



Johnson-Reed Act

100 YEARS LATER

Critical Reflections on the Global Legacy of US Immigration Quotas, 1924-2024

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

22-23 August 2024
Debrecen, Hungary

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“Johnson-Reed 100 Years Later”:
Critical Reflections on the Global Legacy of US
Immigration Quotas, 1924–2024

August 22–23, 2024, University of Debrecen, Hungary

PLENARIES

Johnson Bavery, Ashley

Eastern Michigan University, USA

UNAUTHORIZED EUROPEAN MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES AFTER 1924

After the United States Congress passed the 1924 Immigration Act, tens of thousands of Eastern Europeans traveled to Canada with the hopes of entering the United States. Ashley Bavery’s presentation draws on her book *Bootlegged Aliens: Unauthorized Immigration on America’s Northern Border* (Pennsylvania, 2020) to explore the clandestine ways Europeans migrants crossed from Canada into Michigan, New York, and Maine. This spike in unauthorized migration alarmed U.S. officials and local labor leaders, who saw new Europeans as a threat to the stability of local politics and workplaces. In Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and New York, local officials derided newcomers as potential communists, criminals, and economic drains on limited welfare resources in ways that echo rhetoric about migrants on the United States border with Mexico today. Ultimately, this talk will demonstrate how Europeans from nations like Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine created a panic over unauthorized immigration that has been forgotten by their own ancestors, yet that became central in forming

United States strategies on policing and controlling migrants throughout the twentieth century.

Bio:

Ashley Johnson Bavery is associate professor of history at Eastern Michigan University, where she teaches courses on United States immigration and ethnic history. Her book, *Bootlegged Aliens: Immigration Politics on America's Northern Border*, received the First Book Award from the Immigration and Ethnic History Society for its examination of unauthorized European immigration to Detroit before World War II. Her articles have been published in the *Journal of American History* and the *Journal of Urban History*. She is currently working on a book that explores early Muslim immigration to the American Midwest.

Mazurkiewicz, Anna A.

University of Gdansk, Poland

NATION OF IMMIGRANTS: DECONSTRUCTING THE AXIOM

The talk contains a general survey of major changes in US immigration policies beginning with naturalization laws of the 1790s. Against such a backdrop, Mazurkiewicz examines the changing interpretations of who were “the Americans” since the early days of the Republic. She revisits recent scholarly debates related to the “Nation of Immigrants” discourse in the United States. Considering that immigrants are American history, she looks at how various social constructs, created to retain the power of the dominant group, evolved from Anglo-normativity to transnational and pan-ethnic assimilation models, and how racial and ethnic groups functioned in relationship to each other within the “Nation of Immigrants” paradigm. The talk concludes with the adoption of the Hart-Celler Act, which abolished the national origins quota system and significantly transformed American society.

Bio:

Anna Mazurkiewicz (dr habil., prof. UG) historian, and author of four monographs: on the American responses to elections of 1947 and 1989 in Poland, and on the role of the political exiles from East Central Europe in American Cold War politics. Her book, *Uchodźcy z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w amerykańskiej polityce zimnowojennej, 1948-1954* (2016), won the Willi Paul Adams Award, for the best book on American history

published in a language other than English, *Organization of American Historians*, April 2019. She edited five volumes, including four in English (published in Germany and the UK). She serves as the editor of the book series “Migrations in History. Past Experience, Global Patterns, Memory” at DeGruyter (Germany) and the book review editor for Poland’s *Polish American Studies* (University of Illinois, USA). Mazurkiewicz was the past President of the Polish American Historical Association (2017–2018) and a Board member since 2015. She is also a member of the Inter-faculty Committee of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU) for the Study of the Polish Diaspora as well as the Committee on Migration Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN). Recipient of numerous research grants and awards by Polish and American institutions, Mazurkiewicz was a visiting scholar at the University of Notre Dame, Central European University (Budapest), University of Regensburg, Kosciuszko Foundation Scholar at the University of Minnesota, State University of New York at Buffalo, Valdosta State University (Georgia, USA) and Fulbright Senior Award, Center for Russian East European and Eurasian Studies, Stanford University, USA.

Szente-Varga, Mónika

Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary

IN THE WAKE OF THE JOHNSON–REED ACT: THE FORMATION AND EVOLUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN COMMUNITY IN MEXICO

Following the First World War, emigration re-started from Central and Eastern Europe. This phenomenon, however, differed in several characteristics compared to the emigration in the previous period: total numbers were lower; the composition of emigrants had undergone changes, the proportion of Hungarians increased, and there was a shift in destinations, too. Due to the Johnson–Reed Act, migratory routes changed. With the introduction of the quota system, the U.S. was no longer a viable option for most of the Central and Eastern Europeans, thus some of them opted for South America, especially Brazil and Argentina, whereas others were looking for springboards, from where after a couple of years they hoped to get to the land of their dreams. Therefore, countries in the vicinity of the United States that did not use to have important flows of immigration were converted into places of destination, such as Cuba and Mexico. Considering it as a means of development, Mexican governments had long wanted immigration in the country, however, due to the

closeness and higher attractiveness of the United States, immigration flows stayed low. The need for immigrants increased for the 1920s, as the armed phase of the Mexican Revolution had led to enormous human losses and emigration in the previous decade. From the middle of the 1920s there emerged a combination of the above-mentioned factors: an increased demand for immigrants in Mexico and a growing pool of people who actually wanted to go there, even if most of them had the idea of a temporary stay.

This presentation will examine the formation and evolution of the Hungarian community in Mexico from the 1920s until the end of the 1940s. The fluctuation of migratory flows will be analysed as well as the composition of immigrants and their social and economic integration.

Hungarian community in Mexico is much less known than Hungarian communities in Brazil or Argentina. This is primarily due to a huge difference in numbers. Hungarians numbered around 3000 in Mexico at the heydays of the community, whereas – according to estimates – Hungarians in Latin America in general reached 250 000, settling mostly in Brazil and Argentina. What makes the Mexican case special is precisely its limitations: the restricted time span during which most Hungarian immigration took place (only 25 years) and the limited size, as new arrivals were often mitigated by departures to the U.S. What also calls the attention is that despite low numbers, Hungarians did have a lasting impact on certain fields in Mexico, out of which sports and pharmaceutical industry will be highlighted during the lecture.

The presentation is based on archival research in Hungary and in Mexico. It relies on documentation kept at the Hungarian National Archive in Budapest, the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City and the Genaro Estrada Historical Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, complemented by dailies, newspapers, diaries, memoirs and other publications as well as oral history interviews.

Bio:

Mónika Szente-Varga is a historian, a Latin America specialist. She studied History at the University of Szeged (Ph.D. in 2005 and habilitation in 2014). Her first book *Migración húngara a México entre 1901 y 1950*, published in Mexico in 2007 was awarded honorary mention for the VI Jacobo Goldberg Prize. She lived in Puebla, Mexico between 2005 and 2008, and gave classes at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla and the Universidad de las Américas, Puebla. Since 2015 she has been working at Ludovika University of Public Service and is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of International Security Studies. Her main fields of research are Modern and

Contemporary History of Latin America; Global History; Knowledge Transfer and Exchange; Cold War History and International Migration. Her recent publications include “Constructing the future: solidarity action in Nicaragua” (Third World Quarterly, 2023); and “A Mismatch between Migrant Identities and Consular Representations. Migration from East Central Europe to Latin America, 1867–1945” (Journal of Migration History, 2021).

PRESENTERS

Atkinson, David C.

Purdue University, USA

THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE QUOTA ACTS, 1921–1924

This paper examines the U.S. State Department’s crucial role in supporting and administering the 1921 Emergency Quota Act. Enacted on May 19, 1921, that law constituted the foundation of 1924’s notorious National Origins Act and the four decades of restriction that ensued. The passage of the Emergency Quota Act is commonly associated with the efforts of nativist members of Congress, eugenicist academics, and xenophobic journalists, all of whom played a central role in mobilizing public opinion in favor of restriction, especially against Southern, Central, and Eastern European immigration. The key intervention of State Department and consular officials in the Act’s passage and in the establishment and operation of permanent quotas and visa control mechanisms, however, has not received significant attention.

