*Comp Question found in this reading. Persistent ideology/Cultural Pluralism/Melting Pot

1. Melting Pot: Myth or Reality?

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Since very early times people have been moving across the face of the earth, ever seeking more satisfactory situations. During the ancient period there were mass movements such as the barbarian invasions, but gradually they became what is now known as immigration. For hundreds of years there was little intellectual interest in the movements of people. With the nineteenth century came the realization that such movements were causing economic, social, religious, political and other problems, many of which have persisted down to our day, and, since the turn of the century, students have become concerned with the study of immigration and its effects not only upon the immigrant himself but also upon the nation. Problems affecting the immigrant often extended to his children and grandchildren. Descendants of European immigrants in the United States have largely become acculturated, but the nation is yet confronted with bringing into the mainstream of American life the newer "immigrants"—the migrant populations of Spanish-speaking Americans, American Indians, Appalachian whites, and Negroes.

Origins of the American People

Every nation has had its immigration and emigration problems. But the mass immigration that took place to the United States is

unmatched elsewhere. In the more than 350 years since the English established their first permanent settlement at Jamestown, some 45 million people have migrated to these shores. This figure is many times greater than the American population in 1776. It is several times the number of people now living in the eight Rocky Mountain states. The peopling of America adds up to the greatest migration of all time, dwarfing all other population movements before or since.

Just a little more than a century ago Walt Whitman, the poet of democracy, hailed the United States as a "nation of nations." No phrase better sums up this country's cosmopolitan history. America was discovered by Scandinavians, named by a German mapmaker in honor of a Florentine explorer, and opened for colonization by a Genoese sea captain in the Spanish service. Captain Columbus' crew was a preview of things to come. It included an Englishman, a Negro, an Irishman, a Jew, and probably several Greeks.[1]

Non-Europeans got here long before Columbus. Will Rogers, the Oklahoma humorist who was part Cherokee, liked to say that his ancestors met the Mayflower when it was docked. Yet, like the Pilgrims, the first Indians were immigrants. In the distant past, according to anthropologists, the Indians migrated from Siberia across the Bering Strait and displaced the aboriginal American population. Where the earlier population originated has not been determined.

But the question of who came first is irrelevant. What is important is that, whether one traces his family back to Ellis Island, Plymouth Rock, the Bering Strait, or Africa, every American realizes that his ancestors came here from somewhere else. That is what President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was of Dutch ancestry, meant when he reminded the Daughters of the American Revolution: "Remember, remember always, that all of us . . . are descended from immigrants . . . "

But Americans have not just come from somewhere; they have come from almost everywhere. Immigration explains why the people of this nation are unique in the diversity of their ancestry. They spring from a multitude of stocks that have made their way to this land from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

This diversity has affected almost every aspect of United States history. Like the westward movement, to which it was related, immigration was a creative force in the shaping of American society. American culture emerged from the interplay between immigrant

heritages and the New World environment. Our language; our government; politics, and economy; our religions, music, arts, literature, and sciences; our educational systems; our sports, entertainment, even much of the food we eat—all testify, in one way or another, to immigrant cultural backgrounds.

But immigration was, and remains, a two-way process. To know that immigrants altered America is not enough. We also have to see how America altered the immigrants. Otherwise, we fail to understand the meaning of the journey for the immigrant and for his children as well. The wilderness and the frontier changed the institutions the immigrants brought with them,[2] as did the melting pot theory and the concept of cultural pluralism.

The "Old" Immigration

Long before the American colonies were settled, Spanish and French explorers left their mark on the vast American wilderness. The Spanish influence is found in a wide arc across the southern part of the country, from Florida through Texas and New Mexico to California. The French influence is apparent up and down the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys.

