**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**Saida Dr. Moulay Tahar University**

**Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Arts**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

**Suggested Online Lectures of American Civilzation for First Year Master Students (Literature and Civilization)**

**Academic Year 2019-2020**

**Semester II**

**Teacher in Charge of the Module: Dr. BENADLA Djamel**

**Unit 5 Reconstruction and Its Effects**

Links to American Literature: from *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret

Mitchell

 When she arose at last and saw again the black ruins of Twelve Oaks, her head was raised high and something that was youth and beauty and potential tenderness had gone out of her face forever. What was past was past. Those who were dead were dead. The lazy luxury of the old days was gone, never to return. And, as Scarlett settled the heavy basket across her arm, she had settled her own mind and her own life.

 There was no going back and she was going forward. Throughout the South for fifty years there would be bitter-eyed women who looked backward, to dead times, to dead men, evoking memories that hurt and were futile, bearing poverty with bitter pride because they had those memories. But Scarlett was never to look back. . . .

 Hunger gnawed at her empty stomach again and she said aloud: “As God is my witness, as God is my witness, the Yankees aren't going to lick me. I’m going to live through this, and when it's over, I’m never going to be hungry again. No, nor any of my folks. If I have to steal or kill—as God is my witness, I’m never going to be hungry again.” — MARGARET MITCHELL, *Gone with the Wind* (1936)

 Like Scarlett O'Hara, many Southerners threw all their efforts into rebuilding their lives in the years following the Civil War. Other Southerners despaired over their losses. Yet others saw great opportunity and worked to build a new South. Reconstruction of the South was not without problems. Northern soldiers occupied the South as conquerors. Graft and corruption became a way of life.

 Slavery came to an end, but the freed slaves were not truly free; the war did little to improve their daily lives. Feelings of anger and futility were common among Northerners and Southerners. Traces of these feelings still remain today.

　 Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind* (1936) is the most widely read literary work set in the Southern United States. Its sales reached approximately 1.5 million in just the first year after its publication, making it the fastest-selling book in American publishing history (Jacobe 112). Still read all over the world, the book has sold over 28 million copies. The novel depicts the heroine’s obsession with the Old South―the world’s best-known work of Southern literature―in comparison with William Faulkner’s story “A Rose for Emily” (1930). This story is often said to be one of the major works of Faulkner, an outstanding writer of Southern literature. Similar to Gone with the Wind, this work was published in the 1930s, and it also has, as its heroine, a descendant of a Southern aristocratic family who suffers tremendous misfortune as a result of the Civil War. First, let us examine the Old South, that is, the society of the Southern United States during the antebellum period. The Old South’s major distinguishing characteristic was its system of black slavery. The Southern society had major problems related to race, class, and gender. Even though the United States as a whole was based on the values of liberty and equality, the South was home to black slaves and the white aristocracy who exploited them. To legitimize black slavery, Southern whites not only found approval in the Bible for the practice but also insisted that they were protecting the “stupid, lazy” black population as a man takes care of his wife and children (Wilson 106, 203). This paternalistic attitude made patriarchy extremely strong in the South. However, the Old South was exposed to dramatic changes through the abolition of slavery associated with its defeat in the Civil War. Gone with the Wind and “A Rose for Emily” both deeply reflect the social issues faced by the Old South.

 The book *Gone with the Wind*is primarily regarded as a romantic story focusing on the love between the two main characters, Scarlet O'Hara and Rhett Butler, taking place during the American Civil War and Reconstruction. The American Civil War and its consequences echo in the background of the doomed love affair. However, it can be claimed that alongside the great love story, Mitchell in her historical saga provides a very detail description of life in the South covering the years 1861 to 1874, depicts the character of the ―aristocratic‖ society and above all carefully portrays the main characters. **(Suggested Topic: Gone with the Wind and the Changing the Role and Status of Women)**

\*\*\*\*

*Gone with the Wind repeatedly depicts Southern whites characterizing African Americans as 1 “stupid,” “lazy,” and “like children.” “How stupid negroes were! They never thought of anything unless they were told” (390). “Negroes were provoking sometimes and stupid and lazy . . . . ‘Always remember, dear,’ Ellen had said, ‘you are responsible for the moral as well as the physical welfare of the darkies God has intrusted to your care. You must realize that they are like children and must be guarded from themselves like children, and you must always set them a good example’” (447). “The mottled wise old eyes saw deeply, saw clearly, with the directness of the savage and the child, undeterred by conscience when danger threatened her pet” (561). “The more I see of emancipation the more criminal I think it is. It’s just ruined the darkies. Thousands of them aren’t working at all and the ones we can get to work at the mill are so lazy and shiftless they aren’t worth having” (597). “There they conducted themselves as creatures of small intelligence might naturally be expected to do. Like monkeys or small children turned loose among treasured objects whose value is beyond their comprehension, they ran wild―either from perverse pleasure in destruction or simply because of their ignorance” (611). “But they were, as a class, childlike in mentality, easily led and from long habit accustomed to taking orders” (611). “[Northerners] did not know that negroes had to be handled gently, as though they were children, directed, praised, petted, scolded” (629).*

The Civil War was a real slaughter and many women became widows, or wives of war invalids and many stayed unmarried, they lost their sons and other members of their families. They faced suffering and death in hospitals during nursing service. They were forced to undertake men‘s duties and jobs in factories, public sphere or schools and they were successful. Moreover, they found enough strength to encourage their loved ones via letters. They showed bravery and abilities to cope with problems. All the achievements could not leave their lives unchanged. After the war, men could not ignore what women had managed to deal with during their absence. During the Reconstruction, a lot of men and women started to overcome difficulties together. However, it took a long time until women achieved equal rights, because men very slowly started to recognise women‘s new status.

**Introduction**

With its largest and most important cities in ashes, the south entered a period of reconstruction. Leaders of the radical wing of the Republican Party planned to put black southerners on an equal footing with whites and to redistribute old plantation land. White southern leaders resented these efforts. Antagonism and bitterness grew, resulting in two separate systems in the south: one for Negroes and one for whites.

**Reconstruction Plans Differ**

At war’s end, the country faced three main problems. The first was a human one. What were the four million newly freed black people in the South to do? They had no land, no jobs, and few skills outside of fanning. How would they feed and clothe themselves? How would they live?

The second problem was political. What was to happen with the Southern states? Were they to be received back into the Union as Lincoln wished, "with malice toward none"? Or were they to be treated as conquered territories that would be occupied and punished, as some Northerners wished?

