* connection between the nineteenth century and the present (Barkun 1994: 71, 104; Marks 1996: 77, 164–165). However, Christian Identity remains a group on the far right fringe of contemporary

debate, apparently lacking the potential to strike a chord with a more broadly based audience.

Ethnic or Civic Nationalists: The Conservative Split

Many writers, grassroots organizations, and political figures back the push for stronger measures against illegal immigration and support reform of the legal immigration system. They also favor the use of English as the *de facto* (if not *de jure*) language of the American nation and have little time for the multiculturalist agenda. The question thus arises: how is it that these civic nationalists differ from ethnic nationalists who pursue similar political goals?

The answer I have provided revolves around the concept of national identity elucidated by these social actors. Ethnic nationalists wish to preserve the white racial majority in the United States. In contrast, civic nationalists, who dominate American neoconservatism, view the racial composition of the United States as less relevant. Instead, they are concerned with the cultural, economic, and political contributions of the new immigrants to the liberal-democratic U.S. polity. They emphasize the work ethic, family values, individual liberty, English proficiency, and loyalty to the state. At the most basic level, therefore, the two factions are divided by their respective myths of descent. For the ethnonationalists, the United States has a genealogical pedigree of Anglo-European origin. This is encapsulated in Auster's notion of the "pre-1880" population or Brimelow's reference to the white or WASP "ethnic core."

Civic nationalists, on the other hand, subscribe to an *ideological* myth of descent that isolates Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture and history from British ancestry.¹³ Notice the accent on British culture rather than ethnicity: "American history has been shaped more than anything else by British tradition and culture," argues Arthur Schlesinger (Schlesinger 1993: 53). "However changeable and flexible it may be," adds Peter Salins, "American culture does have a distinctive base, and that base, from the nation's beginning, has been English. . . . What the cultural pluralists need to understand is that there is no inherent contradiction in the United States having a . . . distinctive culture, one that members of any ethnic group can participate in without 'betraying' their ethnic heritage and American culture's English foundation" (Salins 1997: 86, 99).

Perhaps Francis Fukuyama stated the civic nationalists' case best in his response to Peter Brimelow in a symposium conducted on the pages of

the *National Review*. Fukuyama rejects Brimelow's premise that the United States is a white, Christian nation, maintaining that "whites" are not a distinct ethnocultural group. Instead, Fukuyama contends,

It is possible to be much more precise than Mr. Brimelow. American culture comes from the Puritan sectarian religious heritage of the early Anglo-Saxon settlers . . . a sectarian Protestant Anglo-Saxon culture that was somehow detached from its ethnic roots. . . . Yet Brimelow for some reason insists on describing in racial and ethnic terms a national identity that can only be properly characterized in *cultural* terms. (Fukuyama 1995b: 77)

Fukuyama also takes issue with those who see recent events as heralding a return of immigration as a major national issue. Immigration restrictionism is "not rising right now," claimed Fukuyama in February 1997, adding that we "are not going to see a lot [legislatively] happening" on this front in the near future. Alternatively, John O'Sullivan, whom I interviewed around the same time, described immigration as "a major [political] issue" and added that the *National Review's* readership evinced a strong demand for articles on the immigration issue (Fukuyama 1997; O'Sullivan 1997).

The Weakness of Contemporary White Nationalism

Much of what passes for ethnonationalist resurgence actually describes civic nationalist phenomena. Those who argue that civic nationalism logically rests on ethnic foundations may be *philosophically* correct, but, in practical terms, civic nationalist spokespeople do not appear to possess an ethnic agenda—instead stressing their belief in an ideological rather than a genealogical Anglo-Americanism.

A somewhat more complicated but related pattern holds with regard to the new "nativist" organizations. It is highly probable that the leadership of the Immigration Reform and, to some extent, Official English movements has an ethnonationalist orientation. Similarly, many rank-and-file members of the Christian Coalition probably harbor dominant ethnic sympathies. Nevertheless, there is little unity of purpose ("frame alignment")¹⁴ on this score between leaders and followers. Rather, consensus for political action has only been achieved where aims have been shared between elites and masses, namely, on transracial, civic nationalist issues. This makes for a sharp contrast with the 1880–1930 period, when the

Ku Klux Klan, the Immigration Restriction League, and the patriotic societies united elites and masses behind an Anglo-Protestant ethnonationalist program.

Similarly, despite the activities of the American militias and other extremists, the political far right has fared poorly in the United States. Buchanan's 1 percent showing in the 2000 election may be an underestimate of his strength—especially given his performance in the Republican primaries of 1992 and 1996. Nevertheless, there has been no expression of dominant ethnicity in the United States that compares with either Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party, and its 10 percent of the 1998 Australian popular vote, or with the success of the European far right (see Figure 11.1).

Another consideration is that opinion surveys demonstrate immigration to be near the bottom of Americans' list of political concerns, while few Americans, even in culturally conservative locales, are aware of the meaning of multiculturalism. Moreover, the salience of racial attitudes for explaining voting behavior, controlling for general predispositions like the

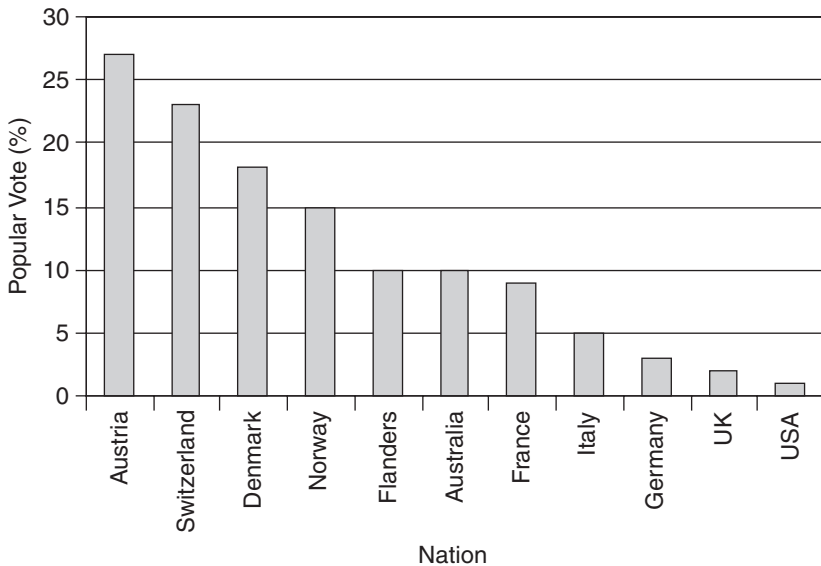


Figure 11.1. Far right's maximum popular vote, 1990–2000 (BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation], 2000. "Rise of the Right" site: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/europe/2000/far_right).

belief in “equality,” is considered by some leading electoral scholars to be so low as to be insignificant (Miller and Shanks 1996: 311–315). The lack of conservative reaction to Bill Clinton’s policies on immigration and multiculturalism bear testimony to the limited resonance of “traditionalist” symbolic concerns among many Americans (C. Smith and Emerson 1997). This has provoked despair in the ranks of conservative Protestantism, where some bemoan the loss of any “moral majority” (Bruce 1998: 185).

Just as important, the pro-immigration Republican “establishment” in which strategist Karl Rove and other neoconservatives figure prominently, is now in firm control of party policy, backing an inclusive electoral strategy that can appeal to upwardly mobile Asian and Hispanic voters¹⁵ (Johnson 1997: 178; Stefancic 1997: 128; Muller 1997: 112–113). “I intend to reform the INS to make it more welcoming to immigrants,” President Bush told the League of United Latin American Citizens in April of 2000 (FAIR 2000). Prior to the events of September 11, 2001, Bush also toyed with an amnesty for the estimated three million illegal immigrants in the United States, but he has since backtracked (Curl 2003).

The results of the 2000 census, which received widespread press coverage, catalogued the dramatic demographic changes in American society. Yet it did not result in any major national debate on this relatively dormant issue. Rather than bemoan the new developments, both Democrats and Republicans, along with the major news media, have generally welcomed the changes that the new “diversity” brings (Hampson 2001; Belsie 2001; Associated Press 2000). Given popular support for reduced immigration, this further demonstrates that the elite consensus wrought by the institutional cosmopolitanism of the postwar period has continued to structure the parameters of debate in this area.

In spite of the seismic cultural changes brought by the new immigration, the Bush administration apparently remains focused on *étatiste* issues of illegal immigration and family reunification, with an eye to maximizing economic benefit and limiting costs. Its recent attempt to institute a guest-worker program with Mexico and to facilitate visas for high-tech Asian workers foregrounds its pro-business motivation (D. Francis 2000). Wooing upwardly mobile Latinos was part of this strategy for the Bush brothers in their gubernatorial campaigns and has become part of the Republican lexicon. Accordingly, the Republican Party mainstream has shunned the ethnonationalism of its “paleo-conservative” faction in favor

of the pro-immigration, *laissez-faire* modernism of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Naturally, there remains an important remnant of dominant-group ethnic nationalism in the United States, rooted in Pat Buchanan's America First campaign, in the writing of a small group of ethnonationalist intellectuals, and in a series of culturally conservative think tanks, magazines, and voluntary associations. The popular base for this Anglo ethnic nationalism can likely be found among the "significant minority in the white population—roughly twenty percent—[that] continues to demonstrate direct, traditional racial prejudice [in surveys]," remark Hayman and Levit (Hayman and Levit 1997: 245; Dovidio and Gaertner 1991). The significant minority of the white population resolutely opposed to interracial marriage and racial integration is probably congruent with this "traditional" white category (Mayer 1992: 345).

Thirty years ago, Charles Anderson wrote of white Protestant Americans that as "Episcopalian and Baptist, cosmopolite and hillbilly, executive and laborer, liberal and conservative, northerner and southerner," they might be too diverse to qualify as a useful social category. But Anderson refuted such arguments with impressive evidence of shared social action (Anderson 1970: 173). WASP ethnic identity has often lacked a high degree of cross-class and transregional unity. Nonetheless, where the northeastern urban elite and provincial masses have come together—as in the 1850s, 1890s, and 1920s—WASP nationalism has been as vibrant as any other. This is not the case today. With the "defection" of its increasingly cosmopolitan-minded elite, lines of status have reasserted themselves within the white (and narrower WASP) group. Consequently, frame alignment between elites and masses has collapsed, leading to diminished dominant-ethnic consciousness.

The commonly asserted opinion that dominant ethnicity is on the rise in the United States has been shown to be largely erroneous. In terms of mass movements, much of what passes for Anglo ethnic nationalism is actually civic in nature. This explains why popular support for Immigration Reform or English Only has only coalesced behind an inclusive message, which has attracted a measure of support from all racial groups. Furthermore, taking into account the unparalleled racial diversity of the post-1965 immigration—of which white Americans are well aware—dominant-ethnic nationalism in the United States must be considered but a shade of its 1920s self.

Liberal Ethnicity and Cultural Revival: A New Paradigm

American national identity is the fulcrum around which many of the nation's "culture wars" pivot (Fischer 1999: 215). These normative exercises tend to feature pitched battles between multiculturalists and assimilationists, in which the sound and fury of the debate often signifies little. Given what is at stake, it is surprising that this exchange too often lacks the historical context and theoretical rigor necessary to interpret current social patterns. In some measure, I hoped to provide this sense of historical proportion through my discussion of the decline of dominant ethnicity in the United States. In this chapter, I will try as best I can to elucidate some of the prescriptive implications of this analysis.

Mine is a somewhat unorthodox position in that I reject the assimilationism of the American right but espouse a reformed multiculturalism that rescues the concept from the radical left, with its anti-WASP (or antiwhite) moral center. I also uphold the validity of both WASP and "American" as important ethnic options. This curious stance is not based on some mischievous desire to be provocative. Instead, it probably stems from my atypical biography. I am a Canadian who does not reside in the United States, and my ethnic background is entirely secular and "new" immigrant in origin: part postwar Jewish, part Chinese, part Hispanic. To make matters worse, I was born in Hong Kong, spent eight early years in Tokyo, studied—and live—in England, and was raised by parents who collectively speak ten languages. But appearances are seldom so simple. Though I experienced a sense of minority consciousness in the WASP suburb in which I grew up, I am—in most social situations—a white, native-born, native-English speaking North American "Anglo." This dual sense of minority and majority consciousness has helped to stimulate my research in this area and germinate a different sense of ethnic reality.