The first wave of settlement came with the colonists at Jamestown in 1607 and at Plymouth in 1620. It was predominantly English in origin. The urge for greater economic opportunity together with the desire for religious freedom led these people to leave their homes. Of all the groups that have come to America, they had the most difficult physical environment to master, but the easiest social adjustment to make. They fought a rugged land, which was hard, but they built a society in their own image, never knowing the hostility of the old toward the new that would face succeeding groups. Although the original states were former English colonies, the inhabitants were by no means wholly English in origin, customs, or religion. The southern back country was settled by Germans, Scotch, Scotch-Irish, and Welsh. Along the southern seaboard, however, the English predominated. Similar backgrounds characterized the people of Pennsylvania. French Huguenots were conspicuous in Charleston, South Carolina; Swedish Lutherans in Delaware; Dutch Calvinists in New Amsterdam and Albany, New York; Roman Catholics in Maryland; and Greek Orthodox in Florida. By 1750 New York City was already on its way

to becoming the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Forty years later, when the first U.S. census was taken, a little more than half the people in this country were of African, Scottish, Scotch-Irish, Welsh, German, Dutch, Swedish, Spanish, French, and other non-English stock, and they were divided into more than a hundred religious denominations.

Shortly after 1820, the first year in which the Census Bureau records foreign immigration, there was a considerable Irish influx. This movement reached its height in the late 1840's and the 1850's, owing chiefly to the severe potato famine and other causes of internal discontent and unrest in Ireland. About the same time the first considerable migration of Germans to this country began—a migration that was to continue in increasingly large numbers down to the early 1880's. The crushing of the liberals in Germany in 1848 (when Carl Schurz came to America and Karl Marx went to England), together with the economic difficulties at about the same time, were the motivating factors in this movement. During the same period, or a little later, many Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes also came to the United States, settling mostly in the upper Midwest.

The Rise of Nativism

Until 1885, by far the major number of foreign immigrants to the United States came from the countries of northwestern Europe. With few exceptions these settlers were of Teutonic and Celtic origin, possessing ideals, customs, standards of living, modes of thought, and religious beliefs similar to those of the earlier settlers: illiteracy was uncommon; education was highly esteemed; for the most part, homes were established in farming communities; and, except for the Germans, and, to some extent, the Irish, there was little tendency among the newcomers to settle in ethnic groups. Before 1880 immigration presented few obstacles to successful Americanization.

A major group that did meet obstacles, even though they were of Celtic origin, were the Irish Catholics. The advent of large numbers of these people in the eastern cities, and the establishment of their church schools, was looked upon by many Americans (themselves descended from earlier immigrant groups) as a menace to national security, and it resulted in a strong nativist movement. Protestant America's fear of Irish Catholics and of popery led to the burning of

schools and convents and to riots in cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. In New York City an extended controversy over the use of public school funds by Irish Catholics resulted in the establishment of the first real public schools there in 1852. A political party, the Know-Nothing party, was even organized in 1853 to oppose Catholics and immigrants, especially Irish and Germans who urged that the United States intervene politically in their homelands. The party urged restriction of immigration, but the outbreak of the Civil War diverted the attention of the country.[3]

The New Immigration

About 1885 America's immigration patterns changed. No longer did the majority of immigrants come from northwestern Europe; instead, larger and larger waves came from southern and eastern Europe. Where before 1885 nine-tenths of the immigrants had come from northwestern Europe, by 1905 three-fourths of them came from countries in southern and eastern Europe. Their religion was predominantly Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, or Jewish; customs, habits, and, to some extent, ideals formed striking contrasts to those of northern and western Europe. Illiteracy ranged from 13.7 percent to 78.9 percent in Serbia. Moreover, the various Slavic groups such as the Ruthenians, the Czechs, Croatians, Ukrainians, and Poles were a "subject people" unfamiliar with the democratic processes of western Europe and the United States. Furthermore, this "new" immigration, including Italians, Greeks, and the Jews, tended to settle in ethnic colonies in large cities, thus isolating themselves from the mainstream of American life. Most serious, perhaps, was the fact that, unlike earlier immigrants, many of the latecomers did not intend to make America a permanent home, and they had no desire to become Americans.

The Beginning of Restriction

This "new" immigration, as it was called, began to alarm WASPish America. Articles and books were written urging that the entry of these "inferior" people into America be restricted. Organizations such as the American Protective Association were formed to urge Congress to pass legislation against the new immigrants. Several bills

were passed by Congress, but, with the exception of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, they were vetoed by presidents Cleveland, Taft, and Wilson.