The third problem was a constitutional one. Who had the right to determine how the Confederate States would be readmitted to the Union? Was it the President, as head of the executive branch of government, or Congress, the legislative branch?

**Lincoln Hopes to Heal Wounds**

Even in the midst of war, Lincoln had wondered how to treat the Confederate States if the Union should win. In general, he believed they had never legally seceded. In fact, an important purpose of the war was to prove that secession was not constitutionally possible. Lincoln believed that it was individuals who had rebelled and knew that the Constitution gave the President the power to pardon individuals.

 Lincoln was eager to restore the Union as quickly as possible, so he wanted a Reconstruction that would be mild and forgiving. He wanted the South’s return to be as easy and painless as possible. In December 1863 he announced his **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction**. **Amnesty means a pardon for crimes against the government.**

The proclamation granted pardons to all Confederates who would swear allegiance to the Union and promise to obey its laws. However, this pardon did not include high officials of the Confederacy and those accused of crimes against prisoners of war.

Under the proclamation, a Confederate state could form a state government as soon as 10 percent of those on the 1860 voting lists took an oath to uphold the United States Constitution. That state could then send its representatives and senators to Congress.

Lincoln’s Reconstruction plan by no means satisfied Congress. Many Northerners, particularly the Radicals, wanted the political power of the slave-owning class destroyed. They also wanted the Southern black people to be given full citizenship—meaning all civil rights, including the right to vote. This demand does not seem radical or extreme now, but it did at the time.

**The Radicals Propose Their Plan**

In July 1864 the Radicals in Congress adopted their own blueprint for Reconstruction—the Wade-Davis Bill. This bill proposed that Congress, not the President, be responsible for Reconstruction. It also declared that for a state government to be acceptable, a majority—not just 10 percent—of those eligible to vote in 1860 would have to take an ironclad oath to support the Constitution. In addition, they would have to swear that they had never supported the Confederacy in any way. Clearly, if more than half a state’s voters had been loyal to the Union, the state would not have seceded in the first place!

**Lincoln did not condemn the Radical plan**.

 Instead, he waited until Congress adjourned, and then he killed the bill with a pocket veto. **According to the Constitution, the President may, within ten days of the end of a congressional session, use a pocket veto.** He simply ignores a bill (puts it in his pocket) and, if Congress adjourns within ten days, it automatically fails to become law.

The Radical Republicans responded by issuing a manifesto, or proclamation, in which they called Lincoln’s pocket veto a "stupid outrage" and declared the authority of Congress to be supreme.

 They warned Lincoln to confine himself to his executive duties and to leave Reconstruction up to Congress. The Radicals took the position that the Confederate States actually had seceded. Thus, they now were territories seeking admission to the Union. Furthermore, it was Congress, not the President, that controlled territorial matters. A serious quarrel was shaping up. After the fall elections of 1864, Arkansas and Louisiana, acting under Lincoln’s plan, sent representatives to Washington. However, the Radicals barred them from taking their seats. That was early in March 1865. Within a month, the war was over and Abraham Lincoln was dead.

 Many historians believe that had Lincoln lived, he might have been able to deal with this difficult situation. However, his successor, Vice-President Andrew Johnson, a man with many good qualities, lacked the quiet dignity and diplomatic skill of Lincoln.

**Johnson Continues Lincoln’s Policy**

Andrew Johnson was always aware that he had not been elected but had become President as a result of Lincoln’s assassination. This bothered him a bit at first, but not for long. What he could not forget, however, was that he had been a poor boy who had to work his way to the top. He scorned people who had had an easier time. He was a man of strong conviction and great energy. His political ideas were a mixture of Jefferson’s and those of an earlier Tennessean, Andrew Jackson.

Like them, he disliked cities and manufacturing, distrusted banks and bondholders, and feared wealth that was not based on land. White Southerners did not know what to make of this man. They considered him a traitor to his region. The Radicals, on the other hand, thought he was one of them. Both were wrong. Almost at once, Johnson surprised everybody by announcing that **he would continue Lincoln’s plan of Reconstruction**. He declared that any state could be readmitted to the Union **if it would declare its secession illegal, swear allegiance to the Union, promise not to pay any Confederate debts, and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery.**

 The Southern states quickly took advantage of these easy terms. Within a few months, these states—except for Texas—held constitutional conventions, set up state governments, and elected representatives to Congress. In December 1865, the newly elected Southerners arrived in Washington to take their seats. Fifty-eight of them had previously sat in the Congress of the Confederacy, six had served in its cabinet, and four had fought against the United States as rebel generals. Johnson gave them all pardons, a gesture that shook the Radicals deeply.

**Johnson’s Vetoes Enrage Republicans**

In the last month of the war, President Lincoln had established a special bureau to assist former slaves and poor whites in the South. He had taken this step at the urging of **Josephine Griffing**, a prominent abolitionist.

**The Freedmen's Bureau** gave food and clothing to former slaves and needy whites. In all, it set up over forty hospitals, four thousand primary schools, sixty one industrial institutes, and seventy-four teacher training establishments. The backbone of the bureau’s schools was its women teachers, both black and white. They came from all over the country and worked almost around the clock to meet the former slaves’ demand for schooling.

**Charlotte Forten**, a black teacher from Philadelphia, was one of the seventy Northern teachers who went to Georgia to teach. She wrote:

I never before saw children so eager to learn. . . . The older ones, during the summer, work in the fields from early morning until eleven or twelve o'clock and then come to school, after their hard toil in the hot sun, as bright and as anxious to learn as ever.

Former slave and educator Booker T. Washington recalled those times as follows:

It was a whole race trying to go to school. Few were too young and none were too old.

By 1869 about 600,000 African Americans of all ages were in elementary schools.

Life was not always pleasant for the students or for the teachers, however. Sometimes the teachers could not find places to live. Other times they could not get credit at local stores. In addition, whites threw stones at the students as they went to and from school. Nevertheless, neither teachers nor students would give up.

 In February 1866 Congress voted to continue and to enlarge the Freedmen’s Bureau by backing it with more money. One month later. Congress passed the Civil Rights Bill of 1866. This act gave blacks citizenship and forbade states from passing discriminatory laws.

