

“We have enough dirt, misery, crime, sickness and death of our own”:
How the Irish Immigrants were Portrayed in 19th Century America –
A Thematic Analysis of New York Times Articles.

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Abstract for Master's Thesis

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<p>Abstract: Irish immigrants formed a large part of the poor in America after they were forced to migrate due to the Great Famine (1845-1852). The aim of this study was to bring insight into how Irish immigration and immigrants were portrayed in America in the 19th century. This was done by analysing <i>New York Times</i> articles between the years 1850 and 1900 that discussed the Irish immigrants and Ireland.</p> <p>The study was conducted by means of thematic analysis, which is systematic and objective when quantifying extensive data. This approach meant that the analysis was divided into smaller content-related categories that each have their own pattern of meaning. An inductive method was used for the analysis, meaning that the themes were determined by their occurrence in the data, making this type of analysis purely data-driven, without trying to fit into pre-existing categories.</p> <p>The thesis finds that there is an abundance of sometimes overlapping ways in which the Irish immigrants are discussed and portrayed in the media. These portrayals included instances of racism, prejudice, and all kinds of stereotypes, while also noting positive features such as the immigrants proving to be useful as labour. America often prided itself on its role as a haven and saviour for refugees from around the world. This data reveals a very different picture: while their heart and passion could be found to be good and pure, the immigrants could also face anti-immigrant sentiments in their work, in their homes and especially toward their Catholic religion. The immigrants were readily objectified into tools or plants, and called dirty, criminally inclined, or morally and mentally crippled. The Irish immigrants were not portrayed as victims of unjust systems, but rather they were considered to be mere paupers and as such they are to blame for their own misfortune.</p> <p>The research concludes that many of the ways in which the immigrants were discussed and portrayed in the media are extremely similar to how they are discussed in the 21st century. The research also finds that the Irish immigrants slowly started to gain a more trusted position in American society once they started to assimilate to their surroundings and they became more American in their manners.</p>	
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1. Introduction

From the mid-19th century to the first decades of the 20th century, Irish immigrants formed a large part of the poor in America. Irish migrants have travelled to America from as early as the 1820s, but the majority of the influx of Irish immigrants came from the beginning of 1845 due to the Potato Famine, or the Great Famine (1845–1852). Its effects on Ireland and America were devastating even after the famine as the population of Ireland faced an unimaginable suffering. America and Ireland have a complicated history together. In this thesis, this history is explored further from the perspective of Americans, looking specifically into how the Irish immigrants were portrayed in newspaper articles between 1850 and 1900. From this portrayal, the relationship between immigrants and the Americans is analysed and discussed further. It is analysed through a thematic analysis of selected data from the *New York Times* Article archives.

Accounts of immigration and racism constantly occur together in the media and as such there are almost endless possibilities for studies in this area. For this thesis, a historical viewpoint was paired with a thematic analysis with the aim of bringing insight into how immigration and immigrants are discussed specifically in America. I have looked at how the Irish immigrants were depicted and for example what kind of stereotypes were drawn upon when describing the Irish during the tumultuous times in America in the 19th century. America often prided itself on its role as a haven and saviour for refugees from around the world. This data reveals a vastly different picture: while their heart and passion could be found to be good and pure, the immigrants could also face anti-immigrant sentiments in their work, in their homes and especially toward their Catholic religion. The discussion around immigrants is still alarmingly similar to this day.

The thesis is structured as follows: in section 2, there is a thorough background for historical perspective on the Irish migration and what was in store for them in America. It provides a historical context for the thesis and the necessary information to understand the data and the analysis. In section 3, the methods and materials used for this thesis is discussed along with details of the thematic analysis. In section 4, there is a thorough and detailed analysis of the data, divided into categories decided by the type of thematic analysis chosen for the thesis. Section 5 provides a discussion on the general outline of the analysis and the topic's cultural and historical significance. Section 6 outlines the broader conclusions drawn from the research and suggests possible future studies.