Finally in 1907 Congress appointed a commission to study all aspects of immigration and its effect upon the country. The Dillingham Commission, which set out to prove that the "new" immigrants were inferior to the "old" immigrants, made its report (in forty-two volumes) to Congress three years later.[4] Throughout the report were sprinkled reflections in scattered phrases and sentences about the inferiority of the new immigrants and their lesser capacity to be Americanized:

> the Serbo-Croatians had "savage manners," the South Italians "have not attained distinguished success as farmers" and are given to brigandry and poverty; and although the "Poles verge toward the 'northern' race of Europe," being lighter in color than the Russians, they "are more high-strung," in this respect resembling the Hungarians. "All these peoples of eastern and southern Europe, including the Greeks and Italians . . . give character to the immigration of today, as contrasted with the northern Teutonic and Celtic stocks that characterized it up to the eighties. All are different in temperament and civilization from ourselves."[5]

This notion was based on the belief that the national origin of an immigrant was a reliable indication of his capacity for Americanization. It was said, and science seemed to show, that some people, because of their racial or national constitution, were more capable of becoming Americans than others. It was argued, further, that the "old" immigrants who came to the United States before 1880 were drawn from the "superior" stocks of northern and western Europe, while those who came after that date were drawn from the "inferior" breeds of southern and eastern Europe.

The "findings"[6] of the Dillingham Commission have long since been discredited, but not before they enabled Congress to pass legislation restricting immigration. Oscar Handlin, who has done much to discredit these findings, has stated that, while the differences between the "old" and the "new" immigration are significant, they have too often been exaggerated.[7]

An enormously popular book typical of the literature of this period was Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race,* which was adjudged a "work of solid merit." Grant insisted that, unlike the older immigrants, the newer ones did not belong to the Nordic race.

The new immigration contained a large and increasing number of the weak, the broken, and the mentally crippled of all races drawn from the lowest stratum of the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans, together with hordes of the wretched, submerged populations of the Polish ghettos. "Our jails, insane asylums, and almshouses are filled with this human flotsam and the whole tone of American life, social, moral, and political, has been lowered and vulgarized by them."[8] Grant insisted that, unless laws were passed to restrict this immigration, the Anglo-Saxons of the United States would be inundated and eventually wiped out—the passing of a great race.

The breakout of World War I created hysteria as to the loyalties of the "new" immigrants. President Theodore Roosevelt criticized "hyphenated Americans" who took sides in the European war, but many ethnic groups supported their homeland against the traditional enemy—Poles against Russians, Balkan Slavs against Austro-Hungarians, Germans against English and French. The German-American Bund marched down the main streets of many cities. This led to a crash program of Americanization in schools, factories, and churches. The purpose of the program was to assert Nordic superiority by persuading the immigrant to abandon his old culture and become an American. This "instant Americanism," with its unfortunate aspect of coercion, created an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust that has never fully been erased.

After the war, these same feelings of fear and doubt persisted. Because the immigrant was frequently accused of being radical, there were attempts to suppress his newspapers and organizations, to brand his culture inferior and unassimilable, to ignore his aspirations, and to intimidate him. Those who supported Americanization too frequently assumed that American culture was something already complete, which the newcomer must adopt in its entirety. Such attitudes and activities promoted the restriction of immigration, but they did not advance the assimilation of the immigrants already in America.

The Americanization movement is reflected in certain educational practices today. Instruction in German was banished from some public schools. (Indeed, more money had been spent by some large school systems to teach American children German than to teach immigrant children English.) Numerous states outlawed the teaching of any foreign language, which was not ruled unconstitutional by a Supreme Court until the Nebraska case of 1923. Many states out-

lawed private and parochial schools, and it was not until the famed Oregon case that the Supreme Court declared such laws unconstitutional, holding that the "child is not the mere creation of the state—parents have the right to nurture and educate him."[9]