President Johnson stunned everyone when he vetoed both measures. It was the opening shot in his battle with Congress over Reconstruction of the South. Johnson said that Congress had gone far beyond "anything contemplated by the authors of the Constitution." The Radicals, on the other hand, believed that Johnson was protecting Southerners who had no intention of giving blacks their full rights. Indeed, there was good reason for the Radicals to think so because the Southern states had passed some repressive laws.

**The Black Codes Keep Freed Slaves Down**

 **Black codes were laws aimed at regulating the economic and social lives of freed slaves.** Immediately after the war, many blacks, while delighted to be free, nevertheless did not know what to do.

 There were no jobs, and the old way of plantation life was gone. Therefore, many of them drifted from place to place around the South seeking work.

Others travelled about in the hope of finding relatives from whom they had been separated during slavery days. Seeing this great mass of free black men and women wandering around infuriated Southern whites. **They thus passed black codes, which put blacks in an inferior position.**

 The black codes varied. Generally, they all stated that blacks could legally marry, own property, sue in court, and go to school. Thus, the codes recognized that blacks had certain rights they did not have before. At the same time, however, blacks could not serve on juries, carry weapons, testify against whites, or marry whites. Blacks also had to obey a curfew, and they needed permits in order to travel. Furthermore, they were not allowed to start their own businesses. In some states, blacks could not rent or lease farm land. In South Carolina, blacks needed special licenses to work other than as servants or farm laborers.

The codes confirmed the Radicals’ darkest suspicions about the South. Northern voters now began asking themselves if they had won the war after all.

The Reconstruction effort to transform the South and turn freed people into citizens, although not entirely successful, was remarkable for its time. Even an unequal freedom was very different from slavery; the free labour South that emerged in the late 19th century was not the South that the blacks wanted, but it was not the South that their former masters wanted either. Despite its overthrow, Reconstruction left an important legacy: commitment to a republican society based on equality under the law, as exemplified in the Reconstruction era legislation that remained on the books even when unenforced. A century later, during the Civil Rights Movement, Americans, both black and white, would build on that legacy, as they renewed their struggle for equality.

References

Axelrod, Allan. Political History of America’s Wars. Washington, D.C., CQ Press, 2007

Barney, William L. *The Civil War and Reconstruction:* a student companion. New York, Oxford University Press, 2001

Jones, Terry L. The A to Z of the Civil War. Lanhal, Md. Scarecrow Press, 2006

Richter, William L. Historical Dictionary of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Lanham, Md. Scarecrow Press, 2004

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Snodgrass, Mary Ellen. The Civil war Era and Reconstruction: an encyclopaedia of Social, Political, cultural, and economic history. Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe, 2011

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  Woodworth, Steven E. [*The American Civil War: A Handbook of Literature and Research*.](http://consort.library.denison.edu/record%3Db1985304~S3) Westport, Conn. Greenwood Press, 1996Kolchin, Peter. American Slavery. New York: Hill and Wang, 1993Paul M. Gaston, The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking (New York: Vintage Books, 1973)Blair, The Prosperity of the South Dependent upon the Elevation of the Negro (Richmond: Everett Waddey, 1889Fesyle, Mary Jo.  “Reading Reconstruction with Students.”  *Journal of American History*.  83 (Mar 97):  1353 - 1357.McFeely, W. S.  “Two Reconstructions, Two Nations.”  *Massachusetts Review.*  32(1).  (Spring 91).Unit 6 Emergence of Modern AmericaObjectives **By the end of this course students should be able to...*** Have a better understanding of how freed slaves found themselves living in a segregated society
* Understand how and why reform movements sought to change the American political and economic systems.
* Have a better understanding of how the United States developed a global empire, complete with overseas colonies.
* Assess the influence of immigration and rapid industrialization of urban life

IntroductionAmericans living in 1876 often called their time the “Age of Invention” and the “Age of Improvement”. An amazing number of new inventions were developed in the last half of the 19th century. Many people believed that these inventions were helping to create a better world, one during which people were able to satisfy their wants with less effort and cost than before. Writers and public speakers of the time often talked about the wonders of American Inventions”. But inventions came about due to the efforts of a great number of people in many countries. American inventions of the late 1800’s often were based on the scientific discoveries of the Europeans. Many American had a popular image of inventors. They thought inventors were mechanical wizards, who could turn the forces of the nature into wonderful devices for people to use. This image was in large part created by the life of Thomas Alva Edison; a true genius and tireless worker, who often went for days without sleep while working on a new project. Edison developed the first practical incandescent electric light, the phonograph, the first motion picture camera, the projector, the film, and hundreds of other inventions. Other Americans were responsible for improvements on electric light, the development of cotton Gin, the telegraph, the sewing machine, the radio and TV.Inventions have helped make life easier and more comfortable for many Americans. They bring about change, often with unpredictable results. Sometimes these changes have good results, and sometimes bad results. The trouble is that when inventions first appear, people cannot tell how they will affect their lives. When the automobile first appeared, people welcomed it not only as a wonderful means of transport but also as an answer to some of the cities’ problems. The New Industrial AgeLinks to American Literature"If I am going to travel by rail, I shan't need it [accident insurance]. Lying at home in bed is the thing I am afraid of." . . .I may say I have travelled sixty thousand miles during the three years I have mentioned. And never an accident. . . ./ hunted up statistics, and was amazed to find that after all the glaring newspaper headings concerning railroad disasters, less than three hundred people had really lost their lives by those disasters in the preceding twelve months. . . .Well, the Erie kills from thirteen to twenty-three persons out of its millon in six months; and in the same time 13,000 of New York's million die in their beds! My flesh crept, my hair stood on end. "This is appalling!" I said. "The danger isn't in travelling by rail, but in trusting to those deadly beds. I will never sleep in a bed again." . . . When we consider that every day and night of the year full fourteen thousand railway trains of various kinds, freighted with life and armed with death, go thundering over the land, the marvel is. not that they kill three hundred humanbeings in a twelvemonth, but that they do not kill three hundred timesthree hundred'— MARK TWAIN, "The Danger of Lying in Bed"Between the end of the Civil War and 1900, the United States underwent striking changes. Railroads crossing the countryside were but one sign of the development of an industrial society. Although the railroads were most important for their contribution to industry, they also became the safest and most efficient means of passenger travel. In addition to moving goods across the nation, they brought people in the far comers of the United States closer together.The New Industry Electricity became the key to many important economic developments that helped industry to expand. Electric trolley cars helped cities to grow. The electric telegraph linked the entire nation. Edison's electric light bulb caused a revolution in lighting. Bell's telephone speeded up communication and, along with the typewriter, brought many white women into the labor force. New methods of making steel brought its price down and improved its quality, making it suitable for dozens of uses. The United States was becoming the world's greatest industrial power. It had the three major natural resources of iron ore, coal, and oil. At first oil was used for lamps, but in the 1890's the by-product called gasoline was used to fuel the new internal combustion engine.In a period less than 5O tears, it was transformed from a rural to urban country. The frontiers vanished. Great factories and steel mills, flourishing cities, transcontinental railroad lines, and vast agricultural holdings marked the land. Cities grew so quickly that they could hadly house or govern their teeming populations. To this “Industrial Revolution”, there was a large contribution of Railroads. The Age of Railroads Railroads grew to be the largest industry in the nation. Their expansion westward led to the adoption of the official time zones we have today. Two railroad companies got government grants to construct a transcontinental line. The company working east to west hired war veterans, many of whom were Irish immigrants. The one working east from California employed Chinese at lower pay. The two lines met in Utah in 1869. Political corruption and overcharging, especially the **Credit Mobilier** scandal, marred their triumph. Farmers organized the Grange to fight the railroads" unfair pricing practices.Congress passed the **Interstate Commerce Act**, which gave the federal government some power to regulate railroad rates. However, this act did not become effective until after 1901. Although the Grange eventually became a social organization, it had established the principle that the federal government had the right to regulate private industry under certain conditions. Many industrialists became millionaires as businesses became more complex. Andrew Carnegie is a good example of how a poor boy could rise to wealth by hard work and keen observation. He became a multimillionaire by making his efficient steel business an integrated operation. Companies could combine in various ways, through holding companies, mergers, trusts, and interlocking directorates. The construction of thousands of miles that concern railroad tracks encouraged the growth of other businesses. Railroad companies also made it possible to ship goods long distances for very low rates. Wheat, corn, livestock, and other products could be shipped from the mid west and west to markets in East. Manufactured goods could be brought from east to western buyers. Some people say that there was a revolution in economy of America in the late 1800s.  Huge trusts came to dominate American businesses. Shrewd and even illegal practices earned some businessmen the name of “robber barons.” **The Sherman Antitrust Act** of 1890 proved ineffective. Spencer’s writing spread the ideas of Social Darwinism. Similar ideas were set forth in the Horatio Alger stories. These widely popular books described how young people could rise from rags to riches by honesty and hard work. Many people accepted the idea that poverty was the fault of the individual.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