My scholarly background in nationalism studies is of similar impor-

tance. Above all, this field embraces an international and comparative perspective. Consequently, I am wary of exceptionalist explanations and solutions drawn from one society's experience. Accordingly, I hope to bring a distinct outlook, both theoretical and ontological, to the quagmire of political theorizing about American ethnic relations. This vantage point appreciates that there *is* a conflict between liberalism and majority-group ethnicity. I shall therefore eschew the popular tendency to gloss over logical difficulties with semantic tricks or convenient lapses of reason.

My normative stance takes its cue from my empirical thesis—that the progress of liberal and egalitarian logic into the cultural sphere led to the decline of dominant ethnicity in the United States. This suggests that a tension exists between these values: the idea of *dominant* ethnicity represents a violation of both liberal and egalitarian thinking, the cornerstones of Rawlsian Liberalism. Moreover, the antinomian individualism implicit in a stronger variant of liberalism breaks down ethnic boundaries surrounding the self, while the imperatives of equality attempt to streamline national identity in order to reduce the alienation of those who do not possess one or more of the dominant group's symbols (i.e., white, British surname, Protestant). Those of us who consider ourselves liberal find it very difficult to accept that any ethnic group has the right to impose its hegemony over a nation-state's realms of political, economic, and mass cultural activity. To this extent, we should be grateful for the courageous innovation of pioneer liberals and egalitarians in trying to end WASP/white hegemony in America.

This supports the contention that ethnic relations in the United States should take the form of multiculturalism, garnished with a limited, constitutional patriotism that is highly inclusive and abstract (Habermas 1993). Since nearly all of the world's states are multiethnic, there is an urgent need for the establishment of a multicultural norm—though the degree of collective rights provision must distinguish between “indigenous” ethnic groups and immigrant groups (Kymlicka 1995, Chapter 2). The United States, along with Western societies like Canada, Germany, and Britain, can play a leading role in establishing such a norm. Dominant ethnicity clearly has no place in this vision.

Whither National Ethnic Groups?

Establishing a global procedure of minority recognition in multicultural states says little, however, about how majority ethnic groups ought to

conduct themselves. In this context, debates over how to manage ethnic relations tend to occupy an inordinate amount of space in political theory.¹ We also need to discuss how ethnic groups—especially majorities—should behave within this framework because, as the fall of Anglo-America demonstrates, ethnicity is in tension with both liberty and equality on the cultural as well as political front.

The Problem of National Ethnicity

Liberals often align themselves with national demands raised by “underdogs,” be they indigenous peoples, discriminated minorities, or occupied nations, whose plight can easily evoke sympathy. But if national claims rest on theoretically sound and morally justified grounds, one cannot restrict their application: They apply equally to all nations, regardless of their power, their wealth, their history of suffering, or even the injustices they have inflicted on others in the past. (Tamir 1993: 11)

Yael Tamir’s argument is surely sound and has been ratified by Will Kymlicka, among others, in his criticism of Charles Taylor.² The question that remains, however, is what to do with nations that are also ethnic groups. On this note, several commentators have acerbically remarked that it is far easier to empathize with “cuddly minorities” than majority ethnic groups.³ As a result, liberal communitarians tend to evince discomfort with *national ethnicity*.

The deeper question therefore concerns the appropriate cultural strategies for ethnic groups in their “homeland” contexts. This category includes indigenous minorities like the Karen of Burma or the Navaho of Arizona, but also encompasses the world’s *national ethnic groups*—most of which are politically dominant. What I wish to probe, therefore, is the relationship between liberalism, egalitarianism, and *national ethnicity*. National ethnic group is a new term that refers to the ethnic collectivity that considers itself indigenous to a particular national territory (Kaufmann 2001b). Usually, the nation-state will have emerged from this premodern group (A. Smith 1991: 39; Hutchinson 1987; D. Miller 1995: 184). National ethnic groups include politically dominant communities like the English (Britain), French (France), or Javanese (Indonesia), as well as subordinate groups like the Basques in the pre-1975 Basque Country or the French Canadians of pre-1960s Quebec. Notice that I am not refer-

ring to *nations*, which may be civic and polyethnic. I am instead concerned with the *ethnic* identity of the “indigenous” portion of the nation, that is, the national ethnic group.

The American case presents a more complex picture in this respect than some other societies. In addition to the claims of the Native Indian and Eskimo population to indigenoussness, we must also consider the prerogatives of subsequent arrivals who were “indigenized” through the native territorialization and transmutation of their identity. The Anglo-Protestant Americans are one such “primary” ethnic group. So too are black Americans, New Mexican/Texan Hispanics, and the Louisiana Cajuns. Unlike such “secondary”⁴ ethnic groups as the Irish or Chinese, primary group myths, symbols, narratives, and geographic attachments are situated in the New World.

Whereas secondary ethnies evince nostalgia for an “Old World” homeland, the social chasm between primary groups and their immigrant homeland is simply too vast. American Indians feel no attachment to northeast Asia, and black Americans—despite efforts to the contrary—remain more attached to the lowland South (especially the Mississippi Delta region) than West Africa. This condition also applies to the scattered, heavily provincial Anglo-Protestant community, with its frontier narrative and low-church heritage—all of which generates a distinct existential predicament that is not borne by secondary groups. In other words, primary ethnic groups in the United States rely on their New World “homeland” far more deeply than secondary ones.

Notice the importance of national ethnicity to the idea of ethnicity itself. Ethnic groups, by definition, feel an attachment (in reality or in memory) to a particular territory (A. Smith 1991: 21). The possession of such a territory is deemed vital to the survival and realization of the ethnic group’s cultural potential, and those that lack a territory, such as the pre-1948 Jews or post-1948⁵ Palestinians, tend to feel this deficit very keenly. Most political theorists tend to bracket questions of majority-group ethnicity, arguing that such groups—especially in the West—do not require any special cultural recognition since their languages possess official status (Taylor 1992b: 38–42). Some go on to assert that national ethnic groups can achieve cultural fulfillment from nation-state participation (Kymlicka 1991: 189–190).

This is akin to asking the host country at an international Exposition to forsake its pavilion, expressing identity purely through its infrastructure and management functions. Unfortunately, membership in a state *gesell-*

schaft cannot serve as an affective substitute for ethnicity because the *gesellschaft* must be abstract enough to satisfy the imperatives of multicultural neutrality. The upshot is that national ethnic groups literally have “nowhere else to go” in cultural terms as they retreat from their ethnic pavilion into the site manager’s office.

Nevertheless, the dictates of symbolic equity mandate that members of the national ethnic group adopt the nation-state identity as their primary one. In the West, their ethnic distinctiveness comes to be confined to the racial appellation “white”—a phenomenon evident on equal opportunity monitoring forms. Such entities (i.e., French in France, British Canadians in Canada) are thereby encouraged to downplay their ethnicity in favor of an inclusive celebration of nation-state diversity and pride in their state’s tolerance. Members of the national host *ethnie* are thereby compelled, through both moral suasion and institutional censure, to express themselves through cosmopolitan, transethnic activity. Many liberals in the West also urge members of national ethnic groups to celebrate their group’s demographic demise as a release from a shameful, inegalitarian history, and a bland, traditionalist culture. Expressions of ethnic community are frowned upon, and the invocation of national ethnic myths and symbols (i.e., WASP settlers in the United States, Anglo-Saxons in England, Gauls in France) is *verboten*.

The repression of national ethnicity is a pan-Western phenomenon. In Canada, only British Canadians are exempt from multiculturalism funding, while in Australia, writes political scientist David Brown, “the majority, variously depicted as ‘white,’ ‘British,’ ‘English’ or ‘Anglo-Celtic,’ has been treated as a residual category, whose numerical, cultural, socio-economic and political dominance disqualifies them” from being included within Australia’s multicultural framework. “Majority ethnic communities,” Brown adds, “are sometimes marginalized by being depicted as having no strong ethnic attachment, or are portrayed as the ethnic community whose previous dominance must now be compensated for by their new subordination” (Brown 2000: 132–133, 139–140). “WASP” appears not only as a social category but as an epithet of derision in common parlance.

To some extent, the reason for the current antipathy toward the WASP is understandable. Most national ethnic groups, including American WASPs, participated in the hegemonic domination of the states that they founded. In the economic and political sphere, minorities like the Irish, blacks, or Jews in America experienced discrimination, and minorities’ culture was systematically denigrated until the very recent past. In addi-

tion, some contend that national ethnic group symbols (i.e., the term *French* for ethnic Frenchmen in France, or the territory of France as the homeland of the ethnic French) are too closely associated with those of the state. The appropriation of these symbols for ethnic discourse or expression is thereby construed as alienating to the sensibilities of minority-group citizens. Overall, the discriminatory legacy of the past provides liberal-egalitarians with a compelling narrative with which to underpin their normative sanctions of “political correctness.”

The liberal narrative of majority-group discrimination is important to consider and should be invoked to prevent ethnic majorities from reestablishing *hegemony*. But such a rationale cannot justify the cultural code that suppresses the freedom of national ethnic groups to be themselves. Stripping away the right of national ethnic groups to be ethnic, we separate diaspora from homeland so as to undercut the life-support system for the world’s diversity. Italians should celebrate their ethnicity in Florence as well as in south Philadelphia. To force ethnic Italian Florentines to repudiate their identity in order to placate Albanian or Somali immigrants is to undermine Italian-ness in the very place where it has the best chance for long-term success. The Italian in south Philly would probably agree—evinced more concern for the cultural survival of Italy than Italian America.

Contrary to what prophets of globalization like Malcolm Waters optimistically celebrate,⁶ a global situation in which ethnicity has been cut from its homeland roots and must survive exclusively in diasporan form will fast become a postethnic world. As the case of American white ethnics demonstrates, in the fluid, liberal-egalitarian ether of high modernity, it is simply unreasonable to expect diasporan ethnicity to remain robust without regular transfusions from home. Notwithstanding the current vitality of minority ethnic expression, it is likely that the vagaries of interethnic marriage, combined with a civic culture of futuristic individualism and upward mobility, will steadily undercut ethnicity’s structural basis. Clearly, both a strong diaspora and a vibrant homeland ethnicity are necessary to ensure a robust global multiculturalism. What is therefore required is a new form of ethnicity that is compatible with liberalism and egalitarianism, and can be comfortably expressed—not only in the diaspora, but within the confines of the homeland nation as well. How can we reconcile the conflicting aims of ethnicity, which is dependent on flourishing national ethnic groups, with the values of liberty and equality? The answer lies with what I term *liberal ethnicity*.

Toward Liberal Ethnicity

In a recent article, I developed the notion of liberal ethnicity as a conception of the good life rather than as a procedural recipe for managing ethnic relations (Kaufmann 2000). In essence, the liberal ethnic ideal favors the relaxation of barriers to entry into ethnic groups. However, ethnic groups are encouraged to develop their symbolic particularity, or what John Higham refers to as ethnic “nuclei” (Higham [1975] 1984: 242). This means that groups would continue to amass “thick” identities with clear boundary symbols like religion, language, and even race. On the other hand, these *symbolic boundaries* would not be used as *barriers* to prospective group entrants or discriminate against those who possess few group symbols. Here it is important to recall that ethnic groups are not sealed genetic bags but porous quasi-associations.

In other words, if you are a German who wants to join the WASP ethnic group in the United States, you should be able to do so. As an individual, you would expect to be accepted as a WASP on a par with the others—no matter what your surname—but you cannot expect WASP identity to change. That is, you should not expect the nucleus of WASP myths and symbols to alter to accommodate you. Just as Gerry Adams or Pierre-Marc Johnson accept that their surnames are not typically Irish or French Canadian, you will have to accept that your surname will never be as typically WASP as Smith. On the other hand, you should be able to maintain multiple identities—your old German identity as well as transethnic identities like being Catholic and part of the urban professional class—without incurring the ire of your new WASP co-ethnics. The same pattern could be expected of a white American wishing to immerse herself in Afro-American culture. She should be admitted into the Afro-American ethnics but should not expect black Americans to water down their symbolism (such as racial blackness) to suit her.

The above considerations have nothing to do with the American *state*, its national identity and citizenship norms. These should be thin, future-oriented, multicultural, and completely inclusive. The core of American national identity must take on board the contributions of the latest arrivals and place them on a par with long-standing groups. Ethnic groups are optional associations that may be kept at arm’s length, but one cannot easily detach oneself from one’s polity. In other words, you cannot expect your new WASP ethnic group to alter itself to take account of the diversity you bring it, but you should demand that the American state’s polit-

ical identity recognize your German ethnicity as being equal to that of the countless other groups that comprise the American mosaic.

