

*Peopling Indiana: The Ethnic Experience*, edited by Robert M. Taylor Jr. and Connie A. McBirney. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996. xiii, 703 pp. Illustrations, graphs, maps, tables, notes, appendixes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

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Indiana is not a state for which one would expect scholars to devote some seven hundred pages to the history of its ethnic groups. As John Bodnar observes in his introduction to this volume, Indiana in 1920 had the highest proportion of native-born whites of any state in the nation. From a midwestern standpoint, Indiana welcomed many fewer immigrants than its neighbors. In 1880, for example, only about 8 percent of Indiana's population was foreign-born, compared to 19 percent in Iowa, 23 percent in Illinois, 31 percent in Michigan, and 45 percent in Wisconsin; the national average was 15 percent. Yet perhaps Indiana is the exception that proves the rule of ethnic diversity in the United States. This handsome collection of essays surveys the experiences of thirty-one ethnic groups in Indiana—from African Americans to Poles, from Canadians to Koreans—and provides an overview of the variety of experiences that in their totality tell us much of the history of the state.

That ethnic history, as Bodnar points out, is a series of layers of migration into Indiana. The peopling was determined largely by economic decisions that encouraged, or forced, people to move to the state. Elizabeth Glenn and Stewart Rafert detail how Native Americans, who opposed the westward invasion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, nonetheless were forced to cede their lands in a series of cessions between 1795 and 1840. Although Native Americans remained in Indiana (they numbered in the thousands in 1990), they were joined in the mid-nineteenth century by European Americans, most of whom lived as farmers on the rich Indiana soil. Aurele J. Violette, for example, surveys the migration of people from eastern France who moved into southern Indiana beginning in the 1830s, only to be followed by other French immigrants who were concentrated in Allen County in northeastern Indiana. Giles R. Hoyt provides a comprehensive overview of German Americans, the largest ethnic group in Indiana, whose first wave of significant immigration commenced in the early nineteenth century. Some decades later African Americans from the rural South, along with new immigrants from Europe, migrated to such industrializing workplaces as Gary or Indianapolis in search of work. Paulette Pogorzelski Bannec, for example, depicts the Polish community that blossomed in northwestern

Indiana; James J. Divita explores the Italian-American migration in the first decades of this century; and Emma Lou Thornbrough portrays the African-American community. Most recently, the immigration into Indiana has continued peopling the state with communities from Latin America and Asia. Cyriac K. Pullapilly provides an engaging portrayal of the migration of Southeast Asians into Indiana in the past few decades, while Samuel Shapiro details the Hispanic, principally Mexican, migration.

Obviously, it is impossible to cite all thirty-one contributors, and, as in any collection, the quality of the essays is uneven. Yet this volume is a real contribution to the history of Indiana. Although the editors and authors deserve praise for their efforts, however, I think some errors were made in completing the project. First, one wonders about the decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion. Some essays depict groups whose population in Indiana is quite small. Yet other groupings that are pivotal to the history of Indiana are ignored. In particular, there is no consideration of white American-born groups that were part of the upland southerner and Yankee migration streams. Clearly, these migrations were as crucial to the identity of the state as Canadians, Native Americans, or African Americans, all of which migrated within North America. One need only refer to the under-appreciated Richard Lyle Power's *Planting Corn Belt Culture: The Impress of the Upland Southerner and Yankee in the Old Northwest* (1953), also published by the Indiana Historical Society, to view the importance of these "ethnic" groups. Moreover, there is a precedent: the peoples of these groups have been included in similar collections, such as *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups* (1981) and *The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (1980), on which this collection was undoubtedly modeled.

Second, the structure of the book could have been improved. The essays are set in alphabetical order, rather than grouped chronologically by arrival date or by global region of origin. The reader thus moves, to take an example, from African Americans to Asian Indians to Baltic peoples, a progression that obscures the historical context of the migration into Indiana. A better organizational structure would have been sections on the peopling of similar groupings, such as the recent Asian immigrations or the earlier European influx. Nonetheless, this comprehensive volume will be of use to professional historians and casual readers for years to come.

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