

Emigrants, Immigrants and the State: The role of Individual States in Fostering Migration - A Swiss and American Case Study

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Emigrants, Immigrants and the State: The role of Individual States in Fostering Migration - A Swiss and American Case Study

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Emigrants, Immigrants and the State:
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Emigrants, Immigrants and the State: The Role of Individual States in Fostering Migration – A Swiss and American Case Study analyzes the role that individual American states (in opposition to the nation state) played in fostering migration during the long nineteenth century. The paper argues that individual states played a crucial role in fostering migration because of different economic challenges and that in order to create a more complex, and more inclusive narrative of American immigration history, scholars must pay closer attention to the individual states in Europe and the United States.

Emigrants, Immigrants and the State uses a variety of primary source documents from Switzerland and the United States and provides two case studies that explain the different economic reasons that induced states to foster migration, and the ways in which they did it. The main goal of transnational state migration authorities was to provide migrants with information, financial and organizational resources, and protection along their journey. In order to achieve their goals they cooperated with different migration agencies, corporate entities, migrant aid societies, and previous migrants.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought on a lot change. The Swiss federal government took on the matter of regulating emigration, and thus the Swiss cantons' involvement became less important. In the United States, the beginning of the twentieth century brought on the rise of nativism, and eventually the federal government took control of immigration and implemented a growing number of restrictive policies. Nevertheless, the states continued to play an important but somewhat different role in migration. While some US states focused on Americanization, other American states continued to promote immigration but became more selective. In other states, such as Wisconsin, immigrant colonies and immigrant groups were able to resist the Americanization efforts.

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INTRODUCTION

I have said nothing as to the necessities of immigration. They are so plain and palpable that it would seem almost an insult to the intelligence of our people to discuss them. I take it for granted that we all appreciate its importance, and that the only branch of the subject open for discussion is, as to the best means to be adopted to secure it.

Governor Walker, Governor of the State of Missouri, 1873¹

The People of the village, as well as of the surrounding country, speak among themselves almost exclusively the German-Swiss dialect, peculiar to their native country A stranger stopping here for the first time could easily imagine that he had dropped down upon a portion of Switzerland.

John Luchsinger, Swiss Immigrant, Wisconsin politician, 1892²

John Luchsinger and Governor Walker both referred to American immigration during the nineteenth century, yet in a way that seems different from the general stories about immigrants on Ellis Island or in overcrowded East Coast cities. In those general stories, immigrants are generally portrayed as being the victims of American nativism, especially around the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. This one is different. The fact that there were Swiss colonies in the United States, and that a governor of an American state would talk so favorably about immigration in Missouri seems surprising. Underneath the popular narrative there are different – more positive - stories that appear when one looks at individual states and their role in fostering migration. Individual states

¹ As quoted in: Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri*. (Jefferson City: Regan & Carter, State Printers, 1873), 6.

² John Luchsinger, “The Swiss Colony of New Glarus,” in: Lyman Copeland Draper (ed.), *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1908), 412.

are an often overlooked key player in migration, since the traditional narrative tends to focus on the bilateral relationship between sending and receiving country. I argue that an analysis of the actions of individual states shows that varying economic needs made states actively foster migration, and to do so in very specific ways. This creates a multitude of individual stories, some of them quite positive ones, rather than one overlying narrative of nativism.

In order to fulfill their economic needs, Midwestern and western states promoted immigration. This creates a more complex narrative that differs from the traditional one which associates immigration during the nineteenth century with eastern cities whose native-born inhabitants claimed to be overrun by pauper immigrants. In his book *True Faith and Allegiance: Immigration and American Civic Nationalism* Noah Pickus argued that the short-lived success of the Know-Nothing party in the 1840s? came from the lack of a national consensus: “Northerners were preoccupied with Catholics, southerners apprehensive about blacks, and westerners worried about Chinese.”³ This lack of consensus reveals the importance of focusing on the states, since it was the individual needs and problems of the states that created such confusion and makes it very difficult to come up with an all-encompassing narrative – a one size fits all narrative.

It is not the intent of this paper to deny that there were similarities or overlying themes in immigration such as race. Yet, by looking at immigration on a state level, one can see different immigrant groups, different actions of the state and the changes that occurred around the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. The

⁴ An early exception is Theodore C. Blegen, “The Competition of the Northwestern State for Immigrants.” In: *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol.3 No.1 (Sept., 1919), pp.3-29.

role of the states consisted of two important parts: First they provided information, as well as the legal and financial framework to foster migration, and second, they also provided protection for migrants.

During the nineteenth century, states on both sides of the Atlantic became increasingly involved in promoting migration, facilitating migration, and collaborating transnationally in regards to migration-related matters. States on both sides of the Atlantic faced several different economic challenges. Swiss states, which will serve as a case study of this paper, struggled with over-population and an increasing number of people who were in need of their town's or state's financial support. On one hand, for Swiss states the emigration of a particular group of people served as a relief tool and a chance for their poor citizens to start a better life abroad. On the other hand, American states, especially those in the Midwestern and western part of the continent, faced the opposite kind of problem: they had an abundance of available land and undeveloped resources, but not enough people to take full advantage of that potential. For American states, promoting immigration served as a tool to increase their population, the development of the state, fulfill labor demands, and provide the state with more income.

However, for states in both countries, fostering migration would only be economically beneficial if the migration was a success, because if not the migrants would end up as a state's burden again. In order to protect the success of the mission, individual states cooperated with previous migrants, private entities, and federal institutions such as consulates or embassies. This also shows how connected these players were with each other, since immigration agents from American states would work with Swiss consuls, who then would provide immigration to individual cantons.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century there were several important changes in Switzerland, but mainly in the United States. After the fostering of migration had been successful, states were faced with new challenges that immigration had brought. First, the initial development of the territories had been achieved, so states shifted to looking for people who were bringing investment and capital to the states. Instead of focusing on people from abroad, they started to recruit people who already were in country and decreased their support for immigrants. Additionally, states were faced with the rise of nativist sentiment, and shifted from promoting their states to immigrants to showing immigrants who were already there how to become good American citizens.

Chapter 1 will focus on why Swiss and American states took part in fostering migration, and then what their involvement actually looked like. This chapter argues that the main motivation for fostering migration were economic needs of the different states, and because of that the states were actively ensuring that the migrants would be successful. Using Swiss and American states as case studies, this chapter will show how states cooperated with migrants, corporate entities, and benevolent societies in order to provide migrants with information and resources, and to make sure that they were safe. The case study of Swiss cantons provides an interesting situation for two reasons: German immigration to the United States is well-known and well researched. While Swiss immigrants used a lot of the same resources due to the same language, they also created their own communities based on their ethnicity which was completely separate from the German culture. Furthermore, because of the individual cantons' involvement in fostering migration, immigrants from those states experienced important advantages that

not all immigrants had, such as access to information, legal protection, and financial support that would allow them to travel to an area where they had a chance to better their lives.

Chapter 2 will then analyze a shift that occurred around the beginning of the twentieth century. The promotion of immigration during the nineteenth century had been so successful that states moved away from promoting immigration for everyone to encouraging the immigration of a few select groups. Furthermore, immigrants were no longer welcomed the way they were, but rather had to assimilate. States worked to facilitate assimilation, and social and cultural ideas became more important than economic needs in the state's calculations about who officials wanted to come. Nonetheless, there were cases like the Swiss colony of New Glarus, or German immigrants in Milwaukee, who were able to fight back against the push of Americanization.

The focus of this paper is mainly on Swiss emigrants who left Switzerland because of its economic situation, and who experienced some kind of support from their state. There were also Swiss emigrants who migrated for different reasons, such as politics or ideologies. One example would be the Swiss colony in Highland, Illinois, whose founders left Switzerland because of political disagreements. Furthermore, there were many other privately-founded colonies all over the United States. While some colonies eventually cooperated with different Swiss state governments, they are not at the center of this paper. It is also not my intent to provide yet another explanation why Northern Europeans were more welcome in America than Southern and Eastern Europeans. The issues of race and class in immigration have already been extensively

discussed by scholars such as Hidetaka Hirota and Mae Ngai. This paper's intent is to highlight the importance of individual states, the transnational connections in immigration, and the different layers that are hidden beneath the general narrative of American immigration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

State immigration agencies are not an unknown topic in migration literature, but most of the time they are only mentioned in relation to the mass migration of specific immigrant groups to a particular area. This means that while there is information available, it is often focused only on one ethnicity and lacks a comparative perspective. Most of the time these kinds of books are more informative for the general public rather than intended for academic research.⁴

H. Arnold Barton published a chapter called “Why Minnesota, Why the Twin Cities?” in *Swedes in the Twin Cities: Immigrant Life and Minnesota’s Urban Frontier* which was edited by Philip J. Anderson and Dag Blanck and published in 2001. Barton analyzed the different explanations to why so many Swedes settled in Minnesota. Barton wrote that a common explanation is the idea that Swedish emigrants wanted to settle in an area that had a similar climate and landscape to their homeland, and in those regards Sweden and Minnesota were fairly similar. Barton argued that even more important than the similarities between Sweden and Minnesota was the influence of the state’s efforts to promote immigration. The secretary, and thereby essentially the director of the Minnesota Emigrant Bureau, which was founded in 1867, was the Swedish immigrant Hans Mattson, who put a lot of emphasis on recruiting his countrymen.⁵

Barton also put a lot of emphasis on the importance of chain migration and how reports from friends and relatives influenced Scandinavian emigrants. Barton also adds

⁴ An early exception is Theodore C. Blegen, “The Competition of the Northwestern State for Immigrants.” In: *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol.3 No.1 (Sept., 1919), pp.3-29.

⁵ H. Arnold Barton, “Why Minnesota, Why Twin Cities?” in: Philip J. Anderson and Dag Blanck (eds.), *Swedes in Twin Cities: Immigrant Life and Minnesota’s Urban Frontier*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001), 33.

the psychological component, which then links the explanation of Minnesota's similarity to Sweden and the state's effort to recruit Scandinavians, by arguing that the reports convinced patriotic Swedes that they could feel at home anywhere.⁶ Barton's combination of both potential explanations and connecting the psychological aspect is helpful and important since it was likely to be a culmination of everything that led to the success of Swedish settlement in Minnesota.

Jeremy W. Kilar's booklet *Germans in Michigan*, published in 2002, a history of German settlement in Michigan, talked about the state's efforts to promote immigration. He made the important point that just because immigration was promoted on a state level, it did not mean that the entire state was on board. He argued that the increased immigration of Germans before the Civil War, and the fact that they tended to settle in their own communities, caused fear among native-born Michiganders, who then tended to support anti-immigrant policies.⁷ How did the native-born citizens feel about the increased effort of states to recruit immigrants? Even though Kilar did not go into depth, this provides an interesting opportunity for further research.

While states and their immigration policies and actions to promote immigration got a lot of attention in regional history and the history of individual ethnic groups, the states received less attention in more general American immigration histories.⁸ In "A

⁶ Barton, "Why Minnesota, Why Twin Cities?", 36-37.

⁷ Jeremy W. Kilar, *Germans in Michigan*. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002), 20-21.

⁸ Other examples of this categories are Frederick Hale, *Swiss in Wisconsin*. (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2007, and La Vern J. Rippley, "Official Action by Wisconsin to Recruit Immigrants, 1850-1890." In: *Yearbook of German-American Studies* (Vol. 18, 1983), p. 185-195.

Nation of Immigrants and a Gatekeeping Nation: American Immigration Law and Policy,” which is part of Reed Ueda’s 2006 *Companion to American Immigration*, Erika Lee argued that traditionally most scholars focused on “anti-immigrant Nativism” and “legislative history of immigration law.”⁹ Most of the time, the common narrative of American immigration tends to focus on the federal level, and thus only really starts with the 1880s when the federal government started to become more involved in immigration policy. Prior to that, immigration policies were a matter of the different states, but historical research tends to focus on the experiences of individual immigrant groups, or the rising anti-immigrant sentiment, rather than examining state laws and the experiences of immigrants at the state level.

One of the most recent works that attempts to close this gap is Mae Ngai’s 2004 book, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Ngai made the connection between economy and immigration by arguing that undocumented immigrants were “woven into the economic fabric as cheap and disposable labor.”¹⁰ However, Ngai based her argument on a federal framework since she focuses on the time between 1924 and 1965, after the implementation of the Johnson-Reed Act, that implemented a federal quota system. Her focus on different regions and different actors, though, showed very well how fluid immigration and immigration policies were and how

⁹ Erika Lee, “A Nation of Immigrants and a Gatekeeping Nation: American Immigration Law and Policy,” in: Reed Ueda (ed.), *Companion to American Immigration*. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 7.

For further information see Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882*. (London: MacMillan, 2005.), Kunal M. Parker, *Making Foreigners: Immigration and Citizenship Law in America, 1600-2000*.