On the wider international stage, a liberal-ethnic world order has much to recommend it. National ethnic groups like “Anglos” in the United States should welcome the advent of global governance, much as Wales or Scotland have welcomed the European Union. Cultural powers, possibly including immigration control, linguistic policy, and education, would remain under the sway of national ethnic groups, though such groups would have to acknowledge the collective rights of diasporan ethnic communities within their borders. Finally, international norms of *global multiculturalism* would reinforce the collective security of ethnic communities, whether inside or outside their home territory—just as international norms of human rights would continue to safeguard individual rights. Overall, then, the advent of liberal ethnicity would lead to a revolutionary departure from existing ethnic practice.

A Reconstructed Americanism: Liberal Ethnicity in the American Context

Through liberal ethnicity, individuals are encouraged to embrace both liberal and ethnic values, with the liberal values taking precedence whenever ethnicity intrudes into the realm of basic liberties. Ethnic groups should develop their particularity and yet maintain a liberal attitude to new entrants and an egalitarian posture toward those with fewer typical ethnic traits. Notice that this *ethnic* ideal has nothing to do with the *state*: states like the United States must *not* develop their particularity. They should not try to assimilate newcomers to anything but the most inclusive ethical precepts, and they ought to be as culturally neutral as possible, operating as explicitly multicultural entities.

On the other hand, states are under no obligation to be open to all comers. Decisions concerning citizenship and immigration will instead be determined by a wide range of considerations. “Secular” concerns about the effect of immigration (pro and con) on the economy, global justice, and the environment will play an important role. Ethnic considerations must also be taken into account, and the state needs to justly arbitrate between the cultural preferences of the state’s ethnic groups. Groups that stand to benefit demographically from a greater inflow will push for this, and those that stand to lose will attempt to limit numbers. Liberal ethnicity only asks that individuals give weight to both secular-liberal and

ethnic concerns, and that the state refrain from instituting the preferences of any particular group(s).

Liberal Ethnicity and American Ideas

Does traditional ethnic relations theory in the United States measure up to the liberal-ethnic standard? American theories can be classed along two axes: consistent—inconsistent and ethnic—transethnic (see Figure 12.1). Consistent theories of ethnic relations include the melting pot (in its Adler-Zangwill version) and the pluralism of Horace Kallen. Inconsistent arguments are found in the writings of the Anglo-conformists and “asymmetrical” pluralists. In addition, the writings of many liberal nationalists, though logically consistent, are highly impractical. Let us now apply the logic of liberal ethnicity to the American case.

The first *consistent* paradigm is that of the classical melting pot, as interpreted by Felix Adler, Israel Zangwill, William I. Thomas, and others, which sought the cross-fertilization of all ethnic groups within a cosmopolitan construct. This idea is consistent with that of a nation of equal individuals. It is a vision that takes the bold step of sacrificing ethnicity for the sake of individual liberty and equality. Similarly, Horace Kallen’s blueprint for a multiethnic federation for international colonies is fundamentally sound. In his model, all ethnic groups (including the Anglo-Saxon) are to have a place at the national table, though none is to be given special status. Kallen did not believe in interethnic marriage and espoused the sanctity of ethnic boundaries and the virtue of a multiethnic polity.

	Pro-Ethnic	Anti-Ethnic
Consistent	Pluralism (Kallen version)	Melting pot (Zangwill version), Liberal nationalism
Inconsistent	Asymmetrical pluralism (i.e., Bourne version), Anglo-conformity	Asymmetrical pluralism (i.e., Bourne version), Anglo-conformity

Figure 12.1. American models of ethnic relations.

Of course, Kallen glossed over the question of indigenoussness, thereby failing to pay sufficient attention to the distinct existential predicament of the “native” Indians and Eskimos, blacks, Anglo-Americans, New Mexican Hispanos, and Louisiana Cajuns, all of whom had forged symbolic connections between their group’s *mythomoteur* and their New World experience. Even so, Kallen, like the melting pot theorists, was consistent in that he made a clear tradeoff (though he would never have admitted as much): ethnic values were to take precedence over those of liberal individualism.

Kallen’s ideas had little direct influence on contemporary debates, but one of his disciples, Randolph Bourne, proved more successful (Gleason 1992: 51–53, 56). Bourne’s “transnational” paradigm, like Kallen’s pluralism, stressed the merits of a multiethnic society. In contrast to Kallen, however, Bourne, possibly owing to his Anglo-Protestant background, placed the Anglo-Saxon at the cosmopolitan center of the American mosaic (Figures 12.2 and 12.3). In Bourne’s view, the Anglo-Saxon should be transethnic and cosmopolitan, while other groups should be ethnically

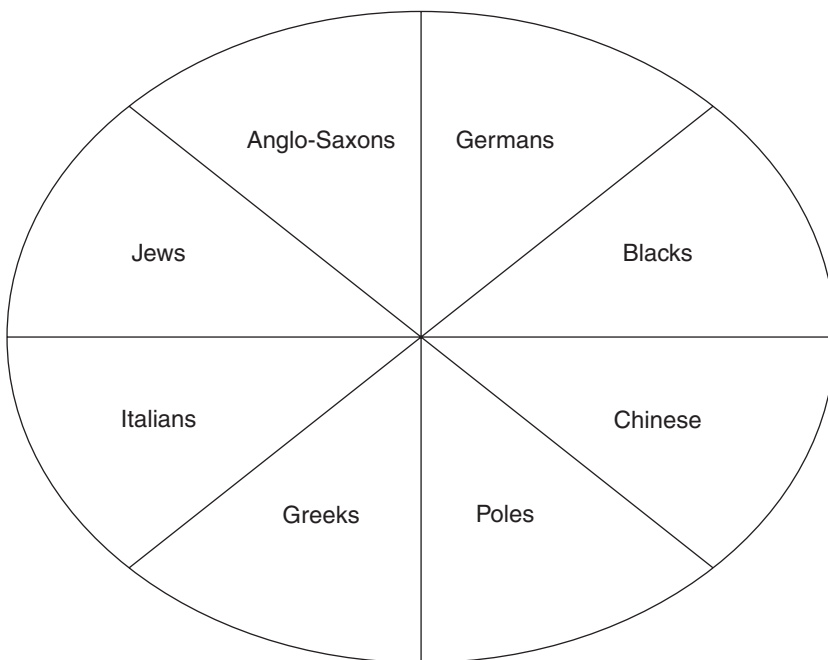


Figure 12.2. Horace Kallen’s “symmetrical” pluralism.

conservative (Bourne [1916] 1964: 113–114, 118). Thus Bourne wound up betraying both ethnic and liberal values, though his argument remained consistent with the dictates of egalitarianism in that it weakened the power center while strengthening minority groups.

Unfortunately, it was Bourne’s vision that attained paradigmatic status in progressive circles and remains with us today in the form of modern, *asymmetrical* multiculturalism. This creed represses majority-group ethnic expression while simultaneously supporting both “exotic” ethnicity and “subversive” forms of transethnicity. The result is the increasing alienation of a large segment of the American populace from the ideas of ethnicity and multiculturalism. The majority, excluded from partaking in a meaningful ethnic option, turns its back on the entire concept in favor of a universalist individualism. This forces the national mass culture to adopt an individualistic hue, fostering a cultural ethic hostile to ethnic survival. It is therefore no accident that modern, asymmetrical multiculturalism finds itself hoist on its own petard.

Opponents of multiculturalism have committed similar blunders.

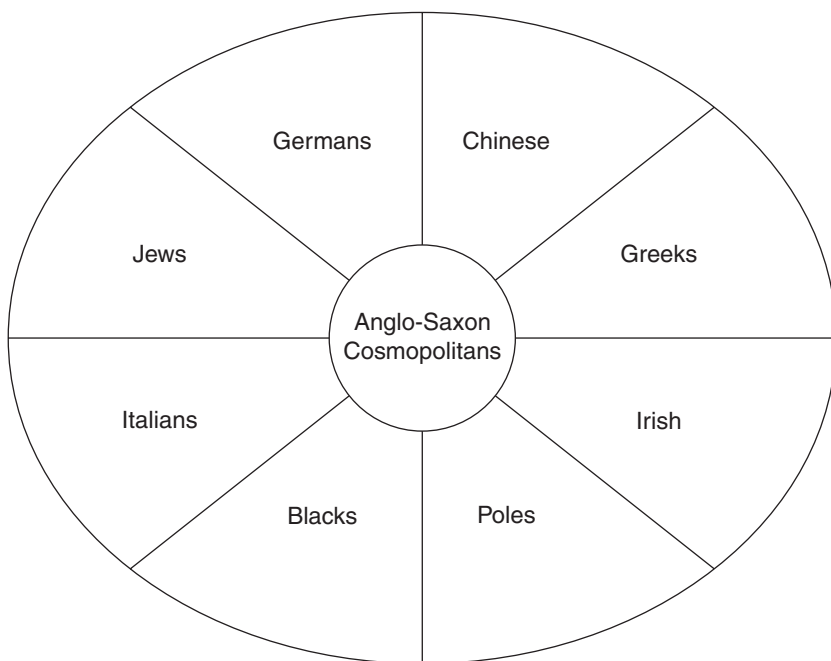


Figure 12.3. Randolph Bourne’s “asymmetrical” pluralism.

Anglo-conformists (i.e., advocates of dominant ethnicity) sought to render their society ethnically homogeneous, yet they persisted in discriminating against racial and ethnic minorities, casting a spell of second-class citizenship which impeded integration. Their advocacy of theories of Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic ethnic purity also mitigated against the incorporation of ethnic minorities into a homogeneous national entity. Beyond this, however, the Anglo-conformists were consistent. They sought to sacrifice equality and individualism for dominant ethnicity. Happily, they did not succeed.

In our final category are the mainstream civic nationalists, who, from the consensus era onward, erroneously believed that civic attachment to the American nation-state could somehow serve as a substitute for ethnic ties. They thereby attempted to fuse the melting pot concept with a watered-down Anglo-conformity. States are certainly capable of attracting loyalty, and most Americans strongly identify with the American one. However, a minimal state committed to individualism and cultural tolerance must be constructed from a thin, abstract set of symbols in order to provide a lowest common denominator for the entire citizenry. The citizens will be loyal to the state and defend it in times of stress, but in their daily existence, the abstract state cannot possibly supplant their symbolically rich, ethnic *gemeinschaft*.

Liberal nationalists thereby grossly underestimate the power of ethnicity, which enchants the daily lifeworld, romanticizing mundane, average, and commonplace experiences within a narrative of “living history.” Moreover, ethnic identity:

With its stress on a beginning and flow in time, and a delimitation in space, raises barriers to the flood of meaninglessness and absurdity that might otherwise engulf human beings. It tells them that they belong to ancient associations of “their kind” with definite boundaries in time and space, and this gives their otherwise ambiguous and precarious lives a degree of certainty and purpose. . . . By linking oneself to a “community of history and destiny,” the individual hopes to achieve a measure of immortality which will preserve his or her person from oblivion; they will live on and bear fruit in the community. . . . It is in and through offspring that deeds live on and memories are kept alive. But these deeds and memories only “make sense” within a chain of like deeds and memories, which stretch back into the mists of obscure generations of ancestors and forward into

the equally unknowable generations of descendants. (Regis Debray, in A. Smith 1986: 175–176)

Thus liberal nationalists, from the consensus theorists to Arthur Schlesinger and Peter Salins, are faced with a dilemma. To the degree that they enrich the symbolic load of the nation-state with Anglo-influenced symbolism (language, history, institutions, key personages) in order to compete with ethnicity, they act as Anglo-conformists. This alienates minorities and betrays the cause of equality. Yet, to the degree that liberal nationalists back away from a historically rooted national identity in order to remain true to their liberal principles, they surrender their hold over the popular imagination to ethnicity. Most liberal-nationalist political theorists tend to opt for conceptions of the nation that run deeper than mere constitutional commitment, but embrace no more than a “civic” variant of public culture and history that cannot compete with the resonance of ethnic identities⁷ (D. Miller 1995: 141–142, 189; Lichtenberg 1997: 160–161). Consequently, the liberal nationalists are not so much inconsistent as they are impractical: they can be minimal-state liberals, maximal-state Anglo-conformists, or something in between, but they cannot have their cake and eat it too.

