Language Culture and Civilization

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American Civilization

From **American Civilization**: An Introduction

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Introduction

Immigration is a central aspect of US history. It is a major reason that the nation's total population grew to 303 million by 2008. Believing in the American Dream, many tens of millions of people have come to live in the USA. They thus changed their homelands, America and their family histories forever. They strengthened the nation's commitment to 'the dream' and to its ideal of being a refuge for the poor and oppressed, a nation of nations. Gradually, over the centuries of massive immigration and the struggles of newcomers and Americans to adjust to each other, the view that the nature of the nation was and should be a composite of many national backgrounds, races and cultures gained popular acceptance. This view continues to face the opposition of those who believe newcomers should leave their homeland cultures behind and the dilemma of deciding what is necessary to hold the country and its increasingly diverse population together.

There is some truth to the dream. Settled peoples have been able to climb a 'ladder of ethnic succession' as new waves of immigrants arrive. For most of the foreign-born, life in the USA has meant an improvement over their situation in the 'old country', the realization of modest hopes for land or homeownership, for example. Later generations have enjoyed more significant socio-economic progress, though 'rags to riches' careers are rare indeed.

However, the meetings of newcomers and native-born have also contributed to America's history of social disorder. The contacts, conflicts and mixing of cultures have fueled widespread discrimination, economic exploitation, anti-foreign movements, and debates over equality, opportunity and national identity. In a country whose history began with the meeting of Native Americans and European colonists and continued through the importation of African slaves and several waves of immigrants, there has never been a single national culture.

The search continues for a metaphor that captures the character of American society. Is it best understood as an Anglo-American core culture into which newcomers sooner or later merge as they assimilate? Or should it be some form of cultural pluralism as suggested by, among other images, the metaphors of a 'melting pot', a 'salad' or a 'stew' and who is to decide who is included or excluded from these mixtures? Some commentators reject both the claims of a unitary culture and of cultural pluralism, preferring instead forms of multiculturalism, in which multiple traditions are the ideal, and no cultural group, however old or influential historically, receives priority. Americans disagree over the nature of the process and what the ultimate goal should be: the

integration, assimilation, even homogenization, of newcomers or the acceptance of a permanently pluralistic society

Lecture One

Early encounters between Europeans and Native Americans

When European explorers and settlers encountered Native Americans in the late 1400s, a long history of mutual incomprehension and conflict began. These encounters amounted to a collision of worlds. Contacts between the Americas and other continents had been so rare that plants, animals, diseases and human societies evolved into different forms in the ‘new’ and the ‘old’ worlds. Europeans and Native Americans caught diseases from each other. Europeans survived the first contacts better, but for most of the seventeenth century, well over half of them died from difficulties in adjusting to the new environment.

The Native Americans fared far worse: epidemics annihilated entire native cultures. North America's pre-Columbian population of 5 million shrank to between 1 and 2 million. The exchange of plants and animals had effects that were just as far-reaching. Horses, donkeys, sheep, pigs and cows were alien creatures to Native Americans. Potatoes, maize and tobacco were discoveries to Europeans. The potato played a key role in the great population growth that brought millions of European and smaller numbers of Asian immigrants to the USA in the 1800s.

European societies were so diverse that Spaniards and the English could hardly imagine living in the same place in peace. Some Native-American cultures viewed other indigenous peoples with a dislike no less intense. Yet, each continent's diversity of cultures were related, even quite similar in broad outline, when compared with cultures from the other continent. Thus, all Europeans tended to look alike to Native Americans, and most Europeans seemed incapable of seeing Native Americans as anything but a single people.

To Europeans, Native Americans seemed lazy and wasteful of nature's potential. Viewing time as fluid, they had only vague concepts of the past and the future, and so seemed utterly unreliable. Because they viewed nature as a great mother, they could not comprehend how pieces of her could be sold and owned by individuals. From the first European settlement until today, the main focus in conflicts between these continental culture systems has been land ownership.

The Founders

The people who established the colonies are considered founders rather than immigrants because they created the customs, laws and institutions to which later arrivals (the first immigrants) had to adjust. The Spanish occupied coastal Florida, the south-west and California in the 1500s and 1600s. After trying to enslave the natives, they worked to convert them to Christianity, farming and sheep-herding. Because many natives rejected this way of life, the Spanish colonies faced border attacks for over 200 years.

The English established their first permanent settlement at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Their monarch had no desire to rule distant colonies, so instead the Crown legalized companies that undertook the colonization of America as private commercial enterprises. Virginia's early residents were so preoccupied with a vain search for gold and a sea passage to Asian markets that the colony floundered until tobacco provided a profitable export. Because of the scarcity of plantation labor, in 1619 the first African laborers were imported as indentured servants (free people who contracted for 5 to 7 years of servitude). Supported by tobacco profits, however, Virginia imported 1,500 free

laborers a year by the 1680s and had a population of 75,000 white Americans and 10,000 Africans in hereditary slavery by 1700.

