

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: FROM SELECTIONS SOCIALES TO SOCIAL SELECTION: TRACING THE ORIGIN AND CAREER OF A FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL SCIENCE CONCEPT IN FRANCE, ITALY, BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES FROM THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR TO THE COLD WAR

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This dissertation argues that “social selection,” a social scientific concept first formulated by the anthropologist Paul Broca and later systematized and popularized by Vacher de Lapouge, had a decisive influence in the development of the American and British social sciences before the Second World War. Through a series of densely argued case studies, ranging from the disciplines of anthropology, ethnology, demography and sociology, I contend that discussions of social selection in the writings of social scientists as varied as Franz Boas and Piritim Sorokin were integral to their social theory and their social science. Writers used social selection to define the limits of the natural and to describe key facets of their own social theory. My discussions of social selection also show key conceptual continuities in the history of the social sciences while also using discussions of social selection to interrogate under-analyzed aspects of a variety of important figures.

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by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
2018

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2019

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## Introduction

This dissertation traces the origins of the concept of “social selection” in the work of the ethnologists Paul Broca (1824-1880) and the systematization and expansion of “social selections” in the work of Vacher de Lapouge (1854-1936). The dissertation then describes the reception of “social selection” and especially influence of Lapouge’s theory of “social selections” (in the original French, *sélections sociales*) in the American and British and Italian social sciences. This dissertation is the first history of the term “social selection” and its constitutive impact on the social sciences from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present day.

Broca founded the *Société d’Anthropologie de Paris* in 1859, *la Revue d’anthropologie* in 1872 and *l’École d’anthropologie de Paris* in 1876. Through a combination of administrative and pedagogical acumen, brilliance and the sheer volume of his prose and critique, Broca and his students dominated anthropology in France before the First World War. He was responsible for the founding of a study center for anthropology and ethnology as well as the funding of several university chairs in anthropology and related disciplines.<sup>1</sup>

Vacher de Lapouge was a librarian who was a prominent socialist. Lapouge helped found the Parti ouvrier français (POF), the most important Marxist party which existed in France in the Third Republic prior to the founding of the long-lived (until the 1960s) *Section française de l’Internationale Ouvrière* (SFIO) in 1905. He began as a jurist, writing in the history of law. Quickly, he began penning pessimistic

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<sup>1</sup> A.L. Conklin, *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950* (Cornell University Press).

tracts in the tradition of the infamous racial theorist Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882). Lapouge, following Zeev Sternhell, was a key representative of the *ni droite, ni gauche* tradition in France, espousing a kind of “aristocratic socialism,” which espoused a hatred for democracy and a rejection above the “pluto-demagogic” of mass consumerism and luxurious decadence which he considered to be the features of “eugenic capital” was at its final stage of exhaustion.<sup>2</sup>

The dissertation through its combination of intellectual history and history of science is a reexamination of the fundamental narrative in the history of the social sciences, namely the discontinuity between scientific racism and social Darwinism and modern social theory. It defines a new question and potentially a new field for research in the history of the social sciences through its examination of the reception of this key social science concept.

It argues for broad and evidenced continuities between social theory before the world wars and into the modern era, illustrated by persistence of social selection and the continuity of its function in social theory until the present day.

I contend further that historians of the social sciences have misidentified discussions of social selection as “natural selection” in early sociology and that virtually every discussion of selection in the social sciences in America, Britain, France and Italy before the Second World War refers to not “natural selection” but “social selection.” This is the case since social selection served to define the

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<sup>2</sup>Z. Sternhell, *Ni Droite Ni Gauche: L'idéologie Fasciste En France* (Gallimard). Z. Sternhell, *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition* (Yale University Press). Pierre-André Taguieff, "Sélectionnisme Et Socialisme Dans Une Perspective Aryaniste: Théories, Visions Et Prévisions De Georges Vacher De Lapouge (1854-1936)," *Mil neuf cent* 18, no. 1 (; G.V. de Lapouge, *Les Sélections Sociales: Cours Libre De Science Politique, Professe À L'université De Montpellier (1888-1889)* (Thorin & Fils).

boundaries of the natural and the social and to define the field of social research for early American and European sociologists. Social selection was then key to disciplinary development of the social sciences before the Second World War. Discussions of “selection” in social theory then were not about importing the ethics of nature into society, but of determining the boundaries between the natural and the social. This dissertation then finally renders much discussion of “social Darwinism” moot and serves to clarify the contributions of many early American and European social theorists and their continuing relevance to present-day social theory.<sup>3</sup>

As importantly, I argue that “social Darwinism” was not an essential element of American social theory because social Darwinism makes no sense conceptually as a part of American sociological practice. Since social Darwinism presumes that there is no distinction between the laws of nature and the laws of society, there is no need for a separate science of sociology with its own laws. If social Darwinism is true, then society is not autonomous and there is no need a specific inquiry of sociology.

This dissertation begins as a deep examination of French ethnological and anthropological sources, then moves to American sociology and anthropology before the Second World War. It then focuses on the role of social selection in a number of key English demographers and geneticists, and then returns to the United States in its discussion of post-war social science. Revealing a lacuna in intellectual history and the history of science this dissertation also uses Italian sources to contextualize and to

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Temple University Press).

newly analyze key American and European social scientists, from Franz Boas and W.E.B DuBois. My extensive use of Italian sources, in the absence of any secondary literature, points also to an extraordinary untapped resource for the further interrogation of American and European social sciences.

I define “social selection” as the social scientific description of the selective influence of civilization and its laws, morals and institutions and their role in human evolution and development, as opposed to the selecting influence of nature and its role in non-human evolution. The latter is “natural selection.” According to natural selection, in nature, animals compete and are successful based upon their competition with other animals and their resistance to the physical elements. In civilization, and in “social selection,” man often only competes with his fellow man in conditions mediated by his social and institutional environments. If an individual is successful in this social competition, he is rewarded with status, privilege, rising in social class and position. Alternatively, if this individual is not successful, they experience a loss of status and position and may fall through the social ranks.

Thus, discussions of social selection are often found alongside discussions of social mobility, social role and social status. To capture aspects of this process, social scientists before the Second World War described not only the characteristics of individuals which allowed social success, but also outlined the historical and current features of institutions which mediated social success in individuals. Social selection

therefore is another instance of social scientists broaching the dilemma of the inherent conflict between individuality and social cohesion.<sup>4</sup>

Social scientists before the Second World War frequently used social selection to assist in their discussion of the nature of tradition, the origins and persistence of customs, or to account for the workings of social mobility. However, undergirding these diverse applications of the concept of social selection was its fundamental role in delimiting nature and society. Thus, this dissertation is as concerned with the historical function of social selection within theories of society, and as such is an exercise in the history of theory construction in the social sciences. Social selection is today utilized by many social science fields, particularly sociology, psychology, anthropology and economics, to denote the role of the social environment in differences in status and in social success.<sup>5</sup>

Three generations of historians and philosophers have argued extensively for Paul Broca and Vacher de Lapouge's centrality to scientific racism and to Nazi racial science. George Mosse and Hannah Arendt, among other scholars of European racism, have argued in some detail for Lapouge's account of the Aryan in his *L'Aryen: son Rôle Social* to be one of the constituent elements of Nazi racism and

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<sup>4</sup> W.M. McClay, *The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America* (University of North Carolina Press).

<sup>5</sup> Richard Breen and Jan O Jonsson, "Inequality of Opportunity in Comparative Perspective: Recent Research on Educational Attainment and Social Mobility," *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 31 ( Hans-Peter Blossfeld et al., *Models of Secondary Education and Social Inequality: An International Comparison* (Edward Elgar Publishing). Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict* (Cambridge University Press); Jack Knight and Itai Sened, *Explaining Social Institutions* (University of Michigan Press). Tiina Ojanen, Jelle J Sijtsema, and Ashwin J Rambaran, "Social Goals and Adolescent Friendships: Social Selection, Deselection, and Influence," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 23, no. 3 (; Jacob E Cheadle et al., "The Differential Contributions of Teen Drinking Homophily to New and Existing Friendships: An Empirical Assessment of Assortative and Proximity Selection Mechanisms," *Social science research* 42, no. 5 (

totalitarian ideology, and France's most important racial theorist.<sup>6</sup> George Mosse devoted the better part of a chapter, the eight, describing Lapouge's account of the eternal struggle between "Jew" and "Aryan" in his *Toward the Final Solution*.

Mosse argued that Lapouge "synthesized several trends in racial thought" using among other means linguistic and scientific data to construct an idealized notion of the "Aryan peasant" and of the "Aryan race." The Aryan was, Lapouge argued, heroic and individualistic, and when called upon was an efficient and consistent worker. But according to Lapouge, as the workshop had been replaced by the factor and virtuous living by commercial decadence, "the Jew" was replacing "the Aryan" in his dominion of Europe. Lapouge's account of "the Jew" and "the Aryan," with the former both the "enemy" and the "double" of the latter, mirrored in the later National Socialist account of "the Jew" as the "hidden enemy." Lapouge specifically referred to Jews or "the Jew" in terms outlined by Jeffrey Herf in his account of the ideological components of Nazi antisemitism in National Socialist propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

More recently, the French intellectual historian and philosopher Pierre-André Taguieff remarks at the beginning of his overview of Lapouge's life and work, that Lapouge has "nothing to please the contemporary French reader." Lapouge, Taguieff continues, was against nearly everything. As a socialist he railed against the "plutocracy" of modern France, he was a vociferous critic of democracy, he inveighed against egalitarianism. In sum, Taguieff notes, Lapouge "displeased everyone."<sup>8</sup> Like Mosse and Arendt, Taguieff considers Lapouge's legacy for the

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<sup>6</sup> G.L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Howard Fertig Publisher); H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).

<sup>7</sup> J. HERF, *The Jewish Enemy* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>8</sup> Taguieff.

history of ideas to be negative, where his oeuvre may be understood as a summation and radicalization of various currents in French eugenics, social Darwinism and scientific racism, and whose contacts ranged from the prominent American eugenicist Charles Davenport (1866-1944) to some of the major influences for Nazi racial theory, such as Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1986).<sup>9</sup>

This dissertation makes quite a different case for the significance of Broca and Lapouge through the influence of their concept of social selection in modern social theory and in the social sciences. I argue that their concept of social selection, though relatively less well-known to scholars (but not to social scientists) before the Second World War than natural selection, had as much influence in the social sciences in Britain, United States and in Italy as natural selection, especially before the Second World War. This dissertation explicitly argues that some of the key conceptual innovations in the social sciences, which are still in use today, such as social mobility, have their origins in the work of Vacher Lapouge's social selection, and have their roots in antisemitic ideology.

Accordingly, I argue that the history of anti-Semitism and the history of the social sciences are interlinked and historians must be attentive to both legacies in order to reconstruct the early history of the social sciences in Europe, Britain and the United States. As importantly, social selection while known to some early social scientists as from the work of Lapouge, quickly became disassociated from its

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<sup>9</sup> On the connections of Lapouge and Broca to Nazi racial science, mostly indirect, see especially, Jennifer Michael Hecht, "Vacher De Lapouge and the Rise of Nazi Science," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61, no. 2 ( Robert N Proctor and Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis* (Harvard University Press). and again Robert Proctor, "From Anthropologie to Rassenkunde in the German Anthropological Tradition," *Bones, bodies, behavior: Essays on biological anthropology* (

origins. It became, as I will explain in the dissertation, a “migrating” concept which was of fundamental or constitutive importance to the development of the social sciences in America and in Europe.

The chronological frame of the dissertation runs from the founding of the Third Republic in France in 1870 to the conclusion of the Second World War in Britain. The end of the Second World War and the Shoah saw the final destruction of the ancient regime in Europe, the rise of fascism and mass politics worldwide, the weaponization of the ideologies of scientific racism and anti-Semitism,<sup>10</sup> the dissolution of the ideological détente between liberalism, communism, and nationalism which had vitiated the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> This period also saw the rise of the great European cities,<sup>12</sup> the great debates over the health and wellbeing of the working class,<sup>13</sup> the refinement of the technological promises of the industrial revolution,<sup>14</sup> the expansion of banking and of finance,<sup>15</sup> and the flourishing of managerial capitalism.<sup>16</sup>

Through its wide-ranging discussion of social selection in four countries and over more than a century, this dissertation is then a work of transnational history<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> W. Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism: From Ancient Times to the Present Day* (Oxford University Press); R.S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (Random House Publishing Group).

<sup>11</sup> G.L. Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Westview Press). T.C.W. Blanning, *The Nineteenth Century: Europe 1789-1914* (Oxford University Press).

<sup>12</sup> F. Lenger, *European Cities in the Modern Era, 1850-1914* (Brill).

<sup>13</sup> J.G. Williamson, *Did British Capitalism Breed Inequality?* (Taylor & Francis). J. Komlos, *Stature, Living Standards, and Economic Development: Essays in Anthropometric History* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>14</sup> J. Sperber, *Europe 1850-1914: Progress, Participation and Apprehension* (Taylor & Francis).

<sup>15</sup> Y. Cassis, R.S. Grossman, and C.R. Schenk, *The Oxford Handbook of Banking and Financial History* (OUP Oxford).

<sup>16</sup> A.D. CHANDLER, T. Hikino, and A.D. Chandler, *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>17</sup> T. Bender, *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (University of California Press).

and the history of the social sciences, which has struggle since its peak in the late 1990s to establish a presence in a crowded field.<sup>18</sup> This is also a work in the history of ideology, tracing the complex legacies and influence of scientific racism and antisemitism.<sup>19</sup> Like other recent scholars of the social sciences, this dissertation underscores that ideology is an essential part of any intellectual history and any history of science. While the history of genetics and the history of biology is not the primary focus of this dissertation, natural science concepts will be discussed when relevant. This is then a contribution in the history of science, biology and medicine. This is also a work of conceptual history, building on recent work emphasizing the mobility and the transformability of natural biological and social scientific concepts.

It draws on French, American, English and Italian sources, which in initial research drew from hundreds of books and articles which explicitly discussed social selection in the social sciences, from the 1870s to the present day. The subjects of the dissertation were chosen by the following criteria. In the case of American social sciences, social scientists had to be important in their own times and of continuing relevance to the discipline. All the American sociologists discussed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation were Presidents of the American Sociological Association.

This chronological framework of this dissertation is significant as it argues for *continuities and discontinuities* in the history of science and in the history of the social sciences through reference to the concept of social selection and how social selection continued to vitiate the social sciences through the Second World War.

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<sup>18</sup> R. Porter, T.M. Porter, and D. Ross, *The Cambridge History of Science: Volume 7, the Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>19</sup> L. Poliakov, *Histoire De L'antisémitisme* (Calmann-Lévy); M. Stoetzler, *Antisemitism and the Constitution of Sociology* (UNP - Nebraska).

Here, the continual use of social selection by social scientists in a variety of contexts, from social mores to social mobility, and to define what was natural and what was cultural are two such continuities emphasized by this dissertation. These continuities regarding the persistence of social selection in a wide variety of authors works against the consistent strand of presentism which continually possesses the history of the social sciences and the history of science. As importantly, this dissertation argues against standard, disciplinary views of the origin and influence of the American social sciences which have relegated early American sociologists such as Edward Ross and William G. Sumner discussed at length in this dissertation to the “prehistory” of the profession, where they are “pre-scientific” and “pre-objective.”<sup>20</sup>

My critique of revolutions and of discontinuities is then especially relevant since historians view the work of Charles Darwin and Darwinism and social Darwinism as the “pre-history” of the social sciences in the United States and in Europe. Historians of the social sciences address these early social scientists and their theories of society, if at all, as consequences of ideology. Many current accounts of the development of the history of the social sciences view Darwinism as an ideology which has been overcome. Such narratives present extraordinary Whiggish accounts of the social sciences as well as a near total neglect of the pre-Second World War social sciences in the United States.<sup>21</sup>

This dissertation through its discussion of social selection also argues against the omnipresence of increasing historiographic specialization. Neither historians of

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<sup>20</sup> C. Calhoun, *Sociology in America: A History* (University of Chicago Press). L. Daston and P. Galison, *Objectivity* (Zone Books). *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> H. Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (Norton).

social science nor historians of science have broached such a broad network of American social theorists addressed in this dissertation since the “boom” in the history of the social sciences with the work of Dorothy Ross and Daniel Rogers.<sup>22</sup>

As importantly, the most obvious avenue for a prolonged discussion of social selection, the history anthropology, is a small sub-field even within the domain of the history of the social sciences. George Stocking’s work in anthropology focused on the emergence of the cultural relativism of Franz Boas, who developed modern anthropological methodology, especially in the United States. Stocking had little more than a working understanding of the history of the French social sciences.<sup>23</sup> Henrika Kuklick, who was the sole historian and sociologist of science to focus on anthropology for many years, wrote on the development of the methodologies of British anthropology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Neither individual had the inclination to deeply study the interconnections between French ethnology, anthropology and intellectual history, and American social theory which this type of study would require.<sup>24</sup>

This dissertation begins with Paul Broca who responded in his review *Les Sélections* that though Darwin was correct concerning some evolution in nature and among plants and animals, natural selection could not full describe the evolution and development of man in society.

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<sup>22</sup> Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science*, vol. 19 (Cambridge University Press). D.T. RODGERS, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>23</sup> G.W. Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>24</sup> H. Kuklick, *The Savage Within: The Social History of British Anthropology, 1885-1945* (Cambridge University Press).

Broca noted in his review that though he was skeptical that Darwin's theory of natural selection produced all of the modifications present in living beings, he was nonetheless willing to grant the efficiency of natural selection in evolution. Broca noted that at the most savage states of civilization, natural selection still influenced man. However, this was only the most rudimentary stage of civilization, for as human civilization advances, his "field of battle" shifts from nature to society. Moreover, those features which had served man so well in the rudimentary stages of civilization and which served animals in nature, such as strength and keen senses, lost "their preponderance." As society advanced, Broca continued, it was intelligence especially became the most important attribute, this was particularly the case in advanced civilization with "the specialization of work, the division of labor," where "social competition" introduces "processes of selection" which are "proper" and unique "to the human family."<sup>25</sup> Broca outlined in great detail in the essay how and why Darwin's concept of natural selection was insufficient. Natural selection did not describe the "processes of selection" in civilization, nor did natural selection faithfully describe, according to Broca, the object of selection: human intelligence and human culture.

While Broca's contributions to scientific racism are not the focus of this dissertation, I do not wish to give an overly "panglossian" account of Broca's legacy. Focusing, however briefly on Broca's contribution to the internationalization of scientific racism moreover serves in the context of this dissertation's discussion of

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<sup>25</sup> P. Broca, *Mémoires D'anthropologie* (Reinwald).pg. 241-2.

social selection to provide a foundational understanding of Broca's work as a neurologist and as a systematizer of craniometric methods.

Nonetheless, Broca's discussion of perfection through social selection and the general increase of human intelligence did not stand in complete contradiction with his earlier work on the morphological, neurological and intellectual inequalities between Africans and Europeans. Rather, Broca was a rather unsystematic thinker who often delved into polemics. His account of perfection through social selection, moreover, was a crystallization of thinking around Darwinian evolutionary theory, as well as objections to the reception of Darwinism in France. Moreover, French and Italian and Anglo-American commentators did not see any contradiction between Broca the neurologist and ethnologist, there being a sufficient space of about a decade between his works in neurology and his polemical discussion of Darwin's *Descent of Man* in 1871.

Shortly after Lapouge in his *Sélections Sociales* (1896) leveraged Broca's concept to mount a full-scale critique of modern, consumerist, urban modernity, fusing his critique of urban, industrial and financial modernity to a virulent antisemitism and Aryanism that cannot be disaggregated in any way from his account of social selections.

It was Lapouge's *Sélections* that was the key vehicle for the reception of social selection in Europe and in the United States. And while Lapouge's Aryanism was ridiculed (especially in the United States and Italy), his declinism was critiqued (particularly in Italy and in the United States) and his antisemitism was ignored (even by European sociologists), all also read him as offering a powerful conceptual

framework to describe how civilization and social life changed human evolution. Among the reasons for this was the felicitous publication date of Lapouge's work in the late 1890s, when the social sciences were developing in American and in Europe. As importantly, for American social scientists, Lapouge's declinism and his conviction of the destructive potential of the new European megalopolises (as will be outlined in Chapter 3) was perceived in part to be a threat to the American project of modernization.

In each chapter of *Sélections Sociales*, Lapouge outlined a differing form of selection in modern civilization, those most important being: "urban selection" or the selective effect of cities; "military selection" or the impact of wars and conflicts on the evolution of man and "economic selection," or the discussion of social mobility. Lapouge's initial reception into the United States was through the prism of his discussions of urban selection. Lapouge contended that cities attracted "Aryans" from the countryside to the cities. For him, this was the doom of European civilization and the future of man, for cities ruthlessly eliminated the "Aryan," as cities were the epicenter of wealth, vice and all of the forces which destroyed the vitality of the "Aryan."

Thus, the first chapter of this dissertation, "Paul Broca's Critique of Darwin's Natural Selection: From Nature to Social Selection and Perfection" will contend that while Broca is well-known in the historiographic literature for his contributions to racial theory, he argued that while biological evolution did indeed create inequality, selection in civilization intervened to ameliorate those differences, eventually leading to a state of perfection of all individuals. By focusing this very key text, the article

*Les Sélections*, which has been inexplicably omitted from commentary, I see to reinterpret one of the key figures in the history of French anthropology. As importantly, I also maintain that Broca can be a contributor to the history of racial theory as well as a fundamentally important figure in the history of sociological thought. Thus, French and Anglo-American historians of the sciences cannot maintain, as they have, that there are fundamental discontinuities between the social sciences between the two World Wars. Broca's legacy, as with Lapouge's is bifurcated: his use of craniometry and his emphasis on evolutionary distinctions between races as well as his sociology of amelioration and perfection. While the first is amply described in the scholarship, the second indeed has escaped notice. This discussion of amelioration and of perfection is all the more important as from this account of Broca's emerged his conceptualization of social selection.

The second chapter, "Lapouge, *Sélections Sociales*, Antisemitism and the Foundations of Social Mobility Research" will be the first extended treatment of Lapouge's account of "economic selection" as well as his other "selections": "urban" "military" and "economic." This chapter, as part of the fundamental reconsideration of Lapouge, will also closely examine his reception in France and in Italy, especially, as noted above. In doing so, I reinterpret Lapouge as one of the major sociological thinkers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly in the negative, whose concepts had a life beyond his texts. Italian socialists, as noted above, were particularly venomous in their account of Lapouge's racial psychology and his "anthropo-sociology." Apart from the reception of Lapouge, my chapter focuses on his account of urban and economic selection, as these were the two most important selections for British and American

sociology, as the next chapters will demonstrate. In this chapter I also argue that there can be no proper understanding of the emergence of studies of social mobility without an engagement with the centrality of Lapouge's antisemitism. Thus, as with my discussion of Broca, my argument poses serious problems for those who wish to consider the modern development of sociological concepts to be free of ideology, fully objective and scientific.

Thus, the remainder of the dissertation will focus on the surprising ways that Broca and especially Lapouge's "selections" entered into American and British (and less so) Italian sociology. Chapters 3 through 7 will underscore how a variety of social scientific individuals in a number of social scientific disciplines integrated discussions of social selection and the various permutations of social selection, most notably "urban selection" and how discussions of "economic selection" transformed into discussions of various types of mobility.

Thus, the focus of Chapter 3, "Franz Boas and his Contemporaries: Social Selection and the Limits of Environment" will argue that Boas' was far closer to his contemporaries that anthropologists and historians have argued.<sup>26</sup> It contends further that much of what Boas says concerning "selection" and the role of the environment was contained in the writings of Italian ethnologist Ridolfo Livi.

An intermediate chapter will trace the work of about four important sociologists who were active before the Second World War. Chapter 4, "Social Selection and the Founding Generation of American Sociologists: Association and

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<sup>26</sup> Adna Ferrin Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century* (New York,: Pub. for Columbia university by the Macmillan company; etc.).

Social Control, Competition and Civilization” emphasize the role of social selection as a constitutive and foundational concept in the early American social sciences in two key areas. They were: first, the origins of association and group cohesion, traditions, customs, mores and folkways; second, the driving forces behind social evolution. As importantly, in the cases of the first two sociologists, William Graham Sumner and Edward A. Ross, whom have been subject to a great deal of critical comment, I use the concept of social selection to fundamentally reinterpret their work.

Though the figures discussed are diverse they are foundational to the history of sociology and foundational to modern sociology as a science. Ross, Sumner, and Cooley are especially well known to students of social theory. All three are unified not only in their use of social selection but in their use of social selection for the purposes of articulating central theoretical tenants of their respective systems. My focus on the influence of Lapouge’s social selection departs significantly from accounts which emphasize the confessional and religious aspects behind the origins of American sociology.<sup>27</sup> As importantly, my analysis of the foundational environment of American sociology does not consider the work of Max Weber at all. I do not mean to be in conflict with very recent histories of sociology which have emerged underscoring the foundational role of Weber to American sociology. However, I underscore that it is as important to consider the French roots of American sociology in addition to the Prussian.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ross. R. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Temple University Press).

<sup>28</sup> C. Fleck, *A Transatlantic History of the Social Sciences: Robber Barons, the Third Reich and the Invention of Empirical Social Research* (Bloomsbury Publishing).

The fifth chapter, “Pitrim Sorokin on Social Mobility, Selection, Revolution and Elites” is the first sustained critical discussion of the sociology of Pitrim Sorokin (1889-1968) by an intellectual historian or a historian of the social sciences. Sorokin published *Social Mobility* in 1922 while at the University of Minnesota, which together with his *Sociology of Revolutions* was the first systematic treatment of the phenomena of social mobility in any language. I will show that social selection was central to his account of social mobility.

Sorokin’s work had a complex legacy was as pervasive as it was hidden. For Robert Merton (d. 1922-2003), the American sociologist and historian of science, scientific and university institutions actively maintained to foster the concentration of elites. Merton was Sorokin’s research assistant from 1931 to 1936 at Harvard. Merton inherited from Sorokin his citation style, as well as Sorokin’s interests in the role of institutions as “social sorters” and “social sifters,” except applied to the domain of science.

The dissertation in the sixth chapter then shifts to Britain with “Alexander Carr-Saunders, R.A Fisher, Social Selection and the Foundations of Social Inquiry in Britain” to outline the role of social selection in foundational debates in demography and in population science. Here, the work of Alexander Carr-Saunders (1886-1966.) a British demographer and the founding president of the London School of Economics (where he fostered the promotion of such luminaries as Karl Popper and Ernest Gellner) sought to first unify the science of demography with the science of ecology.

The text I focus on in the case of Carr-Saunders will be *The Population Problem* (1922) not only used social selection to describe the variety of social

institutions which governed reproduction and fertility, but also represented a turning point in the history of demographic science. I underscore that Carr-Saunders had the most developed account of the ways and mechanisms of social selection in primitive as opposed to advanced civilization of any social theorist.

I argue Carr-Saunders finally utilized the concept of social selection to distance the 20<sup>th</sup> century inquiry into population from eugenics. Social selection allowed population and reproduction to be social, rather than merely biological. Thus, I argue that social selection aided the transition of the study of population and of reproduction from a biological inquiry into a predominately social one, particularly through the medium of social biology, an inquiry which I will outline through a brief discussion of the work of Lancelot Hogben. Social selection allowed in the phrase of Hugh Dalton (1887-1962), a British economist and Chancellor of the Exchequer, “a new contribution to the population problem.”<sup>29</sup>

In the second portion of the chapter, I will also outline the work of R.A. Fisher (1890-1962) who used Carr-Saunders work to promote the historical inquiry into the “social selection of fertility.” Fisher, though one of the founders of population genetics, was deeply concerned with what he considered to be the foibles and reproductive insufficiencies of the upper classes in Britain. Fisher longed for, in part, a return to aristocratic virtue. However, this longing lead to a very interesting debate which I will briefly outline. This debate tried to ascertain whether Fisher was actually correct, and in doing so, introduced the discussion social forces into

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<sup>29</sup> Hugh Dalton, "A New Contribution to the Population Problem," *Economica*, no. 8 (

demographic and population research, which, especially in the United States, had a long career.

The final seventh chapter, “The ‘Negro Problem’ and Social Selection: From W.E.B Du Bois and Gennaro Mondaini to Gunnar Myrdal’s “An American Dilemma” discusses the role of the concept of social selection in the work of Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987). Myrdal’s use of the concept of social selection is addressed last because it is chronologically last. Myrdal was a Swedish economist, whom was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1974, for his “pioneering critique of how political values in many areas of research are inserted into economic analysis.”<sup>30</sup>

The final chapter of this dissertation will show how the concept of social selection was key to Myrdal’s analysis in *An American Dilemma* of this “century-long lag.” I will describe in brief, the role of social selection in discussions of the ‘Negro Problem’ in American life, which as Myrdal underscored, was the central problem of his *American Dilemma*. I will begin not only with African American sociologists’ discussions of “the Negro Problem” and their use of the concept of social selection, but the work of a pathbreaking Italian sociologist, Mondaini Gennaro (1874-1948).

Gennaro was a complex figure. He was a colonialist, favoring Italian expansion into Africa, but argued extensively in *La questione dei negri* (1898) that African-Americans were neither biologically inferior, nor were they to disappear from the United States due to urban environments and their contact with Europeans- the latter argument, that African-Americans had a decidedly shorter lifespan and were

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<sup>30</sup> G. Myrdal, *The Political Element in the Development of Economic Theory* (Taylor & Francis).

unsuited to civilization was seriously proposed by Frederick Ludwig Hoffman.<sup>31</sup> “La razza afro-americana,” declared Mondaini, possessed a “living resilience” which made their continued presence in the United States assured. What was needed for African Americans was a “social fusion” with American society. This would allow African Americans to ascend to the level American civilization. Such a social evolution occurred through a slow process of social selection, whereby African Americans would become culturally like Caucasian Americans.<sup>32</sup>

Perhaps most importantly, Myrdal’s discussion and use of social selection rather provocatively illustrates the migration of Lapouge’s concept of social selection. By its appearance in Myrdal’s work and in the context of *An American Dilemma*, social selection had secured its place in describing the force of norms and traditions as well as being a critical mechanism for describing how social institutions influenced the role, status and advancement of an individual. Furthermore, though neither Mondaini nor Du Bois are central figures in this dissertation, these uses of social selection links Myrdal’s work with the first discussions of the “Negro Problem” in American and European sociology. Such a linkage positions Myrdal not only as an outgrowth of the political economy of Swedish social Democracy, but also as representing French and American sociological traditions.

In sum, this dissertation in the history of science and the social sciences attempts, primarily in English, French and Italian, to reinterpret a fact of the social sciences in both Europe and in the United States in the long 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Frederick Ludwig Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, vol. 11 (American economic association).

<sup>32</sup> Gennaro Mondaini, *La Questione Dei Negri Nella Storia E Nella Societa Nordamericana* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca). Pg. 388ff.

century. It places Vacher de Lapouge and his “social selections” at the center of the development of the social sciences in the United States, Britain, France, and Italy. It contends that social selection was one of the most important motors for the developing social sciences in Europe and America. It contends that social selection, rather than social Darwinism was the key concept which linked the developing social sciences.

It was social selection, furthermore, which aided social sciences inquiry into society and it was through social selection that the developing social sciences defined society. Lastly, it argues forcefully that in a variety of key works and in a deluge of forgotten figures, that social selection was as essential for the history of the social sciences as natural selection. As importantly, it is no contradiction that Lapouge was a virulent anti-Semite and one of the conceptual founders of the modern social sciences. Accordingly, this dissertation argues for not only a renewed attention to the continuities in the social sciences between 19<sup>th</sup> century concepts and modern usages, but for a more nuanced and detailed account of the intersections between the history of ideologies and the history of ideas. Without a union of the two, there can be no effort to address the centrality and importance of figures like Lapouge to the inquiry into society.

## Chapter 1: Paul Broca's Critique of Darwin's Natural Selection: From Nature to Social Selection and Perfection

Paul Broca (1824-1880) was a surgeon and anthropologist. Broca was the originator of the concept of *sélection sociale*, which was systematized and expanded, and fundamentally adapted by Vacher de Lapouge as *sélectionnes sociales*, as discussed in the next chapter and subsequent chapters of this dissertation. Thus, Lapouge responsible for the dissemination of the term *sélectionnes sociales*, but Lapouge himself did not invent it. The term *sélection sociale* emerged out of Broca's critique of Charles Darwin's "natural selection" and Darwin's *Descent of Man*, published in 1871. Thus, this chapter will characterize not only Broca's objection to Darwin and Darwin's own theory of natural selection, but detail Broca's own account of "social selection."

Broca himself is an important and complex figure. He helped found the *Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, inaugurating a generation of study of human anatomy and its connection to culture. In 1861, he discovered a region of the brain which is thought to influence language acquisition and comprehension. When individuals have a tumor or other lesion in "Broca's region" they frequently have either an inability to develop speech and writing, or vast difficulties in any type of language acquisition. In France, Broca systematized a system of cranial measurement, used to distinguish physical characteristics between various races, called "craniometry."<sup>33</sup> Broca like many men of science in France and England was

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<sup>3333</sup> Craniometry has a complex legacy. Ethnologists used measurements of the width and length of the skull to serve as the foundation of eugenics and other population control efforts. These were most visible in colonial governments such as Australia, which viewed craniometry as a tool to classify

of a Huguenot background, who very quickly became a master of French institutional and academic politics, joining the leading anatomical and medical associations of Paris. Scholars are in agreement that Broca, regardless of his early belief in biological inequality between “races,” founded the modern inquiry of anthropology.<sup>34</sup>

Such was Broca’s facility as a lecturer and an administrator that he had a decisive hand in the shaping of the generation of anthropologists from the middle of the 19th century to the arrival of Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) in the two decades before the first world war, whose own contributions in the systematic redefinition of the study of society in France in the late 19th century was to shift French anthropology, ethnology and sociology away from its fixation on biological race and its contribution to history and present culture.<sup>35</sup>

It is due to Durkheim that discussions of social selection ceased in France and accounts of “social facts” commenced, though Durkheim’s own dependence on organic metaphors, biological and genetic discussions and his aversion to Darwinism

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a “subject” population of “natives.” On craniometry and eugenics see Mary Cawte, "Craniometry and Eugenics in Australia: Rja Berry and the Quest for Social Efficiency," *Australian Historical Studies* 22, no. 86 (1986). However, craniometric methods, such as measuring the width and length of the skull is still used by modern physical anthropology, not without controversy. If a difference does exist between contemporary and 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century uses of craniometry, it is how the data now is not used to deterministically fix “race” or “type.” But again, this is not without problems and physical anthropologists discuss the perils of using this measurement often. See LAETITIA M FINLAY, "Craniometry and Cephalometry: A History Prior to the Advent of Radiography," *The Angle Orthodontist* 50, no. 4 (1980) see also Matthew R Goodrum, "The Beginnings of Human Palaeontology: Prehistory, Craniometry and the ‘Fossil Human Races’," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 49, no. 3 (2016)

<sup>34</sup> C. Blanckaert, *De La Race À L'évolution: Paul Broca Et L'anthropologie Française (1850-1900)* (Harmattan); H. Kuklick, *New History of Anthropology* (Wiley), published in 2009. Other historians have, less critically, declared Broca the founder of French anthropology, see for example Francis Schiller, *Paul Broca: Founder of French Anthropology, Explorer of the Brain* (Oxford University Press, USA), published in 1992. Leading anthropologists such as Sol Tax have also underscored Broca’s contribution to the founding of anthropology, see S. Tax, *Horizons of Anthropology* (Taylor & Francis), reprint, published in 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Blanckaert., pg. 354-355.

is both well-documented and controversial. It is still unclear to most scholars how much Durkheim really drew from organic conceptions of society and believed in racial psychology. The consensus is more than is admitted in standard accounts; especially when one considers Durkheim's contemporary connections and his indebtedness to past French thinkers.<sup>36</sup>

The most important and consequential scholar of Broca's works in the French language is Claude Blanckaert. In his monumental *From Race to Evolution* (700 plus pages) Blanckaert is exhaustive in his examination of Broca's life and of his times.<sup>37</sup> What is most startling concerning Blanckaert's account of Broca is its evenhandedness. By this I mean: Blanckaert examines everything from Broca's account of species (both human and primate), to his work on the interconnection between mind, brain and intelligence, to his work in measuring the brains matter and skulls of various "races", to his writings on embryology and evolutionary theory as having equal merit and of deserving equal discussion. He nonetheless concluded that Broca exemplified the worst of 19<sup>th</sup> century discussions on racial inequality.

In the two pages in which Blanckaert discusses Broca's *sélections sociales* (1872), he excoriates Broca for his linking of natural and social inequalities and through his promotion of the "self-made man." He underscores that Broca's conceptualization of *sélection sociale* was key to further and more elaborate accounts of biological and social inequality such as those of Vacher de Lapouge. However,

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<sup>36</sup> Dominique Guillo, "La Place De La Biologie Dans Les Premiers Textes De Durkheim: Un Paradigme Oublié?," *Revue française de sociologie* 47, no. 3 (2006) this article argues that indeed, Durkheim was far more indebted to biological theories than has been commonly understood and that there indeed exists a level of continuity between Durkheim and his contemporaries that has not been acknowledged by anthropologists and historians of sociology.

<sup>37</sup> Blanckaert., published in 2009

Lapouge's *sélectionnes* was of a fundamentally different character than Broca's initial protean formulation, where Lapouge expanded and reformulated Broca's *sélection sociale*. As importantly, Blanckaert does not actually analyze this key essay in Broca's work. This chapter is the first to do so and in doing so points to a modification of the existing historiography on Broca, epitomized by Blanckaert.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, in this chapter, I will outline the substance of Broca's objection to Charles Darwin as well as in some detail Broca's own arguments for social selection. This requires outlining the substance of Darwin's own life and thought. As importantly, I will also outline how Broca's account of social selection, leading to the biological equality of all races of mankind was just an extension of an earlier argument of the possibility of biological amelioration and of perfection of "Caucasians" through social forces to all races. Thus, Broca's discussion of these issues in his account of social selection was a significant change, but a significant change in continuity with his earlier work, which has justly earned Broca his reputation as a scientific racist.

As I also show, how Broca's account of social selection led him to reject the social Darwinism of Darwin's French translator of the *Origin of Species*, Clémence Royer (1830-1902), whom Broca ridiculed as "more Darwinist than Darwin." Broca's *sélection sociale* was then articulated by Broca himself at its very origins as *contrary to Social Darwinism*. Moreover, Broca's discussion of *sélection sociale* and its discussion of a state of future perfection undercuts (although not totally negates)

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<sup>38</sup> For a quite similar account of Broca see, in excellent English translation, P.A. Taguieff, *The Force of Prejudice: On Racism and Its Doubles* (University of Minnesota Press), published in 2001

his reception in French and American historiography as a biological determinist and racist, even though he was responsible for the standardization of craniometry. Thus, my attention to Broca's account of *sélection sociale* will serve to fundamentally shift the reception of Broca in 19<sup>th</sup> century history of the social sciences and history of anthropology, while also trying Broca to a broad current in the history of the social sciences.

Broca's critique of Charles Darwin's *Descent of Man* (1871) began as the result of Darwin's own inability and disinclination to put forward a theory of society. In the *Origin of Species* (1859), Darwin had excluded man in order to avoid controversy. Even in the *Descent of Man*, which Darwin produced after much struggle, the topic of man was very uncomfortably broached.

Only in the very last chapter in Darwin's *Descent of Man* was the species identity of man openly discussed. That the majority of the book concerned among other topics the plumage of birds and the reason for their courtship, and a discussion of the physical characteristics of man rather than any account of their society points to the simple fact that Darwin was not an anthropologist and did not wish to be one. Darwin was not a sociologist, but it would have been possible for him to be one, if he so chose. For example, his near contemporary, Herbert Spencer, (1820-1903) lived long enough to witness the final stresses (but not breakage) of the post-Napoleonic, European consensus forged by the Concert of Europe, the birth of nihilism and the reconstruction of the European tradition according to the dictates of modernism, was a sociologist. Spencer was the one to really push biological reasoning into society, and for the next one hundred years, Darwin and Spencer were systematically

confused. This confusion only ceased with the fusion of genetics and of evolutionary theory.<sup>39</sup>

This was so because Darwin's entire intellectual project in the *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*, the full force of his writing, was directed towards the controversy of providing the evidence for evolution by means of natural selection, and more directly of proving the work of natural selection in nature. This was no small task and was in Darwin's time deeply controversial. But it was, I note again, a very focused task which was very much apart from social and sociological explanations. Darwin was a naturalist and as a naturalist in the Victorian tradition who was concerned with the principle issues of the day: an explanation for the diversity of life and the place of man within the order of nature. This was perfectly consistent with the fact that Darwin, like naturalists since Linneaus and throughout the Enlightenment, were men of faith (but not terribly significant devotion) who believed (like Immanuel Kant incidentally, this is the purpose of Kant's critique of taste, to show the transition from morality to nature)<sup>40</sup> that purpose was in nature.

Darwin begins his magisterial *Origin of Species* with a simple fact: that there was indeed much variation in nature. This is plainly true regardless of how one classifies that variation or whether variations mean that those who possess them are of differing "varieties" or of differing species. But the mere existence of variety did not, according to Darwin, explain at all how varieties and individual variability among organisms came into being. Darwin observed that distinctions and variety

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<sup>39</sup> M. Francis, *Herbert Spencer and the Invention of Modern Life* (Taylor & Francis).

<sup>40</sup> J.H. Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant's Critique of Judgment* (University of Chicago Press).

persist in nature and that distinctions between organisms come into being “invariably from the struggle for life.”

Each natural being, even if so slightly different, has attributes which allow it to compete better or worse than its fellows. Such is the competition in nature (where numbers are large and resources limited) makes it so that if any variation confirms an advantage in the struggle for life and if such a variation is heritable in some way, such a variation (or trait) Darwin says is passed on to progeny. Because the offspring, possessing this advantageous trait, would themselves have a better chance than their fellows of surviving, little by little the population is itself changed, where those who possessed the advantageous variation, being better adapted than their fellows, slowly replace those who are less well adapted. In this way, slowly and imperceptibly, the population over time changes, leading to not only the presentation of diversity but also the change of organic forms over time. Natural selection, Darwin clearly defines is nothing but “this principle by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved.”<sup>41</sup>

The struggle for existence for Darwin is not simply metaphorical but real. For Darwin, though nature often presents a serene face, it is often times the site of great and intense struggle, as with two animals who fight for food in times of scarcity or a plant on the edge of a desert in a contest against nature itself. The struggle for existence is the “invariable” consequence of the fact that all animals have a relative high rate of increase relative of the population, this was even the case of humankind,

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<sup>41</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection; or, the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life and the Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, *The Modern Library of the World's Best Books* (New York,: The Modern library). 99

whereby the population of man, according to Darwin, has increased once every twenty-five years, where for Darwin, the absolute single necessity of an individual organism is to rapidly increase its numbers.

Such an imperative Darwin underscores is necessary due to the vast number of ways in which nature and the environment itself eliminates (rather ruthlessly and necessarily in order to circumvent the overpopulation of any species) and it is most severe Darwin underscores not between members of remote species or of populations, but between members of the same or of closely related species, this is due to the fact that such are the similarity of their features that minute differences will be accentuated.

Darwin then outlines in the next chapter (four) that because of the struggle for existence, because of the great disparity between the population and the resources available, because of the competition between organisms, natural selection will “modify the structure” of organisms and in particular “in social communities” “it will adapt the structure of each individual for the benefit of the community.”<sup>42</sup> Those preserved advantageous traits could be as simple as the structure of a predatory bird’s beak, so that it can better open eggs, or of a insects jaws. Or Darwin noted, it could be a change in the stature of a plant or animal, although this change would be very slow and would happen very, very slowly over time, over a number of generations. Another example of natural selection brought about by the struggle for existence would be as Darwin notes “Let us take the case of a wolf, which preys on various animals, securing some by craft, some by strength, and some by fleetness.”

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 129

In the case where the deer population is severely limited, as during the winter months, Darwin sees no reason to doubt “that the swiftest and slimmest wolves would have the best chance of surviving, and so be preserved or selected” being able to pass on those variations for strength and slimness down to their descendants. But these variations are very slight as natural selection in all cases “can act only by the preservation and accumulation of infinitesimally small inherited modifications, each profitable to the preserved being” much in the same way (echoing the work of Charles Lyell on geological time and modification) that little by little a small stream of water will, given enough time, carve out a canyon.<sup>43</sup>

Natural selection moreover emerges when there are a large number of individuals and thus more variation to selection (for nature to act upon). Darwin here (trafficking a bit in teleological and purposive arguments) contends that natural selection and the struggle for existence will enable organisms to become better adapted to space that is devoid or less populated with life. Natural selection conversely is diminished by breeding between in particular large animals with few offspring.

