



Faces of Community: Immigrant Massachusetts 1860-2000

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For hundreds of thousands of immigrants, coming to Massachusetts has meant exchanging one community for another in multiple ways that are often overlooked. Whether home was originally an Irish tenant farm or the slave quarters of a Southern plantation or an Eastern European ghetto, whether its mention evoked warm memories or nightmares, immigration has required adopting a new identity consonant with new circumstances. Men who considered themselves Milanese moved to Boston's North End and became Italian Americans; women who identified themselves with County Cork turned into Irish Americans when Worcester became their hometown. The identities that immigrants adopted demarcated the outlines of their new communities. This collection of essays explores some of the communities that Massachusetts immigrants created for themselves in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Contributions investigate how individual immigrant settlements came about and how groups interacted with one another as well as how newcomers were received. The essays also assess how immigration affected those who experienced it, the men and women who gave up the rhythms of their birthplaces in favor of the pulsing beat of their adopted homeland.

Because the Bay State was a primary destination for immigrants during the social reorganization caused by industrial and urban development, the volume offers important case studies, with national significance, of how newcomers and natives adjusted to each other and reshaped the boundaries of American communities. The collection explores the common aspects of community creation and development that linked their various ethnic experiences-Irish, French Canadian, Jewish, Italian, Swedish, and African American.

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