In the 1630s, Lord Baltimore established Maryland as a haven for Catholics, England's most persecuted minority. Maryland's leadership remained Catholic for some time, but its economy and population soon resembled Virginia's. In the 1660s, other English aristocrats financed Georgia and the Carolinas as commercial investments and experiments in social organization. Within a generation, these colonies too resembled Virginia, but their cash crops were rice and indigo. The southern settlers warred with the natives within a few years of their arrival and by the 1830s drove the Native Americans from today's South.

To escape religious oppression in England, the Pilgrims, a small group of radical separatists from the Church of England, founded the first of the northern colonies in 1620 at Plymouth, Massachusetts. The Puritans, who established the much larger Massachusetts Bay colony in 1630, wanted to purify the Church of England, not separate from it. Mostly well-educated middle-class people, in America they believed they could create a ‘city on a hill’ to show how English society could be reformed. To that end, over 20,000 emigrated in around ten years. By the latter 1600s, the bay colony had expanded to the coast of present day Maine, swallowed up Plymouth, and spawned the colony of Connecticut. Flourishing through agriculture and forestry, the New England colonies also became the shippers and merchants for all British America. Because of their intolerance towards dissenters, the Puritans’ New England became the most homogeneous region in the colonies.

The founding of the middle colonies (New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) was different. The earliest European communities here were Dutch and Swedish outposts of the fur trade that almost accidentally grew into colonies. New Netherlands, along the Hudson River and New York Bay, and New Sweden, along the Delaware River, recruited soldiers, farmers, craftsmen, clergymen and their families to meet the needs of the fur traders who bought pelts from the natives. New Sweden lasted only from 1638 to 1655, when the Dutch annexed it. New Netherlands itself fell to the English fleet in 1664. The Dutch maintained their culture in rural New York and New Jersey for over 200 years. They also set the precedent of toleration for many ethnic, racial and religious groups in New Amsterdam. Before it became New York, the city had white, red, brown and black inhabitants; institutions for Catholics, Jews and Protestants; and a diversity that resulted in eighteen different languages being spoken. Although the dominant culture in colonial New York and New Jersey became English by the end of the 1600s, the English authorities continued the tolerant traditions of the Dutch in the city.

Pennsylvania's founders were Quakers who flocked to the colony after Charles II granted the area to William Penn in 1681 as a religious refuge. As with the Pilgrims and Puritans, official English tolerance took the form of allowing persecuted minorities to emigrate. Penn's publicizing of cheap land and religious freedom brought some 12,000 people to the colony before 1690. His toleration attracted a population whose diversity was matched only by New York's.

Lecture Two

The First Wave: Colonial Immigration, 1680-1776

The founders had come for economic gain and religious freedom, but their descendants gave the first large wave of European newcomers a warm welcome only if they were willing to conform to Anglo-American culture and supply needed labor. The reception that immigrants received varied according to location and the individual's qualities, from the extremes of largely hostile New England, to the more tolerant, diverse middle colonies. It was with mixed rural New York settlements of north-west Europeans in mind that St. Jean de Crévecoeur, an immigrant farmer from France, first stated in 1782 the idea that in America ‘individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of man’. The only people who mixed in his vision, however, were north-west Europeans, and he required that the people in this first version of the melting pot had to turn their backs on their homeland cultures. Like the colonists everywhere at the time, he thought that the white people along the wilderness frontier, like the Native Americans, soon descended into savage barbarism, and he tolerated them primarily because they provided a protective buffer against the natives.

Although conditions in their homelands also played a decisive role, this first wave was possible only because after 1660 the Crown opposed emigration from England and Wales but encouraged it from other nations. In 1662, King Charles II licensed the Royal African Slave Company as the supplier of slaves to English colonies, and during the next century about 140,000 Africans arrived after surviving the appalling conditions and brutal treatment on slave ships.

The largest group of immigrants (voluntary newcomers) were the Scots-Irish. With encouragement from the English, their ancestors left Scotland for Northern Ireland in the 1500s. Yet, roughly a quarter of a million of them left Northern Ireland for the American colonies after 1680 because of economic discrimination by the English. Most paid their passage across the Atlantic by becoming indentured servants. When their term of service was finished, they usually took their ‘freedom dues’ (a small sum of money and tools) and settled on the frontier where land was cheapest. Constantly looking for better land, the Scots-Irish are the source of the stereotype of frontier folk, who feel it is time to move if they can see the smoke from a neighbor's chimney. This moving scattered their settlements from western New England to the hill country of Georgia and made it difficult to preserve their cultural heritage.

