



2020 HAWAII UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
ARTS, HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, & EDUCATION JANUARY 6 - 8, 2020
HAWAII PRINCE HOTEL WAIKIKI, HONOLULU, HAWAII

IMMIGRATION TO THE INTERMOUNTAIN WEST: THE CASE OF COLORADO



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Synopsis:

The paper discusses the immigrants who have come to Colorado from its beginnings as a territory in the 19th century to the present. It evaluates their effect on Colorado's development and considers how immigration has changed from one period to the next and how it has not. In doing so, it enhances our understanding of how immigration has contributed to the nation's growth as well as shed light on the current national debate over immigration.

Immigration to the Intermountain West: The Case of Colorado

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Emma Lazarus, 1849-1887
“The New Colossus”

For most of its history, America has been a haven for those seeking a better life and a refuge for those fleeing violence. Indeed, since its inception, America has been an inspiration to others, a place where the downtrodden could find hope. And until recently, Americans have taken pride in referring to themselves as “a nation of immigrants.” Among the proponents of immigration was the late President John F. Kennedy. He had an inclusionary vision of America, which he laid out in his 1958 book *A Nation of Immigrants*.¹ Kennedy wrote about what immigrants had done for the country and what the country had done for them. As a descendant of Irish immigrants who fled County Limerick during the “Great Potato Famine” (1845-1849), Kennedy knew from his family’s history that, over a century and a half earlier, an anti-immigrant campaign had been directed against his forebearers. He also knew of the contributions and sacrifices Irish immigrants had made to the development of the United States and how the country in turn kept its promises to them. In America, the Irish could realize their dream of a better life for themselves and their families.

Kennedy’s paeon to immigrants notwithstanding, the history of immigrants in America has been a fraught one. Their story is more complex than the proponents of immigration would have it. Instead of working together to transcend their cultural differences to achieve the ideals

embodied in America's founding documents, immigrants brought with them their inherited prejudices of race and nationality. As historian Thomas Andrews has noted in his study of Colorado coal mines:

The Welsh and Scots despised the Irish, the French bore a grudge against the Germans, and the Germans claimed superiority over the Poles, who could not forgive the Austrians, who despised African Americans, who distrusted Yankees, who saw Hispanos as dirty, lazy, and primitive.²

Indeed, immigrants have often been in contention with each other in their pursuit of the American Dream. In light of this, perhaps the United States of America can be described not only as a nation of immigrants but also as a nation of contending immigrants.

Currently, many Americans, perhaps as many as a third of the country, are opposed to immigrants. The leading opponent to immigration is another president, President Donald J. Trump. Unlike President Kennedy, Trump has an exclusionary vision of America that calls for immigration restriction and even a ban on specific immigrants. He has asked plaintively why they are coming from "shithole countries," referring to Haiti and African countries, rather than from nations like Norway. His remark is a throwback to an earlier period when many Americans subscribed to the pseudo-scientific doctrine of Nordicism in which people from Northern Europe were deemed inherently superior to everyone else. In his rant against immigrants, Trump has provided his own answer to one of the most persistent questions in the nation's history, Who is an American? And by extension, Who is not an American?

Even though Trump is himself a descendant of immigrants (his grandparents, Friedrich Trump and Elizabeth Christ, were from Kallstadt, Germany), he is the country's most prominent opponent of immigration.³ He has assumed the mantle of nativist-in-chief to inveigh against

immigrants, particularly those from Latin America. He has either forgotten or chosen to ignore his immigrant heritage and origins. Instead, Trump has demonized immigrants, employing what Timothy L. O'Brien, author of *TrumpNation*, calls a "simplistic, deterministic, and racist perspective."⁴ Under his administration, the Immigration Service has changed from an agency that welcomes immigrants to one that rebuffs them.⁵ The Immigration Service removed the phrase "nation of immigrants" from its internet site in February 2018 to signal this change.

Trump's hostility to immigration is as much political as it is personal. He uses immigration as a wedge-issue to appeal to his conservative Republican base, which sees immigrants as a threat to the "American" way of life. Using vitriolic anti-immigrant rhetoric, Trump exploits people's fears, anxieties, and anger about immigrants. He promotes restricting immigration as a panacea for the nation's problems, real and imagined. He is not the first American politician to engage in such unscrupulous behavior, though he is certainly the highest-ranking to do so. As it will be discussed below, in 1936, Governor Edwin Johnson did something similar when he tried to prevent Latinos from New Mexico (not just Mexico) from entering Colorado as a way to pander to people's prejudices and to garner votes.

Immigration continues to be a central issue in Trump's presidency and his 2020 re-election campaign. Differing perspectives on this issue have become a major fault line between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Trump seems intent on changing (or at least disrupting) the national narrative of America as an ethnically and racially diverse nation. Instead, he is advocating for a racially white and culturally homogeneous nation. More worrisome is his encouragement of intolerance toward those who appear different and even violence against them. Trump's arguments against immigration have been heard before. Like those in the past, his arguments are full of misinformation, colored by the politics of the period and shaped by

ideological considerations. One of his recurring themes is that immigrants are mainly parasites, a financial burden on the rest of society. In reality, they have been overall a financial asset to the society.⁶

The purpose of this paper is to go beyond the political rhetoric, past and present, through an evaluation of immigration and its effects in one place in the American West – Colorado. The Colorado experience will serve as a microcosm of the phenomenon in the Intermountain West as well as the nation as a whole. The paper will investigate immigrants who have migrated to Colorado from its beginnings as a territory in the 19th century to the present, with a focus on analyzing their effect on Colorado's development. It will consider how immigration has changed from one period to the next and how it has not. It will refresh our understanding of how it has informed the nation's growth as well as shed light on the current national debate.

Frontier Colorado

Much of the Intermountain West became part of the United States when President Thomas Jefferson purchased France's North American Empire in 1803. The Louisiana Purchase was a historic land deal, through which the United States acquired an area that extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains, nearly doubling its size. The government acquired approximately 827,000 square miles of land at the relatively paltry cost of 15 million dollars, or about four cents per acre. The area included parts of Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming, along with a foreign population that the 1860 Census estimated to be about 30,000 inhabitants of Spanish, French, and British descent.⁷ (The census did not enumerate the American Indian inhabitants, though there were many.) With the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848), which ended the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), an additional 525,000 square miles of land was added to the United States. The new territory included what would later

become the states of Arizona, Nevada, and Utah; and an area below the Arkansas River that became part of southern Colorado.

Beginning with the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806), the newly acquired territory in the Louisiana Purchase was explored and mapped, and its American Indian inhabitants (over 70 different groups) were contacted. Other expeditions followed, including one led by Zebulon Pike (1806-1807), for whom Colorado's Pikes Peak is named. Pike described the western part of the Great Plains, stretching east of the Rocky Mountains to about the 100th meridian of longitude, as essentially a wasteland. Confirming this characterization, in 1820, another expedition leader, Stephen Long, for whom Colorado's Longs Peak is named, produced a map labelling the land he explored as the "Great American Desert." The name stuck and Colorado became a place to avoid or to pass through as quickly as possible on the way to more promising land beyond the mountains, which beckoned along the Pacific Coast. Nonetheless, explorers such as Lewis, Clark, Pike, and Long served as the vanguard for American expansion across the continent. They charted the way for colonizers and the concomitant expulsion of the indigenous American Indian population.

Previously, the Intermountain West had been fertile grounds for the beaver fur trade, where Europeans and Americans cooperated with American Indians, bridging their cultural differences for mutual material benefit. After the Louisiana Purchase, the fur trade was expanded and institutionalized with the establishment of trading posts until its collapse in the 1840s. Between 1800 and 1850, there were 24 such posts in Colorado. The most famous was Bent's Old Fort on the Arkansas River, along the Santa Fé Trail in southeastern Colorado. Bent's Old Fort, built between 1832 and 1834, served as an important oasis for local European, American, and American Indian fur trappers for many years. When the beaver fur trade collapsed in the 1840's,

Bent's Old Fort developed the buffalo hide trade to replace it. Like the above-mentioned explorers, trading posts were an essential step in western expansion, preparing the way for colonization.

Manifest Destiny notwithstanding, western expansion and the settlement of Colorado was never preordained. As part of the Cordilleran Region, frontier Colorado was a mountainous and arid area, attracting few colonizers. Up through the first half of the 19th century, Colorado was a relatively sparsely populated place, inhabited mainly by American Indians, who had long occupied the area, and Hispano settlers, who traced their origins back to the 17th century. Before the Territory of Colorado could become an integral part of the United States, it needed more than the few fur trappers and traders who traversed its mountains and prairies. What it needed was colonizers willing to face the daunting challenge of an inhospitable landscape and climate, and later, to weather the area's boom-and-bust economy. Many of the people who took on this challenge were immigrants and their descendants.

Where immigrants came from

What started the colonization of Colorado was the discovery of gold and silver. What eventually enabled colonizers to establish permanent settlements was the expulsion of the American Indians from their homelands and their forcible relocation to reservations.

The catalyst for this series of events was the 1858-1861 Colorado Gold Rush, also known as the Pikes Peak Gold Rush. This initiated a flood of habitation into what was once deemed an uninhabitable region. In the wake of the gold rush and in the midst of the secession of the Southern States, which precipitated the Civil War, the US government established the Territory of Colorado on February 28, 1861. The creation of the Colorado territory enhanced the federal

government's control of the Intermountain West and its resources, protecting them from depredations by southern secessionists.

Over the course of 1859, as many as 100,000 gold seekers from across the United States and around the world headed for the Pikes Peak goldfields. About 40,000 of them reached Denver. Fewer than 25,000 made it into the mountains to search for gold. Like others of their ilk, these prospectors had a sojourner's mentality. Their goal was to make their fortune and then return from whence they came. Over time, the gold rush also generated a sizable return migration since many of the prospectors failed to find gold and found Colorado's environment inhospitable.

Consequently, despite the large influx of gold-seekers, by 1860, there were only 34,277 people living in the Territory of Colorado. Of that number, 31,611 or 92 percent had been born in the United States, and 2,666 or about 8 percent were immigrants, mostly young adult men.⁸ The percentage of immigrants in Colorado was notably lower than the 13.2 percent for the country as a whole. This is not surprising. In addition to Colorado's unfortunate reputation as a wasteland, immigrants were deterred by the long distance from their ports of entry to Colorado. In due course, however, they would come. Immigrants were a restless group of people looking for the main chance that awaited them in America, including along its underpopulated western edge. Many did not remain on the East Coast for long and eventually moved westward. For most, westward migration was a two-stage process: first they migrated to the Midwest, and then to the Interior West. An analysis of the 1870 and 1880 census data shows who the immigrants were and where they came from, why they went to Colorado, and what work they performed after they arrived.