2. Background

2.1. Great Famine

Due to the Great Famine, large numbers of Irish men, women and children immigrated to other countries in search of refuge. They were a dominant presence in the United States and in England, and “they were also among the poorest and most disadvantaged people that either country had ever hosted, especially during the traumatic generation from 1845 through the 1870s” (Casey & Lee, 2006: 364). The Great Famine of Ireland profoundly changed the country. Ireland’s poorest people were dependent on the potato as their nutrition and “the potato, an excellent source of nutrition, met 60 per cent of the food needs of the Irish population on the eve of the famine” (Holmes, 2004: 13). Approximately one-third of the Irish agricultural efforts were devoted to the potato (Gibney, 2017) and in 1845 when a potato blight hit Ireland and a substantial portion of the crop failed, it meant that millions of people would die of starvation and diseases. “Those that died tended to be the poorest people and they lived in the Gaelic-speaking districts of the South and West. Those who were a step up on the socioeconomic ladder were able to emigrate” (Holmes, 2004: 13). The Irish population decreased from approximately 8.2 million people in 1841 to 6.5 million in 1851 (Gibney, 2017). A large portion of the decrease in population is to do with malnutrition, starvation, and diseases, but it is also due to large scale emigrations from Ireland. Poor potato harvests were present in the 1820s and 1830s but the potato crop’s failure in the 1840s was drastic. “In 1845, 2.4 million acres were devoted to growing potatoes in Ireland; by 1847, thanks to the ravages of the blight, that number had collapsed to 284,000 acres. In 1845 perhaps a third to a fourth of the crop failed, prompting emergency relief measures [...]” (Gibney, 2017: 144). These emergency relief measures were barely adequate and thus ineffective in helping the Irish.

The export of cash crops continued during the early years of the famine, which resulted in riots and unrest, and in the end, the British garrison stationed in Ireland had almost doubled in size as money was more widely used on security rather than on famine relief (Gibney, 2017). The general outlook on the famine from the point of view of the British was that the “famine was the unavoidable consequence of various Irish social evils” and that “the relief of the famine was a responsibility that should fall upon the shoulders of Irish landlords” (Gibney, 2017: 145). Many regarded the famine as man-

made and there was a sense that England might have been glad to be rid of the ‘wretched’ Irish and thus did very little to help in the disaster (O’Brien & O’Brien, 1994): “Thou shalt not kill; but need’st not strive officiously to keep alive” (Clough & Phelan, 2013: 264). The famine was historically perhaps unavoidable and inevitable but the scale at which it occurred would probably have benefited from more determined governmental action.

The Irish were a major source of labour for Britain and the United States even before the famine, and most of those who migrated were under the age of thirty. There is unfortunately no way of knowing how many Irish migrants there were before the famine as the immigration statistics before the year 1855 are not very trustworthy as there were no proper guidelines for censuses etc. (Bielenberg, 2014). But it is safe to say that during and after the famine the number of migrants increased significantly and the idea of a typical (young male) migrant changed to include women, children, and the elderly. More of the migrants were Catholics rather than Protestants, and more of the migrants were Irish speakers than not (Gibney, 2017). The poorest areas in the country were most affected by the famine but they also had drastically low numbers in emigration as the people were simply too poor to afford to leave. Few migrants received financial aid for the passage. The north-eastern parts of America were popular destinations for the Irish, especially New York, as it received around 900,000 Irish immigrants between the years 1845 and 1855. A recession in America in the 1870s saw a lowered number of Irish immigrants, but between the 1840s and 1870s mass emigration began and became prominent. However, the number of immigrants mentioned are mere estimates, as for example in a census in 1870 (according to Bielenberg), the people were asked only a yes or no question on whether they had foreign-born parents, without asking where they were from (Bielenberg, 2014). In 1819, the Immigration Act (which became effective in 1820) stated that all migrant ships to America had to have passenger lists or manifests that included the sex, age, occupation and country of origin or nativity of all the passengers they had aboard the ship. There were misconceptions about what ‘nativity’ meant (whether it be country of birth, citizenship, or simply long-term residence) and thus the data could be rather inconclusive. And the ships were filled with countless migrants and not all of them were necessarily included in the passenger lists (Bielenberg, 2014). There is thus no way of knowing how many of the Irish migrated before 1855 when a new Immigration Act was put into effect.