World War I completely destroyed the traditional concept of a free America. The revelation of "hyphenated Americanism," combined with questionable but much-publicized results of physical and mental tests made upon soldiers drawn from various immigrant groups, gave new impetus to those forces opposing the new immigration, forces that had been gaining strength since 1881. The wholesale exodus from stricken European countries at the close of the war removed the last shreds of effective resistance, and a quota law limiting the volume of immigrants by using selection on the basis of nationality was enacted in 1921. These restrictions discriminated against immigration from southern and eastern Europe (quotas were based on the census of 1890, when immigration from southeastern Europe was just beginning to gain momentum), and the restrictions were increased in 1924. The law with its "national origins" clause, effective in 1927, limited the quota to 150,000, and it favored immigration from Britain. Hence, restriction was cultural rather than economic; it sought to maintain the "Nordic" culture. This law remained in effect until 1965 when President Lyndon Johnson signed the reform immigration act, abolishing the "national origin" system and removing discriminatory restrictions against southern and eastern Europeans and others.

It must be remembered that migration, whether external or internal, has been the fundamental social process that created the United States. Voluntary migrations from Europe and forced migrations from Africa built this nation, and the internal migration from East to West unified it. After the First World War, when migration from Europe was sharply reduced by the quota system, the internal migration from farm to city and from South to North and West was the major factor in the industrial expansion of the United States.

All of these migrations were regarded as unwelcome and socially destructive by groups already settled and partially acculturated. Those of English or Anglo-Saxon origins looked down upon the Irish, the Germans, and the Scandinavians, who, in turn, looked down upon the Italians, the Slavs, the Greeks, and the Jews. Today, their descendants look down upon the Puerto Ricans, the Mexican-Americans, and the Negroes, who, as the most recent immigrants or migrants are often considered inferior and a threat to what is "American," whatever that means. Thus, a recurring nativism continues to afflict our nation, creating numerous social, political, and educational problems. And yet, all the migrations had one purpose—the uprooting of peoples in order that they and their children might have a better chance, truly a part of the American dream!

The Melting Pot Theory

The idea of the melting pot is as old as the Republic. "I could point out to you a family," wrote the naturalized New Yorker, Jean de Crèvecoeur, in 1782, "whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a Frenchwoman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, received new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced . . . Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men . . . " It was an idea close to the heart of the American self-image. But as a century passed, and the number of individuals and nations involved grew, the confidence that they could be fused together waned, as did the conviction that it would be a good thing if they were to be. In 1882 the Chinese were excluded, and the first general immigration law was enacted, to be followed by a steady succession of new and more selective barriers. Then, in the National Origins Act of 1924, the nation formally adopted the policy of using immigration to reinforce, rather than further dilute, the racial stock of early America.

This latter process was well underway and gaining momentum when Israel Zangwill's play, *The Melting Pot,* was first performed in 1908. The play was an instant success. It ran for months on Broadway, and its title was seized upon as a concise evocation of a profoundly significant American fact. One of its characters, David Quixano, the Russian-Jewish immigrant, a "pogrom orphan" who escaped to New York City, exults in the glory of his new country:

> America is God's Crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty hatreds and rivalries, but you won't be long like that,

> brothers, for these are the fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American . . . The real American has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible, I tell you—he will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman.[10]

Yet, looking back, it is possible to speculate that the response to *The Melting Pot* was as much one of relief as of affirmation, more a matter of reassurance that what had already taken place would turn out all right than encouragement to carry on in the same direction. No country made up of a diversity of immigrant peoples has as yet successfully solved the problem of mass amalgamation.

Zangwill's hero throws himself into the amalgam process with the utmost energy. By curtainfall he has written his American symphony and won his Muscovite aristocrat, and almost all concerned have been reconciled to the homogeneous future, including a German concert-master and an Irish maid thrown in for comic relief. But the doctrine of the melting pot was not dominant among the ethnic groups of the nation in the 1900's, and in significant ways it became less so as time passed. Individuals, in considerable numbers to be sure, broke out of their mold, but the ethnic groups remained. The experience of Zangwill's hero and heroine was not general. The point about the melting pot is that it did not take place.

It was once believed that the system of public education with its almost universal use of English would produce a nation unilingual and unicultural at base. The successful operation of this principle was taken for granted, for the public schools did help to acculturate and Americanize untold thousands of immigrants. Revisionist writers now question such statements,[11] but it was World War I that clearly established that the nation was not of one culture and one language and that neither Jacksonian democracy, with its assertion of the similarity and equality of all, nor the later theory of the melting pot had worked effectively. While the public schools were teaching in English, private schools, particularly certain parochial groups, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and some Greek Orthodox, were carrying out instruction in various foreign tongues. Both industrial centers and rural regions contained communities culturally distinct from their American surroundings and conscious of their separate identity.