Immigrants are often portrayed by proponents of immigration as ambitious people with initiative and courage. They are willing to risk moving from familiar surroundings to unfamiliar and even less secure locations in their quest for advancement. In Colorado history, there are many individuals who fit this description. For example, there was Adolph Hermann Joseph Coors (born Adolph Hermann Josef Kuhls), a German immigrant who founded his eponymous beer company, and Otto Mears, a Russian Jewish immigrant who became known as the “Pathfinder of the San Juans” for his road and railroad projects in southwest Colorado. However, in contrast to these two exemplars, on the whole, immigrants were welcomed less for their entrepreneurship than for their labor. This was certainly the case in labor-starved Colorado.

Edward M. McCook, Colorado Territorial Governor, 1869-73 and 1874-75, certainly appreciated their value. As a Union general in the Civil War, he readily acknowledged the important role that immigrants played in the Union’s victory against the Confederacy and considered them the solution to Colorado’s chronic labor shortage. McCook observed that “those new States of the West, like Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota, which have made organized efforts to secure European emigration, have increased in population and wealth beyond all precedent in the history of our country.”⁹ He further observed that European immigrants were interested in coming to Colorado, noting that he had received communications from “two German colonies containing over two hundred families each, and from one containing forty families” inquiring about agricultural and the other resources of the territory.¹⁰

By 1870, the number of immigrants in Colorado had more than doubled to 6,599 or 16 percent of the population. They emigrated mainly from Britain, Ireland, and Germany. (See Table 1.) Together, they made up 73 percent of immigrants. British immigrants were among the most numerous to migrate to Colorado as well as the country as a whole. If immigrants from

what the 1870 Census calls “British America” are counted, then 752 individuals, most of them from Canada, should be added to the British total, bringing the number of British immigrants in Colorado to 2,463 or 37 percent.¹¹ This would boost the overall percentage of immigrants from Britain, Ireland, and Germany to 84 percent.

The British arrivals were hardly considered immigrants. Instead, they were deemed more or less Americans the moment they stepped ashore. This was because British immigrants were Anglo-Saxons and Protestants, who blended into American society easily. Americans saw them as kindred souls, cousins from across the pond, rather than as foreigners. As the US 1880 Census observed, the word foreigner was “never applied to an Englishman, nor generally a Scot or Welshman, nor always to an Irishman.”¹² For this reason, British immigrants have been described as the “invisible immigrants.”¹³ Invisible or not, they became the ones against whom all other immigrants were compared and usually found wanting.

Besides taking the British into account in any discussion of early immigration to America, it is essential to discuss the descendants of the immigrants in order to analyze the role immigrants played in the country’s development. From the information provided by the 1870 Census, it is evident that the majority of immigrants living in Colorado who had been counted a decade earlier by the 1860 Census were the offspring of immigrants who had settled in nearby Midwestern states as part of an earlier wave of immigration. The 1870 Census appreciated this as well, so it began to enumerate the number of descendants of earlier immigrants.¹⁴ It noted the value of “ascertain[ing] the contributions made to our *native* population by each principal country of Europe; to obtain . . . the number of those who are only one remove.”¹⁵ Because most of the immigrants who came first were males, the descendants of immigrants tended to have foreign-born fathers and native-born mothers. As people moved westward, there was increasing

intermarriage, though that varied depending on the ethnic group and their dispersal throughout an area. For instance, mixed marriages were greater among Irish immigrants than for Scandinavian immigrants to America because Irish immigrants came predominantly as single men and were willing to travel far and wide in search of gainful employment.

Of the 39,864 Coloradans enumerated in the 1870 Census, 9,347 individuals or 23 percent had foreign parents, and 10,707 or 26 percent had one parent who was foreign.¹⁶ (See Table 2.) Most of them were young men who migrated from nearby Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa.¹⁷ (See Table 3.) A significant number also migrated from as far away as New York and Pennsylvania.¹⁸ In all likelihood, those from New York and Pennsylvania were also descendants of immigrants: Irish (the so-called famine Irish) who sought to escape the urban ethnic enclaves into which they were crowded and German (the so-called Pennsylvania Dutch or Deutsche) who sought land to farm. Because of shorter distance and the availability of rail transportation, these descendants of immigrants were able to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Colorado. Many were persuaded that a better life awaited them in the Colorado Territory.

Many of these second-generation immigrant Americans identified with their ethnic group first and spoke the group's language rather than English. As the 1870 Census itself noted, it was commonplace to refer to people by their ethnicity rather than nationality, that is, where they were born. With the end of the Civil War (1861-1865), these descendants of immigrants along with other Americans, would increasingly identify with the nation rather than the state or their ethnic group, a phenomenon that was reinforced with civic education taught in American schools.

Why immigrants came

A variety of “push/pull” factors led to immigration to America and Colorado, and these changed depending on the prevailing circumstances. The national narrative emphasizes the search of freedom that brought early colonists to America. In 1883, Emma Lazarus described immigrants as the “huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” The same understanding is shown in the earlier explanation given in the 1860 US Census that immigrants were “impelled to seek . . . a refuge from the persecutions of religious bigotry and political exclusion at home.”¹⁹ English Pilgrims, French Huguenots, and German “Forty-Eighters,” for example, were religious and political dissenters who sought refuge in America. In more recent times there have been Asians fleeing war-ravaged Southeast Asia and Latinos escaping gang violence in Central America.

Perhaps a more important factor for the majority of immigrants was poverty. Many were driven from their homelands because of an unfavorable land-to-people ratio. Population growth was a driving factor. At the beginning of the 19th century, there were about 900 million inhabitants on earth. Within a century that number had climbed to 1.6 billion. The grim reality in many areas in the world was that there were now too many people on too little land to support them, a situation exacerbated by adverse climatic changes. For example, in the 1800s, southwestern Germany suffered from extreme weather conditions that resulted in a series of disastrous crop failures.²⁰ In the early 1900s, so-called Volga Germans – Germans who had migrated to Russia – were eventually forced by famine and politics to migrate again. For those wanting to escape this precarious existence or simply to live at something better than a subsistence level, the solution was to become economic immigrants. Many Germans voluntarily went to America in search of a materially better life for themselves. Many of them settled in Colorado’s farm country, and by the 1970s, they were the state’s second-largest ethnic group.²¹

As the 1860 Census observed, for immigrants America was a place “more than anywhere else, [where] every man may find occupation according to his talents, and enjoy resources according to his industry.”²² And that primary resource was “land beyond the capacity of the people to till, and consequently cheap.”²³ This vision of plentiful land was encouraged by the Homestead Act (1862), a bill signed by President Abraham Lincoln to stimulate western migration by providing settlers 160 acres of public land. To qualify, settlers had to be US citizens and willing to complete five years of continuous residence to receive ownership of their homestead. With this incentive, immigrants came in droves looking for land they could call their own. In 1880, immigrants represented only 13 percent of the national population, but 23 percent of those who settled in the American West.²⁴

Their settlement of the land was expedited by the building of the Transcontinental Railroad (1863-1869), a 1,912-mile railroad line that connected the US rail network at Council Bluffs, Iowa, to San Francisco, California. In 1870, local Colorado entrepreneurs financed and built the Denver Pacific Railway line to Cheyenne, Wyoming, to connect Denver to the Transcontinental Railroad. It provided a comparatively cheap and fast way for people in the United States and from around the world to go beyond the 100th meridian to Colorado. Advances in modern technology facilitated the settlement of the American West. Coal-powered railroads and steamships made America and the Interior West closer than ever to people around the world.

The Transcontinental Railroad, which promoted immigration to the American West, was also built by immigrants, mainly Chinese who worked on the Central Pacific and Irish on the Union Pacific.²⁵ Arguably, the over 20,000 Chinese who worked on the railroad had the worst of it since they had to negotiate the Sierra Nevada Mountains. As one descendant of a Chinese railroad worker described it, they “risked their lives hammering and detonating gunpowder,

surviving avalanches and extreme conditions – engaging in the kind of backbreaking, chisel-to-granite ‘bone-work’ that others refused to do.”²⁶ The Chinese and Irish railroad immigrant workers can be credited with unifying the nation economically and culturally.

After completing the railroad, many immigrant workers remained in the Interior West, making their way to Colorado and the other Intermountain States where they contributed significantly to their economies by working in the mines, railroads, and in other occupations. The Chinese, for example, specialized in placer mining, gleaning the gold left behind by earlier prospectors. (As it will be discussed below, the major exception to this was their work in the Como Coal mines.) Although Chinese laborers were generally not in direct competition with other miners who went to work in underground mines, they became embroiled in conflicts with them.

Another sizable group to migrate to America were those who involuntarily immigrated to America as a matter of life and death. They were refugees. The most well-known were the Irish who fled the rural areas because of the Great Potato Famine. The famine claimed the lives of more than a million Irish peasants who died from starvation and disease. Ironically, there was food available in Ireland to feed them, but their English landlords had exported it abroad along with their former tenants.²⁷ Some of the English thought that “a merciful God was doing a favor by killing off the starving masses,” who came from a country infested with crime, famine, disease.²⁸ Penniless Irish peasants joined the exodus abroad, ending up in unfamiliar urban enclaves on America’s Eastern seaboard. In the first half of the 19th century, some three million had immigrated to America.

What immigrants did

Among the first massive wave of immigrants who came to America during the 1840s and 1850s were those who found work in Colorado. According to the 1870 census, of the 17,583 individuals with known occupations, a full 17,157 or 97 percent were males from 16 to 59 years of age. (See Table 4.) Of those in this age category, 13,117 or 74 percent were born in America.²⁹ As discussed earlier, a significant number of them were undoubtedly descendants of earlier immigrants. The remaining 26 percent were immigrants, mainly from Britain (including those from British America, 1,388 or 8 percent), Ireland (1,230 or 7 percent) and Germany (1,012 or 6 percent).³⁰ In addition, there were immigrants from Scandinavia, Italy and other parts of Southern Europe and Eastern Europe. By the end of the 19th century, immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe increased dramatically, changing the character of immigration to America and Colorado.

To explain the economic contributions of immigrants to Colorado, the 1870 census placed the immigrants in 74 selected occupations that were deemed gainful and reputable. These occupations were grouped into four major categories: agriculture, professional and personal services, trade and transportation, and manufacturing and mining. In all four categories, more people were classified as some sort of worker than in any other occupation: agricultural laborers (2,659 or 41 percent), laborers (1,931 or 53 percent), officials and employees of railroad companies (962 or 34 percent), and miners (2,200 or 46 percent).³¹ Among the laboring masses were large numbers of British and Irish who were largely valued for their muscular arms and strong backs. Lacking the capital to start farms or the skills needed to farm the arid high plains of Colorado, they had few alternatives but to work as common laborers.³²

Immigrants played a significant role in developing the territory's economy, providing the physical labor necessary to make it a wealth-producing area and building the infrastructure

necessary to make area accessible to the rest of the nation. Their most important role was unquestionably as miners who extracted area's mineral resources, first gold, then silver, and later coal. Mining was central to Colorado's historical development. Its significance is emblazoned on the territorial seal, which features a heraldic shield with two miner's tools, the pick and sledge hammer, crossed on a golden background.³³ Immigrants also worked on the railroad, building the network of rail lines needed to transport mineral resources out of the area and commercial goods into it, making the place livable. Sustaining them were the agriculturalists, many of whom were German immigrants, who grew the food and raised the cattle necessary to feed the miners, railroad workers and others. Through irrigation, they were able to transform the arid prairies, which were suitable for raising cattle, into arable farmland.