¹⁰ Mae Ngai, Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 2.

they were continuously reshaped based on economic interests. Due to her time frame, she mainly worked within a federal framework, but it would be interesting to see what happened in those regions prior to the Johnson-Reed Act.

One scholar who eventually put the states in the center of his research is Hidetaka Hirota. In *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy* which was published in 2017, Hirota argued that the immigration restriction policies of Massachusetts and New York “laid the foundations of American immigration policy.”¹¹ Furthermore, Hirota argued that immigration exclusion and restrictions targeted Europeans prior to the implementation of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and thus, according to Hirota, Irish immigrants were the first victims of state’s immigration restrictions. Hirota made an important point by comparing the anti-Chinese sentiment in California, which eventually led to the Chinese Exclusion Act, with the anti-Irish sentiment which shaped immigration restriction in New York and Massachusetts. Due to the geographical, social, and cultural diversity of American states, each of them faced different problems and had different needs. Thus their different attitudes and actions in regards to immigration make sense, and need to be examined individually. This underlines the intent of this paper by showing that when we look at immigration on the state level, we can see that we can uncover new parts of American immigration history.

One of the biggest difficulties in doing transnational research is that one must examine two different geographical areas of scholarship, which do not always interact

¹¹ Hidetaka Hirota, *Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 12.

with each other. For this paper the primary and secondary sources involved English, German, and Swiss sources. One of the most extensive works among German-speaking scholarship is Ingrid Schöberl's *Amerikanische Einwandererwerbung in Deutschland 1845-1914* (American Immigration Promotion in Germany 1845-1914), which was published in 1990 and is a detailed study of American immigration promotion in Germany. Schöberl argued that it is important to look at immigration promotion because this topic can provide us with a lot of insight into the migration process. It shows the interaction between push and pull factors, the reasons why people wanted to emigrate, the organization of migration and the reaction of the German government.¹²

Similarly, to Schöberl, Agnes Bretting offered a look at the connection between German and American migration laws in "Organizing German Immigration: The Role of State Authorities in Germany and the United States." She argued that most of the state laws were a reaction to the negative consequences of mass migration for the German states. Unintentionally, the increased control and regulation of emigration also benefitted migrants, for example because of the vetting of emigration agencies.¹³ She explained well that due to the bad conditions of the emigration business the danger was imminent

¹² Ingrid Schöberl, *Amerikanische Einwandererwerbung in Deutschland, 1845-1915* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), 12.

¹³ Agnes Bretting, "Organizing German Immigration: The Role of State Authorities in Germany and the United States," in Frank Tommler and Joseph McVeigh (eds.) *America and the Germans, Volume 1: An Assessment of a Three-Hundred Year History – Immigration, Language, Ethnicity*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 25.

that those wanting to leave Germany would end up as a “burden to public and private charities.”¹⁴

While American scholars tended to focus mainly on American sources, German scholars were more likely to use German and American sources. This increased the transnational aspect of their research. It is a partial goal of this paper to provide a more transnational approach in American immigration history. As Marcus Lee Hansen’s wrote in his 1927 article “The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research,” American immigration must be seen as complete process.¹⁵

Together with Hartmut Bickelmann, Brettnig also looked at emigration clubs and emigration societies, which were another integral part of emigration during the nineteenth century.¹⁶ Their book focuses more on private emigration agencies, which often stood in opposition to state agencies, unless there were contracts between them.

Ziegler-McPherson’s other book, *Selling America: Immigration Promotion and the Settlement of the American Continent 1607-1914*, combines the actions of private entities and American state governments. Ziegler-McPherson puts the states into relation with the different land and railroad agencies to provide a broad overview of immigration

¹⁴ Brettnig, “Organizing German Immigration,” 29.

¹⁵ As quoted in Ingrid Schöberl, *Amerikanische Einwandererwerbung in Deutschland, 1845-1915* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), 12.

¹⁶ For further information see Agnes Brettnig and Hartmut Bickelmann, *Auswanderungsagenturen und Auswanderungsvereine im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. (Von Deutschland nach Amerika: Zur Sozialgeschichte der Auswanderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, number 4. (Stuttgart: Verlag Franz Steiner, 1991)

promotion across the entire continent from the seventeenth to the twentieth century.¹⁷

She centers a lot of the motivation for the promotion of immigration around the idea that state officials wanted to settle their states with white Europeans in order to push out Native Americans. However, none of the state documents that refer to establishing an immigration agency refer in any way to Native Americans, even though one needs to ask the question where all the land and resources the states advertised were coming from. However, based on the primary sources I do believe that economic interests of the state were one of the driving factors for the promotion of immigration. Overall, the goal of this paper is to contribute to the current historiography a transnational approach that looks at a variety of states on both sides of the Atlantic not only to highlight the importance of states, but also to show the connections between the different actors analyzed by the aforementioned authors.

¹⁷ Christina Ziegler-McPherson, *Selling America: Immigration Promotion and the Settlement of the American Continent, 1607-1914*. (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2017)

1.0 CHAPTER 1 SWISS AND AMERICAN STATES FOSTERED MIGRATION

1.1 SITUATION IN SWITZERLAND

Individual states and territories on both sides of the Atlantic were actively involved in promoting and facilitating migration. While Swiss states struggled with overpopulation, high unemployment, and lack of resources, the American states were in need of people in order to take advantage of the abundance of resources in their state. Thus Swiss and American states became actively involved in finding a solution for these problems, and deemed migration to be the perfect answer.

Swiss States decided to promote emigration because of crop failures, increasing unemployment due to the progress of the Industrial Revolution, and overpopulation. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, Swiss states started to experience an increase of unemployment, crop failure and resulting poverty. The onset of the Industrial Revolution also influenced the transformation from agricultural to industrial society and put many people out of work. Land became scarce, and the price for the remaining land increased tremendously. For many Swiss states, emigration was a welcome solution not only to relieve their state finances and communities, but also to improve the lives of their citizens. This moral commitment of helping their citizens to better their lives and keeping them safe while doing so is a further important factor of the promotion of migration. In Switzerland fostering emigration in order to provide relief during the increasing poverty and overpopulation looked different from state to state, yet there were similarities and even cooperation between the different states.

Throughout the nineteenth century different states saw themselves confronted with the question of whether or not the states should assist in emigration, and if so, how.

Generally the states' involvement fell into one of the following categories: protecting emigrants from exploiting and fraudulent agents, providing financial contributions, and ensuring that only people who were able to sustain themselves abroad would migrate.¹⁸

Leaders of the canton of Aargau, which is located in the Northwestern part of Switzerland, felt pressured to look into the question of supporting immigration due to the increasing number of people who were leaving the country. Governments of different cantons appointed committees to analyze this question. In 1854, the canton of Aargau conducted such an investigation, and raised the question of whether the state should continue to support emigrants, or if they should cease such support. State officials argued that it was the state's duty to look into emigration if only due to the high number of emigrants. Based on the report of the government of Aargau, the number of people who emigrated to the United States rose from 202 between 1841 and 1850, to almost 1300 people between 1851 and 1853.¹⁹ The report argued that the number of poor emigrants in need of support would only increase in the future. The authorities saw the reasons for this increase related to the "ever deteriorating economic and social situation."²⁰ Due to increasing land prices, the lack of fertile soil and profitable markets, and an increasing

¹⁸ Rudolf Arnold Natsch. *Die Haltung Eidgenössischer und Kantonalen Behörden in der Auswanderungsfrage 1803-1874*. (Zürich: P.G. Keller, 1966), 133.

¹⁹ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage: Bericht des Aargauischen Regierungsrathes. Dem Grossen Rathe erstattet den 17. Mai. 1853*, 1.

²⁰ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*, 6.

surplus of workers, more and more people relied on the state's support.²¹ In those circumstances emigration became the last ray of hope for many, and the question was whether the state should promote emigration with state resources. In the years leading up to this report, the canton and the communities had already financially supported emigrants. Now, though, they considered increasing their support for emigration with additional resources.

According to the canton of Aargau, the ideal candidates for state-supported emigration were those who fell in between people who relied on the state due physical or mental illness, and those who were able to come up for their emigration by themselves. The canton leaders saw it as their moral duty to prevent emigration for people who would not be able to provide for themselves independently once they arrived in the United States. The state believed that emigration would be beneficial for those who were poor and relying on the state's support due to their own laziness and unwillingness to work. The state thought that emigration would be the best solution and best remedy for them, because "for those who are work-shy the life in America is the best and most charitable ... compulsory labor institution."²² For the officials of the canton of Aargau, "North America offered our poor, rural population a secured existence and a future as no other country with comparatively small effort."²³ This shows how much the economic interest of the state shaped the way the state fostered migration. By supporting those people who

²¹ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*, 6-7.

²² Ibid., 7.

²³ Ibid., 8.

were able to work, but were a burden to the state due to their unemployment, providing them with a jump start proved to be economically more valuable, than continuing to support them from the state or communities' relief funds.

Like the canton of Aargau, the canton of Bern conducted a similar investigation. Bern started to look into emigration because an increasing number of citizens wrote to the government asking for assistance. "Presentation of the Board of Domestic Affairs to the Regierungsrat to the hands of the Grosser Rat about the matter of emigration," was published in 1848.²⁴ The reason the committee should look into the matter of emigration, it said, was that state leaders were worried that the current situation of increasing unemployment, increasing poverty, and overpopulation threatened the state's intellectual, material, and moral welfare. They also wanted to know if there were any additional reasons why a state controlled emigration would be useful.²⁵ The report included examples of other states and private entities who advocated for a controlled emigration by the state. After a very detailed analysis of different factors, the committee came to the conclusion that at the current moment neither the intellectual or material welfare, nor the general state of society was in danger due to increasing population and increasing poverty.²⁶

²⁴ The term Regierungsrat describes the executive part of the state government, while the Grosser Rat is the legislative part of the government.

²⁵ Direktion des Innern, "Vortrag der Direktion des Innern an den Regierungsrath zu Handen des Grossen Rathes Über die Angelegenheit der Auswanderung," (Bern, 1848), 2-3.

²⁶ Ibid., 16-18.

Despite the fact that the current situation apparently did not pose a threat to the wellbeing of the state and its citizens, the cantonal government identified a couple of instances in which the government's support of emigration was justified. The first case included people who were working in the traditional putting-out system, but who were no longer needed, due to the increasing industrialization, and the change from an agricultural to an industrial society. Traditionally, a lot of people who worked in agriculture, would support their income by partaking in the putting-out system. People would provide a certain task for an employer or merchant at home, and would be paid for the product they made. This was very common in the textile industry. But due to the onset of the Industrial Revolution, the traditional putting-out system was replaced by modern manufacturing, and those a lot people lost their additional income. In addition to that, the overall change from an agricultural to an industrial society, also created a surplus of agricultural workers who were no longer able to find employment. This increased the overall poverty in Bern.

Additionally, to those cases, the state should also support those, whose fertile and useable land was destroyed for a long time to come by a natural catastrophe, or for families who had been poor for several generations and where the support of the community was not working. In those instances, fostering emigration would be beneficial.²⁷

²⁷ Direktion des Innern, "Vortrag der Direktion des Innern," 24.

Those categories are closely linked to the idea of the “deserving poor.”²⁸ In the mentioned cases, the people became poor because they either lost their traditional source of income because of the Industrial Revolution, or because their own land was destroyed. The last section is particularly interesting since it refers to the idea that even though a person works hard, he or she is no longer able to survive because of circumstances outside of their control. In all of those cases the poverty of potential emigrants was caused by external circumstances, and thus they were deserving of a better future and the state’s assistance in emigration. The state saw it as its moral duty to support its citizens and help them to a better future. This is different from the canton of Aargau who saw emigration as some form of reform program for the people who were too lazy to work.

The Bern report concluded that in the cases where the state’s involvement was necessary, the state should help with financial contributions, the acquisition of land, and mainly by providing support and advice for emigrants. The committee argued that while the current situation was not posing a threat to the intellectual and material well-being of the state, the situation might change in the future because of the fact that the population continued to grow, and the amount of available land and the way the land was developed could not keep up with the increasing population. This would lead to an increased number of families without property and without the means of acquiring property. This

²⁸ The idea of deserving poor came up with the New Poor Laws in England, and refer to the idea that people deserve poor relief and support when their poverty is caused by no fault of their own, such as disease, disability, death of husband or parents. For more information refer to Terry Bamford, *A Contemporary History of Social Work: Learning from the Past*. (Bristol: Policy Press, 2015.)

would result in an ever increasing surplus of agricultural, and later also industrial, workers.²⁹

For other states, there were different motivations that led to their involvement in fostering migration. Again, Natsch's *Haltung Eidgenössischer und Kantonalen Behörden* provides a good overview of the situation across Switzerland. Due to the economic situation in Switzerland a lot of different communities across all cantons were involved in some form of contributing to emigration. In some cases, the state authorities saw themselves forced to intervene to protect the emigrants. Natsch provides the example of the canton of Freiburg in the western part of Switzerland. In that state, local communities had been abusing the system and were deporting people who were not in the position to provide for themselves once they arrived in the United States (or at other emigration destinations). Natsch explained that the canton of Freiburg established a regulation that the cantonal authorities would only grant passports if there was proof that either the emigrant could fund the emigration himself, or if his home town granted the financial support for the journey. The authorities also made sure that emigration was voluntarily, because it in some cases communities had threatened to take away poor relief if the family would not agree to emigrate. Eventually, the government completely forbade the emigration sponsored by individual communities.³⁰

Some states became involved in emigration not to relieve the communities but rather to protect the emigrants. According to Natsch, one of the bad cases happened in

²⁹ Direktion des Innern, "Vortrag der Direktion des Innern," 24.