These communities, especially those of the so-called "new" immigration, added constantly to their ranks from streams of newly

arrived immigrants and from the American people's failure to practice their national theory of equality. These immigrants congregated for mutual protection in ethnic colonies, especially in the large cities, because they were denied entry (like the blacks later) into the broader community. The ethnic colonies served as decompression chambers or mutual protective groups, where "wops," "hunkies," or "kikes" (as they were often branded), forced by social pressure back into their ghettos, could seek their place among their own kind. Of low economic status and without an intelligentsia (except in the case of the Jews), leaderless and with a tendency to lose successful members since the price of success was often the severing of group ties, these immigrant communities hung on in most American cities, ignored by many and condemned by others as un-American.

Ethnic Communities

Thus there is ambivalence in the American character: the proclamation of the equality of all people as exemplified in the Declaration of Independence and the Federal Constitution, on the one hand; and the practice of discrimination and the denial of equality, on the other hand. It is this ambivalence that contributed in part to the development of ethnic communities. Rebuffed socially and often economically, the immigrant groups developed certain characteristics. Mutual benefit societies have been formed to assist members at times of sickness or death and, incidentally, to serve as social gathering places. Food stores and restaurants purveying familiar food have served as gossip centers where news is shared and stereotypes of thought and action are reinforced and preserved. In most communities a church follows the first signs of prosperity, as soon as the group is able to support a minister or priest. To many an immigrant his religion is the only experience that he can carry unchanged from his old home to his new. Whether or not a school follows the establishment of the church depends largely upon the leadership, for the demand for education is far from universal among immigrants, who are often illiterate. The development of schools is most apt to be stimulated by religious authorities seeking either to preserve the religious affiliation of a group exposed to alien ways or to enable a particular church to survive. Such schools, whether supplementary or full-time, have been organized by evangelical Scandinavians, Polish

Catholics, German Lutherans, Greek Orthodox, and Orthodox Jews, to name some. In these schools, the ethnic language, history, and traditions are taught to second and third generations of immigrants, sometimes alongside English studies. When not supported by religious leaders, such schools are usually the work of organization officials who see in the younger generation the only way to maintain organizations that originally grew up to protect newcomers.

When a community is sufficiently large and literate, there are publications in the native tongue to spread news of the old country and of the community itself and to interpret the affairs of the nation at large. Professional men within the group perform necessary services. Traditional forms of entertainment develop. The community in many instances becomes so complete that its members practically never leave it (except to move from one such community to another). They do not think in other terms, hardly read American news, rarely meet other people or make contact with the outer community. Such isolation as this exists most conspicuously in more or less separate industrial communities, but it is almost as characteristic of blocks in the ghettos of large cities (for example, Jewtown, Little Italy, Greektown, Little Lithuania, Little Warsaw, and Chinatown, among others, in Chicago). Although it can hardly remain so complete for more than one generation in a city, a new generation does not see the end of the old isolation.

It is characteristic of these American communities that they should be always on the move, each new wave of immigration or migration forcing an old community out of its old home and into a new one. On Chicago's near West Side, within the shadow of the downtown skyscrapers, a prestigious Anglo-Saxon community of the 1860's and 1870's, now the site of the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle and the location of Chicago's famed Hull House, became a German and Irish settlement during the 1880's, deteriorating into a slum. By 1900, Italians, Jews, and Greeks had taken over the area, and after World War II it was occupied by Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Negroes. Even with such movements, however, essential cultural features persist without reference to geographic location. Immigrant groups are more self-conscious in their areas of second settlement than in their original unit. It is only when many leave the ghetto that they know they have been in it. If the area of second settlement has become completely developed as an ethnic

community before they enter it, it may take a third or a fourth move to make them realize that they have been part of a separatist entity in the midst of a larger whole.