In sum, the immigrants laid the economic foundation necessary for the Territory of Colorado to become that State of Colorado. Before they could so, however, the government had first to expel the American Indians who already owned the land.

Interethnic Conflicts and Racial Antagonisms

From the early 1850s to the late 1870s, the federal government waged a protracted campaign to suppress American Indian resistance. The government repeatedly broke its treaties and agreements with the American Indians it had defeated to expel them from their ancestral homeland to make it available to white colonizers. With the Battle of Summit Springs (1869), the last Colorado Great Plains battle against American Indians, and after the Meeker Incident (1879), which led to the eventual expulsion of the Utes from the state and their incarceration in reservations, Colorado was considered safe for white settlement. Many more people began migrating to Colorado and transforming it in the process. The 1880 Census characterized this

trend as the Interior West “losing something of [its] frontier character and taking on more of the social and domestic character of older communities.”³⁴

From 1870 to 1880, immigrants came mainly from Britain, Ireland, and Germany, and did so in increasing numbers. Within a decade there were now seven times as many immigrants from Britain³⁵ and almost five times as many from Ireland and Germany. (See Table 1.) Many of them were migrants from nearby Midwestern states such as Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio; and from as far away as New York and Pennsylvania. (See Table 3.) Some of them may have been wives and children of earlier immigrants.

Immigrants and their descendants alike came looking for gainful employment and found it in Colorado. Because of its expanding economy, Colorado experienced the unusual phenomenon of seeing a greater increase in people with occupations than simply an increase in population. As noted above, in 1870 the state had 17,583 individuals who were gainfully employed. A decade later, the number had dramatically increased to 101,252, a percentage increase in employed individuals that was greater than the increase in population. Of those who were gainfully employed, 28 percent were immigrants. A third of them were from Britain and British America, and the remainder came from Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia and other countries.³⁶ They fulfilled the demand for various sorts of manual labor: 40 percent of railroad workers were immigrants, 34 percent were miners, and 29 percent were common laborers.³⁷

There was a significant increase in domestic servants (700 percent). This was probably due to the increased availability of women in the state, many whom were Irish women who had immigrated in numbers comparable to Irish men. There were also a large number from Great Britain. Thirty-eight percent of women were domestic servants while the rest worked mainly in

the following occupations: milliners, dressmakers, and seamstresses; laundresses; teachers; boarding and lodging-house keepers.

Immigrants arrived at a crucial moment in Colorado's history. Besides contributing to the economy, their very presence provided the numbers needed to become a state. Jerome Chaffee, territorial representative from Colorado in Congress, was able to push through the enabling act for statehood only because he was able to convince his congressional colleagues that the territory had the required 150,000 people in 1875.³⁸ In 1870, Colorado had 39,864 people; by 1880, the population had increased to 194,327 people (39,790 or 20 percent of whom were first-generation immigrants), making it the most populous as well as prosperous Mountain State. (See Table 5.) Colorado became the nation's 38th state on August 1, 1876, a century after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, thus, earning for itself the nickname "Centennial State."

The pattern of immigration to Colorado was changing, however. Among Northern Europeans, the greatest percentage increase was seen for Scandinavians. There were now thirteen times as many of them as before. From the nativist perspective, a more ominous change was the perceptible increase of immigrants from unfamiliar places. As of 1870, there were very few immigrants from other parts of Europe: 2 from Hungary, 16 from Italy, 49 from Poland, and 10 from Russia; by 1880, there were now 49 from Hungary, 335 from Italy, 154 from Poland, and 278 from Russia. Perhaps most alarming was those from Asia. In 1870, there were only 7 from China and 2 from India; in 1880, there were now 601 from China, 1 from Japan, and 26 from India. Most of them were attracted to the state's booming mining industry.

Toward the end of the 19th century, these newcomers changed the character of immigration to America in general and Colorado. Though there were comparatively few immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, and Asia at the time, the general populace,

including earlier groups of immigrants, believed they were about to be overwhelmed by the new arrivals. Their response to these later immigrants was out of proportion to any real threat the newcomers actually posed to their livelihoods or culture. While the bigotry against immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe was severe, the discrimination lasted longer and was far worse for Asians and other people of color. Traditionally, Asians, along with blacks, Latinos, and American Indians, were stigmatized because of their race rather than ethnicity. Immigrant life in America would be riven with interethnic conflicts and racial antagonisms.

Discrimination against newcomers has been a recurring pattern in immigration. Earlier European immigrant groups, such as the Irish and Germans, also perceived succeeding groups of new immigrants this way. They should have known better since they too had been condemned for representing an alien culture, practicing exotic customs, and having a relatively low standard of living. Compared to British immigrants, who were Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, the Irish were viewed unfavorably for being Celtic and Catholic, their Catholicism being considered their most unfavorable characteristic. The Irish were also racialized, described as dark, brutish, and simian-like. When different immigrant groups found themselves in economic competition, the perception of racial or ethnic otherness provided fuel for heightened antagonism.

In Gilpin County, for example, Cornish and Irish immigrant miners found themselves competing with each other. The Cornishmen (from Britain) had arrived the earliest and had been recruited for their expertise in sinking shafts and tracing veins. But they felt that their livelihood was being threatened with the arrival of the Irish, who were being paid less. The antagonism of the Cornishmen toward the Irish was exacerbated by what was considered a natural antipathy based on cultural and religious differences. It was said that “it did not take many drinks to precipitate a fight between members of these two groups.”³⁹ Sometimes, these differences

resulted in violent clashes such as the Philadelphia Nativist riots in 1844, a result of rising anti-Catholic sentiment and the growing presence of Irish Catholic immigrants in the City of Brotherly Love. Anti-Catholicism has persisted in America to at least the Sixties, when John F. Kennedy's election was dogged by allegations that as a Catholic, he was a de facto agent of the Papacy with the mission of subverting the country.

The Germans were also viewed unfavorably for being Teutonics and Catholics. They were feared and disliked for allegedly being Socialists with violent tendencies and then for being potential subversives during World War I and II. Early on, the venerable Benjamin Franklin took a dim view of their language and customs, complaining of the adverse influence they were having on Pennsylvania, though it should be noted that they, along with the Swiss, were the ones who opened up Pennsylvania's back country. Other Americans viewed Germans favorably. George Bancroft, an American historian, lauded them for their "love of personal independence," which could be traced to their tribal heritage and their resistance to Roman domination.⁴⁰

Generally speaking, native-born Americans (themselves descendants of immigrants) condemned Irish and German immigrants, considering them unalterably foreign and inferior because of it. The nativist Know-Nothing Party (1844-1860) opposed their immigration to America, seeing them as an existential threat to the American way of life. As far as nativists were concerned, the Irish and Germans were "subversive and diseased people who were stealing American jobs."⁴¹ The Know-Nothings tried to disempower Irish and German immigrants already in the country by requiring them to be residents for twenty-one years before being eligible for citizenship. Fortunately, this did not come to pass.

As time went on, the Irish, Germans and other white ethnic groups assimilated into mainstream society. They became citizens, attained political power, and moved up the economic

ladder. For the Irish, the appearance of Irish police officers in the late 1850s was the pivotal moment in their assimilation into mainstream society, according to Noel Ignatiev.⁴² As armed police, they had the ability to defend themselves against nativists and other enemies. Through ethnic solidarity, Irish immigrants advanced themselves politically whenever they could. For example, though most Irish were Democrats, they banded together to elect a countryman, Robert Morris as Republican mayor of Denver in 1881.

White ethnic assimilation was facilitated by intermarriage, which served to attenuate the individual's original ethnic identity by combining it with another. As the previously mentioned census data regarding foreign parentage suggests (see Table 2), immigrants married native-born Americans at a high rate. Contrary to nativists' conviction that immigrants were inassimilable, immigrants always assimilated into American mainstream society to some extent for reasons of survival, if nothing else, and their descendants assimilated to an even greater extent, learning to speak English (the American version, of course), embracing American customs and espousing its values as the way to achieve security and success for themselves and their families. Ironically, this included the acceptance of the mainstream's prejudices toward various ethnic and racial groups.

Take the Irish, for example. As they moved westward, their socioeconomic circumstances improved steadily. They moved up from the bottom of the economic ladder to its middle rungs and higher, enjoying a status they never could attain in East Coast urban ghettos. "An Irishman might be described as a lazy, dirty Celt when he landed in New York, but if his children settled in California [or in Colorado] they might well be praised as part of the vanguard of energetic Anglo-Saxon people poised for the plunge into Asia," as Reginald Horsman has observed.⁴³ Irish upward mobility came at the expense of other groups. The Irish stood shoulder to shoulder with

older immigrants in opposition to other immigrants who were viewed as being even more foreign than they were.

Southern and Eastern European immigrants were denigrated for belonging to an alien culture, exhibiting exotic customs and having a low standard of living. For example, Italians, most of whom were from southern Italy, were among the most unpopular immigrants in Colorado. With the promise of good pay and safe working conditions, they had immigrated to America or were recruited by labor contractors known as *Padrones* during the great railroad construction period from 1880 to 1895. In 1880, there were approximately 816 Italians in the state; in 1890, there were 3,882 of them, working in industrial centers and mining camps. They were recruited as cheap labor for mines, smelters, and railroad construction gangs. Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini lamented:

Here the hardest work is reserved for the Italian worker . . . they merely look upon him as an ingenious machine for work . . . I saw these dear fellows of ours engaged on construction of railways in the most intricate mountain gorges. . . . Italian miners spent most of their waking live underground . . . until old age and incapacity creep over them, or . . . a landslide or explosion or an accident of some kind ends the life of the poor worker, who does not even need a grave, being buried in the one in which he has lived all his life.⁴⁴

The Italians endured what they did for the money that they could make to send back home to support their families or save enough to enable them to buy farmland or to open a business when they returned to their homeland. Italian laborers could earn \$300 a year in the American West as compared to \$50 in the *Marches* in eastern Italy or \$100 in northwest Italy. In some parts of Southern and Eastern Europe the wages were even lower. Hungarian field hands made only \$22,

for instance. Even with the hardships they experienced, Italians and other immigrant workers wrote letters to friends and relatives about the high wages that could be earned in America. In comparison to their homelands, America was the place to make money.

