

**Roots of a Murderous Idea:
'Replacement' Thinking in the Atlantic World Since
the Early 19th Century***

Leo Lucassen

IISH-Research Paper 55

2022

* I am very grateful to Jan-Willem Duyvendak, Nancy Foner, Beatrice de Graaf, Katy Hull, Jaap Kloosterman, Sarah Lea de Lange, Jan Lucassen, Patrick Manning, and Damian Pargas for their remarks on an earlier version. And I thank Anna Yeadell for polishing my English.

IISH Research Paper 55

ISSN 0927-4618

© Copyright 2022, the authors and the Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis

Some rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, any part of this book may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise).

IISH-Research Papers is a prepublication series inaugurated in 1989 by the International Institute of Social History (IISH) to highlight and promote socio-historical research and scholarship. Through online, open access distribution of these works the IISH hopes to encourage international discussion and exchange.

This vehicle of publicizing works in progress or in a prepublication stage is open to all labour and social historians. In this context, research by scholars from outside the IISH can also be disseminated as a Research Paper. Those interested should write to the Publication Department of the IISH, Cruquiusweg at irsh@iisg.nl.

Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Introduction	5
North Atlantic Xenophobia since the 1830s	6
Popery and Irish immigrants	7
Immigration and the rise of racism and eugenics	10
Anti-black manifestations	18
Back to Europe	20
Conclusion	24
<i>Where</i>	25
<i>How</i>	25
<i>Why</i>	27
Appendix	32
About the author	37

Abstract

The current discussion about the “replacement” conspiracy theory, triggered by the killing spree of the Norwegian Anders Behring Breivik in 2011 and a dozen of terrorist attacks that followed in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Germany, tends to focus largely on recent ideological developments in Europe’s neo-Nazi and white supremacist circles and on the postwar immigration from Islamic countries. The structure of today’s replacement theories as embodied by the “Eurabia” frame, however, goes much further back in time and is rooted in the mass immigration of Europeans to the United States starting in the 1830s. For Americans who conceived of themselves as a white Protestant nation, the settlement of groups that were seen as fundamentally different, either religiously or racially, proved a hotbed of xenophobic conspiracy ideas. These notions were fueled by a mix of long existing fears for Catholic world domination, the abolition of (internal) slavery and its consequences, and – from the 1890s onwards – the threat of a worldwide Jewish plot and especially scientific racism and eugenics, which pitted North-West Europeans as the superior “Nordic” race, threatened by the suicidal mixing with inferior European and Asian races.

What they all have in common is the belief that globalist elites (from outside or from within), are behind the (mass) immigration of dangerous outgroups. And that, in turn, these “invaders” seek to take over society and destroy the native ingroup and their culture. The outsiders are mostly perceived as inferior and dangerous migrants, but can also include groups within, such as established Jewish (or Catholic) communities, descendants of enslaved Africans whose emancipation erodes racial boundaries, or indigenous peoples who are considered a stumbling block for an ethnically and religiously homogenous nation state. By concentrating on four key characteristics of current replacement thinking (Nativism, Racism, Siege and Conspiracy), I show how various forms of replacement ideas have influenced – and partly shaped – the American self-image already since the 1830s. Furthermore, I demonstrate how these ideas have been linked to European variants since the 1960s, reaching the mainstream in the 1990s via the American Clash of Civilizations frame, finally breaking through after the 9/11 attacks, when the discussion about the integration of children of migrants from other continents was increasingly conducted in terms of unbridgeable chasms, with Muslims as an existential threat. Finally, this analysis shows that whatever form that replacement thinking adopts, the root cause is always the ingroups’ fears about losing their privileged position to outgroups, which they deem inferior or less worthy.

Introduction

On Friday, 9 April 2021, Fox News host Tucker Carlson opined that there was nothing wrong with “Replacement” theory, which states that the Democratic Party deliberately stimulates mass immigration in order to “replace” the native (white) population by immigrants, who, in turn, seek not only to gain the demographic upper hand, but also to impose their (intolerant/inferior) culture. Or, in Carlson’s words:

I know that the left and all the little gatekeepers on Twitter become literally hysterical if you use the term ‘replacement,’ if you suggest that the Democratic Party is trying to replace the current electorate, the voters now casting ballots, with new people, more obedient voters from the Third World. But they become hysterical because that’s what’s happening, actually. Let’s just say it! That’s true.¹

Similar ideas surfaced during the Charlottesville riots in August 2017, when hundreds of American neo-Nazi and white supremacists – protesting against plans to remove a statue of a confederate general – shouted “you will not replace us”, with Jews as the evil genius.²

At first sight, replacement thinking seems to stem from Europe, where these ideas started to circulate at the end of the twentieth century, and which formed the ideological inspiration of Anders Breivik’s terrorist attack that killed 77 Norwegians in the summer of 2011.³ Most of them were members of a social-democratic youth camp, which he targeted because this next generation of leftist politicians would continue the deliberate mass immigration of Muslims and thus destroy the Nordic culture. He justified his actions at length in his online published *2083 Manifesto*.⁴ Since the beginning of the century, Breivik had been a member of various extremist groups and (Nazi) networks, including Nordisk (Nordic), with 22,000 members, which believed in a conspiracy of multiculturalist elites to Islamize Europe. These networks, however, were not limited to Scandinavia, like Nordisk, or Europe, but included American anti-Muslim bloggers and publicists such as Pamela Geller, Robert Spencer, and Michelle Malkin.⁵

Three leading questions guide this paper. Firstly, *where* did the replacement ideas, embraced so enthusiastically by the far-right in Europe, North America, and Australia since the beginning of the twenty-first century, originate? Secondly, *how* did they develop over time in the North Atlantic? And, finally, *why* and under what conditions do such ideas blossom? To organize my

¹ On Fox News Primetime: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VfWGwAxxFI> (9 April 2021).

² See also Richard Alba, *The Great Demographic Illusion: Majority, Minority, and the Expanding American Mainstream* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford, 2020) p. 45.

³ And which, unlike 9/11, was largely seen as the consequence of a personal pathology (Mohammed A Bamyeh, *Lifeworlds of Islam: The Pragmatics of a Religion* (Oxford, 2019) pp. 2–3.

⁴ On Breivik and, more widely, the idea of intolerant Muslims “infiltrating” Scandinavian countries, see Eirikur Bergmann and Michael Butter, “Conspiracy Theory and Populism”, in Michael Butter and Peter Knight (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories* (London, 2020) pp. 330–343.

⁵ Liz Fekete, “The Muslim Conspiracy Theory and the Oslo Massacre”, *Race and Class* 53 (2011) 3, pp. 30–47.

quest into the where, how and why, I will concentrate on the following four, partly overlapping but analytically distinct, elements of replacement thinking:

- 1) Nativism: an opposition to an internal minority that is seen as a threat on the grounds of its foreignness.⁶
- 2) Racism: the core ingroup is assumed to be superior to certain outgroups (mostly – but not necessarily - migrants and their descendants), which, on the basis of cultural or racial characteristics, are deemed immutable, inferior, and dangerous.
- 3) Siege: not only do these outgroups fail to share the core values of the receiving society, they also cannot or do not want to assimilate, and, consequently, will (deliberately) crowd out (and destroy) the ingroup and its culture.
- 4) Conspiracy: immigration or the recognition of the equality of internal outgroups is the result of a (sinister) long-term plot by external or internal (elite) powers.⁷

If we want to understand where these ideas came from, we must concentrate on the United States, without losing sight of specific European and colonial sources of inspiration. The four “replacement” ingredients mentioned above will enable us to reconstruct their genealogy and understand how they were linked over time, culminating in the globalized version that currently dominates the public debate, and which has deeply influenced a number of white supremacist and Islamophobic terrorists in North America, Europe, and Oceania.

North Atlantic Xenophobia since the 1830s

Looking at the history of xenophobia, it becomes clear that, although not limited to the modern period,⁸ the political and societal problematization of immigrants was given a huge boost by the ideology of the nation state in the nineteenth century, with its stress on ethnic homogeneity, stability, and the concurrent rise of scientific racism. A quick and dirty way of mapping the core ingredients of anti-immigration feelings and politics can be done by listing the most extreme manifestations of xenophobia, using mob violence against labour migrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Atlantic world as a shorthand.

The overview in Table 1 (Appendix) shows that mob violence against labour migrants was primarily aimed at a limited number of external (Irish, Chinese, Italians) and internal

⁶ I borrow this definition from Jan-Willem Duyvendak and Josip Kešić, from their forthcoming book *The Return of the Native: Can Liberalism Safeguard Us against Nativism?* (Oxford, November 2023), who have adapted the nativism definition of John Higham, who described it, in 1955, as an “intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign (i.e. “un-American”) connections”: *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1955) p. 4.

⁷ This may go hand in hand with populism (which pits cosmopolitan elites against the native/national people) but not necessarily. I use populism here as defined by Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2017).

⁸ Leo Lucassen, “Mob Violence against Free Labour Migrants in the Age of the Nation State: How Can the Atlantic Experience Help to Find Global Patterns?”, *International Review of Social History* 67:3 (2022).

(African Americans) migrants, and that the different types of threats are limited to religious, nationalist, and racist ones, which often compound each other, and are all characterized by basic ingroup-outgroup mechanisms in which the outgroup is perceived as a grave, if not mortal threat. It seems no coincidence that, in the same period (1840s–1870s), mass killings of indigenous peoples took place, especially in California, where between 10,000 and 16,000 men,⁹ women, and children were killed by US state authorities and militias, while between 10,000 and 27,000 were enslaved for forced labour, and others kidnapped and raped.¹⁰

While focusing on the United States in the rest of this article, I will first analyse the four most important expressions of xenophobia, which entail at least one of the key elements of modern replacement thinking: 1) anti-Catholic against Irish migrants; 2) anti-Chinese xenophobia; 3) racialist agitation against immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe; and 4) anti-black manifestations. I argue that, already by the 1920s, nativist thinking contained all the basic elements of replacement thinking, albeit not always in the same combination. In the conclusion, I will then link this American heritage to more recent replacement ideas in Western Europe and beyond.

Popery and Irish immigrants

The idea of a Catholic conspiracy in England goes back to the late sixteenth century, when Guy Fawkes was believed to be behind the Gunpowder (Treason or Jesuit) Plot of 1605 to kill the Protestant King James I in the House of Lords. Since then, xenophobic sentiments against Catholic immigrants have been documented by historians who analysed the reaction to the mass emigration from Ireland since the 1780s in London,¹¹ and more widely spread since the 1820s, especially during the famine years. As Table 1 in the Appendix shows, this led to various incidents of mob violence in England and the United States in the 1840s and 1860s. As is so often the case, it was a converted Catholic, William Murphy, who stoked the fire in England by giving a series of inflammatory lectures in the 1860s, to free Great Britain “from the yoke of the Roman Catholic priesthood and its abettors”.¹² Especially during the first phase, Irish immigrants were seen as paupers who would lower wages and accept inhuman labour conditions, but, more importantly, migrants were perceived as being under the spell of Catholic priests and the pope in Rome, who threatened the liberal and democratic nature of the receiving societies.