These separate communities consist of a solid, group-conscious nucleus surrounded by a fringe that is gradually being worn away by intermarriage, education, participation in activities such as sports, and economic change. They are torn by internal conflicts between the generations, for the first generation of native-born children, subjected to external influences, differs sharply in ways and attitudes from the parents. The internal factors holding the communities together are weakened whenever immigration is reduced, and the attitude of the broader community gains strength and becomes the perpetuating force.

Of course, the force of economic pressure is constantly at work, breaking down isolation, producing physical mobility, encouraging contacts among members of different groups, and rewarding those who achieve financial success with scant regard for the group from which they come. Sociologists tell us that, from among the people of the "new" immigration, the Jews, Greeks, Syrians, and Armenians were the first to reach middle-class status, and this was due chiefly to their mercantile background.[12] Yet even as these groups climbed the socioeconomic ladder and moved out of the ethnic community, they retained much of their ancestral ethnicity down to the third and fourth generation.

Cultural Pluralism

We may argue whether it is "nature" that returns to frustrate continually the imminent creation of a single American nationality. The fact is that, in every generation throughout the history of the American republic, the merging of the varying streams of population, differentiated from one another by origin, religion, and outlook, has seemed to lie just ahead—a generation yet to come, perhaps. This continual deferral of the final melting of the different ingredients (or at least of the different white ingredients) into a seamless national web such as is found in the major national states of Europe suggests that we must search for some systematic and general causes for this American pattern of subnationalities and subcultures. It is not the temporary upsetting inflow of new and unassimilated immigrants

that creates a pattern of ethnic groups within the nation; rather it is some central tendency in the national ethos that structures people, whether those coming in afresh or the descendants of those who have been here for generations, into groups of different status and character.

Fifty years after mass immigration from Europe ended, the ethnic pattern is still strong in the United States. Four major factors appear to have contributed to the survival of ethnicity:

1. After every wave of immigration strong sentiments of "nativism" resulted in prejudice against immigrants, forcing them to close ranks for protection and to isolate themselves into ethnic colonies.[13]
2. Cultural conservatives in the ethnic communities exhorted their compatriots to remain loyal to their religion, language, customs, and traditions. These flames were generally fanned by the immigrant press, whose editors were usually culturally conservative, as well as by the organized church.
3. Politicians exploited immigrants for their vote, and ethnic political organizations were courted by both political parties.[14]
4. Third and fourth generation descendants of immigrants desired to seek out their ancestral roots and to perpetuate ethnic traditions —foods, songs, dances—which gave them identity. This is not unlike the current movement among Negroes in their search for identity and an acceptable self-concept.

The mosaic of subcultures that thus characterizes the United States has given rise to the concept of "cultural pluralism," a concept supported earlier by John Dewey. In an address before the National Education Association in 1916, he said,

> No matter how loudly anyone proclaims his Americanism, if he assumes that any one racial strain, any one component culture . . . is to furnish a pattern to which all strains and cultures are to conform, he is a traitor to an American nationalism.
>
> . . . I find that many who talk the loudest about the need of a supreme and unified Americanism of spirit really mean some special code or tradition to which they happen to be attached. They have some pet tradition which they would impose on all.[15]

But it remained for Horace Kallen to bring the concept of cultural pluralism into prominence. As early as 1924 he opposed the melting pot theory and advocated that immigrants should be encouraged to

develop their institutions and ways of life, thus contributing to the richness of American life. Writing in opposition to the growing restrictionist movement of the early twentieth century, he wrote,

> Today the descendants of the colonists appear to be reformulating a Declaration of Independence. Again as in 1776, Americans of British ancestry apprehend that certain possessions of theirs, which may be lumped under the word "Americanism," are in jeopardy. The danger comes, once more, from a force across the water, but the force is this time regarded not as superior, but as inferior. The relationships of 1776 are, consequently, reversed. To conserve the inalienable rights of the colonists in 1776, it was necessary to declare all men equal. In 1776 all men were as good as their betters; in 1920 men are permanently worse than their betters.[16]

Kallen reminds us that, when the English settlers arrived, they did not consider themselves different from the Englishmen of the mother country, for they possessed the same ethnic and cultural unity and were homogeneous with respect to ancestry and ideals. Not until the economic-political quarrel arose did they begin to regard themselves as other than Englishmen. They had forgotten how they had left England in search of religious liberty. They had forgotten how they had left Holland, where they had found this liberty, for fear of losing their ethnic and cultural identity, a condition which their descendants would deny to latecomers.