Though Italians suffered discrimination, exploitation, and hostility, they did have one advantage. They were Europeans and were considered whites, which paved their way to acceptance into American society.⁴⁵ The Italians eventually found common ground with other European immigrant groups in their opposition to the capitalists who exploited them. Many of them participated in labor movement in Colorado where they engaged in labor disputes, the most famous of which was Ludlow Massacre on April 20, 1914. After Colorado National Guard troops set fire to the striking miners' tent colony, killing fourteen women and children, Colorado's southern counties was the scene of a ten-day war that caused more than 100 deaths.

Unlike Irish and Italian immigrants, the Chinese were ostracized because of their race. They were condemned for being racially rather than ethnically different, placing them squarely in the middle of the long-standing black-and-white binary that has shaped race relations ever since America's founding. The Chinese bore the dual burden of being new immigrants as well as a people of color. The driving force behind the anti-Chinese movement was mainly racial antagonism toward Asians. As John Higham has observed:

No variety of anti-European sentiment has ever approached the violent extremes to which anti-Chinese agitation went in the 1870s and 1880s. Lynchings, boycotts, and mass expulsions still harassed the Chinese in 1882. . . . Americans have never maintained that every European endangers American civilization; attacks have centered on the "scum" or "dregs" of Europe, thereby allowing for at least some implicit exceptions. But opponents of Oriental folk have tended to reject them one and all.⁴⁶

The Chinese tried to defend themselves against this hostility but were handicapped. Chinese (and other Asians) were among the most vulnerable because they suffered from the disadvantage of being declared aliens who were ineligible for citizenship. In 1870, Congress had passed a Naturalization Act that limited naturalization to whites and Africans. Denied the right to vote and to hold political office, Chinese were unable to protect themselves from their nativist enemies. For them, “Not a Chinaman’s Chance” was more than just an expression.

Opposition to the Chinese began when capitalists recruited them to work in their mines because they were comparatively inexpensive as well as reliable. European immigrant workers perceived Chinese workers as a threat to their livelihoods. Politicians demonized them as a way to gain peoples’ votes. Union organizers vilified them to build up their incipient labor movement. Together, these interest groups formed a powerful triad of enemies who waged a vitriolic campaign against the Chinese. They encouraged the lynching and expulsion of Chinese, and the boycott of Chinese businesses.⁴⁷ Their enmity toward the Chinese, couched in terms of solutions to “The Chinese Question,” centered on the need for restrictions on their immigration to the United States. The later exclusion of the Chinese from the country was the harbinger of a restrictive immigration policy. It was only a short step from the racism that was the basis of this policy to the establishment of an ethnic hierarchy that also restricted new immigrant groups from Southern and Eastern Europe.

The nativists did not wait for an answer to the “Chinese Question.” In the wake of the Panic of 1873 and the world-wide depression, Colorado nativists used the Chinese as scapegoats, declaring the “Chinese must go!” They engaged in a campaign to drive them out of Colorado’s mining communities. In Leadville, where the silver boom began in 1877 and one-third of the miners were Irish, the Chinese were forbidden from entering the town on pain of death. In Como,

during the so-called Chinese-Italian War (1879), Italian miners attacked and expelled fellow Chinese miners whom they feared were being brought in to replace them, vowing to kill them if they returned.⁴⁸

The hate campaign against the Chinese in Colorado culminated in the Denver anti-Chinese race riot (October 31, 1880).⁴⁹ An estimated three to five thousand people, approximately ten percent of the city's residents, descended upon the city's Chinatown to rape and pillage. They sought to kill or expel Chinatown's 450 residents. Given that Chinatown was located in an area of the city with a large immigrant population, between 30-40 percent, it is highly likely that many of the rioters were fellow immigrant workers.⁵⁰ After the race riot, there was never a recurrence of large-scale violence against the Chinese in Colorado, though there were a series of isolated incidents. Ethnic cleansing of Chinese continued.

The Denver anti-Chinese race riot contributed to the passage of the federal Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), which blamed the Chinese for local disturbances and held them responsible for the brutality that had been visited upon them, adding insult to injury. The Exclusion Act placed a ten-year moratorium on the immigration of Chinese laborers from entering the country as a way to ensure social order. By 1902, anti-Chinese groups were able to convince the US Congress to make the Exclusion Act permanent.

Colorado's need for workers persisted, however. So Japanese and other Asians immigrants were recruited to replace the Chinese. By the time of the 1900 Census, there were 10,132 persons living in Colorado who had been born in Japan. At the same time, anti-Asian groups were lobbying to exclude them all from the country. Unions used the race card to foster worker solidarity among its members at the expense of racial groups such as Asian and Latino immigrants, blacks and American Indians. The Western Federation of Miners, for instance,

publicly opposed “the continued presence of Asiatics within the continental United States” in 1901.⁵¹

Golden Door to Guarded Gate

The Chinese Exclusion Act had consequences well beyond the Chinese. As an opponent of the original legislation, Massachusetts Senator George Frisbie Hoar (Republican), noted in 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act legalized racial discrimination.⁵² It was the first law enacted targeting a specific group of people from immigrating to the United States.⁵³ Before then, there were no significant restrictions on immigration, and those that existed were simply ignored. The Chinese Exclusion Act signaled the beginning of the end of free immigration to the country. Other discriminatory immigration laws would follow. In 1907 came the Gentlemen’s Agreement, which extended the ban on Chinese workers to Japanese workers. In this instance, however, the Japanese government agreed to stop their laborers from leaving Japan rather than have the American government prevent them from entering the United States. However, an important difference between the treatment of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants was that the agreement allowed the wives and children of those Japanese already in America to immigrate, resulting in a stable ethnic community and the emergence of second-generation Japanese Americans.

Between 1890 and 1920, the character of immigration to the United States and Colorado also changed. The high tide of immigration to the United States was reached during these years when an estimated 16 million immigrants entered the country, mainly for economic reasons. Toward the end of the 19th century, immigration from such traditional sources as Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, and the Scandinavian countries began to decline while those from Austria, Hungary, Russia, and Italy began to rise. In 1896, the number of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe was more than 50 percent of the total. These new immigrants entered the

United States when it was in the throes of industrialization and urbanization. Owing to their poverty, upon arrival most immigrants moved into urban ethnic enclaves, living in tenements and working in factories under deplorable conditions. Those who could afford to do so or those who were recruited by labor brokers migrated west to the Mountain States. In Colorado they found work in the steel mills in Pueblo and the coal mines in the southern part of the state. There they continued to live in ethnic enclaves or newly established company towns.

In 1890, immigrants constituted 20.3 percent of Colorado's population and those with a foreign parent constituted 33.02 percent, a significant portion of the population. Immigrants from Northern and Western Europe began to decrease while those from Southern and Eastern Europe began to increase, with some groups like the Italians present in numbers almost equal to those of Great Britain and Germany. (See Table 6.) The decrease of some of the traditional immigrant groups may be due in part to the fact that many had become naturalized citizens and no longer counted as foreigners.

Between 1890 and 1910, immigrants to Colorado from Southern and Eastern Europe caught up to but did not surpass those from Northern and Western Europe. The number of immigrants from Asia continued to be comparatively small. By 1910, out of a total immigrant population of 129,587, there were 47,559 (38 percent) from Southern and Eastern Europe, and 66,206 (51 percent) from Northern and Western Europe, while only 2,968 were from Asia, mainly Japan. (See Table 7.) Much of this change had occurred since 1900, with the numbers of immigrants coming from Italy, Russia, and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire showing the largest increases. Meanwhile, immigration from Germany and the Scandinavian countries experienced only modest increases. At the same time, immigration from England and Ireland experienced modest decreases. (See Table 8.)

The influx of immigrant workers from Southern and Eastern Europe compensated for the decrease of those from Northern and Western Europe, some of whom had benefited from upward mobility and were now working in a managerial capacity. A significant portion of all European immigrants, however, continued to work as laborers, particularly in the mining industry, which continued to be the preeminent part of the state's economy. They accounted for fully ten percent of those employed. While metalliferous (metal extraction) mining was the leading industry when measured by the value of products, bituminous coal mining ranked first when the number of persons employed is considered. Indeed, 60.4 percent of mine workers were employed in coal mines. Many of them were immigrant workers from Southern and Eastern Europe. They were given the most dangerous and onerous occupations in the mines.

After World War I (1914-1918), emigration from Southern and Eastern Europe to the United States was severely restricted because of the post-war economic depression and a rising isolationist sentiment that had emerged across the country. As was the case with the earlier Chinese Exclusion Act, people called for immigration restriction because of the widespread fear they would lose their jobs to immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and suffer a decline in their standard of living.

Justifying the call for immigration restriction were eugenicists who created a hierarchical taxonomy of races. They placed Nordics at the top of the hierarchy, justifying this ranking with "scientific" arguments about Nordic genetic supremacy. According to eugenics adherents, Nordics from Northern and Western Europe were superior in every way that mattered and should be encouraged to immigrate to America, while Mediterraneans from Southern and Eastern Europe were inferior and should be discouraged from immigrating. A corollary to this was that intermarriage with people belonging to intellectually inferior and morally degenerate groups

inevitably led to the birth of weaker rather than stronger progeny. Nativists claimed that eugenics proved beyond a shadow of doubt that certain disparate groups of people did not mix well and when they did, the result was degeneration.

On the one hand, eugenics adherents advocated “positive eugenics” emphasizing selective breeding of those at the top of the racial hierarchy, and on the other, “negative eugenics” calling for the end to the breeding of those on the bottom. Tragically, this would lead to such malevolent practices as the sterilization of blacks in America, and the genocidal extermination of Jews in Europe. Not surprisingly, to prevent intermarriage among races, many states kept supportive anti-miscegenation laws on their books until they were struck down by the US Supreme Court in the case of *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967 as violations of the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the 14th Amendment.

On the basis of bogus genetic science, nativist leaders called for the country to change its time-honored policy of free immigration and adopt restrictive immigration policies to prevent “inferior” people from entering the country. In the early decades of the 20th century, the undesirables were doing so in massive numbers. The future well-being of the nation was said to be at stake. The federal government responded by passing a series of measures to prevent them from entering the country. The laws were patently prejudicial from the get-go, favoring the old immigrants from Northern and Western Europe and disfavoring the new immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.

At first, US Congress tried to reduce the number of entrants with the passage of a Literacy Act in 1917. It required all immigrants be able to read or write English or some other language, and created the “Asiatic barred zone,” which prevented immigrants from most of Asia and the Pacific Islands from emigrating to America. But this proved inadequate for the nativists,

so they persuaded Congress to institute the notorious “national origins” system to restrict immigration even further. Beginning with the Immigration Act of 1921, the federal government limited the number of immigrants to three percent of the total number of their countrymen who were residing in the United States according to the 1910 decennial census. This act succeeded in drastically reducing immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe by about 75 percent. The total number of immigrants allowed into the country was restricted to 357,000.