Nor can liberal nationalism invest its hopes in the wrecking-ball of American individualism. In the long run, individualism may attenuate ethnic attachments, as has occurred among many white ethnic groups, which will level ethnic barriers to the liberal-nationalist vision. But is apathy much better than antipathy? A nation-state composed of self-interested, expressively oriented individuals can hardly be expected to sign on to the liberal-nationalist credo of civic participation, national welfare provision, and public culture (D. Miller 1995: 68–70). Hence, even with the advent of postethnicity, the apostles of liberal nationalism are unlikely to realize their vision.

A Reconstructed Multiculturalism?

The inconsistency of asymmetrical multiculturalism and Anglo-conformity, coupled with the impracticality of liberal nationalism, brings us back to the consistent positions advocated by the melting pot and pluralist theorists prior to the 1920s. The melting pot paradigm sought to privilege the individual over the ethnic community, while the pluralist model favored ethnic over individual self-expression. What is needed is a

quantum leap that allows for the retention of both ethnicity and individuality, all within the context of equality. It is obviously time to revisit the idea of liberal ethnicity that we delineated earlier.

A liberal-ethnic position cannot endorse the melting pot model. Instead, our new concept must embrace the multicultural idea that ethnic groups are an important source of meaning, security, and continuity in modern societies. The new model also recognizes that ethnicity is not for everyone. State or civic opinion-makers should neither encourage nor discourage ethnic practice. The state should insist that all be taught the virtues and failings of both cosmopolitan *and* ethnic values. It may accomplish this by either separate ethnic courses or subsections of state curricula. In the process, it should be ensured that assent be given to both ethnic and transethnic lifestyle options.

It is also important that no normative distinction be drawn between various ethnic groups. In short, the asymmetry of contemporary American multiculturalism, slanted as it is against “old-stock” groups, must be rectified. It should be made clear that Anglo-American is as valid an identity choice as Japanese or Italian-American and that all groups have both shameful and proud episodes in their respective pasts. The liberal left played an important part in developing pluralist ideas during the dark age of Anglo-conformity, but their antinationalist vision is now an anachronism. In effect, multiculturalism is too important an idea to be left to those radicals who are looking for a convenient successor to the Marxist epic. It must be rescued from them in order to find acceptance at the American center.

A Secular Great Awakening: Toward an American Cultural Revival

Many assimilationist Americanizers fall back upon a coercive vision of the American state because they are denied a native American ethnic option. The new dispensation ought therefore to provide space for variants of “American” *ethnicity* to develop—as long as their advocates recognize that the American *nation-state* is a multicultural one. The notion of ethnogenesis is only dimly apprehended by many Americans, who take ethnicity as a given, primordial quality. On the contrary, there is no ethnic group on the planet that was not created in humanity’s very recent past. In fact, many, like the Slovaks, Finns, or Yoruba, are no more than a century or two old and owe much to the romantic movement’s reaction against the

alienation of modern life (Ranger 1983: 211–262; Peel 1989; A. Smith 1991: 67).

A rebuttal to those who would proscribe indigenous “American” ethnogenesis relates to the deracinated condition of its three oldest ethnic communities. Native Indians, black Americans, and Anglo-Protestants literally have “nowhere else to go” in their existential search for community because they are New World formations that have become thoroughly blended, transmuted, and indigenized. To these groups may be added the rising legions of mixed-origin Americans whose sense of ethnicity is dim or fragmented. Even for those of single ancestry, multiple generations of residence leads, for many, to a sense of alienation from the ethnic homeland that cries out for resolution. The daily rhythms, local histories, and environment of American life are likely to render “American” ethnic constructs especially appealing. In the future, therefore, with the large-scale mixing of much of the American population and the related blurring of the connection between surname, phenotype, and ancestry, we may witness the rise of a national “American” ethnic group with a legitimate claim to recognition within the framework of global multiculturalism.

The discussion so far should be reinforcing the idea that neither the United States nor other New World societies have “exceptional” populations that can subsist on identities devoid of history and territorial rootedness. I try to dispel the notion that residents of the Old World see themselves as part of a timeless river of culture, while those in the New World identify as individual drops of water washing over a cultureless backdrop. All nations are both nations of immigrants and homelands for their native-born. The Turks did not possess Turkey until 1453, while the Taiwanese, Singaporeans, and Ulster Protestants have ethnic histories no longer than that of the Anglo-Americans. It is a completely spurious artifice to distinguish the former as timeless, Old World entities, and the Anglo-Americans as New World ephemera. Some human beings prefer to have ethnic attachments while others wish to be free of them. Geography plays no role in this issue, though habits prevailing in one location condemn some to be cultureless, others unfree.

It has long been possible for the individualistically inclined Ayn Rands of the Old World to migrate to the New in search of freedom. It has also been feasible for secondary ethnics in the New World to return to their ancestral homelands. But it is an altogether different matter for the American black, Native Indian, Anglo, or multiethnic “mutt” to return to an ethnic experience. For these native-born Americans, the only serious

ethnic option is to draw on the New World experience. To block this option is to limit the choices, and potential, of the American people. A better solution is to lift the barriers and widen the scope for ethnogenesis. This is in better accord with a more global view of cultural diversity, in which everyone has the possibility for escape and for return. Such an aim would best be served by a world of multicultural, neutral states in which both ethnic homelands and modernist enclaves could flourish.

In the United States, cultural ferment based on a blend of Native Indian, Anglo-Protestant, and Afro-Protestant symbols and myths would represent the zenith of “American” ethnogenesis and would command strong legitimacy from those outside the country. This is a far more appealing vision than the class-divided nightmare of an elite of lighter-skinned Eurasians resting atop ethnically divided lower strata. To reiterate: as a liberal-ethnic group, the “Americans” would share their land with other groups on an equal basis, and the blood of all of the world’s peoples would flow in their veins. However, the psychological realities of *gestalt* limit the number of ancestors upon which ethnic “Americans” would be able to meaningfully draw to the Native Indian, Anglo-Protestant, and Afro-Protestant.

Gestalt psychology points out that our cognitive structures must sift “foreground” information from the “background” bombardment our senses receive. In cultural terms, this often leads to the selection of the “part from the whole,” in which certain motifs or regional myths come to stand for the entire national or ethnic community. For instance, many “typical” Norwegian motifs come from very specific rural valley locales (Eriksen 1993: 103). Similarly, Zulu myths and memories largely fixate upon those of Shaka’s (originally insignificant) Zulu clan, which proceeded to absorb its neighbors in the early nineteenth century. The imperatives of gestalt explain why Greeks conveniently ignore their considerable Slavic and Turkic blood, and Jews their Chazar, Arabic, and European lineage. Indeed, it would hardly be unusual for a future American ethnic group to omit the Swedish, Japanese, and a thousand other bloodlines from its genealogy, selecting from its diverse genetic pool a restricted number of ancestors (A. Smith 1986: 212).

In Trinidad, blacks and Hindu are already coming together to form a new national ethnic group much as Spanish and Aztec did in Mexico after 1917⁸ (Francis 1976: 348–349). Yet, a native, Brazilian ethnicity has yet to emerge from Portuguese, African, and Indian strands, and too few Peruvians have grasped the possibilities of an Inca-Spanish blend. The

same dilemma characterizes the United States. The truly national extent of the folkways, place names, history, and settlement patterns of the Native Indians, native blacks, and Anglo-Protestants inexorably points toward these groups as the ideological and genealogical touchstones for a new, substate, ethnic Americanism. The key for future generations of Americans will be to unlock this cultural potential within a liberal, multicultural framework that safeguards the rights of those American citizens who choose not to identify with this new group.

The Individualist Challenge

Perhaps the most formidable barrier standing in the way of a reconstructed, liberal American ethnic is the coercive power of modernism, which pressures Americans to be individualistic and future-oriented. Rob Farr argues that individualism in Western societies, far from reflecting an ideological vacuum, actually serves as a collective leitmotif (Farr 1996). In this manner, the institutions of American society enforce an individualistic norm that works against the expression of communal attachments (Bellah [1985] 1996; Lasch 1995; Taylor 1992a).

The modernist imperative to be expressively distinct is accompanied by intense pressure to conform to a futurist orientation so as to be free of one's past. As Michael Novak stressed in 1971, "future shock," and staying "with it," are the new rules of conformity in American society (Novak 1971: 62). Peer-group pressure to follow the latest fashion and watch the correct "hip" programs, media persuasion to consume the latest fad, stay forever young and mouth the latest buzzword, professional pressure to keep up with the most recent trend—all are instances of coercive modernism. Historic cultures are typically viewed as *passé*, nostalgic, or "hokey"—evidence of a less-than-independent mind.

In addition to novelty, change, immediacy, and expressive individualism, recall that modernism endorses an ethic of diversity. This accounts for the taken-for-granted, aesthetic judgment among many in the cosmopolitan mainstream that one *ought to prefer* diversity within one's nation, one's milieu, and oneself. I have no quarrel with the merits of a multiethnic nation-state. What I find disturbing, however, is the blurring of two ideas—the culturally tolerant idea of *accepting* ethnic diversity within one's nation-state and the culturally imperialistic modernist creed of *preferring* diversity over homogeneity within one's own lifeworld.

In truth, one can no more dictate a taste for diversity than one can

dictate a taste for anchovies. The idea of tolerance allows space for both ethnics and cosmopolitans to flourish, but the rhetoric of “celebrating” diversity—especially insofar as this pertains to the majority—only recognizes the merits of cosmopolitanism. A reconstructed multiculturalism would respect the choice of those who prefer an ethnically homogeneous milieu, those who prefer to live in an ethnically diverse environment, and those who favor some mixture of the two. From a global perspective, this makes sense—flourishing national ethnic groups are the source of the diversity that cosmopolitans so prize. What society *can* insist on is the practice of liberal ethnicity, namely, an inclusive, tolerant ethnicity that respects its members’ right to hold multiple identities and encourages a tolerance of other ethnic groups.

Where does equality, the other independent factor in the demise of Anglo-America, figure in this picture? The dictates of egalitarianism have moderated the raw impact of individualism by opening up a limited space for marginalized ethnic groups to express themselves. However, members of the majority “Anglo” or white American group are not shielded from such pressure. Since Northern/Western Europeans and mixed-ancestry whites are decisive shapers of American mass culture, the individualistic ethos of their milieu comes to be transposed onto other groups. In other words, the suppression of dominant-group ethnic expression alienates the majority group from ethnicity *per se*. This forces the mass culture to take on an individualistic hue, thereby generating an acidic social environment that erodes the structural basis of all ethnic groups.

Toward Cultural Revival

Let us be clear here: there is nothing wrong with individualism, modernism, or transethnicity as lifestyle *options*. Rather, pathology derives from the conformist, normative pressure that modernism brings to bear on American life. A better social recipe than individualist mimesis is cultural tolerance. Such a position would embrace both individualist and collectivist forms of expression. A similar form of moderation is in order on the equality front. It is simply going too far to ask national ethnic groups to bleed their cultures dry so as to accommodate every wisp of minority-group alienation. On the other hand, it is not too much to ask that the host ethnic group keep its hands off the state. What is therefore needed is a secular, multicultural public sphere within which all ethnic groups can freely express themselves.

A relaxation of conformist individualism, coupled with the institution of a liberal-ethnic multiculturalism, may help nurture the cultural instincts of majority-group Americans. This could lead to a “secular great awakening,” or revival, of Anglo-American ethnicity and its regional subcultures—in a manner similar to the Regionalist and Colonial Revival movements earlier in the twentieth century. A desire to reconnect with the agrarian, neoclassical, and pathfinder motifs would constitute the “national” arm of a cultural revival. This might be followed by a “regionalist” interest in engaging with the folkways and history of the major regions, particularly the highly atrophied New England tradition.

This rediscovery could in turn be used as an interpretive communal framework, providing a connection between past and present, individual and community. Such a revival would help to bring the proper names, architecture, landscapes, events, and consumer choices of modern life within a narrative context of culture and history. No longer would so many wander through life alienated from their surroundings and routines. Instead, more of their daily activities could be framed by a meaningful cultural story, which in turn could inform consumer and producer choices. Notice the difference between this liberal Anglo-American *national* ethnicity and the Anglo-American *dominant* ethnicity of the past. There is no emphasis here on dominating the state and the economy, just a private effort to cultivate group ethnic resources.