In 1924 Kallen's cry was a voice in the wilderness, overwhelmed by the voices of the restrictionists. Now, nearly fifty years later, cultural pluralism has become a reality.

How does it work? Basically today's affluent society has a "mass culture."[17] Since a culture is a common and standardized set of ways of thinking and believing, a mass culture is one in which most people think and believe alike. They share a maximum of goods and services. They have the same amusements. They generally read the same newspapers and view the same television programs. They eat approximately the same food and wear the same clothing. Goods are manufactured for a mass market. Popular taste and popular fashion are thus undifferentiated. The image of a mass culture is conveyed by the thought of millions of families watching Bob Hope. Some people sit in four-hundred-dollar chairs and divans in their penthouse apartments, while others sit on soiled, rancid, overstuffed sofas in ghetto slums, but all participate in the mass culture. Generally characteristic

of mass culture is mass political behavior, led by astute politicians who tend to be manipulators. Mass behavior tends to be hypernationalistic, racist, or class conscious, depending upon the society. This is the secondary level of relationship in which most Americans participate.

On the primary level of relationship, which is the more intimate level that involves family, relatives, and friends, however, most Americans belong to subcultural groups, whether they be ethnic, religious, social, or economic. These are sometimes called "deviant cultural groups."

Some of the "deviant cultural groups" are made up of transitional social groups that are moving into the mass culture. In the United States these are the southern rural or Appalachian whites, southern rural Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and some eastern and southern Europeans. Several of these groups are classified as "culturally deprived," or "socially disadvantaged." They generally enter the mass culture by becoming acculturated to it. For instance, the family from the southern mountains that came to the North twenty years ago to work in the factory found great rewards by becoming acculturated to the mass culture of the North. Since then, the children have gone to school and have good jobs. The family has bought a small house in an industrial suburb. When they drive back in their automobile during a paid vacation to see their relatives, they return as heroes.

Alongside the mass culture are a number of other "deviant cultural groups." Some are religious groups; some are second- or third-generation ethnic groups; others are social-class groups. The sociological terminology speaks of "elites" and of "high culture," though these terms are not fully applicable to the contemporary situation. These deviant groups operate in some kind of tradition—literary, religious, ethnic, or aesthetic—and their productivity, use of time, and life style are determined by this tradition. The deviant groups judge the quality of their products (material, intellectual, or artistic) by standards that are independent of the consumer of the product. Their mores, music, colleges, eating habits, home furnishings, and favorite television shows reflect these standards and separate them from the mass culture.

The tendency in contemporary society is for the mass culture to grow at the expense of subgroup cultures. Transitional social groups

tend to lose their identity (with the exception of blacks and other visible groups) and are swallowed up or assimilated by the expanding mass culture. As a result, cultural uniformity grows. While the poor people seek to join the mass culture and to work for acculturation or assimilation, those cultural groups that cherish their identities seek to escape the mass culture which they think threatens to engulf them. In both cases, education is the major instrument for achieving their goals. Education in contemporary American society is used to acculturate some groups to the reigning culture (the traditional role of public schools), as well as to acculturate other groups into deviant cultures which they think are better than the reigning culture (the traditional role of private schools and of some parochial schools). Education is a way of joining the American society for some people and a way of escaping the regimentation and standardization of American society for other people.

Hence, the melting pot, so gloriously expounded by Crèvecoeur two centuries ago and praised by Zangwill's characters some sixty years ago, is in reality a myth. The melting pot, as we have seen, simply failed to melt. And while it is a good general rule that, except where color is involved, the specifically *national* aspect of most ethnic groups rarely survives the third generation, and despite the intermarriages which continue apace so that even strong national traditions are steadily diluted, the groups do not disappear. The religious aspect serves, along with the other major factors mentioned, as the basis for a subcommunity, and a subculture continues to exist for these groups. Beliefs and practices are modified to some extent to conform to an American norm, but a distinctive set of values is nurtured in the social groupings defined by religious affiliation. This is quite contrary to early expectations. It appeared to Crèvecoeur, for example, that religion as well as national identity was being melted into one by the process of mixed neighborhoods and mixed marriages.