³⁰ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 133.

Tessin, located in the Southern Italian part of Switzerland. Some municipalities were working with fraudulent emigration agencies, who only wanted to make money, but did not care about the people. According to Natsch, the situation became so bad that he compared it human trafficking. The state decided to prohibit any form of emigration support from the communities. Anyone who violated this law faced a fine of 100 Swiss Francs. In addition, any emigration contract needed to be verified and granted by the cantonal authorities.³¹ Thus, in those cases, it was not so much the fact that the states actively wanted to foster emigration, but rather that single communities and emigration agents forced people into emigration, so that the state had to intervene in order to protect its citizens and to prevent abuse.

1.2 SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES:

In the United States, the individual states that decided to foster migration did so mainly because of their vast abundance of undeveloped natural resources and a lack of population to develop them. By promoting their states to immigrants, they could increase the population, which then would develop the land, which then would increase the taxable property of the state. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, states started to become more selective about what group of immigrants they wanted to recruit, since they started to focus not on developing the land, but rather on increasing the general investment and capital of the state.

³¹ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 134.

The first state to recruit immigration actively was Michigan, because it had a lot of available land and state officials wanted people to know how good the state was. Thus, the state began to promote immigration in 1845.³² Michigan was also one of the states that promoted immigration the longest, and even in 1881 and 1882 the Commissioner still advised that “several millions of acres of good farming land lying within the State yet remained unoccupied, the settlement, and improvement of which would add largely to its productive wealth and taxable resources.”³³ Thus state officials attracted immigrants by telling them “[they] can buy cheap lands, raise good crops, [and] send [their] children to good schools.”³⁴

The second state to promote immigration was Wisconsin. In the 2005, *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration 1852 – 1855*, Johannes Strohschänk and William G. Thiel discussed Wisconsin’s Office of Emigration and outlined why state officials decided to create a state authority to deal with immigration. Strohschänk and Thiel describe the conflict that sparked the foundation of that institution as follows: “should Wisconsin rely on private sources of information, such as the book written by de Haas, or letters by emigrants, or material provided by promoters, at the risk that the interests served by these authors might conflict with the state’s official purpose and intent of

³² Michael C. LeMay, *From Open Door to Dutch Door: An Analysis of U.S. Immigration Policy Since 1820*. (Westport: Praeger, 1987), 34.

³³ Frederick Morley, *Report of the Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Michigan, For the Years of 1881-1882*. (Lansing: W.S&CO, 1883), 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

attracting immigrants?”³⁵ Because of the risk of conflicting interests, Wisconsin decided to follow in the steps of Michigan, and create a state office, called “The Wisconsin Office of Emigration.”

Missouri was another state in which officials started to advertise to attract immigrants. The authorities of Missouri hoped that increasing immigration would not only help them to bounce back from the consequences of the Civil War, but also increase the overall development of the state. According to the First Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri, one of the first goals of the promotion of immigration was to “repair as rapidly as possible the losses of population sustained through the desolations of war.”³⁶ In addition, the recruitment of immigrants should also help with “the development of [Missouri’s] agricultural and mineral resources.”³⁷ In order to facilitate the attraction of immigrants, Missouri’s legislation created the Board of Immigration, in 1865. A report of the State Board of Immigration, written in 1873, praised the Board’s success in promoting immigration in the two previous years: “The marvelous, almost unexampled, rise and progress of our State, since the end of the civil

³⁵ Johannes Strohschänk and William G. Thiel, *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration 1852 -1855 and its Impact on German Immigration to the State*. (Madison: Max Kade Insitutut for German-American Studies, 2005), 5.

³⁶ Missouri Board of Immigration, *First Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri; For the Twenty-Fourth General Assembly for the Years 1865 and 1866*. (Jefferson City: Emory S. Foster, 1867), 1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

war; the rapid development of her rich resources; the extension and completion of her railroads, is largely owing to the influx of immigration and capital.”³⁸

In this report, the Board of Immigration, also took a stance on rising anti-immigration sentiment and claimed that Missouri would not mind immigration, no matter how many immigrants would come.³⁹ Even 15 years after the foundation of the Board of Immigration, Missouri was still working on attracting immigrants. In 1880, the Board of Immigration published a pamphlet? Book? You don’t want it to publish a publication. called “The Agricultural, Manufacturing, Commercial and Geographical Center of the Mississippi Valley, Missouri: The Imperial state: Its Wealth and Resources, 1880” which was addressed “to people of older states and lands beyond the seas.” It promised that the “people of Missouri extend a cordial welcome.”⁴⁰ In this pamphlet, the state also referenced one of the push factors for emigration, saying that immigrants in Missouri would be able to “freely hold and express [their] opinion.”⁴¹ This would especially be important to immigrants who left their home country because of political or religious oppression.

When states wanted to increase the general population and the overall development of the state, officers tried to attract a variety of people and were

³⁸ Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri* (Jefferson City: Regan and Coter, 1873), 1.

³⁹ Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Bieannial Report*, 1.

⁴⁰ Missouri State Board of Immigration, *The Agricultural, Manufacturing, Commercial, And Geographical Center of the Mississippi Valley. Missouri the Imperial State: Its Wealth and Resources*. (St Louis: State Board of Immigration, 1880), 1.

⁴¹ Ibid., 3

unconcerned about their economic class. Their emigration guides, which were published by the different immigration agencies, reflected this openness by referring to the push and pull factors, and by mentioning the different kinds of support and resources the state offered to immigrants. Overall, the different immigration agencies had similar tasks: they had to collect and distribute accurate information about the state, tell immigrants how to get there, and provide immigrants with additional support once they arrived.

Their promotion efforts depended on the motivation behind these efforts to increase immigration, and whom they wanted to attract. Each immigration agency issued different kinds of immigration pamphlets to attract potential migrants. These immigration pamphlets all had a similar structure and contained sections about the states' soil, climate, geography, and history. The pamphlets included descriptions about the different counties and major cities, as well as the general population. A big part of the state immigration guides was the explanation and promotion of the states' economic resources, such as available land, agricultural or mineral resources, or opportunities for manufacturing. If the states wanted to attract certain tradesmen immigration pamphlets included average wages for different professions and the average cost of living. Besides describing the financial opportunities, they also discussed education, health, and taxes. All information was geared towards marketing the state to immigrants and presenting it in the best way possible.

In cases like Missouri, Michigan or Minnesota where the main goal was to increase the population and the general development of the state, the states welcomed a wide variety of immigrants. This inclusiveness distinguished them from many of the East Coast states, which did not want poor people. Those states that welcomed all classes of

immigrants made sure to address their openness in their pamphlets. *Minnesota, The Empire State of The New North-West: The Commercial, Manufacturing, and Geographical Center of the American Continent*, for example, which was published by the Board of Immigration for the State of Minnesota in 1878, was addressed, “To laboring Men, who earn an honest toil; To landless Men who aspire to that dignity which comes from possession in God’s free earth; to all men, of moderate means, and men of wealth, who will accept homes in a beautiful and prosperous country.”⁴²

Similarly, to Wisconsin’s pamphlet Minnesota’s *Minnesota, her Agricultural Resources, Commercial Advantages, And Manufacturing Capabilities: Being a Concise Description of the State of Minnesota, And the Inducement She Offers to Those Seeking Homes in a New Country*, also indicated that immigrants from all social classes were welcome. The pamphlet “invite[d] all who would escape the exhausting competition and hopeless drudgery of the overcrowded countries of Europe.”⁴³ The stated prided itself on the fact that people who came to Minnesota with almost nothing were now able to live comfortable lives: “Many families are living in this State and are now well off who came here with less than 300 dollars.”⁴⁴

Iowan leaders followed the pattern of Minnesota and Wisconsin in their desire to attract a variety of people. Their publication *Iowa: The home for immigrants, being a treatise on the resources of Iowa, and giving useful information with regard to the state, for the*

⁴² Minnesota Board of Immigration, *Minnesota, The Empire State of the w North-West, The Commercial, Manufacturing, and Geographical Center of the American Continent*. (St. Paul: H.M. Smyth & Co. Printers, 1878), 1.

benefit of immigrants and others, was published in 1870 and was available in English, Norwegian, Swedish, German, and Dutch. It was addressed to “all working men, who live by honest toil, and would thereby contribute their part to the development of a free and prosperous state,” and “to all landless men and women of the Old and the New,” and “to all good men and women, who aspire to independence ... and who will contribute, either of mind or muscle, to carry Iowa forward to her grand and glorious destiny.”⁴⁵

The fact that these states were looking for immigrants from all different classes, including unskilled laborers or farmers, is a further sign that a state’s attitude towards immigration was motivated by each state’s economic needs. This significantly distinguishes western states from Eastern states like Massachusetts or New York, which Hirota discussed in *Expelling the Poor*. Massachusetts and New York deported paupers around the same time, as western states wanted to recruit them. It also shows that those kind of migrants who emigrated from Switzerland, hoping for a better future where employment was widely available, and where people could provide for their families, really had a chance to succeed in the western states of the country.

Oregon was slightly different from states like Wisconsin or Michigan, because right from the beginning officials were trying to fulfill a specific demand for labor. In 1869, the Oregon Board of Statistics, Immigration and Labor Exchange published an immigration guide called *Oregon, Its Resources, Soil, Climate, and Productions. Containing Some Facts for the Consideration of Emigrants*. It was addressed to: “To the laboring classes in Europe

⁴⁵ Iowa Board of Immigration, *Iowa: The Home for Immigrants, Being a Treatise on the Resources of Iowa, and Giving Useful Information with Regard to the State, for the Benefit of Immigrants and Others*. (Des Moines: Mills & Co., 1870), 92.

seeking home in America; and to the mechanic, farmer, and working men of all classes in the Atlantic states.”⁴⁶ Throughout the guide, there is a heavy emphasis on attracting the working classes. For example, in the section called “Facilities for Educational and Religious Instruction, ” it said that “ample facilities for the education of the children of working classes are provided.”⁴⁷

Their vast amounts of natural resources were a further reason why states were actively looking for immigrants. Once all of the available natural resources could be cultivated, they would provide a lot of money for the state. The Oregon authorities praised Oregon’s abundance of available iron and coal: “the placers of Eastern Oregon have been worked continuously since 1861, and are still yielding rich returns to the industrious miner. They are sufficiently extensive to afford employment to a large number of people for many years to come.”⁴⁸ Based on the guide’s description, the manufacturing resources were equally plentiful; even though the development of manufactures was just at its beginning, because of the extensive natural resources the guide promised that the different resources “afford the raw material for the establishment and operation of a hundred others.”⁴⁹ Furthermore, the guide explained that “with an increased population and increased facilities

⁴⁶ Board of Statistics, Immigration, and Labor Exchange. *Oregon, its Resources, Soil, Climate, and Productions: Containing some facts for the Consideration of Emigrants*. (Portland: A.G. Walling, Book and Job Printer, 1869), 1.

⁴⁷ Board of Statistics, *Oregon*, 5.

⁴⁸ Board of Statistics, *Oregon*, 7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

for transportation, they are capable of an almost indefinite expansion.”⁵⁰ The more people were working and processing the resources, the more profit the state would make, and thus immigration served as a useful tool to increase the population and state profits.

Oregon’s demand for labor became even more specific in subsequent years. In an immigration guide published in 1885, *Oregon as it is*, there was a section about “Who should come.” Oregon was looking for “ordinary and mechanical labor.”⁵¹ In contrast, state officials made it clear that they were not looking for professional men, “such as lawyers, doctors, surveyors, and civil engineers.”⁵² Additionally, the guide book also advised that people without a particular trade would face some difficulty. Most importantly, the guide mentions that people, such as mechanics, who already had a stable job with a stable income at home, should not risk the emigration to Oregon. This part is particularly interesting because it shows that Oregon had a very specific labor demand to fill – people who were used to “ordinary and mechanical labor.”⁵³

For both American and Swiss states, fostering migration was a way to deal with their economic situations. On one hand migration would provide the people with a better life abroad, and on the other hand it would also increase the living conditions and the development in the individual states.

⁵⁰ Board of Statistics, *Oregon*, 7.