The period's 200,000 German immigrants aroused more opposition than the Scots-Irish. The largest non-English speaking group in the colonies, they believed their descendants had to learn German if their religion and culture were to survive in North America. For mutual support, they concentrated their settlements. In the middle colonies, German families lived so closely together in some areas that others found it hard to settle among them. Like the Scots-Irish, the Germans lived on the frontier, but they usually stayed behind when settlement moved farther west. Developing German-speaking towns, they kept to themselves and showed little interest in colonial politics. For some immigrants, the last straw was the Germans’ prosperity. Renowned for their hard work, caution, farming methods and concern for their property, they were too successful, according to their envious neighbors. Benjamin Franklin expressed what many feared when he said they might ‘Germanize us instead of us Anglicizing them’. In a period so near the religious wars of the Reformation, the reception Germans met also varied according to whether they were non-conformists, reformed Lutherans or Catholics.

Other smaller groups in the first wave showed the contrasting ways in which immigrants could adjust to new and varied conditions. England sent some 50,000 convicts and perhaps 30,000 poor people as indentured servants to ease problems at home while supplying the labor-starved colonial economy, and these people formed an underclass that quickly Americanized. Immigration from Ireland included thousands of single, male, Irish Catholic indentured servants, who assimilated even more rapidly than the Scots-Irish, because of religious discrimination and the difficulty of finding Catholic wives. The Scots, perhaps because of their hatred of English attempts to suppress their culture at home, followed a pattern more like that of the Germans, using compact settlement, religion, schooling and family networks to preserve their culture for generations in rural areas. A French enclave persisted in South Carolina, but the French Huguenots and Jews, who settled in port towns, illustrated a contrasting tendency. English colonists severely limited their civil rights and sometimes attacked their churches or synagogues, but accepted marriage with them as long as they changed their religion. As a result, their communities nearly vanished.

This first wave of immigration transformed the demography of the colonies. By 1776 English dominance had decreased from four-fifths to a bare majority (52 percent) of the population. The great diversity of the peoples in the country led Thomas Paine, the colonies' most famous political agitator, to call the US a 'nation of nations' at its founding. African-American slaves composed 20 percent of this population and were a majority in large parts of the southern colonies. Most Native-American cultures had been forced inland to or beyond the Appalachians. Non-English peoples were a majority in the coastal towns, Pennsylvania, the south and parts of all the other colonies. The cultural, political and economic dominance of Anglo-Americans was clear, but the first wave had played a major role in bequeathing America a tradition of pioneers on the frontier, a new vision of itself as diverse, possessed of religious tolerance, and with a federal system of government that reserved most power to the new nation's quite dissimilar thirteen states.

Lecture Three

The Second Wave: The ‘old’ Immigrants, 1820-90

Between 1776 and the late 1820s, immigration slowed to a trickle. The struggle for independence and the founding of the nation Americanized the colonies’ diverse peoples. The dominant Anglo-American culture and time weakened the old ethnic communities. Dutch and German areas of influence remained locally strong, but most ethnic groups assimilated. In the 1820s most Americans and newcomers therefore thought the situation was unprecedented when the second wave gathered strength.

A range of factors pushed Europeans from their homelands. Religious persecution drove many German Jews to emigrate, and political unrest forced out some European intellectuals and political activists, but economic push factors were decisive for most of the so-called ‘old’ north-western immigrants. Europe's population doubled between 1750 and 1850. In Ireland and parts of Germany rural people depended on the potato, which yielded more food per acre than grain. The rapid growth of cities encouraged farmers to switch to large-scale production based on farm machinery, the elimination of small holdings and enclosure of common lands. With these changes, such a large population could not make a living in the countryside.

During the 1800s, the industrial revolution and an international trade boom spread from Britain to the Continent and the USA during this period, but reached different regions at different times. If nearby cities offered industrial work or jobs in shipping, emigration rates were lower. But the population surplus from the countryside was so large that huge numbers ofpeople left anyway. Stage migration (moving first to the city and, after some years, from there to a foreign country) became common. Following changes in the Atlantic labor market, people moved to where the jobs were. Steamships and trains made migration abroad safer, faster and cheaper, and ‘America letters’ from family and friends in the USA gave a remarkably accurate picture of changing economic conditions there. Of the 60 million people who left their homelands between 1820 and 1930, two-thirds settled in the USA. During the ‘old’ immigration, 15.5 million people made America their home.

The largest immigrant groups, in order of size, were Germans, Irish, Britons and Scandinavians, but many other peoples, including French Canadians, Chinese, Swiss and Dutch, also came in large numbers. The factor that pulled most people to the USA was an apparently unlimited supply of land. Few seriously considered the claims of Native Americans. Another pull factor was work. The USA needed both skilled and unskilled labor. American railroad companies as well as state and territorial governments sent immigration agents to Europe to recruit people with promises of cheap fertile farms or jobs with wages much higher than they could earn at home. News of boom times in the USA, land giveaways such as the Homestead Act of 1862 and the discovery of gold in California brought peaks in the rising immigration.