State Department diplomats, consular agents, and bureaucrats performed an essential function in shaping and implementing the Emergency Quota Act, and the restrictionist national origins system it created. They helped justify the new law through their pessimistic reporting on conditions abroad in the First World War’s aftermath—much of it tinged with anti-Semitism—and they enthusiastically promoted the benefits of remotely regulating the nation’s borders through the visa system, a continuation of wartime practices designed

to prevent “dangerous,” “subversive,” and “unsuitable” immigrants from entering the United States. Having secured this new remote gatekeeping role, State Department officials soon discovered that it represented an extraordinarily complex task, fraught with unexpected consequences for American foreign relations that strained the bureaucratic capacity of the Department. Officials at home and abroad had to contend with accusations and entreaties from outraged foreign governments, domestic interest groups, beleaguered prospective migrants, confused steamship companies, stranded veterans, and separated families, all while attempting to impose clarity upon a world still reeling from war and riven by unclear boundary changes.

Bio:

David C. Atkinson is an associate professor of history in the Purdue University History Department. He received his Ph.D. from Boston University in 2010, and he is the author of *The Burden of White Supremacy: Containing Asian Labor Migration in the British Empire and the United States* (UNC Press, 2017), and *In Theory and in Practice: Harvard's Center for International Affairs, 1958-1983* (WCFIA/HUP, 2008). He is working on a new project that explores how imports shaped the political economy of the 19th century United States, and he has published articles on Asian migration in the Pacific Northwest, on the international resonances of American immigration restriction in the 1920s, and on the imperial and international implications of Australian immigration policy.

Balogh, Máté Gergely

University of Debrecen

THE ‘SILENT MAJORITY’ AND THE ETHNICS – INVOLVEMENT OF EASTERN EUROPEAN-AMERICANS IN RICHARD NIXON’S CAMPAIGN

In 1972, Richard Nixon won the presidency of the United States with one of the biggest landslides of the twentieth century. Winning the majority of the “ethnic vote,” was seen as crucial to the success of Richard Nixon’s second presidential run. There was a special focus on the vote of the people of Eastern European descent during Nixon’s 1972 campaign. Whereas traditionally, immigrants were counted among the supporters of the Democrats, the Republican Party had been attempting to gain the support of the “white ethnics” since World War II. By this, they were referring to a group of American voters of

European descent, mostly of Eastern European immigrant background, anti-communist, often Catholic.

One of the key figures in this process was the Hungarian-American politician László Pásztor, who emigrated to the United States after 1956 himself. This paper presents how the Republican Party attempted to reach out to mostly Eastern European-American ethnic groups through the Nationalities Division (later renamed Heritage Groups Council) of the Republican National Committee, how they attempted to organize them, and how these ethnics fit into the “Silent Majority” concept of Nixon’s campaign.

Bio:

Máté Gergely Balogh is an instructor at the North American Department at the University of Debrecen. He graduated as an English major at the University of Debrecen, and also received an MA in International Relations from Corvinus University Budapest and in History from the Central European University. He received his doctorate from the University of Debrecen in 2022, the title of his dissertation is *The United States of America through the Eyes of the Hungarian State Security, 1956-1989*. His research areas include international relations of the United States after 1945 with a special focus on Hungarian-American relations, Hungarian-Americans, and American politics.

Battisti, Danielle

The University of Nebraska

PRIVILEGES OF ILLEGALITY: UNAUTHORIZED ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES AND ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The passage of the Johnson-Reed Act in 1924 represented a monumental shift in the country’s position toward European immigration. Among other restrictions, the law set relatively low annual ceilings on immigration, enacted paltry national origins quotas for Southern and Eastern European sending states, and restricted legal entry to immigrants who had cleared a range of security and health checks prior to their departure. While the Johnson-Reed Act went far in achieving one of its goals to reduce the flow of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, it correspondingly expanded the number of European immigrants who would now immigrate through irregular channels. This paper builds off of Mae Ngai’s seminal work on illegal immigration by using a case study of unauthorized Italian

immigrants to explore the fluid boundaries of il/legality that were produced with the United States's adoption of National Origins Quotas for European immigrants.

This paper utilizes the archives of The Italian Welfare League, a New York City-based immigrant aid organization, to study 600 case files of Italian migrants (most notably, commercial seamen who deserted their vessels at American ports) who came to the United States illegally in the 1950s and who subsequently adjusted their status to legal permanent resident. I use those records to not only call attention to the ubiquity of unauthorized European immigration to the United States in the twentieth century, but to perform a qualitative analysis of data that cannot be found in annual statistics on unauthorized immigration gathered from government agencies. My research shows how the state – via laws passed by Congress, practices of government agencies, and decisions made in immigration courts – generally permitted the legalization of unauthorized Italian migrants, especially seamen through obscure but enormously consequential legal practices including grants of “pre-examination” and “voluntary departure.” I also show how such loopholes overwhelmingly benefitted white migrants by design. Although it was never a straight or guaranteed path, the state put a number of mechanisms in place to adjust, accommodate, and ultimately absolve many unauthorized European migrants of their marginalized status at the very same time that the state was actively targeting unauthorized migrants from Latin America and elsewhere for removal.

I also discuss how Italian seamen deserters were largely able to normalize their status because state actions in this period tended to recognize the familial and community ties established during the immigrant's residency in the United States as elements that bound newcomers to the nation. However, the legitimacy of an immigrant's affiliation with the United States continued to be highly circumscribed by racialized and gendered constructions of citizenship. Enduring constructions of American citizenship that idealized white heteronormative families, with men understood to be the economic and social head of household played a major role in determining the fate of the men, and their families, examined in this study.

Bio:

Dr. Danielle Battisti is an associate professor of History and Chair of the History Department at the University of Nebraska at Omaha where she specializes in immigration and ethnic history. Her first book, *Whom We Shall*

Welcome: Italian Americans and Immigration Reform (Fordham University Press, 2019) examined both the liberal and conservative elements of Italian American efforts to influence American immigration policies in the 1950s and 1960s. It won the Best First Book Award from the Immigration and Ethnic History Society in 2020. Dr. Battisti is currently engaged in two new research projects. The first is an anthology, co-edited with Dr. S. Deborah Kang, *The Hidden Histories of Unauthorized European Migration* (University of Illinois Press, 2024) which addresses gaps in political discourse, the academy, and popular memory about the history of unauthorized European migration to the United States. Her other book project, *Cold War Crossings: the United States and International Migration, 1945–1989* examines American involvement in the creation and operations of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, a postwar international government organization created in 1951 and charged with resettling European Displaced Persons and traditional economic emigrants to the Americas and Oceania. Battisti has also published articles and chapters in *The Journal of American Ethnic History*, *The Italian American Review*, *Making Italian America*, *Consumer Culture and the Production of Ethnic Identities* (Fordham University Press, 2014), and *Ethnic Families in America* (Prentice Hall, 2011).

Beelaert, Bram

Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp, Belgium

STRANDED IN ANTWERP: REPERCUSSIONS OF THE US IMMIGRATION QUOTA IN ANTWERP AS A PORT OF DEPARTURE

In 1873, the Red Star Line company started a service to Philadelphia and New York, making Antwerp, that was connected to its hinterland via a dense network of railways, into an important departure point for trans-Atlantic emigrants from continental Europe.

During the 1890's and at the beginning of the 20th century emigration peaked. But Antwerp also struggled with the repercussions of American immigration regulations, enforced by a policy of remote control (Zollberg, 2009). This culminated, when US immigration quota in 1921 and 1924 coincided with a last wave of emigrants from Eastern Europe, and with stricter border procedures in Europe.

