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**COMMUNITIES AND NEW AMERICANS:
THE PROCESS OF JOINING AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES
AMONG 1880-1920 IMMIGRANTS AND WORLD WAR II REFUGEES**

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During the late 19th and early 20th century, the United States faced substantial changes in the nature of European immigration to the country. Unlike previous phases of immigration, many of the European arrivals were from Southern and Eastern Europe, and as a result struggled to identify existing culture groups or resources to assist in the adjustment process. World War II brought new changes to America's migrants from Europe, as first refugees fleeing Nazi Germany and later Displaced Persons fleeing the instability of postwar Europe moved to the country. They too faced novel challenges as they arrived in the country, having to adapt to a new nation without the benefit of a more deliberate transition than was available to their predecessors.

Due to the circumstances that each period of migration encountered, both phases developed their own unique adjustment process. Immigrants during the earlier period of migration commonly developed entire neighborhoods, with their origins in all-male boardinghouses which single men used to cut housing costs. In contrast, while Displaced Persons did build their own communities, they also had more opportunities to integrate into existing structures. However, despite major differences in both the type and timing of their movement to the United States, immigrants and refugees nonetheless also shared some commonalities in their efforts to adjust to America. Both groups participated in community building efforts, often in an effort to both establish cultural connections with their European pasts and to address shortcomings in whatever existing institutions offered new arrivals. The distribution of immigrants and refugees provides another commonality, with both groups concentrating in cities and urban areas for economic and cultural reasons, and resisting efforts by American observers to suppress the trend.