Settlement Patterns and Nativism

While the newcomers settled everywhere, they were most numerous in the manufacturing centers of the north-east and the recently settled farmlands and frontier cities of the mid-west and Pacific coast. Immigrants found many economic niches, supplying much of the market for domestic

servants, mill and factory workers, miners, loggers, sailors, fishermen and building workers. Most came with enough funds to travel to places where countrymen could help them adjust to American society, but, after potato blight ruined the crop that supported Ireland's rural population, huge numbers of Irish immigrants arrived in the 1840s and 1850s with so little money that they stayed where they landed.

British immigrants seemed nearly invisible because they spoke English and Anglo-Americans' culture was much like theirs. White and Protestant, Scandinavians had language problems that made them seem slow to comprehend, and at times they were ridiculed for their homeland ways. Nativism (the dislike of people and things foreign) plagued many 'old' immigrants in spite of their apparent similarity to native-born Americans. Germans were welcomed for their technical knowledge and industry, and admired for a culture that was Europe's most respected at that time. But they were also stereotyped as Prussian marionettes or Bavarian louts, criticized for clannishness, and were targets of temperance movements that attacked their habit of drinking in beer halls after church on Sundays. German Jews were excluded from education and the professions and were shunned in many social circles.

The Irish suffered many forms of discrimination and were often stereotyped as dirty, violent drunks. The most serious opposition they faced, however, came from anti-Catholic bigots, who burned convents and churches as early as the 1830s. All the large immigrant groups found themselves involved in controversies over the control and content of the public schools, but none was so critical of the schools' attempts to Americanize immigrant children as the Irish (usually through the reactions of Irish-American priests).

Anti-foreign agitation reached its first peak in the 1850s. Along with anti-Catholicism, this nativism focussed on popular versions of ideas made famous by Alexis de Tocqueville's *American Democracy,* which claimed that the basic social and political character of the USA was transplanted to New England from the mother country. The Know Nothing or American Party believed that not only the Irish, with their alleged loyalty to the Pope in Rome, but also all non-British immigrants threatened this precious heritage, and so proposed tripling the time needed to gain US citizenship and restricting immigrants' voting rights. On that platform, Know Nothings won dozens of seats in Congress and numerous state and local offices, especially in the north-east. Internal divisions and the coming of the Civil War defused this nativist movement. Another arose in the 1860s in the west and achieved its goal, the Chinese Exclusion Act, which ended Chinese immigration in 1882. Racism and the fear of unemployment and depressed wages motivated the labor organizations that spearheaded the campaign.

Lecture Four

The Third Wave: The 'New' Immigrants, 1890-1930

The 'new' immigration marked a change in the origin of most immigrants. Around 1890 immigration from north-western Europe declined sharply (but did not stop), while arrivals from southern and eastern Europe rose. By 1907, four out of five newcomers were 'new' immigrants. Between 1890 and 1914, the volume of immigration also soared, topping a million annually several times and equaling the 15.5 million of the old immigration in just twenty-four years. In numerical order, the largest 'new' groups were Italians, Jews, Poles and Hungarians, but many Mexicans, Russians, Czechs, Greeks, Portuguese, Syrians, Japanese, Filipinos and others also immigrated.

To most Americans, the change mostly involved the feeling that the typical immigrant had become much less like them. The religions, languages, manners and costumes of the Slavic peoples seemed exotic or incomprehensible. But this tidal wave of people was in several ways similar to its predecessors. The basic economic push and pull factors had not changed. The new immigrants had the same dream of bettering their own and their children's future. Like the Puritans, eastern European Jews emigrated because of religious persecution, chiefly the bloody Russian pogroms.

By the late 1800s falling train and steam-ship ticket prices (often prepaid by relatives in America) made migration affordable even for the very poor and the young. Cheap travel also permitted people to see immigration as a short-term strategy, and many new immigrants were sojourners, 'birds of passage', who stayed only long enough to save money to buy land or a small business in the old country. In general, the new immigrants were younger, more often unmarried, and more likely to travel as individuals rather than in family groups. The opportunities in America had changed too. The closing of the frontier around 1890 signaled the end of the era of government land-giveaways. Less than a quarter of the newcomers found employment in agriculture. The Japanese in California are the best example of those who succeeded by buying unwanted land and making it productive. Four-fifths of immigrants went where the jobs were: to the industries in the big cities of the north-east and mid-west. America had an enormous need for factory workers, but, due to mechanization, most jobs were unskilled and poorly paid.