Local authorities deplored the decline in revenues from the passenger shipping business, and feared that stranded emigrants would become a public charge. But above all, the journey of transit migrants through the city changed. Before the war, the vast majority only spent a couple of hours to a couple of days in Antwerp. Now destitute emigrants,

often Jewish refugees from the collapsed Russian Empire, became stuck in the city. They were entangled in procedures or anxiously waiting for a chance to board a ship, while authorities, aid organizations and shipping companies bickered over the responsibility for them. The Antwerp Jewish community actively helped, in some cases absorbing stranded passengers.

By combining testimonies, oral histories, and archival research, and adding new elements to the research of the Red Star Line Museum, I aim to outline how American emigration quotas changed the trajectories of transit migrants in Antwerp, highlighting not only the role of governments and shipping lines, but also the agency and ingenuity of emigrants themselves.

Bio:

Bram Beelaert (1978) studied history and journalism in Ghent and Brussels, Belgium. He published about social, cultural and migration history and has expertise in the fields of archivism, oral history, heritage studies, museology, journalism, and historical research. He is currently curator and head of research at the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp.

Csatár, Péter and Attila Cserép

University of Debrecen

COMPARISON OF AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN METAPHORS OF IMMIGRANTS

The aim of the presentation is to give an overview of both American and European metaphors related to immigrants and migration. We assume that similar metaphors have been used although the historical contexts on the two continents show remarkable differences. The scope of our study includes metaphors used in the past and present (late 19th century – 21st century).

Our research is qualitative rather than quantitative. Linguistic data are taken from scholarly articles and books on the topic, and they will be examined within the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). This allows us to analyse metaphorical relations at different levels of specificity (e.g. NATURAL DISASTER is a general metaphor which subsumes more specific metaphors such as FLOOD, POLLUTION etc.) Based on this analysis, we can throw light on differences and similarities between American and European

discourses. In CMT metaphors are viewed not simply as linguistic expressions but as conceptual patterns that affect our thoughts and therefore this study also shows patterns in attitudes.

Bio:

Péter Csatár (csatarpeter@unideb.hu)

Senior lecturer and head at the Department of German Linguistics, Institute of German Studies, University of Debrecen. Research areas: linguistic metaphor research, Discourse Linguistics, Pragmatics

Attila Cserép (cserep.attila@arts.unideb.hu)

Senior lecturer at the Department of English Linguistics, Institute of English and American Studies, University of Debrecen. Research areas: semantics of idioms, metaphor and metonymy in English and other languages.

Dominguez Lopez, Ernesto

Center for Hemispheric and United States Studies-University of Havana

THE CUBAN ETHNIC ENCLAVE: THE CROSS-BORDER INTERPLAY BETWEEN FOREIGN POLICY, IMMIGRATION POLICY AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

This paper addresses the nature and composition of the Cuban immigration to the US after 1959. It discusses two key concepts: transnational community and ethnic enclave. On that base, it examines the formation of the Cuban community in Southern Florida, the policies, politics, sociology and economic policy of its evolution until 1980. It uses descriptive statistics to form a coherent picture of the immigration flow and the community they formed and contributed to expand; compares the standing general immigration legislation to the specific regulations and policies towards the community, places those policies within the broader framework of US foreign policy and domestic politics, and examines the politics of that community.

It develops three key theses: 1) The formation of the Cuban ethnic enclave in Southern Florida is demonstrated by empirical evidence, but the concept of transnational community as defined by Alejandro Portes does not apply to this case prior to 1980; 2) The evolution of the community demonstrates that American immigration policy is far more complex than the standing legislation, as it intertwines with domestic and international politics; 3) Race and class combines in the formulation of specific immigration policies.

The paper aims at contributing to the study of the ways in which immigration, migratory policies, legislation, racial divides, class structure and foreign policy interests interact, to shape specific realities and specific cross-border relations. It intends to offer a perspective on the role of US legal framework for immigration in the country's political landscape, social structure, political history, and foreign policy, thus advancing in the understanding of the nature and impact of US immigration law.

Bio:

Born in Havana, Cuba, in 1976. He holds a PhD in Historical Sciences from the University of Havana (Cuba), and currently is doctoral candidate in political sciences at the University of Rostock (Germany). Dominguez Lopez is full professor of history and political sciences at the Center for Hemispheric and United States Studies-University of Havana and a visiting professor at the universities of Buckingham (UK) and Sancti Spiritus (Cuba). He has held visiting positions at the University of Rostock, the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (France), the University of Wisconsin-Madison (US), Arcadia University (US) and the Carter Presidential Center (US). Dominguez Lopez has been a guest lecturer, guest professor and guest speaker at over 30 universities and academic institutions from Europe, North America and South America. His research interests include theory of history, political theory, global and regional geopolitics. US-Cuba relations, post-industrial capitalism.

Domotor, Teodora

Károli Gáspár University, Hungary

A DISTORTED AMERICAN DREAM AND THE CONSEQUENTIAL EXPATRIATION OF AMERICAN AUTHORS

The old national ethos, "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness", promised prosperity to all Americans regardless of ethnic origin or social class. By the time the Roaring Twenties came, an entire generation's search for the elusive American Dream of wealth, happiness, and freedom was perceivable. Despite the continuous influx of immigrants wishing to contribute to American society, after World War I the country decided to withdraw into isolation to rebuild a stable society and revive their trademark confidence. Asserting national values by immigration restrictions (including the prevention

of immigration from Asia and setting quotas in the number of migrants coming from Eastern and Southern Europe as well as establishing the first formal border control in the U.S.) was of primary importance during the 1920s, as was racial discrimination – a total deviation from the spirit of the Declaration of Independence. This new ‘American Dream’ failed to live up to the promise implied in Thomas Jefferson’s words. Such inconsistencies, flaws, and the lost ideals of the American Dream informed contemporary literary works (including *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) by John Dos Passos, and *In Our Time* (1925) by Ernest Hemingway). The artists and writers who could not and would not accept the system of the United States in the 1920s left for abroad, settling primarily in Paris, and formed a group commonly referred to as the Lost Generation. This paper aims to investigate the unintended consequences of immigration restriction that took place in the United States in the 1920s, highlighting the main reasons behind the disillusionment and consequential expatriation of American authors who found a new home in France. The methodologies to be utilized shall include social history and literary studies.

Bio:

She received her Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Surrey, UK. She currently works as an assistant professor at Károli Gáspár University in Budapest. As a visiting scholar, she conducted extensive research at Columbia University in NY and JFK Presidential Library in Boston, with whom she maintains an active connection. Her primary research interests include the narrative representation of immigration and identity in twentieth-century transnational American literature. She is committed to an interdisciplinary approach: social history, psychoanalysis, and gender studies form the basis of her arguments. In addition to articles and chapters in American and European publications, she is working on her first monograph focusing on the trauma of expatriation.

Glant, Tibor

University of Debrecen

GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA IN INTERWAR HUNGARIAN MALE JUVENILE TRAVEL WRITING

The punitive Trianon Treaty of 1920 forced new realities upon Hungarians living in both what was left of Hungary and in the United States, while rising anti-immigrant sentiments in the New World culminating in the passing of the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 further complicated the situation. With tens if not hundreds of thousands of ethnic Hungarians resettling into smaller Hungary from the territories forcefully ceded to the successor states, Budapest was not interested in large-scale remigration from the US. At the same time, American immigration restrictions drastically cut off the flow of Hungarian migrants to the New World communities established at the time of the “new immigration”. American popular culture (especially music, movies, and pulp fiction) took Hungary by storm and further strengthened the overtly positive image of the Transatlantic Promised Land. Travel writing continued to play a dominant role in shaping mutual images, and a new subgenre, juvenile male travel literature, emerged. Taking a closer look at the works of Lola Réz Kosáryné, Andor Kun, and Gedeon Mészöly I explain how tourism, romanticized images of the “Other”, and government propaganda mingled in these texts in what seems to be a concerted attempt to help young Hungarians come to terms with interwar political realities. In a world where women were still second-class citizens, the emphasis was on young men who were seen as the future of Hungary in both the Carpathian Basin and in the New World communities.