 References |

 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

 |

 |

 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |

 |

Burlingame, Roger Machines that Built America. New York: Harcourt, Brace,

Jovanovich, 1953.

Carnegie, Andrew. The Gospel of Wealth Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard

University Press, 1962.

Hacker Louis M. World of Andrew Carnegie, 1865-1901 Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1968.

Hofstadter Richard. The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It. New York: Knopf, 1973.

Hofstadter, Richard. Social Darwinism in American Thought. Boston: Beacon Press, 1955.

Paper Holbrook, Stewart H. The Story of American Railroads. New York: Crown Publishing, 1981.

Josephson, Matthew. The Robber Barons: The Great American Capitalists, 1861-1901. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1962.

Shippen, Katherine. Andrew Carnegie and the Age of Steel. New York: Random House, 1 964

 Unit 7 Unionism, Political Reforms, and Populism

Objectives

Students will learn:

* how labor attempted to organize unions and why most of them failed
* the successes and failures of both government and private efforts at political reform
* the cause and effects of the third party reform movement known as Populism

Links to American Literature

*The Republican nominee for president of the United States is one Rutherford Birchard Hayes, three times governor of Ohio, a general of no distinction in the late war. and a man entirely unknown n to most of the convention that has just nominated him. . . . Rutherford B. Hayes, who is, this morning's paper informs us. Fifty-three years old. five feet eight inches tall, and n eight one hundred and seventy pounds—which is plainly wishful thinking on the part of the*

*Governor, who must weigh, according to his photograph, about two hundred pounds: he has a long grizzled beard, an aquiline nose, and a fierce gaze. . . .*

*In silence the votes of each state were read and tallied. Hayes was elected president by a single vote. Nor was the silence broken as Ferry intoned, "Wherefore. I do declare: that Rutherford B. Hayes, of Ohio, having received a majority of the whole number of electoral votes, is duly elected president. . .."*

*There was no applause. Only a long weary sigh from the embattled Congress. . . .*

*Today, for the first time since Lincoln’s murder, the front page of the New York Sun appeared with a band of mourning*. — GORE VTDAL. 1876

 The growth of industry caused widespread discontent among workers. This discontent was mirrored by unrest on the political stage. The Presidential election of Rutherford B. Hayes is an example of this unrest. Hayes set about his self-appointed task of social reform by issuing executive orders. Although he failed to bring about lasting reform, he was able to restore the American people’s faith in government simply because he was a man of integrity.

Introduction

 Populism (from the Latin term *populus,* usually translated as "the people") is the name of a group of ideologies that stresses the need for a more equitable distribution of economic, political, and cultural power. Populists argue that elite of some form or another holds an unfair concentration of political and economic power and typically that government intervention is required to counteract this injustice. Populism is a style of politics used to mobilize mass movements against ruling powers. Populists claim to speak for ordinary people, taking an “us versus them” stance. Its leaders have used rhetoric that stirs up anger, floated conspiracy theories, pushed the distrust of experts, promoted nationalism and demonized outsiders. Populism has become a recurring political theme in American politics and has inspired political reform, but has also been used to direct the hostilities of angry citizens to straw men. Below is a timeline of notable populist movements throughout U.S. history.

New Industry

 New industries meant a hard life for more and more workers. Large factories demanded long hours for low pay. Industrial expansion brought dangerous working conditions, child labor, sweatshops, and company towns. The railroad strike of 1877 was nationwide and resulted in corporations organizing against unions. The Knights of Labor ran a successful series of strikes under Powderly’s leadership but collapsed because of the Haymarket bombing. It also had competition from Gompers’s craft union, which was called the American Federation of Labor. Debs organized all levels of railroad workers into one industrial union, the American Railway Union. Mother Jones led women in support of coal miners. Newman organized other women into the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. The tragic fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company factory helped their cause.