A renewed Immigration Debate and Immigration Restriction

The scale of the new immigration and the altered job market resulted in larger urban immigrant quarters than Americans had ever seen. Crime, overcrowding, insanitary conditions, and epidemics in immigrant ghettos had caused alarm and reform before the Civil War. Now these problems seemed insurmountable, and many Americans became convinced that the more 'exotic' foreigners could not be assimilated into society. Reactions to the situation in the cities were various. Reformers established 'settlement houses' and charities to help immigrants adjust, worked to Americanize them and fought for better housing and parks. Some saw that the ghettos were important buffer zones where immigrants could use their mother tongues and follow old-country traditions while gradually adjusting to the USA. Others concluded that the ghettos proved that restrictive immigration laws were needed.

In 1909, Israel Zangwill's play *The Melting Pot* popularized the idea that the diverse groups in the USA would eventually fuse many races and cultures through intermarriage and become a new people. To many a native-born reformer, that was a more radical version of the melting pot than they could accept, and to them the metaphor meant that the immigrants should conform to Anglo-American culture, for their own good. Nativists of the time could not imagine a greater calamity than such a melting-pot 'mongrelization' of the white race. An opposing, traditional view was that the USA should be an example of what Horace Kallen called 'cultural pluralism', the belief in a collection of cultures united by loyalty to the same political and civic ideals. But pluralists had long split over the issue of race. The founding fathers, for example, made the national motto 'e *pluribus unum'* (out of many one), but in the Naturalization Act of 1790 they permitted foreigners to become American citizens only if they were white.

Restriction, even regulation of immigration, was slow to develop in the USA, which encouraged immigration and until 1875 the local authorities were only asked to count immigrants. Foreigners could become citizens in five years and vote as soon as they applied for citizenship. Finally, in 1891, the federal government took responsibility for regulating immigration and the next year opened Ellis Island, the famous screening depot for immigrants in New York Bay. In the 1920s, however, those who believed the USA could not successfully integrate so many immigrants won the passage of severely restrictive, racist immigration laws. The National Quota Acts represented the climax of a campaign for restriction that achieved its first result in 1875, when the federal government began a piecemeal listing of banned groups that, in time, included convicts, prostitutes, the Chinese, lunatics, idiots, paupers, contract laborers, polygamists, political radicals, the Japanese and illiterates.

The influence of eugenics, the pseudo-scientific racism of the early 1900s, which purported to prove experimentally the superiority of Anglo-Saxons over all other 'races', was evident in the list and later legislation. So was the combination of First World War super-patriotism that demanded 100 percent Americanism, and the ideological insecurity that grew after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Finally in 1921, Congress passed the first general limitation on immigration, the Emergency Quota Act, that drastically reduced the annual number of European newcomers to 358,000 (less than a third of pre-war levels), and introduced *nationality quotas.* Each European nation's allotment of immigrant visas per year equaled 3 percent of the foreign-born in the USA from that country at the federal census of1910.

The dissatisfaction of restrictionists with this law revealed the groups they feared most, Asians and the new immigrants from Europe. In 1924 the Asian Exclusion Act ended all immigration from Asian nations, and a National Origins Quota Act reduced European nationality quotas to 2 percent. More important, it moved the census for counting the foreign-born of each group back to 1890, when only small numbers of 'new' immigrants were in the USA, so that their quotas became much smaller. The 1924 Act also introduced a new concept, national *origins* quotas, based on the accumulated part of the American population of each European national background between 1790 and 1920, which cut the quotas for all European nations but the United Kingdom by one-half to two-thirds. In 1929, when the national origins quotas went into effect, Britain's was 65,361, while Italy's, for example, was 5,802 and Syria received the minimum of 100 visas. This narrow, specifically Anglo-American definition of the national identity remained the legal framework for immigration to the USA until 1965.

Lecture Five

Wartime Policies and the Search for Principle in Immigration Policy

Writing immigration law that functions as intended has proved difficult. The Quota Acts did end the new immigration, and arrivals from northern and western Europe did fall sharply, but immigration from the United Kingdom also declined. Even the western European nations with much reduced quotas left those unfilled. Nor did Congress guess that arrivals from 'non-quota' nations in the western hemisphere, such as Mexico, and US territories, such as the Philippines and Puerto Rico, would soar into the millions by 1960. Events during these years defied governmental plans. The depression of the 1930s put a stop to mass immigration. Local authorities and 'vigilantes' forcibly deported about half a million Mexican Americans, many of them US citizens, during that decade. Nazi and fascist regimes caused an enormous flow of refugees, 250,000 of whom Congress admitted as non-quota immigrants under special laws. Many more, including 20,000 Jewish children, were turned away because the USA was unwilling to put aside national origins quotas during a time of high unemployment and rising anti-Semitism.