A good example of anti-Catholic propaganda is the widely read book (with seven editions between 1835–1855) *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States* (1835) by

⁹ Barry Pritzker, *A Native American Encyclopedia: History, Culture, and Peoples* (Oxford, 2000) p. 114. See also Brendan C. Lindsay, *Murder State: California's Native American Genocide 1846–1873* (Lincoln, NE, 2012).

¹⁰ Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide, The United States and the California Catastrophe, 1846–1873* (New Haven, CT, 2016) pp. 11 and 351.

¹¹ Ian Haywood and John Seed (eds.), *The Gordon Riots: Politics, Culture and Insurrection in Late Eighteenth Britain* (Cambridge, 2012).

¹² Steven Fielding, *Class and Ethnicity: Irish Catholics in England, 1880–1939* (Buckingham and Philadelphia, PA, 1993) p. 7.

the inventor of the telegraph, Samuel Morse. He deemed the immigration of Catholics, especially from Ireland, a great danger. As illiterates, they had no opinions of their own, they were bewitched by their priests, and only obeyed their foreign master, i.e. the Habsburg monarchs and the pope in Rome. Moreover, Catholicism was not so much perceived as a religion as a political system: “despotic in its organization, anti-democratic and anti-republican, and cannot therefore co-exist with American republicanism”.¹³ Similar arguments are found in Lyman Beecher’s work, which warns readers that German and Austrian Catholics are taking over the country, subsidized and sent by “[t]he potentates of Europe”, with Chancellor Metternich of the Austrian Empire as the evil genius (and, in this case, the pope as Austria’s puppet),¹⁴ using his emigrants as soldiers:

But if, upon examination, it should appear that three fourths of the foreign emigrants whose accumulating tide is rolling in upon us, are, through the medium of their religion and priesthood, as entirely accessible to the control of the potentates of Europe as if they were an army of soldiers, enlisted and officered, and spreading over the land, then, indeed, should we have just occasion to apprehend danger to our institutions.¹⁵

More generally, Beecher contends that all Catholic powers in Europe, including those in Ireland, only have *one* – coordinated – aim: to send as many priests and migrants possible to populate the American West and undermine the free (Protestant) institutions.¹⁶

The role of European “despots” and Catholic priests is also stressed by William Hogan, in his *A Synopsis of Popery*, published in 1847. Catholic immigrants as such may be good people, he admits, but the problem is that they are under strict surveillance of their priests and that the numbers have risen enormously. In the past decade alone, Hogan claims, 1.4 million Catholic immigrants settled, together with 293 priests, twelve bishops, and 772 new churches. And, he adds, if nothing is done to stop them, they will become the majority and the pope will rule the United States.¹⁷

The conspiracy thinking pertaining to Catholic immigrants culminated in 1836, a year after the publication of Morse’s and Beecher’s books, in the often reprinted and sensational *Awful Disclosures or, The Hidden Secrets of a Nun’s Life in a Convent Exposed*, characterized as by far the most influential nativist publication in the era before the Civil War, with some 300,000 copies sold by 1861 and a continued popularity through various editions since then.¹⁸

¹³ Samuel Morse, *Foreign Conspiracy against the Liberties of the United States* (New York, 1835) p. 118.

¹⁴ David Davis, *The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion from the Revolution to the Present* (Ithaca, NY and London, 1971) pp. 85–99.

¹⁵ Lyman Beecher, *Plea for the West* (Cincinnati, OH, and New York, 1835) pp. 56–57.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 123–125.

¹⁷ William Hogan, *A Synopsis of Popery, as It Was and as It Is* (Hartford, CT, 1847) p. 43.

¹⁸ Ray Allen Billington, “Maria Monk and Her Influence”, *The Catholic Historical Review* 22:3 (1936), pp. 283–296, esp. pp. 283 and 296.

Furthermore, excerpts were published in several newspapers, with fierce battles over its authenticity.¹⁹

The author, Maria Monk, a former nun claimed to have escaped from a convent in Montreal, where she was told “to obey the priests in all things” and where, apart from sexual abuse, infanticide was a daily routine. The book, considered a hoax by scholars,²⁰ fits in what Richard Hofstadter described, in 1952, as “the pornography of the puritan”, adding that, “the anti-Catholics developed an immense lore about libertine priests, the confessional as an opportunity for seduction, licentious convents and monasteries, and the like”.²¹

During the 1870s and 1880s, the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish atmosphere waned in both countries, only to resurface in the US in the 1890s, when Catholics were accused of deliberately having caused the banking crisis of 1893.²² That this brand of conspiracy ideas had not evaporated is clear from Josiah Strong’s book *Our Country*, published in 1891. Strong, a congregational minister and founder of the League for Social Service, distinguished seven perils: Catholicism; Mormonism; Socialism; Intemperance; Wealth; Urbanization; and Immigration. In Chapter 5 (“The Perils of Romanism”), he portrays the Catholic Church as a direct threat to American institutions, because the believers will always obey their priests and the pope in Rome and put their values above American ones. This implies that, in the end, the pope meddles in American politics and that, because of their allegiance to Rome, the Catholic faith is incompatible with American citizenship, as, indeed, Bismarck and Gladstone also claimed.²³ Thus, if there are no obstacles in their path, they will turn America into a Catholic country and thereby subservient to the pope in Rome:

It has been shown that it is the avowed purpose of Romanists to make America Catholic. It has been shown that this could not be done without bringing into active conflict the diametrically opposed principles of Romanism and of the Republic, thus forcing all Romanists in the United States to choose between the two masters, both of whom they now profess to serve. It has been shown that Roman Catholic training, from childhood up, is calculated to disqualify the mind for independent action, and renders it highly improbable that any considerable number of even moderate and liberal Romanists would, in the supposed event, forsake their allegiance to the Pope. The rate of growth, therefore, of Romanism in the United States becomes a matter of vital importance. Many who are well acquainted with the true character of Romanism are indifferent to it because not aware of its rapid growth among us.²⁴

¹⁹ A more general background on the nature of the American popular press is provided by Andy Tucher, *Not Exactly Lying: Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History* (New York, 2022) pp. 31–33.

²⁰ Gordon Stein and Martin Gardner, *Encyclopedia of Hoaxes* (Detroit, MI, 1993) pp. 224–226.

²¹ Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York, [1952] 1967) pp. 21–22.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²³ Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York, [1885] 1891) pp. 59ff.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Strong's book was far from a marginal publication. Before 1916, 175,000 copies were sold and many chapters were reprinted in all kinds of magazines.²⁵ A similar picture is painted by a kindred spirit, Samuel Loomis, whose book *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems*, from 1887, features an introduction by Strong, and stresses the worrying demographic growth of Catholics in the United States, whose numbers had increased twice as fast as Protestants since 1850. This fear was stimulated by the inherent urge of nation states to make their populations "legible" and to establish statistics listing all kind of characteristics of their populations (gender, religion, ethnicity).²⁶

More disturbing, however, he finds that Catholics do not mingle and remain apart from the rest of society, locked into their tradition, which rejects free speech and free government. Especially in cities, they tend to live an isolated existence in parallel societies, thus frustrating the process of Americanization. Although he does not exclude the possibility of Catholic immigrants assimilating, the chances are great that "[i]f the religion of Rome becomes ours, then a civilization like that of Italy will be ours too".²⁷

Immigration and the rise of racism and eugenics

In the 1880s, scholars, politicians, journalists, and Protestant clerics became increasingly worried about the ongoing immigration from Europe and, moreover, the shift in origin from the North-West to Eastern (especially Russia) and Southern Europe (especially Italy). Although race had been an issue much earlier, resulting in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882,²⁸ the anti-Asian exclusionary racism, which would soon also affect Japanese and Filipino migrants, was much less prone to conspiracy thinking. What they did share with other labour migrants, like Italians, Irish, and Eastern Europeans, is that were perceived (unjustifiably)²⁹ as "coolies", whose standards of living were much lower and who would be uninterested in improving their lot, for example by joining unions. As a result, both Chinese and Italians, as "the Chinese of Europe",³⁰ were viewed as a direct threat to the position of American workers, and suffered from mob violence in last quarter of the nineteenth century, both in Europe and the United States, as Table 2 in the Appendix shows.

In the 1880s, this led to increasing calls for the restriction of immigration, not least by the labour movement and unions such as the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of

²⁵ Introduction to the 1963 edition by the Belknap Press.

²⁶ James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT, 1998); Theodore M. Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking, 1820–1900* (Princeton, NJ, 1986).

²⁷ Samuel L. Loomis, *Modern Cities and Their Religious Problems* (New York, 1887) p. 92.

²⁸ Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York, 2008); Beth Lew-Williams, *The Chinese Must Go: Violence, Exclusion, and the Making of the Alien* (Cambridge, MA, 2018).

²⁹ Stan Vittoz, "World War I and the Political Accommodation of Transitional Market Forces: The Case of Immigration Restriction", *Politics and Society* 8:1 (1978), pp. 49–78, esp. p. 58, n 22.

³⁰ Donna R. Gabaccia, "The 'Yellow Peril' and the 'Chinese of Europe': Global Perspectives on Race and Labor, 1815–1930", in Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen (eds.), *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives* (Bern, 1997) pp. 177–196.

Labor (AFL). In 1888, the American Economic Association initiated a contest for the best essay on the “evil effects of unrestricted immigration”.³¹ As in Europe, urban reformers from the middle class, like Loomis and Strong, worried about the social problems that the continuous stream of poor European peasants would cause in the slums of the big cities in the North-East. Well-known is the study by Jacob Riis (a Danish social reformer and photojournalist who arrived in New York in 1870) entitled *How the Other Half Lives*.³² The prevailing mood was well expressed by Richmond Mayo-Smith, the first full professor of political economy at Columbia University, whose 1890 book *Emigration and Immigration* was a plea to ban poor immigrants, criminals, and those unable to support themselves: “It is not the immigration of individual paupers and indigent persons that we have to do with, but the beginning of an influx of whole classes, that threatens to lower our standard of material civilization.”³³

Although, ultimately, Mayo-Smith was convinced that American institutions were strong enough to assimilate foreign immigrants, even when their numbers were considerable,³⁴ the book signals the growing worries about European immigration and the call for restrictions. A call that is initially characterized by the idea of a superior white race, dominant in the temperate zones of Europe, Russia, North America, and Oceania, and inferior Asian (especially Chinese) and African races. This scientific racism, with a strong belief in heredity, propagated by English scholars such as Francis Galton and Charles Pearson,³⁵ was well received in the United States, but initially lacked the pessimistic vision that the white race was doomed in the face of the demographic force majeure of Asia and Africa. Typical for the belief in the superiority of the white race – in a form of “racial nationalism”,³⁶ – is a widely read article by the future US president Theodore Roosevelt, published in 1894, a year before the Japanese victory against Russia.³⁷ Praising Charles Pearson’s work, he disagrees with his pessimistic outlook and argues that, as long as the “white race” sticks to democracy, the immigration of inferior races will be prevented, as the American Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and similar legislation in white settler colonies, such as Australia, shows.³⁸ He very much regretted the presence of (formerly enslaved) Africans in the United States, which he considered the legacy of the rule of a “trans-oceanic aristocracy”,³⁹ a notion that betrays a lingering populist idea that elites often do not represent the interest of “the people”. Roosevelt’s racial ideas, which were intimately linked to

³¹ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, p. 41.

³² Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (New York, 1890).

³³ Richmond Mayo-Smith, *Emigration and Immigration: A Study in Social Science*. (New York, 1890) pp. 134–135.

³⁴ *Idem*, *Statistics and Sociology* (London, 1895) pp. 338–339: “When we consider that in some states the immigrants and their children constitute three fourths of the population, and that, notwithstanding this, those states seem as American in legislation, in political life, and in public opinions any of the Union, the thought suggests itself that established institutions are more powerful in assimilating the foreign influence than immigration is changing native institutions.”

³⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, MA, 1955) pp. 185–193. See also Thomas C. Leonard, “Retrospectives: Eugenics and economics in the Progressive Era”, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19:4 (2005), pp. 207–224.

³⁶ Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 2001) p. 16.

³⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, “National Life and Character”, *The Sewanee Review* II (August 1894), pp. 353–376.

³⁸ McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, pp. 195–196.

³⁹ Roosevelt, “National Life and Character”, p. 366. See also Gerstle, *American Crucible*, pp. 22–23.

his imperialistic ambitions and were at the root of the Spanish-American war (1898) and the occupation of Cuba and the Philippines, were highly gendered. As Gail Bederman remarked, he “yearned to be the virile leader of a manly race and to inspire his race to wage an international battle for racial supremacy”.⁴⁰ Eight years later, in 1902, Roosevelt, now president, appeared more pessimistic as he openly worried about the low fertility rates in Europe and the US, which – he argued – could result in “race suicide”,⁴¹ a term (similar to “white genocide”) that is also widely used by current white supremacists and can be considered as “a reaction to the end of white entitlement as the global norm”.⁴² At the same time, Roosevelt did not distinguish between European “races” and refused to go along with the anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic tide, illustrating the “unstable nature” of his racism,⁴³ and that of many others.⁴⁴

The idea of “race suicide” was introduced in 1901 by Edward Alsworth Ross (1866–1951), a well-known and respected sociologist and eugenicist who worked at universities such as Stanford, Cornell, Wisconsin, and Nebraska.⁴⁵ Of interest for our argument, is that he not only coined the term “race suicide”, but also linked it to the discussion on immigration restrictions, following economists like Francis Walker, who already in 1891 had warned against declining birthrates of the native population.⁴⁶ Although he warned against those with a “vulgar faith in race” and those who exaggerate the race factor while denying the role of social conditions, he nevertheless observed that the only thing that threatened Anglo-Saxons, who, despite being gifted with stability of character, pride of blood (hence they do not mingle with inferior races), and a strong sense of superiority, was low fertility. Together with open borders, especially the Chinese (that “prolific race of the Orient”) would displace whites as a race:

For a case like this I can find no words so apt as “race suicide”. There is no bloodshed, no violence, no assault of the race that waxes upon the race that wanes. The higher race quietly and unobtrusively eliminates itself rather than endure individually the bitter competition it has failed to ward off from itself by collective action. The working classes

⁴⁰ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, IL, 1995) p. 171. Furthermore, he was convinced that Asian races, like the Japanese and Chinese, were less “manly”, but also more “civilized” and, therefore, more of a threat to American men than “primitive” African Americans. This idea functioned as an extra argument for the exclusion of Asian migrants (*Ibid.*, p. 199).

⁴¹ Trent MacNamara, “Why ‘Race Suicide’? Cultural Factors in US Fertility Decline, 1903–1908”, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 44:4 (2014), pp. 475–508. This term was also used by British eugenicists at the time. Here, however, it is not linked to immigration, but rather to the inverse relationship between class and fertility, with the worrying prospect that the poor would outbreed the rich: Richard A. Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1990) pp. 226–232.

⁴² A. Dirk Moses, “‘White Genocide’ and the Ethics of Public Analysis” *Journal of Genocide Research* 21:2 (2019), p. 210. See also Tawia B. Ansah, “Violent Words: Strategies and Legal Impacts of White Supremacist Language”, *Virginia Journal of Social Policy and the Law* 28:3 (2021), pp. 2-37.

⁴³ Gerstle, *American Crucible*, p. 80.

⁴⁴ On the fluidity and political construction of race, see also Matthew Fry Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA, 1999).

⁴⁵ See also Alan M. Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the Immigrant Menace* (Baltimore, MD and London, 1994) pp. 109, 155, 145–146.

⁴⁶ Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America* (Urbana, IL, 2002) p. 88.

gradually delay marriage and restrict the size of the family as the opportunities hitherto reserved for their children are eagerly snapped up by the numerous progeny of the foreigner. The prudent, self-respecting natives first cease to expand, and then, as the struggle for existence grows sterner and the outlook for their children darker, they fail even to recruit their own numbers. It is probably the visible narrowing of the circle of opportunity through the infiltration of Irish and French Canadians that has brought so low the native birth-rate in New England.⁴⁷

Ross nevertheless ends his essay on a positive note, expressing his trust in American institutions and the energy of “true” Americans, despite their dilution with “masses of fecund but beaten humanity” from South and Eastern Europe. In other words, “replacement” is considered only a theoretical possibility and, in the absence of a concrete *conspiracy*, the feeling of a *Siege* is missing.

Yet, the theoretical possibility and notion of “race suicide”, together with the belief in Anglo-Saxons as the superior race, would cast its shadow forward. Soon, the moderate optimism of Roosevelt and Ross would be replaced by an outright apocalyptic view espoused by writers and scholars with a much more pessimistic view of the consequences of mass immigration. This becomes especially clear in the run-up to World War I, when the professed danger of immigration from South and Eastern Europe became a hotly debated issue. This shift is conveyed in Ross’s second book, *The Old World in the New*, published in 1914. The author now reveals a pessimism about the chances of Southern and Eastern Europeans assimilating. He describes Italians from south of the Po Valley as “wavering”, “impulsive”, and as being unable to organise themselves, and he suggests that, as a consequence, admitting large numbers of them would lead to lower efficiency and less democracy.⁴⁸

Ross, who also was quite pessimistic about the demographic survival of the “white race” on a global scale,⁴⁹ is alarmed by the prospect of immigration by the inferior (but highly fertile) “Slavic race”, and as evidence, he cites a manager of an American steelworks: “You may ground and polish dull minds all you want in the public schools, but you will never get a keen edge on them because the steel is poor.”⁵⁰ Following the British eugenicist Herbert Spencer, Ross warns of the racial degrading of Anglo-Saxon Americans through continued immigration, especially when their “valuable race traits” are mingled with those of inferior races, because the result would inevitably be a bad one. In contrast to his 1901 essay in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, most aspects of replacement thinking are present,

⁴⁷ Edward E. Ross, “The Causes of Race Superiority”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 18 (July 1901), pp. 67-89, esp. p. 88. For the wider context, see also Madoka Kishi, “The Erotics of Race Suicide: The Making of Whiteness and the Death Drive in the Progressive Era, 1880–1920” (PhD, Louisiana State University, 2015).

⁴⁸ Edward A. Ross, *The Old World in the New: The Significance of Past and Present Immigration for the American People* (London, 1914) p. 119.

⁴⁹ *Idem*, “Western Civilization and the Birth-Rate”, *American Journal of Sociology* 12:5 (1907).

⁵⁰ Ross, *The Old World in the New*, pp. 138–139.

including the core of the conspiring “elite versus the people” frame, as becomes clear from the following passage:

Immigration raises the pressure-gage at once for laborers, but only gradually for other classes. It is the children of the immigrants who communicate the pressure to all social levels. The investor, landowner, or contractor profits by the coming in of bare-handed men, and can well afford to preach world-wide brotherhood. The professional man, sitting secure above the arena of struggle, can nobly rebuke narrowness and race [...] hatred. Throughout our comfortable classes one finds high-sounding humanitarianism and facile lip-sympathy for immigrants coexisting with heartless indifference to what depressive immigration is doing and will do to American wage-earners and their children.⁵¹

It is the elitist “comfortable” classes whose interests are served to the detriment of the working classes and who legitimize their position through a humanitarian discourse. This is similar to the derogatory notion of “Gutmenschen” in today’s migration debates. Moreover, he hints at a conspiracy when he mentions the role of steamship company agents and their runners as being responsible for the mass immigration.⁵² This point had already been made explicitly by James Whelpley in his 1905 book *The Problem of the Immigrant*,⁵³ in which he speaks of an international conspiracy of brokers and other informal networks:

There is a more or less well-organized conspiracy to break down or evade barriers which may be erected, and it succeeds to a remarkable degree; for the influences at work are international, hence cannot be neutralized from a single, or national point of operation.⁵⁴

The persuasion that migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe were of an inferior race was not undisputed, but scholars like the German-born Franz Boas and others, who showed that physical characteristics changed over the generations due to favourable environmental factors, such as better food and housing, were fighting an uphill battle. Although Boas was a member of the high-level Dillingham Committee, installed by Congress in 1907 to research the causes and impact of recent immigration, he lost out to followers of eugenics and race science, among whom the chairman of the committee, Senator William Paul Dillingham himself.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 226–227.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁵³ James Davenport Whelpley, *The Problem of the Immigrant: A Brief Discussion, with a Summary of Conditions, Laws, and Regulations Governing the Movement of Population to and from the British Empire, United States, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Denmark, Scandinavia and Russia* (London, 1905).

⁵⁴ McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, p. 335. On the alleged role of steamship companies, see also the alarmist book by Kenneth Roberts, *Why Europe Leaves Home* (New York, 1922).

⁵⁵ Tibor Frank, “The Dillingham Report, Franz Boas, and the Measurement of US ‘New’ Immigrants, 1907–1911”, in Annemarie Steidl *et al.* (eds.), *European Mobility: Internal, International, and Transatlantic Moves in the 19th*

By far the most outspoken opponent of Boas was Madison Grant (1865–1937), a New York lawyer and writer and a leading thinker and activist of the Progressive Era. He was not only an outspoken eugenicist, but also a well-known conservationist and founder of the Bronx Zoo and Save the Redwoods League.⁵⁶ What really made him famous, however, was his book *The Passing of the Great Race*, published in 1916.⁵⁷

Although his book “only” sold 17,000 copies,⁵⁸ it was hugely influential and enthusiastically received by scholars and politicians, among whom the former and later presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge, as well as scholars.⁵⁹ In his book, Grant unfolded a purely racist interpretation of human history, arguing that, in Europe, there were basically three races: the Nordic; the Alpine; and the Mediterranean race, with the blue eyes and fair-haired Nordic as the master race.⁶⁰ The main message was that the original immigrants were of Nordic stock, but that, since the 1880s, the inferior Alpine and Mediterranean races (from Eastern and Southern Europe) threatened to marginalize the Anglo-Saxon master race, which was aggravated by miscegenation, which was per definition to the detriment of the Nordic race:

It must be borne in mind that the specializations which characterize the higher races are of relatively recent development, are highly unstable and when mixed with generalized or primitive characters, tend to disappear. Whether we like to admit it or not, the result of the mixture of two races, in the long run, gives us a race reverting to the more ancient, generalized and lower type. The cross between a white man and a negro is a negro; the cross between a white man and a Hindu is a Hindu; and the cross between any of the three European races and a Jew is a Jew.⁶¹

The main reasons why the existence of the Nordic race was threatened were, firstly, warfare, including the Thirty Years’ War in seventeenth-century Germany, the American Civil War, and

and Early 20th Centuries (Göttingen, 2009) pp. 101–119. For the wider context, see also Robert F. Zeidel, *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics: The Dillingham Commission, 1900–1927* (DeKalb, IL, 2009).