This was the case, Darwin observed, because breeding between very closely related pairs who have few offspring often had the effect of blending of traits. This often had the consequential effect of making those traits which were so beneficial to the organism and which natural selection sought to preserve blend and diminish. Although Darwin had no understanding of modern genetics, he did, like most Victorian naturalists, understand that progeny typically carried with them the

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 134

characteristics of both parents. This blending had the effect of reducing the intensity of the advantageous trait. Natural selection in the natural world Darwin however will always “act very slowly at long intervals of time, and generally on only a very few of the inhabitants of the same region at the same time.” And though the rate and intensity of the change are slow Darwin was sure that the degree of change particularly in aggregate could be almost infinite. Darwin then goes on in great detail to describe how through the action of natural selection due to the struggle for existence, even the most infinitesimal distinctions if advantageous, can with enough time allow for the divergence into very distinct species and even again those classes further up the scale of evolution.<sup>44</sup>

Darwin was well within the traditions of Victorian and nineteenth century naturalism when he believed human beings to be of one species and of one creation. This depended upon a very detailed and highly sourced notion of species and of what defined species. Broca had a distinctive account of especially human beings which (both metaphysically and scientifically) contrasted with that of Darwin.

For Broca and a number of French writers after the publication of *Origin of Species and Descent of Man* such a discussion of the “struggle for existence” and natural selection in nature was excellent. But it was, according to Broca, insufficient. If Darwin brought with him the imperatives of the English naturalist tradition, Broca was infinitely concerned with describing in stark terms as a critic of Darwinism (not

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 156

necessarily of the idea of natural selection) but of the primacy of the theory of natural selection. Broca also was a devoted follower of Lamarck.<sup>45</sup>

Broca's Lamarckianism necessitated a view of the organism which is in a constant conflict with his environment. However, as a result of this environmental struggle, organisms improve and are able to carry their improvements on to their progeny. Most importantly, organisms improve because they have the will to do so and it is due to their will that organisms survive. As importantly, such improvement can lead to perfection.

Perfection and perfectibility, Darwin knew and Broca embraced, were akin to a advocacy of utopianism, something which Darwin abhorred. As important was Darwin's emphasis on progress and upon gradualism. In many instances in Darwin's evolutionary theory emphasized not only the small changes in an organism but also the length of time which evolution in an existing population did indeed take. Under the scheme of Lamarck, if the logic is extended to its conclusions, changes could occur very rapidly if the need and the environment were extreme enough. Lastly, as Darwin was keen to emphasize, Lamarck's account of the action of will and nature in the environment, was simply not nearly often enough observed in nature. As Darwin noted famously, "Heaven forbid me from Lamarckian nonsense of a tendency to progression."<sup>46</sup>

Broca approached many of the issues of his 1872 article on *sélection sociale* in an 1861 piece "On the Form of the Head." The immediate background to Broca's

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<sup>45</sup> A.V. de Lima, *Exposé Sommaire Des Théories Transformistes De Lamarck, Darwin Et Haeckel* (C. Delagrave).

<sup>46</sup> In S. Gissis and E. Jablonka, *Transformations of Lamarckism: From Subtle Fluids to Molecular Biology* (MIT Press). Pg. 42

discussion was whether it was scientifically proper to reduce the brain to the mind. Broca argued that it was additionally impossible to fix a specific character trait to a specific region of the brain as was common practice with phrenologists.<sup>47</sup> According to Broca, there could not be a region of the brain “for each feeling.”<sup>48</sup> Instead, what was truly important was the “measurement of the face angle,” by which Broca meant his method of craniometry, which pointed to the degree of development of the “highest intellectual faculties” in the frontal region of the brain. And it is here that Broca developed his account of perfectibility and races.

He underscored that «Les races les moins perfectibles sont celles qui ont l'angle facial le plus aigu. » or “The least perfectible breeds are those with the most acute facial angle” or those whom according to Broca, had the least developed frontal lobes.<sup>49</sup> The most developed “race” and the most subject to perfection was “le type frontale” or “des races caucasiques” who were able to direct their development through their superior intelligence. It was the development of the frontal lobe which “is connected to the power of the highest intellectual faculties, those which make the superiority or inferiority of the races, those which gives rise (or birth) to civilization

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<sup>47</sup> Phrenologists and phrenology, a movement which was in vogue in the middle part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Phrenologists argued that each region of the brain corresponded to a specific psychic tendency, such as “assertiveness” and “religiosity.” A person’s character could be defined through outwardly visible features on the head, which corresponded to the intellectual and emotional features of the brain. Phrenology became particularly popular in the United States, as well as in England, because it was in a certain sense, democratic, with a guide to phrenology, easily purchased in any bookstore in a cheap edition, allowing individuals to “diagnose” others, without any recourse to a physician. However, even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, phrenology was seen as a kind of “pseudo-science” with anatomists like Broca intent on arguing often with the precepts of phrenology. On phrenology see Susan Branson, “Phrenology and the Science of Race in Antebellum America,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 15, no. 1 (2017)

<sup>48</sup> P. Broca, *Mémoires D'anthropologie* (Reinwald)., volume 1, pg. 209.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 210

and to progress.”<sup>50</sup> It is from articles like these that Blanckaert and other draw just conclusions concerning Broca as a “scientific racist.” Broca had in the 1861 article no conception of what forces would be guiding the perfection of man, this would change in 1872, when his worldview was provoked by the work of Charles Darwin in the *Origin of Species* and in the *Descent of Man*, published in 1871. In his 1872 article Broca would extend his account of perfection to all races, not merely “caucasians” a significant change, to be sure, but one which was protean in his earlier writings.

Broca’s *Les Sélections* in 1872 is a number of ideas bound together in one article. It is sometimes mocking critique of Darwin as well as an account of Broca’s account of an ideal future society. Broca’s account of social selection also revealed a conception of society as just and protecting the “weak.” This was to oppose what Broca saw as the vulgarities of Darwinian competition. Aside from its account of society, Broca’s critique of Darwin was an extraordinarily trenchant account of the origin and scientific status of the theory of natural selection.

In his article, Broca first sought to outline his objections to Darwin’s account of natural selection generally and to what he considered to be the systematic limitations of Darwin’s theory of natural selection. Broca was quick to emphasize that “natural selection” as presented in the *Origin of Species* was “a bold hypothesis” which brought “a seductive and simple explanation” to the problem of the “origin and the evolution of species.”<sup>51</sup> Here Broca was keen to critique first Darwin’s account of biology and of the natural world, whereby the reader would be prepared for Broca’s

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. Broca specifically notes «le volume relatif des lobes antérieurs est en rapport avec la puissance des facultés intellectuelles les plus hautes, de celles qui font la supériorité ou l'infériorité des races, de celles qui enfantent la civilisation et le progrès. »

<sup>51</sup> P. Broca, *Mémoires D'anthropologie* (Reinwald). 205 all in Vol.3

later discussion of social selection- by critiquing Darwin's discussion of the natural world first, Broca could then add his account of a new kind of social selection in the social world.

Broca held that Lamarckianism explained certain natural phenomena, while others were explained by natural selection and Darwin's theory. He underscored that the principle of "transformisme" was perfectly separable from natural selection. For example, natural selection explained perfectly well the function of organs and their origin,<sup>52</sup> it did not explain either the appearance of new species nor the sheer diversity of nature, which revealed a teleology or plan. Broca's objection was that natural selection, to his mind, did not "explain by natural causes the production of all organic forms."<sup>53</sup> Natural selection as a simple, unified, theory for Broca did far too much intellectual work. Broca was adamant as well that additional accounts of the generation and maintenance of variation in the natural world must be considered, noting that all hypothesis, including natural selection must "be placed in front of facts and be subject to their control."<sup>54</sup>

Broca was throughout a skeptic, he underscored to his readers to not be "dazzled by the grand results" of natural selection and that natural selection was not proven by the mere existence of the variety of species.<sup>55</sup> This was akin to logic denoting that because there appeared to be change in nature and natural selection provided a mechanism for such change, that therefore natural selection was the agent

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid. pg. 201

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, pg. 206 Rather mockingly, Broca noted that Darwin « il avait conçu le plan d'une vaste synthèse, où l'évolution des espèces, régie par un petit nombre de lois, devait expliquer par des causes *naturelles la production de toutes les formes organiques.* » Emphasis mine.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 207

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 207

behind said change. But many of the facts of nature in this regard neither confirm nor deny natural selection, according to Broca.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, many of the phenomenon of nature indeed “escaped” the explanation of natural selection, even though some phenomena may indeed be well served by reference to natural selection. Broca was throughout deeply content to provoke natural selection as a mere hypothesis which explain some phenomena and not others. He was open at the end to remark that the actual agent of selection was still unknown.<sup>57</sup>

Broca then chided Darwin for not extending any of his analysis of natural selection in the *Origin of Species* to man and of restricting his analysis of man in order to “not come in contact with theology.”<sup>58</sup> Indeed, Broca asserted that Darwin would have probably “preferred” that man was not part of his theory of natural selection. Broca detailed that the problem of human beings and their connection to the natural world is a question “which throw confusion and uncertainty into the firmest minds.”<sup>59</sup>

In *Descent of Man* Broca noted, Darwin described that man through the process of natural selection descended from “lower forms.” Broca lauded Darwin’s use of natural evidence noting the variety of evidences from comparative morphology

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 208

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Broca underscored that in *Origin of Species* in particular, Darwin was uncomfortable with the place of man in his system. Broca underscored, « Non qu'il pensât que l'homme fit exception aux lois générales de la nature; il ne l'avait ni dit ni laissé entendre; mais il préférerait peut-être que la sélection naturelle fit son chemin dans le monde avant de se trouver directement aux prises avec la théologie. » Broca here is mocking Darwins’ cautious approach.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 210, « ...le grave problème des origines humaines est de ceux qui jettent le trouble et l'in certitude dans les plus fermes esprits. » Broca specifically argued that if Darwin wished to argue that all human beings descended from a common ancestor, Lamackianism was the only alternative, as chance would never result in a “type” or specifically a “special type” which would result in the common ancestor of human beings. Specifically « un type aussi spécial que celui qui est commun à tous les hommes. » pg. 233.

and embryology as well as atavistic features of human morphology.<sup>60</sup> Broca noted, approvingly, that Darwin, though he had two chapters on the psychology of man and the distinctiveness of human psychology, did not exclude man from the general plan of nature and from the animal kingdom and make him the consequence of a “special creation.”<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, Broca did not think Darwin’s account of either physical or psychological evolution of mankind was sufficient.<sup>62</sup> Broca specifically argued that because natural selection should preserve only “advantageous” features, but Darwin fully admitted that man as a biological organism possessed nothing advantageous or special.<sup>63</sup>

It was in this context of broad critiques of Darwinism and natural selection in which Broca developed his account of “social selection,” in section entitled, “Remarques du reviewer sur la sélection sociale.”

Broca began by observing that “savage man” is very much close to the state of nature and because he is close to the state of nature, he is subject to all of the stresses and agents as wolves and other animals. In the savage state, according to Broca “is governed almost exclusively by the state of nature.”<sup>64</sup> In the state of nature,

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<sup>60</sup> In more detail, Broca wrote, « Ce sont toujours les analogies de structure, les phénomènes de l'évolution embryonnaire, les anomalies régressives, ( or atavisms) les organes rudimentaires, etc., qui forment la base principale de sa démonstration. »

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. «...ne voit pas dans cet ordre de faits une raison suffi sante pour exclure l'homme du règne animal, et pour attribuer son origine à une création spéciale. »

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, pg. 211

« Ceux qui pensent, comme moi, que l'école darwinienne fait jouer à la sélection naturelle un rôle exagéré et que cette sélection, quoique réelle, ne donne pas une explication suffisante des phénomènes organiques, jugeront probablement qu'il y a lieu de faire les mêmes réserves à l'en droit des phénomènes psychologiques »

<sup>63</sup> La sélection naturelle, en effet, *ne peut conserver et développer que les variations avantageuses*, et l'auteur reconnaît franchement qu'aucune des différences extérieures que présentent les races humaines n'est de nature à rendre à l'homme un service direct ou spécial » Italics mine. Pg. 233

<sup>64</sup> « les conditions de l'existence diffèrent peu de celles où sont placées les autres espèces animales, et sont régies presque exclusivement par les lois ordinaires de la nature. » pg. 241.

man and wolf, according to Broca, must themselves rely on their speed and quickness. However, in degree to the measure of refinement of civilization as it advances (this it is worth mentioning, very much has the sense of a conjectural history) selection by nature fades away. This is replaced by selection in society. As society advances, Broca notes, “the terrain for the struggle for existence gradually transforms.” Ferocious beasts which are so dangerous to “savage” and “primitive man” are now exterminated. Social life and association fundamentally changes the nature of the hunt: in primitive society they are disordered, dangerous and which subject man to the natural world.<sup>65</sup>

In society and with increasing levels of complexity and sophistication, life becomes “regular” and “more ordered.” Indeed, hunting, one of the great agents of natural selection, Broca observes, slowly passes away as animals are increasingly more and more domesticated and as farming becomes more and more the preferred means for cultivating food. (Broca incidentally was exaggerating, as an anthropologist in Paris he would know that there were many “savage” and “primitive” communities which often-times farmed and hunted.)

For Broca, what Darwin missed was that society and association even more generally fundamentally transforms the nature of competition and struggle. For man, Broca underscored, it was not the case that he battled with nature or that he battled with other species. Indeed, human evolution was competition (for the first time in natural history) solely between members of the same species. It is moreover the society itself which “becomes the principal theatre for the struggle for

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 241

existence.” With the transition into society, those qualities which had served savage man so well, do not aide him. Thus, Broca concludes, that qualities useful in the savage state « ne sont plus décisives dans la concurrence sociale » “are no longer decisive in social competition.”<sup>66</sup>

Broca noted that while it was certainly the case that Malthusian considerations of the connection between food and available resources are important, what was most essential to understand about selection in society, as opposed to selection in nature, was that the “qualities which grant victory in natural competition (and the struggle for existence) ordinarily are no longer decisive in social competition.” In society, Broca described, “physical force...the sensitivity of the senses, the only conditions of superiority in the state of nature, lose little by little in collective life their preponderance.”<sup>67</sup> What replaced physical force and physical strength was a very human quality, that of intelligence.

“Intelligence” moreover “is at first given a very small share,” but by the era of advanced civilization “it becomes considerable among peoples in advanced civilizations.” Social competition generally and moreover with the “arrival of class distinctions, the specialization of work and of labor, certain specific aptitudes which may assure the existence of a great number of individuals who would be not well adapted to enter, direct and in an isolated fashion into a struggle with nature.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, as the nature of selection changed, so too did the members of society.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.242 Thus Broca noted, « La force physique, l'adresse corporelle, la finesse des sens, seules conditions de la supériorité dans l'état de nature, perdent peu à peu dans la vie collective une partie de leur prépondérance. »

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

This is the result of a society, Broca underscored, which on the one hand, diminished little by little the effects of natural selection and the elements of the struggle for existence in nature and on the other hand, there developed with increasing intensity a “processes of selection which are proper to the human family.”<sup>69</sup> Social selection did not completely eliminate the law of natural selection but it did “profoundly modify” the “field of battle” in the form of a great substitution, from the struggle with nature to a struggle in society. As society improved, it little by little “attenuates the brutal effects of ordinary natural selection” while on the other hand “brings into play...with increasing intensity, methods of selection which are particular to the human family.”<sup>70</sup>

Broca continued, “*It substitutes for natural selection another selection in which the latter plays only a diminished role, often almost obliterated, and which deserves the name of social selection.*”<sup>71</sup> With this general formulation Broca not only coined the term “social selection” but also opposed natural selection and social selection, in some detail. For example natural selection according to Broca developed those characteristics which defined an individual as belonging to a biological species, while social selection “develops those characters useful to the individual as a member of society. Social selection renders him more adapted to live in society.” Broca went on to observe that evolution through social selection would be beneficial if the society

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<sup>69</sup> « Ainsi, d'une part, une société qui se perfectionne atténue de plus en plus les effets brutaux de la sélection naturelle ordinaire ; et, d'une autre part, elle fait intervenir dans la concurrence vitale, avec une intensité croissante, des procédés de sélection qui sont propres à la famille humaine. »

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, pg. 242

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. « Elle substitue à la sélection naturelle une autre sélection où celle-ci ne joue plus qu'un rôle amoindri, souvent presque effacé, et qui mérite le nom de sélection sociale. »

rested on justice, but less than ideal if the society rests upon inequality.<sup>72</sup> As Broca explained later, the ideal society was one in which justice reigned, where the poor were provided for. Such provisions would lead to a natural state of perfection. Society, moreover, according to Broca, was in its very nature charitable.

Social selection thus worked inversely to natural selection and led to an order apart from that of the natural world. This led Broca to critique the social Darwinism of Charles Darwin's French translator Clemence Royer, who argued that natural selection must be the basis for social order. Royer remains an enigma in the history of ideas. Such was an early translator of Darwin whose edition of *Origin of Species* remained in print until the middle of the twentieth century and an early social theorist. Such was rather unusually for the 19th century a woman of the French very far right, whose ideas were so strident than even a provocateur such as Broca had to distance himself and poke fun at her expense. Part of naming her "more Darwinist than Darwin" was Broca's objection to her entire account of evolutionary ethics—whereby natural selection and the struggle for existence was according to Royer consequential for "morality and the humanities."

Royer went on to "complain," according to Broca, that charity was a great evil because it ensured the survival of the sick and weak. This was according to Royer, one of the principal failings of democracy, insofar as democracy made charity, which in medieval times and in early civilization was not compulsory. But here Broca mocked Royer, nothing that charity was not simply an appendage of the social order but was rather very close to the nature of the social order and to society itself.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Broca observed that to suspend charity would be to subvert the entire social order and would be impossible. Charity he argued was as one of the values and virtues of social selection which was selected and supported by society itself. Thus, to blame charity on democracy or any other kind of government, was faulty. All societies according to Broca in this way possess in their ranks members who would not survive under the conditions of natural selection. But this is, according to Broca, the very definition of society itself to reverse the conditions of natural selection. And indeed, contrary to those like Royer who posited that civilization itself was the cause of decadence, Broca rejoined that the “best” civilized man was superior to the savage. Royer and many others who point to the decadence and degeneration of civilized man are simply making a number of mistakes.<sup>73</sup>

He noted that though the average weight of skulls diminished from with the advent of in particular advanced civilization this was due the presence of “inferior” individuals who are nonetheless found in civilized society, which itself “protects and uses them.”<sup>74</sup> This is because society according to Broca must by definition protect individuals who are “feeble”, otherwise there would be a return to a state of nature. Moreover, as Broca in the very next paragraph the existence of such inferior individuals is really only quite temporary. Royer’s social Darwinism was unnecessary according to Broca because of the perfectibility of mankind and society.

Civilization would lead to the “perfection of others.” Broca declared that social selection acted “so as to perfect the species.”<sup>75</sup> And though it may indeed be

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid. pg.243.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. pg. 244

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, pg. 242

the case that the “average” of the weight of brains and skulls diminished in civilization, it was nonetheless perfectly possible that an increase in the average cranial capacity of a population in society could come about through the increasing “perfection” where even the “weak” and “feeble” is perfected “in their turn.” Any diminishment in the average “gives way” to an upward movement when society continues its upward progressive movement and so ameliorates any inferiority in society. Thus, little by little, the average of skull size and brain weight more and more increases. Thus, according to Broca, negating the claims of Royer and others.

Going into more detail, Broca underscores that the frontal region of the brain (or the frontal cortex) was the region most responsible for intellection and abstract thinking. And that this region was the most susceptible to selection under civilization, because it was most influenced by intelligence. Intelligence and its increase was what society “selected for.” This was due to the fact that civilization established educational institutions and placed a premium on education, learning and intelligence.

Education and the cultivation of values and norms associated with education, i.e. the inculcation of the importance of intelligence and learning, according to Broca, lead to the increase in brain size in the frontal region. He declared: “*Education, education in all of its forms, here is the force which allows society to ameliorate the race.*” (italics mine) And if it were the case that individuals were allowed to join equitable institutions which were administered with justice “society” and “social selection” “would do more for the race than the most pitiable natural selection.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid. pg. 245 « L'éducation, l'éducation sous toutes ses formes, voilà la force intelligente qui permet à la société d'améliorer la race, tout en luttant contre les sommaires procédés de perfectionnement de la sélection naturelle. »

Broca observed that throughout history the positive social selection of intelligence does best in a society without such institutions as guilds and other kinds of corporations which rest on privilege. He noted specifically, “It is certainly the most effective means available to it. Include equitable institutions for each individual to obtain a position proportional to its usefulness, and you will have done more for the race than the most unforgiving natural selection could do.”<sup>77</sup>

This meant for Broca a destruction of unnecessary privileges as with guilds and corporations, who are selected are not those who are the most intelligent but rather for those that are best able to navigate within the social conditions of the guild. Broca here underscores his radical politics. However, Broca continued, it was too often the case that in work, labor and life, that such issues as favoritism and cronyism made possible mediocrity and the selection of individuals based upon seniority rather than merit.<sup>78</sup>

By the end of Broca’s account of social selection, he not only detailed how education and intelligence would bring about the perfection of the human species, but underscored that the progression of intelligence would result in the equality of all. He noted, “That selection takes place first of all for the benefit of intelligence, the other qualities will shortly follow.”<sup>79</sup> Broca continued that any social evolution and increasing action of social selection was the result of the equalizing tendencies of the French Revolution which “grâce à la suppression des castes, des corporations, des

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, pg. 245

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. pg. 247.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, pg. 248. « Que la sélection s'opère d'abord au profit de l'intelligence, les autres qualités viendront par surcroît. »

privileges” “thanks to the suppression of castes, corporations and privileges”  
“education plays a growing role.”<sup>80</sup>

This vision of equality, intimately connected to the Lamarckian account of perfection and purpose, rested as well on an account of society which was the opposite of the socialDarwinian one of Royer. Society for Broca took care of the feeble. Society to was best when hereditary privilege had been removed. As importantly, however, Broca made certain to construct a theory of society which not only was the opposite of Darwinian natural selection, but whose emphasis on justice reached back to his account of intelligence working to render every human biologically perfect.

In Broca’s work, the two sides, the social and the biological worked together as a critique of Darwin’s whole system. Such a critique, and its opposition to the social Darwinism of Royer, also served to separate nature and society, and social evolution and natural selection. This separating function, where social selection discussion opposed social Darwinism, persisted throughout discussions of social selection and will be a key theme of this dissertation.

Accounting for Broca’s discussion of social selection reveals a complex portrait of Broca as well as a complex picture of the limits of natural selection as Darwin presented it. As importantly, this chapter also began to characterize social selection not only as the development of mankind under the conditions of civilization, but as an argument and social process that is positioned against social Darwinism.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

And though Vacher de Lapouge quoted Broca at length, Broca was the opposite of a declinist. Broca, a complex and mercurial figure, whose political affiliations were unclear, was keen to ascribe certain facts to Darwinism as he was to excoriate it. He was a believer in societal perfection; such a vision is in many ways the opposing one of Lapouge. Broca's perfectionism and his radical political philosophy remains unexpected from Broca given the view of him in the literature which presents him as a promoter of hierarchy of the races. This received view of Broca however is modified with his discussion of social selection, which regardless of Broca's emphasis on hierarchy elsewhere in his corpus (and which incidentally is detailed exhaustively by Blanckaert), nonetheless shifts towards the amelioration of education and the transformative effects of civilization.

The next chapter's discussion of Vacher de Lapouge provides a rather stark transition. I will show how social selection was seamlessly integrated by Lapouge into a declinist, anti-Semitic and Aryanist metaphysic. The contrast between the two is deliberate, not only did Lapouge expand and expound on Broca's social selection, he used the concept to opposing ends as Broca. This underscores again a key theme of this dissertation: the plasticity of social selection and its flexibility to any number of social theories and concerns.

## Chapter 2: Georges Vacher de Lapouge: *Sélections Sociales*, Antisemitism and the Roots of Social Mobility Research

Georges Vacher de Lapouge (1854-1936) lived long enough to both be traumatized by the Franco-Prussian War and to make a decided contribution to the ideology of fascism. He was, in many ways, much like the Russian sociologist Piritim Sorokin, discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, one of the many liminal figures, spanning two generations.<sup>81</sup> Lapouge's key texts were *Selections Sociales* published in 1896, published shortly after in 1899. For the latter text, in particular Lapouge achieved a measure of infamy because of his promotion of the "Aryan" as one of the prime movers of history, locked in eternal struggle with "Jews" who were to eventually dominate the West.<sup>82</sup> A chapter framed according to Lapouge's contribution to sociology would surprise many. As outlined in the Introduction to this dissertation, historians and political scientists have justly noted Lapouge as one of the central French antisemitic ideology. I argue in this chapter that Lapouge was one of France's most virulent and visible antisemites while also, through his systematization of social selection, originating the concept of social mobility.

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<sup>81</sup> W. Stark, *The Fundamental Forms of Social Thought: An Essay in Aid of Deeper Understanding of History of Ideas* (Taylor & Francis).

<sup>82</sup> See on this especially his section "Domination éventuelle des Juifs en Occident" in G.V. de Lapouge, *L'aryen: Son Rôle Social* (A. Fontemoing), 1899, pg. 467, "Under a regime where the only inequality received is that of fortune, the Jew is naturally called to take the first rank" and "to eliminate from the ruling class all other elements, as it deems necessary." The analysis of Lapouge's contribution to National Socialist ideology has been extensive. See among others Josep R Llobera, "The Dark Side of Modernity," *Critique of Anthropology* 8, no. 2 (1988), MJ Hawkins, "The Struggle for Existence in 19th-Century Social Theory: Three Case Studies," *History of the Human Sciences* 8, no. 3 (1995); M. Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (Cambridge University Press). (1997), Sean Quinlan, "Discussion: The Racial Imagery of Degeneration and Depopulation: Georges Vacher De Lapouge And anthroposociology'in Fin-De-Siècle France," *History of European ideas* 24, no. 6 (1998)

Lapouge has been justly analyzed as one of the founders of modern, antisemitism, who argued that “Jews” through a “conquête pacifique” would slowly take over modern European nations due to “selection” by “hazard” and a supreme valuation of wealth. This was the case since “Jews” benefited most from a society in which the only valuation account to Lapouge was monetary wealth and in which social selection and social mobility was determined by wealth and riches. For Lapouge this was the most damaging for of “economic selection.” This, combined with the double action of the cities to draw forth “Aryan” elements, through the process of “urban selection” from the countryside and to decimate their numbers, allowed “Jews,” members of the “l'aristocratie d'argent” to be the dominant elements in any society.<sup>83</sup>

However, in Lapouge’s account of the various types of “selections,” I argued, and the subsequent chapters of this dissertation argue, sociologists though rejecting Lapouge’s “Aryanis” and his antisemitism, used his varying concepts of forms of selection, especially selection occurring in the cities and selection which occurred due to economic competition became fertile ground for discussion until the Second World War. Lapouge’s legacy for social theory, as outlined by this dissertation through its discussion of Franz Boas, William Ripley and Ridolfo Livi in the next chapter, in American sociology in Chapter 4, and in the work Pitirim Sorokin in Chapter 5, among others in this dissertation, underscore the importance of his concept for the development of social theory in Europe and in the United States. Sorokin’s own

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<sup>83</sup> See especially the discussion of Lapouge of these two dynamics in G.V. de Lapouge, *Les Sélections Sociales: Cours Libre De Science Politique, Professé À L'université De Montpellier (1888-1889)* (Thorin & Fils), 1896, pg. 347.

discussion of social mobility drew heavily from Lapouge's own discussion of social selection, and as this chapter will detail, we see the roots of discussions of social mobility in Lapouge's analysis of "economic selection"; however, historians have only examined Lapouge's legacy for antisemitism, rather than his contribution to social theory, though the two are intimately connected.

This dual legacy exists because Lapouge was the principle expositor of Broca's *sélection sociale*, which he expounded upon in ways that were both modern and deeply reactionary. Lapouge, drawing directly from Broca's own discussion of "social selection" in his review of Darwin's 1871 *Descent of Man*, Lapouge underscored that in his critique of Darwin, Broca "Broca alone, with his usual boldness, dared to look at the sphinx in the face."<sup>84</sup> Broca's discussion of social selection was simply that of a "theory and outline." Lapouge considered his task to be to elucidate and clarify the phenomena of selections occurring in the modern world, some of which were already known.<sup>85</sup>

Lapouge, as Gabrielle Hecht underscores, was one of a group of radical, socialist French anthropologists and ethnologists.<sup>86</sup> Lapouge's own initial concern was over the demographic effects of the Franco-Prussian War, which like the First World War, profoundly influenced national consciousness and national memory; indeed, both presented deep reservoirs to the forces of reaction in France. Lapouge was also deeply concerned with the emerging modernity of French civilization, with

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., vi.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Jennifer Michael Hecht, *The End of the Soul: Scientific Modernity, Atheism, and Anthropology in France* (Columbia University Press).

its finance capitalism, its banks with its declining birthrate, and its swelling urban population.<sup>87</sup>

Lapouge was and remains, one of the most prominent socialist antisemites, whose critique of modernity, whose critique of modern, capitalistic, financial France and Europe illustrated two phenomena. First it underscored the degree to which by the time of 1890s, France was indeed industrializing, urbanizing and developing a new sort of economy.<sup>88</sup> Lapouge's critique of modernity and of capitalism was also a prime example, as recent authors have underscored of the conjoining of a critique of capitalism with antisemitism and hatred of "the Jew" as the representatives of capitalism.<sup>89</sup> Secondly, in Lapouge's sociology, one can also view, and this is described in great deal in this chapter, the particular anxieties of urbanization and population dislocation in France, with its attendant depopulation.<sup>90</sup> Elisa Camiscioli among others has underscored the importance of Lapouge's work for pro-natalism, and for the biological understanding of French nationhood.<sup>91</sup>

In reading Lapouge, one understands also many of the strains of republican government in France, the distaste of all politics that came after the Revolution and the Terror.<sup>92</sup> His antisemitism is unmistakable, resembling the antisemitism of the Third Reich. Lapouge depended upon the work of Édouard Drumont, whose *La*

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<sup>87</sup> R. Gonnard, *La Dépopulation En France* (Université de Lyon).

<sup>88</sup> P. Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Peter Davies.).

<sup>89</sup> M. Battini, N. Mazhar, and I. Vergnano, *Socialism of Fools: Capitalism and Modern Anti-Semitism* (Columbia University Press).

<sup>90</sup> H. Clément, *La Dépopulation En France: Ses Causes Et Ses Remèdes; D'après Les Travaux Les Plus Récents* (Bloud et Cie.).

<sup>91</sup> E. Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race: Immigration, Intimacy, and Embodiment in the Early Twentieth Century* (Duke University Press).

<sup>92</sup> J.P. Azéma and M. Winock, *Histoire De L'extrême Droite En France* (Éd. du Seuil).

*France Juive* (1886) set the tone for much of the period writing in the era of the Dreyfus Affair. Drumont spoke of France being overtaken by a “Jewish conquest,” who were the only group to “profit” from the Revolution, from the contemporary maladies of France. “The Jews” did so through a “vast system of financial exploitation.”<sup>93</sup> Drumont echoed many of the same notes as Lapouge but while Drumont was content to mostly focus on the politics of the French Third Republic, Lapouge through his emphasis on competition and selection and through recourse to a declinist theory of history, made the conflict between “Jew” and the “Aryan” the central drama of European history. He combined this central drama, with ethnology and most notably, a theory of the social forces at work in his Third Republic France, which is absent from Drumont’s texts.

This chapter argues that while Lapouge was deeply antisemitic and authoritarian ideology has received ample attention, but his *sélections sociales*, which was to serve as the foundation the sociological discussions outlined in this subsequent chapters of this dissertation, has escaped notice. Because Lapouge’s *selections sociales* was longer and more systematic than Broca’s brief and dense review, Lapouge served as the principle intermediary of the social selection concept, especially outside of France.<sup>94</sup> Often, as was the case in his Italian reception, Lapouge’s concept of “social selection” was discussed, while Lapouge himself was

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<sup>93</sup> É. Drumont, *La France Juive: Essai D'histoire Contemporaine* (Marpon). V., published in 1900

<sup>94</sup> Franz Boas, "The Mind of Primitive Man," *Science* 13, no. 321 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1628473>; E.A. Ross, *Foundations of Sociology* (Macmillan). F.H. Giddings, *The Principles of Sociology: An Analysis of the Phenomena of Association and of Social Organization* (Macmillan).

ruthlessly critiqued.<sup>95</sup> Such a reception is also discussed in Chapter 7 of this dissertation, where Lapouge and his “social selections” plays an important role in the “Negro Question.”<sup>96</sup>

As importantly, no scholar has outlined Lapouge’s discussion of “economic selection” and “urban selections” which, in particular, was the first extended study of the phenomenon of social mobility in modern industrial and financial capitalism. Subsequent authors, but most especially capitalized on Lapouge’s discussion his selections in his account of social selection and social mobility, while disregarding Lapouge’s pessimism, his Aryanism and his antisemitism.

Lapouge was the first sociology to discuss social mobility in modern society. And in this important, though limited sense, Lapouge’s sociology pointed to many of contemporary sociology’s concerns. Although laced with antisemitism, Lapouge gave to sociology a series of questions, which remained after social theorists such as Boas and such as Pitirim Sorokin, used Lapouge discussion of selection to describe how economic competition and the structures of society “selected” some individuals over others, leading some to prosper and others to fail. The discussion of the “social selection” of human fertility appears not only in the work of Franz Boas, but also in the work of Alexander Carr-Saunders, discussed in Chapter 6.

This chapter, and this dissertation generally, will both outline Lapouge’s specific reactionary ideology as well as argue for his modern contribution to social theory. Accordingly, this chapter, surprisingly given the amount of secondary

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<sup>95</sup> N. Colajanni, *Razze Inferiori E Razze Superiori: Latini E Anglo-Sassoni* (Rivista popolare illustrata), 1903

<sup>96</sup> Gennaro Mondaini, *La Questione Dei Negri Nella Storia E Nella Societa Nordamericana* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca).

literature on Lapouge, will be the first to discuss not only his racial theory and his antisemitism, but his social theory and his account of modernity. Throughout the chapter an effort will be made as well to detail his understanding of social mobility as it was detailed in his *sélection économique* and his “*sélection urbaine*” as well as more briefly his other “selections.”

Social selection and social mobility was in Lapouge’s usage central to his account of “the Jew” as the symbol of modernity and the chief agent of the decline of “the Aryan.” Lapouge’s account of modernity was an extraordinarily pessimistic vision which was a total rejection of modernity, especially the modernity of the masses, classes, financial capitalism, where, according to Lapouge, wealth and population was extracted from the countryside and in the degenerate anonymity of the city.<sup>97</sup>

If this appears to be more akin to the “German ideology” than that of the *Action Française*, the sense is correct, and there is much that needs to be rethought about the narrative of the cumulative radicalization in Europe towards Nazi ideology.<sup>98</sup> That Lapouge’s use of social selection (*sélection sociale*) and his examination of the selective forces of civilization could exist alongside that of Broca’s (not to say others) of latter chapters underscores the utility of this conceptualization for the development of specific metaphysical programs.

In these ways, Lapouge’s intellectual project was distinct from Paul Broca’s (Chapter 1) although both discussed *sélection sociale* and both attempted to extend

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<sup>97</sup> Pierre-André Taguieff, "Sélectionnisme Et Socialisme Dans Une Perspective Aryaniste: Théories, Visions Et Prévisions De Georges Vacher De Lapouge (1854-1936)," *Mil neuf cent* 18, no. 1 (

<sup>98</sup> E. Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism* (Penguin Publishing Group).

the theoretical architecture of Darwinism to the realm of the social sciences. As I have emphasized many times such is the flexibility and malleability of social selection and *sélection sociale* that it explains its permanence and allows it to be an extraordinarily useful conceptual tool to assist in the detailing of foreign metaphysics.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, it is striking that Lapouge's apocalyptic account of the decline of Europe due to the destruction of the "Aryan," was so distinct from Broca's own project. However, this is in the very nature of transmission and propagation of the social selection concept.

This chapter in the pages that follow will first outline the historiographic reception of Lapouge and his work, underscoring throughout the inseparability of his account of social selection and his ant-Semitism, which contain not only his understanding of economic competition, but his critique of modern and his construction of "the Jew" as the antithesis to "the Aryan." There will some discussion as well of his general account his general discussion of "social selection" as well as his description of *sélection militaire*, as this selection was a key exemplar of the trauma of the Franco-Prussian War. This discussion too has escaped the notice of scholars. To contend with the interconnections between Lapouge's antisemitism and his account of social mobility, some discussion of Lapouge's racial theory also follows.

As importantly, the last pages of this chapter will address in some detail, the French and especially the Italian reception of Lapouge's social selection. I argue that Lapouge's work was immensely bifurcated, whereby social theorists either deeply

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<sup>99</sup> J. Agassi, *Science in Flux* (Springer Netherlands).

critiqued or totally ignored his Aryan psychology. While this chapter only addresses Lapouge's Italian and French reception until the 1920s, I have serious reservations from this small discussion concerning the actual contribution of Lapouge to, in particular, Italian fascism. Thus, Lapouge's authoritarian connections were not through social theory but through other channels which are outside the scope of this dissertation.

Historiographically, Lapouge has been almost entirely considered from the future standpoint of authoritarianism and of fascism.<sup>100</sup> Lapouge's ideas concerning the supremacy of "the Aryan," of the certainty of the degeneracy of Europe due to the forces of modernity, have rightly, by George Mosse been included in the intellectual genealogy of the "German Ideology."<sup>101</sup> A generation of historians around George Mosse interrogated the broad streams and currents of historical racism and hierarchical thinking in the French philosophical and literary tradition in order to (rightly) render it illegitimate.<sup>102</sup> However, due to this historiographic emphasis, historians have not realized that Lapouge inaugurated discussions of social selection and social mobility.

The image of the solely authoritarian Lapouge was a consequence of the 1970s and during the 1980s, of the resurgence of not only the traditional far right (such as in its royalist and traditionalist bands) but what appeared to amount to a

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<sup>100</sup> C. Blanckaert, *Les Politiques De L'anthropologie: Discours Et Pratiques En France (1860-1940)* (L'Harmattan).

<sup>101</sup> G.L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Howard Fertig Publisher). J. HERF, *The Jewish Enemy* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>102</sup> P.A. Taguieff, *Sur La Nouvelle Droite: Jalons D'une Analyse Critique* (Descartes et Cie).

multipronged intellectual and cultural assault on the republican and anti-racist traditions in France.

And indeed, there is much merit in this account of Lapouge as a racial theorist. Lapouge's account of social selection drew a great deal from his account of race and his notion of essentialized racial characteristics. However, the key historiographic error was that commentators have not progressed beyond Lapouge as a racial theorist, while this dissertation maintains that although his account of social selection rested on a reactionary racial theory and his discussion of social mobility was rooted in an antisemitic worldview, his text was nonetheless the foundation of a huge number of sociological discussions which were often contrary to Lapouge's own metaphysics. The concept of social selection, however, must be discussed in Lapouge's own specific race, antisemitic and Aryianist worldview.

This requires first and foremost some discussion of Lapouge's discussion of the "European" or "Aryan" race, as Lapouge's account of the disastrous social selection of modernity depended upon a racial metaphysics which say the "Aryan" type ruthlessly negatively selected by modern society. For Lapouge this lead him to the conclusion that while in the past "Aryans" had been favored, such were the conditions, particularly of the city and such were the modern selections of Europe, that the "European" was continually decimated. What follows first is an account of Lapouge's racial theory of history and then a full account of his sociology of modernity and of the "selections" which occur.

For Lapouge, race was the presence of characteristics, mental, physical and physiological, which constitute a "type." This mix of characteristics, moreover, was

hereditary and transmissible through the variations; whereby a type could be distinguished from a mere variety because some variations between individuals were due to the accidental influence of the environment. Lapouge underscored that it was usually not proper to think of an individual as belonging to a race or thinking of races solely in terms of individuals; rather, it was groups that the term race should be applied. Lapouge, using these criteria (which are well-known in the history of ideas and which are discussed throughout this dissertation,) was able to define the “Races of Europe.” For Lapouge there were two principal races: the “European” race and the “Alpine” race.<sup>103</sup>

The European race or “dolichocéphale” Lapouge underscores were the movers of history. They were located mostly in the Nordic countries and in the United States of America. They were however due to their highly energetic nature, spread throughout Europe. He fought for the sake of fighting, without any notion of profit. This type considers it better to gain and lose wealth, which he can do with a great deal of ease, than to conserve it (and thus adopt a conservative posture.) The “European” race, though it contained idiots, was nonetheless capable of genius. For “European” race, according to Lapouge, “the entire world is his homeland” and for him there is nothing that he does not dare or want and there is nothing that he will not execute “on the spot.” The desire for progress is his “greatest need.”<sup>104</sup>

The “European” race had as its original point of dispersion, the North Sea, and was today found, Lapouge underscored in Belgium (where it made up the majority of

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<sup>103</sup> de Lapouge, *Les Sélections Sociales: Cours Libre De Science Politique, Professé À L'université De Montpellier (1888-1889)*.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 12ff

the population) as well as France and Germany. But even in France and in Germany it was a “secondary” portion of the population, but a portion of the population which was “the more important.” This population was not found in lowland regions of France, or at any low elevation in Europe. It was also the case that the European race was typically intermixed with the local population and therefore the only instance in which a “pure” individual could be found was through some chance whereby an “atavism” reasserted itself.

In contrast, the “Alpine” race or “le brachycéphale” were “frugal and industrious.” He leaves “nothing uncertain” and though he does not lack courage he does not have “a taste for war.” He had, according to Lapouge, a love for their earth and for his native soil. He rarely attained “talent or genius”, and all of his work is for very narrow and attainable ends. He is a “man of tradition” and as such is wary of progress enjoying far more than change or progress, the Catholic religion and uniformity.

After outlining the various tendencies of the “Alpine race” Lapouge speculated that the members of this group are of more recent origin than the “European” race, the products of an unknown degree of crossing and of intermarriage. The “Alpine race” was wide-spread, he noted, in Spain, in Italy and among the European islands such as Sicily. With the exception of Poland, the “Alpine” race did not dominate the plains regions of Europe, this for Lapouge was the domain of the “European race” and their “métis.”

In fact, throughout history, Lapouge observed, it was the case that the “Alpine race” dominated any part of Europe that the “dolichocéphale” did not inhabit due to

undesirability or some other factor, and often when the numbers of the “European” race were in decline, the “Alpine” race frequently replaced them and because of this, in the present day, much of the population were an intermixture of “Alpine” and “European” races.<sup>105</sup>

Lapouge underscored that ancient societies and ancient civilizations had a high percentage of “Europeans” and that the “superior classes” in these societies were predominantly of the “European” race, illustrated by the skull measurements of the present inhabitants of Notre Dame and the “*grand siegneurs*” of past civilizations. By way of evidence, Lapouge observed that the Alpine race was not represented in sculptures of the Middle Ages; thus, according to Lapouge, they were not men of standing.

He argued that during the Middle Ages as a consequence of “economic selection,” while the highest class contributed most to economy and to society, it was the middle classes numbers who swelled the most, the consequence of an “energetic selection” among the laboring classes which swelled the ranks of the republicans and of the bourgeoisie, this was nothing but a modern example of the “the ascendent movement of the brachycéphales (the Alpine race.)”<sup>106</sup>

For Lapouge, beginning his discussion of social selection proper, the history of man was very different than nature, for in nature, the “less gifted succumb each generation” and the adaptive “characteristics” are “conserved by heredity.”<sup>107</sup> Like Broca, Lapouge considered the selection which takes place in society was

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid. 39

<sup>106</sup> de Lapouge, *Les Sélections Sociales: Cours Libre De Science Politique, Professé À L'université De Montpellier (1888-1889)*. pg. 40

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 198

fundamentally of a different kind for, as Lapouge noted, man was a social animal and as a social animal, man lived and worked in society, which subjected him to a radically different sort of selection than nature. According to Lapouge, man's existence is dominated by his social connections; and society, however rudimentary, fundamentally changed the nature of selection which is directly proportional to the degree to which society has itself developed.