With time, a more powerful, mulatto “American” ethnogenesis may take place. This cultural complex would distill elements from the Anglo-Protestant, native black, and Native Indian traditions into a powerful expression of indigenous Americanism. This might involve the blending of Anglo-Protestant myths and symbols; Native Indian geographical names, aesthetic patterns and building styles; and black American folk music, agrarian traditions, and narratives of migration and resistance. Similar to the fusion of Spanish and Aztec in Mexico, the Afro-Anglo-Indian combination could provide the rich wellsprings for an American cultural renaissance.

Again, it is vital that any new national ethnicity adhere to the strictures of liberal-ethnic practice. Under the dictates of this reconstructed multiculturalism, institutional pressure must be brought to bear on ethnic revival, prompting the communitarian impulse to discharge itself along liberal lines. This means the separation of “nation” from state, the acceptance of a multi-ethnic polity, the abolition of ethnic hierarchy, and the maintenance of permeable ethnic boundaries. Liberal worries that a majority

cultural revival might take on authoritarian forms are not unfounded, as the example of the American 1920s shows.

Yet the 1920s gave way to the liberalism of the 1960s largely because American WASPs reformed themselves. If liberals allow the fear of ethnonationalism to carry all before it and demand that national ethnic groups surrender their existence, they risk the very legitimacy of their project. After all, few national ethnic groups outside the northwest European/North American heartland of liberalism are likely to accept this sacrifice. Even within this heartland, extremist groups playing the fascist card will find their audiences more receptive if liberalism goes unreformed. What I am suggesting is that the widely accepted modern version of Whig history that views any shift to cosmopolitanism as “progressive” is yesterday’s creed. In order to sustain itself, liberalism must accept the idea that cultural communities, even in their national homelands, have validity. This is the premise of the synthesis I have named *liberal ethnicity*.

Transethnic, modernist enclaves have everything to gain from these developments. First, liberal ethnicity welcomes the opportunity for individuals to cultivate multiple identities, whether ethnic or transethnic. Second, the salutary effects of liberal ethnicity on modernism must be brought to light. Recall that modernism drew strength from the Anglo-Protestant tradition because dominant ethnicity provided a “generalized Other,” in Mead’s terminology, against which modernism could find itself. The dissipation of a majority-group ethnic challenge greatly weakens modernism’s creative stimulus, hence the remarks of those who herald the exhaustion of modernist creativity in its latest “postmodern” guise (Bell [1976] 1996: 20, 145).

According to Hegel, one cannot know oneself in isolation. Only through dialogue with another, through the monitoring of the Other’s response to Self, can one attain self-knowledge (Hegel [1807] 1977: 114–118; Lavine [1984] 1989: 220–222). The problem is that individuals too often seek to master their Other. In like manner, the impulse of any social movement is to universalize itself, thereby mastering all opponents and negating them. However, just as the individual who kills or enslaves his competitor loses a reference point for his sense of self, so it is that a hegemonic cultural idiom like modernism loses self-consciousness if it masters its opponent. Applying this logic to the modernist juggernaut, Ulf Hannerz succinctly remarks: “There can be no cosmopolitans without locals” (Hannerz [1990] 1995: 250).

“The quest for cultural diversity may turn out to be self-defeating,” adds

David Miller, “because as cultures become more accessible to outsiders they also begin to lose their depth and their distinctive character . . . as more people are able to travel further afield, their presence dilutes the local cultures which must adapt to receive them, so that the main charm of travel—the promise of change, of encountering the strange and exotic—is lost” (Miller 1995: 186). The revival of a culturally vibrant American national ethnicity would make the United States a more interesting place for foreign cosmopolitans to visit and would inject meaning and self-esteem into many American lives.

At the same time, modernist cosmopolitanism, by sharing cultural influence with its ethnic Other, would emerge sharper and more creative. Majority-group cultural revival under the auspices of liberal ethnicity would reconstitute the United States as a richer field of cultural activity. A rich cultural landscape of vibrant ethnicity and dynamic modernism would replace today’s routinized, monochrome individualism. In the end, an enduring Americanism must be sought in this *qualitative* ferment, rather than in the ephemeral quantitative triumphs of state performance—whether martial, material, athletic, or ideological.¹⁰

Should such a revolution in consciousness succeed the American “Anglo” majority will be reintroduced to its cultural roots, expressing its identity in reconstructed form. This transfer of identity from state to ethnic will take the edge off American individualism and will give the American majority the existential security necessary to tone down an often insular patriotism. The shift from state to ethnic group may also occasion a humbler, more welcoming stance toward international institutions like the United Nations. It should also help many Americans to accept some loss of state power to supranational bodies, thereby facilitating international initiatives geared toward the improvement of the global environment, the reduction of Third World poverty, and the cessation of international conflict.

Conclusion

Throughout history, civilizations, tribes, and ethnic groups have interacted in both peaceful and hostile ways. The disappearance of ethnic groups, for instance, has occurred through both hostile conquest and peaceful assimilation. Carthaginians, Britons, and Chazars provide examples of the hostile process, while Normans, Cornish, and Wends furnish examples of the many groups whose corporate existence has been lost through assimilation and mass immigration. In virtually all cases, the “losing” ethnic group has tended to lack the cultural resources—technological or artistic—necessary to sustain social cohesion in the face of large-scale immigration or conquest.

There is, however, a category of civilization, typically found in Antiquity, that has appeared to possess cultural superiority but has nevertheless undergone dissolution. The Romans, Assyrians, and Phoenicians all led powerful empires, but the syncretism and internationalism of their cultures and heartland cities helped drive a wedge between a cosmopolitan elite and the isolated mass of the group’s cultural core. In effect, the imperatives of the wider, cosmopolitan civilization captured the affections of the cultural elite, and when this elite faced hostile conquest, the bulk of the native population was left without the vertically binding markers and institutions of cultural distinctiveness necessary to ensure survival (A. Smith 1986: 101).

Let us insert the Anglo-Protestant Americans into this picture. Here is a classic settler ethnîe, forged through ethnic fission along the same lines as the Ulster Protestants, Anatolian Turks, Afrikaners, or French Canadians. The American ethnîe, though strongly divided by class and region, still maintained a degree of cohesion into the twentieth century. Forces of imperialist internationalism (along Roman or Assyrian lines) appeared in the nineteenth century, exemplified by the debates over Philippine ex-

pansion and Chinese immigration. Nevertheless, the popular-democratic nature of the American polity enabled the Anglo-Protestant masses to effect a degree of ethnic closure in the form of immigration restriction, Americanization, and temperance legislation. Until this point, in the 1920s, the Anglo-Americans appeared to fit the model of an ethnic group—the *fin-de-siècle* Turks and Orthodox Greeks come to mind—that had taken steps to consolidate itself for long-term success.

This was not to last, however. The dominant position of the WASP in American life rapidly receded in the twentieth century. WASP ethnic boundaries began to fade as the Protestant crusade, anti-Catholicism, and temperance lost their hold over the liberal American mind between 1900 and 1910. In the 1920s, Germans, Scandinavians, and Irish Catholics partly ascended the “American” podium as “Nordics” when race challenged religion as the main criterion for ethnic belonging. This rise in status helped northwestern European groups to succeed in the manual labor market. By the 1930s, they were joined by other Europeans, while Jews gained entry in the 1940s. In the 1960s, formerly excluded European groups entered the nation’s upper strata in large numbers, joined two decades later by non-Europeans. The American “core” changed more slowly than its boundaries: the WASP remained the American cultural icon until the 1970s and still lingers today.

The ultimate disappearance of the Anglo-Protestant ethnic on American soil is by no means assured, but the marked decline in Anglo-American ethnic activity is a phenomenon of world-historical importance. This is so for one reason: namely, that *ethnic decline has occurred as a consequence of an explicit ethnic ideology*. Other dominant groups have atrophied through a cultural syncretism bred by overexpansion, but no such group has explicitly sought its own dissolution outside the imperialist mode. Indeed, the Anglo-Americans would appear to furnish the first example of dominant ethnic dissolution occurring in the post-1648 age of bounded states.

The idea that liberalism and egalitarianism, in their cultural forms, are part of the myth-symbol complex of the Anglo-American ethnic (not merely its nation-state) was outlined in Chapter 2. These ideological markers served to differentiate Americans from the British, but formed part of an integrated set of boundary markers that included the Americanized English language, a North European phenotype, low-church Protestantism, Yeoman Republicanism, and an Anglo-Saxon myth of origin. Throughout the first century and a half of American national existence, there existed a tension between the imperatives of liberty-equality and

Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. In Chapter 3, we saw how intellectual “double-consciousness” was pressed into service in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to resolve this difficulty, a mental trick that kept the American ethnic intact.

An ethnic group with Enlightenment principles at its core is inherently unstable, and, as the logic of liberty and equality unfolded within the cultural sphere, these symbolic forces burst the boundaries of American ethnicity and emerged into the ether of universalism. The crisis first came to a head with the Chinese immigration question between the 1860s and 1882, which exposed the contradiction between universalist liberalism and dominant ethnicity. This crisis began to force Anglo-Americans into two camps: those whose loyalty lay with their ethnicity and those whose ethical commitment to liberalism prompted them to subconsciously exit from their own group. Prompted by Populism and the early Social Gospel movement, most Anglo-Americans, including intellectuals, accepted that the sacrifice of liberal principles pertaining to migration and acculturation was an acceptable price to pay for dominant ethnic maintenance.

This was not everyone’s view, however. *Laissez-faire* capitalists, libertarians, and empire builders still favored unrestricted immigration, albeit under WASP tutelage. Furthermore, after the turn of the twentieth century, many egalitarians also adopted a pro-immigration stance. This latter group drew inspiration from the intellectual breakthroughs of pluralism, which stemmed from the libertarian progressivism of Felix Adler and William James. This critical crossover of expressive individualism and cultural egalitarianism gave rise to the Liberal-Progressive social movement, the first to make the existential break with Anglo-Protestantism.

Jane Addams and John Dewey were leading advocates of Liberal-Progressive cosmopolitanism. They argued for an end to Anglo-Protestant hegemony because they felt that the common dignity of human beings required the United States to accept all cultures on an equal footing. This in turn mandated the retention of immigrant cultural traditions, albeit within the fold of a new, multiply-constituted cosmopolitan nation in which “all gave and all received.” Ecumenically minded Protestant intellectuals in northern mainline denominations interacted closely with the Liberal Progressives and quickly picked up on the Liberal-Progressive vision of American identity. Though only dimly aware of it at the time, these egalitarian pioneers were shedding their ethnic attachments and grasping the moorings of an intellectual adversary community.

The expressive-individualist innovators in pre-World War I New York,

known as the “Young Intellectuals,” gave aesthetic flesh to this new avant-garde community. This was achieved by transfiguring liberty and equality into an epiphany of modernist, countercultural symbolism, complete with a communal destiny and ideological myth of descent. By the 1930s, these ethical and aesthetic advances of the prewar period came to influence Anglo-Protestant opinion-makers in the media, northern churches, schools, and universities.

Meanwhile, better-educated Anglo-Protestants began to look to the liberal-egalitarian avant-garde for cultural trends like modernism in architecture, art, and product design, and existential guidance (such as the adoption of a more cosmopolitan identity). By the 1940s, this influence penetrated the provinces of the federal judiciary, executive, and bureaucracy, steering government policy in a more cosmopolitan direction. With the emergence of the G.I. Bill, university expansion began, a process that greatly enhanced the diffusion of more cosmopolitan notions of American identity among Anglo-Protestants in the 1950s and 1960s.

The period from the 1920s to the 1960s had resulted in the culling of the “WASP” components from the American nation. To be sure, this was a two-step process. WASP boundaries in employment, education, the military, and politics were breached as early as the late 1920s, especially for Irish and German Catholics. On the other hand, the ethnic “core” of myths and symbols held out longer: the ideal-type, “all-American” to which others conformed remained WASP into the 1970s. Thereafter, Anglo-Saxon Protestantism rapidly yielded its role as the leading cultural discourse to cosmopolitan modernism. This cultural earthquake etched new social patterns in the former Anglo-Protestant population (and its various assimilated elements). First of all, there was the American national identity. This now consisted only of the residual American Creed of liberty and equal opportunity, the newly minted “nation of immigrants” discourse, and a thick forest of civic signs: official regalia, government infrastructure, consumer iconography, and pop culture.

