Steve Yeh 1/7/13

Ms. Finneran Intro Paragraph

Millions of immigrants poured into the United States during the Post-Civil War Era. Many, like the Irish, faced famines. The Jewish from Russia faced pogroms, of government-encouraged attacks on Jewish villages. Many immigrants, such as the persecuted Jewish, were fervent of the freedom of religion. Before, many immigrants lived in lands where the police could arrest anyone without reason. Political unrest caused many other Europeans to travel onboard ships to Ellis Island to seek refuge. Other immigrants came for an improved quality of life and job opportunities. As a result, numerous soon-to-be citizens thought America as the “land of opportunity”. But, as soon as the new waves of émigré set foot on Ellis or Angel Island, they would have to find a way to overcome the many hardships to come. Many of the new U.S. citizens settled in ethnic ghettoes and slums in cities. They lived in tenements, apartments where it was usually overcrowded and awfully unsanitary. Immigrants worked in factories where the managers treated them as machines. For example, working conditions included no ventilation, hazardous machines, overworking and violations of safety regulations, if there even were any. Also, only the minority of the immigrants knew how to speak English. Nativists discriminated immigrants, accusing them of stealing jobs from white Protestant Americans. Nativists thought that the immigrants would not fit in American society, that their cultures were too dissimilar. Immigrants found it hard to be assimilated into American society. They couldn’t write, read or speak in English. Myriads of immigrants arrived in America with high hopes and aspirations, who also found countless numbers of hardships, struggles and obstacles.