⁵⁶ Jonathan Peter Spiro, *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant* (Burlington, VT, 2009). Characteristic of his racism was Grant’s attempt to put Ota Benga (a man from the Congo) on display among the apes in Bronx Zoo: Angela Saini, *Superior: The Return of Race Science* (Boston, 2019) p. 80.

⁵⁷ His work is still read and praised by white supremacists in the US and elsewhere. Thus, in 2012, a reprint was published with a laudatory introduction by the Palingenesis Project, an imprint of Wermod & Wermod Publishing group, based in Abergele, UK and Indianapolis, US). For a wider background of the palingenesis (rebirth) concept in fascist movements, see Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism* (Basingstoke, 2007).

⁵⁸ Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, p. 160.

⁵⁹ Although as Allan Chase aptly remarked, Madison (who took a law degree in 1890) suffered from the delusion that, if you write about science, you automatically qualify as a scientist: *The Legacy of Malthus: The Social Costs of the New Scientific Racism* (New York, 1976) p. 163.

⁶⁰ Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race, or the Racial Basis of European History* (New York, 1916). Grant borrowed the term Nordic from William Ripley’s book *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (London, 1899), who, in turn, followed the Russian-French anthropologist Joseph Deniker: William Ripley, “Deniker’s Classification of the Races of Europe”, *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 28:1–2 (1904), pp. 166–173.

⁶¹ Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race*, pp. 15–16.

World War I,⁶² which he considered as devastating civil wars *among* Nordics. Secondly, the mass immigration of “racial nondescripts” from Eastern and Southern Europe, and, finally, the undermining influence of democracy (migrants could vote soon after arrival in the US) and “sentimentalism”.⁶³ Like Ross, who, two years before, mourned misunderstood humanity, Grant blamed what he called the “sentimentalists”,⁶⁴ who – often religiously inspired – believed in the sanctity of human life, altruism, and, therefore, opposed eugenic measures and slavery. They were the cause of the blacks displacing the whites in the South,⁶⁵ and they stood in the way of a much-needed eugenics programme to prevent the “unfortunate victims of reckless breeding” from multiplying.⁶⁶ Although Grant holds the “sentimentalists” responsible the passing of the great race, the book lacks a clear conspiracy element. The only time he comes close is a (well-known) reference to the Church of Rome, which would use its influence to break down racial distinctions, and which would oppose all national movements.⁶⁷ He ends his book with a pessimistic, even apocalyptic conclusion:

We Americans must realize that the altruistic ideals which have controlled our social development during the past century, and the maudlin sentimentalism that has made America “an asylum for the oppressed”, are sweeping the nation toward a racial abyss. If the Melting Pot is allowed to boil without control, and we continue to follow our national motto and deliberately blind ourselves to all “distinctions of race, creed, or color,” the type of native American of Colonial descent will become as extinct as the Athenian of the age of Pericles, and the Viking of the days of Rollo.⁶⁸

The Passing of the Great Race, which reads like a diatribe against democracy and modern life,⁶⁹ would play an important role in the political discussion about immigration restriction along racial lines and Grant himself, with his impressive network, was very active in influencing lawmakers, like Albert Johnson, chairman of the House Immigration Committee and Burton J. Hendrick. The latter stated that the quota acts (1921 and 1924) were explicitly meant to minimize the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe, thus reproducing the strong anti-Semitism that permeates Grant’s book.⁷⁰ Furthermore, together with other eugenicists, such as Harry A.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 116ff, 79, and 200.

⁶³ The idea that citizenship of immigrants could undermine the United States we find also in Prescott F. Hall’s writings, who clearly distinguishes the inferior ‘Alpine’ and ‘Mediterranean’ races: “Selection of Immigration”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 24 (1904), pp. 169-184: writing about the many Italian and Austria-Hungarian immigrants, “... it is evident that many of our present immigrants are not the stuff of which patriots are made. This is a highly dangerous condition in a country where we are once for all committed to the principle of government by force of numbers.” (p. 178).

⁶⁴ Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race*, p. 79.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁶⁹ Chase, *The Legacy of Malthus*, p. 166.

⁷⁰ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, pp. 209, 215, and 220.

Laughlin (superintendent of the Eugenics Record Office) and Prescott F. Hall (secretary of the Immigration Restriction League),⁷¹ and Carl Brigham (professor of Psychology at Princeton), Grant bombarded the committee members with eugenic propaganda, with a main message that non-Nordic immigrants had a lower intelligence.⁷²

As mentioned before, these ideas were not undisputed. Apart from scholars like Franz Boas, especially Jewish organizations protested. Gedalia Bublick, editor of the *Jewish Daily News* and a well-known Yiddish writer, heard by the House Immigration Committee, blamed Madison Grant for being “the Moses of race hatred in the United States”, who “wants only men with long skulls and blond hair, and he says that if a man has a different kind of skull and a different kind of hair [. . .] we do not want him”, adding: “No man has the right to say to me that [. . .] I am of a low race, because I am not a Nordic.”⁷³ His critique was stifled, however, by the overwhelming belief in scientific racism, as popularized by Grant.⁷⁴

The success of Grant’s ideas was enhanced by an even more popular book published in 1920 by his follower Lothrop Stoddard, with an equally alarming title: *The Rising Tide of Color against White World-Supremacy*. Like Grant, Stoddard was not a scholar, but rather a prolific journalist, whose book was publicly endorsed by President Harding⁷⁵ and became a bestseller, soon translated into Danish, Dutch, German, Magyar, and Spanish.⁷⁶ Moreover, his work was reprinted frequently in the magazine of middle America, the *Saturday Evening Post*, which had a circulation of two million plus in the 1920s. These translations and their reception, including Grant’s German edition from 1925, reveal the transatlantic connections. Where both authors heavily borrowed from famous European racist (often non-scientist) writers, such as De Gobineau, Vacher de Lapouge, and Houston Chamberlain,⁷⁷ in return they were praised by German race scientists including Hans F.K. Günther⁷⁸ and members of the emerging Nazi

⁷¹ Prescott F. Hall, *Immigration and Its Effects upon the United States* (New York, 1906). For a thorough analysis of his racist ideas and fear of being swamped by inferior European migrants, see Jeanne D. Petit, *The Men and Women We Want: Gender, Race, and the Progressive Era Literacy Debate* (Rochester, NY, 2010) pp. 1–2. Hall was inspired by Darwin’s concept of natural selection and warned against ‘undesirable immigrants’ who would pose a threat to the original Anglo-Saxon colonists (“Selection of Immigration”). See also footnote 64.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 215. On the role of Laughlin and Ross, see David Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA, 2014) p. 16; and McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, p. 330.

⁷³ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, p. 222.

⁷⁴ Aristide Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (New York and Cambridge, MA, 2006) p. 249.

⁷⁵ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, p. 178.

⁷⁶ James R. Bachman, “Theodore Lothrop Stoddard: The Bio-Sociological Battle for Civilization” (PhD, 1967) p. 4.

⁷⁷ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, p. 160. Most likely through William Ripley’s book, *The Races of Europe* from 1899 which proposed the tripartite division “Teutonic, Alpine and Mediterranean races” (ch. 6), while adding that he would prefer “Nordic” over “Teutonic”. See also Saini, *Superior*, pp. 53-54.

⁷⁸ Stefan Breuer, *Die Nordische Bewegung in der Weimarer Republik* (Wiesbaden, 2018) p. 105.

movement, among whom Adolf Hitler, who referred to Grant's book as "my bible",⁷⁹ and who mentioned Grant's book in a speech for NSDAP members in Munich in 1927.⁸⁰

It may be clear that both Grant and Stoddard tick the *Nativism*, *Racism*, and *Siege* boxes, but what about the *Conspiracy* element? Where Grant blamed the sentimentalists (and the Catholic Church), Stoddard points at the (left-wing) "internationalists", who "caressed visions of 'human solidarity' culminating in universal race-amalgamation".⁸¹ But the real culprits for Stoddard were the imperialists, especially represented by politicians in Germany, France, and England, and who, in their competition for colonies, lost their "instinct of race solidarity"⁸² and were responsible for the Great War, typified by Stoddard as "the white civil war".⁸³ Where "cynical chancelleries and ultra-imperialists" betrayed the white race, the average European was instinctively still convinced of the importance and value of the white race.⁸⁴ And, in Grant's thinking, it was a small step to the "elite versus people" conspiracy thinking of the current replacement theory.

Anti-black manifestations

In their book *Culling the Masses*, David Fitzgerald and David Cook-Martin point at the fact that the discrimination of blacks preceded the legal discrimination of Chinese, and they refer to the Federal Immigration Act of 1830, which had that aim.⁸⁵ This legislation fits neatly into a recurring frustration of racist writers and politicians like Theodore Roosevelt, Madison Grant, and Lothrop Stoddard, who lament the demographic and political result of slavery for the United States – but with interesting differences. Whereas Roosevelt regretted the presence of African Americans as such, because it disturbed the dream of a homogeneous white (Anglo-Saxon) race, the fatal turning point in the eyes of Grant was the abolishment of slavery and the – at least, in theory – political equality that resulted from it:

The negroes of the United States, while stationary, were not a serious drag on civilization until the last century, they were given the rights of citizenship and were incorporated in the body politic.⁸⁶

⁷⁹ Steve Rose, "A Deadly Ideology: How the 'Great Replacement Theory' Went Mainstream", *The Guardian* (8 June 2022).

⁸⁰ Christian Hartman *et al.* (eds.), *Hitler, Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition* (München and Berlin, 2016) vol. I, ch. 302, p. 745.

⁸¹ Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color against White World-Supremacy* (New York, 1920) pp. 170–171.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 204–205.

⁸⁵ Fitzgerald and Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses*, p. 40.

⁸⁶ Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race*, p. 73.

It is interesting in this connection that Grant was in contact with the Jamaican “back to Africa” activist Marcus Garvey, who became active in the United States in 1917. Although with different motives, like Grant, he was interested in bringing Africans in the diaspora back to their ancestral land, envisioning Africa as a one-party state, and in upholding segregation to prevent integration.⁸⁷

As in the debate on immigration, Grant blamed the “sentimentalists”, who totally ignored the race science in which he wholeheartedly believed. He mocked the dogma of the brotherhood of man by the “loose thinkers of the French Revolution” and disagreed entirely with the idea that they could become equals through Christianity and civilization.⁸⁸ He realized that the abolishment of slavery could not be undone, but was a staunch supporter of Jim Crow legislation in the South,⁸⁹ not least because segregation- and explicit anti-miscegenation laws functioned as a buffer against the racial undermining of the ingroup by mixed offspring, which in the racial thinking of Prescott Hall, Grant, and Stoddard, would inevitably lead to the fall of the master race.