The Second World War and the Cold War caused several contrasting shifts in policy. The government imported temporary farm labor from Mexico under the '*bracero* program' due to wartime labor shortages and lifted the ban on Chinese immigration because offoreign-policy considerations. Yet it also bowed to panicky racists on the West Coast, who feared foreign spies, and confined 115,000 Japanese Americans in 'internment camps', confiscating most oftheir property. After the war, federal law provided for the entry of families formed by US service people abroad, and several hundred thousand displaced persons (those so uprooted by the war that they had no homes to return to) were admitted by Acts of Congress. Between 1948 and 1959, Cold War refugees from communist countries, such as Hungary and Cuba, also came. The total of non-quota immigrants for those years reached 750,000, and made a mockery of the idea of regulating immigration according to national origins quotas. Moreover, during the Cold War, when the US competed with the USSR for the allegiance of non-aligned nations, the racist principles underlying the quotas were a foreign-policy embarrassment. In 1952, the McCarranWalter Act stated that race was no longer a reason for refusing someone an immigrant visa. Instead it started the so-called 'brain-drain' to the USA by reserving the first 50 percent of visas for each country for people with needed skills. But the law kept the national origins principle, gave many Third World countries tiny quotas, and made communist or socialist associations a bar to immigration. Pressure for an entirely new approach grew.

The Immigration Act of 1965 provided this new approach, but also had unforeseen consequences. It replaced national origins quotas with hemispheric limits to annual immigration. To emphasize equal treatment, all nations in the eastern hemisphere had the same limit of 20,000 immigrants annually. A system of preferences set principles for selecting immigrants. Reunifying families, the most important principle, reserved nearly three-quarters of immigrant visas for close relatives of American citizens or resident aliens. Spouses, minor children and parents were admitted outside the limits. Grown children, brothers and sisters were given special preferences. The second principle continued the 'brain-drain' by reserving 20 percent of visas for skilled people. Refugees received the remaining visas. Legislation made the national limit and preference system global in the 1970s.

Congress intended to make up for past injustices to southern and eastern Europeans through family reunification visas for siblings and grown children, which it hoped would lead to the reappearance of the 'new' immigrants. For ten years the plan worked, but by 1980 it became clear that the family preferences benefited people from other nations much more. In 1965 Europe and Canada provided the majority of immigrants to the USA, but by 1980 fewer than a sixth came from those places and four-fifths were almost equally divided between Asia and Latin America. Expecting western nuclear families, American lawmakers did not anticipate, for example, how foreign students from Third World countries, especially Asians, would adjust their legal status upon graduation and become immigrants who used the family reunification clauses to bring in extended families.

Lecture Six

The Fourth Wave: 1965 to the Present

The 1965 law ushered in the fourth major wave of immigration, which rose to a peak in the late 1990s and produced the highest immigration totals in American history by the end of the decade. In addition to the many immigrants allowed by the hemispheric limits (changed to a global total of 320,000 in 1980), the wave has included hundreds of thousands of immediate relatives and refugees outside those limits. It has also contained millions of illegal aliens, who cross borders without (or with false) papers or arrive at airports on student or tourist visas and then overstay.

Between 1960 and 2007 nearly 39 million people settled legally in America. The list of the ten largest nationality groups among these is shown in Table 3.1 for 1960 and 2007 below. The table shows only one Latino and no Asian immigrant groups but many European nationalities in 1960. The prominence of Mexicans around half-way down the list, however, foreshadowed future trends. At the peak of the fourth wave in the 1990s, some 11 million more newcomers arrived. The second list of groups, from 2007, well *after* the peak brought by the 1965 Act, reveals the law's unexpected benefits for the Third World immigrants ofthe fourth wave. In 2007 no Europeans groups were in the ten largest. Three quarters of the legally resident foreign-born (over 38 million people) were Latino (51 percent) or Asian (25 percent). Remarkably, another 42 percent of the immigrant population in 2007 consisted of people whose nations contributed fewer than the ten nationalities listed in the chart. In other words, although this wave is predominantly Latino and Asian, it is also the most diverse wave the USA has seen. Another striking feature of the table is the Mexicans' rise in prominence from a mere 6 percent in 1960 to a presence approaching a third of the entire group in the present wave of immigrants.

1960	%*	2007	%
1 Italians	(13%)	1 Mexicans	(31%)
2 Germans	(10%)	2 Filipinos	(4.4%)
3 Canadians	(10%)	3 Chinese (including Taiwan and Hong Kong)	(4.3%)
4 British	(9%)	4 Indians	(4.1%)
5 Poles	(8%)	5 Vietnamese	(3.0%)
6 USSR residents	(7%)	6 Salvadoreans	(2.8%)
7 Mexicans	(6%)	7 Koreans	(2.7%)
8 Irish	(3%)	8 Cubans	(2.5%)
9 Austrians	(3%)	9 Dominicans	(2.3%)
10 Hungarians	(3%)	10 Canadians	(2.3%)

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) and Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2007, Office of Immigration Statistics, US Department of Homeland Security.

