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Making the Heartland Quilt: A Geographical History of Settlement and Migration in Early-Nineteenth-Century Illinois (Paperback)

By Douglas K. Meyer

Southern Illinois University Press, United States, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book. Douglas K. Meyer reconstructs the settlement patterns of thirty-three immigrant groups and confirms the emergence of discrete culture regions and regional way stations. Meyer argues that midcontinental Illinois symbolizes a historic test-strip of the diverse population origins that unfolded during the Great Migration. Basing his research on the 1850 United States manuscript schedules, Meyer dissects the geographical configurations of twenty-three native and ten foreign-born adult male immigrant groups who peopled Illinois. His historical geographical approach leads to the comprehension of a new and clearer map of settlement and migration history in the state. Meyer finds that both cohesive and mixed immigrant settlements were established. Balkan-like immigrant enclaves or islands were interwoven into evolving local, regional, and national settlement networks. The midcontinental location of Illinois, its water and land linkages, and its lengthy north-south axis enhanced cultural diversity. The barrier effect of Lake Michigan contributed to the convergence and mixing of immigrants. Thus, Meyer demonstrates, Illinois epitomizes Midwestern dichotomies: northern versus southern; native-born versus foreign-born; rural versus urban; and agricultural versus manufacturing.



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