The famine changed the way in which land was inherited in Ireland. Before the famine, the land available was divided among all the sons of the family which resulted in often very small plots of land that did not produce a lot of food or income (Holmes, 2004). During the famine and after it there were fewer options available as usually only the oldest son would inherit land on the farm, leaving the other children at risk. If one was not the oldest son, the work choices available in Ireland were very limited. Even religious bigotry was a factor in job opportunities because most of the jobs went to Protestants (Holmes, 2004). Faced with the prospect of not inheriting anything, and lacking good options in Ireland, many were forced to emigrate from the country. Many of the people who did not inherit anything earned the money for passage to America and left the country with very little to their name, bringing only a few items of clothing, cutlery, and a plate with them (Holmes, 2004). Irish emigration could also be seen as a kind of exile. The Irish custom of ‘waking,’ watching, the dead, was also used in the context of emigration as the ‘American wake’ was held for the person emigrating in the same way as for someone who had deceased (National Museum of Ireland, 2023). The emigration process was seen with a sense of finality, that those who emigrated were likely not to come back.

2.2. Coming to America

The Irish emigrants made the journey to America in so-called ‘coffin ships’ that had a poor reputation due to the many lives lost in the shipwrecks across the sea (Holmes, 2004). The six to eight-week journey was difficult, with very few rations for the overcrowded ships, and poor ventilation and many fell ill during their journey. “John Solan, who settled in Shields in Dodge County, left Co. Mayo with his father, mother, and two brothers. His baby brother died after hitting his head while disembarking from the ship. His mother died en route from Albany to Buffalo of a “raging fever” most likely caught onboard the ship, and his older brother died of fever shortly after they settled in Wisconsin” (Holmes, 2004: 17). After the 1830s many Irish first travelled to Liverpool and made their way from there to New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. During the famine, many travelled from Limerick, Sligo, Westport, Killala and Kinsale. Only in 1858 was it possible for the Irish emigrant to travel to America from Belfast, Queenstown (Cobh), or Galway (National Museum of Ireland, 2023).

An Irish immigrant was likely to identify themselves according to the county or area they came from, meaning that for example a male immigrant coming to New York

would have identified himself as a 'Corkman' or 'Kerryman' rather than the all-encompassing 'Irishman.' These distinctions were not recognized by the Americans, so any immigrant from Ireland was simply an Irishman (Holmes, 2004), which is also visible in the articles studied for this thesis, where the Irish are usually only spoken about as Irish without any distinctions. However, discrimination from the Americans may have brought the Irish population more closely together and the distinctions and specifications slowly started to dissolve. More Catholics than Protestants migrated from Ireland to America in the early nineteenth century (Holmes, 2004). Many of the Americans were Anglo-Saxon and as such their religious background and cultural aspects were similar in nature to the British population. Both tended to see Catholicism as an anti-democratic religion promoting superstition, and ignorance and overall, it was seen as dangerous. But for Irish immigrants, the Catholic church was a beacon of hope in America, providing comfort and a sense of familiarity and they took control of the Catholic church in America quite quickly upon their arrival (Holmes, 2004).

Emigrant Industrial Savings Bank (EISB) has data suggesting that even the poorest immigrants were keen on saving money and were often able to gain substantial sums in America, meaning that the traditional stereotype of the Irish being ridden with poverty in the slums might not have been entirely true (Wegge et al., 2017). Of course, many of the poorest people would not have enough money to deposit anything or even think about depositing. The EISB was founded by Irish Americans as The Irish Emigrant Society was worried about the mistreatment of Irish Americans and Irish immigrants at other savings institutions, due to anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic prejudices (Wegge et al., 2017). Deposits for the EISB were accepted in New York City from the 30th of September 1850 onwards, and most of the depositors were immigrants and especially recent arrivals from Ireland after the famine. According to the database by EISB, 43% of all New York City Irish-born male immigrants in 1855 were 'unskilled workers', 41% were artisans, and 8% were business owners, and the rest fell under the categories of professionals, lower-status white collars, petty entrepreneurs, or 'difficult to classify' (Wegge et al., 2017). Many of the largest savers in the EISB were indeed unskilled workers and many of them were women. The Irish tended to be unskilled workers and as such they usually worked as common labourers, for example as needleworkers, shoemakers, and domestic servants. The people with more skills were often carpenters, plasterers, or bricklayers (Casey & Lee, 2006). In America, most of the work indeed was to erect buildings, working on paved streets, railways and so on. It was work that did not

require much expertise or finesse but provided some payment. “Underpaid and miserably housed, they were not only despised by native-born workers but exploited by contractors and foremen” (Casey & Lee, 2006: 354).

