*America: A Narrative History*

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Introduction

With every wave of immigration in America, the nation responded with a diversity of attitudes that range from the extreme hostile to extreme hospitable. Though the foundations of United States were based on the help, ideas and inspiration from people of various nations, majority of the American raised their suspicions about eth foreigners and immigrants in different times through the landscape of history. During eth period of diplomatic tension with France in 1798, a series of laws were formulated in the states as Alien and Sedition Acts. As immigration was concerned, these bills gave an extension in the residency period of five years to fourteen years which was needed for attaining the citizenship. It also allowed for the deportation of the any people who could be termed as aliens and were considered as dangerous in ensuring eth peace and integrity in the United States. However, by the start of nineteenth century, these sentiments were somehow diminished. But as the German and Irish immigrants came to United States in the later decades, there was a revival of these acts.

 Germans and Irish immigrants were forced to leave their homes due to economic and political recession their countries. When these people arrived in United States, the Native Americans resented the idea for American lands being provided to the new arrivals. To them, the wave of strangers in their native lands posed a threat as they found their languages and ways of living mysterious and suspicious. In 1954, these natives and other unknown groups from thirteen states formulated a party whose motives were anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant agendas which was known as ‘Know-nothing’ party. They believed that the native Americas were superiors to the immigrants on the basis that they were poor, culturally and economically backwards and Catholics. The sentiments of resentment towards the Irish immigrants increased as after the civil war, Irish American communities started to become well-established. The popular parlance started to represent the resentment all along[[1]](#footnote-1) ;

“Americans Shall Rule America. This 1856 sketch satirizes Baltimore Nativists out to bully German and Irish immigrants.”

The Irish immigrants were mainly tenant farmers, however, their conditions due to the immigration experiences left them with untrained skillfulness for farm work and neither did they have enough money to travel or buy land. Majority of them were hired with construction groups that primarily built railways and canals. Only a fewer number of immigrants could go to the south, but those of who did find small jobs as planters. Most of the Irish immigrants were massed at the eastern cities and near the port of entry. They worked as domestic servants and unskilled laborers and lived together in small congested towns. However, their sentiments of self-identity and authoritarianism made them resilient and they started gaining highlight in the American politics.

 The German immigrants included a lot of independent farmers and laborers with professional skills, and small businessmen. They found themselves some means of establishing on American land with their skills. Several immigrants from Germany came in America due to failure of eth liberal revolutions. These people developed a well-established community with various farcicalities. During the period of industrialism, the immigrant from Asia and Eastern and Southern Europe headed towards United States in larger numbers. As in the east, the Irish immigration was on peak, in the west, the number of Chinese immigrants was increasing immensely. These chines immigrants started working as laborers in mines, railroads and construction in the railways. While others became the agricultural laborers. As the economic recession progressed in America, it caused a backlash against the Chinese laborers in American firms. They were subjected to violence and coercion in order to remove the competition created by the Chinese laborers and small businessmen. It led to the Chinese exclusion act and barred Chinese immigrants from entering the country or obtaining nationality.

The Italian immigrants that moved from the rural and under-developed areas mainly performed unskilled labor works. They too had to face harsh conditions in finding jobs and it was hard for them joining the unions due to their original nationalities.

So, Italians just like Irish immigrants became scapegoats for the economic issues as they could not get any work. Italians who lived and worked in the towns and cities were subjected to the physical assault by mobs with anti-immigrant sentiments.

Though the fear against the immigrants and Americans with foreign-born ancestors still persists in our society that it would stain our culture. However, it is to be considered that they have become uniquely American while still preserving their cultural values. As new immigrants some to United States, the old controversies and tensions might arise against and become apparent. I believe that these immigrant’s resilience though they were the subject to victimization, could not stop them from persisting and making their way through. It is important to perceive their stories of endurance and achievement. It would remain a melting pot with in American history that people from various ethnicities, languages and cultures fused together to from new communities on American land. They had gone through very harsh challenges and they still do. Many disparities and discrepancies in the American social. Economic and political system could be avoided if immigrants were treated cordially and given equal opportunities. Nonetheless, it can still be achieved by giving them, their due share and treating them as other America citizens are given priorities.

Bibliography

Shi, David E., and George Brown Tindall. *America  : A Narrative History*. 10th ed. W. W. Norton & Company, 2016.

1. Shi and Tindall, *America  : A Narrative History*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)