It was also the case, Lapouge observed, like Broca, that man by possessing fire, by increasing the rudiments of civilization and especially through the use, not of his physical strength or of his fighting prowess, but of his intellect and wits, was able to distance himself from the natural world. For Lapouge, as with Broca, while natural selection pitted individuals in a struggle for existence was man against nature, especially against animals and the elements, social selection pitted man against other men. In civilization, Lapouge observed, with all the animal enemies of man having been destroyed, his enemies are not wolves but "merchants." Survival is fought and one by "social acts." But though the nature of selection has changed, moving from the natural and physical to the social realm, it is nonetheless as murderous.<sup>108</sup>

For Lapouge, the most important selections in society were: military, and especially economic and urban selection which will lead into the discussion of Lapouge, social mobility, his account of the pathologies of modernity, and its connection to his antisemitism.

Military selection, argued Lapouge, had been important throughout history, as service in the military and the deaths of a certain number of individuals due to

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid. 199

conflict. In the most primeval of societies, there were wars against not only other men, but also against famine and hunger. However, primitive wars and primitive conflict were not in and of themselves of numerical importance. Wars of great numerical importance began only with the Romans, particularly against the Carthaginians, where entire populations were annihilated. The so-called “military selection” David Starr Jordan (1851-1931,) the then founding president of Stanford University, extended this debate into American sociology, which reached a peak at the end of the First World War.<sup>109</sup> For Lapouge, the consequences of these early conflicts were profound as the Romans eliminated a “race” which was roughly similar to that which began the modern English nation.<sup>110</sup> If Lapouge were to give an estimate of the numbers of individuals killed in all primeval and early modern wars, he would respond that nearly two and a half billion had so perished.<sup>111</sup>

Modern warfare, moreover, had not been less “bloodstained” than those of previous centuries. Because of numerous factors, however, frequent primitive warfare elevated the quality of the population, regardless of any absorption of the “conquering race.” Such are the travails of warfare among primitive tribes that only “the fittest” survived all of the privations of warfare among savage tribes. Moreover, warlike individuals in primitive societies often had an advantage insofar as those proficient at warfare are rewarded in their societies with more wives. Polygamy is frequently the reward of the best warriors in a tribal society. The warrior strata tended to, according to Lapouge, dominate the class system of tribal societies. Selection in primitive

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<sup>109</sup> David Starr Jordan, *The Blood of a Nation* (San Francisco, Cal.,: A. Carlisle & co.).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* 217.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* 219

societies was therefore doubly effective “defective individuals are eliminated” and the warrior class are placed in a position whereby “which assure them a posterity all the more abundant.”

On the other hand, civilized warfare had the effect of “depressing the race” and more concerning for Lapouge was the idea that “the real” damages of military selection were not necessarily caught by official statistics. For Lapouge, this did not only mean that the “ardor” or “fire” of those of valor who became tired of war and of their societies, or the maladies which attended the inevitable end of a conflict.

What was difficult to measure, according to Lapouge, were the moral and physical shocks of modern warfare, which caused a society to degrade and to decline. These were the “material, moral and economic counter-currents” which also affected women, children and other non-combatants, who waste away or undergo some other deterioration. Such incalculable damage was on display during the siege of Paris, which did not spare a single family and scarcely any family in Paris who did not lose one of its members. Infants in particular succumbed to all sorts of maladies.<sup>112</sup>

Even now, Lapouge underscored, during to the Franco-Prussian war the birth rate of France was depressed. Instead of elevating the best parts of a population, it frequently had the effect of decimating the “most apt.” The most apt or the most intelligent, and the bravest, or those closest to the “European stock” were frequently those who are exposed to early mortality by the ravages of war. This was particularly

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 230.

the case in most recent colonial wars, where the bravest perished and those less so “stayed home in their barracks.”<sup>113</sup>

Lapouge’s own account of the selective effects of the Franco-Prussian war and its effects on France actually placed him at odds with many statisticians who alike were concerned with enlarging the role of Darwinian theory into the social sciences. Otto Ammon considered warfare to have positive effect. Not so, countered Lapouge, for many of those who fought and died in the Franco-Prussian war were “newly married.” Indeed, marriages increased in the time before “the catastrophe of Sedan.”

Such for Lapouge was a demographic disaster considering the degree to which the percentage of pregnancies which occurred in the first two months of marriage was extremely high. These individuals, “the most apt,” were the ones who married and then went off to war. Finally examining the craniometric statistics, Lapouge concluded that if wars were of short duration then it would be possible for the “European” race to reassert itself. However, if wars were of long enough duration, this meant that the less adventurous, more conservative and less adapt reassert themselves, much in the same way they have done throughout history, taking over an area or a society after the decline of the “European” race.

Militarism, according to Lapouge most generally was not only harmful because “pulverized” the elite, according to Lapouge, rendering of those who survive wounded and lame. Last, among its many problems, war depopulated and reorganizes much of the French countryside as the enforced garrisoning of individuals

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 231.

in the city has the effect of making former soldiers yearn for city life. This forces them away from the countryside and into the closed environment of the cities.<sup>114</sup>

Lapouge returned to the cities in his discussion of economic selection which for Lapouge was the selection of “indisputable preponderance” in the modern world. While the majority of the other types of selections were quite mixed in their duration and in their application to the modern, material, technological world, this was not so in the “material struggle for existence” for “daily bread.” Man’s needs moreover were ever increasing and more difficult to satisfy. Such were the importance of material needs that it had replaced the desire for salvation which had motivated the medieval peasant. Economic selection and the struggle for material existence was often so pronounced that individuals would forsake their reproductive potential for their material well-being.

In this way, Lapouge observed, economic selection could be the most damaging. It was universal due to the universal desire for advancement and elevation among human beings “regardless of race.”<sup>115</sup> On economic selection in particular Lapouge underscored that of all the “selections” it was economic selection which was becoming more and more dire and destructive. It was economic selection which « leurs ravages vont croissant, et nul ne saurait dire quel sera le terme de leur développement. » (“their ravages are increasing, and no one can say what will be the end of their development.”)<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid. 232.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. 343.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, pg. 343

Economic selection was furthermore far fiercer and as pitiless as war between “savages.”<sup>117</sup> Economic selection was more brutal because “egoisms are more brutal and desires monstrously increased in a century of luxury, wealth and psychic refinement.”<sup>118</sup> It was ubiquitous in society as there was a “selection” for entry into “each class.” In more detail, he underscored for each family «il y a sélection pour se maintenir et pousser en avant sa dynastie... » (“there is a selection to maintain and push forward his dynasty.”) This is because in each individual there was a “desire for self-elevation” (“le désir de s'élever.”)<sup>119</sup> Any functioning society, according to Lapouge moreover allows these adepts to prosper and those singularly maladapted to perish. Lapouge underscored that societies had “social capillaries” produced “a sorting of ethnic elements” as these diverse groups differ “in their aptitudes” as well as their “social position.” In this way “economic selection” brought about oftentimes a “rapid and considerable” series of changes in society.<sup>120</sup>

However, Lapouge quite distinctly underscored that economic selection, as “facts” detailed, brought about the concertation and the subsequent “elimination *des dolichoïdes*” the “European or “Aryan” race. Thus, Lapouge while clearly described a picture of social mobility through economic competition, it was clear that Lapouge believed the machinery of modernity to be eliminating the “European” race. As I will detail below, this conception of social mobility and economic completion was the

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. « parce que les égoïsmes sont plus brutaux et les désirs monstrueusement accrus dans un siècle de luxe, de richesse et de raffinement psychique. »

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, 344.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid 344-5

result, according to Lapouge, of the ubiquitous luxuriousness and mistaken valuation of wealth which was an essential facet of modern society.

Lapouge argued that modern industrial society, with its banks, financial capital was nothing but a “plutocratic regime” in which the “golden calf is still standing.” In modern France, Lapouge argued fortune and wealth “is everything.”<sup>121</sup> He continued that in modern society, “So beauty, science, genius, virtue, courage, all fades before the prestige of gold, because everything is bought.”<sup>122</sup> He continued that he who has wealth “is the undisputed master” where “the most learned men for doctors, engineers, secretaries, the greatest artists to build, adorn his palaces, bring joy to his ears.”<sup>123</sup>

Wealth was, for Lapouge “the plan of contemporary society.”<sup>124</sup> Lapouge continued that economic competition and the desire for money and material possession had the effect of decimating the “intellectual aristocracy” and of vastly decreasing the number of the “European” race. The decimation of the aristocracy was the result of the inversion of proper values.

Lapouge detailed how in past eras, such as feudal society, the aristocracy possessed land and titles, but possessed such due to their talents and innate ability. Modern capitalism had however brought about an era where social standing was not based upon the possession of talents, but upon wealth. Lapouge declared, “beauty,

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid. 345

<sup>122</sup> « Donc beauté, science, génie, vertu, courage, tout s'efface devant le prestige de l'or, car tout s'achète. »

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, « les hommes les plus savants pour médecins, pour ingénieurs, pour secrétaires, les plus grands artistes pour construire, orner ses palais, réjouir ses oreilles. »

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

science, genius, virtue, courage, all are erased by the prestige of gold, because all can be bought.”<sup>125</sup>

Selection, according to Lapouge, in modern France, had nothing to do with merit or ability. It was merely selection “by hazard.” The reign of the plutocrats and the “Jews” that were prominent among them, made prominent individuals who were devoid of merit. What was gone according to Lapouge, what was lacking was the virtues of the older, hereditary nobilities. These natural elites, according to Lapouge, would rise on account of their own virtues. Thus, Lapouge complained that gone were the “la noblesse phénicienne, de la noblesse grecque, de la noblesse romaine” which possessed “capital” but who possessed capital because of their artistic, intellectual or marital prowess.<sup>126</sup> And unlike other hereditary nobilities, the modern rich no sense of collectivity among them, simply their success as individuals. And because of this, there is no way that wealth could be administered responsibly by those in subsequent generations.<sup>127</sup>

According to Lapouge, it was the regime of wealth, the “plutocracy” led to “imbecility” of the intellectual aristocracy and its decline. This decline, in turn, Lapouge contended, supported the “parallel” “Jewish aristocracy.” Lapouge wrote in more detail that the “European race” was “crushed” by this “parallel aristocracy” which desired the concentration of the “political, financial and intellectual forces” of France. Lapouge concluded that “this phenomenon of peaceful conquest was not

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid 346.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. 345

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. 346.

unique to France.” Rather, Lapouge continued it occurred in all countries where “the Aryan element disappears.”<sup>128</sup>

More specifically, Lapouge underscored that because of the omnipresence of wealth there was a complete lack of any talent in any elevation. This was unlike the nobility where selection and social mobility was the result of “les vertus guerrières et l'autorité morale” (war-like virtues and moral authority.) This was because the nobility placed value in the land, with each and every other acquisition “supposait une certaine valeur personnelle.” This was very much contrary to the modern aristocracy, which in no way resembled the ancient one for “To gain fortune, chance is the great auxiliary, and the qualities that must be added to it are not among the highest. It has almost no merit, and so differs in principle from the aristocracies which preceded it”<sup>129</sup>

In his work specifically on the “Aryan,” Lapouge underscored that, “the Jew” was uniquely suited to this regime of “plutocratic wealth.” Lapouge underscored that “As soon as the Jews were liberally delivered to the exercise of their instincts, in a society where economic interests are considered the front line, their major abilities to accumulate capital have designated them as the high barons of the world, the aristocracy of capital.”<sup>130</sup> Lapouge continued that the manner in which “Jews” came to power acquired their wealth underscored the degree to which their property, their selection by society was unique in history. Lapouge noted, “They have seized money by the force of atavistic instincts, and money will doubtless soon give them supreme

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> « pour acquérir la fortune, le hasard est le grand auxiliaire et les qualités qui doivent s'y joindre ne comptent pas parmi les plus relevées. » pg. 346.

<sup>130</sup> de Lapouge, *L'aryen: Son Rôle Social.*, pg. 478.

power, because today it is the only God and only king.”<sup>131</sup> “Capital” becomes the “main engine of the social machine” the main engine of social selection in modern, urban economically driven societies.<sup>132</sup>

In order to explain the decline of “genius” and talent and the rise of a “parallel class,” Lapouge detailed a lengthy account of status emulation and the notion of hereditary genius. Essentially, Lapouge accused Jews in France of preying upon the weaknesses of the elites so that the elites in turn would care about nothing but money. After this discussion, Lapouge points to the bureaucracy and other elements of the modern state, as the causes of the decimation of the “European” race.

Lapouge began by noting what was most damaging was the widespread assumption in France and elsewhere that artists and intellectuals were of an economic class, that they were bourgeois. This was mistaken, according to Lapouge. The aristocracy of wealth, the “mammonists,” “maintain this confusion.”

Moreover, the Jewish “monied classes” considered themselves of the same rank and status as the artists and geniuses of a country. However, this “parasitic” class, detailed Lapouge, pressured the artists and savants to pursue work and to exchange status and fulfillment for nothing other than material gain due to the constant pressure to acquire. This exacerbated the natural tendency of the artistic and intellectual elites in Europe to forsake art to marriage and to forsake intellectual advancement for marriage and for children.

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid, « Ils se sont emparés de l'argent par la force des instincts ataviques, et l'argent leur donnera bientôt sans doute la suprême puissance, parce qu'il est aujourd'hui seul Dieu et seul roi. »

<sup>132</sup> « On comprend d'ailleurs que le capital soit le grand ressort de la machine sociale. » pg. 348

This, according to Lapouge, made artists and savants culturally significant but reproductively insignificant. In the France of the present, Lapouge contended, the “financial aristocracy” with its “mistresses” served as a source of poor emulation for the artists and savants who pursue a dissipated lifestyle which brought about their ruin. For Lapouge this meant the promotion of idleness and of the pursuit of pleasure rather than the development of good familial relationships.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, it was often the case that the “aristocracy of intelligence” was most unstable due to the preponderance of nervous disorders where nervousness and debility threatens to “rise in the most gifted family.”<sup>134</sup>

The heredity of genius, Lapouge admitted, was very unstable and not well understood. Geniuses, according to Lapouge had a tendency, even before the rise of the monied classes and the “Jewish aristocracy,” to forsake reproduction for their art.<sup>135</sup> The disappearance of the “little intellectuals”, moreover, those individuals of merit and distinction who were in the lower social orders by birth or happenstance and who under normal circumstances would ascend the ranks, was also the result of another modern dynamic, the rise of the great cities.

Throughout history, Lapouge observed, cities both attracted and decimated artists. In the Roman era, Greek artists were kept as slaves and succumbed to the decadence of the cities, were their artistic work only benefited their masters. Today, intellectuals and artists are likewise “enslaved” by money.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid. 350

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. 351

<sup>135</sup> Ibid, 351.

For Lapouge, the “destruction” and decimation of the “Aryans” of Europe was exacerbated by the machinery of the modern state: the bureaucracy. Lapouge outlined the degeneracies of the modern state. The bureaucracy was overrun by the “Alpine” race and detrimental to the “European” race.<sup>136</sup> The bureaucracy and the reign of the functionaries had the general effect of siphoning off, much like the “mammonistes,” those elements of French society which were the most intellectually or physically elite. Once inside the bureaucracy, they “vegetate and hardly reproduce.”<sup>137</sup>

Likewise, the professions in modern civilization which were generally sources of beneficial selection, sorting and sifting according to Lapouge according to talent and mobility where in modern France, had with modern capitalism allowed the mediocre, the lovers of wealth and luxury to ascend the ranks of society.

Ideally, Lapouge underscored, professions should be among the most perfect of selectors. These were points which were echoed by Pitrim Sorokin, Alexander Carr-Saunders, and others who will be addressed in this dissertation. Professions, Lapouge underscored, were one of the principal ways social selection operated in a society. Professions did not only require specific physical traits but also differing talents and abilities.<sup>138</sup>

According to Lapouge, historically the “lettered” and literary classes often had longer skulls than the majority of the population. This signaled intelligence and a higher proportion of “European” (as opposed to Alpine) race blood. Likewise, the

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 353-4

<sup>137</sup> Ibid 354.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 355-57.

greater the proportion of “European” to “Alpine” blood, the greater the chances of that individual being a scientist or a savant. And the greater the infusion of European blood, the more likely that the individual was to forsake family for art, adventure or fame.

Lapouge contended moreover that the decimation of the “European” intellectual aristocracy, the true men of talent and of genius was further exacerbated by the cities.<sup>139</sup> This was what Lapouge termed “urban selection,” a subtype of “economic selection.”<sup>140</sup> The next chapter of this dissertation will detail how the anthropologist Franz Boas and others debated the character and extent of urban selection. The next chapter will show too how discussions of urban selection were critical to Boas’ own critique of biology notions of race.

An attention to the discussion of urban selection, as importantly, will not only show the influence of Lapouge’s ideas in the United States, but through doing so will provide a distinctive view of Boas, less as an innovator and much closer to some contemporary anthropological and ethnological ideas about race. Specifically, many of Boas’ ideas concerning the influence of environment on physical characteristics were held by Boas’ contemporaries. Accordingly, I argue that Boas’ discussion and critique of Lapouge was part of a much larger American and European discussion of Lapouge’s urban selection.

According to Lapouge, it was the case that the “European” race was most often of those who migrated to the cities. Individuals from other countries and

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 362.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. 387ff.

localities, such as those in Italy “did not emigrate” “rarely went on adventures.<sup>141</sup>” This was due to the “blood of the Alpine race” being “too dominant.”<sup>142</sup>

It was even the case, Lapouge contended, that if an individual was intermixed with “European” and “Alpine” blood, that the greater the percentage of European blood (which was visible from the length of the skull over that of the average) the more likely an individual was to move from the countryside to the city. The European race was driven by their hereditary character to seek their fortune in the urban environment.<sup>143</sup> As Lapouge explained, “No one wants to be a peasant in France.”<sup>144</sup>

According to Lapouge (and this will be described again in Chapter 3 and 4, which begins the American reception and transmission of these ideas), “anyone with intelligence” sought his life in the big city in business or another sort of affair. It is in the cities, full of functionaries and bureaucrats, luxuries and physical and mental degeneracies, where the alert and intelligent individual of the “European” race finds himself. Once a member of the “European” race enters the city he found himself subject to the most kind of ruthless selection, that of economic selection, where he had to compete for status, fame and power. Under these conditions, according to Lapouge, members of the “European” race declined, falling down through the ranks.

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 366

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, 367.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid 383

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. 387

As a consequence, the most able members of the “European” race were often destroyed, in poverty and on public assistance.<sup>145</sup>

Reflecting on the widespread anxieties concerning birthrate and the decline of population in France, Lapouge underscored, that the increase in the population of the cities was mainly due to migration, rather than the natural increase. Lapouge underscored that all that needed to be remembered was that individuals attracted to the cities, as a consequence of the luxuriousness and decadence of the cities, were “sterilized” in an “irremediable fashion.”<sup>146</sup>

Following others, further discussed in Chapter 3, Lapouge underscored that the civilizational danger of urbanity has been well-known in France and in England since the middle of the 19th century. His only contribution, Lapouge added, was to in some ways systematize it and to add the racial element. Lapouge used the statistics of a number of racial anthropologists, including that of Otto Ammon (whose work is further discussed in Chapter 4), to paint the selective processes of the cities.

For France “there was scarcely a more disturbing question that the use of our intellectual reserves by urbanity.” Furthermore, “the public and those in power do not suspect it.”<sup>147</sup> This was all the more disconcerting for Lapouge as urban and economic selection were “regressive selection which were “plagues.” Nonetheless, these selections were “the greatest danger to Europe and to France in particular” this was the effect of the “plutocracy and luxury” “attracts our last men to the cities.”<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid. 388.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. 391

<sup>147</sup> Ibid 407.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid 407-8.

Urbanism moreover was among the successive selective revolutions unleashed by civilization since Roman times, and because of this France had lost almost all of our “dolicho-blonds” while even the best “mixed” individuals disappear. Urban and economic selection was both the cumulation and the harshest phase of these “regressive” selections. According to Lapouge, the “hour approached” where France and Europe would be nothing but the “moribund debris of nations.” Because of this Lapouge lamented Europe would become, at some point soon would fall “prey to unforeseen conquerors.”<sup>149</sup> Thus, European civilization would disappear in the same manner as other past civilizations as the Greeks and the Romans.<sup>150</sup>

Lapouge has been viewed primarily as a trafficker in “raciology” and as a dyspeptic anti-Semite. This is due to the foundational work of French historians of ideas such as Pierre-André Taguieff, building on the magisterial work of Leon Poliakov.<sup>151</sup> Lapouge, as noted in the introduction and throughout this chapter, is one of the key purveyors of a particularly vicious type of antisemitism. This included detailing the conspiracy of “the Jew” as developing a “parallel aristocracy” which actively replaced the true, intellectual, Aryan aristocracy. Lapouge made “the Jew” the personage of modernity of “luxure” and “wealth.” According to Lapouge, the “mammonists” and the values of modernity, had introduced a selection of wealth, where the most able individuals succeeded in society due to chance and whom constantly tried to ape the values of luxurious modernity, much to their ruin.

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid, 408

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> L. Poliakov, *Histoire De L'antisémitisme* (Calmann-Lévy).

As noted earlier in the chapter, Lapouge fit quite easily within one of the key moments in the development of French history, the uneasy modernization of the French state between the Franco-Prussian War and the First World War, during which time the experiment in republican government and the secularization of the state and of society (leading to the decline of the traditional institutions of French society such as the monopoly of the Catholic Church over not only education but many forms of life) lead for many to the decline of optimism in the future of France.

In particular, one can see how anxieties particularly over the consequences of urbanization and the rising inequality in France and Europe which occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as fin de siècle ostentation negatively influenced Lapouge. Lapouge can easily be placed within the large number of social theorists concerned with decadence.<sup>152</sup> His sociology is part of the long tradition of anti-urbanism and anti-modernism in France and in Europe, his sociology of decline a consistent feature of pronatalism in France, growing in the 20<sup>th</sup> century far beyond the traditional clerical coalitions, situated at the origins of the French welfare state.<sup>153</sup> As importantly, his anti-capitalism and critique of the existing French order resembles in its vehemence many 19<sup>th</sup> century French characters. But unlike many of the European Right, he had no love for the French peasant. His elitism was an adoration of the aristocracy, which has made him a key figure in the *Nouvelle Droite*.<sup>154</sup> His discussion of war as a decimation of elites is part of the frequent talking points of New Right leaders such as Tomislav Sunić, who like Lapouge inveighs against the

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<sup>152</sup> M. Winock, *Décadence Fin De Siècle* (Editions Gallimard).

<sup>153</sup> P.V. Dutton, *Origins of the French Welfare State: The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914–1947* (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>154</sup> *Éléments Pour La Civilisation Européenne* (Société des éditions du labyrinthe).

“decimation of elites” by the Second World War as the cause of Croatia’s pathological politics.<sup>155</sup>

Lapouge’s antisemitism also deserves separate mention. His statements certainly render problematic any distinction between French and German antisemitism, where the latter is somehow less radical. Claude Berger and others have underscored how “the Jew” has functioned in the history of the West as the anti-thesis of cleanliness, whose very presence demands removal, from the standpoint of not only Roman Catholic theology but the political theory of Voltaire in the Enlightenment.<sup>156</sup>

Unlike previous historiographic accounts, Lapouge’s work is re-contextualized not simply as “raciology”<sup>157</sup> nor simply as Aryanism and antisemitism, but as an inquiry into social forces. As such, Lapouge was also one of the first individuals to discuss the character and dynamics of social mobility in the context of social selection. This was done in the context of his long discussion of economic mobility and the selective forces of the city. It was these two elements together: Lapouge’s construction of the “Jew” and his account of social mobility, which defined the radicality of his text.

In part however, it was Lapouge’s critique of what he considered to be the decadence and the luxuriousness of France. Wealth, rather than merit or genius,

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<sup>155</sup> Tomislav Sunić, *Američka Ideologija : Nova Europska Sudbina Ili Putokaz U Novu Katastrofu, Biblioteka Istraživanja* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada).

<sup>156</sup> C. Berger, *Les Siècles Aveugles De La Gauche Perdue: Rome, La Mecque Ou Jérusalem? : De La Mythologie Progressiste, De Ses Fondements Antisémites Au Salarial D'état Et À L'antisionisme* (Safed).

<sup>157</sup> Richard McMahon, *The Races of Europe: Construction of National Identities in the Social Sciences, 1839-1939* (Springer).

became the principle illustration and characteristic of rank and of status. Wealth was the value. Wealth was a way, according for Lapouge, for individuals to ascend the ranks of civilization, to be socially mobile. Wealth was also the signifier of status.

According to Lapouge, the social mobility of individuals of wealth rather than that of talent was one of the principle ways in which civilization was floundering. The promotion and valorization of wealth was even worse (and the succor, according to Lapouge, to a hidden, “parallel” Jewish aristocracy) than the selective influence of the cities, which not only attracted the best of the “Homo Europeanus”, but which also because of competition and luxury decimated the elite elements of the population according to Lapouge.

What is remarkable about the discussion of the next chapter and the following chapters of the dissertation was the degree to which American and European anthropologists ignore Lapouge’s Aryanism and antisemitism, while also debating the scope and contours of Lapouge’s “urban selection” and other aspects of Lapouge sociology.

In chapter four, for example, among American sociologists, Lapouge’s social selection becomes a powerful tool for the analysis of civilization, its progress and decline. Discussions of social selection, moreover, by the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century become so ubiquitous that they are totally unmoored from Lapouge’s own intentions. By 1922 and the writings of Sorokin in his *Social Mobility*, there was no hint of assent to Lapouge’s discussion of racial psychology; indeed, Sorokin goes out of his way to critique Lapouge. This bifurcated reception was emblematic of the

transmission of Lapouge's ideas, and especially his concept of selection social throughout European sociology.

Lapouge did have a limited career in France until about the end of the First World War. Until that time, in French sociology almost no one uncritically engaged with Lapouge's "Aryan" psychology.

In this sense, he founded no school, as no French sociologist took to his account of racial psychology and expanded upon it. All were quite similar to Paul Jacoby, using the work of Lapouge to construct sometimes rather baroque discussions of the intricacies of social evolution. Claude Richet's sociology used social selection to argue for the social evolution from the most primitive man to the most refined and urbane. Richet's discussions of social selection involve the use of the term "social selection" almost thirty times. There is in that discussion, almost thirty analyses of social selection in modern society and in the history of man. There is not one single discussion of Lapouge or of any of his theories. Richet's work thus exemplified the "unmooring" of Lapouge's own specific metaphysics and his term of social selection.<sup>158</sup>

Nothing more represented Lapouge's reception than the bifurcated response as Italian sociologists, who all considered Lapouge "social selection" to be of extreme utility, but whom nonetheless rejected the specifics of Lapouge's "Aryan." The Italian sociologist Enrico de Marinis, simply labelled the Aryan metaphysics of Lapouge "erroneous," observing that it was actually the case that the development of

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<sup>158</sup> See among others P. Jacoby, *Études Sur La Sélection Chez L'hermo* (F. Alcan). P. Jacoby and G. Tarde, *Études Sur La Sélection Chez L'homme* (Alcan). Charles Richet, *La Sélection Humaine* (F. Alcan).

civilization would lead to a “*u migliore condizione organica*” or a “better organic condition.”<sup>159</sup>

De Marinis who was one of the first chairs in sociology in Italy, holding the chair at the University of Naples, complained about Lapouge while attempting to defend the applicability of Darwin’s theory of natural selection to sociology. Marinis underscores that selection does not necessarily exist in the social world. Rather the fact that society does introduce a selective pressure does indeed underscore the existence of relentless innovation in the social world.<sup>160</sup> He goes on to defend that Darwin, particularly when discussing uncivil or “savage” nations, had an idea of intellectual activity and evolution overtaking that of physical and biological development and thus very nearly approaches that of Lapouge and Broca in their account of social selection.

He thus complains that many critics of Darwin have not read the *Origin of Man (L’origine dell’uomo)* and thus do not know that Darwin (and Wallace) to understand Darwin own sense of his theories applicability to the natural world, and of Darwin’s own sense of the key differences of selection in society.<sup>161</sup> According to him, Lapouge made a critical error in his “selections” because he does not understand that “all selection” “implies a final improvement.” Thus, it would be impossible, according to Marinis, to have selection leading to a decline.<sup>162</sup> Marinis continued that it was most likely the case that mankind in the future would progress biologically

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<sup>159</sup> E. de Marinis, *Sistema Di Sociologia (Naturale Concezione Del Mondo Sociale)* (Unione tip.-ed.). pg. 418-9.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 418

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

rather than decline and that it was a mistake for Lapouge to predict the future based on the current organic condition of man, when indeed it would most likely be the case that the biological condition of man has improved in some way, rather than declining.

Indeed, Marinis mocked Lapouge as a kind of Don Quixote figure, whose Aryan psychology “tilted at windmills” (*molini a vento*). While Marinis rejected Lapouge’s Aryanism and his declinism, he nonetheless made Lapouge *selezione sociale* a center-piece of his own sociology, developing an enormous inquiry into what he called “social chronology” (*corologia sociale*) in which he meticulously outlined the distinctions between biological and social forces.

Similarly, the sociologist and criminologist Giuseppe Vadalà Papale (1854-1921) was a jurist and criminologist who was also a university rector as well as an avowed socialist. In his “Natural Darwinism and Social Darwinism: Sketches of a Social Science”<sup>163</sup> attempted to integrate Lapouge’s understanding of social selection within the cosmic order and development of the laws of evolution in nature and in society according to the model proposed by Auguste Comte. This was very much “high church” positivism, whereby everything could be subsumed under the same regime of law. Social selection, consistent with Papale’s socialism and corporatism, would lead to revolution, to the destruction of capital and the alignment of all of society to collectively struggle against nature.

Papale uses Lapouge’s discussion of selection sociale to not only articulate a perfectionistic positivism (which had a long history within Italian sociology, even to

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<sup>163</sup> G. Vadalà-Papale, *Darwinismo Naturale E Darwinismo Sociale: Schizzi Di Scienza Sociale* (E. Loescher).

the present day) but also to note that society due to “social selection” and “social struggle” has become “wonderfully organized” (*meravigliosamente organata*). Interestingly (foreshadowing the emphasis of Italian sociology on associations, corporations and groups) social struggle in its perfection is not manifested in individuals but in the family, the corporations and the state. And individual can struggle and improve, Papale notes, but if institutions are not aligned to carry that struggle with him, then he will fail in that struggle. It is for this reason that institutions must adapt and involve in response to struggle and why institutions carry forward the burden of development.<sup>164</sup>

It is furthermore the “collective social struggle” which has really made strides in the “defense against animals, in the struggle against needs.” Institutions and associations also have the effect of diminishing the selfishness of the individual, while also producing new associations and a new division of labor.<sup>165</sup> Social selection was then very different than natural selection and struggles in nature because according to Papale, while individual struggle divided, social and institutional struggle harmonized. This is the case even though social life is always continually differentiating and harmonizing with the “whole of society”, resulting in a constant configuration and reconfiguration of social forms and new and ever-evolving associations. Social selection and social struggle had as its goal the satisfaction of collective needs. This included for Papale the resolution of inequalities in society, for social and collective selection brought about a continuous improvement. This will not

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid. 444.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. 445

lead to an end of “capital” but a unification of society whereby it becomes entirely aligned in the struggle with nature.<sup>166</sup>

Lastly, Napoleone Colajanni (1847-1921) who began as a rather orthodox Marxist but who transmuted into a supporter of Italian fascism through his own blend of Marxist heterodoxy and the pressures of being one of Italy’s leading public intellectuals, had no patience for Lapouge. He considered Lapouge’s discussion of “urban selection” to be rather banal. While using Lapouge’s discussion of social selection to undergird his account of social evolution, Colajanni nonetheless ruthlessly mocked Lapouge’s racial theory. Lapouge’s own racial theory simply proved his “ingenuity and cultivation.”<sup>167</sup> He accused Lapouge of “pan-Aryan fanaticism” where he was guilty of misrepresenting what were in reality the “strident contradictions” between the psychology of a people and its contributions to history.<sup>168</sup>

The bifurcated account of social selection was a key feature too of Lapouge’s reception in the last chapter of this dissertation, which details the role of the concept of “social selection” in the “Negro Problem.” In this chapter, I outline the nearly fifty-year use of the social selection in the “Negro Problem.” Such a presentation allows for the reception of Lapouge’s “social selection” to be summarized, as the first discussion of the “Negro Problem” in Italy by Gennaro Mondaini explicitly engages and critiqued Lapouge, while also using the term “social selection” to explain the mechanisms behind, among other elements, the eventual “social fusion” of African Americans with whites in the United States.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid. 347

<sup>167</sup> Colajanni. Pg. 22.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Mondaini.

## Chapter 3 : Franz Boas and His Cotemporaries: Social Selection and the Limits of Environment

Franz Boas (1858-1942) was born in Westphalia, training first as a physicist, with some coursework in geography at the University of Kiel. Because of antisemitism in Germany, Boas' found his career prospects limited, and thus immigrated to the United States at the age of twenty-nine, wishing to undertake research in physiology and in psychology. After fieldwork in the Baffin islands, focusing on ethnolinguistics, Boas finally secured a position at Clark University in the United States. In the United States, he moved into studies of physical anthropology and the mechanisms of growth and bodily change during the nineteen teens. He later established himself Columbia University, training a generation of students, including Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, among others. Historians and anthropologists consider Boas' to be the progenitor of "cultural relativism" and one of the premier anthropological exponents of the autonomy of culture and the overcoming of scientific racism.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> This included, *The Methods of Ethnology*, published in 1920, *The Handbook of American Indian Languages*, published in 1922, *Modern Populations of America*, published in 1917 and *Representative Art of Primitive People*.

The work of Boas' students and their prominence in anthropology appears to emphasize this point. Mead (1901-1978) published in 1928 her seminal *Coming of Age in Samoa*, arguing that sexual mores and social practices were unconnected from any evolutionary or biological norms. Similarly, Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* declared that anthropology "is the study of human beings as creatures of society."<sup>171</sup> Both books were anthropological bestsellers, particularly Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*. For the anthropologist Andrew Lessing, "modern anthropology begins with Franz Boas."<sup>172</sup> Modern anthropology began with Boas, Lessing and others have argued, due to Boas' arguments against biological determinism and scientific racism and for the autonomy of culture.

Boas work in anthropology in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, as many historians have previously outlined, was a deeply considered commentary on two elements in existing late 19<sup>th</sup> century ethnology and anthropology. The first was evolutionism, or the idea that each and every culture progressed through specific stages in their growth and development, and that the outward facets of cultural development reflected this account. When anthropologists praise Boas for his development of "cultural relativism" they simply mean that Boas rejected many of the facets of this evolutionary account of culture, which graded primitive peoples according to a normative account of cultural (chiefly material) development. Boas own fine-grained works on material culture, languages and the arts, did not see

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<sup>171</sup> R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Houghton Mifflin), 2005 (reprint edition) pg. 1

<sup>172</sup> In S. Silverman, *Totems and Teachers: Key Figures in the History of Anthropology* (AltaMira Press), 2003, pg. 4.

“primitive” tribes as solely a stage in the development of a higher culture, the apogee of which resembled the material refinement of Victorian England.<sup>173</sup>

As important was Boas’ apparent critique against scientific racism and hierarchical descriptions of races and individuals. As briefly outlined in the context of the work of Paul Broca in the first chapter of this dissertation, one of the key evidences to group peoples and “races” hierarchically was the “cephalic index.” The Swedish anatomist Anders Retzius (1796-1860) had established the initial distinction between brachiocephalic and dichocephalic, “short” and “long-headed” individuals. Though there were, according to 19<sup>th</sup> century anthropologists, short and long-headed Africans, nonetheless “long-headed” “Aryan” was viewed as the “higher” “race” of man.<sup>174</sup> Retzius and others argued that these traits of the length width of the skull were fixed from birth and an essential part of racial lineage. The idea that “long-headedness” and “short-headedness” was a key feature of human anatomy, as well as the idea that peoples were “racial types” was endemic to nineteenth century anthropology. Indeed, such ideas persisted well into the Second World War, which has always proven to be problematic for historians and anthropologists who consider Boas’ work to be the turning point for the refutation of such ideology.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> The most well-known proponent of “evolutionism” in cultural development was E.B. Tylor (1832-1917). Tylor’s *Primitive Culture*, published in 1871, did not use specifically Darwin’s account of evolution as the product of natural selection, but rather accounted for the development of unified cultural growth, rather hewing to a more general form of “evolutionism,” which argued for the growth of culture through competition, similar to, but not the same as biological and natural processes. See E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom* (J. Murray), 1871.

<sup>174</sup> M. Fitzpatrick and P. Monteath, *Savage Worlds: German Encounters Abroad, 1798-1914* (Manchester University Press), 2018

<sup>175</sup> A. Chase, *The Legacy of Malthus: The Social Costs of the New Scientific Racism* (University of Illinois Press), 1980. Chase argues that Boas destroys the “head-form myth.” If so, why then do social scientists like W.E.B Du Bois write (with little comment) that in primeval history there was the “primitive Negro, long-headed and with flattened hair follicle” who “spread along southern Asia and

Boas attracted wide notice from anthropologists during his lifetime for a series of articles, including “Some Criticisms of Anthropology” (1899), “Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants,” published in 1911, and a more general work, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, published in 1912, as well as the other papers and chapters discussed in this dissertation. For historians and anthropologists particularly in the United States, these texts have captured the historiographic imagination as they appear to support Boas’ place as the progenitor of the modern discipline of anthropology in which he critiqued this sort of reductive and racist analysis of human beings and human cultures which defined nineteenth century ethnography. Boas’ “egalitarianism” and his “anti-racist” positions are illustrated by these two texts,<sup>176</sup> where he “began to combat scientific racism,” moreover and to “challenge the structure of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant science.”<sup>177</sup> Lee D. Baker argues that before Boas anthropologists “viewed race and culture as one and the same, arguing that cultural traits were merely race traits and tendencies.” After Boas, according to Baker, anthropologists did not view cultural diversity of a people as the result of “racial” characteristics, the width and breadth of the skull and the color of the skin, but rather as the result of an autonomous development brought about by people themselves.<sup>178</sup>

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passed over into Africa...” W. E. B. Du Bois, Cedric Dover, and Library Cedric Dover, *The Negro, Home University Library of Modern Knowledge ;No. 91* (New York : London: H. Holt ; T. Butterworth)., 1915, pg. 25

<sup>176</sup> E. Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge University Press)., pg. 87 and 88.

<sup>177</sup> Lee D Baker, "The Location of Franz Boas within the African-American Struggle," *Critique of Anthropology* 14, no. 2 ( 1994),

<sup>178</sup> L.D. Baker, *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954* (University of California Press)., 1998, pg. 5

Elazar Barkan contends that “Changes in the Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants” and *Mind of Primitive Man* “undermined the traditional approach to physical anthropology” as it “refuted the very notion of a physical stability which was at the base of any racial theory.”<sup>179</sup> Likewise, Carl Degler underscores that in these texts Boas “pressed so early and so hard against racial explanations.” These texts, according to Degler, represented a fundamental break with the anthropological writings which preceded it.<sup>180</sup> Robert Bernasconi in his introduction to Boas’ writings underscores that in Boas’ writing underscores that “race was minimized.” Bernasconi then notes that Boas “did not deny that race might be a factor” but that Boas “sidesteps” the problem of race.<sup>181</sup> Thus, anthropologists and historians have used Boas’ work to demarcate the boundaries between pre-scientific scientific racism and modern scientific anthropology which have emphasized the distinctiveness of culture and its particularism, from biology. For historians and anthropologists, Boas’ essays on race and physical anthropology as the origin point of the “retreat of scientific racism,” or the definitive turning away of anthropology and the inquiry into human difference from biological determinism to cultural relativism.<sup>182</sup>

Finally, historians and anthropologists have viewed Boas’ anthropology as a critique of “selectionism,” in particular the social selection of Vacher Lapouge.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Barkan., 1992, pg. 83.

<sup>180</sup> C.N. Degler, *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Darwinism in American Social Thought* (Oxford University Press), 1992, pg. 66.

<sup>181</sup> R. Bernasconi and T.L. Lott, *The Idea of Race* (Hackett Publishing Company), 2000, pg. 86

<sup>182</sup> G.W. Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (University of Chicago Press); F. Boas and G.W. Stocking, *A Franz Boas Reader: The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883-1911* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>183</sup> See especially J.M. Marks, *Human Biodiversity: Genes, Race, and History* (Transaction Publishers), 2001,

Lapouge argued, as outlined in the previous chapter, that superior “Aryans” were deleteriously selected against in modern cities. For Lapouge this meant disaster for the future of European and world civilization, as the cities were leading to the decimation of those “superior” elements in society. Lapouge’s account of social selection as outlined by the second chapter, welded an account of racial superiority with an account of selection by social institutions and social dynamics rather than nature.

David Depew and John Jackson have emphasized that Boas’ work in physical anthropology *The Mind of Primitive Man*, as well as other articles marked a decisive turning point in American anthropological practice, amounting to a refutation of racial theory. They note that Boas “went about his work delicately” and were an exemplar of “judiciously sorting knows from unknowns, probabilities from improbabilities, ideas worth pursuing from ideas to be set aside.”<sup>184</sup> Both Depew and Jackson understand that Boas reject the racial theory of the time, but they attempt to minimize it. They note that Boas’ response to selectionist arguments “varied with the sorts of stories told.” Nonetheless, they note that Boas “was unable to rule out some sort of selection” in his study of European immigrants and their children, and here they are the only authors to attempt to grapple with Boas account of social selection.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> J.P. Jackson and D.J. Depew, *Darwinism, Democracy, and Race: American Anthropology and Evolutionary Biology in the Twentieth Century* (Taylor & Francis), 2017, Pg. 51.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 50

Nevertheless, while Boas has been much glossed by his students and by contemporary critics, his work has been subject to little critical, sustained analysis.<sup>186</sup> Indeed, serious students of Boas' work, such as anthropologist Herbert Lewis have complained that no serious synthetic account of Boas' anthropology has emerged because of Boas' "pragmatic avoidance of theoretical analysis" as well as his "philosophy of planless hodgepodge-ism." Furthermore, his work in physical anthropology is defined by a veritable historical lacuna as Lewis himself mounts a wide-ranging defense of the methodological unity of Boas' work, but also neglects his physical anthropology. Thus, while contemporary commentators often discuss Boas physical anthropology in general terms, underscoring its revolutionary character, they do so without subjecting the texts to critical analysis, this leads to a "Whiggish" account of Boas' which focuses on his account of culture while disregarding his writings on race and physical anthropology.<sup>187</sup>

In this dissertation chapter I argue that while historians and anthropologists are correct that Franz Boas argued against laws for the development of culture, they are incorrect concerning Boas' rejection of fixed racial characteristics and of social selection. While Boas' rejected Lapouge's Aryanism and antisemitism, he

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<sup>186</sup> Cole's biography of Boas' glosses over many significant issues in his anthropology, which are clarified in this dissertation chapter. The biography at best is incomplete focusing much on Boas' university life and his time at Kiel. Any significant reappraisal of Boas is hampered by the lack of any significant and sustained historiography. For mostly biographical details concerning Boas' student years, see Cole D. Cole, *Franz Boas: The Early Years, 1859-1906* (Douglas & McIntyre)., 1999. Jerry D. Moore provides another exemplar of such an overview when he writes that Boas' anthropology was "the single most important shaping force in American anthropology in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century." J.D. Moore, *Visions of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists* (AltaMira Press, 2004)., 2004, pg. 33.

<sup>187</sup> HerbertS Lewis et al., "Boas, Darwin, Science, and Anthropology," *Current anthropology* 42, no. 3 (2001)

nonetheless adhered to Lapouge's and those anthropologists' working after Lapouge understanding of social selection as the selection of specific racial "types" by social forces. Thus, this chapter of the dissertation will describe how Boas held many of the same ideas as several other working anthropologists before the Second World War regarding the influence of modern social forces (such as immigration to the city, migration or colonization, marriage practices) on fixed racial types.

As importantly, this chapter will also show that Boas' emphasis on the dynamic between social selection and environment was also widely shared by anthropologists and social theorists at the time, who were all working using a variety of assumptions concerning the nature and power of social selection. When Boas' discusses the influence of environment and of "plasticity" or the malleability of racial characteristics, Boas argued, like many other working anthropologists for the influence of the environment on "types" and the length of the skull.