 The police and the courts opposed these early unions. Business owners controlled the powers of government, which in turn tried to prevent workers from organizing. Demands for political reforms grew, however, as political corruption became a major issue. Congressmen and other officeholders gave out government jobs in return for support. Presidents Hayes and Garfield pushed for reform. When Garfield was assassinated, President Arthur surprised everyone by also urging change. The Pendleton Act of 1883 established the civil service system. This system resulted from the belief that government jobs should be based on merit and not on politics.

The Rise of Movements (Reformers)

 Woman suffrage became a major issue. At first women had to struggle for suffrage state by state. Wyoming and several other Western states led the way. Anthony and Stanton fought for women's right to vote. They faced much opposition. Their opponents were public opinion, factory and liquor store owners, and Southern politicians.

 Two Constitutional amendments were ratified. The 18th Amendment was designed to make the US more wholesome by prohibiting the sale of liquor. The passage of the 19th Amendment climaxed a long struggle by women for the right of vote. Women had hoped to get the vote along with blacks after the Civil War.

 Defeated on the national level, many women turned their energies toward getting women’s right of voting laws passed on the state level. Dedicated suffrage like Carrie Chapman Catt crisscrossed the country, complaining for women’s suffrage wherever there was a state referendum on the issue. Most of these complain were unsuccessful until 1890. Then Wyoming entered the Union with voting rights of women. Women intensified their efforts and other western states passed women’s suffrage in the 1890s and early 1900s.

 American farmers backed the Populist movement. They wanted to put more money in circulation because the whole economic system was hurting them badly. They also demanded reforms in government. The Populists became a political party. In the South the Populist Watson used hatred of blacks as a political weapon. McKinley’s front porch campaign of 1896 was crucial. The Democrat Bryan called for a system that would make silver the base of the nation's money. Farmers backed this policy of inflation. The Republican McKinley called for a gold standard. Gold was much more scarce and would therefore bring deflation.

McKinley won. Yet many of his opponent’s ideas were later adopted.

 Farmers in debt demanded a national policy of currency inflation. They called for more greenbacks and more silver. Eventually, three groups of farmers came together to form the People's Populist party—one group came from the plains, one was composed of white farmers in the South, and one was made up of black farmers in the South. In 1892 Populists offered a platform of reform for the American economy and political system. The election of 1896 was a major battle. The voters had to choose between Bryan's policy of inflation through bimetallism and McKinley’s deflationary policy of a gold standard. McKinley won. The Populists faded away because of the nation's new prosperity, but many of their demands have since been met.

Questions and Critical Thinking

1. What changes did workers face during the industrialization of the late nineteenth century?

2. What was the sweatshop system?

3. How did the methods of the Knights of Labor and the NLU differ from the bread-and-butter

unionism of Samuel Gompers?

4. What idea did Eugene Debs contribute to unionism?

5. Which two dramatic events led to improved working conditions in the garment industry?

Analyze the relationship between these events and the increase of women in the work force.

6. What did the Fourteenth Amendment imply about women's right to vote?

7. What three approaches did the leaders of the National American Woman Suffrage Association take to gain voting rights for women?

8. Were male abolitionists justified in not supporting woman suffrage during efforts to pass the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments? Explain.

9. Using the Populists as an example, explain how third parties can help to improve democracy in the United States.

References

Arnett, Alex Mathews. (1967). *The Populist Movement in Georgia.* New York: AMS Press

Canovan, Margaret. (1981). *Populism*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich New York and London

Goodwyn, Lawrence. (1976). *Democratic Promise*: The Populist Moment in America. New York: Oxford University Press,

Hicks, John D. (1961). *The Populist Revolt.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press,

Kazin, Michael. (1998). *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press

Lefort, Claude. (1988). *Democracy and Political Theory*. trans. David Macey. Cambridge, UK: Polity

Rosenblum, Nancy L.. (2008). *On the Side of the Angels:* An Appreciation of Parties and Partisanship. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Saloutos, Theodore. (1968). ed., *Populism: Reaction or Reform*? New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston

Tindall, George Brown. (1966). ed., *A Populist Reader.* New York: Harper & Row,

Unit 8 The Progressive Era

Objective

* Explain the importance of national Progressive political leaders such as Teddy Roosevelt. Describe Roosevelt’s philosophy about the role of the federal government at home and abroad.
* Describe the way the federal government sought to resolve conflicts between labor and management and prevent monopolies during the Progressive Era.
* Summarize the presidential election of 1912. Explain the reasons for Wilson’s victory and the role Roosevelt played as a third-party candidate.
* Explain why nearly a million voters supported the candidacy of Eugene Debs. Explain the ideas and goals of the Socialist Party and how they compared to those of the Progressives.

Links to American Literature

There was never the least attention paid to what was cut up for sausage; there would come all the way back from Europe old sausage that had been rejected, and that was moldy and white—it would be dosed with borax and glycerine, and dumped into the hoppers, and made over again for home consumption.

 There would be meat that had tumbled out on the floor, in the dirt and sawdust, where the workers had tramped and spit uncounted billions of consumption germs. There would be meat stored in great piles in rooms; and the water from leaky roofs would drip over it, and thousands of rats would race about on it. It was too dark in these storage places to see well, but a man could run his hand over these piles of meat and sweep off handfuls of the dried dung of rats. These rats were nuisances, and the packers would put poisoned bread out for them, they would die, and then rats, bread, and meat would go into the hoppers together. This is no fairy story and no joke; the meat would be shovelled into carts, and the man who did the shovelling would not trouble to lift out a rat even when he saw one—there were things that went into the sausage in comparison with which a poisoned rat was a titbit. — UPTON SINCLAIR, The Jungle (1906)

 The period from the turn of the century to World War I was yet another era of reform, commonly called the Progressive Era. During this time, the United States was adjusting to its new image as a great industrial nation. As cities and industries grew, the need for social reform and government regulation became overwhelming.

Certain factories, such as the meat-packing plants, had become horrors both for the workers and for consumers of their products. Since these industries did not regulate themselves, it was time for the federal government to intervene. The pressure for reform is a recurring theme throughout American history.

The Progressive Movement Begins

The immediate stimulus to the Progressive movement came from three main sources: religion, the press, and a number of radical political groups that called for extreme measures to bring about change. Progressives could be found among Democrats as well as Republicans. Many Progressives were white-collar workers who were finally joining the farmers in their demands for reform. The farmers' crusade for change could be traced back to Populism.