Alas, Grant noted, as a result of the politics of the “sentimentalists”, African Americans in the South were already crowding out the white population.⁹⁰ This could all have been prevented if the race consciousness of the Calvinist colonists had not been impaired by the growth of altruism. For a deeper understanding of present-day replacement thinking, it is important to note that he explicitly links the abolishment of slavery with the acceptance of immigration, stemming from the same “sentimentalist” well, with disastrous consequences:

The agitation over slavery was inimical to the Nordic race, because it thrust aside all national opposition to the intrusion of hordes of immigrants of inferior racial value, and prevented the fixing of a definite American type, such as was clearly appearing in the middle of the century.⁹¹

This persuasion shows how, at a deeper – and long-term – level, anti-immigrant sentiments and the resistance of whites against the internal migration of African Americans from the South is linked to their gradual legal equality in American society. Like stigmatized foreigners through time, African Americans were confronted with violence and exclusion. Only, in their case, their exclusion – rooted in the pervasive influence of internal slavery – was much more institutional, existential, and durable,⁹² and based on racist notions of inferiority. The abolishment of slavery was a watershed, but it also made the boundary between African Americans and “whites” much more salient, and incursions as perceived by whites often led to extreme, gendered, mob violence

⁸⁷ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, p. xii; see also Colin Grant, *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey* (London, 2008).

⁸⁸ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, p. 14.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁹² As defined by Göran Therborn, “Dynamics of Inequality”, *New Left Review* 103 (January–February 2017), pp. 1–19; and Charles Tilly, *Durable Inequality* (Berkeley, CA, 1998).

(lynchings), in order to “draw the line”.⁹³ One of those breaches was the “Great Migration” of some 7 million African Americans starting at the beginning of the twentieth century, resulting in their settlement in big cities in the North and the West.⁹⁴ Many whites regarded this as a major threat; or, in the words of Carol Anderson:

Thus, while African Americans understood the exodus as grabbing at a chance for freedom and equality, white Southerners saw black advancement and independence as a threat to their culture, and indeed, their economy.⁹⁵

Whereas, during the second half of the nineteenth century, Chinese, Irish, and Italians were the main target, in the first half of the twentieth century, migrating African Americans became the object of mob violence, with significantly more casualties than among European migrants, running in the hundreds (Table 2 in the appendix). It is therefore no coincidence that the violent white supremacists who took centre stage during the Trump presidency continued the Ku Klux Klan tradition in which hatred against blacks, Catholics, and Jews formed a holy trinity.⁹⁶

Back to Europe

Having shown the deep American roots of replacement thinking, it is time to return to Europe and ask ourselves to what extent these American ideas influenced extremists like Breivik as well as far-right politicians and intellectuals during the acceleration of immigration (internal, postcolonial, and labour migrants and refugees from other continents) in postwar Northern and Western Europe.⁹⁷ Secondly, and at a more structural level, I will examine the general conditions that stimulated replacement thinking on either side of the Atlantic.

Although Breivik was the first to draw the ultimate conclusion, by resorting to terrorist violence, *nativist* and *racist* sentiments have accompanied anti-immigrant movements and

⁹³ William Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880–1930* (Urbana and Chicago, IL, 1993). Lynchings of blacks peaked in the 1890s and remained high during the first two decades of the twentieth century, to slowly die out from the late 1930s onwards (Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration* (New York, 2010). Victims were overwhelmingly male African Americans, showing the highly gendered dimension.

⁹⁴ James N. Gregory, *The Southern Diaspora: How The Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2005); Carol Anderson, *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide* (London, 2016) ch. 2.

⁹⁵ Anderson, *White Rage*. p. 46.

⁹⁶ After the successes of the Civil Rights Movement, the (male) white supremacist movement regained momentum in the late 1970s and 1980s, portraying themselves as victims and striving for the restoration of white privilege: Mitch Berbrier, “The Victim Ideology of White Supremacists in the United States”, *Sociological Focus* 33:2 (2000), pp. 175–191.

⁹⁷ For an overview see Klaus J. Bade *et al.* (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Migration and Minorities in Europe: From the 17th Century to the Present* (New York, 2011).

reactions since the mid-nineteenth century.⁹⁸ For most of this time, however, the *siege* and *conspiracy* elements were largely missing. This changed after World War II, when immigration soared. The starting gun was fired on 24 April 1968, when the xenophobic British Conservative MP Enoch Powell gave his inflammatory ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech at Birmingham’s Midland Hotel. He warned his audience that due to ‘coloured’ immigration from South Asia, West Indian and African Britons would become increasingly isolated, ‘strangers’ in their ‘own country’.⁹⁹ Five years later, the well-known French novelist Jean Raspail, a devout and traditionalist Catholic, published an influential novel (*Le Camp des Saints*), which was translated into English and German and eight other languages with sales running to half a million copies.¹⁰⁰ In his novel, he sketched a future in which France (and Europe as a whole) would be overrun by hordes of Third World immigrants, thereby destroying European civilization. In a 1985 *Le Figaro* article, which featured the leading question, whether ‘we’ will still be French in 30 years’ time, Raspail stated that “the proportion of France’s non-European immigrant population will grow to endanger the survival of traditional French culture, values and identity”.¹⁰¹

A crucial element in both Powell’s and Raspail’s thinking is that they regretted the loss of empire and the privileged position of white Europeans. This explains why they paint such an apocalyptic picture of a future in which immigrants from former colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean replace the British and the French, along with other Europeans. Moreover, as Powell vividly spelled out for his audience, the roles would invert: “in this country in 15 or 20 years’ time the black man will have the whip hand over the white”,¹⁰² with native English becoming a persecuted minority. Wholly in line with Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, he blamed the emancipation of African Americans, a foreshadowing of what awaited Great Britain:

“As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see, ‘the River Tiber foaming with much blood.’ That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect.”¹⁰³

So, as Alexander Barder succinctly reminds us,¹⁰⁴ what ties Powell and Raspail together is a fear – offset by global decolonization and the rise of anti-racism, globalized through organizations like UNESCO and the United Nations – that the era of white superiority is waning, and that

⁹⁸ Leo Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat: The Integration of Old and New Migrants in Western Europe since 1850* (Urbana and Chicago, IL, 2005) and Table 1 in the Appendix

⁹⁹ John Solomos, “‘Strangers in Their Own Land’: Powellism’s Policy Impact”. *Patterns of Prejudice* 53:2 (2019), pp. 200–209.

¹⁰⁰ Ian Allen, “Inside the World of Racist Science Fiction”, *The New York Times*, 25 December 2018.

¹⁰¹ Jean Raspail (in collaboration with Jean-François Dumont), “Serons-nous encore Français dans 30 ans?”, *Le Figaro*, 26 October 1985.

¹⁰² Enoch Powell, *Freedom and Reality* (New Rochelle, NY, 1970) p. 213.

¹⁰³ Cited in Erik Bleich, *Race Politics in Britain and France: Ideas and policymaking since the 1960s*. (Cambridge, 2003) p. 74.

¹⁰⁴ Alexander D. Barder, *Global Race War: International Politics and Racial Hierarchy* (Oxford, 2021) ch. 9.

formerly colonial ‘races’ are taking over. Barder, citing Stuart Hall, stresses that *siege* and *conspiracy* went hand in hand. For Powell, the left was the enemy within, enabling mass immigration (“if you want a negro as a neighbour, vote Labour”),¹⁰⁵ whereas Raspail blamed a misplaced humanitarianism among the elites, echoing Grant’s disdain for sentimentalists some sixty years earlier.¹⁰⁶

Raspail’s and Powell’s ideas found fertile ground thanks to long-standing colonial anti-Islam, anti-Arab, and anti-Black stereotypes in states such as France (Algeria), Great Britain (India), and the Netherlands (Indonesia). In the case of France, these notions were transferred to “The Hexagon” already after World War I, when labour migration from Algeria started and institutional racism in France quickly developed.¹⁰⁷ This further intensified during and after the Algerian War of Independence, which was followed by a mass emigration of French “pieds noir” civil servants, who brought their anti-Arab attitudes with them when they entered the French state bureaucracy, where many of them became responsible for the settlement process of Algerians.¹⁰⁸ In a way, the spirit of the “clash of civilizations” thinking has always been part of French colonial history, long before Huntington coined the term in 1993.¹⁰⁹

It is no great leap from Jean Raspail to Renaud Camus, the French author who published his influential book *Le Grand Remplacement* (the Great Replacement) in 2011, in which ‘Muslims’ and ‘Islam’ became the prime target. Camus warned that France was in great danger of being taken over by Islamic immigrants and their descendants due to the scheming of influential European leaders. Camus was not the first to express such ideas. Six years earlier, in 2005, Bat Ye’or (nom de plume of the Egyptian-born, British journalist Gisèle Littman) published the widely read book *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* in which she claimed that “globalists”, pushed by French and Arab elites, were secretly trying to Islamise Europe by allowing Arab immigration.¹¹⁰ This was followed, a year later, by Bruce Bawer’s *While Europe Slept* in which he offered similar arguments.¹¹¹ The “Eurabia” idea was immediately picked up by Islamophobic far right politicians such as Jean Marie Le Pen in France and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, whose radical anti-Islam stance was one of the sources of inspiration for Breivik’s killing spree.¹¹² Finally, also in 2005, an obscure book, entitled *The Kalergi Plan*, was

¹⁰⁵ A slogan from Powell’s Conservative colleague Peter Griffiths, uttered in a successful election campaign in Smethwick in 1964: Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* (London, 2002) p. 41.

¹⁰⁶ Stuart Hall, “Race and Reaction”, in S. Davidson, D. Featherstone, M. Rustin, and B. Schwarz (eds.), *Selected Political Writings: The Great Moving Right Show and Other Essays* (Durham, NC, 2017) p. 150.

¹⁰⁷ Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control between the Wars* (Ithaca, NY, and London, 2006).

¹⁰⁸ Leo Lucassen, “How Repatriates Forge Social Change in the Metropole: A Cross-Cultural Migration Perspective”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44:3 (2020), pp. 430–438. More generally, see Bleich, *Race politics in Britain and France*; and Naved Bakali and Farid Hafez (eds.), *The Rise of Global Islamophobia in the War on Terror: Coloniality, Race, and Islam* (Manchester, 2022).

¹⁰⁹ Jim Wolfreys, *Republic of Islamophobia: The Rise of Respectable Racism in France* (London, 2018) p. 41.

¹¹⁰ Bat Ye’or, *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis* (Fairleigh, NJ, 2005).

¹¹¹ Bruce Bawer, *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam is Destroying the West from Within* (New York, 2006).