Like the earlier waves of newcomers, the fourth includes a broad range of socio-economic groups. One result of saving visas for needed occupations is that a very noticeable minority are highly skilled workers, professionals (especially engineers, doctors and nurses) and entrepreneurs with capital. The large majority of *both* legal and illegal immigrants are similar to those who have arrived since the 1820s. They are above average educationally and economically at home, but below average in these areas in the USA. They have come because commercialization and industrialization (now revolutionizing the Third World) have disrupted their traditional economies. At the socio-economic bottom of this wave are often recently arrived groups of refugees from wars and other disasters. In the 1960s and early 1970s huge groups of people fled south-east Asia to the USA as a result of America's involvement in the Vietnam War. The poorest also include people who obtain visas because they are near-relatives of recent, more skilled immigrants or who take jobs Americans do not want. Among the latter are Latino women recruited by agencies as live-in domestic servants and nannies. Spreading the word about these jobs and moving into better-paid work once they have acquired more English, they bring their families and forge the links in 'chain migration' based on a network of female contacts.

The nationalities and skin colors of most people in this wave are different and more various, however, and they arrive in different ways and settle in different places. There are colonies of Hmong in Minneapolis, Vietnamese on the Mississippi Delta, east Indian hotel-owners across the Sunbelt, MiddleEastern Muslims in Detroit and New Jersey and large concentrations of Latinos not only in the south-west and the nation's big cities, where their communities are large and long-established, but also across the rural districts and small towns of the south and mid-west, where their population has grown by 70 to 80 percent between the most recent US federal censuses. These large foreign-born settlements have given rise to contemporary forms of racism and nativism.

Groping for ways to adjust to the changes in their country's population, some Americans are again resorting to broad stereotypes.

Lecture Seven

Attitudes to Immigrants: The Contemporary Debate

In 1982, when the Gallup Organization asked Americans whether specific ethnic groups had been good or bad for the USA, on the whole, the longer the group had been the country, the more favorable was the public response. Thus, by then large majorities thought Irish Catholics and Jews, who earlier suffered from widespread discrimination, had been good influences on the country. Racial attitudes, however, appeared to be decisive in creating long-term low opinions of non-white ethnic groups. Fewer than half of the Americans questioned in 1982 thought Japanese, Chinese and African Americans had favorably affected the country, and only one in five or fewer approved of having recent non-white groups, such as Puerto Ricans, Vietnamese and Haitians in the USA.

Large numbers of Asian immigrants in the fourth wave arrive with more capital and a higher level of education than most Latinos. Those facts and popular attitudes towards some Asian cultures' emphasis on respect for parents, education and hard work have led some media commentators to lump all Asian Americans together under the label of the 'model minority'. This ignores the large majority of Asian immigrants who come with little money and education; the problems of Asian refugees who have experienced wartime traumas; and job discrimination and violence against Asian Americans. For its own convenience, the federal government invented the word 'Hispanics' to put in a single category all the Central- and South American Spanish-speaking cultures arriving in the USA in the fourth wave. A handy label for official statistics, the word became identified with illegal immigrants in the popular mind because of the large number of immigrants unlawfully crossing the border with Mexico. It thus contributed to prejudice against hugely diverse Latino populations. About two-thirds of 'illegals' are Mexicans, but the 'undocumented' come from countries as diverse as China, Nigeria and Iran.

Illegal immigration causes heated debate over government policy to control entry to the USA. One segment of public opinion stresses that tolerating illegal immigration encourages a general disregard for the law, lowers wages for other workers, and undermines the 1965 law that gives all nationalities an equal chance for immigrant visas. Other Americans emphasize that illegal immigrants take jobs that US citizens do not want, are paid less than the legal minimum wage, work in substandard conditions and, while needing the benefits of social welfare programs, dare not reveal the facts of their situation for fear of being deported.

The federal government responded to this ongoing debate in 1986 by passing the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). The law attempted to minimize illegal immigration while expressing acceptance and giving rights to people already inside the USA. It sets fines and penalties for employers who hire illegal aliens and also attempts to prevent employment discrimination through rules that outlaw firing or refusing to hire people because they look foreign. The law offered 'amnesty' (legal immigrant status) for illegals who had stayed in the USA for four years and for many temporarily resident farm workers. Almost 3 million people became legal immigrants through IRCA. Their improved situation was the one great success of the legislation. It

proved difficult to document when employers had broken the law, and the number of illegals, which declined at first, rose again to between 9 and 11 million in a few years.