Bio:

Tibor Glant majored in History and English at the University of Debrecen and earned an M.A. and a Ph. D. in History from the University of Warwick, UK. He has taught various courses on American history, culture, and film (including US-Hungarian relations) since 1991 in Hungary, England, the Netherlands, Germany, Romania, and the USA. He chaired the North American Department between 2002 and 2017. He took his habilitation with the University of Debrecen and has served as President of the Hungarian Association of American Studies between 2013 and 2024. He has published eight books on World War I and the Trianon treaty, American peace preparations during World War I, Hungarian travel writing on the US, 1956 in American memory, and the American adventures and return of the Holy Crown (1944-78). He lives in Debrecen with his wife and daughter. <https://ieas.unideb.hu/en/dr-tibor-glant>

González Delgado, Dalia

Center for Hemispheric and United States Studies, University of Havana

FROM THE JOHNSON–REED ACT TO TRUMPISM: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF US IMMIGRATION POLICY

Any observer of American politics can notice that the immigration phenomenon is an inextricable part of debates. The 21st century, with the transformations it has brought about in international relations and the consequences of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, has brought with it changes in the interpretation of the issue and has kept it among the priorities on the agenda. Added to this, the presidencies of Barack Obama, the first African–American to hold that position, and Donald Trump, with their openly racist and xenophobic statements, revived feelings of rejection towards immigrants among large sectors of the population. But that is not new in the United States.

In that sense, for example, the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 marked the beginning of a long period in which restrictive immigration policies for certain foreigners predominated. From that moment on, there was a rise in nativist sentiments and policies, which crystallized in 1924 with the approval of the Johnson–Reed Act, which established a quota system to limit the entry of Eastern and Southern Europeans. In all moments, although the idea of open borders has coexisted with hostility towards newcomers, immigration policy had a selective nature and the observed trend is towards restrictions of various kinds, although with fluctuations particularly between 1965 and 1980.

To fully understand the issue from its origins, this paper proposes an approach to the evolution of immigration policy in the United States from the formation of the country to the Trump presidency. The intention is to characterize the main immigration legislations and its conditions, and to find long–lasting patterns that are repeated through time.

Bio:

Dalia González Delgado (La Habana, 1989) is an assistant professor at the Center for Hemispheric and United States Studies, University of Havana. PhD Student in Historical Sciences; Master's in Contemporary History (emphasis on International Relations), 2015; Bachelor's Degree in Journalism (Título de Oro), summa cum laude, 2011; University of Havana. Her PhD investigation is on *Historical evolution of US Federal Congress' Immigration Policy, 2001–2016*. Other research interests include the study of policymaking processes

in US Congress, the Cuban–American community, and US–Cuba relations. She has taught courses on American history and political system and US–Cuba relations. Her articles have been published in magazines and academic books in Cuba, Mexico and Argentina, and in the press in Cuba and the United States.

Hazemali, David and Matjaž Klemenčič

Hazemali, D.: Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia

Klemenčič, M.: Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia

MIGRATION FLOW FROM YUGOSLAVIA TO THE U.S. UNDER THE JOHNSON–REED ACT OF 1924: A HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL ANALYSIS

The 1924 Johnson–Reed Act was a landmark legislation that restricted immigration to the U.S. based on national origin quotas. This article examines the consequences of this act and the preceding 1921 quotas on the migration from Yugoslavia, with special focus on the South Slavs, until 1941, when the Axis Powers and its allies invaded the country.

Using a mixed–methods approach, the article analyzes migration statistics, census data, and newspaper articles from selected South Slavic–American and domestic Yugoslav newspapers, with special focus on Slovenian, Croatian, and Serb newspapers.

The article aims to answer the following research question: How did the 1921 and 1924 quotas affect the demographic, social, and cultural aspects of the South Slavic communities in the U.S., and how did they respond to the acts in their newspapers and other media outlets?

The article contributes to the field of South Slavic–American studies by providing a comprehensive and nuanced account of the impact of the immigration policy on the South Slavic migration and identity formation.

The article expects to find that the 1921 and 1924 quotas significantly reduced the number and diversity of the South Slavic immigrants as well as the gender structures and other demographic data, and that the South Slavic–American newspapers reflected the negative stereotypes and reported on the prejudices against them. The article also discusses the implications of the findings for the current debates on immigration, ethnicity, and diversity in the U.S. The article

acknowledges the limitations of the data sources and the scope of the analysis, and suggests directions for future research.

Bio:

David Hazemali, PhD, teaching assistant, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, David.hazemali@um.si, ORCID: 0000-0001-9776-8224

Dr David Hazemali is a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia. His fields of expertise include migration and ethnic studies, military history, university-industry collaboration, and history of intelligence of the Slovenian ethnic territory. His recent work explores the immigrant experience of South Slavic ethnic communities in the U.S. during World War I, especially the Slovenian-American community. He also examines U.S. wartime propaganda, the daily migration of Slovenians, and the contemporary migration of Bosnians to China. He has published 16 articles in leading peer-reviewed journals, such as *Journal of Balkan & Near Eastern Studies*, *Sustainability* and *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 3 chapters in monographs, and has presented his research at several international conferences and symposiums. His work has been widely cited by other scholars and researchers, and he holds an h-index of 6 in the Scopus database. Hazemali is passionate about sharing his findings and insights with the academic and public audiences.

Matjaž Klemenčič, PhD, Professor of History, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia, matjaz.klemencic11@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0003-2796-9367

Professor Matjaž Klemenčič taught history at the University of Maribor. Since his retirement from the University of Maribor he held positions as Adjunct Scientific Councilor at the Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia; adjunct professor of History at the University of Nova Gorica, and adjunct professor of American Studies at the University of Ljubljana. His fields of expertise include migration and ethnic studies and history, with a focus on the immigrant experience of South Slavic ethnic communities in the U.S.; history of ethnic relations in former Yugoslavia and its dissolution, and history of Slovene indigenous ethnic minorities. He investigates different aspects of South Slavic migrant experience in the U.S. throughout history. He has authored 13 scholarly monographs and over a hundred scholarly articles in leading journals in the field, such as the *Journal of American Ethnic History*, *The Journal of American History*, *Nationalities Papers* and *Journal of Balkan & Near Eastern Studies*. He held lectures at different universities in the U.S. and Europe. His work has been extensively cited by other scholars and researchers.

Ivan, Emese and Adrian M. Pandev

St John's University, NYC, USA

IMMIGRATION, CULTURE, AND WELL-BEING: THE ROLE AND PLACE OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Although there are several studies reporting the beneficial role of sports in immigrant health, more research is needed to understand whether and how these activities can guide the psychological sense of community and well-being outcomes. This study aims at exploring how sport participation among immigrants contributes to developing their sense of community and subjective well-being over the times. Particular attention is paid to an analysis of different timeframes under US immigration laws and their affect on community development. At the same time research in the field of immigration and sport is still in its infancy. By giving a historical overview of the immigration quotes on the evolution of sporting culture in immigrant communities of the USA this article also argues that immigration has introduced a countless number of sports to the North American society. Without immigration, the overall North American society, culture, and sporting landscape would be less diverse and rich. Immigration has not only brought new sports to North America but has introduced new cultures and community building techniques as well. It is safe to say that these developments have also greatly benefited the economy over time. In conclusion this paper argues that although sports have long been an arena for the display of national pride, particularly in association with the modern Olympics, held every four years since 1896, the last decades have witnessed an enormous internationalization of sports. And this trend introduces new opportunities and challenges for studying the field of immigration and sport.