⁵¹ Oregon State Board of Immigration. *Oregon As it Is: Issued By the State Board of Immigration. Solid Facts and Actual Results. For the Use and Information of the Immigrants.* (Portland: G.W. McCoy, 1885), 21.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

1.3 STATES' INVOLVEMENT IN FOSTERING MIGRATION

The involvement of Swiss and American states looked very similar, since generally speaking they had the same goals. They wanted to provide accurate information for migrants, provide resources, and protect those moving. The only difference between them was that Swiss states generally did not publically advertise emigration since they did not want to encourage people to leave the country, especially if it were people who would be good for the state.

For Swiss states, their involvement consisted mainly of providing money, creating the framework of migration, such as regulating transportation and legal protection, and in some cases buying the land from the United States for their citizens. In his book *Die Haltung Eidgenössischer und Kantonalen Behörden in der Auswanderungsfrage*, Natsch argued that the canton of Aargau was one of the states that was the most engaged in fostering emigration.⁵⁴

Furthermore, according to Natsch, the canton of Aargau provided credit forms which emigrants could exchange for American dollars at the Swiss consulate in the United States. This would provide them with money to afford their start in the United States, or probably even more valuable, it gave them the opportunity to travel westward.⁵⁵ In addition, Natsch also claimed that the state government was against the “forced deportation,” or the

⁵⁴ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 137.

⁵⁵ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 137

deportation of criminals. But the state authorities believed that the state should consider pardoning a criminal if he agreed to emigrate, a policy which, theoretically, would give the criminal the chance to start over.⁵⁶

Yet, Aargau's support was only available to a small group of people. Based on the report, only people who already received poverty assistance from the state or were likely to receive such in the near future could receive it. The single municipalities still provided the majority of financial support. Only when they could not contribute enough the state would step in. In total, emigrants should receive about 50 Swiss Francs for their emigration, but the canton of Aargau regulated that they would not receive the money when they went aboard the ship, but only after their arrival in the United States. This should ensure that the emigrants could afford to travel westwards and would not get stuck in the overcrowded East coast cities. Furthermore, in order to receive the money, emigrants had to provide doctor's notes certifying that they were healthy enough to travel. The idea was to prevent the migration of elderly, or disabled, or other people unable to work.⁵⁷ The limitations on who would be able to receive support of the canton were very strict and left out emigrants who could pay for the trip themselves. They got no financial support, despite the fact that their migration would aid the state, nor did they enjoy the benefits of the formal contracts between state and migration agencies.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 138.

⁵⁷ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*, 5.

⁵⁸ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*. 6.

Like the canton of Aargau, the canton of Bern conducted a similar report.

“Presentation of the Board of Domestic Affairs to the Regierungsrat to the hands of the Grosser Rat about the matter of emigration,” was published in 1848.⁵⁹ One of the things that motivated the government to conduct this investigation was that citizens of the state had petitioned the government to provide assistance.

In the end, the presentation made several determinations about how the state should foster and support migration. The committee recommended that the state should not engage in any direct colonization, because of the risk that emigrants would not appreciate the opportunity and would not understand how much work it took to settle in a new region. State officials worried that if their domestic poverty was caused by laziness, a lack of childhood education or other moral reasons, their poverty would just continue in a Swiss colony abroad. Their situation would not improve, but rather become even worse.

However, the state acknowledged that “it would be desirable that Swiss or Bernese emigrants could be together at least in the beginning because this would prevent a lot of common problems of emigration.”⁶⁰ The authors assumed that if there was a common settlement it would aid emigrants and they could take advantage of common resources. At the same time, the committee wanted to prevent creating any further inducements for emigration, as it did not want to hurt the state’s interests at home. The committee thought that it would secure the success of the emigration if at least in the beginning the emigrants were

⁶⁰ Direktion des Innern, “Vortrag der Direktion des Innern,” 32.

in an environment where they were familiar with the language, customs, and ways of living, and could then get used to their new environment.⁶¹

The report suggested that the state should periodically acquire land in the United States and then, under certain circumstances, sell portions of it to emigrants for the acquisition price. Even though this would appear to run against the economic interests of the state, as it would not make any profit from the sale of the land, it would be economically worthwhile in the long run, because if the emigration failed, the emigrants would be deported to Switzerland, where they would become a burden to the state once again. In addition, the report reminded [who is reading it?] that the state had a moral duty to ensure the wellbeing of its citizens.

The report also argued that the state's influence in fostering migration should focus on the protection, guidance and providing advice to emigrants. In order to accomplish these goals, the committee further recommended the establishment of official bureaus of emigration in Le Havre, France – which was one of the main points of origins for the sea passage – and in the United States. It also called for the state to offer financial support of state and in cases of lack of income, or in order to relieve the poor relief of the individual municipalities.⁶²

A different example is shown through the case of the canton of Glarus in the eastern part of Switzerland. Motivated by the same issues the rest of Switzerland faced, a group of different communities in the canton of Glarus joined together and decided that emigration

⁶² Direktion des Innern, "Vortrag der Direktion des Innern," 36.

“under the care and control of the government,” would be the solution.⁶³ The different communities founded the Glarus Emigration Society, which collected private contributions to fund emigration. The plan was that a group of two men would travel to the United States to look for an appropriate location for a new community. Once they found a good place, the other participants would follow. The Society reached out to the government of the canton of Glarus, and it? Not clear who is doing this. eventually agreed to contribute half the costs of the travel expenses for the two pioneers, and also provided the Society with necessary documents from different Swiss consulates, which, according to Natsch, influenced the decision making, about where to settle.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the state also provided an emergency fund, to be used in emergency situations that threatened the survival of the colony.⁶⁵

The story of Glarus provides another example of the different ways in which states were involved in fostering migration. Furthermore, the canton of Glarus also serves as a example of how states believed they would profit domestically from fostering migration. In the canton of Glarus, the agricultural land was owned by the church and each citizen would automatically receive a certain amount of it for agriculture. When people emigrate to the United States, fewer people were looking for jobs, and needing to be fed. But it also meant

⁶³ Luchsinger, “New Glarus”, 415.

⁶⁴ Natsch, *Die Haltung*, 104.

⁶⁵ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Wisconsin State Journal"; "New Glarus August 6, 1883"; viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

that those who emigrated gave back their plot of land back to the church, and thus more land became available in general.⁶⁶

Eventually, the canton of Glarus contributed significantly to the founding of one of the most successful Swiss colonies in the United States.

1.4 PROMOTION OF MIGRATION:

The involvement of American states in immigration began with the promotion of a state or territory to potential immigrants. The main goal of the different immigration committees was to give immigrants correct information about the state, the resources, and the opportunities it would provide. In order to achieve that, the different boards issued immigration pamphlets. These immigration pamphlets all had a similar structure and contained sections about the states' soil, climate, geography, and history. A big part of the state immigration guides was the explanation and promotion of the states' economic resources such as available land, agricultural or mineral resources, or opportunities for manufacturing. Depending on the state's motivation the immigration pamphlets included average wages for different professions and the average cost of living. Besides describing the financial opportunities, they also talk about the financial opportunities, they also discussed education, health, and taxes. All information was geared towards marketing the state to immigrants and presenting it in the best way possible. When states were recruiting immigrants for the purpose of development of the state, or fulfilling a demand for labor, they also addressed some of the push factors.

⁶⁶ Luchsinger, "The Swiss Colony", 414.

But in order to be really attractive to the different immigrants of Europe, the states also promoted the different new opportunities the immigrants would find by referring to the different push and pull factors of migration. Wisconsin's "Statistics, Exhibiting the History, Climate and Production of the State of Wisconsin" included a section about "Personal Rights."⁶⁷

In this state all men are free and equal in the eye of the law; one may express his sentiments on any subjects; ... there is no imprisonment for debt, and a large amount of property is exempt for seizure for sale for the payment of debts; the right to worship according to the dictates of his own conscience is secured to every person, and he cannot be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain a ministry against his consent.⁶⁸

This paragraph addressed several important push factors that made people leave their country of origin. Since a lot of immigrants left their country because of suppression of either their political or religious beliefs, the reassurance of freedom of expression and freedom of religion was significant. Once again, the state emphasized that it welcomed immigrants from all classes, which they indicated by the fact that no one could be imprisoned for debt. This sentiment was reinforced in the last section of the guide book called "Recapitulation."⁶⁹ In this section, the state of Wisconsin is described as a state "where the division of the products of labor between the laborer and the capitalist is equally made" and "where honest labor

⁶⁷ Wisconsin. Board of Immigration. "Statistics, Exhibiting the History, Climate and Production of the State of Wisconsin" (Madison: Atwood & Rublke, State Printers, 1867), 26.

⁶⁸ Wisconsin. Board of Immigration. "Statistics, Exhibiting the History, Climate and Production of the State of Wisconsin" (Madison: Atwood & Rublke, State Printers, 1867), 26.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

always secures a competence for a man and his family.” “Land can be obtained almost without price,” and “where ample and proper provisions are made for the unfortunate.”⁷⁰

Another way to contact immigrants was to send agents to the arriving ports, a very popular technique at the beginning of immigration promotion. It was the agents’ duty to get in touch with them and tell them about the respective state and its opportunities and then help the immigrants to get respective state. In their book *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration*, Strohschänk and Thiel outlined the foundation of the Wisconsin Office of Emigration. In order to recruit immigrants, the Board of Immigration had agents in different parts of the United States. Strohschänk and Thiel provide a great example of Wisconsin’s first commissioner of emigration Gysbert Van Steenwijk. Van Steenwijk was stationed in New York City where he was supposed to reach the immigrants that were arriving on the different ships. Based on Strohschänk and Thiels’ description, “Van Steenwijk and his agents not only staffed the office daily from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., but also visited the docks, taverns, hotels, and other houses in the area.”⁷¹ Van Steenwijk also published advertisements, pamphlets, and articles in newspapers in the United States and in Europe. Strohschänk and Thiel made the important contribution that the fact that Van Steenwijk focused primarily on German immigrants was not necessarily racially or ideologically motivated, but rather just a practicality.⁷² Van Steenwijk soon realized that if he hired a German agent, he could cater to

⁷⁰ Wisconsin, “Statistics of the State of Wisconsin,” 31.

⁷¹ Strohschänk and Thiel, *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration*, 34.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 40.

the different needs of German immigrants even more, especially since the language barrier would fall away.⁷³

States started to realize that most immigrants made the decision on where to settle prior to their departure in Switzerland, and tried to reach them by relying on the help of former immigrants. States then realized that the best way to connect with potential immigrants through their friends and relatives who already migrated and were successful in their new home. Those connections were important because immigrants were more likely to listen to their friends, and their success served as additional credibility. Thus states started to rely on previous immigrants to share the advantages with their friends and relatives back in Europe.

In the case of Michigan, the “Report of the Commissioner of Immigration For The State of Michigan For the Years 1881 and 1882,” provides a great insight in the ups and downs of the promotion of immigration, as well as the collaboration between previous immigrants and the state. The beginning of the report outlined the history of immigration promotion in the state of Michigan since prior to the beginning of the Civil War. After the Civil War the Michigan legislature passed an act that led to the appointment of a “commissioner of emigration to reside in Germany.”⁷⁴ Yet, this project failed to promote immigration to Michigan efficiently and the state officials terminated it in 1874.⁷⁵ A few

⁷³ Strohschänk and Thiel, *The Wisconsin Office of Emigration*, 34.

⁷⁴ Morley, *Report of the Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Michigan, For the Years of 1881-1882*, 3.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

years later in 1881 when the legislature reinstated an act to promote immigration they were aware of the fact that the previous system was not successful. They also relied on further experience from other states: “Mr. Allardt, who had represented Michigan in Germany, had reported, after three years’ residence that ‘Louisiana, Virginia, Minnesota, Florida, Nebraska, and Alabama,’ which had had agents there since his arrival, had ‘all abandoned the field.’”⁷⁶

Michigan decided to rely on a new way in order to advertise their state to immigrants: “the adoption of a system which, disregarding the lines of country or race, should address itself to the intelligence and sense of thrift of every man who desired to better his condition. In order to spread that information to potential immigrants, Michigan also relied on the collaboration of immigrated residents. The state created an immigration pamphlet and also distributed it to local newspapers in Michigan, hoping that readers would be eager to “mak[e] [the] remarkable resources [of the state] known to friends elsewhere.”⁷⁷

Furthermore, “many copies were delivered directly to persons who forwarded them to friends living in other States or in foreign countries.”⁷⁸ Michigan state authorities also published advertisement in the German newspapers of the state, where they “requested that [the readers] would forward the names of persons in Europe to whom they desired it to be sent, or apply for copies to be used for that purpose.”⁷⁹ The added benefit of this option was that

⁷⁶ Morley, *Report of the Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Michigan, For the Years of 1881-1882*, 5.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

those pamphlets “were almost sure to be accompanied or followed by personal letters ... and it is known that many instances ensued of a correspondence leading to increased German immigration.”⁸⁰ The pamphlet was also translated into Dutch, and the same techniques were used to promote Dutch immigration to Michigan.