I argue further that one figure, in particular, was essential Boas' anthropology: the Italian anthropologist Ridolfo Livi. Livi (1856-1920) was chiefly known for his two volume *Antropometria militare* (which appeared in 1896 with a further volume in 1905). This work was the result of morphological and craniometric measurements from over 300,000 military recruits in Italy. Livi gave great weight to the influence of environment, underscoring how for example the stature of agricultural workers was influenced by environment, especially the abundance of food and proper nutrition, while not excluding of social selection.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> R. Livi, *Antropometria Militare: Risultati Ottenuti Dallo Spoglio Dei Fogli Sanitarii Dei Militari Delle Classi 1859-63 Eseguito Dall'ispettorato Di Sanità Militare Per Ordine Del Ministero Della Guerra* (Presso il Giornale medico del Regio Esercito). Pg. 81ff., 1896

Boas approvingly noted Livi's account of selection and of the working of the environment on "types" in multiple publications, including an early 1896 review, before Boas' began to approach the question of selection and the role of the environment in his own writings. Boas' early and sustained engagement with Livi will run throughout the chapter, then moving to key texts in which Boas discusses social selection, from the 1890s to the 1930s. Drawing from Boas' review of Livi's anthropology, *Changes in the Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants*, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, Boas' 1913 article "The Head-forms of Italians as Influenced by Heredity and Environment" his 1916 article entitled "New Evidence Regarding the Instability of Human Types" as well as a later essay Boas wrote on race in 1936, shows a consistent engagement with not only Livi's discussion of social selection and the role of environment. These articles also demonstrate as importantly underscored that Boas worked consistently within a framework which accepted the role of social selection and its power in the modern world.

Thus, while historians and anthropologists have underscored Boas' account of the action of environment, they disregard or minimize his discussion of social selection. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, Boas account of social selection became more nuanced and complex, but this was very similar to other discussions of social selection, as this dissertation demonstrates. Conjoining Boas with Livi and others allows for Boas to be viewed as responding directly to Lapouge, where many anthropologists before the Second World War were arguing the same thesis: that both environmental influences and social selection were important for determining the characteristics of modern, especially modern urban populations.

Thus, Boas and Livi were both representative of the tendency of anthropologists to reject Lapouge's Aryanism but to appropriate Lapouge's theory of selectionism as a significant factor governing the modification of a population, where Lapouge argues that social forces work on fixed racial types. As importantly, by conjoining the work of Boas and Livi, I am not only arguing for the importance of arguments of social selection in the work of both anthropologists, but in arguing that such was Boas' dependence on Livi (and his account of selection and environment) that the work of both men is quite similar. Thus, both Boas and Livi consistently point to the influence of social selection on fixed racial types and the influence of general environmental factors. Lastly, Livi, like Boas rejected Lapouge's Aryanism and his account of the factors behind migration to the cities. Boas rather than directly addressing Lapouge, essentially appropriated Livi's critical account of Lapouge's social selection. It is through Livi that Boas comes to understand social selection and it is through Livi that Boas comes to understand the limits of Lapouge's thesis.

Thus, this chapter will first discuss Boas' discussion of selection and environmental influences, focusing first on his articles written during the 1890s, in which Boas' begins to address the issues surrounding "selection," the fixity of the form of the head, and the role of the environment. If the majority of the chapter concerns how Boas addressed the interplay between selection and environmental factors, the latter part will then address how Boas' account of selection and environment was virtually indistinguishable from that of many of his counterparts.

It is in this context that the work William Ripely, whose 1899 *The Races of Europe* and other writings, scholars often present as the antithesis of Boas'

anthropology, is important. The economist and later ethnologist William Ripley (1867-1941) had varied output being one of the first historians of railroad technology and the modern business, ranging from his first publication *The Financial History of Virginia* (1893),<sup>189</sup> to *Races of Europe* (1899),<sup>190</sup> *Railroads: Finance and Organization* (1920)<sup>191</sup> and his introduction to *Trusts, Pools, and Corporations* (1916)<sup>192</sup> Ripley's own work, whether on the financial institutions of colonial Virginia, the present impact of urbanization on the races of Europe, or the historical development of railroads, pools, trusts, and corporations, was chiefly concerned with describing the forces at work in the evolution of human beings, whether racial, climactic, technological, or institutional.

Opposing even the most recent scholarship on Ripley,<sup>193</sup> I underscore through a careful attention to Ripley's arguments concerning the nature of selection that Ripley's discussions of selection and his critique of Lapouge was close to Boas', though not perfectly aligned. Ripley's *Races of Europe* will also be considered alongside his many articles throughout the chapter. Thus, this dissertation aims to be not only to elucidate the work of Boas' but those of some of his contemporaries and to underscore the ubiquity of the types of argument of concerning selection and environment during Boas' early career.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> William Z. Ripley, *The Financial History of Virginia* (Columbia, 1893,)

<sup>190</sup> *Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (D. Appleton and Company, 1899)

<sup>191</sup> Ripley, *Railroads: Finance and Organization* (Longmans, Green, 1920)

<sup>192</sup> William Ripley, editor, *Trusts, Pools, and Corporations*, (Ginn and Co., 1916)

<sup>193</sup> Richard McMahon, *The Races of Europe: Construction of National Identities in the Social Sciences, 1839-1939* (Springer). (2016)

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.* Livi.

Although Ridolfo Livi's work is obscure today, in the closing years of the nineteenth century and before the Second World War, his work was widely reviewed and quoted, where ethnologists and anthropologists viewed his work as a devastating assessment of the "Aryanism" of Lapouge. Here to reiterate, Livi's objection was not on the force and power of social selection, but like Boas, Livi objected to Lapouge's account of urbanity as stripping the countryside of its "best" elements.<sup>195</sup>

In the first volume of his *Antropometria militare*, while acknowledging that the work of Lapouge has some statistical basis, he nonetheless concluded that "centri urbani di ogni parte d'Italia tende continuamente ad assomigliarsi, a quasi a livellarsi a un tipo comune corrispondente press'a poco alla media generale delle popolazioni italiane" or "of the urban centers of every part of Italy tends continually to resemble each other, to almost level itself off to a common type corresponding almost to the general average of the Italian populations."<sup>196</sup> This was contrary to the arguments of Lapouge, who underscored that cities were predominately "short-headed" because cities eliminated through adverse selection the best "Aryan" elements. Livi continues that his results "did not confirm" to the work of Lapouge, who argued that "Aryans" "will flow" (*affluiscono*) to the cities.<sup>197</sup> He noted again that "Dolicocefali e

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<sup>195</sup><sup>195</sup> M Muffang, *La Distribuzione Geografica Dei Caratteri Antropologici in Italia. Rivista Italiana Di Sociologia. T. li* (JSTOR)., 1898, here Muffang approvingly notes that Livi underscores the untenability of Lapouge's thesis that cities drive "long-headed" Aryans from the countryside and into the cities. Muffang underscores as well that Livi is correct in disproving Lapouge's thesis that "Aryans" always composed the best elements of any population. Though Livi was a known critic of Lapouge, William Ripley, much like Boas, greatly praised Livi's work noting that his "military anthropology" "forms a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the anthropology of Europe." Livi's work, as importantly, refutes Lapouge and offers "in our view the true explanation" for the differences between urban and rural populations. See WZ Ripley, "Ethnic Influences in Vital Statistics," *Publications of the American Statistical Association* 5, no. 33 (1896), pg. 38.

<sup>196</sup> Livi. , 1896, pg. 91

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., pg. 92.

brachicefali sembrano in Italia egualmente attratti a i centri urbani” or “Dolicocephalic and brachycephalic seem in Italy equally attracted to urban centers.”<sup>198</sup> It was Livi’s discussion of “types” and the ethnic population of Italy which attracted the most attention, as it refuted the work of Lapouge. Livi nonetheless discussed social selection a great deal and held to the permanence of types, in most cases in Italy and elsewhere in the world, ideas that no anthropologist, including Boas, challenged.

Livi like Boas was not a total environmentalist, he did believe that individuals possessed certain racial characteristics, such as eye and hair-color as well as the width and length of the skull. He underscored that particularly in terms of stature “short” parents often gave birth to short offspring, no matter what the environment.<sup>199</sup> These hereditary differences persisted over generations and through “differing social states” (*varii stati sociali*.)<sup>200</sup> And, like Boas, though taking a dim view of Lapouge nonetheless (like many described in this dissertation) considered social selection an active force in history.

Livi argued that Italy was marked by various concentrations of “short” and “long-headed” individuals. For Livi one of the major questions, particularly in the case of Italian history, was the degree to which ancient invasions and migrations were significant. For Livi, the key question was whether in ancient history, populations invaded Italy and then settled successfully, having characteristics which predisposed them for social and material success. According to Livi, for the ancient Italians, it

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. 80

<sup>200</sup> Ibid, 81.

was a question of whether there was an avid process of social selection between migrants and already existing social institutions where various individuals “aveva attitudini e qualità fisiche che gli permettevano di prosperare e di riprodursi nella nuova patria” (“had the aptitudes and physical qualities which allowed him to prosper and to reproduce in his new homeland”) or the conquering people becomes “materially extinct” (*materialmente estinto*) Thus, modern Italy was the result of more historical forces of social selection, which are playing out in areas in the present where “indigenous races” (*razza indigene*) in some areas are slowly disappearing, little by little, “a poco a poco scomparendo.”

However, in other regions such as Java as well as some other colonies, the social institutions and the general environment, according to Livi, was leading to a failure of “acclimatization” and adaptation to existing social institutions. However, Livi hinted that there were situations in which the social and environmental conditions would materially change individuals. In such areas where there were extreme environments such would be the action of social selection where “differirebbero assai per i loro caratteri fisici dalla popolazione originaria” (where eventually they would differ greatly from the physical characteristics of the original population).<sup>201</sup> Looking at the whole sweep of human history, Livi was unsure whether at all times and at all places there were always mechanisms of selection occurring. Thus, any account of the “physical history of the Italians” must draw from

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid, pg. 130-1.

its evidences not only ethnological evidences but also “be enlightened by (attingere lume) various sciences, including history, archeology, and linguistics.”<sup>202</sup>

Livi also spent a great deal of time discussing various forms of selection and the role of environment in the professions. He underscored that among bakers for example, there was a great difference to the average in the weight of the arms due to the musculature and the benefits of exercise. Bakers, according to Livi, benefited immensely from “nutrition” “thanks to the craft itself” (*in grazia del mestiere stesso*).<sup>203</sup> Nonetheless, he also assumed that bakers had specific physical characteristics which were not necessarily the consequence of environment. He noted that, all professions underwent a process of social selection, in which social and behaviors acted on certain physical and mental features, such as dexterity, strength or intelligence, while there was also considerable modification by environment. In this regard, Livi concluded, based on his measurements that the two largest groups, based upon weight and height were butchers and students. Both groups were heavier and larger because as was especially the case with butchers, the selection of the profession, only allowed those butchers whom were “robust” to be successful. As important was the manual labor of the butcher, which lead to changes in his bodily form through increase exercise.<sup>204</sup>

Lastly, Livi underscored that the selective influences of conflicts and wars were intense and varied. According to him, statistically, both marriage and reproduction decreased, though it was difficult to make further conclusions because

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Livi. Pg. 80

<sup>204</sup> Ibid, 57

the consequences of wars were “of a complex and diverse nature” (*sono complesse e di diversa natura.*) War was deleterious not (as Lapouge argued) that wars eliminated the “fittest,” but rather the stresses and anxieties affected the fertility of women and the gestation of the unborn, leading to less healthy offspring.<sup>205</sup> However, if the campaign was particularly long the selection of the soldier population because of the various nature of the diseases, would be beneficial.<sup>206</sup>

Boas gave Livi’s work a glowing review in the pages of *Science* in 1896, commenting how well Livi had dispensed with conceit of Lapouge that cities draw forth “Aryan” individuals from the countryside and then “select” against them. It is deeply significant that Boas first foray into the permeance of type and of the factors, whether hereditary or environment, responsible for the shape and form of the head, was in his review of Livi’s work.<sup>207</sup>

Writing in *Science*, Boas gleefully underscored that Livi had disproved the idea of Lapouge’s that the inhabitants of the countryside were “more dichoccephalic” than those of the urban areas, meaning that these individuals were more “Aryan.”<sup>208</sup> Boas noted approvingly that Livi had demonstrated that instead individuals who inhabited the towns were closer to the average of the population, where Lapouge’s doctrine predicted that inhabitants of towns would be less long and wide and

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<sup>205</sup> “la miseria prodotta nella popolazione generale, direttamente o indirettamente, dalla guerra, non possono non influire sulla gestazione e contribuire a rendere ancora più deboli i frutti della concezione” or “the misery produced in the general population, directly or indirectly, by war, cannot but influence the gestation and contribute to making the fruits of the conception even weaker.”

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.* 90

<sup>207</sup> Franz Boas, *Antropometria Militare* (JSTOR), 1896 and Franz Boas and Helene M Boas, “The Head-Forms of the Italians as Influenced by Heredity and Environment,” *American anthropologist* 15, no. 2 (1913)

<sup>208</sup> Boas. 1896, 930

“brachiocephalic.” Lapouge was arguing that For Livi and Boas this meant that, “is that the town population are more mixed than the country population,” demonstrating that there was a great deal of intermarriage in the towns, rather than the “elimination” of “Aryan” elements as Lapouge would predict. Boas underscored that Livi’s work demonstrated the interplay between selection and environmental elements in which he underscored height and body weight were the result of the interplay of selection and environment. While Livi understood height to be determined by hereditary factors, Boas nonetheless observed that Livi undertook a “detailed investigation of the influence of the altitude of habitat. . . .” Livi demonstrated “that stature decreases quite considerably in mountainous districts” which was the result of “unfavorable social conditions”<sup>209</sup>

Boas ended the review by underscoring his approval of Livi’s discussion of social selection and of the ancient migrations of Italians into the peninsula. Boas noted as well that Livi’s discussion of the distribution of types in Italy through social selection, especially migration and colonization, was achieved with “remarkable accuracy,” with Boas praising especially Livi’s discussion of the “the occurrence of a tall dolichocephalic type near Lucca, and the peculiarities of the type inhabiting Carloforte as compared to the rest of the inhabitants of Sardinia.”<sup>210</sup> Going forward, Boas’ discussion of “type” and other racial characteristics, of social selection, and of the influence of the environment all greatly mirrored that of Livi.

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid

<sup>210</sup> Boas.

For example, in Boas' often discussed "critique" of race and of physical anthropology, written in 1899, Boas underscored that racial types and racial features did indeed exist and were often of permanence. He underscored in 1899 to those objecting that peoples did not possess specific and definable characteristics, "I do not hesitate to say that, provided we had satisfactory statistics of the distribution of human forms over the whole globe, an exhaustive description of the physical characteristics of any group of individuals belonging to one locality would enable us to identify the same without any difficulty." Writing further, "*The critics of the method of physical anthropology will of course concede that a negro child must be a negro, and that an Indian child must be an Indian,*" and while environment did bring about some modifications "it does not seem likely that it can bring about an entire change of form" (italics mine.)<sup>211</sup> For Boas there were limitations to the influence of environment, where the influence of environment could be seen among some tribes where there were different "types" and physical forms though they "inhabit the same area and live under identical conditions."

Boas even defended the use of the cephalic index underscoring that the cephalic index and of making judgement based upon the width and length of the head. While it would be improper for anthropologists to "subordinate" all other evidence to the cephalic index, such evidences were nonetheless useful for anthropologist, especially with certain studies. Boas continued, "The proportion of length and breadth of head may be a very desirable measurement..." The great value of the

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<sup>211</sup> Franz Boas, "Some Recent Criticisms of Physical Anthropology," *American anthropologist* 1, no. 1 (1899) pg. 102 and 103.

cephalic index was in its ability to objectively describe the “a comprehensive description of the varieties contained in a geographic or social group.”<sup>212</sup> In this context, Livi’s measurements were singled out specifically, as Livi, though a series of measurements traced out for the whole of Italy, the terrain of “long-headed” and “short-headed” individuals. Boas noted approvingly that Livi, “where he has proved that in regions where longheaded forms prevail in the country, in the city the population is more short-headed; while in regions in the country in which short-headed forms prevail, in the city the population is more long-headed.”<sup>213</sup>

This is not to say that Boas did not discuss social selection in ways exactly similarly to that of Livi, who focused on migration and colonization. In an early discussion of immigrants and their influence on the physical characteristics of populations, “Race Problems in America” before his 1911 *Changes in the Bodily form of Immigrants*, he underscored that there were two forces at work in immigrant population and the journey from Europe to the United States: social selection and environment. Here in particular, Boas discussed the social forces surrounding marriage and marriage as a mechanism of social selection.

Nonetheless Boas considered the external social environment to be of great importance regarding the development of not only immigrants but also their children. It was clear that the children of immigrants who had come to America were significantly healthier, increased in stature as well as weight.<sup>214</sup> However many physical phenomena were the direct result of social selection, where “intermixing” of

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid, pg. 104

<sup>213</sup> Boas, "Some Recent Criticisms of Physical Anthropology." Pg. 102

<sup>214</sup> Franz Boas, "Race Problems in America," *Science* 29, no. 752 (1909), pg. 843

immigrant populations was the result of mores and rules governing marriage and fertility. Boas remarked that one of the most essential features of “race mixture” was the social selection surrounding fertility. He underscored that the social determinants of fertility among recent immigrants had “declined with great rapidity” were a key question would be the differences in fertility among immigrant “types.”

In the United States, Boas mused if an immigrant “type” was fertile, because of the lower death rate in the United States “we may anticipate a gradual increase of the physical influence of the more fertile type” where as important a question is to what degree intermarriage was favorably socially selected among immigrants. Married men from Italy often bring their children and families with them after they arrive, while the urban environment of the cities separate various nationalities “in various quarters.”<sup>215</sup> Marriage, moreover, becomes purely social with the “mixture” of various “types” becoming significantly different from Europe as immigrants loose more and more a sense of their own lineage where “most social traces of their descent have disappeared, and that many do not even know to what nationalities their grandparents belong.”<sup>216</sup> The intermixing between fixed “types” in the United States would be far different because of the new environment, a totally new process in contrast to how it would occur if allowed to take place at random. Boas concluded “it is obvious that intermixture, as soon as the social barriers have been removed, must be exceedingly rapid” as America had fewer barriers than Europe.

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 846

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*

Nonetheless, the influence of Livi is clear. In his 1911 *Changes in the Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants*, Boas again addressed the question of the role of the environment and the role of social selection in the apparent modifications of individuals who lived in the United States, especially to explain the differences between immigrant parents and their children. He explained the problem clearly, he wished to account for whether “American environment had a favorable or unfavorable effect upon the descendants of immigrants.”<sup>217</sup> Although Boas, clearly considered environment to be a considerable factor, he nonetheless argued that forces of social selection were important. He argued, drawing from Livi, that “that the changes that have been observed in the transition to Europeans to the environment of New York must be considered as analogous to those that the European rural population undergoes when it moves from the country to the city.”

The city then selected various “types” of individuals, allowing some to prosper and some not. Livi’s work proved the social selection wrought by the cities “is of considerable importance in the development of differences between urban and rural population” in the United States. Boas underscored that it appeared as though the same process of selection due to the conditions of the cities was occurring in Europe and in the United States where in Europe and America there were great modifications of, according to Boas, the “Hebrew type.”<sup>218</sup> And because of the force of social selection of the cities the changes among Scots immigrants are explicable though they are slight “most of those measured having been city dwellers and skilled tradesmen in Scotland, and continuing the same life and occupation here.”<sup>219</sup> In America and Europe, Boas reiterated “long-headed” individuals from the countryside

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<sup>217</sup> Franz Boas, "Changes in the Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants," *American anthropologist* 14, no. 3 (1911), pg. 2

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 75

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*

and from Europe to American cities were “factor(s)...of considerable importance in the development of differences between urban and rural populations.”<sup>220</sup>

In the *Mind of Primitive Man*, especially, the role of environment was emphasized, as one of the many factors which lead to the changes in American born individuals, in comparison to their parents. He underscored that what was of particular importance was the “phenomenon of growth.”<sup>221</sup> As important were social factors, such as the size of the family, where many of the characteristics associated with an “Aryan” or “blonde,” such as increased height, were the result of smaller family size or social and economic dislocations, such as the Panic of 1893, which decidedly influenced standard of living, wages and nutrition.<sup>222</sup> Nonetheless, in explaining the specific features of American populations, Boas noted that social selection, of a differing type than that experienced in the cities, was also extreme. This was the case since, according to Boas, during periods of colonization where “the settling of the West by the most vigorous members of our Eastern population, and in the complementary weeding-out of strong elements in some parts of New England.”<sup>223</sup>

Boas was keen to underscore that environment was not totalizing. He agreed in *Mind of Primitive Man*, that the observation of “selectionists” are “in accord with those on our American city-born central Europeans...”He continued, “as we do not know the causes of the observed changes, we must speak of plasticity...of types,

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<sup>220</sup> United States. Immigration Commission and W.P. Dillingham, *Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants* (U.S. Government Printing Office). Pg. 74.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid, pg. 78.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid, pg. 79.

<sup>223</sup> F. Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man: A Course of Lectures Delivered before the Lowell Institute, Boston, Mass., and the National University of Mexico, 1910-1911* (Macmillan). Pg. 52

including in the term changes brought about by any cause whatever- by selection, by changes of prenatal or postnatal growth....”<sup>224</sup> He concluded that “It would be saying too much to claim that all the distinct European types become the same in America....solely by the action of the new environment.”<sup>225</sup> Boas continued that the “approach to a uniform type cannot be established” because of the inability to describe the exact manner of the changes, nor their final result. Plasticity is not “unlimited.” The history of “the British types in America, of the Dutch in the East Indies, of the Spaniards in South America, favors the assumption of a strictly limited plasticity” and of the action of social selection.<sup>226</sup>

However, even in his account of environment and its influence, which Boas has been justly praised for, is more or less borrowed from the work of Livi. Boas details that in the case of Italian immigrants (using data derived from Livi’s work) they are the “Mediterranean type” with an “elongated head, dark complexion and hair.” The influence of the environment was such that Italian children of immigrants “the face decreases very much in width.”<sup>227</sup> Summing up his arguments concerning selection, Boas underscored that first there was some stability of “types” and of races, but it was less than total due to the changes in environment between the Old and New worlds. Much the same was argued again when Boas argued in a 1913 paper, “The Head Forms of Italians as Influenced by Heredity and Environment” glossing the work of Livi on the Italian peninsula that both selection and direct modification by environment must be competing factors. He noted that in Italy there was both a “great

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<sup>224</sup> *Ibid*, 557

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 63

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 64

<sup>227</sup> Boas., pg. 52

stability of types” and “the occurrence of several distinct types in the same area and in the same environment.”<sup>228</sup>

Boas would return to the same themes again in a 1916 article entitled, “New Evidence in Regard to the Instability of Types” in which he argued that through a combination of social selection and environment “East European types are more elongated, and those of the descendants of South Europeans more rounded” than their immigrant parents. Citing Livi, Boas underscored that “Growth depends upon nutrition, upon pathological conditions during childhood, and upon many other causes, all of which have an effect upon the bulk of the body of the adult.”<sup>229</sup> Boas took Livi’s data about the “head-forms” of Italians, found that there was more variation than social selection and the dynamics of the cities would predict, and argued that direct environmental effects were the cause. He noted, “I found throughout that the variability of head-form in each city is smaller than would be found in a population in which all the constituent genetic types were present without physiological modification.”<sup>230</sup>

This meant for Boas that, like Livi, in Italy there were processes of selection and processes of modification by environment. Selection, Boas underscored again, was not the sole mechanism which defined the racial make-up of Italy. There was “the direct influence of city life on the cephalic type.” By this Boas meant the kind of environmental influence described by Livi.<sup>231</sup> However, for Boas selection, of the

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<sup>228</sup> Boas and Boas., pg. 163

<sup>229</sup> Franz Boas, "New Evidence in Regard to the Instability of Human Types," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 2, no. 12 (1916), pg. 715

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 716

<sup>231</sup> Boas and Boas., pg. 188.

kind Livi and even Lapouge described, was possible because, such was the complexities of variables and the degree of change in the form of the head and in the stature of individuals could very well be a combination of modification and selection of certain individuals and groups by the environment of the city.

Social selection was also extreme in the mountainous regions of Italy, where due to “religious persecution” individuals flee into the mountains in order to escape persecution. This introduced new forces of social selection, where individuals of certain “types” were introduced into an area quite suddenly. This combined with environmental effects, made the inhabitants of mountainous areas quite distinct from the surrounding countryside- a consequence of selective pressures on existing types and the local influence of the environment.<sup>232</sup>

Boas again discussed the influence of social selection in an essay published as “Modern Populations of America.” He noted that “In the United States we find side by side families of English, Irish, French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Italian descent, each of which represents the type of the locality from which it comes.” Thus, again there was a fixity of type. However, again Boas underscored that the United States and the social environment of the United States introduced specific conditions of selection which were distinct from Europe.

American populations were “much more diverse than Europe.” This diversity had specific “biological consequences,” among them being “that under American geographical and social conditions the width of the face decreases, and the

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

head- form undergoes certain slight changes.”<sup>233</sup> The reasons for this change according to Boas were far from clear. One of the mechanisms could be selection, where specific “types” did not prosper due to social conditions, while some of the change could be traced to the direct influence of the environment itself.<sup>234</sup> Boas concluded that although environment was important, particularly environmental factors which were the result of “social heterogeneity,” there was nonetheless a “direct relation between bodily form...and selective process.” It was quite obvious that “the settlement of the new western countries” required “a certain bodily and mental vigor which was necessary to enable a person to undertake the venture.”<sup>235</sup>

Boas considered the last and most important form of selection in the United States to be occurring with the “negro race.” He considered social selection to be distinct and a specific process with the “negro race” in the United States because of the particular features of the “negro race.” Selection was to operate differently on African Americans because there were, according to Boas “anatomical differences are so great that corresponding mental differences are plausible.” The “negro race” was distinct from the “European race” which was a “unity.” The “negro race” possessed “slightly inferior size”... and perhaps “lesser complexity of structure, of his brain.” The lesser degree of “vitality” of the “mulatto” may indeed be due to social pressures and adverse social selection than to any biological quality. Most importantly, however, “the number of full- bloods will rapidly decrease” “because of social selection and “increasing mobility” of African Americans.

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<sup>233</sup> F. Boas, *Modern Population of America.*, published 1917, pg. 574

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 575.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 39

Anticipating some of the arguments of Gunnar Myrdal in Chapter 7 of this dissertation, Boas remarked that “it is quite obvious, that, although our laws may retard the influx of white blood considerably, they cannot hinder the gradual progress of intermixture.” This was the case since even the caste-system of India “has not been able to prevent intermixture.” It was a very different case in the United State where “which recognize a greater amount of individual liberty.” That mores existed which did not exclude intermarriage was discernible, Boas underscored, by the “the size of our mulatto population.”<sup>236</sup>

Well into the 1930s, Boas continued to affirm the same dynamic between selection and environment. Boas understood several types of social selection, the most important being cities working to “select” certain fixed types with specific characteristics. However, Boas was as keen to discuss how colonization, religious persecution and other social factors favored other “types” over others. In one of his last major statements on race continued to discuss selection in terms which are consistent with his pre-war publications (even before the First World War.)

As with his “Modern Population of America” Boas in “Race and Progress” began underscoring the differences between African Americans and whites in the United States. He noted, “Whites are a race...set off clearly from the Negroes with their dark skin, fuzzy hair and flat nose.” He continues, “In regard to these traits the two races are fundamentally distinct.”<sup>237</sup> Regarding the stability of these features in reference to environment, Boas observed that “it is also necessary to remember that in

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid, pg. 848-849

<sup>237</sup> Franz Boas, *Race, Language and Culture* (New York,: The Macmillan company, 1940)., pg. 4

varying environment human forms are not absolutely stable, and many of the anatomic traits of the body are subject to a limited amount of change according to climate and conditions of life.” For example, paraphrasing Livi, “proportions of the body change with occupation.”<sup>238</sup>

Nonetheless, Boas underscores “selective processes are also at work in changing the character of a population.” “Differential birth-rate, mortality and migration may bring about changes in the hereditary composition of a group.”<sup>239</sup> Considering such factors such as intelligence Boas found that “Negroes who had lived in the city for more than six years were far superior than those who had just moved to the city.” The differences were attributable to the distinction in the “cultural background” between urban and rural districts, where the intellectual environment was so dissimilar.<sup>240</sup>

Finally, in his chapter commissioned on “Race” for *General Anthropology* written with student Ruth Benedict, Boas underscored that “selection” including social selection was an essential factor in the modification of any population over time in concert with environmental influence. Most notably in this latest iteration, Boas’ formulation on social selection has become somewhat more precise. He underscores, “Changes in environment due to migration or to other causes may become an important factor in eliminating or at least decreasing the frequency of certain genetic lines at the expense of others.”<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid, pg. 7

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, pg. 8.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, pg. 12

<sup>241</sup> Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, *General Anthropology* (DC Heath Boston)., 1938, pg. 20

This chapter underscored that Boas not only had a strong interest in discussions of selection as he underscored that social forces acting on fixed racial types, as well as other forms of social selection, were responsible for the modifications found in a population. As importantly, however, I underscored that Boas not only considered environment to be significant, but also argued in addition that selection was a cause of the bodily characteristics of migrants and of the differences between urban and rural populations in both America and Europe. Thus, Boas firmly believed in distinctions between “types.” He underscored moreover that even though he preferred a large role for the environment, he cautioned that the changes in stature and in head form between parents and their American born children could be the result of any number of factors, including selection.

Boas was thus in many ways an anthropologist of his time. He promoted discussions of the plasticity of “type” due to environment, but also was able to entertain the action of “selection” or the “elimination” of one “type” or group in order to explain the observed changes. Boas nonetheless admitted that the “plasticity” of “types,” the centerpiece of his lauded theory by anthropologists could be “brought about by any cause whatsoever.” He did not necessarily think that any modification in type could be settled either in reference to selection or to environment, it was most likely a combination of both. Such discussions underscored moreover the degree to which Boas’ insight was not his alone, but like discussions of selection generally, ubiquitous.

Thus, William Ripley in his *Races of Europe* (1899) declared early on that “A distinction must be made...between the social and the physical environment,” since

together these things make up the all-important *milieu*. Thus, “Nature sets the life lines for the savage in climate; she determines his movements, stimulates or restrains his advance in culture by providing or withholding the materials necessary for such advance. The science of primitive ethnology is a constant illustration of this fact even in the smallest details.”<sup>242</sup> For Ripley, in contrast to the savage in the thrall of nature, there could be no better example of how human beings became more firmly entwined by their civilization and how the built social environment affected the future social evolution of man than understanding the perils of industrialization.

Ripley noted with the coming of industrialization, the work of previous millennia, where races and social classes remained fixed and caste-like, was being undone. Such matters were of critical importance since the American people was too being affected by the rising tide of urbanization. He described the process of “urban selection” going on in cities as outlined by Lapouge and his school.

According to Ripley, the horror of city life was then that it tended to degrade individuals, particularly physically, and that such degradation was hereditary. The city was the cruelest selector, as the vast majority were the “grist,” including the energetic Teutons. Only the chosen few could climb the social ladder. Those less successful individuals migrated in the city towards the Eastern areas, the Bowery, while those most successful, established themselves on West End. For Lapouge,

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<sup>242</sup> William Z. Ripley, *The Races of Europe*, 10

Ripley noted, this meant a permanent decline in the racial stock of Europe and the decline of civilization.<sup>243</sup>

Nonetheless, Ripley's pessimism was motivated by, much like Boas, an acceptance towards pluralism in his explanation of the characteristics of migrants to cities and the characteristics of urban denizens that "type" could not explain all social phenomenon. Ripley concluded (and this deserves to be quoted in full):

From the preceding formidable array of testimony it appears that the tendency of urban populations is certainly not toward the pure blond, long-headed, and tall Teutonic type. The phenomenon of urban selection is something *more complex than a mere migration of a single racial element in the population toward the cities*. The physical characteristics of townsmen are too contradictory for ethnic explanations alone. A process of physiological and social rather than of ethnic selection seems to be at work in addition. To be sure, the tendencies are slight; we are not even certain of their universal existence at all. . . . Naturalists have always turned to the environment for the final solution of many of the great problems of nature. In this case we have to do with one of the most sudden and radical changes of environment known to man. Every condition of city life, mental as well as physical, is at the polar extreme from those which prevail in the country. To deny that great

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid, 649.

modifications in human structure and functions may be affected by a change from one to the other is to gainsay all the facts of natural history.<sup>244</sup>

For all of Ripley's pessimism (which has attracted the attention of historians and critics of early anthropology), Ripley's position, in 1900, was quite close to Boas'. Ripley underscored modifications found in population over time were the result of the death of individuals due to novel social conditions. This was "social selection" in its purest form. Like Boas', Ripley did think that indeed there were "types," but that the "selection" of types by the social and environmental forces of the city was more than the "selection" of one type over another by the particular social environment. And much like Boas, Ripley underscored that social selection was one factor, with environment also causing a great deal of changes to individuals over time.

Historians have viewed Franz Boas as detailed in the first pages of this chapter as part of the origins of modern anthropology. Boas as I have detailed not only held conventional, period understandings of "types" but considered African Americans in particular to be subject to specific forms of social selection because of their inferiority.

Boas throughout his work not only conformed to many fixed ideas about specific races, but underscored that social forces acted specifically upon specific races, especially in the case of migration or of colonization, producing pronounced social selection. Boas underscored that social selection worked in consort with the influence of the environment to produce modifications upon "types" but that in many

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid, 559

cases, what mattered for Boas was the process of social selection. This was, as my closing discussion of Ripley illustrates, a framework (emphasizing social selection and environment) was consistently used by other anthropologists. Thus, in periods of great social stress, according to Ripley and Boas, social forces eliminated or diminished specific “types” and allowed others to prosper. This was selection by society. Boas especially underscored that environment and selection worked in concert, and that environment did indeed modify “types.” Nonetheless, if Boas was keen to restrict the workings of social selection he was as keen to underscore that in many cases, modification by environment did not apply and that the features of a population were the result of selection by society.

My discussion of Ridolfo Livi not only underlines the degree to which Boas consistently praised and drew from his work, but the degree to which Boas and Livi’s account of social selection, especially the social selection which occurs during migration to the cities, was virtually identical. As importantly, it is clear that Boas’ discussion of how environment could act upon a “fixed type” also drew from Livi’s discussion of the modifications of the environment on professions. Thus, when Boas discusses social selection, he also often times used Livi’s discussion of social selection (as well as his evidence) as a model, especially when discussing migration to the cities.

Boas thus appears in this chapter as much less of an innovator and much more as a consequence of his times. When he argues that “types” can be modified by the direct influence of the environment, as in his work on immigrants or in his *Mind of Primitive Man*, he argues such in a context were many other anthropologists, such as

Livi and Ripley, argue much the same. As importantly, Boas' dependence on Livi for both his account of selection and his account of modification through environmental influences, evidenced by Boas' continual drawing from Livi's evidence points to an anthropologist deeply immersed in the work of his time, but who departed in no substantial way from it. Most illustrative was Boas' discussion of African Americans, where Boas' not only argued that they were inferior, but that they conformed to a specific "type" which was distinct from the European "type." If all evidence concerning Boas' discussion of social selection and his approval of Livi was excluded, Boas' discussion of African Americans should give historians who place Boas at the beginning of modern anthropology pause.

## Chapter 4: Social Selection and the Founding Generation of American Sociologists: Social Control, Competition and Civilization

The previous chapter detailed the deep engagement by both Franz Boas and William Ripley with the work of Lapouge and the centrality of the concept of “social selection” to Boas’ critique of what historians and anthropologists have since called “racial essentialism.” The previous chapter also argued that Boas’ anthropology on the nature of bodily changes between immigrants and their descendants was first, indebted to the work of Ridolfo Livi, and second, quite similar to other critiques of Lapouge by the sociologist William Ripley. Accordingly, I argue that a close attention to the problem of “selection” in the work of Boas and other authors underscores not only the centrality of Lapouge, but also that Boas’ was one of many social scientists examining the role of the environment and engaging with Lapouge’s work. Chapter 3 detailed the critique of Lapouge and of his account of in particular urban selection by anthropologists and ethnologists, particularly in the United States and in Italy.

This chapter continues the deep engagement with the writings of Lapouge and in particular the concept of “social selection” by what many historians, including Dorothy Ross and Robert Bannister consider to be the “founding generation” of American social scientists, writing before the First World War. This chapter of the dissertation will focus on three figures: William G. Sumner, Edward Ross, and Charles H. Colley.

My discussion of social selection among these figures seeks to reinterpret a swath of sociologists who have a very developed historiography. The most central

contention among historians is the importance of the work of sociologist Herbert Spencer to American sociology before the Second World War. Herbert Spencer continues to be viewed as one of the principle promoters of “social Darwinism” an ideology which argues for the transference of the ethics of nature to that of society. Spencer, historians have noted, “was anxious to see the law of the survival of the fittest and of natural selection adopted in society.”<sup>245</sup> It was Herbert Spencer, James Allen Rodgers reminds us, who first used the term “survival of the fittest” rather than Darwin, and it was from this Spencerian vision of society “red in tooth and claw,” that Richard Hofstadter and others argued that was the foundation of American sociology.<sup>246</sup> This sociology as Gregory Claeys underscores was, like Darwinism itself “fundamentally individualist” and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer as well as American sociology concerned the importation of the individualist struggle of nature into American ethics and American social life.<sup>247</sup> More and more however, historians have challenged this model, and this dissertation will continue to move against what T.C. Leonard calls the “unresolved Whiggish tension” in American social science historiography. By this Leonard means that there has always been a consistent tendency to frame historical debates in terms of their present importance. Social

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<sup>245</sup> R. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Temple University Press), 1979, 51.

<sup>246</sup> James Allen Rogers, "Darwinism and Social Darwinism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33, no. 2 (1972), Gregory Claeys, "The "Survival of the Fittest" and the Origins of Social Darwinism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61, no. 2 (2000), pg. 225

<sup>247</sup> On this see also Hawkins M. Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (Cambridge University Press).

science history, moreover, has always been viewed somewhat as in perpetual progress.<sup>248</sup>

As discussed below, the linkage between social Darwinism and American social theory is strongest in the work of William Graham Sumner, whose works, especially, his *Folkways*, published in 1906, provided key early sustenance and synthesis for the emerging American sociological movement.<sup>249</sup> In this foundational text of sociology, Spencer is not cited once. In his equally well-known essay collection, *Earth Hunger and other Essays*, published in 1913, cites Hebert Spencer not once. To take another figure, Edward Ross, is to show much the same tendency, if less starkly. While Ross did cite Spencer approvingly, it was actually to argue for the argument of separation of Church and of State, as Ross and Spencer argued that a “legal religion” was not to be desired because it would eventually crowd out other forms of social order. Charles Cooley, another subject of this dissertation chapter noted in his discussion of Herbert Spencer’s sociology. He noted that, “It is certain that nearly all of us fell away from (Spencer) sooner or later and more or less completely.”<sup>250</sup>

Thus, it is reasonably clear that the influence of Herbert Spencer in American sociology has been exaggerated. While sociologists did cite him on certain matters, such as the separation of Church and state, what one does not find is the centrality of Spencer to the arguments and evidences of American sociologists during this period,

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<sup>248</sup> Thomas C Leonard, "Origins of the Myth of Social Darwinism: The Ambiguous Legacy of Richard Hofstadter's Social Darwinism in American Thought," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 71, no. 1 (2009)

<sup>249</sup> W.G. Sumner and A.G. Keller, *Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals* (Ginn), 1906

<sup>250</sup> C.H. Cooley, *Reflections Upon the Sociology of Herbert Spencer.*, 1920, pg. 129

indeed, one finds the opposite where sociologists like Cooley underscore their distance from Spencer rather than their dependence upon him. As importantly, it would make little sense for sociologists to import the ethics of nature into that of society, as this would make biology the most necessary subject rather than sociology.

A discussion of Spencer naturally leads into the problem of Darwinism and social Darwinism. As this dissertation has argued, there was a ubiquitous discussion of “selection” in early American and British social theory, which continued, as this dissertation has detailed and will continue to detail, the ubiquitous discussions of “selection” in the social selections refer to “social” rather than “natural” selection. While in many ways, the narrative of “social Darwinism” in the social sciences is convenient for Whiggish accounts of the discipline of sociology,<sup>251</sup> and social Darwinism proved instrumental in the Marxist critique of the social sciences by Eugene Genovese and others,<sup>252</sup> it does not stand up to scrutiny. Sumner only mentions Darwin’s “natural selection” in his *Folkways* on pg. 170. Sumner only briefly discusses Darwin the person on two occasions. Cooley, to take another example, only described natural selection in the context of Ward’s theory, which will be described in detail in this chapter, of the difference between “organic” and “social” evolution and organic and “social selection.” Ross for his part only discusses Darwin and “natural selection” in the context of Lapouge and the problem of social selection in civilization. Darwin himself is only discussed on two pages of *Foundations of Sociology* (pg. 327 and 329.)

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<sup>251</sup> C. Calhoun, *Sociology in America: A History* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>252</sup> E.D. Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (Wesleyan University Press).

The absence of a sustained discussion of Darwinism or of the figure of Darwin in texts of social Darwinists such as Sumner and Ross present serious issues to the thesis of the ubiquity of social Darwinism in the origin of the American social sciences. Instead, discussions of “selection” refer to “social selection” rather than “natural selection.” How then to evaluate these initial figures in the social sciences? First, the facile diptych of social theory’s “Darwinist” past and its non-Darwinist future needs to be fundamentally reevaluated. Sociologists did indeed discuss Darwin, such as Lester Frank Ward, but only in the context of animal reproduction and of animal life.<sup>253</sup> Much more common were discussions of social and natural selection like that of John Gillette who underscored, “The method of natural selection is brute struggle...” while selection in society depended upon the “mutual element of cooperative assistance.” Social selection “is thereby rendered a different and is constituted a higher synthetic process.”<sup>254</sup> There was a rather sustained debate about the nature and mechanisms of Darwinism, but this had, by the 1900s, abated somewhat, with differing communities focusing on differing aspects of Darwin’s theory. It would take until the 1930s to really bring out the development of Darwinism and in particular its connection to the mechanism of inheritance. However, most of the sociologists considered in this dissertation wrote after Darwin but before an actual theory of Darwinism.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> L.F. Ward, *Pure Sociology: A Treatise on the Origin and Spontaneous Development of Society* (Macmillan). 1907

<sup>254</sup> J.M. Gillette, *Sociology* (A. C. McClurg & Company), published in 1916, pg. 107, see especially his chapter on “social selection.”

<sup>255</sup> E. Mayr and W.B. Provine, *The Evolutionary Synthesis: Perspectives on the Unification of Biology* (Harvard University Press). 1988. On the issue of eugenics, eugenics was not necessarily Darwinian but concerned mutations and inheritance. Thus, eugenics, far from being concerned with Darwin, was actually dependent upon the work of Gregor Mendel, the Bohemian plant breeder. For example

How do we situate these figures in the absence of social Darwinism? Social Darwinism has functioned as a convenient framing device which has served to demarcate the “pre-history” of the social sciences from their professional, post Second World War present. The answer to this question is simple and straightforward, while also answering a hereto unasked question: why was it the case that the anthropology of Emile Durkheim had such a late reception in American anthropology and in American social theory? As outlined by Clifford Wilcox in his work on the anthropologist Robert Redfield, Durkheim only very haltingly became part of American and British social theory at the time of the Second World War.<sup>256</sup> A.R. Radcliffe Brown’s account of the origin and persistence of social institutions as well as human social interactions grew out of a specific reading of Durkheim’s account of social institutions fulfilling biological needs. Radcliffe-Browne’s account of “functionalism” in this guise was published in 1935, well after many of the discussions of social selection discussed in this dissertation.<sup>257</sup> After Radcliffe-Browne’s essay functionalism became one of the principle manners in which to argue for the presence and persistence of social institutions as well as to navigate the connections and interactions between biology and society.<sup>258</sup>

However, what is clear is the degree to which Lapouge, or more exactly, his concept of “social selections” was central to the projects of early American sociology.

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in the work of eugenicist Charles Davenport C.B. Davenport, *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics* (H. Holt), published in 1911, Darwin is discussed once and has a single entry in the index.

<sup>256</sup> C. Wilcox, *Robert Redfield and the Development of American Anthropology* (Lexington Books).

<sup>257</sup> Alfred Reginald RADCLIFFE-BROWN, "On the Concept of Function in Social Science," *American Anthropologist* 37, no. 3 (

<sup>258</sup> A.J. Treviño and N.J. Smelser, *Talcott Parsons Today: His Theory and Legacy in Contemporary Sociology* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers).

If Darwin and Spencer have been overemphasized, then the role of social selection has been underemphasized due to, as I outlined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, Lapouge's Aryanism and Lapouge's antisemitism. This is clear from the sociology of the first focus of this chapter, Edward Ross. Ross is intriguing as well in the degree to which he both knew first hand of the work of Lapouge, through reading him in the original French and was keen to both reject Lapouge's Aryanism but adopt his discussion of social selection.