Many of those who once identified as ethnic Anglo-Americans stood out against this relatively impersonal, presentist cultural backdrop only as privatized individuals identifying with personal characteristics. Others experienced direct participation in the many subcultures of American life. Lifestyle enclaves, whether occupational or recreational, probably filled most of the existential vacuum, much as Emile Durkheim might have predicted. For those with a good university degree, high-status identity fulfilled existential needs. On the other hand, the less advantaged tended

to gravitate to race or religion (especially of the fundamentalist variety) in pursuit of status and psychic security. Within this array, a small minority of Anglo-Americans—left-wing cultural elites, homosexuals, and some feminists—counted themselves part of the “multicultural” movement, seeking to attain greater resources and recognition for minority groups.

Contrary to popular belief, the post-1960s period has dealt harshly with multiculturalism. Rather than bolster this doctrine, it has hastened the shift from mosaic to melting pot—from what might be termed hierarchical multiculturalism to melting pot cosmopolitanism. This was manifested in the leveling of ethnic hierarchies and the large-scale relaxation of ethnic boundaries, which moved the United States away from a *dominant-ethnic* to a *liberal-egalitarian* pattern of social relationships. Inter-marriage and ethnic social mobility thereby sealed the fate of dominant ethnicity and gave birth to the cosmopolitan melting pot pattern we see today. The seeming vitality of multiculturalism *discourse* is arguably the expression of a transition phase in which newly empowered groups revel in their newfound status, even as their membership slowly assimilates into the general subcultural landscape, adopting the new, minimal, national identity.

The future of dominant ethnicity is less certain than its recent history of decline. Even if Anglo-Protestantism is on the wane, one might argue that there could still be a future for “Anglo” (English-speaking, white) dominant ethnicity. Rising rates of intermarriage among white groups could lead to the dissolution of the Anglo-Saxon within a broader identity. Yet such a project is unlikely to succeed. Race could conceivably serve to rally whites around a project of *political* domination, but culturally, whiteness is an opaque mask that lacks focus and obscures more than it illuminates. As with the European Union, any attempt to forge a common, inclusive European identity falters on the rocks of abstraction. Which Europe? What symbols? Which group experiences? Cultural power is impeded by the sheer number of groups involved and by the vast gulf between “old-stock” and “ethnic” historical narratives. The weakness of white identity is also facilitated by the continuation of those forces of cultural liberty and equality that so decimated Anglo-Protestant dominant ethnicity. Representatives of European subgroups will demand equal symbolic play, and many will denounce the whole project as illiberal. The exponential rise in interracial marriage rates further portends the demise of the Euro-American idea.

The preceding exercise in social prediction springs from my conviction that liberty and equality are the premier drivers of American culture, constituting a barrier to dominant-ethnic expression. Liberal ideas disable ethnic boundaries, driving the immigration and blending that will result in an American population that is a quarter mixed-race and half nonwhite by 2050. Increasingly, race and ethnicity are being superseded. This brings us full circle, back to the idea that American society will divide along *transethnic* lines in the longer term. Status and ideology will probably form the principal master frames, bearing out Daniel Bell's four-quadrant scheme which we visited in Chapter 8. Upper-status groups will continue to differentiate themselves from the lower by income, education, and cosmopolitan sensibility. Within this upper-status group, public-sector and creative professionals, with their Democratic sympathies, will tend to form a separate group from the Republican-oriented private-sector managers and professionals.

Race and ethnicity will play a role in this new alignment only insofar as whites and Asians (as well as mixed Eurasians) remain overrepresented in upper-status groups, while blacks and Hispanics remain underrepresented in them. This opens up the possibility that we may witness the rise of a caste-like dominant ethnic ideal. Indeed, it is interesting that the one area where WASP characteristics have been most resistant is in the realm of national icons (i.e., president, popular culture stars). American society might thus come to resemble the many parts of the world where light skin is an ideal associated with higher status and national icons—Latin America, the Caribbean, parts of the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, the Horn of Africa, and much of East Asia. In terms of authenticity, light skin and Anglo cultural characteristics might serve to signify WASP ancestry—however partial and distant—in much the same way as upper-caste Indian Hindus revere their Aryan ancestors, upper-status Indian Muslims look to their lighter-skinned Persian/Afghan Mughal forbears, and Ethiopian Amhara trace their Semitic pedigree.

The survival of an ethnic caste-ideal does not alter the general picture of collapsing ethnic boundaries. The immigration of new ethnic diasporas might mitigate ethnic decline somewhat, but—given ecological constraints—only for a limited period. Over the *longue durée*, this thesis would suggest that racial boundaries, as with ethnic boundaries, will continue to weaken, thereby generating a symbolically fluid, highly privatized, post-ethnic social environment. The only foreseeable force that could reverse the decline of dominant ethnicity in the United States is an

intellectual crisis in which the cosmopolitan paradigm is jettisoned. This would entail the American cultural elite losing faith in liberty and equality as the ultimate standards of social progress. In effect, these Enlightenment ideals would need to be superseded as the definition of the Good in America. Such an about-turn would represent a civilizational cataclysm, rupturing a progressive narrative that is hundreds of years old, a truly post-“modern” development that is nowhere in sight.

Notes

References

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Notes

1. Introduction

1. The Canadian sociologist John Porter coined this structure a “vertical mosaic” in reference to WASP dominance in Canada (Porter 1965).
2. From the Greek *cosmo* and *polis*, meaning “the world is my city.” Anthony Smith argues that nationalists have traditionally viewed cosmopolitanism as the antithesis of nationalism and ethnicity. He adds that cosmopolitanism has a long pedigree that embraces the history of most of the major empires and religious realms. However, Smith maintains that, in its current, postmodernist form, cosmopolitanism constitutes a “memoryless,” problematic entity (Smith 1990a: 6; 1990b: 174–175; 1995: 19–21).

For Ulf Hannerz, cosmopolitanism is more of an ideology of the Self, which entails a set of relationships to a diversity of cultures. In his words, “a more genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It is an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity” (Hannerz 1990: 239). Whereas ethnic identity is delimited in territorial (space) and ancestral (time) terms, I use the term *cosmopolitanism* to describe the phenomenon of spaceless, timeless, “virtual” identity. Fields of cosmopolitan activity need not be global in scale—though global extension often constitutes the goal of a cosmopolitan social movement.

2. The Rise of Anglo-America

1. Even those who have acknowledged the presence of American dominant ethnicity have tended to explain it as a transient phenomenon, present only as a series of brief “nativist” upsurges against a background of liberal openness, the result of economic deprivation or racist ideology (Higham [1955] 1988; Kohn 1957). Liah Greenfeld writes that nativism and Anglo-Saxonism were “a marginal alternative to the national identity which was profoundly universalistic” (Greenfeld 1992: 438).

2. Eugen Weber, for instance, claims that roughly half of French schoolchildren in the late nineteenth century could not speak French—and thus had to be actively converted to French identity (Weber 1976: 67).
3. A notable exception occurred in parts of the South where the white population knew itself to be merely “white” or “American.”
4. Another interesting perspective is that provided by Edwin G. Burrows’s concept of vernacular ancestralism in Revolutionary America (Burrows 1982).
5. For further discussion, see Eriksen 1993: 44. “Ethnic Category” refers to an ethnically conscious population with the lowest degree of incorporation according to Handelman’s classification scheme (Handelman 1977: 187–200).
6. With regard to nostalgia for the disappearing American forest, see the discussion in Daniels 1993: 157–167.
7. Figures are compiled from Fischer 1989: 871 and Easterlin et al. 1982: 19, and include Irish Protestants. The 1920 totals are based on data for “native-stock” Americans, a designation that includes all white Americans whose parents were born in the United States. Though a less than perfect indicator of British stock, it is the best indicator we have.
8. See Higham [1955] 1988: 141–147 or Solomon 1956: 68–69, 130. The racial Anglicization process may be likened to the philosophy of “whitening” as conceived by Brazilian elites in which it was assumed that the black strain in the Brazilian population would gradually decline over time (Skidmore 1993: 23–24).
9. This is not entirely correct, as we shall see in later chapters. Many Americans, particularly Liberal-Progressive elites, believed that the United States was and would continue to be an immigrant society.

3. Limited Liberals

1. For discussion, see Chapter 1.
2. According to Anthony Giddens, reflexivity refers to the process whereby the analysis and discussion of society, located in major societal institutions and often conducted by experts, in turn shape that society. Methods of surveillance and record-keeping, which developed in late modernity, are integral to its effectiveness (Giddens 1991: 149).
3. Even William James, who can be described as extremely progressive in this regard, spoke eloquently of “our Anglo-Saxon race” as late as 1881 (Hollinger 1985: 20).
4. Fourierite refers to followers of the French anarchist, Charles Fourier (early nineteenth century). Prominent American Fourierites included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Horace Greeley, and other members of the Brook Farm colony in West Roxbury, Massachusetts (Johnpoll and Johnpoll 1981: 93).
5. In 1860, Mill argued that a “feeling of nationality,” which requires the effect of “race and descent,” allows for the proper functioning of representative government—this even as he excoriated those whose individuality lay trapped within a collective tradition (Goldman 1992: 250; Mill [1859] 1974).

6. “Christian,” when used by Protestant writers, usually referred to Protestantism, which was considered the purest form of Christianity, a standard against which the “papist” fell short (Handy 1971: 18).
7. This subtle intertwining of church and state occurred most prominently at the state level, with 37 of 42 states acknowledging the authority of God in their constitutions (Handy 1971: 26).
8. The decline occurred gradually, for, as Thomas Gossett mentions, “it [the Anglo-Saxon myth] still turned up fairly often among the speeches of men in public life who had absorbed it one way or another.” For example, in 1908, Columbia president Nicholas Murray Butler commended the Anglo-Saxon impulse that brought the United States into existence. Meanwhile, eminent psychologist G. Stanley Hall, doubtless shaped by wartime attitudes, declared in 1915 that the Anglo-Saxon American soul was free of Germanic influence.

Anglo-Saxonism became increasingly intertwined with Nordic racism as the century continued. Henry Pratt Fairchild’s *Melting Pot Mistake* (1926) and Madison Grant’s *Conquest of a Continent* (1927), for instance, were described by John Higham as “epitaphs” of race-thinking in what Higham saw as a marked slackening in nativist sentiment after 1924. This continued into the popular realm, where only southern segregationists like George Wallace continued to refer to old-stock Americans as “Anglo-Saxons,” something they did well into the 1960s (Gossett 1963: 122; Higham [1955] 1988: 201, 327).

4. Conservative Egalitarians

1. Commercial elites in the Northeast, for example, managed to secure the establishment of a national bank over the objections of the Republican rank and file.
2. Here one needs to bear in mind that the Republican Party of the 1850s had little institutional connection to its Jeffersonian predecessor.
3. Union membership burgeoned from 447,000 in 1897 to over 2 million in 1903. The 1898–1903 period was also the peak of corporate merger activity.
4. The change in southern elite attitudes between 1898 and 1912 was striking. In 1898, southern senators voted 15 to 3 against a literacy test for immigrants. In 1912, they voted 16 to 1 in favor (Higham [1955] 1988: 16–18, 73, 107, 166–167; Gyory 1998: 228–230).
5. Half the nation’s undergraduates, for instance, attended church-related colleges in 1900 (Bass 1989: 49).
6. For example, in 1920s Connecticut, 18 cities, with two-thirds of the state population, had only 14 percent representation in the state’s assembly (Baney 1989).
7. Whereas western European socialists of the First and Second Internationals generally supported colonialism, characterized non-Europeans as too backward for socialist revolution, and gave primary loyalty to their own nation-states, the Third International (post–1919) was a truly global, anticolonialist project (Colas 1994: 523–527).