The Board of Immigration in Missouri approach a very similar method. They relied on the help of private authors who already worked on promoting the state of Missouri. In the spring of 1865, the Board of Immigration ordered copies of Nathan Parker’s book *The Missouri Hand-book: Embracing a Full Description of the State of Missouri*, and officially endorsed this book. Furthermore, they also enlisted the help of Friedrich Muench, a German-American who already published a private immigration guide in 1859. Muench was a German minister who lead the *Giessen Emigration Society*, a group of German emigrants who planned to settle in Missouri. He continued to promote German emigration to the area of Missouri with the plan of “creating an American state of Germans.”⁸¹ In the “Biennial Report” the Board of Immigration wrote that “our State owes a debt of gratitude to her veteran writer for Missouri – our German correspondent, Mr. Muench.”⁸² The Missouri officials wrote that because of him Missouri became a very popular destination for German emigrants.

⁸⁰ Morley, *Report of the Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Michigan, For the Years of 1881-1882*, 10.

⁸¹ "Friedrich Muench (1799-1881)," Missouri Germans Consortium, last modified January 29, 2014, <https://mo-germans.com/exhibits/descendants/friedrich-muench-1799-1881/>.

⁸² Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri*, 6.

In the “Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri,” published in January 1873, the Board of Immigration wrote that the best way to attract immigrants to the state was “by making known the advantages of Missouri through its own successful and prosperous immigrated citizens, and these through their personal friends and the Press abroad.”⁸³ The report also included a quote from Governor Walker who claimed that “private immigration enterprises ... will not find the confidence of those whom they wish to induce.”⁸⁴ They saw their theory proven in the comparison between German and Italian immigrants. The authors of the “Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri,” mentioned that a group of German and Italian immigrants arrived around the same time. On one hand, the German immigrants wanted to leave Germany on their own will, and looked for a proper destination. Inspired by reports of friends and relatives they settled in the Midwest, specifically in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas and Iowa. According to the Missouri Board of Immigration “they [were] welcome to all – no one complain[ed].”⁸⁵

On the other hand, the group of Italian immigrants were “allured, enticed by agents, ship-brokers, who promised them wonders.”⁸⁶ But because of the fact that there were almost no Italians in the area “who understand their language, their manners; they are looked at with

⁸³ Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri*, 5.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

suspicion.”⁸⁷ Because of the cold welcome and the rough conditions the Board of Immigration assumed that their negative letters home would stop the immigration of further Italians attracted by paid agents. A few immigrants of that group might do well, and then once they established themselves “become the magnet for thousands of their countrymen, whose arrival then will no more trouble us than that of as many German or Irish immigrants now do.”⁸⁸

Railroad companies also played an important role in immigration promotion. Even if states were trying to promote general immigration to the United States, there was a close connection between states and railroad companies. For example, the Board of Immigration of the state of Minnesota mentioned in its report that the board was very grateful to the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad because “they treated the immigrants liberally.”⁸⁹ According to the report the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad company built several immigrant houses along their routes, which provided the immigrants with accommodation while they were figuring out the next step or were waiting for friends or relatives to come pick them up.⁹⁰ This cooperation between railroad companies and the Boards of Immigration proved to be very useful for the state, since the railroads facilitated the immigrants’ journey, which was another incentive for immigration, but it was not a financial or organizational

⁸⁷ Missouri Board of Immigration, *Fourth Biennial Report of the Board of Immigration of the State of Missouri*, 6.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Minnesota Board of Immigration, *Report of the Board of Immigration to the Legislature of Minnesota (sic)* (St.Paul: D. Ramaley Printer, 1872), 7. Minnesota Report, 7.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 8.

burden for the state. In addition to the cooperation with the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad, the Erie Railway company provided immigrants traveling to Minnesota with a reduced fare and free baggage.⁹¹ Another interesting fact about the St. Paul Railroad company is that Hans Mattson, the former secretary of the Minnesota Emigration Bureau, after his tenure became an agent for this railroad company and thus was still in connection with the state agency.⁹²

One group with whom Swiss and American states were involved with were emigrant aid societies. There were several different forms of interaction between individual states and different emigrant aid societies. In his report of 1850, the immigration commissioner of Michigan wrote in his report, that he had several important connections to emigrant aid societies. He wrote that he was working together with the New York Commissioners of Emigration, the German Aid Society, and the Swiss Benevolent society. For example, the commissioner wrote that Leopold Bierwirth, the former president of the German Aid Society. The commissioner wrote that since the beginning of his stay Bierwirth's "[deep interest] into the success of my mission and in the happiness and welfare of his countrymen was untiring."⁹³

⁹¹ Minnesota Board of Immigration, *Report of the Board of Immigration to the Legislature of Minnesota (sic)* (St.Paul: D. Ramaley Printer, 1872), 7. Minnesota Report, 8.

⁹² Barton, "Why Minnesota, Why Twin Cities?", 33.

⁹³ Michigan Commissioner of Immigration, "Report of the Commissioner of Immigration for the State of Michigan," in: *Documents Accompanying the Journal of the Senate of the State of Michigan at the Annual Session of 1850*. (Lansing: R.W. Ingals, 1850.), 14.

In general, the different aid societies worked with the commissioner and provided their approval of the different document issued by the state of Michigan, and promised to pass them on to their citizens. Emigrant Aid societies also served as an important middle man if it came to support and protection of migrants. Another way in which the states (and in some ways also the federal government) were involved with the protection of migrants was through funding of different emigrant aid societies. This provided another opportunity for states to promote and facilitate migration without having to do it completely by themselves. Emigrant aid societies were societies formed by emigrants of the same ethnicity who came together to provide aid to their fellow emigrants in need. In Chicago, Swiss emigrants founded the Swiss Benevolent Society shortly after the Chicago Fire in 1871 in order to support Swiss victims of the fire. The society continued to exist and in their 13th annual report they also included the financial contributions of the Swiss government and Swiss cantons.

For example, in addition to the federal government's contribution of \$400, the states of Genf, Tessin, St. Gallen, Bern, Zurich, Glarus, Luzern and Aargau also paid money in support of the Swiss Benevolent Society. As a result the society was able to financially support 88 people from different states, give information about housing and board, as well as help pay for hospital bills.⁹⁴ The example of the Swiss Benevolent Society of Chicago also shows that the cooperation between state and individuals was not always positive. In the same report the society complained about the fact that it was on them to support the

⁹⁴ Schweizerische Wohltätigkeits-Gesellschaft von Chicago, "Dreizehnter Jahres-Bericht des Vorstandes der Schweizerischen Wohltätigkeits-Gesellschaft von Chicago, für das am 31. Dezember 1884 endende Geschäftsjahr. (Chicago: Illinois Demokrat Printing, 1885), 6-7.

repatriation of Swiss immigrants who were unable to work or were disabled. This caused a huge financial burden for the Swiss Benevolent Society and even though they complained to Swiss authorities nothing changed.⁹⁵

1.5 PROTECTION OF IMMIGRANTS:

As seen in the example of emigrant aid societies, protection was another important part of states' involvement in immigration. Besides providing resources and promoting the state to potential migrants, sending and receiving states were also very active in protecting migrants along their way. Once potential immigrants had made their mind up, influenced by reports of friends and relatives, maybe received funding from the state, they would then start their journey. Due to the landlocked geographical location of Switzerland the journey of Swiss emigrants was quite strenuous. In order to illustrate the dangers of the migration from Europe, in this case Switzerland, we use the example of Daniel Dürst, who visited the Swiss colony of New Glarus in 1892 provided an extensive travel report.

When Daniel Dürst travelled to Wisconsin to see New Glarus with his own eyes the first stage of his trip took him from Schwanden in the canton of Glarus to the train station in Zurich. From there the entire travel group took the train to Basel, where they spent the night and on the following day the group travelled on a special train to Le Havre. The train rode from Basel to Delsberg, and from there to Paris, and after a short stop in France's capital the trip continued to Le Havre, where they arrived one day after the departure in Basel. Le Havre was one of the most popular ports from where European emigrants started the sea passage to

⁹⁵ Schweizerische Wohltätigkeits-Gesellschaft von Chicago, "Dreizehnter Jahres-Bericht des Vorstandes der Schweizerischen Wohltätigkeits-Gesellschaft von Chicago, 4.

North America. Dürst's ship left France in the afternoon of March 6, and arrived in New York on March 14th. Dürst spent one night in a hotel, where also a lot of other Swiss emigrants stayed, and which was recommended to him by a fellow Swiss emigrant. After his first night in the United States, Dürst surprisingly met his sister-in-law and spent a few days with her in New Jersey, where he recovered from his exhausting journey, before he returned to New York, spent another night, and then took the train to via Buffalo and Detroit to Chicago, to Milwaukee and eventually to New-Glarus, where he was finally reunited with his friends who had left their home to start a new life.⁹⁶

The experience of Dürst, who only undertook this journey to see New Glarus with his own eyes, shows how difficult, long, and exhausting the journey from a Swiss town to North America was. Thus, the journey also contained a lot of dangers, and Swiss states did a lot to try and protect them from those dangers. As mentioned previously, the state of Aargau made sure that the emigrants experienced the best possible treatment during their journey. But as seen in Dürst's report the journey of an emigrant included a lot of different stages and transatlantic migration had become a very profitable business for many who wanted to take advantage of the dire situation of migrants, while they were still in their home country, but especially once they arrived in the United States.

In their report the canton of Aargau recommended that emigrants would only travel with state vetted, and licensed emigration agencies, and even had formal contracts between the state and some agencies. Since the 1850s, the state had formal contracts with agencies in

⁹⁶ Daniel Dürst, *Die Gründung und Entwicklung der Kolonie Neu-Glarus, (Wiskonsin, Nord-Amerika) umfassend den Zeitpunkt von 1844-1892, nebst einer Reisebeschreibung: Mit drei Plänen.* (Zürich: Orell Füssli, 1894,) 11-19.

order to protect the safety of the emigrants. In those contracts, the agencies were obligated to honor the travel contracts, to provide shelter and food until the moment migrants would go aboard the ship. Due to the landlocked location of Switzerland, emigrants had to travel through parts of Germany and or France to reach the ports.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the agencies had to provide good food for the duration of the sea passage, and were responsible to take care of the formalities of the sea passage with the ship's captain and it also guaranteed them to stay aboard the ship for two days after the arrival.⁹⁸ In addition to those practicalities, the formal contracts between state and emigration agencies granted the emigrants legal rights in case the agencies would not fulfill their duty, which would then be settled in cantonal courts.⁹⁹

Another big danger, or at least inconvenience that could easily cause harm to emigrants were the runners and paid agents that would try to scam them while they were still in Europe, and then as soon as they arrived in the United States. Emigrant guides that were written by previous emigrants and licensed agents warned about the danger of runners and other scam artists. In his little book called *Bericht und Anleitung für Auswanderer Nach Nord-Amerika*, the state licensed emigration agent Hiltbold, outlined different kind of runners that would target emigrants before they had even left their country or Europe. Thus he also encouraged that the emigrant should only travel with state sanctioned emigration

⁹⁷ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*, 4.

⁹⁸ Aargau Regierungsrat, *Die Auswanderungsfrage*, 4.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 5.

agencies.¹⁰⁰ Hiltbold identified three kinds of runners. The first one where the street runners that would already target emigrants on their journey, but mainly in the seaport cities. They would be extremely intrusive and claim that they could get them the best places on the ship for the best prices, that they could provide them with affordable accommodation in New York, or that they could buy them essential goods for not a lot of money. However, the licensed agent identified this as fraud and told the emigrants that they would likely pay way too much for the services and thus should stay away from them.¹⁰¹

The second group of runners that Hiltbold identified were a group what he called “New York Runner,” which would mainly be in New York, but also send agents to Europe, which would often target emigrants in so called emigrant hotels.¹⁰² Those agents who were often Swiss or German were extremely friendly to emigrants to gain their trust. Based on Hiltbold’s report the main goal would be to get their names, destinations and the names of others in their groups, which they then would pass on to their colleagues in New York. Once the ship arrived in New York, those runners would call out their names and pretend to be friends with the people they met in Europe. They often speak (Swiss-) German, and the emigrant would find it comforting to meet someone from his country who speaks his language and offers him help, and would then fall victim to their scam.¹⁰³ And the third

¹⁰⁰ J. Hiltbold, *Bericht und Anleitung für Auswanderer nach Nord-Amerika*. (Bern: Rieder & Simmen, 1862), 14.