A key difference too between Ross and Lapouge was the significant departure between Ross' and even Boas' discussion of social selection (as outlined in the previous chapter) in which Ross was not concerned so much with how social forces eliminated *specific ethnic types* (as Boas argued in his various publications), but rather how social selection eliminated *specific social types*. Although Ross is not single-handedly responsible for this "socialized" discussion of social selection, where there is a discussion of the prosperity and success of social as opposed to ethnic types, and variations of Boas' discussion would continue through the Second World War (as occurred with the work of Pitrim Sorokin) Ross was among a number of prominent sociologists whom discussed social selection as influencing or "selecting" behaviors. This was, as importantly, as discussed in Chapter 1, in Broca's own definition of social selection, as well as Lapouge's but it achieved a new prominence in the work of Ross.

Edward Ross was the first sociologist in the United States to actively engage with the work of Lapouge in his *Social Control* (1901).<sup>259</sup> Ross' sociology was concerned first and foremost with the nature of not only human association but of societal cohesion. Sociology was concerned with, as Ross said with his typical overstatement, the "foundations of order."<sup>260</sup> How did this order come about, Ross underscored that generally the order of human society came about through the workings of social selection. The actions of social selection, in Ross' account, as noted, the manner through which society "selects" certain behaviors over others. Social selection was at the root of Ross' discussion of not only sociology but the root of his sociological problem: the problem of "successful cooperation" which was the basis of not only any society, but any society which was advanced and hierarchical.<sup>261</sup> As discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, Ross was greatly concerned with the basic structures of human social discernment and the mechanisms of in particular social discrimination. Social selection, insofar as it was the mechanism through which human social discernment functioned, through which social values, mores and traditions were enforced, was the center of Ross' social theory, elaborated throughout his corpus of works from *The Foundations of Sociology* to the *Changing Chinese*.<sup>262</sup>

My argument concerning the ubiquity of social selection in the work of Ross' challenges a fundamental assumption concerning Ross, which is the centrality of his

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<sup>259</sup> Edward Alsworth Ross, *Social Control; a Survey of the Foundations of Order, The Citizen's Library of Economics, Politics, and Sociology* (New York and London: The Macmillan Company). , published 1901

<sup>260</sup> E. Ross, "Social Control," *American Journal of Sociology* 1, no. 5 (1896)

<sup>261</sup> Ross., pg. 2

<sup>262</sup>E.A. Ross, *Foundations of Sociology* (Macmillan). E.A. Ross, *The Changing Chinese: The Conflict of Oriental and Western Culture in China* (The Century co.).

pronatalism and his social Darwinism.<sup>263</sup> While historians are surely correct to underscore these aspects of Ross' thought earlier in Ross' career as a sociologist (and as a polemicist), by the publication of *Foundations of Sociology* and especially *The Changing Chinese*, Ross had modified his views concerning race as the prime movers of history to an account of social change which primarily depended upon social forces and upon, as I will argue, viewed cultural evolution through social selection as one of the principal forces of societal change.

William Graham Sumner will be the second figure discussed in this chapter. Sumner like Ross has also been labeled a "social Darwinist" for his advocacy of limited government and laissez-faire. The image of Sumner as a social Darwinist had its origins in the very beginnings of the modern American historical profession- in the work of Richard Hofstadter, who championed and narrated the reformist impulse in American society since the founding.<sup>264</sup> For Hofstadter, Sumner malicious social ethic was a combination of the "Protestant ethic," "the doctrines of classical economics" and "natural selection."<sup>265</sup> Hofstadter's image of Sumner as the "American Spencer" was not only a narrow view of Spencer himself as social Darwinist, which has recently been seriously challenged,<sup>266</sup> but additionally is a caricature of Sumner's social theory.

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<sup>263</sup> L.L. Lovett, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890-1938* (University of North Carolina Press). Thomas C Leonard, "Retrospectives: Eugenics and Economics in the Progressive Era," *The journal of economic perspectives* 19, no. 4 (

<sup>264</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "William Graham Sumner, Social Darwinist," *The New England Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (

<sup>265</sup> In D.S. Brown, *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography* (University of Chicago Press). pg. 31

<sup>266</sup> M. Francis, *Herbert Spencer and the Invention of Modern Life* (Taylor & Francis).

By focusing on Sumner's discussion of social selection and its role in his sociology, I underscore that Sumner looked to social selection as the key to the self-regulation of society. This account of Sumner's sociology as developing a self-regulating society, rather than a society ruled by the laws of nature aims at a fundamental correction of the appraisal of Sumner. Rather than viewing discussion of "selection" as instances of social Darwinism, this chapter will place Sumner's account of "social selection" in its proper context where Sumner, like Ross, used social selection to describe the workings of social dynamics and of social forces in society. For Sumner, specifically, social selection acted in society "through the mores." The mores, Sumner continued, "are the engines of social selection" shaping and molding individuals and groups. As I will argue, it is very clear that because this selection occurs in the context of social life and in society, it is the opposite of natural selection and operates according to distinct criteria. Thus, not only will this chapter be the first to discuss "selection" in its proper context, but also demonstrate its centrality to Sumner's social theory.<sup>267</sup> My discussion of social selection and the mores in Sumner's sociology will thus serve, in a similar manner to Ross, as a fundamental correction to the prevailing historiographic opinion of Sumner as a "social Darwinist." Indeed, as I will argue, he is precisely the opposite.

I group Sumner and Ross together due to the emphasis of both on the role of social selection in social cohesion and in group association, where social selection in the work of both authors played a fundamental and constitutive role in traditions, prejudices and values. Next, C(harles) H(orton) Cooley (1864-1929) will be

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<sup>267</sup> Sumner and Keller.

discussed. Cooley used his account of social selection to develop an extensive account of competition and through competition, an account of the origin and development of civilization.

Cooley, as one recent anthologist pointed out, “was nearly forgotten after World War II” but made fundamental contributions to theories of “social action, social order, and social change,” influencing the sociologist and historian of science Robert Merton (discussed later in this dissertation with Pitrim Sorokin) Like many sociologists and political theorists, he was concerned with the dilemmas of individualism, the perils and virtues of modernity, massification and industrialization, and the effects of the destruction of systems of caste and of heredity. Cooley believed that the “problem of finding where men belong” in the modern world was answered only through recourse to two realities: “inheritance or caste” and “competition.” Modern society and modern individuality were “a compromise between the aspiration toward freedom and the convenience of status.”<sup>268</sup> The dissertation focuses on key essays of Cooley’s “Personal Competition”<sup>269</sup> in which I contend that social selection is key to understanding Cooley’s theories of individuality and association as well as his general scheme for the development of society as a consequence of the development of liberty from the dissolution of caste. What is remarkable concerning Cooley is the degree to which his discussion of social selection is in many senses both an account of the ubiquity of social role and the function of social selection in

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<sup>268</sup> C.H. Cooley and H.J. Schubert, *On Self and Social Organization* (University of Chicago Press). Pg. 207ff.

<sup>269</sup> C.H. Cooley, *Personal Competition: Its Place in the Social Order and Effect Upon Individuals : With Some Considerations on Success* (For the American economic association by the Macmillan Company).

defining that social role. However, unlike Ross and Sumner, Cooley considered the function of social selection to, at least ideally, function in an emancipatory capacity.

My inclusion of Ross, Sumner and Cooley in the same chapter has the following justification. The first two were not only among the earliest adopters of Lapouge's language of social selection, the two individuals together were extremely prominent sociologists in their own time (as well as 'canonical' sociologists in our own time). Sumner and Ross moreover were primarily interested in describing the same social processes, the dynamics of social association and social cohesion. Their sociology and their discussion of social selection used the dynamics of interpersonal association to describe the course of history. In the case of Sumner especially the discussion of social selection and the mores amounted to nothing than a theory of culture and a theory of social evolution. In the work of Ross, similarly, social selection was key to his account of "social control" the social process by which individuals are included and expelled from the social body. Only later with the *Changing Chinese* did Ross understand social selection to be at the center of a process of societal transformation.

If Ross and Sumner's work focused on the dynamics of interpersonal interactions and gradually developed into a theory of civilizational development, Cooley emphasized the "world-historical" in their sociology, where civilizational, macro-sociological accounts of the workings of social selection (especially through social competition) assumed center stage. Nonetheless, all four authors penned the majority of their sociology before the First World War, which places them at the origins of the American sociological profession. Furthermore, Cooley's own readings

of social selection were influenced, in part critically, by his knowledge of Sumner's own discussion of social selection.

Although this dissertation has drawn a great deal from previous works in the history of sociology such as Dorothy Ross and Daniel Rodgers, this chapter, like the dissertation generally argues that the origins of social theory in the United States as well as the origins of social mobility research, owes much to the introduction of the discussion of social selection. This dissertation generally argues against a wholesale "Germanization" of the origins of the American social sciences.

While the German Historical School (of which Max Weber was a late part) was responsible for the modernization of many aspects of the science of political economy, the influence of Weber was minimal on American social theory outside of economics and certain specific schools of Parsonian sociology.<sup>270</sup> Though there is considerable disagreement between scholars as to the exact disciplinary boundaries between the social sciences before the Second World War, one plausible division between economics and political economy and sociology may be the following.

While political economy, in the work of Richard T. Ely and Thorstein Veblen (though the influence of the Historical School on the latter was negative) was influenced by German models, emphasizing among other elements that the "end" of economics was "human welfare" and through a consistent emphasis of the historical development of capitalism and of the various forms of property, much of American sociology betrays no such influence.<sup>271</sup> Indeed, much of American sociology- whether

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<sup>270</sup> Daniel T Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>271</sup> R.T. Ely, *Political Economy, Political Science and Sociology: A Practical and Scientific Presentation of Social and Economic Subjects Prepared for the University Association* (University Association).

of Ward or of Cooley- betrays the influence of not only many psychologists of the crowd, such as LeBon and Tarde, but of (particularly in Cooley's case) a close reading of Lapouge account of social selection and economic competition and of Ward's own account of social selection. This is to suggest that while the sources of the German Historical School were instrumental for the development of economics, this was not the case of sociology, whose orientation was certainly more French. An example of the dependence on crowd psychology and French influence even apart from that of Lapouge is to be found in the title of one of Ross' chapters in his *Foundations of Sociology*, entitled "The Mob Mind."<sup>272</sup>

Thus, as noted in the Introduction of this dissertation, one of the goals of this dissertation is not only to focus on Lapouge and the role of social selection as constitutive and foundation in the American and to a lesser extent the British social sciences through reference to Alexander Carr-Saunders and R.A. Fisher discussed in Chapter 6, but to underscore the French influences on American and British social sciences. Discussions of Lapouge and social selection can be multiplied almost indefinitely, especially in the realm of early American psychology. Similar discussions were to be found in law and the sociology of crime.<sup>273</sup> As well as economics.<sup>274</sup>

Emblematically, the early developmental psychologist James M. Baldwin (1861-1934) in his massive *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* defined "social

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<sup>272</sup> Ross, *Foundations of Sociology*. Chapter V

<sup>273</sup> B.O. Flower, *The Arena* (Arena Publishing Company). A.C. Hall, *Crime in Its Relations to Social Progress* (Columbia University Press).

<sup>274</sup> R.T. Ely, S.P. Orth, and W.I. King, *Property and Contract in Their Relations to the Distribution of Wealth* (Macmillan).

selection” primarily as “social suppression” whereby social selection often led to the “exclusion” of an individual from “social life.”<sup>275</sup> Baldwin elsewhere discussed how “social heredity,” defined as the “social” transmission of traditions, ideas, laws, and norms down through generations. Baldwin opposed “social heredity” to biological heredity.

While biological heredity passed down physical traits from parent to offspring, social heredity ensured that the norms and traditions of a society were transmitted from person to person. The transmission of social norms through social heredity, Baldwin maintained (anticipating in small part the work of Pitrim Sorokin) was the responsibility of parents, but also was principally the role and responsibility of society.<sup>276</sup> Social heredity works through social selection whereby individuals who do not follow the laws and customs of a society were socially excluded through “ostracism.”<sup>277</sup> While social ostracism may have, according to Baldwin, biological consequences, for example, individuals who were socially ostracized often did not marry and therefore did not have children. However, the biological effects of social ostracism were indirect and the consequence of social criteria, rather than any biological imperative. Through “social selection” and social exclusion, moreover, individuals come to determine their own specific social groups, which Baldwin terms “selective association” through social selection.<sup>278</sup> Social selection acting through

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<sup>275</sup> J.M. Baldwin, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology: Including Many of the Principal Conceptions of Ethics, Logic* (Macmillan). On Baldwin’s work and legacy see D.C. Lindberg et al., *The Cambridge History of Science: Volume 7, the Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press). Pg. 258.

<sup>276</sup> J.M. Baldwin, *Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development: A Study in Social Psychology* (Macmillan).

<sup>277</sup> Baldwin, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology: Including Many of the Principal Conceptions of Ethics, Logic*. Pg. 540

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

exclusion was for Baldwin “completely voluntary” in some instances, while “legal and compulsory” in others.<sup>279</sup>

This chapter and others in this dissertation have outlined or will outline social selection and its explanation for the origin and persistence of social institutions. Discussions of social selection and social mobility underscore that social institutions “select” individuals based upon specific qualities. This is very much “functionalism” as it explains the function of institutions in society. The post-war career of social selection will not be the focus of this dissertation. However, as will be illustrated by this chapter and by subsequent chapters discussions of social selection, explicitly and implicitly, revolved around discussions of the functions of institutions. As importantly, much like Durkheim’s own sociology, social selection emphasized, with exceptions, the primacy of social forces. Thus, one plausible explanation for the delayed reception of Durkheim in America and in the UK may be the ubiquity of social selection explanations, which served many of the same functions. Thus, much of the following discussion in this chapter is fundamentally of a Durkheimian character, where for example social selection undergirds the advancement of a more and more liberal society, in the case of Giddings. The net effect of social selection in the latter’s work, as will be detailed in this chapter is to promote the propagation of liberal constitutions.<sup>280</sup>

Accordingly, rather than understanding these theorists as social Darwinists, this dissertation contends that through social selection these theorists were not only

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> M.A. Franklin Henry Giddings, *The Elements of Sociology*.

arguing for the primacy of social forces (and even in discussions of social mobility underscoring the power of social institutions on individuals) but in doing so contending for the autonomy of sociology and related inquiries into society.

However, this chapter is in no way a “rehabilitation” of early sociologists and does not (as it is outside the scope of the dissertation) totally answer the question of the “value” of social theorists working before the Second World War. Robert Merton (discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation) famously addressed the problem of the how the history of sociology should be used and complained that much of the history of sociology was comprised of a “Pickwickian” conception of the history of social theory which neither really addresses historical sociological theories as history nor evaluated past historical theories from an objective theoretical standpoint.<sup>281</sup> To be clear, there is much to dislike in the writings of social theorists before the First World War, whether it be Ross’ discussion of “social selection” as “eliminating” the “misfit” or Sumner’s own out of date and overly general discussions of biology and of Darwin. By underscoring the ubiquity of social selection, I am not in any way arguing for the contemporary value of these sociologists, I am simply arguing that social selection was an essential part of the account of various aspects of interpersonal association and of social evolution.

Historians have generally characterized Edward A. Ross, as described in the introduction to this dissertation, as exemplifying the exclusionist and racist tendencies of early American sociology. Ross’ account of “race suicide” has attracted historians of population policy and pro-natalism, historians of race and gender, as well as

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<sup>281</sup> R.K. Merton and R.K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Free Press).

scholars of the sociology of crowds and the sociology of the masses.<sup>282</sup> Most extensively, Laura Lovett underscores that Ross in his discussion of “race suicide” in the early 1900s reacted to sociological anxieties surrounding both the influx of Asian immigrants and of increasing urbanization in the United States. Ross according to Lovett argued that the “higher race” of white Europeans would not be eliminated by the “lower race” through force or through conquest, but rather through a lower rate of reproduction “quietly eliminates itself.”<sup>283</sup> Historians of sociology and of ideas have solely viewed Ross through these specific lenses.<sup>284</sup> The thesis of Ross as pro-natalist, racist and social Darwinist works perfectly well if one focuses solely on the very early part of Ross’ career.<sup>285</sup>

Ross’ foundational work in sociology does not contain a discussion of race suicide. It is found nowhere in his account of “social control.”<sup>286</sup> Shortly after in his *Foundations of Sociology*, there is a two-page discussion of “race suicide,” which is one of the principal sources of scholars’ discussion of the racial theory of Ross. By Ross’ later *Principles of Sociology*, published in 1920, race suicide disappears, and he has an extensively modified view of “race superiority.” Ross noted in opposition to his own stated position of 1901 that he no longer endorsed the “doctrine of the intellectual superiority of all whites over the rest of humanity.” He concluded later “The conclusion of the whole matter (on the superiority of the races) is that what we

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<sup>282</sup> G. Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>283</sup> Lovett. Quoted on pg. 86.

<sup>284</sup> A. Bashford, *Global Population: History, Geopolitics, and Life on Earth* (Columbia University Press).

<sup>285</sup> M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>286</sup> Ross.

know about the comparative value of races gives no people grounds for oppressing, dispossessing or exterminating any portion of mankind.”<sup>287</sup>

Ross’ diminution of racial factors in history was directly related, I will argue to his acknowledgement of social forces in the form of social selection and in particular his discussion of social selection in *The Changing Chinese* and *Principles of Sociology* on the social selective effects of ideas and institutions modified his views on “race suicide” and the menace of Asian immigration. These works’ discussion of social selection and its influence on individuals and upon social evolution of peoples and nations had their roots in Ross’ earlier critique of Lapouge’s “Aryan” psychology and in his earlier though briefer discussion of social selection. Ross was not only one of the first expositors of Lapouge’s social selection (having read Lapouge and his principle American expositor Carlos Closson), but Ross’ discussions of social selection were exemplary of discussions of this concept: first critical of Lapouge and then adapting Lapouge’s conceptual framework to their own ends.

Ross defined social selection much in the same manner as Lapouge in his 1901 *Foundations of Sociology*. Social selection was the “recognition that institutions and policies work selectively upon a people and may profoundly modify its destiny.”<sup>288</sup> Ross early in his sociology and very early in the reception of this idea in the United States underscored that social selection was distinct from natural selection, whereby social section was the imposition of “decisive conditions” upon

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<sup>287</sup> Edward Alsworth Ross, *The Principles of Sociology* (Century Company).

<sup>288</sup> Ross, *Foundations of Sociology*. Pg. 325

individuals and upon groups by virtue of their membership in society. Selection in nature and the selection of society were distinct as “nature eliminates the unfit; society eliminates the misfit.” Society “burns the heretic and hangs the criminal.” Social selections however according to Ross often “do not eliminate anybody.” They do not determine the life or the death of a single individual or group, rather by influencing the social success of individuals, selections can influence the number of children individuals leave to future generations.<sup>289</sup>

Ross noted however that as tantalizing as Lapouge’s discussion of “economic selection” indeed was, his racial psychology needed to be jettisoned. Social selection, for Ross, would only become the sociological doctrine “of the future” if it succeeded in actually if it succeeded in a “fuller recognition of social factors.” For Ross there was a vast difference between gaining or losing a rung of the “social ladder” and the actual struggle for existence in nature.<sup>290</sup> Anticipating Sorokin, Ross underscored that the chief struggle in society was not existence or in reproduction, but the “struggle to rise.”<sup>291</sup>

Social selection was central to Ross’ theory of “social control” articulated around the same time.<sup>292</sup> As he outlined in *Social Control*, “Social control” for Ross was nothing but the mechanisms and dynamics of harmonious association. Ross posed his account of social control to account for how society compelled individuals, when it appeared (both biologically and psychologically) that such compulsion would be difficult if not impossible, given what was understood about in particular the self-

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<sup>289</sup> *Ibid*, 338.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid*, 344.

<sup>292</sup> Ross, *Social Control; a Survey of the Foundations of Order*.

interested social nature of man. Ross underscored that social selection was one of the essential means to ensure social solidarity and social control. Ross underscored that social selection “selected” those individuals whom were the more “amiable type of man.”<sup>293</sup> Social selection, with the advent of society lead to the “slow elimination of the quarrelsome.” Social selection because of the demands of society slowly isolated those individuals who were a social or whom otherwise reflected those personality traits of “savage” pre-social man. In the medieval world, moreover, the “blood-thirsty” were “drained away” leaving individuals more “peaceable” and “industrious.” Social selection enforced throughout history social cohesion and brought about social control because social selection selected out “extreme” personality types.<sup>294</sup>

Ross discussed social selection in great detail, beginning with how social selection builds upon natural human instincts such as sympathy. Ross considered among qualities “self-sacrifice” was essential for raising young, and how, this would be therefore natural for human beings to possess. Social selection “selected” for this especially among women. Among men as well “social selection works in many ways to put a premium on the more amiable type of man.”<sup>295</sup> He continues that in this social selection came about the very origins of society as “the more peaceable strains of men betook themselves to group life sooner than did the rest.” Social selection at the very origins of society puts “at a disadvantage the man of savage and solitary mood.”<sup>296</sup> Social selection in this instance was not only “age-old” but “of no small

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<sup>293</sup> *Social Control*, pg. pg. 8.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 8

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*

range of moral variety.” Social selection was at the root of the “neighboring tribes of red men, or negroes, or the hill folk of India.”<sup>297</sup>

Social selection also ensured that as society became more advanced “individual struggle” gave way to a struggle within society. And government could do very little, according to Ross, for order and control was not a consequence of state power but of self-regulation among individuals. Government would be overcome through favorable “social selection”<sup>298</sup> Only through for example “the wiping out of the rampant by private enterprise makes way for the social reaction that converts the bully into the criminal and kills or jails him by constituted agents.” Only by “affecting the relative birth-rates or death-rates of the social and the anti-social classes, which solve the problem of order in such a manner that it stays solved.” Thus, it was not particular ethnicities which were affected by social selection, but certain personalities, social and anti-social, which due to the death of individuals need constant replacement. Ross concluded that such equilibrium needed to be constantly restored through the “conscious, intelligent efforts of society.”<sup>299</sup>

In *Foundations of Sociology*, Ross took pains to not only repudiate Lapouge’s discussion of “urban selection” as acting upon “ethnic types” but also underscored that such a repudiation led the way for his own account of social selection. According to Ross, “Undoubtedly men's choices are conditioned and their projects limited by the physical framework they live in.” Nonetheless, “it is necessary to regard social phenomena as essentially psychic, and to look for their immediate

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid, pg. 9

<sup>298</sup> Ibid. pg. 60

<sup>299</sup> Ibid, pg. 61

causes in mind.”<sup>300</sup> Thus, “Selection weeds out the unsocial and favors the survival of the friendly.” This leads to the transformation of society where, according to Ross, “the adaptive process marches irresistibly on; and, however harsh the regime established by the sword, power comes in time to be shared, legal rights are generalized, the state ceases to be the tool of parasites, and interclass exploitation becomes mild and in-obvious.”<sup>301</sup> In this way social selection was to be recognized as a process.

Combined with Ross’ criticism of Lapouge’s Aryan psychology and biological theories of selection, one also finds already in *Foundations of Sociology* a move away from this racialized conception of history. For Ross if social selection was to be the “sociology of the future” as he aptly summarized his position, it must focus on the “social” dimension of selection. This is quite different from this account of history and the account of social change presented in Ross’ discussion of “race suicide.”<sup>302</sup> In his article on the “causes of race superiority,” Ross subscribed to race and natural selection in society being one of the main movers of history. However, this discussion of race and history is essentially dropped, almost immediately.

Later in *The Changing Chinese*, Ross underscored that Chinese civilization was essentially fully of promise, but undeveloped. He noted “For in the middle ages, white men were just as haphazard, casual and uncritical....” The “European brain” like its Chinese counterpart developed due to science. Through a process of selection, the “European brain” became conditioned to standardization, “city

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<sup>300</sup> Ross, *Foundations of Sociology*., pg. 151.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., pg 280

<sup>302</sup> Edward A Ross, "The Causes of Race Superiority," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 18, no. 1 (1901)

government” and “suffrage.”<sup>303</sup> The chief difficulty was that the Chinese according to Ross had not accepted, nor had been selected for, “the principle of efficiency.” Once efficiency, through social selection became a significant element of Chinese life and Chinese institutions, the Chinese stood a fair chance of matching the West.<sup>304</sup>

Social selection furthermore played an outsized role in all human societies, Ross had concluded by his later *Principles in Sociology*, published in 1920, that social selection counted for not only the majority of social control, but explained many of the forces in human society. Social selection, he noted, was quite different from deaths from disease and from climate. War for example decisively molded individuals leading to the selection of certain individuals and the suppression of others. Modern war selected against individuals because it killed indiscriminately. It was thus unlike primitive war, which tended to encourage a specific type of “heroic” individual.<sup>305</sup> The clerical celibacy imposed by the Church decisively changed the Middle Ages and the future of Western civilization as it both concentrated men of ability in the monasteries, but also ensured that those men of ability had no progeny.<sup>306</sup> Social selection by encouraging charity, ensured that many of the individuals who would not survive in nature, nonetheless make a contribution to society. Thus, social selection in war “calls into the danger zone the pick of the young men” decimating a nation since “battle no longer spares unusual prowess as it often did in the days of individual combat, but mows men down in warfare discriminately.”

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<sup>303</sup> Ross, *The Changing Chinese: The Conflict of Oriental and Western Culture in China*. Pg. 314ff.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid, pg. 216.

<sup>305</sup> Ross, *The Principles of Sociology*. Pg. 384

<sup>306</sup> Ibid, 387

Thus the “Teutonic” idea that war was beneficial as a social selection was a “superstition befitting Central Africa.”<sup>307</sup>

Social selection also for Ross in its later variants also explained the development of the professions to the emancipation of women and the liberalization of society. By 1920, there was scarce emphasis on the biological factors which had so motivated Ross’ earlier work. Instead, society was an interplay of a vast numbers of selection which acted together to sustain institutions which molded individual behavior in a number of domains. Indeed, by 1920, Ross, who had been one of the earliest expositors of Lapouge as well as one of the earliest systematic discussants of the new American inquiry of sociology became, with his last work of systematic sociology, an inquirer into social selection and its consequences. His entire sociology became by the 1920s, an inquiry into social selection.

Perhaps most importantly was the social selection brought about by success. For Ross, as for Carr-Saunders and Roland Fisher writing a few years later, the success and upward social mobility, had curious biological consequences. For Ross, there was a concern as “superior failed lamentably to reproduce themselves.” He underscored, addressing in the rudiments a theory of social mobility, “As a rule, the bright farm boy who becomes a banker, a rail road official, or a professional man, leaves fewer children than his duller brother at the plow tail” since “members push on to college and rise into the higher callings does not multiply like the commonplace family which sticks to the soil.” Nonetheless, building on this work on *The Changing Chinese*, Ross underscored “There is nothing foreordained in the present clash

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<sup>307</sup> Ibid

between personal ambition and progeny. In the Orient, in Eastern Europe, in this country until the middle of the last century, the desire to get on does not kill fecundity.”

Thus, what this discussion of Ross has uncovered is not only a ubiquity of discussions of social selection in the work of this foundational sociologist, but the centrality of social selection to his work. As importantly, by focusing on social selection, the portion of the chapter has critiqued the narrative of Ross as a kind of “prophet” for “race suicide” and social Darwinism. In the *Changing Chinese*, Ross underscored that the distinction between European and Chinese states of civilization was the result of a lack of social selection for efficiency. He noted elsewhere that there was no clear intellectual distinction between races. His “change of heart” though not total, was I contend the result of his awareness that discussions of social selection were the “future” of sociology, but only if there was an emphasis on the social. Ross’ emphasis on the social, moreover, which was explicit, and on social selection, which was omnipresent in his sociology, argues against the rather decontextualized account of Ross as a social Darwinist.

William Graham Sumner, similarly to Ross, has never escaped his social Darwinist, Spencerian reputation. Other than the work of Hofstadter, Sumner has attracted little to no attention. His works in social theory, such as contained in “War and Other Essays” present a vision of society which depends (like Ross) on the social phenomenon of mutual association. Sumner’s rejection of government was not in any way related to reposing the order of nature onto society. It was due to his conviction that societies govern best when they self-govern. The self-governed nature of

societies was made possible, moreover, according to Sumner, through the action of social selection.<sup>308</sup>

“Social selection” according to Sumner began with the domination of the “mores” over the individual. The mores were ideas, traditions, sentiments, inclinations which arose “in earliest childhood” which gave each individual “ideas, faith and tastes and lead him into proscribed mental processes.” The mores were central to Sumner’s theory of the structures and foundations of the social order. They played a large role as well in the evolution and development of each and every culture in the world. Mores brought to the individual “standards of conduct.” Mores were “instrumentalities of suggestion,” guiding individual behavior and sanctioning those who do not follow the proscribed paths of that behavior. The mores moreover were the “engines of social selection.” The mores according to Sumner, defined what and whom was socially selected, whether that individual would be socially successful or not. By “coercing” the individual, the mores guide social selection, making sure that individuals who step too far outside the mores and traditions of a specific culture, that they faced ostracism.<sup>309</sup> Again as with Ross, Sumner is not suggesting that nature plays any role in the “selection” of individuals in society.

Sumner’s discussion of social selection, like Ross’ is extensive, and like that of Ross, understands social selection, the regulation of sentiment and behavior by individuals in associations and by the cultural and social practices of individuals. Social selection sets the “social type” which is itself regulated by taboos. Thus,

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<sup>308</sup> W.G. Sumner and A.G. Keller, *War and Other Essays* (Yale University Press).

<sup>309</sup> Sumner and Keller, *Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals.*, pg. 170ff, published 1906

according to Sumner “A gentleman is under more restraints than a non-gentleman. In the eighteenth century he patronized cockfights and prize fights, and he could get drunk, gamble, tell falsehoods, and deceive women without losing caste. He now finds that noblesse oblige forbids all these things, and that it puts him under disabilities in politics and business.”<sup>310</sup> Social selection, selection by society was especially visible in crimes and in the workings of justice and through a process of social selection “taboos” are transformed into the laws of the state. Eventually, through a process of selection “The administration of justice, therefore, bore witness to the judgment of the society as to what conduct and character should be selected for preservation or caused to cease.”<sup>311</sup>

Societal and social selection was also visible in abortion and infanticide. Individuals according to Sumner are guided by individual motives but restrained in important ways through the folkways which are the “engines” of social selection. Thus, “They also suggest to, and teach, the rising generation. They react, in the course of time, on the welfare of the group. They affect its numbers and its quality, as we now believe, although we cannot find that any group has ever been forced by its experience to put these customs under taboo.”<sup>312</sup> “Group interests” and “social selection” were involved, according to Sumner, in a “unquestionable manner.”<sup>313</sup> The behavior of a society towards marriage and fertility were all part of a careful selection which, for each stage in society differed according to social needs and social customs.

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 207

<sup>311</sup> Ibid, 209

<sup>312</sup> Ibid, 309.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid, 311

Thus, through social selection and the work of the mores “the value of children fluctuates, and also the relative value of boys and girls turns in favor, now of one, now of the other.” In the earliest stages of society, “numerous offspring were regarded as a blessing and child rearing, in the horde, was not felt as a burden.” Nonetheless, in modern society “has made children more and more expensive, down to our own times, when " neo-malthusianism,” although unavowed, exists in fact as a compromise between egoism and child rearing.” Processes of social selection generally began as “a primary response to pain and the strain of life” and developed slowly, and according to Sumner, suitably for each form of life.

For Sumner however there was perhaps no better illustration of how social selection operated than the medieval church. The church “contributed, through a thousand previous years, phantasms about the other world and dogmas about the relation of this world to that one.” These dogmas in turn “world and dogmas about the relation of this world to that one. These dogmas became mixed with all the experience of life in the days of civic decline and misery, and produced the mores of the tenth and eleventh centuries.”<sup>314</sup> The Church nevertheless, “gathered all "the good men" in a common will and purpose. The ideals and the means were selected, and the advocates of the same became the selected classes in society. They remained such long after the movement was spent and lost, but the notion remained that every good man, or would-be good man, ought to stand with the church.”<sup>315</sup> Thus, the church selected individuals who conformed to its mores and this institution, in turn,

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid, 221

<sup>315</sup> Ibid, 223

grew and grew in power, spreading its ethics throughout the whole of society. Thus church became a major engine of selection because of the “folkway” it produced and the customs and practices it developed. Sumner then placed social selection at the center of not only the history of modern Europe, but also at the center of religion in society. Like earlier practices governing marriage and fertility, selection was guided by custom and custom guided and developed along “folkways.” Nonetheless, while the forms of these customs were different, the process of selection was the same.

Individuals in society, according to Sumner, prosper because of their adherence to the mores and traditions of their society, and if they do not follow them do not prosper. Biology had little to do with the fate of individuals in society. Thus, Sumner’s criticism of government intervention has nothing to do with his advocacy of social Darwinism. Rather, Sumner rejected government intervention in the life of society because he considered such government intervention to be unnecessary due to the mores. As importantly, social selection played prominent roles in the lives of individuals, not simply historically and in the first stages of society, but through the modern age.

Social selection moreover allowed, by selecting certain behaviors and disregarding others, to craft and to shape the mores in such a way that they would have societal importance. Thus, custom and selection worked together to clothe individuals in practices which would suit them for the society in which they found themselves in. In this way, social selection, and the mores it shaped as society moved forward, were both fundamentally conservative, insofar as they accepted society as naturally developed, and justified the development of that society as given.

Charles H. Cooley moved beyond Ross and Ward's discussion of social selection, wondering how social selection could continue to be a force for progressive change. While Sumner and Ross looked to social selection in terms of association and in terms of the inculcation of traditions and mores by individuals, Cooley in contrast looked more to the macroscopic and macrosocial and in particular looked to social selection as a way of breaking free (in Bagehot's words "the cake of custom.")<sup>316</sup> Mores and social selection thus in Cooley's sociology had the opposing effect. While mores functioned as a kind of inculturation in the work of Sumner and Ross and social selection enforced those mores, in Cooley's sociology they had the opposite effect. My account of Cooley is somewhat distinct from historiography which argues that his great contribution is towards an account of socialization or the "looking-glass self." In contrast to those discussions of his sociology which emphasize his account of individual psychology as well as his contributions to pragmatism<sup>317</sup> and which argues that Cooley was one of the progenitors (along with Mead) of sociological "micro-sociological tradition," I contend that Cooley's discussion of social selection and of competition was a substantial marco-theory which was not only an important part of his work, but which was defined by its extensive use of social selection.<sup>318</sup> What links the two aspects of his work, is his emphasis that social selection is brought to the fore, when in the transition from hereditary caste and the constitution of society according to biological principles, man

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<sup>316</sup> Walter Bagehot (1826-1877) was an English economist and social theorist. He is now mostly remembered for his *English Constitution*, published in 1867, which argued that English society and English law through its own logic, was gradually self-emancipating from primitive and strict custom.

<sup>317</sup> Cooley and Schubert., 1998

<sup>318</sup> R. Garner, *Social Theory: The Formative Years* (University of Toronto Press)., published 2010, G. Jacobs, *Charles Horton Cooley: Imagining Social Reality* (University of Massachusetts Press)., 2006

began to be guided by his mind and by his “psychical principles.” Thus, scholars have focused on Cooley’s psychology at the expense of his social theory of civilizations, which are in dynamic.

Cooley began in his *Social Organization* that there were two world historical forces in human society “heredity and competition.” By the former he meant the limited influence of natural selection, by the latter he meant social selection. According to Cooley all distinctions began perhaps in hereditary distinctions but quickly transformed into species of social competition. Cooley noted that “the informal action of preference, opportunity and endeavor” defined “most trades and professions at the present day.” It was ideally the case that there be a transition between “hereditary” societies which are ruled mostly by selection by “hereditary” properties to a society ruled through “competition” brought about by social selection. Many societies, especially pre-modern one’s were the “organization of social mind on biological principle.”<sup>319</sup>

Social selection emerged with the “diffusion of intelligence, rapid communication, the mobilization of wealth by means of money, and the like, mark the ascendancy of the human mind over material and biological conditions.”<sup>320</sup> Mirroring Sorokin, Cooley underscored that “social selection” would occur chiefly through educational institutions which “permits ability to serve its possessor and the world in its proper place.”<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> C.H. Cooley, *Social Process.*, pg. 226

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid, 227

This account of competition and social selection drew upon his earlier, expansive essay, *Personal Competition* in which Cooley underscored, “The freer the individual, the wider his field of choice in determining his social function, and the wider the field of choice the more active must the selective process be in assigning him his place in it.”<sup>322</sup> This would be achieved in an ideal sense by an “all-seeing despot,” but any society according to Cooley through “just laws, by a public sentiment appreciative of every sort of merit, and, most of all, by a system of education calculated to discover and develop the special capabilities of each individual, it can do much to make its choices prompt, intelligent and just...”<sup>323</sup>

What was important for social selection to bring for progressive advancement was “heterogenous” competition between differing social types, where a individual’s social type was developed through their own self-understanding and socialization.<sup>324</sup> Only heterogeneous competition between differing social types would reflect the differing types of selection under differing social institutions.<sup>325</sup> As Cooley noted in more detail, “Social selection must have in view not one simple type of excellence to be preserved and developed, but an enormous number of divergent types, matching the complexity of social functions.”<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Cooley, *Personal Competition: Its Place in the Social Order and Effect Upon Individuals : With Some Considerations on Success.*, published 1899, pg.17

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Cooley, *Social Process.*, 208

<sup>325</sup> Cooley, *Personal Competition: Its Place in the Social Order and Effect Upon Individuals : With Some Considerations on Success.* Pg. 34ff

<sup>326</sup> Ibid, 34. He continued, railing against eugenics, “If the problem were to develop large men, or strong men, or blue-eyed men, or mathematicians, or musicians, and we could rank all other types as weeds and mercilessly plow them up, the matter would be quite simple and easy. But because such arbitrary selection of types to be favored would be in tolerable, we put up with a somewhat blind and anarchical struggle as the lesser evil.”

Moreover, social selection to continue the progressive transformation of society could not rely upon simply biological characteristics, but upon social qualities which result in pressure being exerted on every individual by social institutions and by every individual in their social life.<sup>327</sup> This was because, unlike in nature, there were no visible outward characteristics among man. All of man's best characteristics were "psychical and social." As Cooley noted, "The most plausible principle of a priori valuation, that of heredity, which was so generally adopted in the past, is, of course, hopelessly discredited as a basis for social organization." He continued, "because of this lack of reliable signs to go by, social selection can never be the simple act of a presiding intelligence, like the selection by man of types of animals or plants, but must be competitive...." Cooley then rejects any association of social and natural selection, underscoring that social selection was not merely a differing phase of society and of social organization, but selected fundamentally distinctly from that of natural selection.

Thus, social selection was a significant part of socialization and of Cooley's theory of the social world, where every individual in the course of coming to know other individuals, understood that their behavior was in some sense a competition for place and a competition for status. The scope and structure of this competition should be, according to Cooley, heterogeneous, which would further refine social selection and further determine, according to Cooley, the "rational organization of institutions."<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid. pg. 35.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid. 38

The problem of social selection for Cooley was the problem of the promotion of social heterogeneity, as from heterogeneity would arise competition and true freedom.<sup>329</sup> Social selection also brought about the destruction of caste, through its diminution of status. Status, according to Cooley, was nothing but the lack of “individuation” as well as the suppression of competition.<sup>330</sup> “True freedom” moreover was the destruction of caste through institutions which brought about individualized social competition on every level. This necessitated every individual come to know their own abilities through their interactions with others. “Healthy selves” and “healthy institutions” “are only possible through open competition” through social selection which is unencumbered through caste and status.<sup>331</sup>

The best institutions come about through social selection whereby individuals are able to compete to their “highest development.” The preferable institutions were for Cooley not merely the *means* of securing the most possible freedom, through selection and competition, but the *outcome* of such competition. Individuals and institutions thus form a social and organic whole which ideally moved to conditions of greater freedom. Through the process of social selection and personal competition, old institutions “have gone to pieces.”<sup>332</sup>

It would moreover be unjust according to Cooley to argue, as many (including Sorokin) did, that each individual was fitted to one social role and to one place within the social system. This notion of “perfect adaptation” was nothing more

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid, pg. 104

<sup>330</sup> Ibid. pg. 106

<sup>331</sup> Ibid, pg. 107.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

than a form of “status” and “caste.”<sup>333</sup> The social system was indeed the “arbiter of success” but such factors which led to social success were according to Cooley not immediately obvious and it was also not the case that social survival lead to physical survival. Breaking with Ross, for Cooley, there was no necessary connection between social success and biological success. Cooley understood that those individuals who were socially successful were not necessarily biologically successful and vice versa. This disconnecting between social and biological success was in many ways not merely a necessary consequence of Cooley’s theory of socialization, which privileged radical individuality through socialization, selection and competition, but also a crystallization of discussions of social selection as contrary in totality to social Darwinism.

What this chapter has characterized is not simply the ubiquity of social selection in early American sociology, charting the centrality of social selection to the thought of a number of key American sociologists. What has also been characterized is the variety of types of discussions of social selection. In the case of Edward Ross, social selection and the autonomy of social dynamics was key rational for his backing way from a racialized view of history, as well as for describing all manner of social phenomena. In the case of Sumner, social selection was the “engine of the mores” and the mores themselves formed the pattern of an individual’s life and work, even on a societal scale, as with the medieval church. In the case of both Ross and Sumner, the action of social selection was mostly inhibitory, but in the writings of Cooley, it could be emancipatory. Social selection as outlined above allowed social theorists to

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid, pg. 109.

discuss both individual and civilizational social forces. While both Ross and Sumner (and Cooley) gravitated between micro and macro, the emphases of the first two was on the former and the last two was upon the latter.

Although three sociologists are discussed in this chapter, the absence of Darwin, or rather the reaction against Darwin, should indeed be quite telling. Rather than defining this period of sociology as social Darwinist or “scientific,”<sup>334</sup> the ubiquity of social selection points to rather a more neutral account of social theorists on American soil. The ubiquity of social selection also underscores the very long and complex legacies of the sociology of Lapouge in American sociology, underscoring the formative influence of his discussions of social selection, even under intense criticism and modification. In all three theorists discussed, Darwin and Darwinism play a very small role. Emblematically, for much of American social science, there has been no discussion of Darwin and his role in the American social sciences at all in this chapter. This is not to say that perhaps for some American social scientist, Darwin was unimportant, but as demonstrated here in this chapter, when social theorists used the term “selection” they often, if not always referred to social selection. Discussions of natural selection and of Darwinism when they did occur, as with Ross, were simply to set up the juxtaposition with social selection.

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<sup>334</sup> R.C. Bannister, *Sociology and Scientism: The American Quest for Objectivity, 1880-1940* (University of North Carolina Press).

## Chapter 5: Pitrim Sorokin on Social Mobility, Selection, Revolution and Elites

This chapter will not only present the first discussion of social mobility theory in Pitrim Sorokin's (1889-1968) sociology, but also will detail through attention to his theory of revolutions and to his account of society, that the mechanism of social selection and its connection to social mobility were key elements of Sorokin's social theory. Thus, like many of the social theorists described in the chapters of this dissertation, social selection functioned as key unifier of his social theory. As importantly, I will also underscore that Sorokin not only gave central place to discussions of social selection, but that he did so while also rejecting Lapouge's Aryanism. This again is consistent with how many other discussions of social selection in this dissertation, which use Lapouge's discussion of social selection while simultaneously critiquing Lapouge.

As Sorokin was both a sociologist and a self-styled historian of sociology, who in his *Contemporary Sociological Theory* discussed Lapouge's writings and his account of social selection extensively. Sorokin, after presenting, in detailed fashion all of Lapouge's "selections" including, "military, economic and urban" he then addressed, with increasing skepticism "the definite Aryan hypothesis." Sorokin concluded, "Whatever may be the origin of this racial type, the facts do not seem to corroborate the essentials of Lapouge's hypothesis, and the same is true of many of his "laws." Sorokin continued, "In the first place, contrary to the conception of Lapouge, dolichocephaly (long-headedness) does not seem to be necessarily coordinated with intellectual superiority, extraordinary energy or intuitive or talent." Sorokin then added "Is it true among the leaders, among the upper classes, or the

prominent men of each race, that the portion of doliochcephals is much greater than among the lower classes and the common people? These questions must be answered negatively.”<sup>335</sup>

Thus, like Edward Ross, Sorokin rejected Lapouge’s Aryanism but used his account of “social selection.” Sorokin often, especially in *Sociology of Revolution*, published in 1925, considered “social selection” to consist in part of social institutions, such as universities, “selecting” individuals, with fixed characteristics, such as IQ and intelligence for promotion and advancement. Sorokin, to be clear, did not have any notion of racial superiority. Sorokin’s discussion of social selection also understood “selection” as often as the action of social forces and social institutions to promote individuals who are “selected” based on specific moral worth and competence. Nonetheless, in Sorokin’s society, moreover, elites of some kind or another ideally would be promoted, although he struggled with defining what qualities that elite would have.