5. Pioneers of Equality

1. However, as with Voltaire and numerous others in the *philosophe* tradition, Paine's cosmopolitanism shared cognitive space with a generally disparaging view of Roman Catholics, blacks, and American Indians (Eze 1997).
2. This was originally a pejorative term for interracial marriage which originated in the antebellum South.
3. Soon after, Low, possibly under Adler's influence, emerged as one of the few pro-immigration reformers and was a founding member of New York's University Settlement (1907) (Bender 1987: 279–280, 282).
4. Adherents of what Digby Baltzell called the New Social Science, like Franz Boas in anthropology, John Dewey in philosophy, Thorstein Veblen in economics, or Charles Horton Cooley in sociology, pushed a post-Darwinian set of ideas that were revolutionary for their day. Stressing the importance of environment over heredity and preaching a gospel of cultural relativism, these turn-of-the-twentieth-century thinkers paved the way for the decline of Anglo-centrism in America (Baltzell 1964: 157–178).
5. Aiding the close interplay between secular and Christian thought was the fact that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, half of the nation's undergraduates attended church-related colleges (Bass 1989: 49).
6. Later, in 1904, Dewey joined Adler on the staff of Columbia University, further enhancing Adler's influence on Liberal-Progressive thought.
7. Woods, head of one of the oldest Settlement houses and influential in the movement, was a member of the Immigration Restriction League.
8. For example, 70 percent of southern Settlements were converted missions, and 88 percent of Settlement workers in 1905 claimed to be active church members (Davis 1967: 23, 27).
9. Often writing for ethnic historical societies, such figures attempted to equate their group to the Anglo-Saxons in importance or tried to render a vision of America that gave their group a prominent role (Saveth 1948: 203).

6. Cosmopolitan Clerics

1. For more on the nature of the conservative-liberal split within the Social Gospel, see Szasz 1982: 57 and May [1949] 1967: introduction, 182.
2. The elimination of racial discrimination was also adopted as part of the Social Creed of Congregationalism in 1925, by which time northern Baptists and other mainline Protestants were also clearly in the "liberal" camp (R. Miller 1958: 311; Davis 1973: 189).
3. The latter passage, from Galatians 3:28, appeared regularly in Christian universalist declarations by the 1920s, as when Baptist journal editor William B. Lippard, supporting the decision of the Baptist World Alliance to hold its World Congress in Berlin in 1934, assured his readers that Baptists "would come to Berlin and counter the Nazi 'Aryan paragraph' with the New Tes-

- tament paragraph of ‘neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free’ ” (Nawyn 1981: 61).
4. The World Council of Churches was an international organization backed primarily by American and British ecumenical Protestants (Cavert 1968; Brauer 1965: 275–276).
 5. Professor Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological Seminary, for example, desired a merger of Protestant and Catholic modernists. Protestant apostates like Orestes Brownson and Isaac Hecker, who had converted to Catholicism, also favored Protestant-Catholic union.
 6. Interestingly, after his stint as secretary of war, Baker became a leading figure in the Protestant Goodwill movement toward Jews and Catholics in the 1920s and 1930s.
 7. A 1931 statement of Roger W. Strauss, Jewish industrialist and co-chairman of the National Conference of Jews and Christians, provides a case in point. As Benny Kraut observed: “In a few cases, Jews even initiated Goodwill activities. . . . But the primary impetus undoubtedly came from Protestant sources and specifically from the Protestant establishment” (Kraut 1989: 197–198).
 8. For example, conservative Protestants born at the turn of the century made up nearly 12 percent of the population. This proportion dipped sharply to 7.8 percent among those born during 1907–1923 but has increased every generation since (Roof and McKinney 1987: 234).
 9. Survey data confirming this phenomenon has been presented in several studies (Glock et al. 1967: 168–172; Hadden 1969: 139–141). The trend is treated more extensively later in this chapter.
 10. O’Brien writes that Senator Joseph McCarthy’s antics helped identify Catholicism with anticommunism, thereby serving as an engine of Catholic social advancement. “Some time around 1950,” remarks O’Brien, many Americans, with the aid of Joe McCarthy, discovered that the Antichrist had changed his address, moving from the Vatican to the Kremlin. This discovery significantly enhanced the social and political status of Catholics in America. . . . I believe that without Joe McCarthy’s crusade in the fifties, John F. Kennedy could not have been elected in 1960” (O’Brien 1988: 36).
 11. The connection between the Protestant elite and nonparish positions becomes especially clear with regard to the top seminaries, where some two-thirds of graduates in the 1960s desired nonparish careers, a figure that appeared to be on the increase.
 12. Although most studies suggest that Protestant clergy have little impact on their parishioners’ social attitudes, some evidence exists that ministers can influence their communicants’ views. Benton Johnson, for instance, in an early 1960s Oregon/Florida study, showed that within the same denomination, frequent attendees at churches with socially liberal ministers were more liberal than frequent attendees at churches with socially conservative ministers (Hadden 1969: 72–73, 83–84).

13. Younger clergy were consistently found to be more liberal on the civil rights/race issue than their more mature peers (Hadden 1989: 114).

7. Expressive Pathfinders

1. Davenport, according to Henry May, was “an old river town which prided itself on its intellectual culture.” Among its alumni were, in addition to Dell, George Cram Cook, Susan Glaspell, and Arthur Davison Ficke (May 1959: 258).
2. Charles Taylor writes that Expressivism’s significance lay in its interpretation of romanticism, which focused inward, rather than outward toward physical nature (Taylor 1989: 385–389).
3. Daniel Bell writes that the city has emerged as a symbol of the modern because of its incarnation of modern values like speed, excitement, and sensual stimuli (Bell 1996: 106).
4. Benedict Anderson first spoke of the notion of an “imagined community” in connection with nations. As he noted, nations are imagined because even the smallest nation’s members will never know each other, yet “in the minds of each lives an image of their communion” (Anderson 1983: 15). Anderson neglects to mention, however, that this definition also encompasses nonnational communities such as that of a worldwide avant-garde. Serge Moscovici’s concept of a figurative nucleus is another important tool for analyzing Village mythology. For Moscovici, a figurative nucleus constitutes a “complex of images that visibly reproduces a complex of ideas” (Moscovici 1984: 38).
5. For more on the muckrakers, see David Mark Chalmers’s *The Social and Political Ideas of the Muckrakers*. According to Chalmers, the Muckrakers, social critics in popular magazines whose heyday lasted from 1903 to 1912, were unusually progressive on matters of ethnic and race relations (Chalmers 1964: 115).
6. Lippmann’s cosmopolitanism and that of Kallen were alike only insofar as they favored intellectual broadmindedness over narrowmindedness. However, Kallen spoke of the ideal individual as ontologically culture-bound, “a cosmopolitan, literally a citizen of the world,” yet one who is so “without ever losing his commitment to his home base, his citizenship, and his original culture” (Kallen 1956: 53). Lippmann, on the other hand, was more of a universalist in that he advocated a cosmopolitan society unified along Saint-Simonian lines by a scientific elite. In his words, “communication is blotting out village culture, and opening up national and international thought,” with the latter clearly the telos in his evolutionary chain (Hollinger 1985: 47).
7. Upon reading the article, Sedgwick was purported to quizzically ask what Bourne was insinuating since surely it was the case that the United States was “created by English instinct and dedicated to the Anglo-Saxon ideal” (Bender 1987: 247).
8. His subsequent attraction to Italian fascism did not contradict this, as the movement was considered, in large measure, antitraditionalist and futurist.

9. These would include Robert Henri's "Ashcan" school of urban realism.
10. These artists tended to depict the American landscape, figures from Anglo-American history, or American regional folk themes.
11. An early exponent of this view was Waldo Frank, who wrote: "Paris . . . fruit of the autumn of all Mediterranean summer. I dwelt again in the streets that curve with life, that stratify with thought, that rise with ordered dream: dwelt with my friends in that nerved stone, in the ease of their acceptance, in the nurture of their talk, in the silence between men who for a thousand years have lived within a Word. . . . Then, America came to my weariness: the America of beauty and splendour. The shafts of dream, impermanent and electric, that are the buildings of my New York." He later summarized his point more succinctly and less poetically: "this American atom is an end of Europe. . . . He is the seed which has fallen to the ground" (Frank 1929: 3, 66).
12. This was also the position of Philip Rahv and others within the New York intellectual community, who saw a golden opportunity for New York and, to a lesser degree, the United States, to become the center of global intellectual culture. Encouraged by the increasingly pluralistic, cosmopolitan nature of postwar America, many former intellectual rebels thereby "rediscovered" America.
13. Contemporary exponents of this view include Francis Fukuyama, who has even proclaimed that the liberal-democratic, capitalist era represents the "End of History" (Fukuyama 1992).
14. For instance, the Brahmins of Boston's Back Bay and Episcopalians in Rhode Island opposed Prohibition.
15. The gap between the Liberal Progressives and Young Intellectuals is starkly illustrated by the fact that it took John Dewey's student, Max Eastman, to introduce him to the modernist circle of activists, journalists, and academics of the "X Club," which met in Greenwich Village during 1903–1917. In Gary Gerstle's estimation, it was only with this introduction to the radical New York scene that Dewey became a truly "cosmopolitan intellectual," a view echoed by Thomas Bender (Gerstle 1994: 1048; Bender 1987: 309). The distance between the New York avant-garde and the Liberal Progressives is also evident in the low esteem in which Young Intellectuals like Randolph Bourne regarded Jane Addams and her Settlement colleagues (Abrahams 1986: 65).

8. Cosmopolitanism Institutionalized, 1930–1970

1. Higham's preface read: "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.—Leviticus, xix, 33–34."
2. The Eisenhower administration, for example, tried unsuccessfully to implement the findings of the Truman commission (King 1998b: 251).

3. Mancur Olson argues that large groups (like dominant ethnics) often lack the “selective incentives” that would lead to special interest mobilization. In his words, “In no major country are large groups without access to selective incentives generally organized—the masses of consumers are not in consumers’ organizations, the millions of taxpayers are not in taxpayers’ organizations, the vast number of those with relatively low incomes are not in organizations for the poor. . . . By contrast, almost everywhere the social prestige of the learned professions and the limited number of practitioners of each profession in each community has helped them organize” (Olson 1982: 34–35). Thus we might expect ethnic minorities and professionals (in university or government) to be better organized for political action than the dispersed WASP population.
4. Dominant group support was essential because the electoral system greatly favored rural and provincial voters, who were overwhelmingly Protestant (Lind 1995: 94).
5. For instance, Rutgers University absorbed *Partisan Review* in 1963, and a 1970s sampling of intellectual magazines found a majority to be receiving some form of university assistance (Wilford 1995: 18, 108).
6. Term used by social theorist Antonio Gramsci to refer to avant-garde intellectuals. See Chapter 10 for a more complete explanation.
7. Immigration from Europe decreased from 34 percent of the total in 1961–1970 to 18 percent in 1971–1980 to 10 percent in 1981–1990. Meanwhile, immigration from Latin America and Asia (combined) grew from 52 percent of the total during 1961–1970 to 77 percent in 1971–1980 to 84 percent in 1981–1990 (Murdock 1995: 14).
8. For instance, postmaterialist indicator questions such as “protect freedom of speech,” “move toward a friendlier, less impersonal society,” “try to make our cities and countryside more beautiful,” and “move toward a society where ideas count more than money” could all be perceived as tapping liberal or egalitarian sentiments, either directly or through the association that money has with inequality (Inglehart 1990: 74–75). This may explain why postmaterialists overwhelmingly support leftist parties: leftist orientations are determining much of the postmaterialist effect (Inglehart 1990: 262). Inglehart nearly makes this admission when he says: “ironically, further progress toward equality would come not from an emphasis on materialistic class conflict, but through an appeal to the public’s sense of justice, social solidarity, and other nonmaterial motivations” (Inglehart 1990: 252).
9. Notice that this diagram shows relative issue positions, unlike McClosky and Zaller’s findings, which are based on real self-identification. In terms of actual responses, the economic “left” (egalitarian), culturally liberal sector is very small, and the economically “right” (liberal) sectors are very large.
10. Divisions of left and right exist within the traditionalists, but in an increasingly modernist environment, these divisions are less important guideposts for their cultural self-definition.

11. First coined by David Snow and his collaborators (1986), this term originally referred to an overarching formula for political action, a practical “toolkit” drawn upon by diverse social movements (Turner 1994: 79; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988; Johnston 1991). Here I use the term in a more culturalist sense—to describe a wider set of myths, symbols, values, and narratives encompassing smaller knots of more cohesive subcultures.