“Irish immigrants formed communities in the relegated and marginalized spaces they were given and lived in cramped tenements that were fraught with unsanitary conditions.” (Brighton, 2008: 132). This naturally resulted in several diseases becoming epidemic in nature as the environmental conditions were often so poor. As such, the outbreaks caused unrest among the Americans and in turn, they became stereotypical of the Irish-born and the Americans created moral judgements and prejudices toward the Irish. Medically speaking, it is now understood how diseases spread and what the root causes for diseases were, but from a historical perspective a person’s lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, and class were believed to be the main factors to cause illness (Brighton, 2008). The Irish were seen as naturally and morally inferior as so many epidemics were somehow linked to them and thus they became a threat to the health and security of Americans themselves. For example, typhus was referred to as the “Irish fever” in 19th-century New York and Philadelphia (Brighton, 2008). The Irish Catholics were increasingly alienated from access to medical treatment, for example. The situation in America was not just an “us” versus “them” issue, but rather one of the “dominant” versus “subordinate”. The Irish not having the access to basic medical treatment and being more or less alienated from the American-born meant that there was a significant social and economic gap between them, resulting in slow advancements in society and at the same time even more prejudice (Brighton, 2008). The Irish were often forced to rely on public dispensaries in case of outbreaks and epidemics. In Brighton’s (2008) view, contact and conflicts between the American-born, the dominant, and the Irish, the subordinate, created social boundaries enforced by marginalized spaces. However, the gap was not all bad, as the Irish for example in a residency area called Five Points in New York, were able to establish a national identity and a sense of community through their shared experiences.

America was growing fast in population and also in wealth. Though it was not yet an exporting country, it had a large internal market that consumed everything that would be produced, resulting in industrialisation in the 1850s, particularly in New York, Pennsylvania, and New England (Keegan, 2011). Change, growth, and expansions were the main themes of America during that time and the society was constantly in motion. People moved from the eastern parts to the western parts of America, from farms to factories, from Germany, Scandinavia and Ireland to America and it was a constant

movement of people everywhere (Parish, 2020). For example, Chicago in 1830 did not exist at all, but by 1860 it was a city of 100,000 inhabitants. “The problem of the mid-nineteenth century was how to accommodate economic progress, territorial expansion, and constant social change with the ideals and the unique blessings with which the Union had been born” (Parish, 2020). These pressures had a high impact on the growing country and meant that there were many things unaccounted for and in progress, making it difficult to navigate especially for immigrants. According to Peter J. Parish (2020), anti-immigrant feeling in the United States usually has tended to intensify in crisis situations and the Civil War (1861-1865) and the pre-Civil War period was certainly no exception to that. American-born citizens were concerned about the immigrants taking jobs, lowering wages, and diminishing the amount of housing available and how the immigrants might change the American way of life.

The transportation revolution meant that in 1840, travelling between New York city and Chicago would have taken around two weeks, while in 1860 it took two days (Parish, 2020). Economic growth and alignment within the continent were unimaginable and the railroads helped form the country. Industrialisation made industrial worker become a distinct section in society, working on products for example in New England textile mills or in iron foundries in Pennsylvania, flour mills and shoe factories and so on (Parish, 2020). In America beliefs in individualism, liberty, democracy, and equality were faltering underneath the pressure from industrial developments and the rising number of immigrants, and furthermore, there was no visible, clear threat to the United States’ external security, making it all the easier to concentrate on expanding opportunities and prosper. However, there was little to no stability in the country, as it was a very young country in the middle of major changes to its structure, mobility, and population: “American government and society were an impressive edifice, rapidly built on solid foundations, but its structural weakness lay in the shortage of cement to bind the fabric together, or of durable mortar to hold the bricks in position in face of stormy weather or human wear and tear” (Parish, 2020: 25). New York, Philadelphia, and Boston were the major cities of America, and New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts were the leading manufacturing states within the United States. Those cities were also the leading destinations for immigrants. It is important to note that Irish immigrants were coming into a country with great instability that finally led to the American Civil War, caused by social, economic, and political differences between the northern and southern states in America. The north (Union) was an industrialized machine whereas the south