Religious Groups Seek Reform

A basic strand in the reform movement was religion. Baptist minister Walter Rauschenbusch was an early exponent of what was called the "social gospel." He put it this way: "It is true that any regeneration [reform] of society can come only through the act of God and the Presence of Christ, but God is now acting, and Christ is now here." In other words, the churches should work to improve conditions for workers and for the poor.

After the Civil War several religious associations were transplanted to the United States from Great Britain. They included the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Salvation Army.

 All three concentrated their efforts on helping newcomers adjust to life in the big cities. They encouraged the establishment of settlement houses, investigated slum conditions, and provided food and clothing to people in need.

 Gradually, many religious leaders and organizations began to shift their efforts from private charity to public reform. In 1908 twenty-seven Protestant churches formed the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The council called for legislation on several issues including the abolition of child labor and of the sweatshop system, one day of rest in seven, a living wage, and safety rules in factories and shops.

Radical Groups Criticize Capitalism

In addition to being a muckraker, Sinclair was an on-and-off member of the Socialist party. This was one of the radical groups that formed the third strand of the Progressive movement. The party had been organized in 1901 by, among others, labor leader Eugene V. Debs. Debs had become a socialist while sitting in jail after the Pullman strike. Later he was the Socialist party’s Presidential candidate in several elections and received almost a million votes in 1912 and again in 1920. The Progressives did not agree with Debs's proposed solution of socialism, which would eliminate private ownership of the means of production. They wanted to keep the capitalist system.

Social Legislation.

 The Progressives pushed for social reforms as well as political ones. Some were members of the National Child Labor Committee; others belonged to the National Consumers' League. Most of them agreed that a woman's place was in the home but that her interests should also include public affairs. Women's groups did research on social problems and hired lobbyists to present their views in state capitals. They succeeded in bringing about a number of changes. By 1914, for instance, almost every state had passed a law either prohibiting the employment of children under fourteen or requiring them to attend school until age fourteen. Unfortunately, most of these laws did not cover farm work or domestic service. Also, the opposition of Southern textile mill owners kept the laws from being enforced in some areas.

In 1908 the Supreme Court in the case of **Muller v. Oregon** reversed itself on the issue of whether a state could limit the working hours of women. In the past the Court had held that such limits interfered with freedom of contract. This time, however, lawyer Louis D. Brandeis, assisted by Josephine Goldmark and Florence Kelley, submitted a 112-page legal brief. Brandeis, reminding the Court that freedom of contract meant that women were as free as corporations to sign or not to sign a contract, argued that a woman was much more economically insecure than a giant corporation and thus needed protection. The "Brandeis Brief" convinced the Court, which said that Oregon's law limiting women to a ten-hour day was constitutional.

 In 1917 a similar brief in **Bunting v. Oregon** persuaded the Court to uphold a ten-hour workday law for men. As a result of these two decisions, many states passed laws limiting working hours. Another area in which Progressive reforms succeeded was workers' compensation. Every year about 35,000 workers were killed on the job and another 700,000 injured. Beginning with Maryland in 1902, one state after another passed legislation requiring employers in dangerous occupations to pay benefits to injured employees.

Progressive Presidents

Roosevelt Becomes progressive Leader

It was at the national level that the Progressive movement really made its mark. Moreover, if you were to ask which President personified Progressivism, most historians would answer, Theodore Roosevelt.

.

A Rough Rider Enters the White House

 Theodore Roosevelt was born in 1858 into an old Dutch merchant and banking family in New York State. Asthmatic and nearsighted as a child, he overcame his physical weaknesses by hard exercise and sheer force of will. After graduating from Harvard, he became a cattle rancher in the Dakotas. He fell in love with the out-of-doors and developed a deep and lifelong interest in the conservation (preservation) of natural resources—forms of wealth supplied by nature, such as air, land, water power, forests, oil, and coal. He wrote two historical works: one on the War of 1812, the other on the winning of the West. He entered politics and moved from assemblyman and police commissioner in New York City to civil service commissioner and assistant secretary of the navy in Washington, D.C.

 Roosevelt’s spectacular charge up San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War brought him to the attention of Senator Thomas C. Piatt, the Republican boss of New York State. Piatt needed a Republican governor to help him in his business affairs. Although he had misgivings about Roosevelt's interest in Progressive legislation, he decided to run the former Rough Rider for office anyway.

 No sooner was Roosevelt elected, however, than he began attacking the ties between business and government. He refused to appoint Piatt’s choice for state insurance commissioner. He also forced through a law requiring streetcar companies to pay taxes on the value of their franchises. Piatt was furious. If such actions continued, New York's Republican machine would lose its financial support from big business. It was unthinkable to renominate Roosevelt for governor. The only solution was to nominate him for Vice-President on the national ticket headed by William McKinley. The Vice-Presidency was considered a political graveyard.

 Six Achievements Equal a Square Deal



*Alton Parker swept the South, which was dominated by the Democratic Party by 1904. Roosevelt’s Square Deal and moderate Progressive reforms were supported by the rest of the nation.*

The new President represented a great change from his predecessor. For one thing, he crackled with energy. While in the White House, he boxed with professionals, one of whom blinded him in the left eye. He played strenuous tennis. He galloped a hundred miles on horseback in one day (using several horses) to prove that it could be done. Moreover, he energetically shot bears on what he called a restful vacation. His red-blooded advice to young people was, “Don’t flinch, don't foul, and hit the line hard.”

 In politics, as in sports, Roosevelt believed in action. The federal government was responsible for the national welfare. He believed it should step in whenever the states proved incapable of handling problems. He also believed that because the President represented all the people, he should play a major role in shaping legislative policy. If big business was squeezing farmers, workers, and small business people, then he, Roosevelt, would see to it that they received a “square deal.” He said, “I believe in a strong executive,” and he proceeded to put his beliefs into practice.

Increasing Federal Power.

There was another aspect to Roosevelt’s political behavior. It was based on knowledge of American history and a vision of national unity. Americans had filled out a continent and built an industrial empire. However, they had not, in Roosevelt's opinion, developed the political tools for managing what they had created. “A simple and poor society can exist as a democracy on the basis of sheer individualism. But a rich and complex society cannot so exist,” he said. In the 19(K)'s, according to Roosevelt, the federal government needed to manage certain areas of society so that the nation could develop in an orderly manner.

Mediating a Coal Strike.