In 1924, restrictions on immigration became even more severe with the passage of the Johnson-Reed Act (the Immigration Act of 1924) , which limited the number of immigrants to two percent of those living in the United States according to the 1890 decennial census. The act also excluded all Asians, including Japanese, from entering the country. In essence, the measure sought to return the country to what it was like before 1882, when the majority of the population consisted of white people from Northern and Western Europe. The erection of this barrier was done with the complicity of older immigrant groups from Northern and Western Europe who saw it in their interest to disavow their past and direct animus toward newer immigrant groups from Southern and Eastern Europe. In doing so, the earlier immigrant groups deflected criticisms from themselves onto the new arrivals while also affirming their assimilation into mainstream American society. The older immigrants and their descendants dealt with this cognitive dissonance by declaring that the new immigrants were somehow different from their own immigrant group, though their criticisms of the new immigrants were eerily similar to those that had been leveled against their own ethnic group.

In 1929, the government made this restrictive immigration system permanent with the National Origins Clause, limiting the total number of so-called quota immigrants to no more than 150,000 a year. Each country was assigned an annual quota or share of the 150,000 based on the

number of persons of its nationality living in the United States in 1920, the last decennial census prior to the enactment of the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act. Given the antipathy toward the new immigrants, it is hardly surprising that in 1931, for the first time in American history, the number of immigrants leaving the country exceeded those entering the country.

The National Origins system of immigration served as an invisible wall to exclude emigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and from other parts of the world, notably Asia, from entering the United States. It was an inherently discriminatory since the large quotas assigned to favored nations, which went unused, were not transferrable to countries with small quotas, even though these countries were the ones with the largest numbers of would-be immigrants; also the quotas that were granted to nations in the Asia-Pacific triangle were miniscule. To illustrate how the act worked to discriminate against applicants from undesirable groups, Britain was allowed an annual quota of 65,361, though only 28,291 visas were actually asked for.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Italy was allowed just 5,666, even though 132,435 Italian applicants requested visas.⁵⁵ Since the quotas could not be shifted to another country, the overall number of immigrants from Europe were reduced significantly, which was evidently the idea.

The National Origins system resulted in a decrease in new immigrants at the national and state levels. From 1930 to 1970, immigrants as a percentage of Colorado's population began to decrease; from 1980 until the end of the century, the percentage began to increase, though it never returned to the heights of the 1880s and 1890s. (See Table 9.) In terms of absolute numbers, there were initially increases in some old and new immigrant groups to sustain the state's economy. According to the 1930 census, there were now 50,355 German immigrants in Colorado and 30,095 Russian and 31,353 Italian immigrants.⁵⁶ The increase in German immigrants may have been a post-World War I phenomenon, with many individuals leaving

Germany because of economic difficulties resulting from the Versailles Treaty agreement. Given the quota system, in all probability, those from Russia and Italy may have been earlier immigrants who had initially settled on the East Coast and then migrated to Colorado in search of better livelihoods, especially with the onset of the Great Depression. Among the foreign-born population, 54.6 percent of them were found to have gainful employment in contrast to 47.4 percent for the native-born population.⁵⁷ The foreign-born immigrants worked mainly in various agricultural, mining, and manufacturing occupations.

Fortunately for Colorado, there were no quotas or limitations applied to immigrants from the Western Hemisphere, that is, Canada and Latin America. Immigrants from Latin America, mainly from Mexico, continued to enter the United States in general and Colorado. More than half of the net increase in immigrants to the United States from 1910 to 1930 was due to immigration from Mexico. The Mexican immigrants went mostly to Texas, California, and Arizona, with some immigrating to New Mexico and Colorado, where they helped meet the need for laborers.

By 1900, an estimated 12,816 immigrants from Mexico had come to the Centennial State, joining the large Hispano population who were already there.⁵⁸ The Hispanos were originally Mexican inhabitants who had been incorporated into the United States and given American citizenship as a result of the above-mentioned Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Altogether there were 57,676 Coloradans of Mexican ancestry in 1930 when they were first included as a separate census category. Previously, they had been counted included with the white population. But as the 1930 census noted, "Because of the growing importance of the Mexican element in the population and among gainful workers, it was given a separate classification."⁵⁹ Between 1910 and 1950,

Mexican immigrants constituted a significant proportion of the state's population, reaching a highpoint of 13.4 percent by 1930. (See Table 10.)

The Hispanos and the Mexican immigrants played an important role in the state's economy. They could be found working in the coal mines, in the smelters and steel mills, and in the beet fields. As coal consumption increased exponentially during the late 19th century, coal mine owners went to Hispano communities in Colorado and throughout the southwest to recruit workers. Hispanos were willing to work in the mines because the mine owners offered comparatively high wages to anyone willing to do it. In the 19th century, mine workers averaged around \$10 a week. An unskilled mine worker could earn \$375 a year and more. Mine owners and managers preferred Hispanos because they mistakenly believed them to be pliable workers, but the Hispanos proved to be as militant as other workers when they suffered inequities and were willing to go on strike to protect their interests. This would prove equally true in the fields as well as the mines when Hispanos and Mexican migrants joined Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers to fight for higher wages and better working conditions.

As seasonal agricultural workers, Hispanos and Mexican migrants were essential to Colorado's sugar beet industry, which became the mainstay of the state's commercial agricultural economy during the post-World War II period. Working in the beet fields was a labor-intensive activity requiring workers to perform some of the most physically demanding and disagreeable jobs in the agricultural sector. In the spring, field workers had to get down on their hands and knees, crawl between rows of plants, and methodically cull the plants with short-handled hoes; in the fall, they had to pull each beet from the ground and use a beet topper to cut off the crown and leafy top. Besides working in the beet fields, Hispano and Mexican migrant workers engaged in other types of back-breaking "stoop labor."

Between 1910 and 1930, it has been estimated that there were more than 30,000 Mexican migrants working in the state's sugar beet industry.⁶⁰ This number is far greater than was recorded in the census, suggesting that many may have been undocumented immigrants. Even though Colorado farmers needed them, there was racial antagonism towards Mexicans and other Latinos. This led to the strange and short-lived border incident in 1936 when Governor Edwin "Big Ed" Johnson tried to halt mainly New Mexicans from entering Colorado to work in its beet fields.⁶¹ A xenophobic "American First" isolationist, Johnson declared martial law and sent 800 National Guardsmen to police Colorado's 370-mile southern border to blockade what he called the invasion of "aliens" and "indigents" entering the state from New Mexico. Implicitly, Johnson was questioning whether New Mexicans were really Americans or at least the type of Americans who were welcomed in Colorado. His pretext was to save the jobs for Coloradans, but the blockade was actually an act of political posturing intended to curry favor with voters. This was a brief effort mainly because New Mexico Governor Clyde Tingley announced a boycott of Colorado products in response, and Johnson was also confronted with push-back from Colorado farmers and ranchers, who had difficulty recruiting enough low-wage workers from within the state. After ten days, Johnson rescinded his obnoxious executive order.

As a result of labor shortages during World War II, when farm workers left to join the armed forces or went to work in the better-paying defense industry, sugar beet companies as well as farmers in general once again relied on Mexican workers. They were recruited through the *bracero* program (the Spanish term *bracero* means literally, "one who works using his arms" or "manual laborer"), the largest contract labor program in US history. In an effort to provide farms and factories with the workers they sorely needed, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the program in 1942. It was agreed that the *braceros*, as they were known, would receive a

minimum wage of 30 cents an hour, be given decent living conditions, and be protected from racial discrimination such as being excluded from segregated “whites only” public facilities. The *braceros* travelled around the country, working wherever their labor was needed. Unfortunately, US employers often violated their agreements, failing to provide the *braceros* with adequate housing, health care, safe working conditions and even wages.

Most *braceros* endured the exploitation and discrimination because they believed correctly that they would make more money in the US than they could in Mexico. They saw it as an opportunity to improve their family’s prospects. The monies earned in the United States allowed them to own a home, open a business, start a farm of their own, and send their children to school. By the time the program ended in 1946, nearly 4.6 million Mexicans had entered the US temporarily to work. Some 465,000 Mexicans were part of the 3.1 million or 15 percent of US farm laborers.⁶² Contrary to what some pundits believed, the *braceros* did not adversely affect native-born farm workers and when they no longer were available, the economic situation of native-born farm did not improve.

As a result of the success of the program, American farmers relied on Mexican migrant workers. When the *bracero* program ended, they complained to the US government that Mexican workers had done jobs that Americans refused to do and that their crops would rot in the fields without them. This situation continues to the present day. Ever since then, Mexican workers have been coming to the United States and Colorado to work, some on H-2A temporary work visas and others as undocumented migrant workers.

Breaching the Guarded Gate

With the passage of the discriminatory immigration laws of the 1920s, the United States was able to prevent so-called inferior peoples from entering the country for several decades. It

would take World War II and the Cold War to end these prejudicial laws and replace them with fairer ones. This occurred in three parts. The first part occurred during World War II when people recognized the incongruity of excluding the citizens of a wartime ally – China – from immigrating to the United States. As a wartime expedient, Congress passed the Magnuson Bill in 1943, repealing the Chinese Exclusion Act and allowing an annual quota of 105 Chinese to enter the country. The second part unfolded during the early years of the Cold War, with the growing recognition that the United States' immigration policy was at odds with its foreign policy. The US needed a complementary immigration policy showing that America was a just nation, a shining example of peace and progress that could serve as a positive influence on the rest of the world. The US also realized that its existing immigration restrictions were inimical to its economic interest since they impeded the movement of people who were essential to its future growth in the emerging global economy. Consequently, Congress passed the McCarran-Walter Act (1952) to address this problem. Even though McCarran-Walter continued the inherently discriminatory National Origins system, it made the exclusion of immigrants on the basis of race illegitimate. Applicants from Asia-Pacific triangle countries now had a token quota of 2,000.

The third and most significant part was the passage of the landmark Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 or the Hart-Celler Act, as this piece of legislation is popularly known.⁶³ Hart-Celler fundamentally changed the basis of the nation's immigration policy from an essentially exclusive approach to an inclusive one. While the United States never returned to the free immigration policy of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Hart-Celler did eliminate many of the unfair features of the Immigration Act of 1917, the Johnson-Reed Act, and the McCarran-Walter Act. It abolished the previous system based on national-origins quotas and eliminated references to race in its preferences. In doing so, Hart-Celler corrected the inequities

that had limited the number of Southern and Eastern Europeans from immigrating to the United States. It instituted a more equitable system that allowed an annual visa limit of 20,000 per country and an overall global ceiling of 290,000 in 1976. Equally important, Hart-Celler replaced the previous ethnic criteria which were designed to keep people out of the country with a family reunification program and skills criteria designed to attract select immigrants to the country.