9. The Decline of Anglo-America

1. Together with the decreasing propensity of northwestern Europeans to fill their quotas, just one in three immigrants to the United States in the two decades prior to 1965 entered under the quota scheme (King 2000a: 242).
2. White immigration is calculated on the basis of national origin (i.e., Europe and “White” settler societies). This probably overstates the figure for white immigration by a small amount.
3. The 1790 figures are drawn from Ward 1982: 56–57. The 1890 figures are from Easterlin 1983: 19 and are based on the population of second (or more) generation native-born white Americans. This figure was then multiplied by the British proportion in the 1790 population to subtract old-stock, non-Anglo-Saxons, and finally, the British share of the immigrant stock was added to the figure. The 1924 and 1970 figures are drawn from Fischer 1989: 871–872. The 1950 figures are based on survey rather than census data, which can be found in Weed 1973: 7. The 1980 figures are from Lieberman and Waters 1988: 34. The 1990 numbers are from the 1996 *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. The 1924, 1950, 1970, 1980, and 1990 figures include an estimate of Irish Protestant numbers, which I have taken as half the reported Irish population.
4. Conservative Protestants, by contrast, registered impressive gains throughout this period (Roof and McKinney 1987: 168–169). Since the early 1980s, Protestant numbers, buoyed by the strength of conservative denominations, have managed to regain some of their lost ground (*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1996, no. 88; Bouvier 1992: 157).
5. These projections tend to assume that the fertility rates of new immigrants will continue to remain higher than those of the native stock, but that the reproduction rates of immigrants’ children will converge toward the national average. These projections also assume that future inflows will resemble the current immigration intake, in both quantity and ethnic composition. (See, for example, Bouvier 1992: 31–34.)
6. For more on the treatment of ethnic minorities in wartime film, see Blum 1976.
7. These, in turn, were often converted into films.
8. As compared with women of British origin.
9. Curiously, the Jewish share of appointments remained steady at roughly 4 percent in both eras (Baltzell 1964: 231).

10. Several examples might include: “I’m Free” (Rolling Stones, 1966), “Anywhere, Anyhow, Anyway I Choose” (The Who, 1965), “It’s My Life” (Animals, 1966), “I’m Set Free” (Velvet Underground, 1969), “Stone Free” (Jimi Hendrix Experience, 1968), or the Nietzschean “I am Superman” (REM, 1985).
11. Daniel Bell labels this phenomenon syncretism: “the jumbling of styles in modern art, which absorbs African masks or Japanese prints into its modes of depicting spatial perceptions; or the merging of Oriental and Western religions, detached from their histories. . . . Modern culture is defined by this extraordinary freedom to ransack the world storehouse and to engorge any and every style it comes upon. Such freedom comes from the fact that the axial principle of modern culture is the expression and remaking of the ‘self in order to achieve self-realization and self-fulfillment” (Bell 1996: 13). David Riesman and his co-authors ruthlessly parodied the same cosmopolitan attitude nearly 50 years ago: “Their own choice is for French food one day and Italian the next; they select their ideas from all ages and their friends from all places; they enjoy primitive African and Renaissance Italian sculpture and read books in four languages. These are felt as advantages, not liabilities” (Riesman et al. 1950: 278).
12. The two-way concept of assimilation that underpins the liberal concept of the melting pot, and that is distinct from the one-way Anglo-conformity preferred by figures like Henry Pratt Fairchild, is discussed in Postiglione 1983: 159–166.
13. Robert Bellah uses the loose-bounded/tight-bounded distinction to differentiate between two different forms of group behavior. He argues that group boundaries have become increasingly loose for most Americans over the past 30 years, but that there exists a determined and growing body of resistance to this trend from “tight-bounded” communities like evangelical Protestants (Bellah and Greenspahn 1987: 229–231).
14. Everett Clinchy, for instance, remarked in 1934 that the “more thoughtful among American youth think in terms of cultural pluralism,” while David Riesman wrote in 1950 that “under the practice of cultural pluralism . . . the ethnic groups are no longer urged to accept the package of work and play as ‘the Americans’ define it. On the contrary, the ethnics are invited to add to the variety of the nation by retaining the colorful flavors of their ‘racial heritages’ ” (Clinchy 1934: 175, 178; Riesman et al. 1950: 284). In any case, more discursive research needs to take place before it can be concluded that most pre-sixties social thinkers favored assimilationist Americanism.
15. One should also note that smaller groups like the Scots or Norwegians will tend to be more mixed than larger groups like the English, who have a more substantial intraethnic marriage pool.
16. The 1960 figure deals only with black-white marriages. However, since the population of nonblack minorities was considerably smaller in 1960 than in later decades, this does not constitute a serious underestimate.

17. British Protestant ancestry appears to be the least popular choice. One of Mary Waters's respondents in her suburban San Jose, California, study highlighted this point when she replied that her husband, of mixed Anglo-Scottish and Russian-Jewish origin, preferred his Jewish over his WASP ancestry. The individual concerned even went as far as to place a mezuzah on his front door, though his mother was Baptist and he had converted to Catholicism (Waters 1992: 87–88).
18. Ethnic commitment refers to the quantity of an individual's social behavior that is governed by her ethnicity (White and Burke 1987: 314–315).
19. Wuthnow, for example, notes that religious television viewers also tend to be active church members and to socialize with other consumers of religious television programming.
20. Herberg's notion of a "triple melting pot" postulated that ethnic groups would melt, but only within wider religious boundaries that would endure (Herberg 1955: 47).
21. The term, coined in reference to a passage in Diderot, refers to an individual's tendency to strive for aesthetic harmony between her consumer goods—a unity based on personal lifestyle choices rather than the guidance of a religious *conscience collective*.
22. Black males and certain Asian and Hispanic groups with large components of recent immigration represent an obvious exception to this rule. Otherwise, the broader pattern holds quite well.
23. This accords with the tenets of Social Identity Theory, which posits that individuals tend to gravitate toward their social identities (or certain markers of those identities) which are perceived to be most rewarding in terms of self-esteem (Abrams and Hogg 1990: 3–5, 29–40).

10. Cultural Modernization

1. For more on this concept, see Berlin 1958: 16–19.
2. Please see the introduction for a definition of this term.
3. For example, see Weber 1923: 275–278; Weber [1904–1905] 1976: 13–31; Durkheim [1893] 1984: 133; Durkheim [1897] 1966; Marx and Engels 1978: 663. Weber's *Protestant Ethic* provides a partial exception, of course.
4. For more discussion of Mannheim's views of the relationship between rationality and other components of modernity, see Mannheim 1992: 87–90.
5. Gramsci considered each group of organic intellectuals to be "organically" associated with a particular mode of production. Although organic intellectual strata may be champions of a new economic system, I view the relationship as far more contingent: organic intellectuals may be agents of an emerging economic order, or they may be bearers of a new cultural ideology that is unrelated to economic shifts.
6. Under the rubric of revivalism, we can place the work of Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (1963, 1975) or Anthony Smith (1984). On the other

hand, an evolutionist perspective has been embraced by Milton Gordon (1964) and Herbert Gans (1979) and finds its most comprehensive expression in the writings of Kenichi Ohmae (1995) and Walter Wallace (1997).

7. Small minorities of non-WASP ethnics in all three societies played a role in these changes, but their electoral significance was hardly the decisive factor. Meanwhile, the more potent French Canadians pushed for biculturalism while opposing multiculturalism.
8. Many of the early gains of classical English liberalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—the Toleration Act, Habeas Corpus, freedom of the press, and Catholic Emancipation—resulted from the activities of the courts and civil rights activists, not Parliament (Marshall [1950] 1992: 10).

11. American Whiteness

1. See the previous chapter for discussion.
2. See Patterson 1977: 57 for a discussion of this concept, which refers to cultural markers that lack potency and structural meaning.
3. For example, in the suburban Los Angeles high school that Pamela Perry studied, these individuals, known as “Hicks,” formed the only self-consciously white subculture at the school.
4. Interestingly, the identification of Anglo-Saxon surnames as “American” became explicit during the 1988 presidential campaign when a number of pro-Bush country singers, including Loretta Lynn, remarked upon the comical (thus, by implication, “un-American”) character of Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis’s surname (Alba 1990: 365, Feagin 1997: 27).
5. Proposition 63 was followed by Proposition 227 (passed June 2, 1998), entitled “English for the Children,” which aims to severely curtail bilingual education. The bill’s proponent, Ron Unz, who is of Ukrainian-Jewish ancestry, ran against Pete Wilson on the Proposition 187 issue and is a well-known opponent of immigration restriction (Hornblower 1998).
6. The measure was subsequently struck down by the state Supreme Court.
7. Conservative Protestants, for instance, who make up the lion’s share of the Christian Coalition’s support base, are probably the social group least disposed toward racial and ethnic liberalism (Roof and McKinney 1987: 202, 218; Shafer and Claggett 1995: 62–64; Bruce 1998: 155–156). In addition, according to a 1992 Gallup poll, practicing Christians are more strongly opposed to current immigration levels than secular Americans (Williamson 1996: 145–146).
8. This point is made by Steve Bruce, who argues that the Coalition elite has alienated its supporters by forging alliances with Catholics, Jews, and blacks—groups that in turn mistrust the Coalition (Bruce 1998: 155–156, 178–179).
9. Some civic nationalists, notably Lawrence Fuchs and Nathan Glazer, have nevertheless endorsed mild variants of multiculturalism, constituting exceptions to the rule.

10. A good example of the civic nationalist consensus was provided by the degree to which Senator Alan Simpson (R-WY), proponent of a 1996 immigration reform bill, and his principal opponent, Spence Abraham (R-MI), agreed on the need for stronger measures to contain illegal immigration (*The Economist*, May 11, 1996).
11. For example, Francis addressed the immigration/national identity issue seven times in his *Washington Times* column between August 20 and October 29, 1997.
12. Victor Berger and Samuel Gompers might be considered early twentieth-century examples of this phenomenon, but their restrictionist sentiment followed, rather than led, American public opinion, and their position on the immigration issue never served as their organization's end in itself.
13. For more on the distinction between genealogical and ideological myths of descent, see A. Smith 1984.
14. For more discussion of the importance of frame alignment in the success of social movements, see Diani 1996: 1058; Snow et al. 1986; or Tarrow 1994: 123.
15. This category encompasses fiscal and religious, as opposed to ethnocultural, conservatives like Newt Gingrich, Ralph Reed, George Bush (Jr. and Sr.), and Bill Bennett. All opposed Proposition 187 and were backed in their stand by the *Wall Street Journal*, Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, and other mainstream conservative institutions (Stefancic 1997: 127–128). Gingrich, for example, recently supported Puerto Rico's bid for statehood in an attempt to reach out to Hispanic voters. "In the long run we're going to get the Hispanic vote," proclaimed Gingrich, "because we stand for lower taxes, smaller government" and other core Republican beliefs (Espo 1998).

12. Liberal Ethnicity and Cultural Revival

1. In terms of political theory, see Kymlicka 1995; Tamir 1993; Miller 1995. On the empirical side, one may consider, among others, O'Leary et al. 1993: 1–40 and Lijphart, 1977.
2. Kymlicka, "The Sources of Nationalism: Commentary on Taylor," p. 63 (Lichtenberg, McKim and McMahan 1997, p. 171).
3. Robert E. Goodin, review of Kymlicka, "The Rights of Minority Cultures," *Ethics* (January 1997), p. 357; Zygmunt, Bauman, "Communitarianism, Freedom, and the Nation-State," *Critical Review* 9, no. 4 (Fall 1995), p. 551.
4. A discussion of primary and secondary ethnic groups may be found in Francis 1976: 167–250, or Kymlicka 1991, Chapter 2.
5. This situation has changed *somewhat* with the creation of the Palestinian Authority.
6. For example, Malcolm Waters argues that "an increased measure of ethnic pluralism" can flourish in a world in which "ethnicities are not tied to any specific territory or polity" (Waters 1996: 136–138).

7. Yael Tamir is an important exception. Her *Liberal Nationalism* endorses the polycentric ethnocultural nationalism of Herder and Mazzini, and, like Kymlicka and Walzer, she backs the right of nations and ethnic groups to restrict foreign immigration in the name of cultural distinctiveness (Tamir 1993: 160–161; Kymlicka 1991: 224–225).
8. The *mestizo* construct in Mexico is not without its genetic omissions, like the Chinese, Italians, and blacks.
9. A term of Californian origin that refers to white, native-born, English-speaking Americans.
10. A good discussion of this difference is provided by Talcott Parsons's pattern variables for particularity–universality and quality–performance. The latter item in each pair is presumed to be the endpoint of modernity's “progress” (Craib 1992: 45–46).

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