¹⁰¹ Hiltbold, *Bericht und Anleitung* 18.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

group were the so called “Americans who were Swiss citizens who came back from the United States and tried to corrupt people into emigrating to the United States under false pretenses. Hiltbold warned emigrants that those people were already lazy and untrustworthy when they were in Switzerland, and they soon got employed by emigrant agencies to work as runners. They would be sent to Switzerland where they would rave about the advantages of the United States, and once they convinced someone to emigrate they would again be the ones with the best advice and the cheapest offers, but once again this was just an attempt to get the money of the already poor emigrants.”¹⁰⁴

The same guide book also included advice on how to prevent being deceived by those runners. Due to their legal travel contract emigrants were allowed to stay on the ship for two 24 hour periods. Hiltbold recommended that especially people who were planning to move to western parts of the country should take advantage of that to prevent the hassle of finding an affordable hotel, and save money. In addition to that emigrants should only contact the Swiss consul or the German society, who had deals with vetted railroad agents that could sell the emigrants safe tickets to fair conditions to cities in the Midwest.¹⁰⁵ He added that those agents could only be found in the office of the Swiss consul or the German society and that if someone claimed to work for them on the streets they would be lying.¹⁰⁶ For additional support the guide also referred to the secretary of

¹⁰⁴ Hiltbold, *Bericht und Anleitung* 19-20.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

the Swiss Aid Society and provided his address for Swiss emigrants in need.¹⁰⁷ For all those reasons one can see why the states found it necessary to provide some form of control and guidance to prevent that their emigrants would fall victim to all that fraud.

Also the American states were aware of this dilemma. The seaports were aware of the inconvenient situation and tried their best to improve it. In 1847 the state of New York created the Commission of Emigration, which should provide relief and protection for alien immigrants. The commission existed until 1860 and left behind detailed annual reports, in which they among other topics, described what they did against the problem of runners. Once again this commission serves as an example for the combination between benevolence and economic interests. One of the reasons mentioned in the annual reports was that the runners “[deprived emigrants] of a large portion of the means intended to aid him in procuring a home.”¹⁰⁸ While the state focused on the well-being of the immigrants, the fact that immigrants would become a victim of fraudulent runners and lose their money to the extent that they could no longer afford to succeed in their emigration, they would end up as a burden for the state, thus protecting the immigrants served them well.

But the annual report also commented on the difficulties that the Commission of Emigration encountered in fighting the fraudulent runners. The commission argued that at the current moment the enforcement of this law is hindered by the fact that there is no

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 36.

¹⁰⁸ New York State, First Annual Report from May 5, to December 31, 1847, in: New York State Commissioners of Emigration *Annual reports of the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York: from the Organization of the Commission, May 5, 1847, to 1860, inclusive: together with tables and reports, and other official documents.* (New York, 1861), 6.

single landing station for the immigrants, and thus it is hard to ensure that the immigrants are not harassed by them. The commission recommended that having one big pier where the ships would arrive would facilitate enforcing the law because no one who was not authorized were allowed on the pier.¹⁰⁹ They also complained about the fact that the implemented licensing system only was in favor of the runners, who were able to receive a license and a badge. Having the badge made immigrants believe that they were honest, yet they were able to abuse that power.¹¹⁰

1.6 CONCLUSION:

States held an incredibly active and important role in migration. They produced information, regulated transportation, funded migration, and made sure that migrants were protect on their long way from their old to their new home. It shows three important things; one there is no one general narrative of immigration that can be applied to the entire United States. While states on the East Coast claimed to be overrun by immigrants and even deported immigrants, other states in different parts of the country actively recruited immigrants, helped them and were promoting the foreign element of the states. Second, the example of states fostering migration also shows that one of the core motivations for migration was the economic situation of the state. The economic situation decided if and how the state promoted migration – emigration and migration. The

¹⁰⁹ New York State, Second Annual Report for the year 1848, in: New York State Commissioners of Emigration *Annual reports of the Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York: from the Organization of the Commission, May 5, 1847, to 1860, inclusive: together with tables and reports, and other official documents.* (New York, 1861), 28.

¹¹⁰ New York State, Second Annual Report for the year 1848, 28.

example of Swiss states also shows that once we look at the individual state level, we can discover the different nuances of migration, and that they were involved well before the federal government took over. It also implies an indirect transnational connection between American and Swiss states. While only in a few cases they were dealing with each other directly, they were connected through migrants themselves, but also through immigration agents, consulates, benevolent societies, etc. Both sides of the Atlantic worked with those middle men, showing that migration is not necessarily a one-way street, but rather a network of different actors that both need their focus.

2.0 CHAPTER 2: “WE HAVE IMMIGRANTS, BUT NOT THE RIGHT ONES”

Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, immigration became an even more pressing topic in American society. Nativism and general anti-immigration sentiment increased, and was reinforced by a new group of immigrants. Eventually the federal government started to pass the first federal immigration policies, but this did not mean that state specific immigration lost its importance. Compared to Switzerland, where the federal government eventually listened to several petitions by the different cantons and founded a federal emigration office, the American states still were heavily involved in immigration, but there were some significant changes.

Compared to the nineteenth century when states addressed immigrants from all different classes, states became more selective about what kind of immigrants they wanted to attract and what they wanted them to do. In addition, while previously the foreign born were used by the states to their own advantage, states were now heavily involved in the Americanization movement that wanted to transform immigrants into Americans as soon as possible.

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

American immigration policies were commonly separated into three eras. Up until 1880s the United States had a very liberal policy, which is often referred to as the “Golden Door Policy.” With the introduction of the Asian Exclusion Act in 1882 up until 1913 there was the “development of a regulatory system.” From 1913 to the implementation of the

Johnston Reed Immigration Act of 1924 the policy shifted from regulation to restriction, leading to total restriction with the implementation of the Johnston Reed Act in 1924.¹¹¹ In the beginning the anti-immigrant sentiment was often based on religious differences, because Protestants despised the often Catholic immigrants. Those Protestant nativist groups then founded the Know-Nothing party, which was very successful in the elections of 1852 and 1856.¹¹² In *Guarding the Golden Door*, Roger Daniels explains that the beginning of the Civil War weakened the success of the Know-Nothings because immigrants also fought in the War.¹¹³

Around the 1880s immigration changed ethnically, racially and demographically. In *American Immigration: A Very Short Introduction*, David A. Gerber blamed this on the different economic changes that occurred around that time. He argues that “the decline after 1890 in the reserves of arable American land ..., the subsequent rise in the price of farm making, and the tremendous growth of mass production industries altered the character of the immigration.”¹¹⁴ Thus instead of families coming from Northern European countries, now a lot of migrants were young men looking for work in the booming cities, and often they came from Southern and Eastern European countries, with different political and ideological

¹¹¹ Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882*. (New York: Hill and Wong, 2004), 5.

¹¹² Noah Pickus, *True Faith and Allegiance*, 69.

¹¹³ Daniels, *Golden Door*, 10.

¹¹⁴ David A. Gerber, *American Immigration. A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82.

beliefs. Gerber argues that they “were different in ways that alarmed many Americans. Many fewer were Protestants ... The majority were Jews, Orthodox ... and Roman Catholic [and] the physical appearances of eastern European Jews, Slavs, and southern Italians and Greeks suggested a lack of racial kinship with Anglo-Americans.”¹¹⁵ Thus native-born Americans started to worry that they would also bring “social and political unrest.”¹¹⁶ Together with new ideas about race, such as Social Darwinism and the changes in immigration, this all led to an increase in nativist ideas, which influenced all states in different ways.

2.2 STATES STILL NEED IMMIGRANTS, BUT THEY HAVE TO BE THE RIGHT KIND:

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century states started to become much more selective about what kind of immigrants they wanted and who they did not want. In general, states wanted to attract people with money, who were willing to bring capital and investment to the state, no matter where they were from; thus states like New Mexico or Arizona did not specifically address foreign immigrants and did not mention any of the resources the state would provide for immigrants to support them.

States like New Mexico and Arizona continued to publish immigration guides. Compared to earlier immigration promotion, they now mainly focused on domestic migrants and on increasing the flow of capital and investment, thus venturing away of being welcoming to all social classes. Other states like Oregon started to distinguish between

¹¹⁵ Gerber, *American Immigration*, 35.

¹¹⁶ Pickus, *True Faith and Allegiance*, 69.

different races and wanted to make sure that their promotion would only attract the right people from Europe. For Minnesota the previous immigration promotion had been successful, and they continued to promote immigration but they were more controlling and mainly wanted to increase their rural population.

At the end of the nineteenth century some states started to focus more on domestic migration rather than immigration of foreigners. During the nineteenth century most states' immigration agencies were trying to recruit internal migrants from other American states and from other parts of the world, mainly Europe. Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, different immigration guides dropped the focus on international migrants. As seen in Chapter 1, immigration guides targeted international immigrants and made sure to refer to the push and pull factors and the different kind of support the state would provide to immigrants in their literature. Around the turn of the century, many guide books did not mention those things anymore, but instead put an increased emphasis on the varied opportunities for investment. The different opportunities for bettering one's life and the available supportive resources were no longer mentioned.

Even if the pamphlets made some references to international immigrants, the various opportunities and resources for immigrants were no longer mentioned. The different guides published by the Boards of Immigration of Arizona and New Mexico published around the turn of the century omitted an introduction that addressed immigrants directly, and began with the facts.¹¹⁷ In *San Juan County in New Mexico: A Land of Abundant Water And Deep Rich Soil, Ideal Climate And Generous Return For Labor Land of Opportunity for the*

¹¹⁷ Cameron H. King, *The Citrus and Fruit Belt of Southern Arizona*. (Arizona: 1887), 4.

Homeseeker, they even proudly mentioned that “there is no foreign element in the entire county.”¹¹⁸ This was a complete change from earlier immigration guides that gushed about the success that immigrants had in their state and how they were welcomed by native-born Americans.

The only time foreign immigrants were explicitly mentioned was in relation to very specific labor demands. In the handbook *New Mexico: Its Resources, Climate, Geography, Geology, History, Statistics, Present Condition and Future Prospects*, which was published by the New Mexico Bureau of Immigration, profitable agriculture is described in the first part without mentioning foreign immigrants at all. In the second part they describe the mining situation in New Mexico, which was described as being very profitable and that so far “immigration [did] not settle in this Territory,” and that “there seems to be no adequate explanations why the miner, who invades arctic winters of the north and thirsts under the African and South American suns should hesitate to explore such a beautiful and wonderfully rich land.”¹¹⁹ This is the only reference to foreign immigration, and showed that even though the focus was now on the security of American workers, in case there was a specific demand immigrants were tolerated.

One of the explanations why states started to become more selective is because they now had different needs. In most places the individual states were developed and land was no

¹¹⁸ New Mexico Bureau of Immigration. *San Juan County in New Mexico: A Land of Abundant Water And Deep, Rich, Soil, Ideal Climate and Generous Return for Labor, Land of Opportunity for the Homeseeker*. (Albuquerque: Bureau of Immigration Of New Mexico, 1908), 29.

¹¹⁹ New Mexico Bureau of Immigration. *New Mexico: Its resources, climate, geography*. (Santa Fé, N.M.: New Mexican printing company, 1894), 89.

longer cheap. States were now looking to increase the flow of capital and investment and were mostly interested in outside investment. Previously, showing that even poor immigrants could significantly improve their life and their social status was an important part of immigration promotion. Since now the state was mainly interested in money, they were looking for people who already had the necessary resources. People who had enough money to invest were likely to be from a higher social class compared to earlier immigrants who came hoping to restart their lives. The main motivation of wealthy immigrants was potential financial gain. Thus, referring to push factors of migration became less important. Furthermore, by avoiding any reference to the opportunities for lower classes, the states made themselves less attractive to those immigrants who they did not want.

In *New Mexico: Its Resources, Climate, Geography, Geology, History, Statistics, Present Condition and Future Prospects* the Bureau of Immigration describes what kind of manufacturing businesses would be profitable in the territory of New Mexico, such as “tanneries,” “wool cleaning establishments,” or “potteries.”¹²⁰ It is evident that opening one of those businesses required a good amount of seed money, that only wealthier migrants – foreign or domestic – could afford. This was likely the same for migrants looking to work in agriculture. Due to dry climate and soil in some of the Western states and territories, irrigation was crucial for profitable farms in that area. The New Mexico Bureau of Immigration warned people about the cost and effort this would take: “An irrigated farm must be intensely cultivated. While this may be a paradise for the industrious and thrifty, it is

¹²⁰ New Mexico Bureau of Immigration. *New Mexico*, 20-21.

the reverse for the makeshift and lazy farmer.”¹²¹ This is similar to statements in earlier guides that excluded idle workers, but it also is a further indication that they expected migrants to have some form of capital, since irrigation was not cheap, making it harder for the poorer, simple farmer.