Bio:

Emese Ivan

Associate professor, Health and Human Services, St John's University, NY
Past Senior Associate Dean of the Collins College of Professional Studies at St John's University

PhD in Kinesiology - Western University, Canada

MBA - Purdue University, USA

BA, MA - Corvinus University, Hungary

Jancsó, Katalin

Department of Hispanic Studies, University of Szeged, Hungary

IMMIGRANTS WELCOMED WITH OPEN ARMS OR UNDESIRABLE ALIENS. ANTI-IMMIGRANT ATTITUDES IN LATIN AMERICA AT THE TIME OF THE JOHNSON-REED ACT

The pro-immigrant policies of Latin American governments had undergone major changes by the third decade of the 20th century. While the Spanish-American white elite classes of the independence period dreamed of large-scale (mainly Northern and Western European) immigration, this attitude seemed to change in the last decade of the century. In fact, in the first half of the 20th century, anti-immigration and racist manifestations became quite strong in many Latin American countries. One of the first signs of change became visible in Uruguay, probably partly due to the influence of the Chinese Exclusion Act passed by the congress of the United States of America in 1882. Similarly, the immigration laws of 1921 and 1924 had an impact on the immigration policies of the countries of the southern part of the continent.

In my paper, I would like to explore the parallels between the two regions, focusing on the trigger factors that, in addition to the international climate, were also generated by internal tensions (economic, social, racial). In other words, after a brief introduction to the historical background and the rise of immigration, the starting point of my paper will be the analysis of the reasons for the anti-immigrant reactions, followed by a study of the immigration laws and policies in Latin America. The paper will conclude with a case study of a South American and a Central American country. My sources will include texts of laws and articles published in contemporary newspapers and other publications.

Bio:

Katalin Jancsó is an associate professor at the Department of Hispanic Studies of the University of Szeged, Hungary, supervisor and co-supervisor at the Doctoral Schools of Military Science and Public Administration of the National University of Public Service. Her main areas of interest are the history and the social and economic situation of minorities and immigrants in Latin America. She carried out research trips to Peru and Mexico. Her research career has

focused on indigenism in Peru and Mexico, historical aspects of immigration in Latin America, and Hungarian–Latin American relations, with special attention to the trajectory of Hungarian travellers in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Javor, Martin

University of Prešov and Museum of Emigration to North America – Kasigarda

Roundtable participant

Martin Javor is a Slovak historian and manager of lifelong learning. He is an associate professor of history at the Institute of History of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Prešov in Prešov, he is the director of the Center for Lifelong and Competent Education PU in Prešov. He is the Deputy Director of the Center of Excellence in Sociohistorical and Cultural–Historical Research of the Academy of Sciences in Prešov. He is the owner of the Museum of Emigration to North America – Kasigarda.

Kimak, Izabella

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland

POLISH IMMIGRATION TO THE US: A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE

The beginnings of immigration from Polish lands to the US on a larger scale can be dated, roughly speaking, to the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This largest wave of Polish migration was followed by several others that were contingent both on the existing US immigration legislation and the conditions in the country of origin. In this presentation I wish to consider literary representations of immigration in texts by American writers of Polish descent, mostly those associated with Chicago, as the Windy City boasts the largest Polish diaspora in the world and has even been termed by historian Dominic Pacyga “American Warsaw.” What is interesting, the majority of contemporary Polish Chicagoan writers – including Stuart Dybek, John Guzlowski, Elizabeth Kern, Marcia Cebulski – and of their characters are already of a second or third immigrant generation, as a result of which these texts offer glimpses into an imagined

immigration, construed on the basis of family stories passed from the immigrant grandparents.

Bio:

Izabella Kimak is an assistant professor at the Department of British and American Studies at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland. Her research interests encompass contemporary American literature, with particular emphasis on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. She is a member of the editorial board of *Polish Journal for American Studies* and has recently been elected Secretary-General of the European Association for American Studies. A Kosciuszko Foundation fellow and a recipient of the Polish National Science Center research grant for the project *Sweet Home Chicago: The Windy City and American Writers of Polish Descent*.

Kaelin, Michael

University of Wisconsin, USA

IMMIGRANT PARTICIPATION IN UNITED STATES: IMMIGRATION CONTROL, 1890-1932

The decades preceding the Johnson-Reed Act witnessed an unprecedented tightening of immigration restriction by federal actors. There were important state-level antecedents before the United States government's assumption of immigration control in 1882, however, and recent studies of individual states' policies have uncovered significant restrictive impulses within those contexts. As Hidetaka Hirota has revealed, for instance, the milestone 1882 Immigration Act that made Chinese Exclusion enforceable was essentially copied from the earlier New York State system.

This paper presentation builds upon these insights by demonstrating first that German and Irish New Yorkers were legally empowered to have disproportionate say in crafting that system, and regulated would-be newcomers (including their co-ethnics) according to their own standards of "worthiness." Secondly, it emphasizes that the regulatory methods they spearheaded remained foundational in early twentieth century American immigration policy. Finally, it points to ongoing efforts by the Irish Emigrant Aid Society and the New York German Society to continue to influence both how immigration policy was drafted and how it was implemented at the main immigrant

receiving center at Ellis Island through at least the 1930s, despite no longer having statutory authority to do so.

In examining these societies' institutional records and public pronouncements, it becomes clear that their actions and ideologies helped lay the groundwork for the Johnson-Reed Act. Beyond merely challenging assumptions of filial piety, or acknowledging the occasional efforts of settled immigrant communities to block other groups deemed undesirable, this project recaptures the role of earlier immigrants as ideological co-founders of American immigration restriction. The tendency of modern scholarship to view migrants as victims or opponents of restriction is understandable, but has obscured the ways in which settled immigrants have sought to make immigration control work *for* them, and broader complicity in often-inhumane nativist policies.

Bio:

Michael Kaelin is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His dissertation, *Selected Lives: Immigrant Community and the Origins of Federal Immigration Control in New York, 1847-1882*, investigates how German and Irish American communities established their own definitions of "worthy" and "unworthy" immigrants, and codified those definitions in law through New York's Commissioners of Emigration.

Lenart-Cheng, Helga

St. Mary's College of California, USA

TRANSNATIONAL PARADIGMS IN ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS OF US IMMIGRANT AND ETHNIC ARCHIVES

In the US, archives of autobiographical accounts by immigrants date back to the early twentieth century, and some of these contain stories by Hungarian immigrants as well. These types of archives and oral history collections grew steadily over the last century, and today, with the development of new crowd-sourcing and digital archiving technologies, they are becoming increasingly accessible and public-facing. Immigrant story archives have often featured centrally in the political and cultural landscape as well, and more recently they have also become an effective means of immigrant activism. Historians tend to use these story collections as primary source materials,

whereas I am more interested in what these collections reveal about our changing archiving practices. Ever since the so-called “archival turn” in the social sciences and humanities, we have become more aware of how historical context and archivists’ curatorial power shape the archiving process. Such a critical archival science is better suited to the contemporary demands of participatory, transformative and integrated archiving practices in the domain of immigration history as well. The question is: how do immigrant story archives in the US reflect these critical developments in archival science, especially when it comes to transnational paradigms? Instead of the binary model opposing home country to host country, scholars today tend to describe migrations in terms of transnational ties, diasporic connections and global networks. How is this decentralization reflected in Hungarian immigrant story archives? Does the easy transfer of digital data allow for a “decentralized curation” (Daniel 2014), for more collaboration across borders and other divides, for participatory cataloging, and for more diverse interpretations?

Bio:

Helga Lenart-Cheng (PhD, Harvard University, Comparative Literature) is full professor at Saint Mary’s College of California. Her research focuses on algorithmic storytelling, critical media studies, theories of narrative, subjectivity, community and memory, phenomenological hermeneutics, and world literature. Her books include *Világok vándora (Alexander Lenard: Wanderer of Worlds*, co-authored with Zsuzsa Vajdovics, 2016) and *Story Revolutions: Collective Narratives from the Enlightenment to the Digital Age* (University of Virginia Press, 2022). She also co-edited a collection of essays on the ethics of cross-border storytelling (*Un/Bound*, Routledge, forthcoming in 2024) and another one on *Life Writing as World Literature* (Bloomsbury, forthcoming in 2025).