While the architects of the Hart-Celler Act sought to make the country's immigration policy more equitable, they did so without the expectation of a significant increase in immigration from around the world. Indeed, if Americans at the time believed that Hart-Celler would increase immigration to the United States, its passage might have been jeopardized. Many proponents of the bill thought that far fewer immigrants would take advantage of the new equal quotas than actually did. Given the country's history of anti-Asian sentiments and its identity as a predominantly white nation, they thought few Asians would make use of the opportunities that immigration reform offered. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, for example, thought that, at most, there would be about 5,000 immigrants from the Asia-Pacific region the first year after the passage of Hart-Celler, with declining numbers afterwards.⁶⁴ His brother Senator Edward Kennedy, who facilitated its passage through the Senate, did not expect the bill to change the essential ethnic make-up of the country nor that there would be a significant influx from the most populated and economically deprived countries in the world.⁶⁵

The proponents of Hart-Celler were right and wrong. They were right about the number of Europeans immigrating to the United States. Comparatively few took advantage of the new immigration law. By 1965 Western Europe had recovered from the ravages of World War II, so most people there had little incentive to leave home. And because of the Iron Curtain, many of those in the Soviet-bloc countries of Eastern Europe were unable to leave, even though they

wanted to do so. By the first decade of the 21st century, about one out of every ten people or 9.7 percent of the population in Colorado was foreign born. And a similar number (9.4 percent) of native-born US citizens have at least one immigrant parent. In 2015, among the top five groups that had immigrated to Colorado, only one was European – Germans, representing 3.2 percent of them.⁶⁶ Presumably, Germany was still recovering from the ravages of World War II and Germans sought to make a new life for themselves in the Centennial State.

The other four groups were from Mexico (43.3 percent), India (4.4 percent), Vietnam (3.2 percent) and China (3.1 percent).⁶⁷ Immigration from Mexico has been on-going since World War II. As part of Colorado's broader Latino community, they currently constitute about 21 percent of the state's population. This is four percent higher than the national average, making Colorado one of just nine states with a Latino population of more than one million people. By 2040, it is estimated that more than one-third of Coloradans will be Latinos, up from one-fifth today.

Latinos have enriched the state's diverse communities and reviving rural communities. Indeed, they have been a critical factor in either slowing or reversing population decline in many rural areas of the state. In some rural communities their numbers now approach those of the white population. In 2017, in Fort Morgan in northeast Colorado the population was 48 percent white and 45 percent Latino.⁶⁸ It also included Somalis and other East African immigrants who made up 4 percent of the population. Latinos and other immigrants have become an integral part of the state's economy. They along with other immigrants are most numerous in the construction (22.6 percent of all workers) and administrative & support; waste management; and remediation services (20.6 percent of all workers) industries.⁶⁹ In addition, 4.9 percent of the state's workforce is comprised of undocumented immigrants.

Under Hart-Celler, large numbers of Asians applied for the visas available to them to escape the economic deprivations and political instability of their homelands. Moreover, they came with the intention of settling permanently in the United States, taking advantage of the immigration act's emphasis on family reunification through a provision exempting immediate relatives – parents, as well as spouses and children – of American citizens from the above-mentioned limitations. For the first time in American history, the country's immigration policy gave priority to family members. Immediate relatives of American citizens and permanent residents were exempt from the established ceiling of 170,000 immigrants from outside the Western Hemisphere. Consequently, Asian immigrants were among the fastest to become naturalized citizens. As soon as they could, Asian immigrants became citizens to apply to bring their families to America, starting a chain-migration process that has continued to the present. Family reunification has remained an essential element in American immigration policy and has withstood various challenges from anti-immigration opponents to degrade it or eliminate it altogether.

The effects of Hart-Celler on Asian immigration to Colorado can be seen in the census record. Since the end of World War II, the Asian Coloradan population has changed significantly. The recent arrivals are no longer just Chinese and Japanese but consist of a remarkably diverse group of Asians which more or less mirrors the demographic distribution of Asians throughout the Interior West and the nation as a whole. Though like other immigrant groups Asians still prefer to gather together in ethnic neighborhoods, they are no longer forced to live in segregated ethnic enclaves. In 1960, Asians constituted only 0.5 percent of Colorado's population; in 1990, they had grown to 1.7 percent of Colorado's population; in 2000, to 2.2 percent; and by 2010, they reached 2.8 percent (or an estimated 143,760 people).⁷⁰ In the

national context, however, these figures are less impressive. In 1960, Asian Americans comprised less than one percent of the total US population, but by 2000, the Asian American share of the total United States population had grown to 4.5 percent and by 2010, 4.8 percent. Compared to other immigrant groups, old and new, the percentage and number of Asian immigrants is low. This is due to past discriminatory laws, which prevented Asians from replenishing their community with fellow immigrants or from founding families and producing a second generation born in America. They are now making up for lost time and opportunities.

Decades after Hart-Celler, Asian immigrants are now the fastest growing racial group in the nation and in the state. As one of America's "new growth" states, Colorado has attracted large numbers of them.⁷¹ By 2010, the Asian population increased more than four times, growing by 43.3 percent while the rest of the country grew by only 9.7 percent. According to a PEW Research Center study, the number of Asians immigrating to the United States had surpassed that of Latinos by 2012.⁷² By that year, an estimated 136,882 Asians lived in Colorado, which was significantly more than before World War II. Asians can now be found throughout the state, though most prefer to live in urban areas.

Recent Asian immigrants are also among the most diverse ethnically. They include immigrants from East, South, and Southeast Asia, as well as various parts of the Pacific. Besides coming as economic immigrants, many of them were also religious and political refugees seeking asylum in America. In the 2010 decennial census, the Chinese, the state's oldest Asian group, are once again the most numerous; Japanese, the state's second oldest Asian groups, are now the fewest. Between them are four other groups, with slightly more Vietnamese and Koreans than Asian Indians and slightly more Filipinos than Japanese.

Augmenting the Asian immigrants are Asian refugees who have come to America as a result of the Cold War, as well as the hot wars fought in Korea and Vietnam.⁷³ Most of the recent refugees have come from Southeast Asia, fleeing Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos in the wake of America's defeat in the War in Vietnam in 1975. By the beginning of the millennium, in Colorado there are 15,457 Vietnamese, 1,451 Cambodians, and 2,156 Laotians, along with 3,000 Hmong, who had fought alongside American troops in Southeast Asia. Together, these Southeast Asians represent a very small part of Colorado's population, 0.5 percent. Less visible are many other, smaller Asian ethnic groups such as the Burmese and Bhutanese, who constitute a large proportion of refugees to the country in the early 21st century. They fled their native lands to escape from oppressive rulers, civil wars, or government violence. They came to Colorado for protection, but with little or no idea what the future may hold for them.

Among the various pull factors that have shaped Asian migration to Colorado, economics continues to be the most significant. While Asian Coloradans are still in demand to develop the local economy, they are no longer restricted to low-wage occupations, such as engaging in the hard-physical labor needed to build the state's infrastructure. They can be found can across the entire economic spectrum of the state. They have come to Colorado because they thought the state offered them better economic opportunities for their families and better educational opportunities for their children, especially in comparison to other places around the country.

One of the major draws has been Colorado's information technology industry, which has developed rapidly in recent decades. As early as 1998, about 84 of every 1000 Coloradans worked in the high-tech industry, making it the state with the highest per capita number of technical workers in the country. Because the demand for qualified personnel outstripped the

domestic supply, the IT industry sought a skilled labor force abroad in countries like India with its extensive system of technical colleges. Skilled Asian immigrants came to fill an important need for technical expertise.

This need became particularly acute when Colorado's high-tech industry needed system analysts, engineers, and scientists able to perform a wide variety of tasks related to the Millennium Bug or Y2K problems expected to occur in the year 2000. Companies using computers (and that meant most them, large and small) were concerned that the existing software was unable to differentiate dates at the end of the millennium and would cause the wholesale collapse of their computers, resulting in irreparable damage to their business. Worse, such a disruption might even cause the country's computer-dependent infrastructure to fail, which would be social disaster of the first order. To remediate this problem, companies began hiring large numbers of computer specialists. Because the domestic supply of such specialists could not meet the demand, companies were willing to hire large number of Asian Indians with the requisite skills.

Asian Indians were prime candidates for recruitment because many of them had the necessary computer training and most of them spoke English, giving them a decided advantage over other skilled foreigner workers, including other Asians. Consequently, many Asian Indians were given H-1B visas, a temporary visa reserved for highly skilled workers allowing them to work in the United States. Indeed, the Immigration and Naturalization service reported that almost 48 percent of all H-1B visas issued from 1998 to 2000 went to Asian Indians. This opened a path to citizenship for many, as many as 40 percent of H-1B visa recipients sought green cards as a preliminary step to becoming naturalized citizens. Working in the state's high-

tech industry has enabled Colorado's Asian Indian immigrants to attain a median highest household income of \$96,302, which is even higher than that of Asian Indians living in other parts of the United States and more than double the national figure. By 2010, there were 20,369 Asian Indians in the state. In the preceding twenty years, the Asian Indian population had doubled itself each decade. In all likelihood, Asian Indians will continue to be a favored Asian immigrant group, at least for the foreseeable future.

Concluding Comments

Immigration has been an integral part of Colorado's development even before it became the nation's 38th state on August 1, 1876. Without immigrants and their descendants settling in the Colorado Territory, it is doubtful that Colorado would have had the necessary population to achieve statehood this early. Besides contributing to this political milestone, immigrants significantly boosted the Centennial State's economic growth. Economics was also the central impetus for emigration from their homelands and the attraction, real or imagined, offered by Colorado. Like most other immigrants, they were pushed out by economic circumstances. They were drawn to Colorado in the hopes of improving them.

Colorado has always needed immigrants. In the 19th century, mainly white ethnic groups, beginning with the British, Germans, and Irish, and later, the Italians, Russians and others, came to do the foundational work of first, extracting the state's raw materials from the ground, notably minerals such as gold, silver, and coal, and secondly, building the road and railway infrastructure required to transport such commodities for local and national consumption. By the 21st century, denigrated racial groups such as Asians arrived to build the technological infrastructure that plays such a large role in the state's economic future, and Latinos have come to provide the labor

needed to maintain its physical infrastructure and to sustain its agricultural sector. They are part of a demographic trend that is predicted to result in people of color being in the majority and whites in the minority by the mid-21st century. Along with this demographic change, there will be concomitant change in the balance of power between them.

Perhaps fearing such a change, there has been a call for immigration reform reminiscent of the 1920s. The intent is once again to minimize or exclude the entry of certain groups, notably those coming from non-European countries such as Latin America. Predictably, these groups have been maligned as posing a threat to American society or becoming a financial burden on the state. One possibility being considered is to have an employment-based immigration policy. To do this they would have to increase significantly the number of H-1B visas for highly skilled immigrants. US companies submitted more than 2011 applications for just 85,000 spots in 2019.⁷⁴ Without such an increase, “immigration experts estimate that for the next 10 years or so, Indian nationals, as well as a small number of Chinese nationals would be the only foreign workers able to obtain green cards through employment – a move that would crush U.S. businesses seeking other talented foreign employees.”⁷⁵ Such a policy would hinder other businesses from competing in the global economy and end the hopes and dreams of non-Asian Indian and non-Chinese immigrants to obtain residence in the United States through employment. While Colorado’s IT industry might benefit from this, it would hurt employers who have traditionally sought Latinos and Europeans for their workforce. Indeed, such a policy would end all future Latino employment immigration to the United States.

