

**RAFFLES INSTITUTION**  
**2014 YEAR 6 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

**GENERAL PAPER**  
**PAPER 2**

8807/02

Monday

1 September 2014

1 hour 30 minutes

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**Additional Materials**

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**Instructions to Candidates**

This insert contains the passage for Paper 2.

*Amy Chua argues that the unifying identity that has made America so successful should not be eroded.*

- 1 Chinatowns and Little Italys have long been part of America's urban landscape, but would it be all right to have entire U.S. cities where most people spoke and did business in Chinese, Italian or even Arabic? Are too many Third World, non-English-speaking immigrants destroying our national identity? For some Americans, even asking such questions is racist. At the other end of the spectrum, the conservative talk show host Bill O'Reilly fulminates against floods of immigrants who threaten to change America's "complexion" and replace what he calls the "white Christian male power structure". 5
- 2 But for the large majority, these questions are painful, with no easy answers. At some level, most of us cherish our legacy as a nation of immigrants. But are all immigrants really equally likely to make good Americans? Are we, as the Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington warns, in danger of losing our core values and devolving "into a loose confederation of ethnic, racial, cultural, and political groups, with little or nothing in common apart from their location in the territory of what had been the United States of America"? 10
- 3 I think Huntington has a point.
- 4 Around the world today, nations face violence and instability as a result of their increasing pluralism and diversity. Across Europe, immigration has resulted in unassimilated, largely Muslim enclaves that are hotbeds of unrest and even terrorism. With Muslims poised to become a majority in Amsterdam and elsewhere within a decade, major West European cities could undergo a profound transformation. Not surprisingly, virulent anti-immigration parties are on the rise. 15  
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- 5 Not long ago, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union disintegrated when their national identities proved too weak to bind together diverse peoples. Iraq is the latest example of how crucial national identity is. So far, it has found no overarching identity strong enough to unite its Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis. However, the United States is in no danger of imminent disintegration. But this is because it has been so successful, at least since the Civil War, in forging a national identity strong enough to hold together its widely divergent communities. We should not take this unifying identity for granted. 25
- 6 The greatest empire in history, ancient Rome, collapsed when its cultural and political glue dissolved, and peoples who had long thought of themselves as Romans turned against the empire. In part, this fragmentation occurred because of a massive influx of immigrants from a very different culture. The 'barbarians' who sacked Rome were Germanic immigrants who were never fully assimilated. Does this mean that it's time for the United States to shut its borders and reassert its "white, Christian" identity and what Huntington calls its Anglo-Saxon, Protestant "core values"? 30
- 7 No. The anti-immigration camp makes at least two critical mistakes. 35
- 8 First, it neglects the indispensable role that immigrants have played in building American wealth and power. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States would never have become an industrial and agricultural powerhouse without the millions of poor Irish, Polish, Italian and other newcomers who mined coal, laid rail and milled steel. European immigrants led to the United States winning the race for the atomic bomb. Today, American leadership in the Digital Revolution — so central to our military and economic pre-eminence — owes an enormous debt to immigrant contributions. 40
- 9 Second, anti-immigration talking heads forget that their own scapegoating vitriol will, if anything, drive immigrants farther from the U.S. mainstream. One reason we don't have Europe's enclaves is our unique success in forging an ethnically and religiously neutral national identity, uniting individuals of all backgrounds. 45

- 10 Nevertheless, immigration naysayers also have a point. America's glue can be subverted by too much tolerance. Immigration advocates are too often guilty of an uncritical political correctness that avoids hard questions about national identity and imposes no obligations on immigrants. For these well-meaning idealists, there is no such thing as too much diversity. 50
- 11 The right thing for the United States to do — and the best way to keep Americans in favour of immigration — is to take national identity seriously while maintaining our heritage as a land of opportunity. U.S. immigration policy should be tolerant but also tough. Here are five suggestions:
- 12 *Overhaul admission priorities.* Apart from immediate family members, the special preference for other family members should be drastically reduced. As soon as my father got citizenship, his mother, brother, sister and sister-in-law were also U.S. citizens or permanent residents. This was nice for my family, but frankly there was nothing especially fair about it. Instead, the immigration system should reward ability and be keyed to the country's labour needs — skilled or unskilled, technological or agricultural. In particular, we should significantly increase the number of visas for highly skilled workers. 55 60
- 13 *Make English the official national language.* A common language is critical to cohesion and national identity in an ethnically diverse society. Americans of all backgrounds should be encouraged to speak more languages — I've forced my own daughters to learn Mandarin (minus the threat of chopsticks) — but offering Spanish-language public education to Spanish-speaking children is the wrong kind of indulgence. 65
- 14 *Immigrants must embrace the nation's civic virtues.* For many immigrants, only family matters and they tend to focus on protecting their own. But a mindset based solely on taking care of your own factionalises our society. Like all Americans, immigrants have a responsibility to contribute to the social fabric. It's not healthy for Chinese to hire only Chinese, or Koreans only Koreans. By contrast, the free health clinic set up by Muslim Americans in Los Angeles — serving the entire poor community — is a model to emulate. Immigrants are integrated at the moment when they realise that their success is inextricably intertwined with everyone else's. 70
- 15 *Enforce the law.* Illegal immigration, along with terrorism, is the chief cause of today's anti-immigration backlash. Illegal immigration is also inconsistent with the rule of law, which, as any immigrant from a developing country will tell you, is a critical aspect of U.S. national identity. But if we're serious about this problem, we need to enforce the law against not only illegal aliens, but also those who hire them. It's the worst of all worlds to allow U.S. employers who hire illegal aliens — thus keeping the flow of illegal workers coming — to break the law while demonising the aliens as lawbreakers. 75 80
- 16 *Make the United States an equal-opportunity immigration magnet.* If the U.S. immigration system is to reflect and further our ethnically neutral identity, it must itself be ethnically neutral, offering equal opportunity to Sudanese, Estonians, Burmese and so on. The starkly disproportionate ratio of Latinos is inconsistent with this principle. 85
- 17 Immigrants who turn their backs on American values don't deserve to be here. But those of us who turn our backs on immigrants misunderstand the secret of America's success and what it means to be American.

*Adapted from 'The Right Road to America?'*

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