Something very similar happened in the case of the Swiss colony in Highland, IL. This colony was founded in the first half of the nineteenth century by a group of Swiss emigrants who left mainly because they were discontent with the political situation in Switzerland. A colony that started with a couple of families grew into a significant settlement. In November of 1883, the founder’s son Solomon Köpfli wrote a letter to a Swiss congressman who wanted to promote emigration in Switzerland. After a glorious description of Highland and the Swiss community there, Köpfli talked about his intentions: “I did not want to attract emigrants but merely to make a certain class of emigrants (industrialists) aware of Highland.”¹²² Köpfli explained that by now “Highland has reached ... a level that because of land prices it cannot be recommended anymore to poorer immigrants as in previous years,” but instead the conditions were favorable for industrialists.¹²³

The “Biennial Report of the Oregon State Immigration Commission” for the years of 1911 and 1912 significantly highlighted the state’s conflict between its economic needs and contemporary beliefs in regards to different ethnicities and race. In the report the

¹²¹ New Mexico Bureau of Immigration. *New Mexico*, 49.

¹²² Leo Schelbert (ed.), *America experienced: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Accounts of Swiss Immigrants to the United States*. (Camden: Picton Press, 1996), 270.

¹²³ Leo Schelbert (ed.), *America Experienced*, 270.

Immigration Commission was especially concerned with the upcoming opening of the Panama Canal. They expected that similarly to the states along the East Coast, Oregon would experience an increase of immigration of the desirable but also of the undesirable kind. The commission wrote that there had been very welcomed groups of immigrants, who they described as “the industrious, thrifty, foreign-born farmer, who emigrates from unfavorable European conditions to carve out a home for his family in a new country.”¹²⁴ One form of immigration that Oregon did not want were those “[who] congregat[e] in our cities and towns, creating slum districts, [were] living below the standard of American workmen, and entering into ruinous competition with American labor.”¹²⁵ Oregon’s previous policy focused on labor recruitment. Now in the “Biennial Report” for the years of 1911 and 1912 this exact group was now considered undesirable. Yet, the state was also aware that in order to be economically successful the state relied on immigrants – they just needed to be the right kind.

State authorities described Oregon as “one of the most sparsely populated states in the Union and has more good land still to be occupied and made to produce wealth.”¹²⁶ The production of wealth then was used to advertise Oregon to the right European migrants. In order to promote the immigration of desired people, and prevent the undesirable immigration, the state wanted to create an “Oregon Information Bureau” in Europe and to provide

¹²⁴ Oregon State Immigration Commission. *Biennial Report of Oregon State Immigration Commission and Oregon State Immigration*, (1911-1912?), 6.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Oregon State Immigration Commission. *Biennial Report of Oregon*, 7.

“attractive and truthful information.”¹²⁷ Immigrants should be attracted by knowing that they can “not only improve their own condition, but become developers of our latent resources and producers of wealth for themselves and the commonwealth.”¹²⁸

The commission also argued that all the expenses to recruit the right kind of European immigrants would be worth it eventually. Increased immigration would “develo[p] a property value for taxation that will enable the State of Oregon to improve living conditions.”¹²⁹ Thus promoting the immigration of well respected Europeans would improve the state overall and provide better conditions for the state. This shows that Oregon was now very selective and outspoken about who they did and did not want, but that in the end the economic needs of the state still forced the authorities to promote immigration, but now economic needs were also used to justify why they did not want working class immigrants who settled in Oregon’s cities and would pose a threat to the American workers.

The ongoing discussions about immigration in the United States did influence the individual states as well, making them more selective and making sure immigrants would not threaten native-born Americans. Furthermore, instead of looking for people who would provide the labor for developing the state, states were now looking for people with money who could invest in the states’ resource development.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Oregon State Immigration Commission. *Biennial Report of Oregon*, 8.

2.3 AMERICANIZATION: IMMIGRANTS HAVE TO BE AMERICAN

While some states became more selective about their immigrants, other states started to put their focus on those immigrants who were already there, and thereby took on completely new tasks. Previously states had used the foreign born to their advantage, and used them to show that immigrants would find fellow countrymen in the state, but now states wanted to Americanize immigrants as soon as possible. States became increasingly involved with the Americanization movement. People started to believe that there must be one homogenous American culture and that immigrants needed to fit in.¹³⁰

Due to the rise of Americanization in the first two decades of the twentieth century, states saw themselves getting more involved in the matter of immigration again. Progressives believed that immigrants could be turned into good citizens. The first state to implement that kind of program was New York. In her book *Americanization in the States*, Ziegler-McPherson told the example of the New York Bureau of Industries and Immigration which was founded in 1910 and was led by Frances A. Kellor.¹³¹ Under the leadership of Frances A. Kellor, the Bureau of Industries and Immigration took on several important projects. The Bureau realized that throughout the last few years, immigration not only increased but also brought a new group of immigrants to New York. New York saw an influx of Polish and Italian immigrants who did not speak English and had different religious beliefs. Between 1889 and when the federal government took over the regulation of immigration in 1910,

¹³⁰ See Pickus, *True Faith and Allegiance*. for more information.

¹³¹ Christina Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States: Immigrant Social Welfare Policy, Citizenship & National Identity in the United States, 1908-1924*. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009), 21.

many private philanthropic organizations stepped in and took on the different problems caused by immigration, and provided support for immigrants. But according to the Board, it was time that the state took on those duties.¹³²

New York founded yet another immigration agency, but this time it was created for a completely different purpose. Ziegler-McPherson outlined “[the social welfare policy for immigrants that [was] called ‘Americanization.’”¹³³ According to Ziegler-McPherson, “Immigrant social welfare was to be the means by which a more compassionate, just, and progressive society would be created, one into which immigrants would want to assimilate by adopting the values and lifestyle of middle-class progressives.”¹³⁴ While the creation of a state agency was familiar, there was the emergence of new terms, such as Americanization and assimilation. In all the aforementioned guides and reports, those terms had not been part of the legislatures at all. As seen in Chapter 2, all guides used the extensive foreign population as an advantage because it offered immigrants a sense of security knowing that they would find familiar institutions and customs. In the example of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration, the state took more agency in immigration once again, but the motivations behind it changed completely. Economic needs and interests were no longer at the center of the state’s involvement in immigration, but rather cultural and political concerns.

¹³² New York State Department of Labor, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration, for the Twelve Months ended September 30, 1911*. (Albany: State Department of Labor, 1912), 13.

¹³³ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 20.

¹³⁴ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 20.

In order to achieve more equality for immigrants, Kellor and the Bureau not only targeted immigrants, but also aimed to change the entire society. As Ziegler-McPherson explained, the progressives who were engaged in Americanization “believed that their foreign-born status and newness to America put immigrants at an inherent disadvantage in finding jobs and housing and defending their rights and property.”¹³⁵ According to Ziegler-McPherson, the Bureau’s goal were “greater social justice, true equality of opportunity, and culture tolerance,” which then would lead to “a more humane social environment into which immigrants would want to assimilate.”¹³⁶ Compared to the immigration promotion guides mentioned in Chapter 2, which sometimes even praised the different attributes of immigrants, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the focus of states changed to turning immigrants into Americans.

The “First Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration,” revealed another interesting motivation why immigrants’ conditions needed to be improved, and why their rights must be protected. The author of the report wrote:

The word which these humble arrivals send back to their own countries inspires or discourages their countrymen. Their understanding of liberty and justice, as shown to them in this country goes along way to win freedom and enlightened governmental action for their less fortunate brothers in their own country ... It is therefore no longer an individual matter, but a community matter, and it is New York State’s obligation to the progress of civilization in both the old and new countries to assure the alien a fair start and a safe road of travel.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 20.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ New York State Department of Labor, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration*, 16.

Even though the motivations were different, the Bureau of Industries and Immigration targeted the same areas as the previous state agencies, and even used very similar techniques. As seen previously the business with immigrants was a tremendous economic opportunity for many. Ziegler-McPherson writes that “rail and steamship ticket agents, luggage porters, cab drivers, city guides, and hotel owners found ways of charging special fees, usually at higher ‘immigrant rates,’ to anyone who resembled a non-English- speaking foreigner.”¹³⁸ Ziegler-McPherson argued that “both independent contractors and by railroad, steamship, and hotel employees,” tried to scam immigrants.¹³⁹ For Kellor there was only one solution. She worked on implementing a law that only “authorized” and “licensed” agents were able to sell tickets.¹⁴⁰

In order to be effective the Bureau had to find a way to reach immigrants. While legislative and policy changes were helpful, the Bureau had to make sure that they were reaching the immigrants who they wanted to help. The Bureau realized that “a vital and immediate contact with the immigrant must be made.”¹⁴¹ They fell back on the same tool that earlier state agencies used to reach immigrants and published an advertisement in the many different immigrant newspapers of New York. The announcement included the address

¹³⁸ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 27.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴¹ New York State Department of Labor, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration* 28.

of the different offices in New York City and Buffalo, but also offered “information, protection and the distribution of immigrants.”¹⁴² They promised to listen to different forms of complaints of immigrants such as mistreatment, exploitation or fraud. Furthermore, it also promised that while they did not offer “direct employment,” or financial support, they would guide the immigrants in the right direction. They claimed that their goal was to “help [immigrants] become useful and successful citizens.”¹⁴³ In a way the Bureau adopted various techniques not only from previous immigration agencies, but also executed very similar duties, like the Swiss states (seen in Chapter 2) offered to their citizens.

It was a common issue that immigrants stayed in the city where they arrived, because of either a lack of money or a lack of information. The newspaper announcement mentioned the “distribution of immigrants.”¹⁴⁴ In *Americanization* Ziegler-McPherson reports that the state of New York had very similar issues at the beginning of the twentieth century, as the entire country experienced throughout the nineteenth century: immigrants would remain in the cities along the coast where they arrived, and rarely move towards more rural areas that actually needed immigrants to develop the resources. According to Ziegler-McPherson, “southern New York was congested and suffered from poor housing conditions and expensive rents ... while upstate New York had labor shortages and millions of acres waiting

¹⁴² New York State Department of Labor, *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration* 28.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

to be developed and farmed.”¹⁴⁵ Thus, the Bureau wanted to move immigrants from the overcrowded New York City to the more rural areas, but as Ziegler-McPherson mentioned “few newly arrived immigrants had the capital necessary to start farms, and as a result immigrants in rural areas ended up with “seasonal farm labor,” which only reinforced their troubles.¹⁴⁶ While this seems like an example of the state’s involvement due to economic interests as seen in other states during the nineteenth century, the state once again had an ulterior motive. Ziegler-McPherson argued that the “distribution of immigrants to upstate rural areas would facilitate assimilation by separating them from their urban neighborhoods and exposing them to American lifestyles and agricultural practices.”¹⁴⁷ This serves as a good example to illustrate the shift that occurred around the turn of the century, when immigrants were no longer wanted and were seen as clannish groups that needed to assimilate.

New York focused on working with immigrants directly, but California wanted to Americanize emigrants through the help of the immigrants’ employers. Ziegler-McPherson argued that even though California’s efforts in regards to Americanization were inspired by New York, they also did some things differently, showing once again that there was not a one size fits all approach. One of the most distinguished features of California was its agriculture. Compared to other states, where farmers owned their farms and worked the land themselves

¹⁴⁵ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 30.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

or had some local assistance, the farmers in California relied heavily on migratory labor, which created an entirely different situation.

In 1912-1913, the state of California founded the California Commission for Immigration and Housing (CCIH) which was the organization that had been tasked with driving the Americanization efforts in California. According to Ziegler-McPherson, the goal of the CCIH was to improve the living and working conditions especially in the different agricultural labor camps across the state. They hoped that through a “social environmental reform” they would be able to Americanize the different workers.¹⁴⁸ The fact that California relied on migratory labor provided an entire different target audience for the CCIH, who mainly focused on those workers who took on seasonal employment in California agriculture.

In previous examples of state immigration, agencies often worked directly with immigrants or organizations that were working with immigrants. California chose a different approach. One of their main efforts was to improve the living and working conditions in labor camps, but their main target was not the immigrants themselves, but the farm owners. In *Americanization*, Ziegler-McPherson writes that the CCIH wanted to “persuade farmers and camp operators to run their businesses in a better, more ‘American’ fashion.”¹⁴⁹ Once again, economic interest played a major role. In cooperation with the California Board of Health, the CCIH produced pamphlets that showed farm owners how they could improve the sanitary situation in their camps. Ziegler-McPherson pointed out that “the commission

¹⁴⁸ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 39.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

appealed to employers' desire for greater productivity, arguing that improved sanitation would increase the efficiency of farmworkers, which in turn then would justify the expense of improving conditions."¹⁵⁰ Yet, since the pamphlet was only meant to advise farmers, the CCIH lacked the means to really enforce these improvements.