Ending Latino immigration would have a decidedly detrimental impact on Colorado’s agricultural economy. As Harry Talbott, the patriarch of Talbott Farms, the largest peach operation in the state, has observed, “Without [them], we would not have a peach harvest in

Colorado . . . Period.”⁷⁶ The future for Colorado’s peach growers and other farmers looks bleak since the number of Mexican migrant workers available to do the onerous field work is diminishing. According to the American Farm Bureau, there were only 243,000 workers in the country on temporary visas in 2018 to fill 2.4 million farm jobs. The bureau found that 40 percent of farmers have been unable to hire enough workers in the past five years. While the number of Mexican migrant workers has declined, there are many Central Americans from Guatemala, Honduras, and San Salvador looking for work and presumably willing to perform the intensive labor required on America’s farms. However, they are being kept out of the country for reasons of race and politics, just as the earlier Mexicans were. If the past is any indication, the newest would-be immigrants are hardly a threat and will more than pay their way through taxes and other contributions. As with previous generations of immigrants, they will assimilate into society and become as American as those who have preceded them.

¹ John F. Kennedy, *A Nation of Immigrants* (New York: Harper Perennial; Reprint Edition, 2008).

² Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), p.89.

³ “Kallstadt’s Kings: How the German heritage he has hidden shaped Donald Trump,” *The Economist* (February 13, 2016) <https://www.economist.com/united-states/2016/02/13/kallstadts-king>. Also see Rick Noack, “‘Go back’? Trump’s grandfather’s German hometown has a different message for the U.S. president,” *Washington Post*, July 16, 2019 https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/07/16/go-back-trumps-grandfathers-german-hometown-has-different-message-us-president/?utm_term=.9e4f5c5eb76a. Evidently, Trump prefers Scandinavian immigrants. In the past, he has claimed Swedish descent, presumably in an effort to avoid alienating potential Jewish tenants of his apartment buildings. Ironically, his mother originally emigrated from Scotland, his first wife Ivana was from Czechoslovakia, and current wife Melania is from Slovenia.

⁴ Cited in David A. Graham, Adrienne Green, Cullen Murphy, and Parker Richards, “An Oral History of Trump’s Bigotry,” *The Atlantic*, 323.5, p. 57. Trump has characterized Mexicans as drug dealers, criminals, and rapists, and has called for draconian cuts to the entry of legal immigrants. Besides engaging in unlawful activities, Mexican immigrants “steal” jobs from American workers, “cash in” on the country’s welfare system subsidized by American citizens, disrespect American values, and refuse to assimilate into American society, according to Trump. Timothy L. O’Brien, *TrumpNation: The Art of Being the Donald* (New York: Grand Central Publishing; Reprint Edition, 2007).

⁵ The Trump administration has also employed a variety of non-legislative ways to undermine the country’s existing immigration system. It has arbitrarily delayed the visa and citizenship application process, treated families (usually women and children) seeking asylum inhumanely, reduced refugee admissions to the lowest in the nation’s history, and placed a travel ban on several majority-Muslim countries under the pretext of national security.

⁶ Francine D. Blau and Christopher Mackie, eds., *The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration: A Report of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2017).

⁷ “Introduction.” *Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. xviii.

⁸ “Table IV. Nativity, (General,) 1870-1850, and Foreign Parentage, 1870, by States and Territories.” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 299. It should be noted that the data of this census as well as the census in general needs to be treated with caution. In his report the Superintendent of the Ninth Census responded to the complaints made about the accuracy of the count and candidly commented on the

problems of the census as a whole. See pp. xix-xxxiv for his evaluation of the problem. Of particular relevance to this essay is his comment regarding the difficulties in enumerating people in the Territories such as Colorado, and the more sparsely settled states. A reasonable inference from his remarks is that the census probably undercounted the people living and working in Colorado. And when pertinent, other data will be used to arrive at a more accurate count. One of things not said but worth mentioning is that the enumerators hired through party patronage were some of the lowest paid and therefore least reliable.

⁹ Governor Edward M. McCook, “Female Suffrage,” in “Message to the Colorado Legislature, January 4, 1870,” in *Council Journal of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Colorado, Eighth Session* (Central City, CO: David C. Collier), p. 19, cited in William Wei, *Asians in Colorado: A History of Persecution and Perseverance in the Centennial State* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2016) p. 43.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Perhaps the only uncertainty is how many of those from Canada were of Irish and French extraction rather than British and Scottish. The Irish fled to the US because of their failure to liberate Canada from England and the French fled to escape British domination.

¹² Francis Amasa Walker, “The First Century of the Republic: The Growth and Distribution of Population,” *Harper’s Magazine* (August 1875): 391-414, cited in “Statistics of the Place of Birth of the Population of the United States,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883) p. 457. In this case, the Irish they were referring to were probably the Ulster Irish or Scotch Irish, who were Protestants.

¹³ Charlotte Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

¹⁴ “Remarks on the Statistics of Foreign Parentage,” “Statistics of the Place of Birth of the Population of the United States,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), pp. 674-476.

¹⁵ “Report of the Superintendent of the Ninth Census,” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. xxix.

¹⁶ Ibid. is the source of the data regarding Coloradans’ place of birth.

¹⁷ “Table VII. Special Nationalities, (Selected,) 1870, in Each State and Territory, by Counties.” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 328-342.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ “Introduction,” *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. xvi.

²⁰ Suketu Mehta, *This Land is Our Land: An Immigrant’s Manifesto* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), p. 109.

²¹ Kevin Simpson, “Rural Colorado’s white population is declining, and minorities are transforming the region’s culture and economy,” *Denver Post*, November 9, 2017. <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/11/09/colorado-rural-demographic-minority-increase/>

²² “Introduction,” *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. xvi.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ronald C. Brown, *Hard-Rock Miners: The Intermountain West, 1860-1920* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1979), p. 8.

²⁵ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nothing Like It in the World: The Men who Built the Transcontinental Railroad, 1863-1869* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000) discusses in some detail the Chinese railroad workers.

²⁶ Ava Chin, “Racists kicked my Chinese ancestor out of America. He still loved the railroad he worked on.” *Washington Post*, May 26, 2019. https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/racists-deported-my-chin...1_story.html?utm_term=.9be7387a885d&wpisrc=nl_headlines&wpmm=1 .

²⁷ The British did this in India as well. In what is sometimes called “the late Victorian holocaust, the British caused the death of 29 million Asian Indians because they caused a famine through their policy of forcing India to export 10 million tons of food a year in the 19th century. Suketu Mehta, *This Land is Our Land: An Immigrant’s Manifesto* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), p. 69.

²⁸ Timothy Egan, “Send me back to the country I came from,” *New York Times*, July 19, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/19/opinion/send-her-back-ilhan-omar.html>.

²⁹ Of the 23,885 who were born in the United States, only 13,117 or 54 percent had identifiable occupations. This is probably because they had children, ages 10-15 (3,885) and parents, 60 and over (747), while first-generation immigrants were mostly single men. Most of the first-generation immigrants who were counted held one of the listed occupations. “Table XXX. Selected Occupations, with Age, Sex, and Nativity, Territory of Colorado,” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 723 and Table XXXIII, pp. 760-766.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Data on laborers need to be treated with caution. According to the 1880 census, there is reason to believe that some of those who had been classified as laborers in the Professional and Personal Services category should have been classified as agricultural laborers. “Remarks on the tables of occupation,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 703. It also noted that in some agricultural districts, many enumerators have reported “agricultural laborers” simply as “laborers.” See note (a), p. 760.

³² Besides British workers, there were British capitalists who invested an estimated £50 million in Colorado’s economy before World War I. They bought into the state’s mines, railroads, and ranches. By 1890, there were 25 British mining companies in the state seeking to extract its mineral resources, for example. While some of them may have immigrated to Colorado, most probably did their work from afar in London.

³³ The territorial seal was adopted by the First Territorial Assembly in 1861. Given their significant role in the development of the American West, immigrant miners should be regarded as the archetypal American rather than the romanticized cowboy. American mythology singles out the freedom loving cowboy as *the* individual responsible for conquering the American West and making the country what it is today. Though the ethnicity of the cowboy was rarely revealed, presumably he was from one of the older immigrant groups when in actuality many of them were black or Latino.

³⁴ “Remarks Upon the Tables of Occupations,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 705.

³⁵ There were so many British immigrants in Colorado Springs that it was nicknamed “Little London.”

³⁶ “Table XXX. The Number of Person in the United States Engaged in Each Class of Occupations, with Distinction of Age, Sex and of Nativity, by Territories: 1880,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 715.

³⁷ “Table XXXI. The Number of Persons in the United States Engaged in Twenty Selected Occupations, with Distinction of Age and Sex, and of Nativity, by States and Territories: 1880,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), pp. 724-743.

³⁸ Jerry Kopel, “How Colorado became a State,” www.jerrykopel.com/b/Colorado-statehood-struggle.htm.

³⁹ Lynn Perrigo, “The Cornish Miners of Gilpin County,” *Colorado Magazine* 14 (May 1937): 92-101.

⁴⁰ Francis Amasa Walker, “The First Century of the Republic: The Growth and Distribution of Population,” *Harper’s Magazine* (August 1875): 391-414, cited in “Statistics of the Place of

Birth of the Population of the United States,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 457.

⁴¹ Marc Fisher, “Behind Trump’s ‘go back’ demand: a long history of rejecting ‘different Americans’” *Washington Post*, July 15, 2019. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/behind-trumps-go-back-demand-a-long-history-of-rejecting-different-americans/2019/07/15/aeb4539a-a712-11e9-a3a6-ab670962db05_story.html?utm_term=.937f2b76f2e7.

⁴² Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 189.

⁴³ Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 4.

⁴⁴ “Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church – Denver, CO, USA” http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMZ8T2_Our_Lady_of_Mount_Carmel_Church_Denver_CO_USA

⁴⁵ David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America’s Immigrants Became White, The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno, eds., *Are Italians White? How Race is Made in America* (New York: Routledge, 2003), Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What that Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998) discuss this phenomenon.

⁴⁶ John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1974), p. 25.

⁴⁷ Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007) provides a detailed discussion of the anti-Chinese campaign in the American West.

⁴⁸ William Wei, *Asians in Colorado: A History of Persecution and Perseverance in the Centennial State* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), pp. 55-57.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Chapter Five.

⁵⁰ In 1880, Denver’s foreign-born population was 24.4 percent. “”Table 26. Nativity of the Population for Urban Places Ever Among the 50 Largest Urban Places Since 1870: 1850 to 2000,” Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, “Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000,” Working Paper No. 81, Population Division, State Demography Office.

⁵¹ Ronald C. Brown, *Hard-Rock Miners: The Intermountain West, 1860-1920* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1979), p. 159.