Sorokin’s sociological legacy and his ideas have not been given full treatment by either historians or sociologists for complex reasons. Sorokin has been overlooked mostly due to the overwhelming presence of Talcott Parsons (1902-1973) in 20<sup>th</sup> century sociology, especially in the work of sociologist Bryan Turner.<sup>336</sup> Parsons was Sorokin’s junior colleague at Harvard. Both Parsons and Sorokin were “big picture” sociologists, interested in developing accounts of the origin and persistence of social institutions in a comparative manner. Parsons in his account of “functionalism” saw

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<sup>335</sup> Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin, "Contemporary Sociological Theories," (1928), pg. 268-269

<sup>336</sup> T. Parsons and T. Bryan, *Social System* (Taylor & Francis), originally published 1991

social systems as fulfilling specific “needs” and “survival requisites” provided a totalizing social theory which linked micro and macro in a way which was very congenial to working sociologists after the Second World War to explain the great societal upheavals which the war had caused.<sup>337</sup> Sorokin also provided an explanation for why specific institutions persist and why certain individuals are prosperous, but also did so through a focus on social selection and its function in social mobility. Much of Parsons “functionalist” system overlaps with Sorokin’s sociology. However, after Parsons death, Parsons, not Sorokin, quickly emerged as the “theorist of modernity” in the argument of one historian of sociology.<sup>338</sup>

Both American and the Russian works on Sorokin are hagiographic and none discuss his theory of social mobility and its connection his account of social selection.<sup>339</sup> None, apart from one article<sup>340</sup> and one surprising book on the philosophy of law, address Sorokin critically.<sup>341</sup> This is to substantial extent a consequence of the degree to which Sorokin is still viewed as the representative of a kind of sociology which is today usually not practiced, i.e. big picture macro-sociology.

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<sup>337</sup> A.J. Treviño et al., *Talcott Parsons Today: His Theory and Legacy in Contemporary Sociology* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers). Published 2001

<sup>338</sup> P.R. Robertson, R.R.B.S. Turner, and P.B.S. Turner, *Talcott Parsons: Theorist of Modernity* (Sage Publications (CA)), 1991

<sup>339</sup> Much of the scholarly work on Sorokin is of dubious quality; Barry Johnson’s intellectual biography is more of a hagiography than an objective account, though it does contain amusing anecdotes about Sorokin, Parson’s interactions. See Johnson’s *Pitirim A. Sorokin: An Intellectual Biography* (University Press of Kansas, 1995)

<sup>340</sup> Aleksandr Dmitriev, ““National Science” and Cultural Importations,” *Cahiers du monde russe* 51, no. 4 (

<sup>341</sup> M. Deflem, *Sociology of Law: Visions of a Scholarly Tradition* (Cambridge University Press).

The relative neglect of Sorokin also points to the continuing presence and influence as well of canonical figures in sociology and to the sociology profession's own distaste for its history, as noted by Robert Merton.<sup>342</sup> Many contemporary sociologists and many contemporary reconstructions of sociological theory privilege the work of Marx, Weber and Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. It is from these three or four theorists that the majority of contemporary sociology finds its basis.<sup>343</sup> Sorokin scorned Parsons, as related in Barry Johnson's biography of Sorokin, openly mocking him, and considering his first work, *The Structure of Social Action* as (1937) utterly worthless.<sup>344</sup>

The animus goes deeper as both men's projects are totally contrasting. Talcott Parson's seminal theory of social action, his account of the functional dynamics of society was, according to Sorokin, an attempt to kill most of 19<sup>th</sup> century European social theory and to reconfigure it according to his tastes. This was done to great damage, Sorokin believed, in Parsons' insistence, that all of 19<sup>th</sup> century social theory could be reduced to the development of a "voluntaristic theory of action."<sup>345</sup> This was contrary to Sorokin's own intellectual project as outlined in *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, which was to examine the scientific validity of all 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century sociological theories, with the aim of clarifying for the student the

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<sup>342</sup> C. Calhoun, *Sociology in America: A History* (University of Chicago Press).

<sup>343</sup> A. Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>344</sup> B.V. Johnston, *Pitirim A. Sorokin: An Intellectual Biography* (University Press of Kansas). Giddens.

<sup>345</sup> J. Holmwood and S. Best, *Talcott Parsons* (Taylor & Francis).

merits of existing sociological theories. As Sorokin explained that theories have been produced “in abundance” and much of which had merit.<sup>346</sup>

Perhaps most important was the contrast in style between the two men’s sociologies. Joel Isaac has recently argued that Parsons, Thomas Kuhn and others developed a kind of “Harvard style” of sociology which emphasized significant intellectual continuities. Kuhn can be reconfigured as a kind of Parsonian philosopher. Kuhn in much the same way as Parsons heuristically used the history of science to argue for radical discontinuities. For Sorokin, radical discontinuities in social theory would upend his project (as well as his discussion of social mobility.) Sorokin engaged in the opposite of the instrumental use of sociological theory and I argue that he is the opposite of both Kuhn and Parsons. And such is the ubiquity of both that he is on the wrong side of the debate methodologically.<sup>347</sup>

Sorokin too had many ghosts which returned to haunt him. He was extraordinarily dyspeptic and often sabotaged his own students whom he did not think up to lofty standards. A famous example of this was the case of Kingsley Davis whom was a student of Sorokin’s whom Sorokin more or less tried to sabotage. Davis responded in kind. It was considered an egregious violation of the norms of academic life Wilbert Moore and Kingsley Davis in publishing their own contribution to stratification theory did not mention Sorokin.<sup>348</sup> And in this way, Sorokin’s own

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<sup>346</sup> Sorokin. xix

<sup>347</sup> J. Isaac, *Working Knowledge: Making the Human Sciences from Parsons to Kuhn* (Harvard University Press).

<sup>348</sup> Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," *American Sociological Review* 10, no. 2 (

sabotage of his student ensured that his own account of social mobility and of social stratification would not make it into the sociological mainstream, as it were.

Nonetheless, it is through Sorokin's systematic discussion of social mobility in the modern world and, in particular, his term, "social mobility" which migrated far beyond Sorokin's own intellectual project, becoming a key tool for sociologists investigating in particular the nature and the extent of inequality, and the composition of social structure and the importance of social stratification, that Sorokin's legacy remains. Without Sorokin, it would be difficult to imagine the work of S.M Lipset on *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*<sup>349</sup> or many of Robert Merton's works on social structure and the reward system of science.<sup>350</sup> Merton's own debt to Sorokin has never been acknowledged or analyzed. But Merton's own account of how by virtue of their success, scientists- through patrons and universities- accumulate more and more resources, thus ensuring greater and greater success, has all of the hallmarks of Sorokin's account of how a stable, functioning society naturally promotes elites.

In this chapter, I should first detail Sorokin's life and career. I will then describe his sociology of revolution and the role of social selection in revolutions. I end with an account of the interconnection between Sorokin's understanding of social selection and its centrality to his account of social mobility as an essential part of any functioning society. For Sorokin, social selection in a functioning society ensured

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<sup>349</sup> S.M. Lipset and R. Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society* (University of California Press), published in 1967.

<sup>350</sup> Robert K. Merton, "The Matthew Effect in Science, li: Cumulative Advantage and the Symbolism of Intellectual Property," *Isis* 79, no. 4 (<http://www.jstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/stable/234750>). Robert K Merton, "The Matthew Effect in Science: The Reward and Communication Systems of Science Are Considered," *Science* 159, no. 3810 (1966)

that society was hierarchical, elevating individuals based upon merit and ability, as well as upon those attributes which societal institutions such as the school and the Church found most valuable. Social selection allowed Sorokin to not only articulate of revolution, but also point to what he considered to be a normative or functioning society.

Pitrim Sorokin was born in 1889, in the (now) Komi Republic, Russia. The area was then used for its mineral and timber reserves. He became a professor at the (then) Imperial University of Saint Petersburg. As related in his autobiography, his first publications were in criminology and in ethnography. The Komi region, where Sorokin was born, still contains some striking genetic and linguistic features, which illustrate the very complex history of settlement in north-eastern Europe: the Komi people, though now part of the Russian Federation, are distinct cultural and linguistically from Russians, related to Finnish and Estonian, but appropriating the Cyrillic script.<sup>351</sup> Sorokin points out in his autobiography that the distinctiveness of the Komi language, his rural upbringing, his apperception of Komi morals (such as their inculcation of the ‘golden rule.’) as well as their ethnic distinctiveness were all important factors for his later intellectual development. Sorokin’s work is infused with several complementary emphases: a defense of the traditional society governed by laws as well as by norms, the importance of the family and church as well as a sensitivity to the work and life of the rural individual.

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<sup>351</sup> Khrunin, Andrey V et al. "A genome-wide analysis of populations from European Russia reveals a new pole of genetic diversity in northern Europe." *PloS one* 8.3 (2013): e58552.

Sorokin in many ways led a tumultuous life, condemned to death by Lenin himself. Sorokin studied and later became a lecturer at St. Petersburg University, writing works in criminology and in systematic sociology. After a brief stint at the University of Minnesota, he became a professor of sociology at Harvard University, doing a large part to found the department of sociology there. He was also a prominent member of the Constituent Assembly in 1917 right before the Bolshevik Revolution, serving as the private secretary to Prime Minister Kerensky. He fled the Bolsheviks in 1922, coming under the influence and protection of Thomas Masaryk then president of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic (and influential social thinker and anthropologist in his own right who was reasonably well-versed in biology and evolutionary theory.<sup>352</sup> Like many sociologists at the time he wrote an extended work on the connection between suicide and modernity.<sup>353</sup>

Sorokin's early work before the Russian Revolution was representative of much work in French and Italian criminology in that he emphasized both individual and group differences and the importance of the social milieu, especially traditional institutions such as the family and the church.<sup>354</sup> Like most works in the nineteenth century, such was the profusion of evidence both biological and social that investigators had difficulty detailing the precise connection between biological, crime and deviance and the social environment.<sup>355</sup> When an individual ascribed everything

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<sup>352</sup> T.G. Masaryk, *Moderní Člověk a Náboženství* (Masarykův ústav AV ČR). On this, see Masaryk's *O nynější filosofii evoluční* (Concerning the Current Evolutionary Philosophy, 1896) as well as an influential thinker on religion and philosophical anthropology.

<sup>353</sup> T.G. Masaryk, *Sebevražda Hromadným Jevem Společenským Moderní Osvěty* (J. Laichter).

<sup>354</sup> В.В. Василенко, П.А. Сорокин: *Опыт Интеллектуальной Биографии (1889-1968)* (изд-во СГУ).

<sup>355</sup> G. Vadalà-Papale, *Darwinismo Naturale E Darwinismo Sociale: Schizzi Di Scienza Sociale* (E. Loescher).

to the social structure, or contended that the social structure was itself pathogenic (or more precisely an intermediate phase in the evolution society) they were typically socialist.<sup>356</sup>

In a related sense, Sorokin had such an aversion to Communism and to all forms of social planning, due to his exile from Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution (where he was briefly placed under a death sentence, and for reasons which are still unclear, ) that he regarded all panaceas for the reduction of crime to not be worthwhile. “Irrationalities” such as crime, deviance, suicide were symptomatic of greater societal decay and must be addressed at the root of that society.<sup>357</sup> Sorokin never offered a solution to societal decay other than an emphasis on the family and a kind of organic harmony, very similarly to Oswald Spengler and Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975), allowed him to be labelled even within his own time, as a pessimist of the pre-Second World War school.<sup>358</sup>

Sorokin’s first pronounced discussion of social selection and social mobility emerged in his *Sociology of Revolution*. In this sociology, we find a number of facets of Sorokin’s social theory to be extremely prominent, the first being his emphasis on the necessity of elites and the necessity of social selection to the functioning of any society. As importantly, there was specific moral element to his account of revolution, whereby revolution because it caused improper of adverse social

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<sup>356</sup> Bruce DiCristina, *The Birth of Criminology : Readings from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (New York: Wolters Kluwer Law & Business).

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> P.A. Sorokin and B.V. Johnston, *On the Practice of Sociology* (University of Chicago Press).

selection, leading to the prominence of the morally “worst” and the decline of the morally “best.”

For Sorokin, the cataclysm of revolution was a disaster insofar as it “not only call forth a numerical change of the population, but what is much more important, change the quality as well.” By this Sorokin meant that warfare, civil war and revolutions especially promote through a process of social selection “the least healthy, the least capable.” Revolutions generally are “instrument(s) of death” which especially eliminated, according to Sorokin “the gifted, the strong-willed.”<sup>359</sup> This was the case in not only the Russian Revolution, which Sorokin was himself a victim of, but all other historical revolutions. Negative social selection was also apparent during the English Revolution where “not only was the population ruined and ravaged but qualitatively and quantitatively, but also among both English and Scotch, the loss of the best men, both among the royalists and their opponents was very considerable.”<sup>360</sup>

He noted that revolutions “not only change social behavior” from that a biological point of view they change the structure of the population by effecting the “process of births, deaths and marriages.” Most broadly revolutions “tend to diminish the population” through the direct destruction of human life.”<sup>361</sup> Revolutions not only kill but degrade the survivors of the conflict. Sorokin detailed that among other issues children are born less healthy, while the average stature of the average soldier

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<sup>359</sup> P.A. Sorokin, *The Sociology of Revolution* (J.B. Lippincott Company), 212

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 224

<sup>361</sup> Sorokin. pg195

in the Red Army has declined. The entirety of population in Russia was decimated by famine.<sup>362</sup> Both during and after revolutions men “grow small.”<sup>363</sup> Thus, civilization in a state of revolution is under a state of “negative selection” concluding that, “he that desires the extermination of his people, the decrease of the birth rate, the deterioration of the racial fund of the nation, the destruction of its noblest elements...should prepare a violent revolution and render it deep-rooted and widespread.”<sup>364</sup>

Revolutions had the effect of making sure only the worst “characters” survived whereby revolutions are an instrument of death, exterminating “all that is best, healthiest, most capable...all that is above the average.” Revolutions instead leave “the grey mass” “indifferent to all but its own welfare.” As importantly, revolution uproots a mass of individuals of quality (the emigres). It was illustrated in history that this type of political “ostracism” which Sorokin was himself subject to “often draws away the most precious and superior elements” such as the “exile of heretics” from Spain or the dispersal of Huguenots from Europe.<sup>365</sup> Revolutions in particular lead to the murder and death of scientists and artists. Russia Sorokin underscored after having many years of scientific progress on the part of its geniuses was “positively beggarded.”<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid. 219-20

<sup>363</sup> Ibid. 212.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid. 228.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid. 214-6

<sup>366</sup> Ibid. 217

Containing the roots of his social mobility theory, Sorokin underscored that any social system consisted in “a series of preventative devices, such as the demand for experience, examinations, etc.” as well as fostered conditions where “descent from a talented family ...good references, etc.” which enable individuals to find their proper place. Revolutions disrupted these mechanisms of selection where “hundreds of individuals arbitrarily seize positions of importance without any test of their abilities or any examination.” Individuals become highly placed in society not through some rigorous mechanism of social testing but through “some speech which please the mob.”<sup>367</sup> While under normal conditions, in order to be admitted to any profession the “mechanism of social selection” is such that it is “necessary for an individual to prove his professional ability and his experience. The individual prepares for his future occupation and is subjected to various tests.” After revolutions these conditions “are mostly brushed aside.” “Unrevolutionaryness” becomes “the criterion of great inability, especially as far as skilled professionals are concerned.”<sup>368</sup>

Nonetheless, society does recover somewhat through a process of social selection. As the “turbidness” of revolution “the outlines of social groups” again become visible and when this occur “the mechanism of selection and circulation which brings them into a system and serves as a regulator is restored.” However, the “mechanism regulating the circulation, distribution and circulation of individuals is

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid, pg. 269.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid, pg. 270

different, and its operation leads to different results as far as the distribution of individuals in the social system.”<sup>369</sup>

Post-revolutionary societies were further defied, according to Sorokin by the “failure of the mechanism of social selection.”<sup>370</sup> Sorokin complained, “Fords and Carnegies may exist among the workers, but they cannot be created by the order of government.” Rather they succeed through a socially selective process whereby: “They succeed by manifesting their organizing abilities...they overcome obstacles, and do not, mechanically all of the sudden, from tailors become managers of metallurgical works.”<sup>371</sup> To take another example, there was another breakdown in the “mechanism of social selection” during and after the Revolutions of 1848 where “the posts of the prefects and sub-prefects were occupied by revolutionary commissaries...among whom there were many not only incapable people, but downright scoundrels.”<sup>372</sup> During the French Revolution and afterwards, politics in France became extraordinarily disordered and a “reverse selection”<sup>373</sup> occurred among politicians which “side by side with capable and tenuous individuals” “incapable ones...passed through.” The same “mechanism of social selection” can be seen in the English Revolution in the government of Cromwell<sup>374</sup>

Sorokin concluded that revolutions only varied in their “extent of the distortion of the mechanism of selection, the percentage of people unsatisfactorily

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<sup>369</sup> Ibid, pg. 235

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid, pg. 273

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, pg. 276

<sup>373</sup> Ibid, pg. 277

<sup>374</sup> Ibid, pg. 278.

distributed.” Sorokin also observed that the types of individuals “climbing up” during revolutions were distinct from normal periods, including “unbalanced maniacs, full of unsatisfied ambitions, hatred and exasperations, indifferent to other people’s sufferings....people with feebly developed (restraining) habits.” In revolutions, as opposed to normal society, “peaceful, compassionate people who are accustomed to create, not to destroy, who are sane and broad-minded enough to understand the dangers of an unlimited destruction....have no chance of succeeding....”<sup>375</sup>

Revolution then for Sorokin was the antithesis of the normal course of the “mechanism of social selection” in society. Quite clearly, Sorokin was moving towards an account of social mobility defined by social selection, but an account of social selection and social mobility which is abnormal, which promotes, according to Sorokin, the wrong sort of individuals and which does not promote the right sort. Sorokin, as also illustrated by his *Social Mobility*, had a notion of “hereditary” elites, such as the nobility, but he also, like Ross, was concerned with character, lamenting how in the context of revolutions “peaceful, compassionate people” had no chance to find their proper place in revolutionary environment, particularly during its most violent phases.

And if revolution was for Sorokin selection at its most pathogenic, his work in *Social Mobility* underscored how he believed the rise and fall of individuals and of groups functioned in everyday society and how indeed, society, under more normal

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<sup>375</sup> Ibid, pg. 281

circumstances brought man away from the selection of nature and into the selection by the moral order of society. This order, moreover, in contrast to the tumult of the revolution, emphasized and rewarded innate differences, talents and abilities. In the “good” society, furthermore, ability and institution worked together, and it was not always the case that an ability selected (such as intelligence), but rather a moral or social characteristic.

If Edward Ross began with an account of the foundations of order, Sorokin began his sociology, as well as his account of social selection and social mobility with an account of hierarchy. For Sorokin all human societies, even the most rudimentary, had some sort of hierarchy and the grouping of individuals in social strata. Sorokin underscored, “Modern democracies do not present any exception to the rule. Though in their constitutions it is said ‘all men are created equal’ only a naïve person may infer from this a non-existence of social stratification within these societies.” In every modern, industrial democratic society there existed “graduations from Henry Ford to a beggar.”<sup>376</sup> For Sorokin, however, a “functioning” society as underscored in his account of revolution was by very definition hierarchical and ordered according to talents and abilities. Accordingly, Sorokin defined social stratification as “the differentiation of a given population into hierarchically superimposed classes” where a functioning society was in its very “essence” an “unequal distribution of rights and privileges...social values and privations.”<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin, *Social Mobility, Harper's Social Science Series* (New York, London,: Harper & Brothers).

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 11.

On social selection and social mobility, Sorokin began, “in any society, there are a great many people who want to climb up into its upper strata.” Only a few can do so, in order that “the vertical circulation does not have an anarchical character.” In any society there must be “mechanism” “which controls the process of vertical circulation.” This control was nothing but the “testing” or “selection” of “individuals with respect for their suitability for their performance of a definite social function” so that each individual through “selection” occupies “a definite social position.” Social selection thus acts as “a kind of sieve...which sifts the individuals and places them within society.” The essential role of “the mechanism of social selection” is “so that each (individual) is placed according to his talents and able to perform successfully his social function.” Without the mechanism of social selection or when the mechanism of social selection does not work or was absent (as during periods of revolution) and individuals are wrongly placed “do their social work poorly” and as a result “all society suffers and degenerates.”<sup>378</sup> Sorokin continued that in functioning society these “mechanisms of selection” were “composed of all social institutions and organizations” which “test” and “select” and “distribute” individuals in the social system so that each individual finds his or her proper place, according to Sorokin, where mechanisms of social selection were to be found in “institutions such as the family, army, church, state, school, political and professional organizations” which all act as “sieves which test and sift, select and distribute the individuals within different social strata and positions.”<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 182

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 183

Sorokin was also clear about which “qualities” were selected, by which institutions and agencies in society. There were “general qualities” which included “general intelligence, health and social character,” which schools, the Church and the family were responsible for selecting for, while many “specific qualities” were subject to selection especially by occupation. In society there was selection and corresponding social mobility for “the oratorical talent of a perspective politician...the physical strength of a future heavyweight champion.”<sup>380</sup>

The family “has been made the first criteria for the development of man’s general and specific abilities” where “the family became one of the earliest bases for the social distribution of the members of a society within its layers.”<sup>381</sup> Sorokin continued that in most “normal societies” “the family as a selecting, testing and distributing agency plays an exclusively important role” where in many societies, for example, “the inheritance of the father’s position by the son was usual and natural.” “Contrawise,” Sorokin continued, in an “unstable family” “the family loses its hereditary as well as its exclusive educational value.”<sup>382</sup>

As important as the family was to the initial “mechanism of selection” responsible for the place of an individual in society, schools were perhaps equally so. As Sorokin noted, “the essential social function of a school” is to determine “which of the pupils are talented and which are not, what ability each pupil has and to what degree” and to “promote those who happen to be bright students in the direction of

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<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid, pg. 184

<sup>382</sup> Ibid, pg. 186

those social positions which correspond to their general and specific abilities.” The school, Sorokin further underscores, “is primarily a testing, selecting and distributing agency,” “the whole school system with its...quizzes, examinations, and supervision of students, and their grading, ranking, evaluating eliminating and promoting, is a very complicated sieve which sifts the good from the bad, the ‘able’ from the ‘dull’ and those fitted for the high positions from the ‘unfitted.’”<sup>383</sup> Schools “increases the physical and mental differences among individuals.”<sup>384</sup> The divergence of individuals into differing social classes, with differing works and labors, differing housing and occupations even among primitive tribes were the consequences of social selection as even in the most primitive tribes “some of their members succeed in rising to leadership...while other individuals do not rise above the general level.”<sup>385</sup>

The Church for its part also played as important a socially selective function as the school, as those whom “in the opinion of the Church, have been virtuous...have been promoted upward.” In this way, the Church was played an enormous role in “the social selection and the distribution of individuals among differing social strata”<sup>386</sup> This is also the case since, “The opinion of the Church community, the Church affiliation of a man, the man’s characterization by Church authorities and leaders, still play a considerable part in the career of a great many people.”<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Ibid, pg. 189

<sup>384</sup> Ibid, 327

<sup>385</sup> Ibid, 328-29

<sup>386</sup> Ibid, pg. 193

<sup>387</sup> Ibid, pg. 194.

Occupations as well served as sites of “social selection and testing” where “in the first place, in that the very existence of a specific occupation calls forth a definite selection of the kind of people who may enter and stay in the occupation and those who can pursue it.” Furthermore, the very division of labor was a “powerful selective agency” where “the population of a greater part of occupational groups is biologically, mentally and morally selected.” In every occupation due to the “mechanism of social selection,” Sorokin continued, “It is well-known that...some are rapidly climbing up, from an office boy to the president of the cooperation” where “such phenomena of social transposition and social redistribution are an everyday phenomenon.” In occupations “every day is a permanent test of his general, as well as his specific ability.” The occupation “tests and retests individuals.”<sup>388</sup>

Generally, then the “mechanism of social selection” “had the character of necessity” which is “firmly controlled by many and various institutions by mere virtue of their existence.” Social distribution “was firmly controlled by many and various institutions by mere virtue of their existence.” These institutions “in their totally compose an enormously complex...machinery which controls the whole process of social testing, social selection and distribution of individuals within the social body.” Among the most important institutions were “the Church, school and the family and occupational institutions” which “performs the functions of social selection and distribution of members of a society.” Sorokin was keen to observe that “the concrete forms of the institutions of selection and distribution may vary from

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<sup>388</sup> Ibid, pg. 204

society to society” but they exist in every society. Sorokin concludes that “in its entirety the whole mechanism of social selection and distribution is responsible for the kind of people that inhabit the upper and the lower strata- the kind of people who are climbing and falling, and the characteristics of the aristocracy as well as the lower classes of society.” Social selection as a mechanism “is determined by the qualities, nature, and character of the organization of the selecting institutions” as well as by “the character of the impediments which they set up” as well as the character of the individuals passing through them.<sup>389</sup>

Sorokin concluded that in any “healthy” society, institutions engaged in constant social testing, socially selecting individuals for various attributes within the “social body.” In Sorokin’s account social institutions such as the Church, home and school not only mold individuals “they perform functions of social selection and the distribution of the members of a society.” As mechanisms of social selection, these institutions have “enormous importance.” While institutions and mechanisms of social selection and the exact characters and qualities which are “selected” varied from society to society, as did the institutions which selected. However, all societies selected, and it was in the nature of the society whether this selection was “wrong” or correct. Social selection was then key to Sorokin to the entire health of a society and was essential to the “strong and prosperous development of the whole society.”<sup>390</sup>

Sorokin also underscored that in most instances “mechanisms of social selection” and “distribution” would result in “the higher the social classes, on the

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<sup>389</sup> Ibid, 207.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid. 207

whole, are more intelligent than the lower ones” where there was a “positive correlation” between social position and intelligence or IQ. Sorokin explained that nonetheless (and this again was a repudiation of Lapouge) that it was “not certain which traits in fact facilitate social climbing and which traits in fact hinder it”<sup>391</sup> Sorokin was keen to note that some traits, such as physical beauty and intelligence, did indeed correlate with higher social status, positive social selection and upward social mobility. He noted that “intelligence (IQ) is distributed unequally through different social classes” and it is “spread more generously in the upper classes” with intelligence as a rule declining through the lower classes. This for Sorokin meant that “a high intelligence, as a general rule, is a condition which almost always is necessary for and always facilitates social promotion of an individual.” As importantly, “the more intelligent part of the population rises to the upper strata and tends to concentrate principally in the upper classes.”<sup>392</sup> Sorokin was quick to qualify that the “composition of abilities within the upper classes permanently fluctuates” where often “cynicism and manipulation of ideas and convictions” were among the many “prerequisites for successfully climbing through many channels.”<sup>393</sup>

Nonetheless, “mechanisms of social selection” produced “upper classes which are composed of people with a higher intelligence than lower ones” where there was “positive correlation” between “social stratification and distribution of intelligence among differing strata.” This “correlation was not perfect” and it was certainly the case, according to Sorokin that differing abilities, other than intelligence was needed

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<sup>391</sup> Ibid, pg. 216

<sup>392</sup> Ibid, pg. 304

<sup>393</sup> Ibid, pg. 310

for social promotion.<sup>394</sup> As importantly, regardless of individual capacities, mechanisms of social selection and their consequent effect on distribution changed with any significant change in the state or the social environment, such as in periods of revolution, where there is a “permanent break in the existing equilibrium of the social distribution of individuals.”<sup>395</sup> Mobility generally and the “mechanisms of social selection” tended to “increase intellectual life” while also increasing “skepticism and cynicism” where unlike in an “immobile society” men learn “a definite course of ideas, opinions, beliefs and values” where “their mental luggage is definite” and “their convictions are firm.”<sup>396</sup>

Discussions of social selection then were extraordinarily important and central to Sorokin’s sociology. Like many of the figures of this dissertation, Sorokin was extremely critical of Lapouge’s Aryanism: Sorokin did not think that Lapouge’s “Aryan” hypothesis has any merit, he did not think that the brightest or most energetic were “long-headed.” Nonetheless, Sorokin full appropriated Lapouge’s account of social selection making the “mechanism of social selection” the center of not only his theory of revolution, but of his account of modern society and social mobility. The discussion of social selection, moreover, unifies key and very complex, weighty texts. These texts demonstrate that Sorokin considered social selection extremely useful to describe how individuals are “sorted” and “sifted” and the society which resulted. The “mechanism of social selection” was key to his account of not merely the pathological society, the revolutionary one, but of the functioning society.

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid, pg. 312

<sup>395</sup> Ibid, pg. 373

<sup>396</sup> Ibid, pg. 519

Social selection and its role in social mobility was present throughout Sorokin's texts, as when he described occupations in the post-revolutionary society, to when Sorokin discussed how the Church and the school, among other social institutions "sorted and sifted" individuals, according to a variety of qualities.

A key question throughout is how to characterize Sorokin's discussion of social selection and the functioning society. Particularly in his account of the selecting influence of the Church and the family, Sorokin understands that much of the selection by society has little to do with innate biological qualities and much to do with moral capacity and with virtues. Nonetheless, his account of selection by educational institutions as accentuating individual differences highlights how he understood society as developing and maintaining an elite. Sorokin believed that "intelligence" was more or less the possession of the upper classes. While it was often the case that the biologically best and the socially best were not elevated together, those individuals with innate potential in Sorokin's ideal scheme had the most social success. While this is very different than social Darwinism, as it relies upon social institutions to do the selecting, the collusion of a biological and social elite remains problematic, all the more so considering that IQ does not exist scientifically.

The next chapter, focusing on Alexander Carr-Saunders and Roland Fisher shifts the discussion of social selection from the United States, where it has been for two chapters, and to England. What binds these two individuals together in their discussion of social selection was both scientist's emphasis on not simply social selection, but how human fertility, and especially, the practices around marriage and

reproduction of social classes, was not at all the consequence of natural selection, but of social selection. Carr-Saunders and Fisher both use social selection to take marriage and reproduction out of the realm of nature and into the social world. Although Sorokin was concerned with marriage and family, both Carr-Saunders and Fisher had an almost exclusive concern on how populations within human societies were mediated by social forces. For both men too this was a historical concern, where both men discussed historical forces of social selection and their role in the development of social classes and the disintegration of the upper, noble classes. Both men too because of their work in the natural and ecological science, not only considered social selection historically but also were keen to define how distinct reproduction and population growth was in modern society, which behaved, they argued distinctly from nature. Both Carr-Saunders and Fisher's work began large tradition in British social theory, focusing on the social factors and the workings of social selection, particularly among the upper classes and the working poor.

## Chapter 6 : Alexander Carr-Saunders, R.A Fisher, Social Selection and the Foundations of Social Inquiry in Britain

This chapter focusing on Alexander Carr-Saunders and Ronald Fisher shifts the discussion of social selection from the United States, where it has been for two chapters, to England. What binds these two individuals together in their discussion of social selection was both scientist's emphasis on not simply social selection, but how human fertility, and especially, the practices around marriage and reproduction of social classes, was not at all the consequence of natural selection, but of social selection. Carr-Saunders and Fisher both use social selection to take marriage and reproduction out of the realm of nature and into the social world. Although Sorokin was concerned with marriage and family, both Carr-Saunders and Fisher had an almost exclusive concern on how populations within human societies were mediated by social forces.

For both men as well, social forces and their interaction with fertility was a historical concern, where both men discussed historical forces of social selection and their role in the development of social classes. Fisher was especially concerned with the disintegration of the upper, noble classes in his *The Social Selection of Human Fertility* which linked with his present concern of fertility in the British upper classes. Thus, both men were keen to define how distinct reproduction and population growth was in modern society, which behaved, they argued distinctly from reproduction and population increase in nature. Both Carr-Saunders and Fisher's work began a large tradition in British social theory, focusing on the social factors and the workings of social selection, particularly among the upper classes and the working poor.

Historians and social scientists have long considered Alexander Carr-Saunders (1886-1966) to be one of the most influential and foundational social scientists of the twentieth century. Carr-Saunders was President of the London School of Economics from 1937 to 1956, when he succeeded the reformer William Beveridge (1879-1963). During his time at the LSE, he served as a mentor to many well-known future social scientists, including Ernest Gellner,<sup>397</sup> and enacted many institutional reforms which allowed for the modernization of British sociology, moving it away from vulgar evolutionism and its association with eugenics.<sup>398</sup> Carr-Saunders published respected works on social structure in England and Wales, as well a monograph on the professions.<sup>399</sup> He studied biometrics and statistics with Karl Pearson (one of the founders of statistics and a proponent of eugenics) and had longstanding involvement with eugenics organizations in Britain.

Ronald Fisher (1890-1962) was a distinguished statistician and geneticist who was one of the theorists most responsible for the development of the modern science of genetics. He provided mathematical understanding through his understanding of Mendelian inheritance how the small variations which were often inherited by various organisms did indeed have a cumulative large effect. While Fisher's genetical theory of natural selection as well as his contributions in mathematics and statistics have attracted a large amount of commentary, his discussion of the "social selection of human

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<sup>397</sup> J.A. Hall, *Ernest Gellner: An Intellectual Biography* (Verso Books). Published 2004

<sup>398</sup> Thomas Osborne, Nikolas Rose, and Mike Savage, "Editors' Introduction: Reinscribing British Sociology: Some Critical Reflections," *The Sociological Review* 56, no. 4 (2008), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2008.00803.x>.

<sup>399</sup> A.M. Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Clarendon Press). A.M. Carr-Saunders, D.C. Jones, and C.A. Moser, *A Survey of Social Conditions in England and Wales as Illustrated by Statistics* (Clarendon Press). Published in 1933

fertility” has attracted much less attention. This dissertation chapter will be the first treatment of Fisher’s ideas on the forces regulating fertility in history and in Fisher’s British present.<sup>400</sup>

Carr-Saunders’ involvement with eugenics and the Eugenics Education Association particularly in the inter-war period, has been subject to a great deal of comment by historians and sociologists.<sup>401</sup> This involvement points to what G.R. Searle called, many years ago, “the surprising resurgence in the fortunes of the British eugenics movement” in the England of the 1930s, which in the face of widespread depression and economic turmoil, manifested in a deep and widespread fear among British sociologists of the poor, laboring classes.<sup>402</sup> Historians such as Richard Soloway underscore that Carr-Saunders throughout his career was uncomfortable with eugenics not only because he considered the state of biological knowledge to be insufficient, but also because he underscored the role of the environment in biological development. This discomfiture was certainly reflected in his 1926 text *Eugenics*.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> On Fisher see in particular J. Sapp, *Genesis: The Evolution of Biology* (Oxford University Press), 2003, on some of the more technical mathematical aspects of Fisher’s theory see A. Etheridge, *Some Mathematical Models from Population Genetics: École D’été De Probabilités De Saint-Flour Xxxix-2009* (Springer). Pg. 5-6

<sup>401</sup> Most of the scholarly comment on Carr-Saunders and eugenics has focused on his 1926 textbook *Eugenics*. Mary O. Furner argued that Carr-Saunders, as a member of the British *Eugenics Society*” described Carr-Saunders eugenics as not of the “negative” kind, focusing on the elimination of the “unfit,” but rather of the “positive” variety, which focused on the promotion of childrearing among the upper classes of British society. M.O. Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Political Science, 1865-1905* (Transaction Publishers). Pg. 445-46

<sup>402</sup> Geoffrey Russell Searle, "Eugenics and Politics in Britain in the 1930s," *Annals of Science* 36, no. 2 (1979)

<sup>403</sup> R.A. Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain* (University of North Carolina Press). Pg. 174. See also A. Bashford, *Global Population: History, Geopolitics, and Life on Earth* (Columbia University Press). pg. 256ff

Nonetheless, the sociologist Nikolas Rose, perhaps the most prominent left-wing sociologist working in Britain today, underscored that Carr-Saunders remains significant today because he more than any other British figure at the time represented the discipline of sociology in Britain, its stage of development, and the concerns of its science.<sup>404</sup> Carr-Saunders, argues Rose, while not being a figure which British sociologists today should necessarily emulate, was nonetheless one of the key figures which allowed for the emergence of modern sciences of population, particularly in Britain. Rose concludes that Carr-Saunders' work while not sociology "in the modern sense" was nonetheless "not straightforwardly eugenics." Rather, "Carr-Saunders sought out a social perspective on matters of population that were exercising policy-makers, intellectuals and politicians of his day."<sup>405</sup>

Unnoticed by historians and key to the arguments of this dissertation, Carr-Saunders work and his account of "social selection" was key to the emergence of studies of "differential fertility," which tried to determine the social, particularly class, differences in fertility. *The Population Problem*, through a number of intermediaries, was also responsible for inspiring studies of social mobility, through Carr-Saunders' key role in the development of "social biology" in Britain.

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<sup>404</sup> Thomas Osborne and Nikolas Rose, "Populating Sociology: Carr-Saunders and the Problem of Population," *The Sociological Review* 56, no. 4 (2008/11/01, accessed 2018/06/18, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2008.00805.x>. Steven P. R. Rose and Dialectics of Biology Group., *Against Biological Determinism* (London ; New York New York, N.Y.: Allison & Busby ; Distributed in the USA by Schocken Books).

<sup>405</sup> Osborne, Rose, and Savage. Pg. 523.

Social biology which is today an established inquiry in Britain, conceptually in between demography, sociology, biology and ethnology.<sup>406</sup> F.M Reid has underscored, in discussing its place in the English educational system, that social biology encompassed all aspects of “humanely important biology.”<sup>407</sup> Social biology most generally, according to the biologist Lancelot Hogben, investigates human “social conduct” in its’ “biological and social aspects, with the idea that man is at the same time a biological as well as a social animal.”<sup>408</sup>

This dissertation chapter thus argues that Carr-Saunders’ work on the population moved decisively away from late nineteenth century discussions of population, by criticizing and adapting the Malthusian account of population, and by emphasizing the social and the role of tradition as opposed to the merely biological aspects of fertility and reproduction and by critiquing overtly Darwinian models of population growth. In this way, Carr-Saunders *socialized* discussions of human fertility in *The Population Problem* through his discussion of social selection which greatly influenced the further development of social theory in Britain.

He thus paved the way, as will be outlined in the last pages of this chapter, to the study of social mobility and differential fertility in Britain. Moreover, in order to “socialize” discussions of population, Carr-Saunders focused on the distinctions

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<sup>406</sup> Chris Renwick, "Eugenics, Population Research, and Social Mobility Studies in Early and Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain," *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 3 ( "Social biology" as an inquiry was first formulated by Lancelot Hogben. Social biology means simply the inquiry into the interconnection between man’s genetic nature and his social environment, where the inquiry is particularly concerned with the elucidation of and resolution of social problems.

<sup>407</sup> F. M. Reid, "Social Biology," *Journal of Biological Education* 2, no. 4 (1968/12/01, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00219266.1968.9653547>.

<sup>408</sup> Lancelot Hogben, "The Foundation of Social Biology," *Economica*, no. 31 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2547903>. (1931)

between natural and social selection (and between distinct periods in human history) and in thus articulated an expansive account of human social and cultural evolution and their departure from natural selection. The division between natural selection and social selection was, as I will show, key to Carr-Saunders account of population and the differing social factors which influenced human fertility in human society.

Thus, the focus of this chapter of this dissertation will be Carr-Saunders' most important book at the origin of all of these inquiries, the work which has welded his reputation among historians and social scientists, his 1922 *Population Problem: A Study in Human Evolution*. The chapter will also address the influence of Carr-Saunders' *Population Problem* in especially the post-war social sciences. Then this chapter of the dissertation will not only be a discussion of Carr-Saunders' account of social selection and natural selection but will make some effort to trace his various influences in especially the post-war British and American social sciences. I will detail how discussions of the "social selection of human fertility" and of the inquiry of human biology opened up an enormous vista in the social sciences in Britain and to a lesser extent the United States by allowing social theorists to theorize the connection between individual distinctions and their consequences for social role and social status outcomes.

A further argument of this chapter is that while many historians of social theory have been concerned over Carr-Saunders deep engagement with eugenics organizations in Britain, such concerns do not seem to have any merit. While Carr-Saunders promoted positive eugenics, this was nothing more than the promotion of an "ethic of responsibility" and the promotion of voluntary parenthood. Moreover, the

focus on Carr-Saunders and the eugenics question has falsely identified social selection discussions as a key to the continuity of eugenics and restrictive population thinking in Britain. This is incorrect. As this dissertation illustrates in this chapter and others, social selection was a key mechanism for distancing and defining the natural and the social.<sup>409</sup>

Thus, in order to further chart Carr-Saunders' influence, I take up a discussion of the origins of "social biology" in the work of Carr-Saunders and in the polemic of the biologist and social theorist Lancelot Hogben. Hogben (1895-1975) was a pioneering biologist and British zoologist who forcefully continued the work of Carr-Saunders in moving studies of population away from not only eugenics, but an emphasis on social forces. Hogben in *Nature and Nurture* and other publications interrogated the links between nature and nurture and between biology and society. Hogben was among the first biologists to clearly consider the role of environment in the study of genetics and its relationship to disease.<sup>410</sup>

Hogben's early studies of "social selection" and "social differentiation" paved the way, along with Fisher's account of the "social selection of human fertility" for studies of social mobility in Britain, particularly after the Second World War. As reviewers such as the celebrated social theorist A. H Halsey (1923-2014) underscored, the inquiry into social biology for British theorists opened up a new "tradition of empirical study of the progress of social selection and social differentiation" at the London School of Economics. According to Halsey,

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<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Lancelot Hogben, *Nature and Nurture* (George Allen And Unwin; London).

discussions of social mobility in Britain needed to take into account both individual differences and social forces in order to give an accurate assessment of the “extent of the movement between social levers.”<sup>411</sup>

Thus, T.H Marshall (1893-1981) underscored, drawing from Carr-Saunders’ and social biology’s new emphasis on individual difference and its interconnection with the “social levers,” that one of the great problems for social theory traditions, whether liberalism, conservatism, or socialism, as well as the welfare state, was the ubiquity of selection and the ubiquity of social mobility. Marshall in his “Social Selection and the Welfare State” underscored (like Pitrim Sorokin in the previous chapter) that any functioning society had a process by which individuals are “sifted, sorted and distributed into the various positions in the social system” distinguished by “function, status or place in the social hierarchy.”<sup>412</sup> The goal of the welfare state thus straddled the line between an assumption of equality of all individuals with the understanding that not all individuals were equally gifted.<sup>413</sup>

In order to further describe Carr-Saunders’ influence and his socialization of demography and population studies and the continual emphasis upon social selection, I will also describe the work of the geneticist R.A. Fisher and his explicit formulation of the “social selection of human fertility.” Fisher was deeply indebted to Carr-Saunders. I will show how Fisher’s work took the distinctions which Carr-Saunders constructed between selection in nature and selection in society and turned such a

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<sup>411</sup> A. H. Halsey, "Social Mobility in Britaina Review," *Sociological Review* 2, no. 2 ( Pg. 169

<sup>412</sup> TH Marshall, "Social Selection in the Welfare State," *The Eugenics Review* 45, no. 2 ( Pg. 81

<sup>413</sup> Alfred H Halsey, "Genetics, Social Structure and Intelligence," *The British Journal of Sociology* 9, no. 1 ( And Marshall, pg. 82ff.

distinction into a diagnosis for one of the key social anxieties for British social theorists before the Second World War, the decline of the aristocracy. Fisher's own discussion of decline was also central to his own inquiry into the inquiry between nature and nature.

Building on Fisher's account of the "social selection of human fertility" Barbara Stoddard Burks (1902-1943), who was a key early theorist of studies of genes and environment and who took as her subject intelligence among twins and related adolescents "reared apart" in different environments, Burks wrote extensively on the "unproven theorem" that human fertility was socially determined rather than naturally selected.<sup>414</sup> Jerzy Berent (b. 1917) used the work of both Carr-Saunders and Fisher to articulate an expansive account of sociological change based on their discussions of reproduction and social selection.