One example of Roosevelt's approach was his handling of a coal strike in 1902. Coal miners in Pennsylvania struck for higher wages, an eight-hour day, and the right to organize a union. The mine operators refused to bargain or even to meet with the labor leaders at the White House. George Baer, a mine owner and the president of the Reading Railroad, said that it was his religious duty to defeat the strikers. He added, “The rights and interests of the laboring men will be protected and cared for—not by labor agitators, but by Christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom has given control of the property interests of the country.”

 To counter the company, Roosevelt threatened to seize the mines and have the army run them. However, he decided to appoint a commission to make recommendations for settling the strike. The mine operators finally agreed to arbitration. The settlement was a compromise. The workers received a 10 percent pay hike and a nine-hour day. They did not obtain a closed shop, that is, an agreement under which operators will not hire anyone who does not belong to the union. In addition, the workers agreed not to strike again for three years. More important than the actual settlement, however, was the establishment of a new principle.

In the past.

Presidents had sent in federal troops only to protect private property or to keep such services as the United States mail going. Now, Roosevelt was saying that the federal government could intervene in a strike if the public welfare was involved. In addition, Roosevelt was emphasizing the Progressive belief that disputes should be settled in an orderly way with the help of experts.

Regulating Trusts.

 Roosevelt also used his skills as a mediator in dealing with the question of trusts. In the public mind, trusts were bad and should be smashed. Roosevelt, however, believed that how a trust acted was more significant than how big it was. He wanted to curb trusts if their actions became oppressive to the public, but he did not want to destroy large corporations. The President thus concentrated his efforts on filing suits under the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890. He attacked the Northern Securities Company, which had established a monopoly over Western railroads. He also sued the beef trust, the oil trust, the steel trust, the sugar trust, and the tobacco trust. All in all, his administration filed forty-four antitrust suits. Nevertheless, although the government won a number of cases and broke up a number of trusts, it did not stop the merger movement in business.

Regulating Transportation.

 Roosevelt was more successful in railroad regulation. Under his urging, Congress put some teeth in the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887.

The Elkins Act of 1903 made it illegal for railroad officials and shippers either to give or to receive rebates. It also said that once a railroad had set rates, it could not change them without notifying the public.

 The Hepburn Act of 1906 went several steps further. It gave the Interstate Commerce Commission power to set maximum railroad rates, subject to court approval, whenever shippers complained. Within two years, the commission received more than nine thousand complaints and lowered a great many rates. In addition, the railroads were told to use uniform methods of accounting and to stop giving out free passes.

Protecting Health.

President Roosevelt—like millions of Americans who stopped eating canned meat—was horrified when he read The Jungle. He promptly appointed a commission to investigate Upton Sinclair's charges. The commission found the charges to be true, so in 1906 Congress passed the first federal Meat Inspection Act. That same year, Congress passed a Pure Food and Drug Act. Credit for this legislation belongs mostly to Dr. Harvey Washington Wiley, chief chemist in the Department of Agriculture. For years, Wiley had lectured across the country, criticizing the harmful preservatives that were added to food. There was coal-tar dye and borax in sausage, formaldehyde in canned pork and beans, and so on.

Wiley wanted such information printed on the labels of cans and other food packages. The 1906 act also placed some restrictions on the manufacturers of prepared foods and patent medicines. An amendment in 1911 prohibited the use of misleading labels. As one historian commented, “American stomachs and insides generally have been better than they would have been had Wiley not lived and labored.”

Progressivism Continues Under Taft

 In 1908 Roosevelt wanted his successor to be a man who would carry out his policies. His choice was William Howard Taft. The Democrats nominated William Jennings Bryan for the third time. Instead of free silver, Bryan campaigned on the slogan of “Let the people rule.” He called for a federal income tax, a lower tariff, and new antitrust laws. Nevertheless, he polled even fewer votes than he had in 1896. As the Republicans said, “Vote for Taft this time—you can vote for Bryan any time.” The voters did exactly that. Taft was cautious and legalistic, a “horse-drawn carriage” in comparison with Roosevelt’s “automobile.” He hesitated to bring problems to public attention or to organize opinion around an issue. He did not even know how to handle members of his own party. As one congressman remarked, Taft was “a well-meaning man who was born with two left feet.”

 President Taft continued presidential support for reform, and in fact, he prosecuted more trusts than Roosevelt. Democratic President Woodrow Wilson was also reform-minded, but the advent of World War I slowed the movement of progressivism. Still, much had been accomplished, and by the end of Wilson’s second term, the principle that is was the government’s responsibility to present and defend the pubic had been clearly established.

Conclusion

Progressivism was a diverse reform movement that emerged in the 1890s and early 1900s and would profoundly influence the next century of American political thought. Whereas conservatives believed that restricting the size and power of the government was the key to liberty, the Progressives believed that certain government regulations could promote efficiency and social justice. Although their critics accused them of starting down a path that would lead to Socialism, Progressives believed they were charting a middle course between complete government control over industry and the laissez-faire practices of the past.

 Progressives regarded private property as sacred, but they also believed that some measure of government intervention was necessary to prevent monopolies and protect the vulnerable. They also had a tendency to view the issues they supported in moral and/or religious terms. In some instances, they carried their faith in a particular reform to the point of believing it might be a panacea that would cure most of society’s ills. At their best, they selflessly dedicated their lives to causes that provided little or no tangible benefit for themselves or members of their social class. At their worst, they looked down upon those in need of charity and failed to consider the perspectives of the working class and impoverished masses for whom they claimed to speak.

 Many business leaders appreciated the Progressive Movement’s opposition to radical doctrines, especially when compared to other reform philosophies and the political upheaval of other industrial nations. These conservatives also preferred mild government regulation and stability that the Progressives promoted, if it could prevent the social unrest and radicalism that had occurred during the Populist revolt of the 1890s. However, business leaders still feared that some Progressive reforms might lead toward the creation of powerful government entities that might someday challenge their ability to act with relative impunity. Furthermore, social conservatives feared that these reformers might create a government that would be more progressive in enforcing economic, racial, and gender equality.

References

Cole, Peter. (2007). *Wobblies on the Waterfront: Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era* Philadelphia

Dawley, Alan. (2003*). Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution*

Flanaghan, Maureen A. (2002).*Seeing with Their Hearts: Chicago Women and the Vision of a Good City*, 1871–1933

Gilmore, Glenda. (1996). *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White* Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920

Johnston, Robert D. (2006).*The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland*, Oregon

Klein, James E. *Grappling with Demon Rum: The Cultural Struggle Over Liquor in Early Oklahoma*(2008).