⁵² William Wei, *Asians in Colorado: A History of Persecution and Perseverance in the Centennial State* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), p. 141.

⁵³ Similarly, in 2017, President Donald Trump has tried to institute a ban on residents traveling from majority-Muslim countries to America. It is commonly referred to as the “Muslim Ban.”

⁵⁴ John F. Kennedy, *A Nation of Immigrants* (New York: Harper Perennial; Reprint Edition, 2008), p. 56.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ “Table 68. Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock, by Divisions and States: 1930,” Section 2: Population, *Abstract of the Fifteenth Census of the United States*, pp. 142-144.

⁵⁷ “Table 14. Number and Proportion of Persons 10 Years Old and Over Gainfully Occupied, by Color and Nativity, for Divisions and states: 1930,” *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. IV, Occupations by States*, Section 2, United States Summary, p. 35.

⁵⁸ “Table 94. Year of Immigration of Foreign-Born Nonwhite Races, for Selected States: 1930,” *Abstract of the Fifteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 179.

⁵⁹ “Chapter 3. Color and Nativity of Gainful Workers,” *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. V, General Report on Occupations*, p. 73.

⁶⁰ Priscilla Falcon, “Soldiers of the Field: Mexican Labor in Northern Colorado,” *Colorado Heritage* (March/April 2015): 30-31. For her, “Mexican” laborers encompass a diverse population that includes Spanish Americans, Tejanos, and Mexican nationals.

⁶¹ David A. Sandoval, “Recruitment, Rejection, and Reaction: Colorado Chicanos in the Twentieth Century” in Arturo Aldama et al., eds., *Enduring Legacies: Ethnic Histories and Cultures of Colorado* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011): 239-255. Peter Roper, “Colorado declared border ‘invasion’ in 1936,” *Pueblo Chieftain*, November 4, 2018, <https://www.chieftain.com/news/20181104/colorado-declared-border-invasion-in-1936> ; Jeremy Jojola, “When a Colorado governor declared martial law and blocked poor New Mexicans at the border,” *9News.com*, February 8, 2018, <https://www.9news.com/article/news/investigations/when-a-colorado-governor-declared-martial-law-and-blocked-poor-new-mexicans-at-the-border/73-516254262>; Alex Hernandez, “When Colorado closed the door to the poor,” *Denver Public Library Monthly Newsletter*, August 19, 2019. <https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/when-colorado-closed-door-poor>

⁶² Robert Longley, “The bracero program: when the US looked to Mexico for labor,” *ThoughtCo.*, October 29, 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-bracero-program-4175798>

⁶³ For details of the Hart-Celler Act, see Reed Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1994) and Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1850-1990* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ “Immigrants in Colorado,” October 4, 2017, Fact Sheet, American Immigration Council. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-colorado>

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Kevin Simpson, “Rural Colorado’s white population is declining, and minorities are transforming the region’s culture and economy.” *Denver Post*, November 12, 2017. <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/11/09/colorado-rural-demographic-minority-increase/>

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ “New Americans in Colorado: The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians in the Centennial State,” Immigration Policy Center fact sheet, July 2013. The Asian American population number is larger than the 2010 Demographic Data provides because it is based on the 2011 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates), cited in note 14 of the fact sheet. It is a conservative figure since it is based on the “Asians alone” census category rather than the multi-race category that takes into account those who have self-identified themselves as belonging to an Asian group in combination with other groups. This practice began for the first time with the 2000 Census and continued with the 2010 Census. Also, this does not include those belonging to the Pacific Islanders category though in popular usage they are often combined with Asians; hence term Asian Pacific Islanders (API). With the increase in intermarriages between Asians and other racial groups, particularly whites, the multi-race category has significant implications for the development of the Asian American community.

⁷¹ During the fifty years following World War II, Colorado was the fifth fastest growing state in the country, mainly because of the presence of military bases, military-related industries, and, of course, military personnel and their families. Burt Hubbard, “100 years change the face of Colorado Census Bureau report adds new wrinkles to trivia, demographics,” *Rocky Mountain News*, December 18, 2002.

⁷² Kirk Semple, “In a shift, biggest wave of immigrants is now Asian,” *New York Times*, June 18, 2012. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/us/asians-surpass-hispanics-as-biggest-immigrant-wave.html>

⁷³ The US Congress has defined a refugee as “Any person who is outside of any country of such person’s nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is

unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” “Invisible Newcomers: Refugees from Burma/Myanmar and Bhutan in the United States,” Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund, 2014, p. 11.

⁷⁴ Andreas Deptolla, “Op-Ed: Why Immigrants make some of Colorado’s best entrepreneurs,” *Westword*, September 22, 2019. <https://www.westword.com/content/printView/11488903>

⁷⁵ Monique O. Madan, “Bill may end practice for next decade,” *Daily Camera*, September 21, 2019.

⁷⁶ Nancy Loftholm, “In the age of ‘go back where you came from,’ Palisade carries on tradition of thanking orchard workers before they leave,” *Colorado Sun*, September 10, 2019. <https://coloradosun.com/2019/09/10/palisade-worker-visas-expire-peaches-unharvested/>

Table 1. Immigration to Colorado, 1870 and 1880

(In the order of size)

	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>
Britain (Includes England, Wales, Scotland, and British America)	2,463	17,467
Ireland	1,685	8,243
Germany	1,456	7,012

(At the time of the 1870 Census, there was no Germany per se, but rather a collection of states that a year later were unified by “Blood and Iron” Otto von Bismarck. The 1870 Census included 14 states under Germany, with Prussia contributing the largest share of immigrants to Colorado. In 1880, these states were referred to as part of the German Empire.)

Source: “Table VI. Special Nativity by States and Territories, United States,” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 336-342.

Table 2. Immigrants in Colorado, 1870

Total population	39,864
Native born	33,265
Foreign born	6,599
One foreign parent	10,707
Both foreign parents	9,347

Source: “Table IV. Nativity, (General), 1870-1860, and Foreign Parentage, 1870, in each State and Territory, by Counties,” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 299.

Table 3. Migration to Colorado from Within the United States, 1870 and 1880
(In the order of size)

	<u>1870</u>		<u>1880</u>
New York	2771	New York	15,593
Ohio	2045	Illinois	12,993
Illinois	1805	Missouri	12,435
Missouri	1595	Ohio	11,759
Pennsylvania	1552	Pennsylvania	11,387

Source: “Table VI. Special Nativity by States and Territories” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 329-333, and “Table X. Native Population Distributed According to State or Territory of Birth: 1880,” *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), pp. 480-483.

Table 4. Immigrants Working in Colorado, 1870 and 1880

	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>
All Occupations.....	17,583	101,251
Agriculture.....	6,462	13,539
• Agricultural laborers.....	2,659	2,540
• Farmers and planters.....	3,224	6,511
Professional and Personal Services.....	3,625	24,813
• Domestic servants.....	357	2,575
• Laborers.....	1,931	12,902
Trade and Transportation.....	2,815	15,491
• Officials and employees of railroad companies.....	962	2,562
• Carmen, draymen, teamsters, etc.....	715	3,273
Manufacturing and Mining.....	4,681	47,408
• Carpenters and joiners.....	552	3,773
• Miners.....	2,200	28,970

Source: “Table XXX. Selected Occupations, with Age, Sex, and Nativity, Territory of Colorado,” *Ninth Census – Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States . . . from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 723 and Table XXXIII, pp. 760-766.

Table 5. Population of the Mountain States for 1860 and 1880

	<u>1860</u>	<u>1880</u>
Arizona	-----	40,440
Colorado	34,277	194,327
Idaho	-----	32,610
Montana	-----	39,159
Nevada	6,857	62,266
New Mexico	93,516	119,565
Utah	40,237	143,963
Wyoming	-----	20,789

Source: Data for 1860 is from "Table I – The United States," *Ninth Census - Volume I. The Statistics of the Population of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 3 and data for 1880 is from "Table Ia. –The United State, in the Aggregate, and by Sex, Nativity, and Race," *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, Volume 1* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 3.

Table 6. Selected Immigrant Population in Colorado, 1890
(by country of birth)

Great Britain.....	1,883
(Includes England, Scotland, and Wales)	
Germany.....	1,385
Ireland.....	927
Scandinavia.....	1,969
(Includes Norway, Sweden, and Denmark)	
Slav nations.....	472
(Includes Russia, Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland)	
Italy.....	1,712

Source: "Table 72. Alien Population, Distributed According to Country of Birth, By States and Territories: 1890," *Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1*, pp.284-287.

Table 7. Immigrant Population in Colorado, 1890 to 1910

	Total Foreign born	Northern and Western Europe	Southern and Eastern Europe	Asia
1910	129,587	66,206	47,559	2,968
1900	91,155	61,441	18,194	782
1890	83,990	63,447	8,578	1,519

Source: "Table 32. Foreign-Born Population by Continent of Birth, for the United States and Divisions, 1870-1910, and for States, 1890-1910," *Thirteen Census of the United States taken in the Year 1910, General Report and Analysis, Volume 1* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 833.

Table 8. Distribution of Colorado's Immigrant Population by Principal Countries of Birth, 1900 and 1910

<u>Countries</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
England	13,575	12,928	-4.8
Scotland	4,069	4,269	+4.9
Germany	14,666	17,071	+16.4
Ireland	10,132	8,710	-14.0
Sweden	10,765	12,446	+15.6
Denmark	2,050	2,756	+34.4
Italy	6,818	14,666	+110.8
Russia	3,403	13,618	+300.2
Austria-Hungary	6,381	13,043	+104.4

Source: "Table 16. Distribution of Foreign-Born Population by Principal Countries of Birth, in the Order of Their Rank in 1910, For Selected States: 1910 and 1900," *Thirteen Census of the United States taken in the Year 1910, General Report and Analysis, Volume 1* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 809.

Table 9. Immigrant Population in Colorado, 1860-2000

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1860	7.8
1870	16.6
1880	20.5
1890	20.4
1900	16.9
1910	16.2
1920	12.7
1930	9.6
1940	6.4
1950	4.6
1960	3.4
1970	2.7
1980	3.9
1990	4.3
2000	8.6

Source: Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 2000," Working Paper No. 81, Population Division, State Demography Office.

Table 10. Mexican Immigration to Colorado
(as a percentage of the population)

1950.....	8.9
1940.....	9.0
1930.....	13.4
1920.....	9.3
1910.....	2.0
1900.....	0.3
1890.....	0.7
1880.....	0.5
1870.....	2.0
1860.....	0.9

Source: “Table 22. Married Couples, Families, Households, and Institutional Population, for the State, Urban and Rural: 1950,” *A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States, Census of the Population: 1950, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 6, Colorado* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1952), p. 37; and “Table 15. Foreign-Born White, 1910 to 1950, and Total Foreign Born, 1850 to 1900, by County of Birth for the State,” *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 1: United States Summary and Alabama-District of Columbia* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 711.