Religion and race, therefore, seem to define the major groups into which American society is evolving as the specifically national aspect of ethnicity declines.[18] Consequently, America remains a nation of mosaics—of cultural pluralities. For while most Americans, on the secondary level of relationship, participate to one extent or another in the mass culture, other Americans, on the primary level of relationship, participate in the culture of their subcommunity. The

concept of cultural pluralism has resulted in a variegated and dynamic culture, each group contributing toward its enrichment. Herein lies the message for our schools. They should provide for this cultural diversity by offering their clientele alternatives to a standard curriculum.

Cultural pluralism has given America its strength. Immigration has made the United States a world power of over 200 million people. The immigrants that came to America, both white and black, tilled the fields, manned the industries, built the railroads, and did many other things that made the country the industrial giant that it is. As its motto—*E pluribus unum*—proclaims, the United States remains truly one nation out of many people.

Notes

1. Arthur Mann, *Immigrants in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1968), 2; Seraphim G. Canoutas, *Hellenism in America* (New York: Cosmos Publishing Co., 1918), 20-21. I am indebted to Professor Mann for this section of the paper.

2. For a general account of the difficulties experienced by immigrants and the impact of the American social order upon them see Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1951); Michael Kraus, *Immigration: The American Mosaic* (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1966.)

3. A standard work on this topic is Ray A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1918).

4. For a synoptic view of the Dillingham Report, see U. S. Senate, 61st Congress, 3rd Session, Senate Document No. 747, *Abstracts of the Reports of the Immigration Commission, II* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911).

5. As quoted in Oscar Handlin, *Race and Nationality in American Life* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), 85.

6. Despite the bias in the "findings" of the Dillingham Commission, which studied all aspects of immigration over a three-year period, its reports are nonetheless important for their statistical information, to wit: by 1911, in the public schools of the nation's thirty-seven largest cities, "*two out of every three* school children were the sons and daughters of immigrants." U. S. Immigration Commission, *Abstract of the Report of the Children of Immigrants in Schools* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 18-19. For a review of the distorted findings of the Commission, see Handlin, *Race and Nationality*, ch. 5.

7. Handlin, *Race and Nationality*. See also Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 3-5; ch. 8.

8. Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race in America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916).

9. Clark Spurlock, *Education and the Supreme Court* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), 162-68.

10. As quoted in Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. and Harvard University Press, 1963), 289.

11. Colin Greer, "Public Schools: The Myth of the Melting Pot," *Saturday Review* 52 (November 15, 1969), 84-85; see also Colin Greer, *Cobweb Attitudes: Essays on Educational and Cultural Mythology* (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1970), ch. 1; Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom* (New York: Vantage Books, 1970), 53-61.

12. Bernard C. Rosen, "Race, Ethnicity, and the Achievement Syndrome," *American Sociological Review* 24 (February 1959), 47-60.

13. A study of this newer nativism is to be found in John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955).

14. For example, until recently the position of postmaster general in Chicago always went to a person of German descent, certain high-ranking positions in the city to members of the Irish community, certain municipal judgeships to members of the Jewish, Italian, and Greek communities. The practice continues, as is illustrated by an item from the *Chicago Sun-Times* of August 26, 1970, under the heading "Jurist Slate—'A Melting Pot'" which includes this statement: "Democrats have put together another carefully balanced, 'something for everyone,' slate of candidates for associate circuit judge, including an Irish Catholic, a Pole, a Jew, a Greek, and two Blacks."

15. John Dewey, "Nationalizing Education," *Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association* 54 (1916), 184-85.

16. Horace M. Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), 69.

17. I am indebted to Professor Robert J. Havighurst for certain sociological concepts used in this paper. See his "The Acculturation Process" in Ernest V. Anderson and Walter B. Kolesnik (eds.), *Education and Acculturation in Modern Urban Society* (Detroit: University of Detroit Press, 1965), 1-15.

18. Glazer and Moynihan, *op. cit.*, 314