Mathey, Éva

University of Debrecen

‘THERE IS ALWAYS ROOM FOR ONE MORE’: IMMIGRATION QUOTAS, US REFUGEE POLICIES, AND THE WAGNER ROGERS BILL OF 1939

The Wagner Rogers Bill, proposed by Senator Robert F. Wagner and Representative Edith Nourse Rogers was designed to secure help and refuge—above the quota set by the Reed-Johnson Immigration

Restriction Act—to 20,000 German, mainly Jewish, children who were facing unprecedented horrors following Kristallnacht in 1938. The bill got in the center of heated political debate both in and outside Congress: while the Nonsectarian Committee for German Refugee Children and many labor unions supported the initiative—as the only righteous response, in Senator Wagner’s words, the “symbol of the strength of democratic convictions and our common faith” and America’s commitment to humanity; patriotic and nativist organizations, among them the American Legion and the American Coalition of Patriotic Societies strongly objected to the bill.

The presentation proposes to discuss the impact of the Johnson-Reed Immigration Restriction Act on US asylum and refugee policies with special focus on the Jewish refugee crisis and the Wagner Rogers Bill of 1939. Based on the records of the US Congress and the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, the presentation will introduce the debate over the legislative proposal to shed light of contemporary political, social sentiments over the question of immigration in the US—driven by multiple forces of racism, eugenics, xenophobia, economic and social insecurities, and the fear that newcomers would significantly and negatively affect and thus reshape the social fabric of the United States.

Bio:

Éva Mathey, assistant professor, North American Department, Institute of English and American Studies, University of Debrecen, teaches American history and culture. Her special fields of research include American social and political history and culture during the period between the World Wars, Hungarian-American relations with special emphasis on the interwar years, and diplomatic history; her interest also extends to the history of the American woman. She was awarded the Fulbright Ph.D. Research Fellowship to Rutgers University, USA for an academic year between 2002 and 2003, as well as a research grant at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Institute, Free University, Berlin. She earned a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Debrecen in 2012 and is Associate Editor of the SCOPUS-indexed *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*. Her articles both in Hungarian and English have been published in Hungary and abroad. Her monograph on Hungarian revisionist efforts toward the US was published by Debrecen University Press in 2020, and its English version is forthcoming in 2024.

Nóvé, Béla

National Széchényi Library, Hungary

**HOPES AND DOUBTS OF OPENING UP NEW RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES:
A RECENTLY COMPLETED OVERALL SURVEY OF HUNGARIAN EMIGRANT
HISTORICAL RESOURCES AT THE HOLDINGS OF THE NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI
LIBRARY**

In his presentation richly illustrated by many archival photos historian Béla Nóvé presents his recently published Handbook of Hungarian Emigrant History as well as provides a brief historical overview of the seven massive waves of Hungarian emigrés, from the mid 19th century exile of Kossuth and his followers till the emigranzs of our days. Then on the researcher offers an insight into the Hungarian cult of 'patriotic exile' by comparing the portraits of four outstanding, and most widely respected emigrés: prince Francis Rákóczi, governor Luis Kossuth, composer Béla Bartók, and writer Sándor Márai. The historian finally shares the results of his most recently completed overall survey of Hungarian emigrant resources at the holding of the National Széchényi Library and also those of the worldwide rescue efforts of Hungarian emigrant documents done by the Mikes Mega-Project with its nine year long service organized on global spots of the Hungarian diaspora, 2014–2023.

Bio:

Béla Nóvé (PhD) is a historian, writer and documentary film maker, born in 1956, and based in Budapest, Hungary. Since 1977, he has published several articles, studies, reference books and monographs, and has worked as a screenwriter, dramaturg and director of dozens of documentaries and television shows. He began teaching courses on cultural history and arts theory for American and Hungarian master's students (ELTE-UCLA Central European Studies Department, Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design) in 2000. During the past two decades he has carried out extensive research in Hungary and abroad on the undiscovered records of Hungarian emigration history (Bern, Bremen, Vienna, Budapest, Szeged, New Brunswick, Passaic, Princeton, Paris and Aubagne). In 2016 he published the documentary feature and monography entitled *Patria nostra. Under-age Hungarian Refugees of '56 in the French Foreign Legion*. His long awaited *Handbook of Hungarian Emigrant History* (Historiography – Sources – Bibliography) was published in Spring 2023. Presently he works for the National Széchényi Library Budapest on an overall database of Hungarian emigré authors as well as their manuscripts and publications.

Perutka, Lukas

Palacký University in Olomouc, Czechia

GOING AROUND: ALTERNATIVE ROUTES OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK MIGRATION TO THE US AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

After the First World War, nativism in the United States led to the introduction of immigration quotas in 1921 and 1924. The principal goal was to diminish the number of East Europeans that were supposed to enter the US. In the case of Czechoslovaks, the Johnson-Reed Act allowed only 3073 to officially migrate. However, this small number could not satisfy the demand of those willing to leave Czechoslovakia for the United States. In the economic depression after the Great War and the social unrest in Central Europe, inhabitants of poverty-stricken regions like Slovakia or Carpathian Ruthenia wanted to follow in the footsteps of their compatriots before the conflict. The direct route offered limited possibilities, therefore they had to search for alternate routes. The situation led them to Canada, Mexico, or Cuba, where they found mixed success. The situation created a new social and diplomatic struggle for the nascent Czechoslovak Republic, and its government had to deal with this new paradigm of migration.

This contribution will use the official documents of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Social prevision that are stored in the National Archive of the Czech Republic. It aims to use critical content analysis to find how the officials coped with the new situation, what measures they adopted, and how successful they were in dealing with it.

Bio:

Lukáš Perutka is an assistant professor at the Palacký University in Olomouc. He has teaching experience at the Institute of Technology in Monterrey, Mexico, the University of California, Berkeley, and Charles University in Prague. His research interests include triangular relations between the United States, Europe, and Latin America or migration from Central Europe to the Americas. He published numerous articles and two monographs: *Checoslovaquia, Guatemala y México en el período de la Revolución guatemalteca* (Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, and Mexico in the Times of Guatemalan Revolution), and *Za to spasitelské moře. Emigrace Rožnovanů do Texasu* (Across the Messianic Sea. Immigrants from Rožnov district in Texas). Currently, he finished the manuscript for another book: *México y la sociedad checa, 1821-1939* (Mexico and the Czech Society, 1821-1939).

Peterecz, Zoltan

Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Hungary

THE IMPACT OF THE JOHNSON-REED LAW ON THE WORK OF AMERICAN MINISTERS IN HUNGARY IN THE INTERWAR YEARS

As the title of the conference suggests, the Johnson-Reed Law was a milestone in the history of immigration to the United States. The drastic cutback to European immigration – especially from the Central, Eastern, and Southern European countries – has been analyzed from various angles, especially how the legal measure dramatically decreased the inflow of immigrants from these places. Much less has been said about the day-to-day events on the ground in those capitals of Europe, where thousands of people felt hopeless as they were stranded in their native countries by the strict quota numbers. This talk would like to investigate how the various American ministers in Hungary reacted and dealt with the new measure. During the previous decades, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians had immigrated to the United States, many of whom did not want to stay permanently in America. Also, the “Hunkies,” as they came to be referred to, were not welcome in the New World. On the other end, as time progressed, the American ministers in Hungary saw an ever-increasing amount of work and trouble regarding the would-be immigrants, many of whom were Jews. From the mid-1930s in particular, the number of Hungarian Jewish people who wanted to immigrate to the United States grew, which caused frustration to the then American minister in Budapest. Therefore, a closer examination will be made of John F. Montgomery, American minister in Hungary between 1933 and 1941. This case study will broaden our understanding of the aftermath of the Johnson-Reed Law of 1924.