¹¹² As becomes clear from his 1518-page manifesto (“2083 – A European Declaration of Independence”) in which Ye’or and Wilders, among others, are mentioned as inspiration and the “multiculturalist elite” is blamed for the

published by the Austrian neo-Nazi and Holocaust denier Gerd Honsink. The core message was that, already in 1923, the Pan-European thinker Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi had designed a plan to deliberately mix the superior European white (Nordic) race with African and Asian races, and that, ever since, Jews and other elites had secretly sought to fulfil this aim by enabling mass immigration.¹¹³

Less extreme, but with a similar message was the German bestseller *Deutschland schafft sich ab* ('Germany Abolishes Itself'), published in 2010, which sold 1.5 million copies. In this book, the author, Thilo Sarrazin, a prominent member of the Social Democratic Party, claimed that Turkish and other Muslim migrants refuse to integrate and, if nothing is put in their way, over time Germany will become an Islamic country. He completed this persuasion with an outright eugenic idea, that most Turkish children have a lower IQ and will negatively influence the quality of the German population.¹¹⁴ In this context, he referred to the controversial book *The Bell Curve* (1994), written by Julian Herrnstein and Charles Murray, which argues that whites are more intelligent than African Americans and that higher educated women have less children than their lower educated counterparts, which would have a "dysgenic" effect.¹¹⁵ This nineteenth-century biologist and social Darwinist argument became even more blatant with Sarrazin's juxtaposing of intellectually inferior Muslim immigrants against Jews, who he portrayed as being genetically gifted with an average higher intelligence. A statement that he hoped, in vain, would counteract accusations that his book was racist. Instead, as Sander Gilmore succinctly remarked, his argument was a textbook example of "a popular misuse of [...] very, very bad science".¹¹⁶

Sarrazin's reference to *The Bell Curve*, reminds us that notwithstanding the many contemporary lines that lead to Europe, replacement thinking has its own American roots and genealogy. One only needs to scratch the surface to discern an internal tradition that originates in discussions, already in the early nineteenth century, about immigration, slavery and segregation, and the purposeful annihilation and marginalization of native Americans. Or, as *Washington Post* journalist Philip Bump stated: "The reason that people get agitated by claiming that 'the people who live here' – mostly White people – are being 'replaced' is that this is a central tenet of white nationalist rhetoric."¹¹⁷

Islamization of Europe. Karin von Brömssen, "'2083 – A European Declaration of Independence': An Analysis of Discourses from the Extreme", *Nordidactica* 1 (2013), pp. 12–33.

¹¹³ For the wider background, see Andreas Önnersfors and André Krouwel (eds.), *Europe: Continent of Conspiracies. Conspiracy Theories in and about Europe* (Abingdon, 2021).

¹¹⁴ Thilo Sarrazin, *Deutschland schafft sich ab. Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen* (München, 2010).

¹¹⁵ Richard Julian Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* (New York, 1994) pp. 269 and 341. It is telling that these authors also refer (pp. 356 and 358) to an utterly pessimistic pamphlet from 1990 (Lawrence Auster, *The Path to National Suicide: An Essay on Immigration and Multiculturalism* (Monterey, CA, 1990)) in which mass immigration to the United States is portrayed as racial suicide, a concept (as we saw) already coined by former president Theodore Roosevelt in 1902. Moreover, they advocate a stricter selection of immigrants based on "competency" (p. 549).

¹¹⁶ Sander L. Gilman, "Thilo Sarrazin and the Politics of Race in the Twenty-First Century", *New German Critique* 117:39 (2012), pp. 47–59, esp. p. 50.

¹¹⁷ Philip Bump, "Why Tucker Carlson's Recent Embrace of 'Great Replacement' is Different", *Washington Post*, 9 May 2022.

Although replacement thinking is closely linked to fears about immigration, it should not be confused with demographic changes in populations through immigration as such. As we have seen, it always concerns specific migrants, those who are regarded inferior and who seem to threaten the position of the insiders. Nevertheless, guileless observers often take such changes as evidence that “replacement” is happening. Replacement thinking, however, goes much further. It assumes that cosmopolitan elites deliberately organize immigration to weaken the native population demographically, economically, and culturally, and that the migrants themselves are set on imposing their own (intolerant non-Western) culture. The dangerous and deadly element is the apocalyptic prediction that, if nothing is done, one’s ingroup is on the verge of extinction. And, if you really believe that there is a conspiracy at work, and that migrants constitute an existential threat, this spreads a poisonous xenophobia. Moreover, it increases the chance that some individuals will resort to terrorist violence, as Table 2 in the Appendix shows.

Although the availability of guns in the United States may explain the dominance of US shootings since 2011, compared with other parts of the world the range of targets (including native Jews and African Americans) betrays a specific American “Sonderweg”, which can only be understood by its unique combination of an internal slavery system, a massive settlement migration at the detriment of native Americans, and a racist conspiracy tradition in which Jews, Catholics, and blacks are inextricably bound, as the history of the Ku Klux Klan until this day reminds us. Nor need it surprise us that, alongside Muslims, Jews, and Mexican immigrants, African Americans were singled out by white supremacist terrorists, as the attacks in Charleston (2015) and Buffalo (2022) testify.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

In 2016, in an interview with the then 92-year-old Jean Raspail, the American journalist Sasha Polakow-Suransky observed that both Marine le Pen, leader of the far-right party *Rassemblement National*, and Steve Bannon (then advisor to President Donald Trump) quoted extensively from Raspail’s dystopian replacement novel *Le champs des saints* from 1973.¹¹⁹ This encounter between European and American replacement thinkers is evidence of the Atlantic connections and mutual influences and marks a new era in which replacement has gone global, at least in the area that we can characterize as Europe and its “Western offshoots”.¹²⁰ It is also a good starting point from which to make up the balance, following the *where*, *how*, and *when* questions posed in the introduction: where, how, and why did replacement thinking occur.

¹¹⁸ See Table 2 in the Appendix.

¹¹⁹ Sasha Polakow-Suransky, *Go Back to where You Came from: The Backlash Against Immigration and the fate of Western Democracy* (London, 2017) pp. 291-292. Raspail told him that Marine Le Pen was a good friend and that he had always been sympathetic to the Front National of her father. Furthermore, it is interesting that he considered Michel Houellebecq’s novel *Submission* (Paris, 2015) as carrying the same message as his 1973 book.

¹²⁰ The United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand: Angus Maddison, "The West and the Rest in the World Economy: 1000–2030. Maddissonian and Malthusian interpretations." *World Economics* 9:4 (2008), pp. 75-99.

Where

Although the fear of replacement by outsiders who are deemed inferior or outright dangerous for the ingroup is not limited to the Atlantic world, as the mob violence against Koreans in Japan in 1923,¹²¹ against (Muslim) Indian labour migrants in Burma in the 1930s¹²² or the violent dehumanization of Muslims by the current Indian Modi regime show,¹²³ the North Atlantic can be considered a hotbed of replacement thinking. Our historical reconstruction shows that “replacement” thinking has deep roots in the history of the United States. Especially the combination of an internal slavery tradition and a long period of mass immigration proved fertile ground for replacement ideas, which go back to at least the 1830s.

How

If we apply the four key elements of replacement thinking to the genealogy of this idea and to the last two centuries, and limit ourselves to the United States, we see a gradual build up over time with *nativism* and (somewhat less) biological and cultural *racism* as constants over time (see Table 1).

Table 1: Replacement thinking towards specific outgroups in the United States since the 1830s

	<i>19th–first half 20th century</i>					<i>1980s–now</i>			
	Catholics	Chinese	Southern and Eastern Europeans	African Americans	Jews	“non-European” immigrants	African Americans	Jews	Muslims
Nativism	x	x	X	X	x	x	x	x	x
Racism	+/-	x	+/-	X	x	x	x	x	x
Siege	x		x			x	+/-		x
Conspiracy	x	+/-			x	+/-	x	x	x

Whether outgroups are considered as a serious threat to the survival of the ingroup (*Siege*) differs over time and from group to group. As for the *conspiracy* element, this is most blatant in the

¹²¹ Sonia Ryang, “The Great Kanto Earthquake and the Massacre of Koreans in 1923: Notes on Japan’s Modern National Sovereignty”, *Anthropological Quarterly* 76 (2003), pp. 731–748.

¹²² Michael Adas, *The Burma Delta: economic developments and social change on an Asian rice frontier, 1852-1941* (Madison, 2011) p. 207; and Lucassen, ‘Mob violence’.

¹²³ Which in September 2022 also spread to Great Britain, as incidents in Leicester show (*The Guardian*, 19 September 2022). See also Saini (*Superior*, pp. 207-208) on the conscious decision of the Hindu nationalist government in 2018 to create a ‘Hindu first’ account of history.

nineteenth-century anti-Catholic movements, with the pope in Rome as the obvious villain. Furthermore, conspiracy is at the heart of anti-Semitism, with the Jew as ultimate outsider with supposed financial and publicity (the press) power. A combination that recently has made George Soros, accused of importing Muslim refugees into Europe, such a grateful victim. It is striking that both then and now representatives of social movements that strive for equality and non-discrimination are accused of furthering replacement of the native ingroup: “sentimentalists” then, “Gutmenschen” or multiculturalist, “cosmopolitan” elites now. A framing that was given extra force by the simplistic binary opposition between “somewheres” and cosmopolitan “anywheres”, by the British journalist David Goodhart.¹²⁴ This populist (“elite versus the people”) element is largely limited to the recent period. Whereas many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century replacement thinkers, like Grant and Stoddard, were unapologetically anti-democratic, with little faith in the people, this has changed – at least rhetorically – with present-day radical and far-right (and sometimes also left-wing) political movements, which claim to stand up for the interests of “the people”. Nevertheless, there is also an important anti-democratic continuity, given the publicly voiced admiration of current far right populist leaders like Le Pen and Wilders for authoritarian leaders like Putin, Orban, Modi and Trump.

This reconstruction of replacement thinking shows the stubborn character of nativist and racist attitudes, both at a group and an institutional level. Although Adam McKeown and others are right in arguing that a shift in the immigration policies took place in the North Atlantic world from a selection based on attributes to one based on achievements,¹²⁵ which explains why, since 1965, higher-educated Chinese and other Asian and African migrants are accepted, while lower-educated Hispanics and others are not; this shift has not erased nativist or racist sentiments. On the contrary, they may well go together with a meritocratic mode of discrimination that McKeown observes. Moreover, it fits within what James Hollifield has called “the migration state”,¹²⁶ in which we see a clear rise, since the 1990s, in exclusion on the basis of perceived cultural threats, with Muslims as the most conspicuous category.¹²⁷

This brings me to the nature of the *Siege/Conspiracy* nexus. Although the core can already be found in the anti-Catholic xenophobia of the 1830s to 1860s, it was predominantly the priests and the Catholic Church who functioned as the bogeymen, with the migrants themselves as passive hangers-on. If only the influence of Catholicism could be curtailed and the migrants infused in American institutions, then the danger would largely be neutralized, was the dominant thought. This differs from the stigmatization of Muslims since the 1990s, who are considered members of a homogenous and unchangeable group that – blinded by religious fanaticism – consciously tries to undermine and, in the end, will take over society. This intentional – and, ultimately, racist – element is often buttressed by a (conscious) misrepresentation of particular

¹²⁴ David Goodhart, *The Road to Somewhere: The Populist Revolt and the Future of Politics* (London, 2017).

¹²⁵ McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, p. 350.