The CCIH walked a fine line in regards to the contemporary racial ideologies, because they did not exclude non-white immigrants from their Americanization efforts. One of its members, Simon J. Lubin, had a very liberal attitude towards racial minorities. He himself was Jewish, according to Ziegler-McPherson "he opposed anti-Asian legislation and the exploitation of Mexican labor, and he supported the integration of African Americans while a student at Harvard."¹⁵¹ His personal reasoning for the state's involvement in Americanization was based on his belief that private organizations, that were often ethnicity based, would foster "the segregation and isolation of minorities."¹⁵²

In its totality, the CCIH did not officially oppose the anti-white sentiments of the time, but they also included racial minorities in their Americanization programs. Lubin and his colleagues also believed in the idea of "immigrants gifts," the notion that immigrants actually contribute to the American culture and thus should not completely give up their own culture. But Ziegler-McPherson argues that Lubin's concept of "immigrants gifts" was mainly in relation to the "Higher European Culture," and not really for the culture of peasants

¹⁵⁰ Ziegler-McPherson, Americanization, 49.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 40.

¹⁵² Ibid.

from Italy or Russia.¹⁵³ This was another change from states like Minnesota or Wisconsin earlier who used the immigrants' culture as a positive contribution and used it to their own advantage.

Massachusetts is another example of where the state created agencies in order to deal with the immigration question. And once again, there were some similarities but also some differences to the State of New York. Massachusetts also founded a Bureau of Immigration in 1917, but its duties were entirely different from previous boards of immigration. Like in the case of New York, the state wanted to assist immigrants in fitting into the American society by teaching them American civics and the English language and show them the American way of life. It is worth taking a closer look at the language used in the Annual Report of the Bureau of Immigration in Massachusetts to see how much the work of immigration agencies had changed. In order to gain the attention of the target audience the Bureau of Immigration canvassed the city with posters promoting the services of the Bureau. It read:

The Commonwealth has created for the service of its residents of foreign origin, especially those from non-English speaking countries a State Bureau of Immigration. The office of the Bureau is intended to provide contact between the State and its foreign-born residents, so that each may be helpful to the other, and thus through mutual co-operation, strengthen the bond of friendship and good will which already exists. In a strange country, speaking a strange language, meeting strange customs, and with no experiences in every-day life ... residents of foreign birth often meet problems to which trustworthy explanation, advice and guidance would be of great advantage.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization*, 40.

¹⁵⁴ Massachusetts Bureau of Immigration. *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Immigration, March 1919*. (Boston: Wright + Potter Printing CO, 1919), 9.

The language used in this poster trying to gain the attention and trust of immigrants was very encouraging and promised mutual understanding, creating a seemingly very positive environment for immigrants. Yet, when reading through the report one can see that the underlying reasons were not so much mutual, but rather to make the immigrant assimilate into American society. In a section about the unfair treatment of immigrants in courts, the authors of the annual report wrote that “any work undertaken with the view to stimulate the assimilation of the immigrant into the body politic, to awaken in him appreciation of American life and ideals, must necessarily be fruitless unless it be based on a foundation of confidence in American justice.”¹⁵⁵ This shows that the Bureau of Immigration’s overall motivation for dealing with the question of immigration, rather than being truly supportive for immigrants and to facilitate a successful start, was more concerned with reform and control. This was a change from the nineteenth century when the states wanted to create a positive environment for immigrants in order to be more attractive.

2.4 THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE

What happened with the Swiss colony during all the turmoil of the rising nativist sentiment and Americanization around the turn of the century? The colony was still going strong and the so called “Glarner” were well respected. In 1883 the *Wisconsin State Journal* published an article about the colony of New Glarus and was full of praise for the Swiss immigrants. The author J.D. Butler wrote that “few colonies among us have held fast their integrity in race, language and customs so largely and so long. Fewer bid fair to hold their

¹⁵⁵ Massachusetts Bureau of Immigration. *First Annual Report of the Bureau of Immigration, March 1919*, 23.

own still longer. Not many have so well fulfilled the hopes of their projectors.”¹⁵⁶ Butler continued and wrote that despite the difficult conditions at the beginning, the Swiss colonists did well and “became forerunners in industries which Yankees later learned to be most lucrative,” such as the dairy industry and “stock-raising.”¹⁵⁷ Butler also commended the Swiss colony for the fact that all children of New Glarus knew how to read, despite the fact that they were not sent away for their education, and for the fact that “thirty-eight years ago not a man of them had any money,” and now “several are ... worth a \$100,00 apiece.”¹⁵⁸ Butler added the story about a fire in the capital of the canton of Glarus in Switzerland, and that then the colony was able to send back remittances that were far higher than the state’s investment at the beginning.¹⁵⁹ This story is reminiscent of the trope that later became the American Dream, that the Swiss came with nothing, and were not only able to survive, but rather to thrive and to help those back home.

What is remarkable is how the newspapers in the first decades of the twentieth century wrote about the economic situation that made the people from Glarus emigrate to the United States. Considering the fact that at the same time Irish immigrants, and immigrants

¹⁵⁶ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Wisconsin State Journal"; "New Glarus August 6, 1883"; viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

¹⁵⁷ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Wisconsin State Journal"; "New Glarus August 6, 1883"; viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

¹⁵⁸ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Wisconsin State Journal"; "New Glarus August 6, 1883"; viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

from Italy were being despised because of their lower class status, in the case of the Swiss emigrants from Glarus the situation was described as “an economic distress,” which especially due to the geographical situation of the canton of Glarus, where “there is comparatively little land suitable for cultivation,” became so bad that the state was no longer able to support the population, “even with the utmost economy on the part of every family.”¹⁶⁰

The *Madison Democrat* described “the history of New Glarus” as “unique and interesting.”¹⁶¹ It blamed the reason for the economic problems on “commercial depression, crop failures and the cessation of installment of the Swiss mercenaries,” and those factors “brought many of the poor of the cantons of Switzerland to the verge of starvation,” and the article claimed that the canton Glarus suffered most.¹⁶² The article then describes the process of how the leading men of the state got together to find a solution, and how they deemed emigration to be the best possible solution. The article shows none of the contemporary dislike of poor immigrants or even those who were state-sponsored, but celebrated only the success story of New Glarus.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Milwaukee Sentinel"; "Swiss Immigrants Became Badgers 70 years ago, August 14, 1915." viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

¹⁶¹ Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography Articles; "Milwaukee Democrat;" "Swiss Colony at New Glarus Tomorrow Celebrates its Seventieth Anniversary, August 15, 1915"; viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org> on March 29, 2019.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Another example from Wisconsin shows how German-speaking immigrants were able to resist the efforts of Americanization. German-speaking immigrants had settled in Wisconsin since the 1850s and had been fairly well received. The idea of Americanization, however, also reached Wisconsin, specifically in a proposed legislation called the Bennett Law, signed by Wisconsin Governor William Dempster Hoard in 1889. The law had two main goals: to enforce mandatory school attendance and to make English the sole language of instruction.¹⁶⁴

The Germans saw the implementation of the Bennett Law as an overall attack on the German element in the Wisconsin society, and more importantly on its core element, the German language. Editor Koerner wrote an entire article listing the reasons why German-Americans should oppose this law. Proponents saw the usage of German language in schools as resistance to assimilation and as refusal to learn English. Koerner argued that Germans were not “enemies of the English language.”¹⁶⁵ He further stated that while he disagreed with the fact that German was a “foreign” language, German immigrants would absolutely accept English as the official language of their new home country and that even in parochial schools, they often taught English beside German.¹⁶⁶ German educators actively encouraged the learning of the English language in the *Amerikanische Schulzeitung*. As mentioned in

¹⁶⁴ Bethany Harding, “The Bennett Law”, in: Encyclopedia of Milwaukee, <https://emke.uwm.edu/entry/bennett-law/>, last accessed 11/24/2017.

¹⁶⁵ Christ. Koerner, *The Bennett Law and the German Protestant Parochial Schools in Wisconsin*. (Milwaukee: Germania Publishing Company, 1890), 10.

¹⁶⁶ Koerner, “The Bennett Law,” 11.

their speeches and presentations, several educators supported the learning of the English language in order to gain full access to American society.

The Bennett Law was based on ideas of nativism, and was supposed to prevent the degradation of American society. The implementation of the law was met with a lot of push back by moderates. They did not perceive the Germans as a threat nor did they see a need for enforced Americanization. According to William Whyte, Germans “liv[ed] in peace and harmony with their Anglo-American neighbors... and the majority of children attended schools taught in English.”¹⁶⁷ According to him “there was no danger of the great majority of the rising generation remaining as foreign as their European born parents.”¹⁶⁸ Even if native-born Americans had the required votes, the majority of the population did not press Americanization of Germans very heavily, which was probably also related to the general reputation German-Americans enjoyed.

Many different scholars have discussed the influence of ethnicity, race, and religion on the perception and acceptance of immigrants, and this paper does not intend to add another contribution to this academic discussion. Obviously the German-speaking immigrants had a strong racial advantage since their race was seen as fairly similar to the Anglo-Saxon race. Additionally, a significant part of the German immigrants were so called 1848ers, who were highly educated and highly trained. Yet there was still a large group of peasants who settled in Wisconsin, who kept to their own communities, and celebrated their heritage. Rather, using the example of Wisconsin, this paper shows that once the focus

¹⁶⁷ William F. Whyte, “The Bennett Law Campaign in Wisconsin,” in: *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, X:4 (1927), 371.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

narrows to individual states, we can discover different patterns, different stories, and different immigrant groups, and we can see that in some states, and in some cases, the immigrants were strong enough and supported enough that they were not only able to fight back against Americanization attempts, but were also celebrated as one of the success stories in the state's history. In the case of the Swiss in New Glarus, they were paupers and their migration was state sponsored, and yet they were able to establish a community that was well received by its neighbors, showing that the situation also worked without Americanization.¹⁶⁹

2.5 CONCLUSION:

The aforementioned example shows that even in the new century the individual states had still had their own motivations, ideologies, and actions in regards to immigration. Even though very popular ideas were supported and reinforced by the federal government, the degree to which each state supported them varied. For example, the CCIH, while not completely speaking out against the anti-Asian Alien Land Act, still included Asians and other racial groups in their Americanization program. The fact that California's agriculture was very different from states in the Midwest or Northeast also created a different environment to which the state of California had to react. In Wisconsin, the immigrant community was strong enough to fight back against Americanization attempts. Including individual states in the discussion of American immigration does matter, because only then can we see the similarities – and more importantly, the differences – between the different approaches of states, ethnic groups, and the different local contexts. It also helps to show that some things that some perceived to be a new threat, were not necessarily new, but were

simply rephrased in a new context. In the examples of Minnesota, Oregon, and New Mexico, we have seen that states became increasingly selective about what kind of immigrants they wanted, and who was considered undesirable. These restrictions eventually culminated on the federal level with the implementation of the Immigration Act of 1924, which introduced quotas and other restrictions on American immigration.

3.0 CONCLUSION

In order to create a more complex and more inclusive narrative of American immigration history, it is critical that scholars start to focus on individual states. More often than not, migration tends to focus on the bilateral level of sending and receiving nation states, and the federal policies that controlled and in some instance restricted migration. The traditional narrative of American history that follows the idea of an open door that closes as time progresses tells the story of immigrants who faced challenges because of their ethnicity, their race, their social status, and so on. It focuses on the exclusion of Asians, the Irish who were faced with anti-Catholicism sentiments, and the questionable whiteness of Southern and Eastern Europeans. But considering the United States' vastness, the diversity of its regions, the different situations in different parts of the country, there are other stories that need to be told, and which become visible if the focus is shifted from the federal level to the state level.

During the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, states on all sides of the Atlantic were heavily involved in fostering migration, and their actions and policies were influenced by their individual economic needs, imagined moral obligations, and the actual situation in their state. For Swiss states the fostering of emigration of their poor citizens served as a relief valve in times of economic hardships. The increasing industrialization, a period of crop failures, and the ever growing population led Swiss states to the point where they needed to find a solution, and for many states this was fostering migration by financing it, by acquiring land to build colonies, and providing a legal framework that would protect the emigrants along the way. The example of New Glarus, the colony which struggled with lots of hardships at the beginning, overcame them, and became one of Wisconsin's success stories serves as a counter example that being extremely poor and

starting over with nothing, did not automatically disqualify immigrants, especially when they ventured westwards and were not stuck in the overcrowded cities on the East Coast. Swiss states ensured that their people would be able to travel onwards and find a place where they could truly start over.

For American states the fostering of immigration through creating immigration agencies that not only promoted, but also protected and supported immigrants shows that the United States was not simply “overrun” by immigrants. Especially states in the Midwest and Western part of the country actively promoted their states to immigrants at home and abroad, thus being an important component in the overall spider web of migration. The state agencies did not only create and share information about the state, but they also assisted immigrants with advice, helped immigrants to organize their transportation, cooperated with other private, state and federal authorities, and thus were an integral part of the transnational migration business.

It also shows that there is not simply one size fits all approach when it comes to an immigration narrative. Eastern states fought different problems than Midwestern states, who fought different problems than states along the West Coast or in the South, and thus all applied individual solutions. The different narratives complement each other and create the patchwork that is American immigration.

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