Bio:

Zoltán Peterecz earned his Ph.D. degree at Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest, in 2010. He teaches as an associate professor at the Institute of English and American Studies at Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Eger, Hungary. His main field of research is American history, American foreign affairs, and American-Hungarian relations in the first half of the twentieth century, on which subjects he regularly publishes articles. He has also done exhaustive research on the financial reconstruction of Hungary orchestrated by the League of Nations (*Jeremiah Smith, Jr. and Hungary, 1924–1926: the United States, the League of Nations, and the Financial Reconstruction of*

Hungary (London: Versita, 2013). His latest book that appeared in 2021 introduced the life and career of Royall Tyler (*Royall Tyler and Hungary: An American in Europe and Crisis Years, 1918–1953*, Reno, Nevada: Helena History Press, 2021).

Sinke, Suzanne M.

Florida State University, USA

MAKING DEPENDENCY POLICY: THE ELEVATION OF FAMILY-DEPENDENT CATEGORIES UNDER JOHNSON-REED

While scholars recognize the Johnson-Reed legislation for its impact in limiting immigration to the United States, particularly from Southern and Eastern Europe (and more so from Asia) it also underscored support for one foundational immigration principle. The new quota legislation shifted the focus not just in terms of racial/national background, but also from individual economic migration to family relationship categories. The measure made family reunification increasingly important to legal immigration. This shift took place at the same time that the US granted women independent rights to citizenship in response to the successful woman suffrage movement. The prioritization of family members and admission of kin outside quota restrictions gained traction over the coming century until immigration based on family relationships constituted the largest share of immigration. Policy makers touted these family ties as leading to more permanent settlement and integration (whether this was justified or not). Persons seeking admission or resident status often looked to family relationship categories as the most useful options to successful mobility outcomes.

By examining US laws, legal cases, and the life stories of family members who sought to utilize their ties to those in the US for purposes of immigration, this paper highlights categories of kinship and how they related to immigration options. From spouses to biological and then adoptive children, from parents to siblings, it brings to light examples of how the policies operated and how mobile people embraced or evaded them to achieve their migration objectives. Specifically it deals with four categories of family relationship across time and how both US federal authorities and potential immigrants negotiated the regulations.

Bio:

Suzanne M. Sinke is a professor of History at Florida State University, where she served as Director of Graduate Studies for ten years. Since fall 2017, she has served as editor for the *Journal of American Ethnic History*. A specialist in migration and gender studies in the US context, she is the author of *Dutch Immigrant Women in the United States, 1880-1920* (2002) and co-editor of three additional books, including *Letters Across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants* (2006). Sinke's extensive list of book chapters and journal articles includes venues such as *International Migration Review*, *OAH Magazine*, *Gender Issues*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, and *History of the Family*. Many of Sinke's publications link marriage and international migration across U.S. history. She has served as a Fulbright professor twice, once in Finland and for a second time in Austria.

Staiti, Claudio

University of San Marino

**'THE MOST POWERFUL OF ALL IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BOOKS':
GINO SPERANZA'S RACE OR NATION AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE
JOHNSON-REED ACT**

This proposal focuses on the crisis of the "Melting Pot" ideal and the problem of citizenship in the United States of the 1920s and particularly on the case of Gino Carlo Speranza (1872-1927) and his book *Race or Nation*. Attorney and journalist, Gino Speranza, a second-generation Italian American, is a very often cited but little studied historical figure and surely one of the most controversial Italian Americans in American History who lived when people of Italian descent were still partially emarginated from public and civil life in the United States. After having spent an entire life playing a prominent role among social reformers who defended the image of America as a nation capable of assimilating various ethnic groups, becoming legal counsellor to the Italian Royal Consulate-General in New York, founding the Society for the Protection of Italian Immigrants, and writing for the "New York Evening Post" and other newspapers to raise the empathy of the middle-class Americans for Italians and combat the image of them as criminals or radicals, in the early 1920s Speranza wrote a series of influential and controversial articles for the "World's Work" and other anti-immigrant magazines, which were compiled in the book *Race or Nation. A Conflict of Divided*

Loyalties (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925). Here Speranza tries to demonstrate how mass-alienage is totally incompatible and dangerous for American legal traditions and for the “Anglo-Saxon” political, spiritual, and social life and that the presence of huge amount immigrants is against the national issue of a common language and a common school. In 1928, in a letter to Speranza’s wife, congressman Albert Johnson defined this book as “the most powerful of all immigration restriction book published in the last few years” and “the one which represented the most research”. By focusing on Gino Speranza’s book, the overarching goal of this paper is, on one hand, to deeply investigate the evolution of this second-generation immigrant and understand the reasons of his extraordinary intellectual “conversion”, apparently inexplicable – from a passionate advocate and defender of the “melting pot” ideal to a militant supporter of a stringent Americanization and of a stricter legislation on citizenship – and, on the other hand, also to situate his experience in the wider historical context and debate on immigration in the United States of 1920’s.

Bio:

Claudio Staiti is a postdoctoral researcher at the School of Historical Studies of the University of San Marino. He received his PhD in Contemporary History from the University of Messina in 2019, during which he was also a PhD Visiting Student at Columbia University. In 2022 he won a Fulbright grant to conduct his research at Stanford University and Seton Hall University. The main focus of his scholarly interests are the history of Sicily in the 1900s, World War I, the popular writings of the Great War and the events of Italian emigration to the United States. He translated and edited the Italian edition of Vincenzo D’Aquila’s (1892–1975) autobiographical war memoir, *Io, pacifista in trincea. Un italoamericano nella Grande guerra* (Donzelli Editore, 2019), and he is the author of the volume *La Grande guerra dei siciliani. Lettere, diari, memorie* (Pacini Editore, 2022). He has published articles in scholarly journals and participated in conferences in Italy and abroad.

Tsiokos, Panteleimon

University of Western Ontario, Canada

LITERARY REFLECTIONS ON THE US IMMIGRATION QUOTAS' IMPACT: THE CASE OF MASS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST JAPANESE AMERICANS

My work in-progress presentation will focus on the novels *No-No Boy* (1957) by John Okada, and Julie Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic* (2011). Both novels address systematic and systemic mass human rights violations against Japanese Americans, as those become blatantly evident in the immigration quotas of early 20th century, and manage to legalize and perpetuate previously customary anti-Asian racism in the US, culminating in Japanese Americans' internment during WWII, less than two decades later.

My paper will claim that the selected novels constitute works of committed literature, as they manage to provide faithful literary assessments of the detrimental effect of troubling American visualisations about race and national identity, the effects of which reach our present time. The selection of these committed literary texts is not accidental, as *No-No Boy* has been a rather neglected novel in terms of scholarly attention, while *The Buddha in the Attic* considers the trajectory of gender-specific violence against Asian immigrants, Japanese women, and the ensuing generations of their Japanese American children prior to, during, and following the immigration quotas. As such, they will contribute to my reflection of the immigration quotas' impact on global as well as the US domestic level, of how Japanese American trauma is remembered today and how American bystanders to such protracted violence against Japanese Americans may reach a deeper understanding regarding institutionalised racism in the US. Based on my deductions through the above reflections, I will conclude my paper by referring to how silent American immigration policy reforms may contribute to a more peaceful US society as a whole.

Bio:

Panteleimon Tsiokos is a Ph.D. candidate in English-Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (collaborative specialization) at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada. He holds a B.A. (Honors, Distinction) in English and an M.A. in English and American Studies from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. His research interests include issues of identity politics, (post)nationalism, migration, mass human rights violence, and

transitional justice as those unfold in works of ethnic, and minority literatures. He is a member of the Multi-Ethnic Society of Europe and the Americas (MESEA) and the European Association of American Studies (EAAS) and his research has been part of numerous international research dissemination fora.