¹²⁶ James F. Hollifield, “The Emerging Migration State”, *The International Migration Review* 38:3 (2004), pp. 885–912; and *idem et al.* (eds.), *Controlling Immigration: A Comparative Perspective* (Stanford, CA, 2022).

¹²⁷ Leo Lucassen, “Beyond the Migration State: Western Europe since World War II”, in James F. Hollifield and Neil Foley (eds.) *Understanding Global Migration* (Stanford, CA, 2022) pp. 385–412.

elements from Islam. The most abused concept in this regard is *Taqiyya*,¹²⁸ which, according to Islamophobic, anti-immigration populists, forces Muslims to hide and lie about their true intentions, which is to secretly prepare their takeover.

The *Taqiyya* concept bears many similarities with the persuasion that Jews, behind the scenes, are always out to undermine Christian societies and nation states in order to establish world domination.¹²⁹ This is the core of the widely translated and disseminated “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” (1903).¹³⁰ The difference with the current Islamophobic conspiracy idea, however, is that Jews (like the Jesuits), due to their alleged cleverness, do not need a numerical majority to get the upper hand, because it would suffice to control the press, politicians, and the financial system. Although, in Islamophobic conspiracy thinking, for “Islamization” of societies to occur Muslims need to have the demographic upper hand,¹³¹ enhanced by the submissive attitude of naïve multiculturalist elites (referred to as “dhimmitude”).¹³²

As we have seen, replacement ideas in North America did not develop in isolation. Crucial elements were imported from Europe, with the scientific racism of De Gobineau, Lapouge (France) and Houston Chamberlain (Germany), British Eugenics,¹³³ (Russian, Austrian and German) anti-Semitism, and, more recently, islamophobia (especially the “Eurabia” notion) as the most important examples. Furthermore, the stigmatization of and violence against Italian and Irish migrants happened on both sides of the Atlantic in the nineteenth century. Finally, there were mutually reinforcing feedback loops, as is shown by the enthusiastic reception of the books of Grant and Stoddard by Hitler and other National Socialists in the 1920s and 1930s, the influence of Powell and Raspail since the 1960s, and the globalization of far right replacement ideas in the current era.

Why

The fact that the United States in particular was such a hotbed for replacement ideas so early on is explained by its specific migration history. It received some 15 million immigrants between 1820–1889, and another 18 million until 1919, the bulk of whom arrived from Europe. Immigration as such, however, is not sufficient. Crucial is the fear that the privileged position of what was considered the native core of the population (in this case, Protestant North-Western

¹²⁸ Jordan Denari Duffner, *Islamophobia: What Christians Should Know (and Do) about Anti-Muslim Discrimination* (Maryknoll, NY, 2021).

¹²⁹ On the (dynamic) relationship between antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe through time see: James Renton and Ben Gidley (eds.), *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe. A Shared Story?* (London and New York, 2017).

¹³⁰ It was originally written in Russian at the beginning of the twentieth century, but its authorship is still unclear: Michael Hagemeister, *The Perennial Conspiracy Theory: Reflections on the History of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (Abingdon, 2022) p. 56. Thanks to Jaap Kloosterman, who pointed this book out to me.

¹³¹ Sarah S. Bracke and Luis. M. Aguilar, “‘They Love Death as We Love Life’: The ‘Muslim Question’ and the Biopolitics of Replacement”, *British Journal of Sociology* 71 (2000), pp. 680–701.

¹³² This idea was launched by Bat Ye’or already in the 1980s and 1990s, and further developed in her book *Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilizations Collide* (Madison, WI, and Lancaster, 2002).

¹³³ Leo Lucassen, “A Brave New World: The Left, Social Engineering, and Eugenics in Twentieth-Century Europe”, *International Review of Social History* 55:2 (2010), pp. 299–330.

Europeans) was threatened: firstly by immigrants from other parts of Europe (let alone other continents), who would be able to achieve the same societal position through the democratic system; and secondly, by the abolition of slavery and subsequent emancipation of African Americans, which would further undermine the position of the native (white) core. In other words, when immigration (or internal emancipation and miscegenation) threatened ethnic, racial, and religious hierarchies. These ideas were at the heart of the racist quota acts of 1921 and 1924¹³⁴ institutional racism, which slowly and partially crumbled during the Civil Rights and post-Holocaust Zeitgeist, and led to the new non-discriminatory immigration act of 1965.

We see similar mechanisms at work in Europe. Immigration increased rapidly after World War II, both within Europe, but also from other continents, as a consequence of the rapidly evolving decolonization process and the considerable demand for foreign labour. Although European migrants could also arouse xenophobic feelings, existential fears were reserved for migrants of colour from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.¹³⁵ The targets of these fears were those people who, in the eyes of nativists, shared elements of both inferior immigrants (like Turks and Moroccans) and formerly enslaved or racially discriminated colonial populations (like West and South Indians in Great Britain and Algerians in France). Both types of immigrants entered liberal nation states in which democratic principles in essence enabled equality through citizenship. As in the United States, it did not take long for replacement thinking to raise its head, as we saw with the examples of Enoch Powell and Jean Raspail around 1970. Although they did influence migration policies, the siege and conspiracy elements were largely contained by the prevailing “integration optimism”, which followed the “ethical revolution”¹³⁶ after the breakthrough in awareness of the ultimate consequences of racism, with Auschwitz as macabre extreme.¹³⁷ The worldwide anti-racism and call for equality, embodied by the United Nations, UNESCO, and other global institutions, and manifested by the demise of imperialism and decolonization, paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement in the US and the anti-racist movements, like SOS Racisme in France, which briefly blossomed in the early 1980s.

The power of this ethical revolution, lost steam in the course of the 1980s, and would soon be followed by a long period of integration pessimism, which started with the Rushdie affair in 1988 and the subsequent launch of the hugely influential anti-Muslim “Clash of Civilizations” framework by the (American) political scientist Samuel Huntington.¹³⁸ This gained prominence with the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent rise of far-right populist parties in Europe. Lingering racist sentiments once again raised their heads and entered the

¹³⁴ These were rooted in earlier dealings with Asian migrants (especially Chinese), and which led to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, p. 331).

¹³⁵ Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, chs. 5 and 7.

¹³⁶ As argued in Leo Lucassen and Jan Lucassen, “The Strange Death of Dutch Tolerance: The Timing and Nature of the Pessimist Turn in the Dutch Migration Debate”, *The Journal of Modern History* 87:1 (2015), pp. 72–101.

¹³⁷ Steven Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge, 2016).

¹³⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?”, *Foreign Affairs* 73:3 (1993), pp. 22–49; *idem*, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, 1996).

mainstream political debate, whereas Islamophobic conspiracy ideas developed in Israel and in Europe.

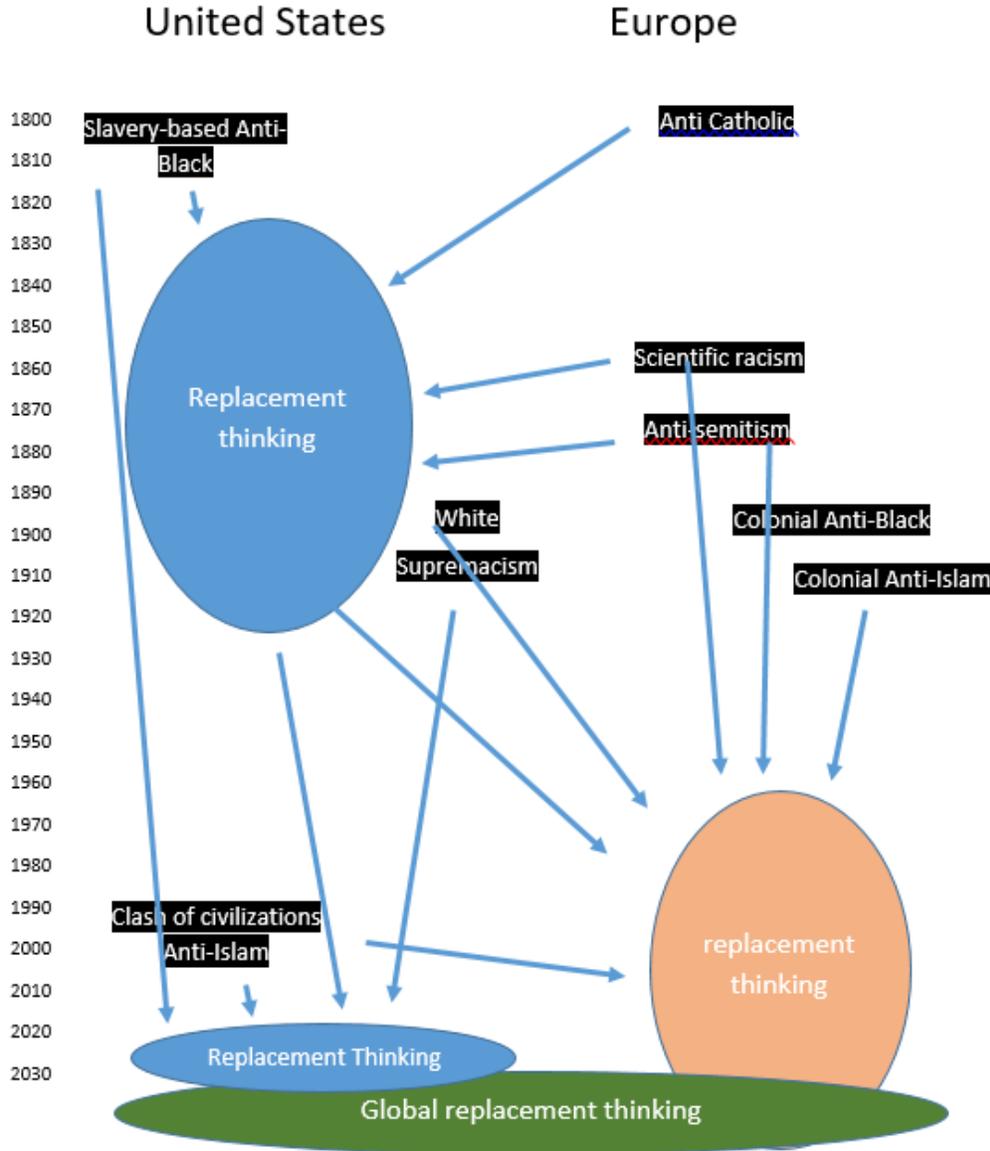
In the 2010s, “Eurabia” fears and anti-black racism coalesced with the growing and more visible American white supremacist movement, the “Refugee Crisis” of 2015, and the Trump presidency, creating a perfect storm and activating long-lingering replacement ideas rooted in the nineteenth century. Propelled by social media, they produced a global variant that united anti-immigrant movements in Europe, North America, and Oceania.

This historical analysis of replacement thinking shows that the sources of inspiration for Breivik and other current replacement thinkers in Europe reach further than Littman’s “Eurabia”, Camus’s “Remplacement”, or even the racist ideology of the Nazi’s. Although Littman and Camus provide a specific (and important) European colonial anti-Arab, anti-Black and anti-Muslim ingredient- building on Raspail and Powell, there are much deeper North American roots. As in Europe the basic opposition is between what was regarded as the privileged and superior ingroup and the dangerous outgroup which was on the verge to displace them with the help of rootless (“sentimentalist”, “politically correct”, “woke”) elites. Who the threatening outgroup was changed over time, with Jews and Blacks remaining constant outsiders.

