



Summary

TELESCOPING THE TIMES *Immigrants and Urbanization*

CHAPTER OVERVIEW *The population rises as immigrants supply a willing workforce for urban industrialization and a political base for many urban politicians. Abuses in local and national government prompt calls for reform.*

① The New Immigrants

MAIN IDEA *Immigration from Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, and Mexico reached a new high in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*

Between 1870 and 1920, about 20 million Europeans immigrated to the United States. Many of them came from eastern and southern Europe, which had not provided large numbers of immigrants before. Some, like Jews, fled religious persecution. Others escaped economic hardship. Some were leaving Europe full of ideas for reform and political freedom.

About 300,000 Chinese immigrants came from 1851 to 1883. Thousands of immigrants came from Japan as well. From 1880 to 1920, about 260,000 immigrants came from the Caribbean. Many Mexicans also came to the United States. About a million immigrants came from 1910 to 1930 to escape political turmoil in Mexico.

Most immigrants traveled by steamship, riding in steerage—the cargo holds below the ship's waterline. Conditions were cramped, with little light or air, and unclean. Many people suffered from disease. Those who arrived in New York were processed at Ellis Island. The process, which took about five hours, determined whether they could enter the country or had to return.

Asian immigrants arriving on the West coast were processed at Angel Island near San Francisco. Conditions were more unpleasant than at Ellis Island, and the processing was stricter.

Once in the United States, immigrants felt confused and worried by the new culture. Many settled in communities with other immigrants from the same country to feel more at home. They also formed organizations to help each other.

While immigrants were arriving in great numbers, anti-immigration feelings spread among some Americans. During the depression of the 1870s, many workers feared they would lose their jobs to Chinese immigrants, who accepted low wages. In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act,

banning all but a few Chinese immigrants. The ban was not lifted until 1943. The United States and Japan reached a "Gentlemen's Agreement" in 1907 and 1908 under which Japan restricted migration to the United States.

② The Challenges of Urbanization

MAIN IDEA *The rapid growth of cities forced people to contend with problems of housing, transportation, water, and sanitation.*

Most of the new immigrants moved to the nation's cities to get work in the growing industrial economy. It was also cheaper and more convenient for them to live in cities. By 1910, immigrants made up more than half of the populations of 18 different cities. Many settled in neighborhoods with others from the same country—even from the same province.

As city populations rose, overcrowding sometimes resulted. Another movement helped swell urban populations. As efficient machines increased farm production, they also cost farm jobs. As a result, many people moved from farms to cities. About 200,000 of these new urban dwellers were African Americans leaving the South for Northern cities. They hoped to escape racial violence but found prejudice and low wages in their new homes as well.

The growing cities had many problems. There were housing shortages, and many urban property owners converted single family homes into multi-family apartments. These solutions often placed people in crowded conditions, full of filth and disease. Growing populations created transportation problems as well. As the cities continued to grow, the transit systems could not always keep up.

City officials also had difficulty obtaining enough clean water. Cities began to clean and filter the water and insist on indoor plumbing, but these steps spread slowly. Removing waste and garbage was another problem.