Valido Alou, Ana Maria

University of Habana, Center for Hemispheric and U.S. Studies (CEHSEU)

US IMMIGRATION POLICY TOWARDS CUBA: HISTORIC TREND AND IMPACT

This proposal corresponds to a PhD research that explores the United States immigration policy making process towards Cuba from 1994 to the present. The research topic addresses two of the thematic axes of the event, namely the impact of the American regulations on other countries in the Americas and the evaluations of American immigration policies, since the general objective of the PhD research project is to explain the evolution of the United States immigration policy towards Cuba since 1994 to the present day and its impact on the development of Cuban external migration in that period; considering that Cuba is the only country to which the United States has assigned a law, The Cuban Adjustment Act of 1962, which favors the expedited regulation of Cuban immigrants, even of those irregular and illegal, as well as a Migration Agreement signed in 1995 by which the United States government commits itself to grant no less than 20,000 immigrant visas annually. The specific objectives of the project are: to characterize the trend of the United States migration policy towards Cuba since 1994 to the present; to explain the factors that have conditioned the United States immigration policy making process towards Cuba in that period; and to explain the relationship between migration policy and foreign policy in terms of the strategic objectives of the United States's State policy towards Cuba. For the analysis of the United States immigration policy making process towards Cuba will be used the institutional and group models (Dye, 2017). Their conjugation with a systemic approach will allow to deepen in the essential factors that influenced the evolution of the United States immigration policy making processes towards Cuba in the referred chronological framework.

Bio:

Valido Alou, Ana María (Toronto, 1977). Doctoral studies at Università degli Studi di Bologna (UNIBO), Italy; MA in Social Development (FLACSO-Cuba, 2012); MA in International Migration and Cuban emigration (International Migration Studies Center, University of Havana, 2008) and BA of Law (Faculty of Law, University of Havana, 2002). Work experience: professor and researcher at the International Migration Studies Centre (CEMI) of the University of Havana (2002–2008); professor of Constitutional Law and Comparative Political Systems at the Higher Institute of International Relations “Raúl Roa García” (ISRI) (Cuban Diplomatic Academy) (2008–2012) and at the International Policy Research Centre (CIPI), holding the position of assistant professor and research associate. Currently a PhD candidate of the Political Science Program at the Faculty of Philosophy and History of the University of Havana.

Echoes of Escape: Navigating Policy and Perception in the Cold War Migration of Hungarian Refugees

PANEL ABSTRACT

This panel brings together diverse academic perspectives to explore the multifaceted dimensions of migration, with a focus on the 1956 Hungarian refugee crisis as a pivotal moment in Cold War history. The crisis acted as a catalyst for a range of international reactions, policies, and cultural representations, reflecting the intricate interplay between humanitarian efforts, political strategies, and public perception. By examining this specific historical event, the panel aims to shed light on the long-term impacts of the Johnson-Reed Act and similar immigration policies, offering rich insights into historical and contemporary interpretations of migration. The presentations collectively highlight the complex responses from governmental policies and international relations to cultural perceptions and media portrayals, shaping the historical, political, and social narrative of one of the most significant refugee movements of the 20th century. This exploration not only addresses the direct consequences of immigration legislation but also delves into the broader ramifications

on identity development, societal norms, and cultural expressions. Through this multidimensional analysis, the panel seeks to deepen the understanding of the transformative effects of migration policies. It underscores how such policies have not only shaped the trajectories of nations and individuals but also influenced the very fabric of cultural and societal constructs globally. This approach aligns with the conference's interdisciplinary aim to examine migration's complex interactions across various academic fields, providing a comprehensive view of the enduring legacy of historic immigration policies.

Máté, Zsolt

University of Pécs, Hungary

THE COMPARABILITY OF THE CANADIAN AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S 1956 HUNGARIAN REFUGEE RECEPTION

Canada and the United States of America accepted the most Hungarian refugees out of nearly 200,000 who left Hungary in 1956 and 1957. The two North American countries adopted different approaches and regulations during the reception process. In my presentation, I aim to employ comparative historical methods to underscore the differences and similarities between them. The number of accepted refugees varied not only between the countries but also over time. Canada, over a longer period (1956-1960), received more refugees than the U.S.A. notable distinction was the centralized reception in the U.S., as opposed to Canada's more localized approach. However, both countries had high-level political representation at the main hub of the refugee crisis in Vienna. Additionally, the refugee reception had long-term impacts on immigration policies in both nations, notably leading the Democratic Party in the U.S. to initiate the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

Bio:

Zsolt Máté is a Pro Scientia gold medalist, two times Countrywide Scientific Student Conference (OTDK) winner PhD-student of University of Pécs. He is writing his dissertation about the American, Canadian, Australian governmental reactions to the 1956 Hungarian revolution and refugee crisis. He participated in conferences not just in Hungary, but in Canada and in France too. He has published a Hungarian-German bilingual popular science

oral-history book about the 1956 Hungarian refugees in Graz. E-mail: mate.zsolt@pte.hu

Farkas, Judit Antónia

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THE UNWANTED EASTERN-EUROPEAN REFUGEES IN RONALD SEARLE'S AND KAYE WEBB'S ILLUSTRATED REPORT (1959-1960)

By the end of the 1950's there were still numerous Eastern-European displaced persons and "new" refugees (including also Hungarians) living in refugee camps in Austria, Italy and Greece because none of the countries wanted to take them due to strict immigration regulations, their age, health or behaviour. The "hard core" ones and the difficult cases – some had been staying in camps for 15 years – had no chance of immigrating to a third country, e. g. the United States, or of starting a new life outside the camp because they were either ill, old, unskilled, deviant or had too many family members. The well-known British illustrator and cartoonist, Ronald Searle and his journalist wife, Kay Webb were invited by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in 1959 to participate as collaborators in the British programmes of the World Refugee Year. They were asked to visit refugee camps in Europe and publish their report. In my lecture I will speak about the postwar European refugee problems through the cases of unwanted individuals presented in *Refugees 1960. A Report in Words and Drawings by Kaye Webb and Ronald Searle*.

Bio:

Judit Antónia Farkas, PhD (Research Fellow, VERITAS Research Institute for History and Historical and Archives). Her research topics include among others the history and reception of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the corresponding refugee crisis. The foreign press, photojournalism and the Hungarian Revolution.

Scheibner, Tamás

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THE INFLUENCE OF U.S. PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS ON IMMIGRATION POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE 1956–57 HUNGARIAN REFUGEE RECEPTION

This paper explores the pivotal role of major U.S. philanthropic organizations, namely the Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations, in shaping both U.S. and international immigration policies. Special attention is devoted to the intricate negotiations, conflicts, and lobbying efforts between these foundations and the U.S. State Department. A significant aspect of this study is the examination of how the reception of Hungarian refugees during 1956–57 influenced American diplomatic interactions with the United Nations.

Through a detailed analysis, the paper demonstrates how the handling of the Hungarian refugee crisis was instrumental in exerting U.S. pressure for the initiation of the UN World Refugee Year. Utilizing a mix of primary sources, including government documents and correspondences from foundation archives, this study offers a unique perspective on the intersections between philanthropy, diplomacy, and policy-making in the context of Cold War-era refugee movements. This analysis not only sheds light on the historical impact of these foundations but also contributes to our understanding of their enduring legacy in shaping global humanitarian initiatives.

Bio:

Tamás Scheibner (Institute of History, HUN-REN Research Center for the Humanities) is a historian and literary scholar, the PI of the research project “The Post-1956 Refugee Crisis and Hungarian Émigré Communities During the Cold War.” His research offers a multifaceted understanding of the 1956 Hungarian refugee crisis, exploring its impact not just as a historical event but also in terms of its broader implications on international diplomacy, cultural exchanges, and the evolution of humanitarian aid practices during the Cold War era.

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