Chapter 14: Immigration & Urbanization (1865-1914)

Section 1: The New Immigrants
Objectives

• Compare the “new immigration” of the late 1800s to earlier immigration.

• Explain the push and pull factors leading immigrants to America.

• Describe the challenges that immigrants faced in traveling to America.

• Analyze how immigrants adapted to American life while trying to maintain familiar cultural practices.
Why did immigrants come to the United States, and what impact did they have upon society?
The foreign-born population of the U.S. nearly doubled between 1870 and 1900.

- In the 1840s and 1950s, **German and Irish Catholics** had immigrated to the United States.
- Despite differences, their children were often able to **blend into American society**.
- But starting in 1870, **some people feared ”new” immigrants** would destroy American culture.
## Old Immigrants and “New” Immigrants

| Old Immigrants (pre-1870s) | • Were mainly Protestants from Northern and Western Europe  
| | • Came as families to settle on farms with family members or friends  
| | • Had money, a skill or trade, or an education |

| “New” Immigrants (post-1870s) | • Were mainly Catholics or Jews from Southern and Eastern Europe  
| | • Sometimes came alone, usually to settle in cities  
| | • Were often poor and unskilled |
Immigrants to the United States from Southern and Eastern Europe made up 70 percent of all immigrants after 1900, up from 1 percent at midcentury.
Push factors for immigration are those that push people from their homes, while pull factors are those that attract them to a new place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push Factors</th>
<th>Pull Factors</th>
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<td>Farmers were pressured by land reform and low prices.</td>
<td>The U.S. offered plentiful land, employment, and opportunity.</td>
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<td>Revolution and war disrupted economies and left political refugees.</td>
<td>Many “chain immigrants” already had family in the U.S.</td>
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<td>Religious persecution forced many to flee violence.</td>
<td>Immigrants could find religious and political freedom in America.</td>
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Revolution and war disrupted economies and left political refugees.
Coming to America was often a tough decision. Immigrants usually brought only what they could carry and traveled by steamship in steerage.
When the immigrants arrived after their long journeys, they were processed at stations such as **Ellis Island** in New York Harbor.

There, officers conducted legal and medical inspections. Only 2 percent were denied entry into the U.S.

Chinese and other Asian immigrants crossing the Pacific were processed at **Angel Island** in San Francisco Bay. Many Chinese were turned away.
Some Chinese immigrants were detained at Angel Island for weeks or months in poor conditions.

They waited to see if they would be allowed to stay in the U.S.
Once in America, immigrants had to find a home and work. They also had to learn English and new customs.

Many stayed in cities and took jobs in factories. They lived in ethnic neighborhoods called ghettos.

Large cities such as New York and Chicago had huge immigrant populations by 1890.
Immigrants had some help coping with their new surroundings.

• Settlement houses ran Americanization programs to help recent immigrants learn English and adopt American dress and diet.

• Immigrants formed fraternal associations – based on ethnic or religious identity – which provided social services and financial assistance.
Many believed that American society was a "melting pot" where white people of different nationalities blended to create a single culture.

This model excluded Asian immigrants, who became targets of social and legal discrimination.
Despite the hopes of settlement workers, immigrants often held on to their traditions.

They established their own fraternal lodges, schools, and religious institutions such as churches.

Immigrants’ children, however, became more Americanized.
Immigrants often dealt with **nativism** and hostility from native-born white Americans.

Religious differences and competition for jobs and housing led to divisions and prejudices.
In 1882, Congress started to restrict immigration to the United States.

- The **Chinese Exclusion Act** prohibited immigration by Chinese laborers, limited the rights of Chinese immigrants in the U.S., and forbade the naturalization of Chinese residents.

- Congress passed another law that prohibited the immigration of anyone who was a criminal, immoral, a pauper, or likely to need public assistance.
Immigrants transformed American society.

- They **fueled industrial growth**.
- They helped **build the railroads** and worked in factories, mills, and mines.
- Their **traditions** became part of American culture.
- Increasingly, they **became active in labor unions and politics**, and they demanded reforms.
Why did immigrants come to the United States, and what impact did they have upon society?

Immigrants came to the U.S. for religious and political freedom, for economic opportunities, and to escape wars.

Immigrants adopted parts of American culture, and Americans adopted parts of immigrant cultures.