It is clear however that much of the 19<sup>th</sup> work on demography, and much of what motivated Carr-Saunders' discussion of population and fertility in civilization understood the growth and regulation of population in human society to be simply a product of biology, where the natural increase of populations was simply a factor of the dynamic between biological imperatives and scarce resources. In general, discussions of the growth of the population of man were greatly influenced not only by the work of Thomas Malthus, but through critiques, apparent and hidden of the idea that "population is limited by subsistence" and the Malthusian corollary that

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<sup>414</sup> Barbara S. Burks, "Social Promotion in Relation to Differential Fecundity," *Human Biology* 13, no. 1 (<http://www.jstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/stable/41447479>).

populations tend to increase beyond that subsistence.<sup>415</sup> Henry Carey (1793-1879), considered by many historians of economic thought to be one of the most important American antebellum economists underscored that at each stage of civilization, the population of mankind could only increase at the level of its subsistence. For example, pastoralists could only maintain a certain population density while “savages” at the lowest stage of population, another.<sup>416</sup>

Later Simon Patten (1852-1922), an American economist who was one of the pivotal early professors at the Wharton business school underscored that while it was certainly incorrect to consider population according to such Malthusian laws, what was also clear was that certain stages of society could only support specific numbers. Patten’s discussion was not sociological (though he did discuss society.) His point was merely that agriculture, though not diminishing in its returns, was only so elastic. This was very different than Carr-Saunders’s sociological account of population and his social understanding of evolutionary forces.<sup>417</sup>

Drawing from these Malthusian currents, Carr-Saunders’s *Population Problem* was motivated with, as he noted, the “question of numbers.” During Carr-Saunders’ time, humanity had finally emerged from what could be called “the Malthusian trap” where disease, warfare, famine kept human groups at a rather low level. Due to the revolutions in sanitation, advances in technology and the regulation and

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<sup>415</sup> ARTHUR T LYTELTON, "The Question of Population," *The Economic review, 1891-1914* 1, no. 2 (1891)

<sup>416</sup> Henry Charles Carey, *Principles of Social Science* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company). Pg. 94.

<sup>417</sup> Simon N. Patten, "A New Statement of the Law of Population," *Political Science Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2139578>). published in 1895

standardization of the food supply, the “question of numbers” again became prominent.

This had been a great concern with Thomas Malthus, who as noted in the introduction, essentially considered population to be a biological and an economic concern, where population levels were decidedly influenced by agriculture and nutrition.<sup>418</sup> In Britain in particular, there was a particular concern in discussions of population during the inter-war period in Britain over two issues, the numbers of proletariat (which was based upon a lingering concern of the ‘social question’) and a widespread suspicion, particularly among social scientists in Britain, concerning the laboring poor.<sup>419</sup>

This was manifested not only in early discussions of what became British welfare and social legislation, but an emphasis on the diagnosis and development of possible schemes for the amelioration of, in particular, urban poverty.<sup>420</sup> The key question was not only in the words of Charles Booth, the pathbreaking sociologist of urban poverty in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, “who is the poor man?” but also “how many poor men were there?” This discussion of the poor tuned immediately into an anxiety over the infertility of the “upper classes” and the decline of the aristocracy. This was the second question.

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<sup>418</sup> A. Macfarlane, *The Savage Wars of Peace: England, Japan and the Malthusian Trap* (Palgrave Macmillan UK).

<sup>419</sup> D. Moggach and P.L. Browne, *The Social Question and the Democratic Revolution: Marx and the Legacy of 1848* (University of Ottawa Press).

<sup>420</sup> I. Gazeley, *Poverty in Britain, 1900-1965* (Palgrave Macmillan). R. McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class : Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950: Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950* (Clarendon Press).

On the decline of the aristocracy and the other upper classes, both demographically and in power, Arthur Ponsonby (1871-1945), underscored that the decline of the upper classes was the direct result of “democracy.” Ponsonby noted that the position of the governing class had radically changed over the past hundred years and it was no longer the case the “learned gentleman of today is a highly educated and indispensable member of the community.” The decline of the aristocracy came about simply because the people did not consider the privileges according to the aristocratic person to be valid.<sup>421</sup>

This problem of the decline of the aristocracy had excited individuals since Francis Galton (a eugenicist and the cousin of Charles Darwin) who in 1874 first seriously inquired into whether the decline of the upper classes was a strictly biological problem or a social and environmental one. He noted that if it was indeed certain that the decline in the upper classes, particularly the nobility, was universal, this would mean that the majority of the population of England was the result of the “proletariat.” And indeed, Galton found that this was the case.<sup>422</sup>

Though Carr-Saunders was as concerned with disaggregating the social and the biological causes of population, some of his inquiry indeed focused on the “character” of the population. Carr-Saunders was keen to argue that the aristocracy, contrary to Francis Galton, did not have inherently superior qualities. This stemmed from a very simple biological proposition that any extreme traits (whether it be

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<sup>421</sup> A.P. Ponsonby, *The Decline of Aristocracy* (T. F. Unwin). Pg 307-8.

<sup>422</sup> Henry William Watson and Francis Galton, "On the Probability of the Extinction of Families," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 4 ( 138ff

intelligence or ability) tended to trend towards the mean after any number of generations. This is called “regression to the mean.”

From his account of family size among the aristocracy, Carr-Saunders pointed to statistics which suggested that families were indeed becoming smaller because of social mores and customs, because of the desire to concentrate wealth and to confer advantages on to a more limited number of children. Carr-Saunders did not think that anything could be done other than to encourage “voluntary parenthood,” which will encourage those parents who are most suitable to become parents themselves.<sup>423</sup> Ronald Fisher, discussed in the second part of this chapter, passionately discussed the problem of “differential fertility” and the aristocracy, drawing from Carr-Saunders’ formulation. The problem of the role of social mores and traditions and its role in reproduction and the differences in fertility among the social classes will be discussed again in the context of Alexander Carr-Saunders discussion of tradition.

Nonetheless, the majority of the *Population Problem* concerned the distinction between population growth in nature and human population growth in society and between the social selection of fertility in various stages of human civilization. This was related to the problem of the growth of the proletariat and the decline of the aristocracy out of Carr-Saunders’ understanding that social forces did indeed shape fertility and population growth.

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<sup>423</sup> Alexander M Carr-Saunders, "Eugenics in the Light of Population Trends," *The Eugenics Review* 27, no. 1 (

Carr-Saunders noted that animal “increase” or reproduction was solely biological and their evolution, in turn was strictly dependent on “germinal change.” Animals and plants in the natural world, Carr-Saunders underscored, reproduced and evolved in response to natural forces and as such “selection is no more than a sieve.” What animals and plants reproduce and what animals and plants are “selected” was more or less the “mean,” where exotic forms and other physical outliers were eliminated.<sup>424</sup>

According to Carr-Saunders, it was the case that in their remote history the course of their population growth was simply a consequence of the action of the environment. Man’s evolution, Carr-Saunders contended in its remotest history, was strictly “germinal.” However, at some point in the remote past, man’s evolution became almost entirely of the “mental” variety, and he was able to grow in understanding, and thus formed an essential part of his social life. Due to such “mental” as opposed to “germinal” growth man was able to change his environment “under the dictates of reason.”<sup>425</sup> “Tradition” Carr-Saunders argued “fundamentally changed the qualitative problem among men.” With “tradition” the nature of selection and the nature of inheritance fundamentally changed. In nature, inheritance and selection was the result of biological characteristics. With tradition, especially, the nature of selection in society becomes fundamentally different. With tradition knowledge, “skill” is cumulative “Even among the most primitive races now existing there is a huge mass of tradition. Succeeding generations do not necessarily start at

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<sup>424</sup> A. M. Carr-Saunders, *The Population Problem: A Study in Human Evolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press). Pg. 78-9.

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.*

the beginning again. They start with the experience of the race behind them, so far as it has been preserved.”<sup>426</sup> Selection in society became the consequence of “evolution of reason” which as “modified the course of selection.”<sup>427</sup>

Rather remarkably, and more than any other social theorist discussed in this dissertation, Carr-Saunders constructed a theory of history whereby human development was divided into two periods, that under the regime of natural selection and that under the regime of social selection. He noted that the “intensity of natural selection” had decreased with the advent of civilization, diminishing more and more as civilization became more and more advanced.<sup>428</sup> Natural selection was at work when for example in primeval history when there was the great shift to agriculture, or during great human migrations. Carr-Saunders underscored that “spreading of man into new climatic zones was doubtless followed by selection, and must again have involved contact with new enemies.”<sup>429</sup>

A similar regime of natural selection was encountered when human beings, in the primeval time, were moving from an arboreal environment into the savanna, as early hominids.<sup>430</sup> As importantly, the early introduction of polygamy among these small tribes of hominids- where there was a correlation of status and access to mates- meant that while some high-status hominids had multiple mates and many offspring, others had none at all.<sup>431</sup> The regime of natural selection extended to the most

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<sup>426</sup> Ibid, pg. 81.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid, pg. 82

<sup>428</sup> Ibid pg. 369.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid, pg. 370

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

primitive tribes, where customs, were designed for the “elimination” of the “physically weak.” This had the influence of preserving the “physical type.” Among the most primitive tribes, the practice of polygamy also had the effect of increasing the role of natural selection in human societies, at least among very primitive “tribes.” Carr-Saunders explained that polygamy had the effect of, at least among primitive tribes, increasing “lethal selection” or the “elimination” of the “weak.” Among polygamous societies in primeval history, polygamy tended to favor those individuals who were most well adapted to the physical environment, and who, consequently, left the most descendants.<sup>432</sup>

Thus, at one point in human history organic evolution and natural selection proper, according to Carr-Saunders, more or less ceases. What takes over, according to him, is selection via culture, selection via tradition. Carr-Saunders declared, “it is universally agreed that, if anything, the intensity of natural selection has decreased with civilization.”<sup>433</sup> In the period the development of modern civilization “It is at least apparent from them that the amount of physical evolution which has been accomplished since the end of that period is slight compared with what was accomplished within that period.” More important was selection of a social and of an intellectual character “selection followed upon the first great steps in the acquirement of skill — the making of clothes, the use of fire, and so on.”<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Ibid 376.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid, pg. 369.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid, pg. 369-70

As individuals and groups moved from more primitive to more advanced states of civilization the entire nature of “selection” changes in accordance with the specific needs of that culture. Carr-Saunders underscored that as civilization began to advance, “Now men and groups of men are selected on account of the customs they practice....Those groups practising the most advantageous customs will have an advantage in the constant struggle between adjacent groups over those that practise less advantageous customs.” The nature of society and the nature of society’s change in the manner of selection was extremely clear in how primitive groups restricted fertility and in how In many scenarios with primitive groups, “Few customs can be more advantageous than those which limit the number of a group to the desirable number, and there is no difficulty in understanding how — once any of these three customs had originated....” And as such through a process of social selection “There would grow up an idea that it was the right thing to bring up a certain limited number of children, and the limitation of the family would be enforced by convention.”<sup>435</sup>

The restriction was not the only selection “pressure” in primitive societies, as Carr-Saunders explained, especially around the institutions of marriage. As Carr-Saunders explained, “It is commonly recognized that among primitive races the girls marry at or soon after puberty. It is not so often recognized that the young men not infrequently do not marry until some years later. The inefficient and the physically incapable sometimes do not marry at all. In such facts we may see evidence of the pressure exerted by social conditions and conventions.” This was the case because,

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<sup>435</sup> Ibid, pg. 223

according to Carr-Saunders, what mattered most in primitive societies, and present ones, particularly as they advanced was not survival but the “standard of living.”<sup>436</sup> Because of this change in emphasis for some “Marriage is considered impossible because he would not be in a position to maintain his family”<sup>437</sup> Thus, human society becomes, through social selection, not a matter of survival but of relative prosperity.

According to the same process, infanticide, which was one of the key ways in which very primitive populations regulated their own numbers, disappeared in more advanced societies. Indeed, it was often the case, that in society, the social mores emphasized the preservation of those less likely to survive in nature.<sup>438</sup> While polygamy “disappears” in most modern and advanced societies, there was the replacement of polygamy by other social mores which influenced the reproduction and population growth of individuals, which demographically shaped the human race in advanced societies. Carr-Saunders underscored that many individuals, who would be eliminated through disease or through other factors, nonetheless survive, due to the distance of society from the natural world. Thus, “To take two examples, not only are men with defective eyesight not eliminated, but they are by the invention of spectacles placed in as good a position as those with perfect eyesight. Similarly, a woman with a narrow pelvis is, owing to the advance in surgical skill, enabled to bear children and to transmit her peculiarity to her daughters.”<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> Ibid, pg. 224

<sup>437</sup> Ibid, pg. 225

<sup>438</sup> Ibid, pg. 377.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

Warfare too become “selected” and framed by tradition so that it “gradually becomes a custom.” While it was true that warfare, according to Carr-Saunders, began first as an “instinct” nonetheless, social selection molded and changed warfare down to the present day. Warfare changed, “as social organization slowly evolved, war too evolved “whereby the highly organized governments of modern nations try to achieve some political end.”<sup>440</sup>Carr-Saunders underscored to that warfare had a decisive role in shaping modern populations. He noted (like Lapouge) that primitive warfare tended to preserve “the strong and the fit.” However, with the advent of Greek warfare, in particular the javelin, not to mention more modern projectile weapons, Carr-Saunders argued that individuals were eliminated at random in conflict. In primitive warfare, particular primitive warfare after migration, whole races “could be lost.”<sup>441</sup>

As, if not more important than war, was what Carr-Saunders referred to as “modern celibacy, postponement of marriage, and restriction of families have come to be practiced in varying degrees....” In the modern period “restriction of families has assumed very great importance”, Carr-Saunders continued, joining Fisher, discussed later in this chapter what he considered to be the forces of the social life influencing the upper classes and the aristocracy in the restriction of their own fertility as well as they delaying of marriage. Carr-Saunders noted, “It has been calculated that, as a

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<sup>440</sup> Ibid, pg. 305.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid pg. 384.

consequence of the fact that restriction is more practised by certain sections of the population than by others, 50 per cent.”<sup>442</sup>

These practices concerning marriage and fertility consisted of traditions, according to Carr-Saunders. And man, through traditions, was “selected” by his society. It was traditions, furthermore, which really determined mankind’s departure from natural selection. In all but the most primitive social organizations “men come to be selected in accordance with the needs of the social organization.” Traditions actively work to “select” certain individuals with certain qualities ensuring that some marry while others do not. Traditions, customs and mores also ensured that those who were not “fit” according to the standards of nature survived as well.<sup>443</sup>

Traditions were the most responsible for distinctions in “differential fertility” among groups, why some groups and nations, social classes reproduced at a high rate, while others reproduced at a lower rate. Tradition and the “selection” it preformed, he concluded, defined “fitness” and fertility in modern civilization. “Struggle” most generally occurred in the modern world, not between individuals but between ideas. If, following Emile Durkheim, society was simple and self-sufficient, the members of that society have no incentive to interact and to test and compete their own behaviors. Thus, Carr-Saunders contended that modern societies, rather than primitive ones, due to their complexity, had more traditions.

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<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid 402

Tradition emerged, Carr-Saunders argued, due to populations of high density, where natural competition in particular between adjacent populations was high, and “skill” and “intellect” were highly prized. This encouraged the development of differing practices, so to compete more efficiently.<sup>444</sup> He explained, “For it is in those regions where there is the greatest abundance in quality and quantity of useful objects that there will be the greatest chance of their usefulness being observed, and that there will be derived the highest return per head from any improvements in skill.” Thus, “The greater the fertility, therefore, the greater the incentive to progress in skill.”<sup>445</sup>

In the modern world there was thus “a process of selection based upon differences in tradition, just as there is a natural selection based upon differences due to modifications and also upon differences due to mutations.” The selection of tradition, and by tradition, continued Carr-Saunders, leads to the competition of ideas, “which may be said to compete.” In advanced societies, “One idea may get the better of another within the minds of the majority without involving any elimination of men who hold any other idea, because men can now change their outlook — not, of course, in the case of the great majority by any logical process.” This meant for Carr-Saunders that any “struggle” was not against the physical person, but against that person’s ideas.

As importantly, Carr-Saunders argued that only with the division of labor was there a real increase in the specificity and number of traditions. Only with the development of the modern class system were social customs developed enough to

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<sup>444</sup> Ibid pg. 425ff.

<sup>445</sup> Ibid, pg. 422

produce sociologically distinct changes in behaviors around birth, marriage, and death.<sup>446</sup> Thus, according to him the more advanced a civilization, the greater its store of traditions. And accordingly, the more advanced and more complex a civilization, the more traditions it possessed.

“Fertility is thus relative to the tradition prevalent at any one time,” Carr-Saunders concluded. Carr-Saunders, again reflecting the concerns of R.A. Fisher, underscored further that differences in fertility or the “social selection” of fertility in society then were not simply the result of the interactions of individuals with social institutions, but the interactions of individuals and social institutions with complex traditions. There was no essential connection, for example, between a particular social institution and the tendency of individuals in the upper strata of society of delaying children or seeking abortions. However, these social practices modeled populations, selected them, as decisively as the natural elements, but in a very different way than nature.<sup>447</sup>

He noted as well that as societies became more complex, and differences in social organization became more pronounced, this accentuated and accelerated differences in selection between communities. Thus, Carr-Saunders argued that at the highest levels of civilization, such as in the modern era, differences in the social factors produced significant differences in “fitness” through a process of social

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<sup>446</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 430ff

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 436.

intensification. This was a point also emphasized by R.A. Fisher, discussed below.

Government, moreover could “select” certain groups for advancement or for persecution. Such advancement and persecution, he noted, would have significant consequences for whether individuals sired descendants and under what conditions. He detailed that, the Edict of Nantes, for example, and the Inquisition of Spain, favored some individuals who adhered to specific religious and cultural traditions, while it suppressed others.<sup>448</sup> Religions, in a similar manner, where traditions which lead to the “selection” of some groups and the diminishment of others, leading, according to Carr-Saunders to demographic distinctions between countries.

As importantly, such selection not only defined the numbers of individuals in each country, in each locality, but produced a certain type of personality or social type. Thus, in the Middle Ages, clerical celibacy as well as other traditions of the Church produced a “distinct mental type.”<sup>449</sup> This concentration of a social type was due in large part, he outlined, to the mechanisms of what become known as social mobility. He explained, that individuals of lower classes, often while numerous, do not rise above their social class. This ensured that individuals in the upper classes married each other leading to the intensification of personality traits.

Members of the upper classes, moreover, while distinguished at some point, were socially selected towards their present concentrated mediocrity. This was the

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<sup>448</sup> Ibid. pg. 450-455.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid, pg. 457

case as there were many social customs and traditions which promoted the restriction of large families among the noble classes. This caused there to be a significant reduction over time in the size of noble families. At present, Carr-Saunders detailed, because characteristics such as intelligence and genius had a tendency to go towards the mean over the course of generations.<sup>450</sup>

Carr-Saunders underscored that traditions, rather than any one specific character trait, were responsible for social mobility. What mattered most was not the intelligence or specific characteristics of one individual, but the traditions of the society which molded him. This was what made moving up or down the “social ladder” so difficult in the case of one individual.

Traditions, moreover, themselves were the focus and consequence of selection themselves. Man, furthermore, to a certain extent, also selected his own traditions. Traditions were the mechanisms by which individuals learned skills and comes about knowing his specialized place in society.<sup>451</sup> Because man could not at any one given time, assimilate the whole of a tradition, it very much was the case that those elements of that tradition which are most useful to him subsist, while others fall away. This was imperative in the case of modern societies, which had enormous traditions covering every aspect of family and social life.<sup>452</sup>

Building upon an early protean discussion of what would later be called “social mobility,” Carr-Saunders underscored that while it was very much the case

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<sup>450</sup> Ibid pg.457

<sup>451</sup> Ibid pg. 466

<sup>452</sup> Ibid, pg. 478.

that individuals did indeed differ in natural abilities and in aptitudes, what mattered in terms of their success in society, in particular whether they left progeny, was mediated by “tradition.” Achievement, status, and success very much in any society too had much to do with the “origin and transmission of traditions,” as past a certain point (past the Paleolithic era) man’s success, man’s “fitness” ceased to be a mere matter of biology, of genetics and much more about his adaptability to culture.

Tradition was thus like a “vast structure which mankind is building” with each generation adding a “few bricks” where man adds bricks depends really upon his “epoch.” His contribution whether he is successful in society, whether he produces children, depended largely upon “the building as elaborated by previous generations.” Whether a man lays the brick “intelligently” or “energetically” depended upon his innate abilities. Nonetheless, all individuals were heavily constricted, according to Carr-Saunders, in their contributions to society, their success and status in society, by the work of previous generations.<sup>453</sup>

This went directly to the question of predicting the character and number of future generations, Carr-Saunders noted, and to the question of eugenics. Those wishing to effect purely germinal change, he underscored would be nonetheless disappointed as the “course of history” depended almost entirely upon “tradition.” History was for the most part “independent” of “germinal change.” Thus, affecting the course of a people of nation did not depend upon biological evolution, it depended, Carr-Saunders argued upon modifying tradition, or most generally, the

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<sup>453</sup> Ibid, 481

environment in which man found himself. Traditions, moreover, as the selective force of society, will typically override the effects of any “germinal change.”<sup>454</sup>

Thus, in the *Population Problem*, Carr-Saunders was extremely skeptical of any actual practical effects of eugenics. This was due to, in Carr-Saunders view, the overriding influence of tradition, and as importantly, the mores and customs which constituted them, in especially modern society. This account of tradition and Carr-Saunders skepticism towards the application of eugenics (in any society, not just Britain’s) derived from what Carr-Saunders considered to be the driving forces behind evolution in modern civilization.

They were not, he reiterated, biological but rather social. Man was “selected” by society to succeed or fail. His “fitness” moreover was determined not by physical elements but by social custom. For Carr-Saunders the inability of eugenics to be practical in modern civilization stemmed not only from his account of evolution in society and the very nature of selection as social rather than natural, but from his theory of history.

Thus, Carr-Saunders’ use and discussion of social selection is consistent with other discussions in this dissertation, namely that Carr-Saunders used the concept of social selection to distinguish the social and the biological, arguing that mankind had decisively moved away from the realm of nature and “germinal” selection. He used social selection as well to distinguish the natural and the civilizational. Thus, social selection was at the center of Carr-Saunders’ conception of human civilization as well

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<sup>454</sup> Ibid, 482.

as his philosophical anthropology.<sup>455</sup> Carr-Saunders also discussed the role of tradition and social customs in the restriction of reproduction and the lower fertility of the upper as opposed to the lower classes, underscoring deep cultural factors and the mechanisms of social mobility for the differences in numbers between laborers and the aristocracy. This account whereby fertility and the differences in fertility were distinct among social classes was extended into a philosophy of history by R.A. Fisher.

R.A. Fisher (1890-1962), following in Carr-Saunders footsteps in his *Genetical Theory of Natural Selection* (first published in 1930), outlined what in that text he called the “social selection of human fertility.” Fisher’s *Genetical Theory* founded many of the postulates of modern population genetics, explaining how for example, large scale variation could in theory emerge from small effects.<sup>456</sup> However, apart from his contributions in population genetics, Fisher’s social selection of human fertility narrated how a biological process such as reproduction was decisively influenced by social forces. Fisher was keen to preserve a heroic past, considering modernity and its social mores to be an impediment to a true plan of progress. However, like Carr-Saunders, Fisher underscored that there was relatively little which could be done in order to reduce “indeterminacy” in natural selection.

According to Fisher, fertility throughout human history varied according to not only class, but to the values of that class. Fisher, more than Carr-Saunders, was

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<sup>455</sup> Carr-Saunders.

<sup>456</sup> .S.E. Fienberg and D.V. Hinkley, *R.A. Fisher: An Appreciation* (Springer New York). S. Krimsky and K. Sloan, *Race and the Genetic Revolution: Science, Myth, and Culture* (Columbia University Press).

deeply concerned over what he considered to be the debilitating effects of modern civilization and the absence of what he referred to as “heroic” virtues. As was often the case with those examined in this dissertation, Fisher adapted his discussion of social selection to his particular metaphysics, where he was less concerned with articulating the dividing line between the natural and the social and more concerned interrogating the line between the primitive and the modern. In Fisher’s account of the decline of the aristocracy and of the influence of modern social mores, he was able, like Carr-Saunders’ to articulate a theory of modernity with social selection at the center.

Fisher considered of utmost importance to be what he considered to be the social influences on fitness. He observed, like Carr-Saunders, that the “upper classes” were relatively “infertile,” where it was “socially advantageous” to restrict reproduction.<sup>457</sup> In the case of the upper classes there was a higher age of marriage as well as a lower birth rate.<sup>458</sup> Fisher observed that it was often the case that the “ruling classes” in various societies diminished over time until their disappearance.

Fisher argued that the universal tendency of the “ruling class” to diminish over time was not due, as some would have it, to the existence of “racial mixing” or the influence of the climate, but rather due to specific social customs and norms which attended the rise and maintenance of individuals into the upper classes. Fisher underscored that in the case of the upper classes in Europe, there was strong social

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<sup>457</sup> Ronald Aylmer Fisher, *The Genetical Theory of Natural Selection: A Complete Variorum Edition* (Oxford University Press). 252

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.* 253

pressure for the concentration and consolidation of wealth.<sup>459</sup> Wealth was, according to Fisher, the most important element for the determination of status and thus social position; wealth is concentrated in the parent's generation, whereby the greater number of children, the more pronounced the diminution of wealth. This resulted, according to Fisher, for there to be a diminution of members of the nobility while at the same time leading to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few.<sup>460</sup>

Again, most generally, Fisher underscored that society throughout history recognized certain qualities in individuals as “valuable” and the structures and institutions of societies function to promote those qualities. In earlier times in Europe, Fisher explained, heroism was a quality that due to the warlike nature of society was highly praised and considered extremely valuable.<sup>461</sup> It was “inevitable” that in any society which existed in a violent state that some groups (or “stocks” in Fisher's parlance), “should distinguish themselves above others in heroic qualities.” As a result, these individuals would be more often sought in marriage as in “heroic” societies where feuding is common such heroism would undoubtedly be an asset. As importantly, “the wooer relies upon his reputation even for the decision of the lady herself.” Qualities such as valor and heroism, according to Fisher, were qualities which the community held in high regard (not just the potential wife). In societies such as “barbaric ones” where heroism, sacrifice, valor, and other such qualities were held in high regard, individuals, groups or classes having these qualities would

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<sup>459</sup> Ibid, 256

<sup>460</sup> Ibid, 261.

<sup>461</sup> Ibid. 265.

be positively “selected.” These individuals would be viewed, by potential “mates” and by society at large as having excellent qualities and would therefore, in most circumstances be expected to have more children than the average.<sup>462</sup>

Such selection of traits would lead, according to Fisher, to the development of a hereditary nobility through the following process. Barbaric societies would place a specific higher value on those qualities which promote social cohesion or are good for the tribe or the larger group. Because such qualities were valued by society, society itself became socially segmented, where individuals in possession of said qualities rose above those who did not possess those qualities. Social selection had a dual influence in this instance.

It had the effect of “intensifying” those characteristics in the higher classes, as only those individuals whom had those characteristics would marry. Thus, any individuals who did not possess those characteristics did not marry and died out. Once these qualities were firmly established in the class, they became “stabilized” through social cohesion. Finally, through the status and prestige given to these qualities, they would, according to Fisher, become more pronounced through competition between individuals to express praise-worthy qualities.<sup>463</sup>

Although societies according to Fisher were no longer barbarian tribal groups, modern civilization still actively worked towards a regime of segmentation and “social promotion.” Social promotion, according to Fisher, did not have a merely

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<sup>462</sup> Ibid, 268

<sup>463</sup> Ibid.

social consequence, but a biological result. Social promotion determines in effect who marries and who does not and whom marries whom. Fisher argued that since all societies were interconnected and exogamous, with advanced societies being even more so than more primitive ones, all individuals married outside of the social unit. However, Fisher noted, there was a strong tendency of individuals from the same social class to marry each other and to otherwise converse with those individuals who were “socially equivalent.”

However, along with this tendency, there was a strong desire of parents to confer a “social advantage” to their children. This required that social promotion be prioritized over all other elements. This in turn required parents to pool their limited financial and social capital into fewer and fewer children over the generations. Fisher detailed, “this is a factor which must act powerful at every grade of affluence, whether the children are benefited by better food or more care and cleanliness....”<sup>464</sup> What mattered the most was a “greater share of inherited capital.” The “social selection of fertility” which restricts the numbers of offspring to low levels was a “machine acting with the automatic certainty of natural law” in the upper classes.<sup>465</sup>

Fisher in response simply added that if the state- whether Britain or any other in Europe- wished to promote births in the upper classes, a simple family allowance would suffice. This was perfectly consistent with the system of family allowances developing in France after the First World War. Fisher’s emphasis on demography

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<sup>464</sup> Ronald Aylmer Fisher, *The Social Selection of Human Fertility* (Oxford: The Clarendon press). Pg. 26.

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 28

reflected too many of the anxieties concerning the great loss of life after the First World War.<sup>466</sup> Fisher and Carr-Saunders as well were writing at a period which saw in large part for a number of reasons, the decline of the aristocracy in Europe. David Cannadine underscored that nothing exemplified the threat of modernity to the aristocracy than railroads passing through what had been noble estates.<sup>467</sup>

Barbara Burks used Fisher's account of social selection and differential fertility to a theory of "social promotion," which was near to her research interests in the life course of young adults. Burks first tried to ascertain whether fertility decreased with higher social class. She found that individuals who were "promoted" originated from smaller families than those who were not promoted. She found further that this was most likely do to an active effort by wealthy families to restrict reproduction, as families who are "established" have even lower fertility and fewer offspring than those families whom are establishing themselves. She argued that once families attained a certain social status, that they more or less assumed "urban" mores, with its heavy emphasis on the restriction of fertility.<sup>468</sup>

Jerzy Berent (b. 1917) underscored by the 1950s the "negative association between family size and social class had acquired the status of a law." By the 1950s, the issue among sociologists, he continued, was not so much the inverse connection between family and social class, but the fear of the proletariat overpopulating the

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<sup>466</sup> S. Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914-1945* (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>467</sup> D. Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain* (Yale University Press).

<sup>468</sup> Burks.

other classes. Berent considered the question to be complex since he did not think it immediately possible to disaggregate those individuals who moved down in status and those who moved up. Therefore, ascertaining the connection between fertility and social class was difficult if not impossible. Berent continued that nonetheless, there was a relationship between social promotion and family size. He underscored that promoting individuals did indeed come from smaller families, although the actual magnitude of the relationship was very small. Berent's discussion underscored however that there was enormous discussion of Fisher and Carr-Saunders' association between fertility and family size. This meant that the "social selection of human fertility" was an active point of discussion among sociologists through the post-war period. The difficulty with the discussion of this relationship was not simply in attempting to ascertain the direction of the movement (such as up or down on the social scale) but also ascertaining correct criteria for status.

While Carr-Saunders 1922 *Population Problem* was an exercise in small part an assessment in the "quantity and quality" of the population at present and in the future, this was outweighed by his account of social selection and the division between the biological and the social. The above shows that both men's discussions, while separated in time, hinged on many though not all of the same themes. Fisher was chiefly concerned with tracing the disappearance of a specific European class and of answering a question posed by Francis Galton: what were the factors behind the decline of the upper classes, the aristocracy? Fisher was also as concerned with the development of the aristocracy as a class, as part of his discussion of the connection between fertility and family size. With Berent in particular we see that this problem

of fertility and family size as well as the social selection of human fertility migrate away from the problem of eugenics. This migration away from eugenics into a more social scientifically neutral space, where social selection loses any of its more unsavory associations.

Fisher's whole inquiry was also influenced in large part with, as Lancelot Hogben argued, the intricate problem of nature versus nature of which Fisher was concerned.<sup>469</sup> For Fisher, the idea that fertility and fitness were fundamentally distinct in society was already argued. Carr-Saunders established it. Hence, Carr-Saunders, while concerned with the upper classes, was even more concerned with understanding "germinal selection" and physical theories of causation as opposed to social forces. Carr-Saunders laid the group work while Fisher set about his interpretation.

As importantly, the British biological and sociological professions took forward both Carr-Saunders and Fisher's insights into the social nature of selection in society and the clear lines between nature and society in human evolution. Thus, in the works of both men, and in both men's discussions of social selection, one finds the roots of the study of social behavior in Britain.

The biologist Lancelot Hogben in his construction of social biology was able to skillfully combine all of these elements with a critique of eugenics and the notion of the "unfit." Carr-Saunders was lauded for making a clear distinction between animal and social evolution, part of the "growing reaction against the prevalent fashion of biologists to insist exclusively on the genetic factor in social

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<sup>469</sup> Hogben, *Nature and Nurture*.

change.”<sup>470</sup> Hogben considered Fisher a key participant in the “nature-nature” discussion which was key to social biology.

The task of social biology, according to Hogben, was to provide an “accredited science” of social behavior that integrated biological insights so that the student of genetics could have some firm guidance. This stricture lead Hogben himself in the early and mid-1930s to interrogate population models of modern population and over-population and to chide their adherents for an insufficient attention to social factors. Hogben that it was impossible to look at reproduction as a wholly “self-regulating biological process” as recent figures from England and Wales demonstrated declining fertility in certain classes due to the increase in leisure time and luxury goods. Important too were an increased knowledge of contraception and the greater dissemination of associated literature.<sup>471</sup>

Hogben and others took these insights under the rubric of “Political Arithmetic” and began an inquiry into the social and biological factors of not only population growth, but occupational and educational mobility. Among the subjects of study were: “changes in the character of marriage” and “how gifted social personnel are biologically conserved and socially utilized.” This meant that social biology was concerned with, among other topics “the educational recruitment of the social classes,” the relationship between initial wage-earning and maximal wage earning through the course of the life-span, changes in occupational status throughout life, the characteristics of classes in Britain and among other commonwealth countries, the

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<sup>470</sup> Hogben, "The Foundation of Social Biology."

<sup>471</sup> Ibid, 22.

effects of urban concentration and so on. Social biology became the inquiry then in Britain into how recruitment into various occupations, migration to urban centers, changes in wealth or social status definitively changed the demography of social and occupational groups (particularly the migrating poor and the lower occupations.)<sup>472</sup>

T.H. Marshall in his discussion of social selection and the welfare state underscored that recent discussions in social mobility and in social biology (via Hogben and Carr-Saunders) underscored that there was indeed something problematic about the welfare state. Due to recent discussions of social mobility and social selection, the entire project of the welfare state appeared “self-contradictory.” The welfare state assumed that all individuals were of “equal status,” but according to Marshall it was also the case that all children were not of equal ability. The welfare state must, especially in education, embrace “competitive selection.” Thankfully, the issue, according to Marshall was more one of “administration” than biology and psychology. Marshall also underscored that social biology and social selection underscored the necessity of inequality, but that the principles of the welfare state necessitated that this inequality.

This initial surge of enthusiasm (centering on the London School of Economics) in social biology, social selection and social mobility, translated into a decades-long discussion on the interconnection between biological and social factors governing occupational and educational attainment. There was a particular emphasis in these studies to trace biological characteristics and its connection to social status

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<sup>472</sup> L. Hogben, *Political Arithmetic: A Symposium of Population Studies* (Taylor & Francis). Pg. 41

and socioeconomic status over the course of the individual life-span and into the fate of decedents. In the work of Donald Glass and many others, discussions of social biology merged into accounts of social stratification and social mobility emerging from the United States.

What is particularly striking is the degree to which the “social selection” discussion could be used in so many ways, even within the relatively narrow confines of British inter-war sociology and genetics. Carr-Saunders used social selection to narrate the history of human civilization as hinging on the division between natural and social forces and between natural and social causation. Fisher took this division for granted and through explicit discussion of the “social selection of human fertility” not only outlined the decline of the nobility but considered how the nobility had concentrated into a heredity caste. Both authors were not concerned with overpopulation, as Malthus was, but with the characteristics of population, particularly its social character. Both authors in contrast were more content, to delineate biological and social forces. Both men’s contributions moreover paved the way for not only a critique of eugenics and biological determinism, but the biological study of human behavior in Britain and eventually in the United States.

Carr-Saunders’ and Fisher’s account of social selection, as this chapter has illustrated, translated almost immediately into an engine for social theory- particularly studies of social mobility and occupational and educational attainment. As the work of Barbara Burks and T.H. Marshall underscored these discussions were often illustrate of specific anxieties concerning the nature of the modern society and of the

proper form of government. Thus, authors have used social selection as a tool to illustrate and examine key social dilemmas.

Both authors' discussion of social selection, like Ross and Sumner's discussion of social selection in Chapter 4, became immediately abstracted from its contexts and served as a general template for social theory. Moreover, the multiple uses and multiple origins of social mobility studies illustrated through the uses of social selection in this chapter underscore not only the extremely wide dispersal of social selection discussions, but also the multiple ways social selection has linked into more contemporary social science discussions.

The next chapter shifts again, to the role of pivotal role played by the concept of social selection in discussions of the "Negro Problem." Gennaro Mondaini used social selection to not only critique Lapouge, but to argued that the "Negro Problem" in America could be eventually solved by a "social" and "ethnic fusion" of whites and African Americans. Social selection too, I argue, was essential to W.E.B Du Bois' account of prejudice in the life of African Americans. Last, and most extensively, I argue that social selection was a key part of Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma*, where he used social selection to describe not only the force of prejudice but to point to the particular features of social mobility in African American communities.

Chapter 7: The ‘Negro Problem’ and Social Selection: From W.E.B Du Bois and Gennaro Mondaini to Gunnar Myrdal’s “An American Dilemma.”

For a period of roughly fifty years, from the American Gilded Age in the 1890s towards nearly the end of the Second World War, American and European sociologists debated not only the cultural and moral impacts of the color “caste system” in the United States, but also how discrimination affected the social role and social status of African Americans in the United States. Under the conceptual rubric of the “Negro Problem,” from the work of W.E.B Du Bois, in his pathbreaking *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899) to Myrdal’s *American Dilemma* (1944), an international group of social scientists began in the 1890s to assess the social and biological impacts of slavery, emancipation and continuing segregation of African Americans in the United States, resulting from the failure of Reconstruction in the United States.<sup>473</sup>

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the “Negro Problem” was viewed as much as biological as a social concern. W.E.B Du Bois in his *Philadelphia Negro* underscored that in addition to their being a high death-rate of African Americans in cities, poverty, illiteracy, African Americans “do not form an integral part of the larger social group.” The “segregation of the Negroes” in American cities like Philadelphia was even more “conspicuous” than that of other ethnic groups, and because of the particular historical situation of slavery, the Civil War and emancipation, African

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<sup>473</sup>J.M. Martinez, *A Long Dark Night: Race in America from Jim Crow to World War II* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers). T.A. Upchurch, *Legislating Racism: The Billion Dollar Congress and the Birth of Jim Crow* (University Press of Kentucky). M.D. Steedman, *Jim Crow Citizenship: Liberalism and the Southern Defense of Racial Hierarchy* (Taylor & Francis). E. Anderson and A.A. Moss, *Facts of Reconstruction, Race, and Politics* (LSU Press).

Americans experienced to a greater extent the social and physical effects of American racism.<sup>474</sup>

By the Second World War, the discussion of the “Negro Problem” focused on discussions of social mobility and status. Within this nearly fifty-year discussion of the “Negro Problem” in American and in Europe this chapter argues, discussions of social selection remained constant, where social selection maintained both a conceptual consistency and a flexibility to the specific needs of the social scientist.

“The Negro Problem” and the many sociologists who addressed its apparent biological and social causes and effects, has been subject to sporadic, but intense scrutiny by historians of the social sciences and historians of racial ideology in the United States.<sup>475</sup> Historians have generally not been inclined to systematically examine the conceptual change and development in discussions of the “Negro Problem,” nor is there any acknowledgement that many treatments of discussions of the “Negro Problem” in both its purported biological and social aspects outside of a few well-known figures, with the vast majority of the existing scholarship pertaining to the work of Du Bois. Because of the overly specialized and pointillistic discussions of the “Negro Problem” both the conceptual continuities and the internationalism of discussions of the “Negro Problem” have been left unaddressed.

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<sup>474</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois and Isabel Eaton, *The Philadelphia Negro : A Social Study, Publications of the University of Pennsylvania Series in Political Economy and Public Law*, (Philadelphia: Published for the University). Pg. 7 and 8

<sup>475</sup> See most recently K.G. Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness* (Harvard University Press). W.E.B. Du Bois, H.L. Gates, and W. Moses, *Black Folk Then and Now: An Essay in the History and Sociology of the Negro Race: The Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois* (OUP USA). Michael B. Katz and Thomas J. Sugrue, *W.E.B. Dubois, Race, and the City : The Philadelphia Negro and Its Legacy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press). And especially A. Morris, *The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (University of California Press).

My argument in this chapter of the dissertation is that the concept of social selection and the work of Vacher de Lapouge was a critical and unrecognized part of both initial and later discussions of the “Negro Problem.” I will focus on two figures: Italian social scientist Gennaro Mondaini (b. 1874) and the Swedish economist and sociologist Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987), while also briefly discussing W.E.B Du Bois and the anthropologist Melville Herskovits (1893-1963), whose work was essential for Myrdal’s analysis of the interconnection between social selection, genetics, and social mobility.

Although Myrdal is well-known by sociologists (less so by historians of sociology), Mondaini has only been discussed in the context of Italian colonialism and Italian fascism as he was a well-known supporter of Italian colonialism as well Mussolini’s fascism. An examination of Mondaini’s early writing makes this transformation into a fascist remarkable.

W.E.B Du Bois’ discussion while not extensive, was a central piece of his sociology of the “Negro Problem” in a number of senses. For Du Bois, the crux of the “Negro Problem,” was how to socially and institutionally encourage the “incorporation of the Negro freedman” in the face of the “rock wall of social discrimination.” Moreover, he underscored that discrimination, the essential cause of the “Negro Problem” was due to a malformed process of “social selection.” Social selection, he noted, in its best aspects, allowed the “Best” and “weeded out” the “Dangerous.” However, the social selection process at the root of discrimination was a toxic form of social selection which selected against the “Different” and “preserved the Powerful, rather than the Best.”

For Du Bois, the solution to this was individuals possessing the “widest human contacts” and to ignore “petty and inconsequential prejudices,” for among human beings due to the process of social selection an inner sense had emerged from the advent of civilization. This inner sense emphasized the “right to be different, to be individual and pursue personal aims and ideals.” As importantly, the “development of individual personality” gave rise to the “right of variation,” and it was variation which led to the richness of culture.<sup>476</sup>

He believed that African Americans would be able to compete in American society, if the laws and customs restricting them from doing so would be removed. Unrestricted “social selection” would aid in harmony between whites and African Americans “because no real men accept any alliance except on terms of absolute equal regard....” The *Negro Yearbook* noted that for DuBois this explicitly meant “that there should be no barrier set up by any nation, or individual, seeking to dictate the policy of social selection between individuals.” What Du Bois and his contemporaries meant by freedom of social selection, was freedom of association in all forms of social life, whether of occupation or marriage relations.

Social selection then played a variety of roles in Du Bois’ sociology. Social selection was then the cause of and the solution to the “Negro Question.” In order for there to be a solution of the “Negro Question,” social selection must be able to work unencumbered. As importantly toxic social selection was responsible for the prejudice which lay at the roots of the “Negro Problem.”

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<sup>476</sup> WE Du Bois, "My Evolving Program for Negro Freedom," *Clinical Sociology Review* 8, no. 1 ( Pg. 55ff.

Mondaini's discussion of the "*questione dei negri*" in 1898 was the first and the most extensive discussion of the "Negro Problem" in Europe by my estimation. Mondaini's discussion was even by American standards, remarkable, coming at the same moment as the work of Du Bois. Mondaini's *Questione dei Negri* was well-known to Du Bois.<sup>477</sup> Mondaini's thesis was also provocative by the standards of the day. Mondaini contended that African Americans in the United States were not racially inferior but also that they could attain the same level of cultural and social evolution as whites.

Mondaini noted further that African Americans would not only eventually assimilate, but that such assimilation could lead to widespread inter-marriage or an "ethnic fusion" ("fusione etnica.") Mondaini moreover used Lapouge's work and the concept of social selection to contend that African Americans in the United States could indeed assimilate. Thus, in Mondaini's work, discussions of social selection (though deeply critical of Lapouge's specific ideas about racial psychology and racial inferiority) were key to his account of the social evolution and eventual assimilation of African Americans into American culture. Mondaini's use of social selection, moreover, was perfectly consistent with the use of social selection before the First World War, as illustrated especially by Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation, namely the critique of Lapouge while also giving central place to his account of social selection.

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<sup>477</sup> W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, "The Study of the Negro Problems," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 11 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1009474>), published in 1898.