With the evaporating ethical revolution and the demand for racial equality, it comes as no surprise that replacement thinking within the white supremacist movement in the United States reared its head again during the Black Lives Matter movement.¹³⁹ Thanks to the rise of social media, racist replacement ideas now flow freely between North America, Europe, Oceania and elsewhere (India), combining anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish, and anti-black perceptions into a new, much more global mix (Figure 1).

¹³⁹ It is ironic that many of those who now consider themselves as the quintessential whites in the United States, and who support white supremacist ideas, are the offspring of (Southern and Eastern European) immigrants, like Tucker Carlson himself (whose forefathers came from Italy), who would never have been allowed in. For the history of these earlier migrants and how they fared, see Roger Waldinger, “Did Manufacturing Matter? The Experience of Yesterday’s Second Generation: A Reassessment”, *International Migration Review* 41:1 (2007), pp. 3–39; and Joel Perlmann, *Italians Then, Mexicans Now: Immigrant Origins and Second-Generation Progress, 1890 to 2000* (New York, 2005). More generally, see Nancy Foner, *From Ellis Island to JFK: New York’s Two Great Waves of Immigration* (New Haven, CT, 2000); and Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, MA, 2003).

Figure 1: The development of replacement thinking in the North Atlantic over time



This brings me, finally, to the question of continuity and change. Looking at the last two centuries in the North Atlantic and comparing the different expressions of replacement thinking through time, I come to the conclusion that, although the stigmatization mechanism in past and present cases bears conspicuous similarities,¹⁴⁰ the portrayal of Islam as an existential threat has inserted new elements. In particular, the anti-Muslim and anti-Arab legacy of European colonialism has resulted in essentialist and orientalist notions of race and culture converging in new, poisonous ways. At the same time, there is a continuity of the powerful anti-Semitic

¹⁴⁰ As also argued by Aristide Zolberg and Long Litt Woon, "Why Islam Is Like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States", *Politics and Society* 27:5 (1999), pp. 5–38.

conspiracy idea of “Jews” representing the ultimate global power, with, as the most recent example, the portrayal of “Soros” during the 2015 “refugee crisis” as being the person behind the screens facilitating “hordes” of Muslim refugees entering Europe.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ As argued, for example, by the far-right American politician Michelle Malkin, in her self-declared conspiracy book *Borders Inc.: Who's Funding America's Destruction?* (Washington, D.C., 2019).

Appendix

Table 1: *Most infamous recorded incidents of collective xenophobic violence against (internal and foreign) labour migrants in the North Atlantic world (1844–1958)*¹⁴²

Country/Place	Year	Perceived threat to		Target	Deaths
		Identity	Resources		
US (Philadelphia) ¹⁴³	1844	Religion	Jobs	Irish	20
UK (Stockport) ¹⁴⁴	1852	Religion	Jobs	Irish	0 (54 wounded)
Australia (Lambing Flat) ¹⁴⁵	1861	Race	Jobs	Chinese	0 (many wounded)
US (New York) ¹⁴⁶	1863	Race	Jobs and housing	African Americans	11
UK (Wolverhampton and Birmingham) ¹⁴⁷	1867	Religion	Jobs and housing	Irish	2 (many wounded)
US (Los Angeles) ¹⁴⁸	1871	Race	Jobs	Chinese	18
US (Antioch) ¹⁴⁹	1876	Race	Jobs and housing	Chinese/Mexicans/ Chileans	
US (Denver) ¹⁵⁰	1880	Race	Jobs	Chinese	1
France (Marseilles) ¹⁵¹	1881	Nationality	Jobs	Italians	?
US (Rock Springs, Wyoming) ¹⁵²	1885	Race	Jobs	Chinese	28 (+15 wounded)

¹⁴² Because I limit myself here to violence against labour migrants, pogroms are not included.

¹⁴³ Kenneth Milano, *The Philadelphia Nativist Riots: Irish Kensington Erupts* (Philadelphia, PA, 2013).

¹⁴⁴ Lucassen, *The Immigrant Threat*, p. 42.

¹⁴⁵ Ann Curthoys, “‘Men of All Nations, Except Chinamen’: Europeans and Chinese on the Goldfields of New South Wales”, in Iain McCalman, Alexander Cook, and Andrew Reeves (eds.), *Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia* (Cambridge, 2001) pp. 103–123, 113.

¹⁴⁶ Leslie M. Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626–1863* (Chicago, IL, 2003) pp. 283–285.

¹⁴⁷ Patsy Davis, “Birmingham’s Irish Community and the Murphy Riots of 1867”, *Midland History* 31:1 (2006), pp. 37–66, esp. pp. 47–48.

¹⁴⁸ Scott Zesch, *The Chinatown War: Chinese Los Angeles and the Massacre of 1871* (Oxford, 2012).

¹⁴⁹ Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (Berkeley, CA, 2007) pp. 20–22.

¹⁵⁰ Roy T. Wortman, “Denver’s Anti-Chinese Riot, 1880”, *Colorado Magazine*, 42:4 (1965), pp. 275–291; Liping Zhu, *The Road to Chinese Exclusion: The Denver Riot, 1880 Election, and the Rise of the West* (Lawrence, KS, 2013).

¹⁵¹ Gérard Noiriel, *Une histoire populaire de la France. De la guerre de Cent Ans à nos jours* (Marseille, 2018) pp. 401–404.

¹⁵² McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, p. 157; Lew-Williams, *The Chinese Must Go*.

p. 91; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*. (Berkeley, CA, 1971) pp. 205–213.

US (Snake River Canyon, Oregon) ¹⁵³	1887	Race	Jobs	Chinese	31-34
US (Pennsylvania) ¹⁵⁴	1891	Nationality	Strike	Hungarians	10 (+ 50 wounded)
US (New Orleans) ¹⁵⁵	1891	Nationality	Crime	Italians	11
US (New Jersey) ¹⁵⁶	1891	Religion	Jobs	Russian Jews	O (Jewish population chased of)
France (Aigues Mortes) ¹⁵⁷	1893	Nationality	Jobs	Italians	8-50
France (Lyon) ¹⁵⁸	1894	Nationality	Jobs	Italians	?
US (Southern Colorado) ¹⁵⁹	1895	Nationality	Jobs	Italians	6
US (Louisiana) ¹⁶⁰	1896	Nationality	Crime	Italians	3
France (Liévin and Lens) ¹⁶¹	1901	Nationality	Jobs	Belgians	1
US (Bellingham) ¹⁶²	1907	Race	Labour	Indian migrants	0
US (Springfield) ¹⁶³	1908	Race	Jobs and housing	African Americans	9
US (St. Louis) ¹⁶⁴	1917	Race	Jobs and housing	African Americans	40-200
France (Brest, Dijon, Le Havre) ¹⁶⁵	1917 (Spring/Summer)	Race	Jobs and housing	Colonial migrants (esp. Moroccans)	20 (several incidents)

¹⁵³ N. Gregory Nokes, *Massacred for Gold: The Chinese in Hells Canyon* (Covallis, OR, 2009).

¹⁵⁴ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, p. 89.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 92–93.

¹⁵⁷ José Cubero, *Nationalistes et étrangers. Le massacre d'Aigues-Mortes* (Paris, 1996).

¹⁵⁸ Gérard Noiriel, *Le creuset français. Histoire de l'immigration (XIXe–XXe siècle)* (Paris, 1988) p. 260.

¹⁵⁹ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, p. 90.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Erika Lee, "Hemispheric Orientalism and the 1907 Pacific Coast race riots", *Amerasia Journal* 33:2 (1907), pp. 19-48.

¹⁶³ James Krohe, *Summer of Rage: The Springfield Race Riot of 1908* (Springfield, IL, 1973).

¹⁶⁴ Elliot Rudwick, *Race Riot in East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Carbondale, CO, 1964); Malcolm McLaughlin, "Reconsidering the East St Louis Race Riot of 1917", *International Review of Social History*, 47:2 (2002), pp. 187–212.

¹⁶⁵ Tyler Stovall, *The Rise of the Paris Red Belt* (Berkeley, CA, 1998), pp. 754–756.

UK (Cardiff, Liverpool, Glasgow) ¹⁶⁶	1919	Race	Jobs and housing	Yemeni, Somali and Caribbean seamen	4
US (Chicago) ¹⁶⁷	1919	Race	Jobs and housing	African Americans	38
US (Tulsa) ¹⁶⁸	1921	Race	Jobs and housing	African Americans	100-300
US (Mobile, Alabama, Detroit <i>et al.</i>) ¹⁶⁹	1943 (May)	Race	Jobs	African Americans	

¹⁶⁶ Jacqueline Jenkinson, *Colonial, Refugee and Allied Civilians after the First World War: Immigration Restriction and Mass Repatriation* (Abingdon and New York, 2020).

¹⁶⁷ Rick Halpern, "Race, Ethnicity, and Union in the Chicago Stockyards, 1917–1922", *International Review of Social History*, 37:1 (1992), pp. 25–58.

¹⁶⁸ Randy Krehbiel, *Tulsa 1921: Reporting a Massacre* (Norman, OK, 2019).

¹⁶⁹ Sparked by the promotion of twelve black men to skilled welding positions, and followed by similar attacks in Beaumont and Brownsville, Texas, as well as in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Chicago. Available at: <https://www.lawcha.org/2020/07/15/goldfield-roundtable-laws-votes-and-working-class-politics-in-the-jim-crow-south/>; last accessed 29 January 2022; Stephen Tuck, *We Ain't What We Ought To Be: The Black Freedom Struggle from Emancipation to Obama* (Cambridge, MA, 2010) p. 213.

Table 2: Selection of 'replacement terrorist' attacks since 2000

Place	Perpetrator	Age	Gender	Year	Target	Number of deaths	Manifesto
Pittsburg	Baumhammers	35	M	2000	Jews, Indians, African Americans	5	
Utøya & Oslo (Norway)	Breivik	32	M	2011	Social democrats	77	yes
Oak Creek (US)	Page	40	M	2012	Sikhs	8	
Overland Park (US)	Miller	73	M	2014	Jews	3	
Charleston (US)	Roof	21	M	2015	African Americans	9	
Quebec (Canada)	Bissonnette	27	M	2017	Muslims	6	
Charlottesville (US)	Fields	20	M	2017	Protesters against the far- right	1	
Pittsburgh (US)	Bowers	49	M	2018	Jews	11	
Christchurch (New Zealand)	Tarrant	28	M	2019	Muslims	51	yes
Halle (Germany)	Balliet	29	M	2019	Jews	2	
El Paso (US)	Crusius	21	M	2019	Hispanics	23	
Poway (US)	Earnest	19	M	2019	Jews	0	
Hanau (Germany)	Rathjen	43	M	2020	Turks/Kurds	11	
Buffalo (US)	Gendron	18	M	2022	African Americans	10	yes

Sources: <https://jewishunpacked.com/white-replacement-theorys-antisemitic-origins/> and my own media search.

About the author

Leo Lucassen, International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, the Netherlands