In spite of rising reactions against immigration in the 1980s, national policy became more liberal through the Immigration Act of 1990. It raised the annual total of immigrant visas, the limit for individual nations and the number of asylum seekers who could remain in the USA. It also removed restrictions on the entry of many groups, including homosexuals, communists, people from nations adversely affected by the 1965 law, and additional family members, including the spouses and children of illegals given amnesty. During the economic boom of the 1990s, the shortage of unskilled labor made most Americans willing to overlook the problem of illegal immigration.

Since 1990, sharp differences in public attitudes to immigration have been evident. The backlash against the level of immigration grew strong by the mid-1990s, especially in some groups in the seven states (California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Texas, Illinois and Arizona) where over three quarters of newcomers settled. In California, a referendum that denied illegal immigrants educational and social services passed easily but was blocked by court challenges initiated by opponents of the measure. More restrictive attitudes also found expression in the federal immigration and welfare reform laws of 1996. These strengthened border controls against illegal immigration, made it easier to deport 'suspicious' visitors and immigrants, required family in the USA to take more responsibility for keeping newcomers off the welfare roles, and denied *legal* immigrants federal welfare benefits (illegal immigrants never received them). Court cases and action by the Clinton administration prevented this last provision from having much impact.

By the end of the 1990s, as legal and illegal Latin-American immigration became increasingly visible, especially in the south and mid-west, the clamor for immigration reform became widespread. George W. Bush expressed generous attitudes toward undocumented foreign workers early in his first term, when he welcomed a proposal from the President ofMexico for a new *bracero* worker program and amnesty law. During the War on Terror and the recession that followed, however, he did not implement the proposal. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, polls showed that large majorities of the public favored further strengthening border controls against illegal immigration and a decrease in legal immigration. In response, the government more energetically used the provisions of the 1996 law, and through the USA Patriot Act of 2002 developed new biometric identity checks to regulate entry to the country, conducted intensified surveillance of the foreign-born, and called in immigrants, especially Arab Americans, for questioning and possible detention or deportation.

Eight years into the twenty-first century, US law still allowed the world's highest level of legal immigration, around a million annually, most of it non-white and non-Western (culturally). An inability or unwillingness to enforce existing law resulted in the continued tolerance of an additional estimated 9-11 million illegal immigrants, most of them Latinos. This situation suggested that in the forty-plus years since the 1965 immigration-reform law, Americans' self-image had become extraordinarily inclusive when compared with the narrow Anglo-American national identity enshrined in US law until that time.

Sharp differences, nonetheless, continued to mark American public opinion about immigration after 2001. Most of the country's economic, political and cultural elites accepted high

levels of legal and illegal immigration. The public, on the other hand, increasingly linked immigration to concerns about job competition, national security, population growth, environmental problems and cultural differences. Majorities of those polled therefore favored more effectively restricting entrance to the country. A dramatic example of this chasm in attitudes about immigration occurred in 2004. Having implemented a variety of national security measures in response to the 9/11 attacks, including more high tech surveillance and patrols of the border with Mexico, President Bush announced his support for a revised guest-worker amnesty plan, similar to the one proposed by Mexico three years earlier. The public rejected the idea by large margins in a series of polls, and it quietly disappeared from the presidential agenda.

Members of Congress, however, continued to respond to mounting public pressure in the seven states most affected and from some groups demanding immigration reform and restriction. From February through May, 2006 Latino groups mobilized hundreds of thousands of legal and illegal immigrants to march in major cities in protest against a bill passed by the House of Representatives that would make illegal entry a federal felony (serious crime) for both those who entered illegally and anyone who helped them. Leaders of the protest movement rallied perhaps half a million marchers against the bill in 102 cities in early April and, calling their next major action 'a day without immigrants', urged the undocumented and legal immigrants to demonstrate how dependent the economy was on them by boycotting their jobs on May 1. An estimated 450,000 immigrants filled the streets in dozens of cities. Then the backlash, led by a group calling their effort the Minuteman Project (an allusion to Revolutionary War activists), mounted a series of counter-demonstrations, including organizing their own patrols along the Mexican border and sending a motorized caravan across the country to Washington DC to attract media attention.

In this polarized climate of opinion, Congress remained deadlocked. No bill in either house managed to suggest to the other house a satisfactory path to legality and citizenship for the undocumented that did not seem either another amnesty that would only encourage more illegal immigration, or a path so burdened with penalties and fines for entering illegally in the first place that few of the undocumented would choose it. Many a cautious politician had much to lose by taking too clear a position, and the two term Bush administration seemed certain to leave immigration reform to its successor. It remained uncertain whether the public's concerns would in time bring a less or more generous American immigration policy.