McGerr, Michael.  (2005). A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920

Montejano, David. (1987). Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836–1986

Questions and Critical Thinking

1. How did women “win the right to vote” in America? How did radical and conservative ideas of gender shape the debate on women’s suffrage?
2. What are the implications of the exclusion of women’s suffrage beyond the national victory in 1920 from the historical record, and how does the inclusion/exclusion of women affect one’s understanding of the nation’s history?
3. Who was Mary Harris Jones, and what was her impact on US history? Does knowing she was a Socialist alter your opinion of her life and legacy?
4. What did Socialists in the United States hope to accomplish? Why might Socialism have attracted so many followers at the turn of the century?
5. Why did the predominantly white coal miners of Colorado to burn the company stores during the Ludlow Massacre of 1914? How might this compare with the reasons predominantly non-white urban dwellers burned stores and destroyed property in the “race riots” of the late 1960s? How did the national reaction to these events compare?

Unit 9 The New Immigration

Objective

By the end of this lecture students will:

* Understand the patterns of immigration and the problems faced by the new/ immigrants in the late nineteenth century.
* Understand the problems faced by urban Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
* Learn the patterns of immigration and the problems faced by the new immigrants in the late nineteenth century
* Know the origins of immigration restrictions in the U.S.

Links to American Literature

*During the two hours he had been there, on the busy wharf crowded with buyers and sellers and fishermen and commission men and market owners, he had spoken to no one and asked no questions. That was only common sense and reasonable caution. This was 1910 and San Francisco, and he was Chinese. He lived and breathed and walked and talked by sufferance, and there was no moment in his life when he was not alert and wary. . . .*

*He went to the door of the shanty, took off his hat, and knocked. . . .*

*"Well?" . . .*

*"Please, sir, with all humility, may I announce that my name is Feng Wo. I am thirty-four years old and in good health, and I am a bookkeeper."*

*"What the ... —"*

*"Please, sir, please do not send me away without hearing my argument. Here in the News"*

*—he held out the paper—"here I read your advertisement." "The ad says four p.m."*

*"And 1 am Chinese."*

*"You sure . . . are," Lavette agreed.*

*"And if 1 appeared at four, as the advertisement says, there would be ten Caucasians here. Then who would hire a Chinese bookkeeper?"*

*— HOWARD FAST, The Immigrants*

 As industry grew, so did America's cities. Between 1870 and 1900, the urban population doubled. Crowding, poverty, and unemployment became pressing problems, especially for the immigrants who faced a difficult road as they tried to cope with a new language, new customs, and prejudice. Understanding the nation’s immigrants is an important key to understanding of people.

Introduction

 Between 1880 and 1915 immigration patterns changed. A massive wave of immigrants arrived in the United States and caused tremendous controversy. It was not the numbers of people entering the country to take up residence that bothered Americans, because the proportion of immigrants to native-born Americans remained at about 12 percent. What caused controversy were two conditions. First, there were considerable cultural differences between this group of immigrants and those who preceded them. Second, most of the new immigrants were concentrated in certain geographical areas, which made for political and economic friction.

Millions of Immigrants

 Wealthy people had an easy life in the growing cities. Middle-class families lived in the new apartment houses and in row houses. Poor people were confined to dark and overcrowded tenements. As cities grew, elevated railways and electric trolleys met transportation needs. Water and sanitation problems still had to be solved. Crime was common. Large cities like Chicago suffered major fires because most buildings were still made of wood. More and more African Americans migrated to the cities. After 1890, customs and prejudices forced these black people to live in segregated areas.

 Local governments proved inept at handling city problems. Incredibly rapid growth put great strains on outdated ways of governing. Politicians gave favors to people in exchange for votes. Political machines took over in many cities, especially in New York. The nation's largest city came under the rule of a political machine called Tammany Hall.

Its Boss Tweed ran corrupt schemes for the construction of public buildings. The Tweed Ring pocketed enormous amounts of money at the expense of the taxpayers. Eventually the New York Times exposed Tweed, and he went to prison.

A Difficult Beginning

 Huge numbers of immigrants came to the United States between 1880 and 1915. They met hostility from native-born Americans because they seemed so different. Many of the new immigrants did not speak English. Many believed in a different kind of Christianity, namely Catholicism. Many were Jews. A few came from Asia. Most of the new immigrants settled in cities in the Northeast and lived together in ethnic neighbourhoods. Their trip across the Atlantic and their inspection at Ellis Island often involved great suffering. For many immigrants, however, the most difficult experience was seeing their children grow up differently from the way they did.

 The immigration of political radicals, Catholics, and Asians led to demands for a new immigration policy. This hostility was especially strong in New England. In California many white Americans demanded that immigration of Chinese be stopped. Beginning in 1882, Congress passed several acts to prevent more Chinese people from entering the country. Both the California government and the federal government took steps to limit the number of Japanese immigrants as well. This resistance to the “yellow peril” caused great hostility in Japan. President Theodore Roosevelt tried to restore peace with the Gentlemen’s Agreement.

Question and Critical Thinking

1. What important cultural differences existed between native-born Americans and new immigrants?

2. How did the “melting pot” concept differ from the “mixed salad” concept?

3. From an economic standpoint, why did many native-born workers resent the influx of new immigrants?

4. What made adjusting to life in the United States difficult for the new immigrants?

5. What groups were represented in the “us against them” mentality of nativism in the

1880’s?

6. In the 1880’s, what helped to cause feelings of anti-Catholicism?

7. Why did President Cleveland veto a bill that would have imposed a literacy test on immigrants?

8. What were the terms of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882?

9. Were nativists’ fears of the new immigrants justified? Were the nativists’ actions that were based on these fears justified? Explain.

References

Antin, Mary. (1980).*The Promised Land Salem*, N.H.: Ayer Publishing

Beard, Annie E. (1968). *Our Foreign Born Citizens*. New York: Crowell Jr. Books

Coppa, Frank J., and Thomas J. Curran. (1976). *The Immigrant Experience in America*. Boston: Twayne

 Neidle, Cecyle S. (1976*). America's Immigrant Women.* New York: Hippocrene Books

Paper. Strasser, Susan. (1982). *A/ever Done: A History of American Housework*. New York: Pantheon Books

Riis, Jacob. (1983). *The Making of an American*. Philadelphia: Century Bookbindery