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Late 19th Century New York

The book *City of dreams* by Tyler Anbinder presents a fascinating chronology of the immigration events that unfolded in New York City during the 19th century. The author details richly the story of the European immigrants and their integral role towards shaping today's prominent New York City. Characterized by the themes of immigration, civil war, religion and liberty, the book portrays how the clash between diversity and social fragmentation contributed towards shaping a diverse New York. The author further uses personal stories of prominent individuals to illustrate the city as one founded by immigrants determined to make it their permanent home. The 19th century immigrants to New York amassed wealth and established prominent markets thus laying the foundation for today's diverse and heavily mechanized New York City.

The Irish, the German, the Dutch, and the Jews found their way into New York in the early 1820's after fleeing the economic hardships and warfare in Europe. Indeed, by 1823, a vast majority had already settled in Manhattan where they conducted barter trade despite their language disparities. These war-shattered, famine-ravaged immigrants settled in New York diffusing their culture on the Native Americans. Irish immigrants, just as the other immigrants who survived the revolutionary war settled in and started their much-anticipated social life.

Another commonality between the Irish and the other immigrants is that they suffered from grave bigotry and marginalization from the Native Americans. These were viewed as primitive thus stereotyped in social places. They were crowded in third rated districts and lived in filthy houses whose 'side walls were frightfully decorated with traces of blood and mutilated remains' (Anbinder 3). Lastly, the immigrant men worked as laborers in the cotton and beer factories where they earned meager salaries.

On the other hand, the Irish immigrants made up the largest immigrant population in New York. By 1823, the Irish were 400, 000, a number that toppled over that of the other immigrants combined. However, as opposed to the German immigrants who had the resources to settle in St. Louis and Ciccinrati, the Irish had no resources to go beyond the Manhattan port. By 1856, they had spread all over Manhattan living in poor social conditions. The Germans and the Dutch however, were concentrated in a city that was later dubbed Kleindeutschland. According to Anbinder, 'the German were literate, skilled and equipped with capital thus, led by the Gompers family, ventured in the tobacco and grocery business' (4). As regards politics, the Irish were quick to jump into the US political arena where they formed a strong democratic voting block and demanded to have a leader who would voice their concerns to the government. They were politically violent and chaotic as opposed to the Germans and the Jews who remained peaceful and less concerned about national politics. Indeed, in 1860, they violently sought for patronage, a move that saw to John Clancy and John Kelly successfully elected to the offices of city clerk and town sheriff respectively. Another difference is founded on how the Native Americans viewed the Irish people in contrast with how they saw the rest of the immigrants. American's swayed grave animosity towards the Irish people because they viewed their protestant belief and hunger for power as threats to their social and economic positions. The Germans and the Dutch on the

other hand, though still disregarded by the American anti-foreigners policy, were favored and allowed to assimilate their culture throughout America.

In conclusion, Anbinder writes the informatively titled book, the city of dreams, to signify New York as the designation for the immigrants. In chapter 9-12 specifically, he focuses on the German and the Irish immigrants in relation to their immigration patterns, political affiliations, as well as religious stands while in New York. The Germans, the Dutch, and the Europeans were literate, business oriented, and less politically involved as opposed to the Irish who despite their illiteracy, posed a threat to the American natives owing to their greed for power. Overall, the immigrant's innovation activities, triumphant wins, as well as social deprivations play out at the heart of New York thus contributing towards its present day prominence.

Work cited

Anbinder, Tyler. City Of Dreams. 1st. Harcourt: Houghton Mifflin, 2016.

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