If Mondaini shows the use of Lapouge's work and the concept of social selection at the beginning of the twentieth century, then Myrdal's use of social selection underscored its ubiquity and versatility for studying and describing social forces, including social status and social role. His work, moreover, mirrors that of Pitirim Sorokin of the previous sixth chapter, which underscored the importance of social selection to his understanding of social mobility. Thus, the first part of the dissertation chapter will be an examination of Mondaini on the "Negro Problem" and his use of "social selection," while the second part of this dissertation will describe the work of Myrdal.

Gennaro Mondaini was a historian, philosopher of law, publishing first in 1897 on the work of economist, chemist and naturalist Giovanni Fabbroni. Mondaini's doctoral dissertation was the first Italian discussion of the "Negro Problem" and its potential solution, entitled *La questione dei negri nella storia e nella società nordamericana* ("The 'Negro Question' in History and in North American Society").<sup>478</sup> *La questione dei negri* was prefaced by a laudatory introduction by Enrico Morselli (1852-1929.) Morselli was a doctor, philosopher and sociologist, whom was one of the founders of Italian positivism and whom did significant work to advance practitioners of the occult.<sup>479</sup> Such was Morselli's reputation in the United

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<sup>478</sup> For example, the first explicit discussion of the "Negro Question" in France was by an article by Coubertin in "Le Figaro." This corresponded with the publication in 1903 of Booker T. Washington's celebrated autobiography. The first sustained discussion of the "Negro Problem" in French sociology was actually by an American psychologist and professor at UCLA, Kate Brousseau, see K. Brousseau, *L'éducation Des Nègres Aux États-Unis* (F. Alcan), published in 1904. Discussions in France ran apace with treatments in the United States in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. See B.T. Washington, *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today* (James Pott).

<sup>479</sup> See W.F. Bynum, R. Porter, and M. Shepherd, *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry* (Routledge).

States that political scientists attributed Mondaini's book to Morselli due to the latter's preface.<sup>480</sup>

Mondaini later became one of the most visible (in Italy and France) and dogmatic expositors of colonial law and colonial policy, writing in 1906 a historical and legal tract advocating Italian expansionism, as well as editing the review *Rivista colonial* from 1907 to 1910.<sup>481</sup> In the 1910s and 1920, Mondaini became steadily more interventionist and rigid. The aspect of Mondaini's writing which has attracted the most attention has been his role in the slow radicalization of Italian colonial policy in Africa. In the 1930s, Mondaini wrote a series of articles, supporting in the words of one scholar "a system of economic discrimination" for "natives" which would parallel "legal, social and moral exclusion" for Africans under Italian colonial rule.<sup>482</sup>

However, no attention has been paid at all to Mondaini's early work and sociology. Such an omission, while not unsurprising, underscores the need for a much fuller evaluation of Mondaini's work, as an explanation for his transformation into one of the most ardent expositors of Mussolini's colonial policy is lacking. A discussion nonetheless of Mondaini's early work is significant, as his later embrace of colonialism is nearly a complete reversal of his position in *La questione dei negri*.

Suggestively, this underscores that Mondaini's transformation into a colonialist ideologue by the 1930s could not be anticipated through reference to *fin de*

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<sup>480</sup> Stephen F. Weston, *Political Science Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2140180>).

<sup>481</sup> Matteo Pasetti, "Un "Colonialismo Corporativo"? L'imperialismo Fascista Tra Progetti E Realtà," *Storicamente* 12 (

<sup>482</sup> Alexander De Grand, "Mussolini's Follies: Fascism in Its Imperial and Racist Phase, 1935–1940," *Contemporary European History* 13, no. 2 (2004)

*siècle* sociology and social theory. Indeed, Chapter 2 of this dissertation, in particular, with its discussion of Italian critics of Lapouge, has detailed a stratum of positivistic, evolutionary, anti-racist sociology existing in Italy before the First World War. This suggests that the radicalization of Italian sociology into an instrument of fascism and authoritarianism was not a slow process, but a historically contingent one which was a consequence of the European-wide radicalization of the inter-war period. Mondaini, as well as the sociologists discussed in Chapter 2, underscore that a clear line between the European sociology before the First World War and the fascist, authoritarian sociology of the interwar period is difficult to draw without explicit reference to contingent historical events.

Nonetheless, in *La questione dei negri*, Mondaini held that any differences in income, wealth, literacy and urban mortality between American whites and African Americans was a matter of African Americans being at a different stage of moral and intellectual progress than whites as a result of the historical experience of slavery and emancipation. Mondaini concluded that African Americans would reach the same moral, intellectual, and economic level as whites, doing so through a slow “ascension” through the process of “social selection.” Moreover, the solution to the “Negro Problem” was a “social fusion” (*fusione sociale*) of African Americans with whites in the United States. Such a fusion would occur when they are more or less able to adopt the culture of whites in the United States through a process of social selection and fully assimilate. This would be prior to the “ethnic fusion” (*fusione etnica*) or widespread intermarriage between whites and African Americans in the United States. This *fusione etnica*, a consequence of the social evolution of African

Americans to the same level as whites, would take place in the very, very far future (“*molto ma molto lontano*”) but would nonetheless “resolve” “the Negro Problem” “that today torments the South of the United States.”<sup>483</sup> He concluded in detail, “To conclude: the ethnic fusion of the two races, white and black... will take place in a very, very distant future, when the two races will in any case already be merged in the social field, when the problem, which today torments the South of the Union, will be beautiful and resolved.”<sup>484</sup>

In *La questione dei negri*, Mondaini was also writing against an older ethnographic tradition in Italy, which depended upon that which flourished in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe. This tradition arguing for differences in skull size and brain weight and composition, reduced Africans and African Americans to a biological racial category was discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.<sup>485</sup> A key writer in this tradition is Filippo Manetta whom in 1864 published *La razza negra nel suo stato selvaggio in Africa e nella sua duplice condizione di emancipata e di schiava in America* (“The Negro Race in Its Savage State in Africa and its dual condition of emancipated and slave in America.”) Manetta contended that due to specific cerebral differences between “Caucasian” as well as “African” cerebral matter, such as less cerebral folding or “gyri of the cerebrum” (*circonvoluzioni del*

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<sup>483</sup> Gennaro Mondaini, *La Questione Dei Negri Nella Storia E Nella Societa Nordamericana* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca). Pg. 429-30.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid, pg. 430.

<sup>485</sup> F. Manetta, *La Razza Negra Nel Suo Stato Selvaggio in Africa E Nella Sua Duplice Condizione Di Emancipata E Di Schiava in America: Raccolta Delle Opinioni Dei Piu' Distinti Antropologi D'europa E D'america, Non Che Di Celebri Viaggiatori* (Commercio). Pg. 19-20

*cervello*), pointing to a less developed cerebral cortex less intelligence and reasoning.<sup>486</sup>

Mondaini's work, consistent with the socialist leanings of much of the Italian sociological profession was an explicitly anti-racist text arguing that there was no basis for the biological inferiority of the Africans or African-Americans. He noted, "that man...is mainly as product of society."<sup>487</sup> Mondaini noted in more detail, "So to conclude: the theory of superior and inferior races....does not stand up to logic and history, since man from the intellectual point of view, man is principally 'a product of society'" He underscored, furthermore, that arguments for biological inferiority were also used by British and American pro-slavery writers such as Josiah Nott and Samuel Morton.<sup>488</sup>

Mondaini's major target, apart from Lapouge, in "the Negro Question" was also one of the most important (though still under-researched) partisans of the inferiority of African Americans and Africans, the German statistician Fredrich Ludwig (F.L) Hoffman (1865-1946).<sup>489</sup> Hoffman was an actuary for the Prudential Insurance Company and an early leader in the effort against universal health care in

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<sup>486</sup> Manetta added that the "great resemblance between the negro and the monkey consists in the identical development of the temporal lobe" (*che la grande rassomiglianza fra il negro e la scimmia consiste nello identico sviluppo del lobo temporale.*) Ibid. pg. 20.

<sup>487</sup> Mondaini., pg.461 "Per concludere adunque la teoria delle razze superiori ed inferiori, su qualunque delle due basi sopra enunciate si fondi, non regge di fronte alla logica ed alla storia, giacchè l'uomo dal punto di vista intellettuale è principalmente "un prodotto della società" "So to conclude the theory of superior and inferior races, on any of the two bases set out above, it does not stand up to logic and history, since man from the intellectual point of view, is principally 'a product of the Society'"

<sup>488</sup> Ibid. pg. 466 ff.

<sup>489</sup> Arguments for the plurality of species, as discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation supported arguments for the inferiority of Africans and African Americans, by furthering the contention that these groups were sufficiently structurally distinct from Europeans to merit the appellation of a different *species*.

the United States.<sup>490</sup> His argument in *Facts and Fallacies* (1920) was that health was a consequence of race and biology, not medical care. Hence, for the majority of individuals, access to health care did not improve life expectancy, morality or morbidity. However, well before his polemics against universal health insurance in the United States, Hoffman published a tract addressing the mortality and morbidity of African Americans in the United States.

F.L Hoffman in his *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro* (1896) painted a bleak future for African Americans in the United States: that of eventual extinction. For Hoffman, the “Negro Problem,” the higher death rate of African Americans in cities and the lack of integration of African Americans into American culture, was a consequence of the biological inferiority of not only African Americans but especially of mixed-race individuals, or as Hoffman would describe them “mulattoes.” Hoffman wrote: “to-day after thirty years of freedom for the negro in this country, and sixty years in the West Indies, the two races are farther apart than ever in their political and social relations.”<sup>491</sup> He continued that the inequalities between African Americans and whites in the United States were due to the “powerful influence of race in the struggle for life” where “the decrease in the rate of increase in the colored population” was the result of an “inferior vital capacity.” Moreover, according to Hoffman, the “racial inferiority” of African Americans moreover had resulted according to Hoffman in a “moral deterioration” leading to an “inordinate rate of mortality,” especially in the cities.<sup>492</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> F.L. Hoffman, *Facts and Fallacies of Compulsory Health Insurance* (Prudential Press).

<sup>491</sup> Frederick Ludwig Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, vol. 11 (American economic association).

<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*, 308

Mondaini countered that not only were African Americans drawn to the cities, but also that their vitality was improved due to their residence in urban areas. Mondaini here used Lapouge's concept of "urban selection." Mondaini adapted Lapouge's discussion of urban selection to not only argue against Hoffman but also to counter Lapouge, contending that, especially historically compared with the experience of plantation slavery, African Americans did better in the cities than in the countryside.<sup>493</sup>

As importantly, Mondaini's concept of "social fusion" (*fusion sociale*) and later "ethnic fusion" depended upon the concept of social selection. As with Du Bois, the solution to the "Negro Problem" was the slow action of social selection, whereby African Americans become assimilated into American society by adopting favorable American values. Thus, Mondaini's use of social selection was not only consistent with that of other authors, but also illustrated the rather complex use of social selection before the First World War, as illustrated by this dissertation. Most importantly, however, Lapouge's concept of social selection was pivotal to counter-balance the biological and racial arguments of F.L. Hoffman. Thus, social selection was used against a racialized argument, similar to its other uses in the chapters of this dissertation, where social selection becomes a key concept in arguments concerning the impact of social forces on individuals and groups in modern civilization.

Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944) is universally acknowledged by social scientists as a foundational work which exhaustively documented the "Negro Problem," Myrdal's examination of

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<sup>493</sup> Mondaini. Pg. 324ff.

the impact of prejudice and American racism (both historical and present) on the social dynamics of African American communities in the United States. Myrdal used the concept of social selection to describe, in particular, the effect of the color “caste system” in the United States, where prejudice around completion and miscegenation enormously influenced the social mobility and social role of African Americans in the United States. He was, as outlined in the introduction of this dissertation, was an economist and sociologist, who sought throughout all his work to integrate values into the analysis of social science. Myrdal’s *American Dilemma* according to the most extensive analysis by Walter Jackson, “established a liberal orthodoxy on black-white relations and remained the most important study of the race issue until the middle of the 1960s.”<sup>494</sup>

Scholars have focused most specifically on Myrdal as a prophet of “social engineering” whose social scientific inquiry rejected the value-neutrality of Weberian social science and instead embrace a “value premises.” For Myrdal, converted to the position of European (more specifically Nordic) social democracy during the tumultuous years of the stock market crash and the Great Depression, this entailed a specific advocacy of moving the constitution and regulation of society from that of the individual to the realm of “political decision and public regulation.” Here for Myrdal the “Negro Problem,” which in addressing what W.E.B Du Bois would call the “rock wall of prejudice,” could only be ameliorated by “controlled social change,”

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<sup>494</sup> W.A. Jackson, *Gunnar Myrdal and America's Conscience: Social Engineering and Racial Liberalism, 1938-1987* (University of North Carolina Press).

the substance of that change and the mechanisms to bring it about, suggested by “fact finding” and “developing theories of causal relations.”<sup>495</sup>

As important an aspect of the scholarly comment has been to situate *An American Dilemma* in the context of the evolving sociological discussion of race and thus to present Myrdal’s *American Dilemma* as exemplar of first, a certain genre of sociological work on race relations before the Civil Rights Era; second, as one of the many foreign observers who have produced works on the paradoxes of American life.<sup>496</sup> In this vein, the critical emphasis has been on Myrdal’s contentious engagement with African-American sociologists, whose careers he only marginally influenced. African American sociologists, moreover, have had a contested relationship with Myrdal’s work.<sup>497</sup> To date, there has been no effort to place Myrdal’s work in the framework of intellectual history, though Myrdal considered himself to be a historian of ideas as well as a sociologist.<sup>498</sup>

I argue that Myrdal’s *American Dilemma* was seeped in the language of social selection, where the concept served a critical function in his landmark work. Myrdal used the social to explain marriage and family life among African Americans, while also exploring the workings of social mobility and social stratification in both African American and white communities. In *An American Dilemma*, Myrdal argued that one

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<sup>495</sup> G. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (Taylor & Francis), pg. 1022-23. Jackson.

<sup>496</sup> Alexis De Tocqueville and Alexis Charles Henri Maurice Clérel Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery* (JHU Press); Margaret Kohn, "The Other America: Tocqueville and Beaumont on Race and Slavery," *Polity* 35, no. 2 ( Richard W Resh, "Alexis De Tocqueville and the Negro: Democracy in America Reconsidered," *The Journal of Negro History* 48, no. 4 (

<sup>497</sup> R.E. Washington and D. Cunnigen, *Confronting the American Dilemma of Race: The Second Generation Black American Sociologists* (University Press of America).

<sup>498</sup> Gunnar Myrdal, *The Political Element in the Development of Economic Theory: A Collection of Essays on Methodology* (Routledge).

of the primary factors behind upward social mobility was social selection among African Americans and among whites for lighter skin color. Myrdal's discussion of social selection thus allowed him to address some of the most fraught topics of American race relations, including "miscegenation," "passing," the "color caste system" and "the caste line" in the United States.

According to Myrdal, preferable social selection for lighter skin has determined the social mobility of African Americans because "relative whiteness" was "one of the main factors determining status within the Negro community." "Mixed bloods" or "mulattos" were "preferred by the whites in practically all respects," before emancipation "classes of trained mechanics and house servants who early came in closer contact with the dominant culture of the whites." Mixed raced individuals, moreover, "followed the white people's valuation and associated their privileges with their lighter color." "Color," due to the experience of slavery, "became a badge of status and social distinction among the Negro people." Myrdal continued that "whites continue to associate the nearness to their own physical type with superior endowments and cultural advancement and the predominance of fair-skinned Negroes in the upper strata seem to give this prejudice a basis in fact."<sup>499</sup> Furthermore, Myrdal underscored, positive "social selection favor(ed) the mulatto group." Myrdal immediately underscored that this positive social selection for "lighter" and "whiter" did not correspond in any way to any selection based on innate ability. He underscored, "it is not certain that whites have predominately selected innately superior Negro girls to have sex relations with...." To demonstrate the

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<sup>499</sup> Ibid, 696.

superiority of “mulattos” over that of “full-blooded Negroes” it must go beyond “finding that mulattoes have made greater achievements than pure-blooded Negroes, since the latter have more social handicaps than the former.”<sup>500</sup>

Perhaps most provocatively, Myrdal drew on the work of Melville J. Herskovits (1895-1963), a student of Franz Boas, who was instrumental in establishing many African American Studies Programs<sup>501</sup> to argue that social selection for light skin color and the upward social mobility of African Americans having lighter skin had influenced the “genetic composition of the present-day American Negro people.”<sup>502</sup>

In the late 1920s and 1930s and in tune with the newly emerging integration of genetics with the social sciences, Myrdal and Herskovits’s discussion of the genetic consequences of social selection, while raising some concerns about the tinge of eugenics, was not an extension of eugenic reasoning. Both social scientists did not use the language of “inferiority” or “superiority.” Instead, their discussion was of a more neutral kind where both social scientists detailed some of the genetic and biological consequences of the process of social selection.

Perhaps most noticeably, Myrdal and Herskovits’ discussion of social selection included no mention of Lapouge and was not defined other than in

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<sup>500</sup> Myrdal. Pg. 131.

<sup>501</sup> Melville Herskovits to a lesser extent than Boas or Mead, has not been the subject of extensive scholarly analysis. His publications were quite extensive, even though his life ended suddenly, covering fieldwork on Dahomey society to expansive and challenging textbooks in economic anthropology and comparative political science. See for example Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Beacon Press). Melville J. Herskovits, *The Human Factor in Changing Africa* (Routledge). The only book-length treatment of Herskovits’ life and work (to say nothing of his wife’s career, which was also extremely impressive) is Jerry Gershenhorn, *Melville J. Herskovits and the Racial Politics of Knowledge* (U of Nebraska Press).

<sup>502</sup> Myrdal. Ibid.

opposition to natural selection. While Mondaini used social selection to argue for the primacy of social forces in the discussion and remedy of the “Negro Problem,” as well as its role in social evolution, Myrdal was most concerned with the effects of social selection on and through social mobility.

This allowed Myrdal in particular to explore issues of class, caste and social mobility in American society. Nonetheless, we can link Mondaini and Myrdal’s analysis as Myrdal explored the consequences of the *fusionne etnica* which Mondaini described as in the future. Thus, Myrdal argued not only that intermarriage did occur but that such intermarriage and the social mobility and social selection surrounding it could be used to explore caste and class in the United States.

Mondaini’s *La questione dei negri* detailed the historical development and solution to the “Negro Problem.” Mondaini famed his discussion of the “Negro Problem” and his account of social and ethnic “fusion” as refutation of the work of F.L. Hoffman. Hoffman had argued exhaustively that African Americans that by their “racial” characteristics were more liable to succumb to disease (esp. tuberculosis), were more likely to engage in criminal activity, had lower “vitality, and expired at a higher rate than whites, particularly in urban areas in the United States. Using many of the same statistics, Mondaini objected that while mortality among African Americans was high, that there was no reason to believe that such mortality was the result of a racial factor. He countered instead that the high rate of mortality among African Americans was the result of the poor environmental conditions as

African Americans due to prejudice and exclusion were clustered to the poorest areas of the cities.<sup>503</sup>

By countering Hoffman, Mondaini reframed and affirmed the “Negro Problem” as a social problem rather than a biological one. Mondaini detailed for example that in cities, African American women had lower rates of mortality than men. This was a factor ascribed to better working conditions and to a certain extent greater social mobility through various types of reasonably favorable employment, such as being household servants.<sup>504</sup> He also observed against Hoffman that if African Americans were more prone to venereal diseases, they were less prone to alcoholism and to insanity and other forms of madness than whites.

He considered the lack of widespread depression and madness in African Americans remarkable considering “the very different social position of the two races” (*la ben diversa posizione sociale delle due razze*) due to racism and discrimination. Furthermore, contra Hoffman, that crime, pauperism and vice was not “the character of the race” (*il carattere della razza*) was instantly demonstrable, Mondaini noted, since crime, poverty and prostitution were worse in the South than in the North, these must be social consequences.<sup>505</sup>

Mondaini concluded contra Hoffman that the high rate of mortality of African Americans in the cities was not a result of a racial difference in “vitality” or a racial propensity for sexually transmitted diseases, but rather “conditions of life and environment.” Moreover, moving specifically to Hoffman’s discussion of the

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<sup>503</sup> Mondaini., pg. 302-3.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid, 305-307

<sup>505</sup> Ibid, 317-8, pg. 319. He discusses suicide and other maladies pgs. 319ff.

“somatic” differences between races (which was key to Hoffman’s notion of the plurality of species), he noted that here too Hoffman was not on firm ground. Against Hoffman, Mondaini contended that African Americans were not fundamentally somatically distinct from American whites; African Americans further from emancipation had not suffered a (*deterioramento fisico costante*) a constant physical deterioration. Instead, based primarily on vital statistics of African Americans in urban areas, but also with some knowledge of the vital conditions of rural blacks, Mondaini concluded that based upon the relative health of rural blacks, that the degradation was due to environmental causes.<sup>506</sup>

Moreover (and Mondaini focused the most time upon this argument) while he agreed with Lapouge and many others that urban areas performed a selecting action, he contended that the selecting action of the cities was *positive* for African Americans, since the pressures of urban life did not reward amoral behavior. The city promoted the adventurous and the hardworking as it selected against vices such as “laziness.”<sup>507</sup> Although African Americans had suffered under slavery and emancipation, they had lower rates of mortality than rural whites. For Mondaini, this strongly argued strongly against the “total extinction of the Negro race in North America” which “the continuous growth of Afro-Americans denies in the most absolute way.”<sup>508</sup> Mondaini countered that instead of decimating the population of African Americans, urban African Americans were in actuality healthier than their

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<sup>506</sup> Mondaini. pg. 350ff.

<sup>507</sup> “...il quale se le sottrae forse alcuni degli elementi più dotati d'iniziativa, le sottrae di certo d'altra parte gli elementi meno morali, i più proclivi all'ozio ed all'infingardaggine.” Migration to the cities “takes away some of the most gifted elements of initiative, certainly subtracts from them the less moral elements, the most prone to idleness and infidelity.” Pg. 325

<sup>508</sup> Discussion *ibid.* Pgs. 324-326, quote from pg. 326.

rural counterparts. He underscored, “La razza afro-americana mostra oggi...una resistenza vitale ed una energia fisica....” “The African-American race shows ... a vital resistance and a physical energy” even in its migration to the cities.<sup>509</sup>

What is most striking is the use of Lapouge’s discussion of “urban selection” : to refute biological racism. Mondaini’s use of Lapouge, “Aryan” hypothesis to argue that African American communities in cities were thriving is perhaps a unique application of Lapouge’s theories. While there is some irony in this, this dissertation has also tried to demonstrate that oftentimes, social selection was used in a variety of manners which would be contrary to the intention of Vacher de Lapouge. In the case of Mondaini’s work, he used Lapouge’s urban selection to shift the discussion of the “Negro Problem” from the biological to the social realm.

Armed with this refutation of Hoffman through Lapouge, Mondaini underscored that the true “Negro Problem” was the disjunction between social and legal equality. The “Negro Problem” was the direct result of the American Civil War, transforming two different social structures in the South (slave and free labor) to a uniform “social structure” (*struttura sociale*) which was “but different in ethnic structure” (*ma diverse nella struttura etnica*.)<sup>510</sup> However, with the end of slavery, slaves now became part of Southern society which was not longer homogenous. The heterogeneity of Southern society inevitably led to a “profound schism” in southern society.<sup>511</sup> In the South the “Negro Problem” especially was then a “ethnopolitical

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<sup>509</sup> Ibid. pg. 325

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., 391.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid., 391-2.

problem,” the solution of which “depends on the course of civilization itself”  
(*dipende il corso stesso della civiltà.*)<sup>512</sup>

Mondaini noted elsewhere that laws were merely the result of “different social forms,” and laws could not affect social evolution, only social selection could. Laws, edicts and legal structures themselves, from the amendments of the United States Constitution to the Magna Carta, had no influence on society, but were in actuality, the result of society itself.<sup>513</sup> He observed further that laws could not destroy the feelings and sentiments, which were “rooted in the soul of a people” (*che sono radicati nell'animo d'un popolo*).

Because of these sentiments “rooted” especially in the “souls” of whites, the state “in vain” “imposes equality.”<sup>514</sup> African Americans found their inequality enshrined throughout all aspects of society: schools, the military, in theatres.<sup>515</sup> In the South white race prejudice was in fact the reenactment of the Civil War struggle between North and South. Even where there is strict legal equality, such as in the North, “the white” will only interact with African Americans when “the white” can “present himself to the Negro as his superior” (*in cui il bianco può presentarsi al negro come suo superiore*)<sup>516</sup>

Mondaini did not believe that there could be any legislative or legal remedy to the “Negro Question.” According to his broadly evolutionistic worldview, peoples and nations underwent slow social evolution through a process of social selection. In

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<sup>512</sup> Ibid, 393.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid, pg. 402ff.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid, pg. 403.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid, 404

Mondaini's view, "social selection" was a "source of perfection."<sup>517</sup> Furthermore, through contact with whites, African Americans would emulate their "higher" and "superior" culture, eventually achieving a "social fusion" with whites which would perhaps lead to widespread intermarriage or an "ethnic fusion."<sup>518</sup> This "social fusion" and later "ethnic fusion" (*fusione etnica*) would be the result of African Americans having followed the guidance of their "best representatives" with whites reducing as much as possible "color prejudice" (*pregiudizio del colore*).<sup>519</sup>

One can indeed discern the roots of Mondaini's later colonialism in his discussion of the "superior" culture of American whites and the solution to the "Negro Problem," being the slow acculturation of African Americans through beneficial assimilation. Mondaini's, however, though in some sense a product of its time, work points to the variety of functions of social selection.

Mondaini inverted Lapouge's discussion of urban selection while also making social selection (albeit generally) a part of his account of social evolution, social selection leading to "perfection" due to the emulation of "superior" traits. More striking than the role of social selection in social evolution- which throughout is vague- but Mondaini's use of Lapouge and urban selection to argue against the inferiority of African Americans. Indeed, Mondaini inverts Lapouge's thesis further by accepting that it draws from the countryside the most energetic African Americans, which is a distinct usage of Lapouge's thesis. Striking too is Mondaini's

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<sup>517</sup> Ibid. 468 "e non si potrà per essa negare che la selezione sociale non sia una fonte di perfezionamento." "and it cannot be denied that social selection is not a source of perfection."

<sup>518</sup> Ibid. 450ff.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid. 474.

idea that selection leads to social fusion; this was remarkably similar to other solutions to the “Negro Problem,” including Myrdal’s.

In Melville J. Herskovits’ expansive and explanatory 1929 article “Social Selection and the Formation of Human Types,” he defended his use of genetic arguments and evidence. He declared that “man is a social as well as a biological animal.” Given the development of genetics and the sciences of heredity, it was essential that biology and genetics pose no barriers to the social sciences, who until recently had been content to only study “man as a social animal and to study him entirely from that point of view.”

Notwithstanding the warnings of, in particular, analogizing and reducing the social and the biological, Herskovits noted that discussions among eugenicists seeking “socially efficient type” were quite different than accepting the central idea of social selection, namely that society selects various characteristics in man. Herskovits noted that while various aspects of man (such as skin color) had been thought- by eugenicists and others- to be a consequence of natural selection, such purely biological phenomena could indeed be demonstrated as having social origins. Moreover, it was better, Herskovits declared, to understand that many of the characteristics of man were social as well as biological in cause and in consequence.<sup>520</sup>

Herskovits continued that in both primitive tribes and in modern societies there were many social customs which encouraged endogamy as opposed to exogamy

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<sup>520</sup> Melville J. Herskovits, "Social Selection and the Formation of Human Types," *Human Biology* 1, no. 2 (<http://www.jstor.org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/stable/41446986>). Pg. 252

or “marrying out.” Particularly when there is immense social pressure to “marry in” one’s social group, tribe, or community, many “traits” which are “inherited according to Mendelian laws” will be intensified over generations, simply by virtue of the nature of inheritance. As many other discussants of social selection underscored, it was in the nature of all human social groups to “throw off variants of one kind or another.”<sup>521</sup>

For example, in many African societies, Herskovits noted, “a light-colored individual is put to death at birth because he does not conform to the ideal of that group.” This was a process which was “distinctly social, yet one which in emphasizing the type held desirable in the minds of these people, is highly powerful in making for the perpetuation of the prevalent physical type.” For Herskovits there was a circle between genetics and biology which led to the development of a social norm and the biological and genetic consequences of that norm. He continued that “the racial ideal” by which he meant aesthetics and standards of beauty, though social had profound genetic and biological consequences. In the case of Japanese women, there is “conscious selection” by men for women who are light-skinned and possessing a “delicate figure.” This ideal made it so that women with particular physical characteristics became successful under this norm and that the underling genetic traits responsible for these characteristics became more common.<sup>522</sup>

Society, noted Herskovits, found certain traits to be favorable and others not. He noted, “If the social ideal, the social tradition, or the social prejudice favors a

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<sup>521</sup> Ibid. pg. 254

<sup>522</sup> Herskovits. pg. 253

given type” this type “survives.” The social type has little to do with “natural fitness” or “inherent survivability.” In civilization, the type which was encouraged was not the strongest or swiftest but the most socially pleasing according to Herskovits. Because social traditions are “unconscious,” there was no rationality to social selection in society, according to Herskovits. Those with albinism in many societies, for example, have inordinate difficulties marrying or otherwise integrating into society.<sup>523</sup>

More generally, “the tendency of persons of like interests to mate to one which is well known and understandable” and this tendency to marry alike was one of the great reasons for homogeneity among human beings and among human “types.” Among African Americans specifically, according to Herskovits there was the selection of “light women by darker men.”<sup>524</sup> According to Herskovits this was not strange as in “white civilization...light pigmentation must unconsciously become synonymous with opportunity, favorable social position, and lack of prejudice.”<sup>525</sup> In these instances the woman, in American society is “superior,” “while the darker man raises his social position and thus his opportunities among his own group by marrying her.” These clear processes of social selection, finally, has little to do with a deep biological “abhorrence,” but was instead driven by the prejudices of “white civilization.”

In *An American Dilemma*, Myrdal was to use Herskovits’ analysis of social selection as part of a fully developed thesis concerning social mobility among African

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<sup>523</sup> Ibid. pg. 258

<sup>524</sup> Ibid, 260 and Melville J Herskovits, "Social Selection in a Mixed Population," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 12, no. 10 (1926)

<sup>525</sup> Ibid.

Americans in response to the prejudice of, as Herskovits, termed it “white civilization.” Echoing many of Herskovits’ conclusions, Myrdal noted that there was “no evidence” to suggest that “socially successful dark Negroes who marry light girls are also biologically superior.”<sup>526</sup> There was also no evidence to suggest that lighter skinned African Americans, who were of mixed ancestry, were biological superior or inferior to African Americans with a greater proportion of “African” ancestry.<sup>527</sup>

Accordingly, while there was a preference for light skin, such characteristics were not uniformly distributed in the population, tending to cluster among individuals of higher class and status in African American communities.<sup>528</sup> African Americans from the upper classes according to both Myrdal and Herskovits had a higher percentage of “white ancestry” than the general population of African Americans.

Turning to white southerners, briefly, Myrdal underscored that there was no evidence to suggest that any class was more predisposed to having children with African Americans, but it was also not possible to state that “miscegenation ... followed any pattern of individual social selection.” Thus, Myrdal in a section entitled, “Social and Biological Selection” in his chapter on “Race and Ancestry” underscored that due to a process of social selection “The Negro girl whose physical appearance and cultural manners approximated the prevalent standards in the higher caste would certainly be preferred as a sexual partner.” Such features would have in the realm of social selection “strong competitive value.” Thus, “lighter skin” according to Myrdal functioned as an agent of “positive selection” and upward social

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<sup>526</sup> Myrdal.

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 132

<sup>528</sup> Myrdal., 131-2.

mobility. Again, Myrdal was keen to argue that there was no connection between “socially successful dark Negroes who marry light girls” and any kind of biological superiority.<sup>529</sup>

Thus, Herskovits’ discussions also allowed Myrdal to launch an expansive account of the connection between “color and caste” and social selection in his account of the “Negro Class Structure.” He observed first that the “American order of the color caste has even more directly stamped the Negro class system” by “including whiteness as one of the factors determining status within the Negro community.”<sup>530</sup> “Mixed bloods” and African Americans have always benefited according to him, due to the preference of “white civilization” for lighter skin. According to Myrdal, lighter skin as a “badge of status” had its roots in the experience of slavery, where “many white fathers freed their illegitimate mulatto offspring and often also their children’s mothers” with some sent to the free states of the North. According to Myrdal, Africans Americans of mixed ancestry “held themselves higher” than other African Americans where “the mullatos followed the white people’s valuation and associated their privileges with their lighter color.”<sup>531</sup>

According to Myrdal, though Emancipation did a great deal to disrupt this color privilege, there was still pronounced social selection favoring lighter skin color, where those African Americans, particularly with “European features” were considered more favorably for positions of employment. The “social success” and upward social mobility of African Americans was more closely tied to skin color and

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<sup>529</sup> Ibid. pg. 130

<sup>530</sup> Ibid, pg. 695-6.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid., 696

“whites continued to associate the nearness to their own physical type with superior endowments and cultural advancement.” This led to an almost exclusive predominance of light-skinned African Americans with mixed heritage into the upper strata of strata of society, especially in urban areas.

According to Myrdal, light skin, furthermore, was not simply a trait selected by whites, but was a characteristic valued as part of social success and social mobility by African Americans themselves. Myrdal pointed to the desire of African American women “of all shades” to “bleach their skin and straighten their hair” the products of which are “the basis of some of the most important Negro businesses and some of the largest fortunes.” Clubs and social organizations also promote this “color preference.”<sup>532</sup>

In marriage, moreover there was a strong social selection towards lighter skin color, particularly of women, where men marry on the basis of “merit,” while women of “fair skin” has “such superior marriage changes” that they are the principle agents of upward social mobility in African American communities, passing from the lower to the higher classes far more often than African American men. While according to Myrdal “darker Negroes *can rise* to the top among Negroes in social status” “darker individuals” tend to form the basis of the “lower strata” as “greater opportunities” for “economic and cultural advancement.” The social selection for lighter color and its connection to mobility and higher status was particularly pronounced, Myrdal added in urban as opposed to rural areas, though he also noted that given the demographics

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<sup>532</sup> Ibid, 697

of African American communities generally, the “blue-veined” societies within African American communities were “breaking up.”<sup>533</sup>

The positive social selection given to lighter skin and the role it was given in African American was merely one of a number of “ a much more general tendency for the Negro people...to take over the valuations” of white Americans.<sup>534</sup> Most generally, as Myrdal explained in a latter section of *An American Dilemma* underscored that among upper class African Americans many behavioral traits mimicked those favored by white Americans, including being “conservative in their dress.” In their desire for status, there was a consistent effort to emulate the aspects of what African Americans viewed, at that moment according to Myrdal, to be most favorable to whites.

Herskovits and Myrdal’s discussions of social selection and genetics were both consistent with the uses of social selection, while also being somewhat troubling. In *An American Dilemma*, Myrdal speculated that the social selection for lighter skin and “European features,” which Myrdal underscored were the product of “white genes.”<sup>535</sup> African Americans with “white genes” due to urbanization and social selection, clustered in cities. They also, because of their upper-class status, had fewer children. This more or less meant that as a whole the number of “white genes” in African American communities remained relatively low and concentrated in urban areas. The reason behind these demographic movements, Myrdal pointed out, was completely social. There was no element among mix-race individuals which

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<sup>533</sup> Ibid, 698

<sup>534</sup> Ibid, 699

<sup>535</sup> Myrdal., pg. 130-1

necessitated their migration to the cities or their upward social mobility. This was not racial psychology, like that of Lapouge. They were neither more “active” or “energetic” or more “intelligent.”<sup>536</sup> However, Myrdal account of social selection with biological and genetic (technically phenotypic) effects, straddles close to the line of describing a social elite with differing biological/phenotypic features.

Drawing from Herskovits’ Myrdal also underscored finally that social selection was critical for the future “racial make-up” of the United States, even if the final results were not clear. He noted, drawing from Herskovits that due to social and especially to “marriage selection” “passing,” that “the American Negro people show up as an incredibly mixed population.” With the phenomenon of “passing,” “while we cannot say existing research permits a definite answer to how many Negroes have white blood, the best available evidence and expert opinion point to a figure around 70 per cent.” This figure would increase with time because there was a strong process of social selection which leads to further intermarriage.<sup>537</sup>

Strong forces of social selection had caused “passing” to become “easier in the more mobile and autonomous society of today and tomorrow.” Nonetheless, immigration from eastern and southern Europe, of individuals who were “darker,” as well as the “rising respectability of the American Indian” will “tend to decrease the desire to pass.” Social and economic conditions would continue to have a decisive influence on reproduction where there would be “no sure signs that light-coloured people will not remain in the upper class.”<sup>538</sup> Perhaps the most important selective

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<sup>536</sup> Ibid. 132

<sup>537</sup> Ibid, pg. 132

<sup>538</sup> Ibid, pg. 134.

influence was immigration where “immigrants from the West Indies and South America...who enter the country as Negroes will somewhat change the genetic composition of the newcomers.” All in all this showed that the result would most likely be, and this according to Myrdal highly speculative, a collision of social selective forces which would tend “toward a slow but continuous equalization of Negro and white genes in the Negro people, decreasing the relative numbers at both the black and white extremes and concentrating the individuals ever closer to the average.”<sup>539</sup>

Myrdal’s discussion of social selection was nonetheless predominately a discussion of culture and behavior: that as African Americans became more established in the United States, they would assimilate to a greater and greater extent all aspects of (white) American culture. Especially as African Americans became “more educated and urbanized” it was expected that they, through a process of social selection and through an effort to attain status as well as to be upwardly mobile, would gradually assimilate many aspects of American culture, “the dominant American patterns.” This trend will work slowly and would only follow the increasing urbanization of the African American population. As urbanization and assimilation increased African Americans, or a class of African Americans, would reach a kind of, to use the phrases of Mondaini a “social” and “ethnic fusion.”<sup>540</sup>

Scholars have very much focused on individual sociologists and their account of the “Negro Problem,” or one specific aspect of it. Examining the “Negro Problem”

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<sup>539</sup> Ibid, pg. 135.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid. 965-6

continuously, I have demonstrated that the “Negro Problem” must be viewed as part of a European sociological effort. Discussions of the “Negro Problem” were vitiated by discussions of social selection. One of the critical changes in the discussion of social selection in the context of the “Negro Problem” was the disappearance of Lapouge. This is consistent with other discussions of social selection in this chapter.

Mondaini did not agree with Lapouge’s racial psychology or his discussion of “urban selection” or his “Aryanism.” Nonetheless Mondaini found Lapouge’s account of urban selection useful enough to invert it. Perhaps most surprising is Du Bois’ discussion of social selection. Given his European education in sociology and his wide reading, he was aware of the connection of social selection with the work of Lapouge. Du Bois also used social selection to not only argue that it was the root of the “Negro Problem,” but also that unfettered social competition and social selection was the *solution* to the “Negro Problem” as well underscores the concepts centrality and flexibility to these discussions.

In a very restricted sense, as narrated by Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation, social selection meant the survival of one “type” over another due to specific social conditions. While the type did not change, the environment did, leading to the success of one type and the decline of another. This was the focus of the discussion between Franz Boas and the anthropological community, as outlined by Chapter 3. That Herskovits as Boas’ student should resurrect this argument, that social selection promoted a certain type, is not shocking considering Herskovits was Boas’ student. Nonetheless, that Myrdal’s discussion of the “Negro Problem” in its discussion of social selection and genetics would harken back to this turn of the century argument,

argues well for the central contention of this dissertation: that social selection, like natural selection, is one of the principle frameworks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century social sciences. Social selection, and Lapouge's concepts, were so flexible that they could be used to help explain argue against biological inferiority in very late 19<sup>th</sup> century texts (Mondaini) as well as, around fifty years later, the genetic composition of a North American population.

## Conclusion

What this dissertation has documented is that the influence of Vacher de Lapouge was far beyond his contribution to racial science in France and in Germany, as has been meticulously outlined by George Mosse and many others. Rather, through a series of critical engagements (in particular outlined in chapter 3 to 7 of this dissertation) social scientists in Europe and in the United States critiqued and discussed Lapouge and his account of “social selection” adapting it in order to articulate and support the core tenants of their social theories. Even the most virulent critics in Italy, such as Gennaro Mondaini, used Lapouge’s social selection to define social dynamics and for their own social theory.

Furthermore, through a discussion of social selection, I have been able to link numerous figures and inquiries to describe a transnational history of the social sciences which spans nearly a half-century and which draws from writings in four countries, in which in particular in the United States, social selection was key for a number of the “founding generation” of American sociologists.

As importantly, my emphasis on Italian sources suggests the desirability of widening the analysis of sources in the European social sciences, as an Italian author provided, as discussed in Chapter 7, of one of the first extended discussions of the “Negro Problem” while also using Lapouge’s discussion of “social selection” to argue against African American inferiority.

This dissertation, though attention to social selection, has also provided original analyses of not only American sociologists such as E.A Ross and William Graham Sumner, but also revealed new continuities and directions in the work of

W.E.B Du Bois and Gunnar Myrdal. Perhaps most importantly, through this dissertation's discussion of Franz Boas and "social selection," I have argued that Franz Boas was closer to many of his contemporaries in terms of his understanding of the fixed characteristics of "race" and the action of social selection on fixed "types" than historians and anthropologists have argued. Secondly, that Boas' emphasis on the "plasticity" of certain racial features under improved environmental conditions, was indeed, not an argument of Boas', but of Boas' contemporary Ridolfo Livi, whose work Boas thought extraordinarily highly of.

In sum, it is clear that much of the history of the social sciences needs to be adjusted in order to account of, among other aspects, the role of Darwinism in the social sciences as well as the role of French ideas in the foundational works of American and British sociology. Simply because of a lack of understanding of the ubiquity of social selection as well as some hasty analysis, social selection deserves, as a constituent concept for the social sciences, as much discussion as natural selection in the history of the social sciences.

Each chapter, moreover, has attempted to underscore not only the ubiquity of social selection discussions but also to argue that each discussion of social selection possessed a certain degree of plasticity. By "plasticity", in this specific instance, I mean that from Paul Broca, to Franz Boas, to Lapouge to Alexander Carr-Saunders and R.A. Fisher, social selection discussions while maintaining a fundamental continuity were infinitely adaptable. Social selection was always distinguished from selection in nature and always deployed (except as this chapter underscores) to argue for the autonomy of social forces. Because discussions of social selection did so

much to determine the nature of the social and its limits- whether tradition, the mores, or the fundamental nature of prejudice- social selection for sociologists also determined the limits of the natural. Natural selection therefore emerged in social selection as what social selection was not and vice versa.

Though discussions of natural selection are ubiquitous in the history of science literature and the history of ideas, this dissertation the first work to give a complete genealogy to social selection and to seriously consider its influence. That this dissertation is the first to do so says a great deal concerning the ‘presentest’ priorities of the history of science progression and the provincial nature of the historiography. By doing so, it not only unravels a critical element of the conceptual framework of the emerging and active social sciences, but by describing in several countries, how social selection adapted and was adaptable to a variety of concerns and metaphysics.

This was the case even when the metaphysics of social selection, as happened almost immediately, became radically divorced from Lapouge’s own intentions for the concept. Social theorists, almost to a person, spent relatively little time on Lapouge, rejecting almost immediately his “Aryan psychology.” Instead they used social selection to describe key features of their social system, such as Sorkin’s use of social selection in his discussions of social mobility. The unmooring of the concept of social selection from Lapouge’s own sociology was remarkable even more for the lack of any effort to maintain a kind of fidelity to Lapouge’s purposes.

Rather, theorists have been keen to adapt social selection for their own purposes, precisely because it was so flexible and precisely because it allowed all of them, in their own ways, to describe critical aspects of their systems.

Social selection's flexibility, furthermore, allowed it to function most generally as an argument for the autonomy of the social sciences, which suited many social theorists well. Thus, in a certain way, it would make no sense for an early sociologist such as Sumner or Giddings to argue for social Darwinism, as this negates the whole idea of the social scientist. Thus, social selection emerged at just the right time, powering much discussion in the transnational social sciences.

The career of social selection after the Second World War saw its migration into population genetics and ecology, where it began to be used by biologists to describe and to explain the social behavior of animals and its influence on fitness but continued in continuities in Britain over social mobility and occupational and educational attainment. In social theory too, there was a continual play with social and natural selection concepts in anthropology and in biologically inclined social sciences, such as sociobiology. However, such as the complexities of genetics discussed in these disciplines that any discussion of social selection in the post-war period would as well be a discussion of the history of population genetics and animal behavior. And this lies firmly outside the scope of this dissertation.

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