(Confederacy) was reliant on agriculture and slave labour. The immigrants came to a country where the political scene was full of tension and anti-immigrant sentiments due to the crisis at hand. The Irish immigrants often worked on the same projects as the slave labourers in the South and: “All over the South, Irishmen were used as substitutes for slaves in more dangerous tasks like draining plantations, building levees, and digging ditches and canals in malaria-infested land. Compared to the valuable investment of a slave, an Irish laborer was cheap and expendable” (Casey & Lee, 2006: 355). Irish immigrant labour was cheaper as the immigrants paid their own trip to America, they paid their own upkeep, and there was a continuous influx of them to America. So, even if some of them died or fell ill while digging ditches in malaria-infested land, there would be more labour on its way. Furthermore, the Irish immigrants did also fight back against their exploitation with violence, during the early industrialization of America. They retaliated against their supervisors if they were late in payment through destroying all the work that they had done already (Casey & Lee, 2006). These factors can be seen to promote the idea that the Irish were naturally prone to violence and were thus criminally inclined.

America had remained quite English in its institutions, tastes and especially prejudices. Americans remained loyal to the Protestant religion and as such, their prejudice was mainly directed towards Irish Catholics, as a result of which for example Irish Catholic churches and convents were set on fire by working-class Protestant Americans (Brighton, 2008). An example of the prejudice toward Catholics was the Know-Nothing party, an American political party active during the years 1850-1860. The party had strong anti-immigrant and especially anti-Roman Catholic sentiments and it flourished in the 1850s with the rising number of immigrants (primarily Germans and Irish) coming to America. The economic and political security of Protestant Americans seemed to be at risk due to the immigrants (Britannica, 2023). The members of the party were prompted to reply that they knew nothing when asked about the organization and its functions. The party was also known as the “American Party” after 1855 and its main policy was to restrict immigration and exclude foreign-born people from voting or holding public office. They also wanted to establish a 21-year residency requirement before it would be possible for immigrants to gain citizenship.

The anti-Irish sentiments resulted in unemployment, job shortages and significant financial insecurity, especially during times of economic depression, when anti-immigrant sentiments flourished. The unemployed and unskilled working poor were easily used as scapegoats for financial troubles as they were considered to be a financial

burden to the American economy (Brighton, 2008). In general, the Irish Catholics were considered to be a part of a priest-controlled machine, in which Americans thought that the Catholics were plotting to overthrow all non-Catholic governments, heightening the tensions between them. A stereotype of the Irish being wild and barbarous became more prominent and became an obstacle for the Irish immigrants trying to survive within the firm foundation of stereotypical viewpoints. The idea that the Irish arriving on American soil were an invasion of the American way of life, and a social plague or even a cultural tumour, was evident. Being poor, unemployed, and living in overcrowded areas was thought to be the fault of the individual, and it was believed that the causes of poverty were not at all beyond an individual's control (Brighton, 2008). According to Brighton, the poor were classified as either unworthy or worthy of help (2008). The people who were unworthy of help were able-bodied men and women and the people worthy of help were for example unmarried women, invalids, and widows with young children, that is, people who had predicaments that were beyond their control. In general, the cause of poverty in America was often deemed to be the fault of the influx of unskilled Irish Catholic immigrants. At a later point, reformers started to realize how the environment affected poverty but still implied that "disease equaled low status and ignorance and, in most cases, had more to do with a chosen lifestyle of the tenement dweller rather than the conditions created by absentee landlords and uncaring municipal health officials" (Brighton, 2008: 137). In reality, the lack of health care in poor neighbourhoods was mostly based on socioeconomic status and was not a result of choice. These are the main outlines needed for the context in the analysis of the data in this thesis. The following chapter provides a closer look into the methods and material that were used for the research.

3. Methods and Material

For this thesis, the chosen method for analysing the data is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis in this case will help provide rich and detailed accounts of data, which would otherwise be laborious and time-consuming to analyse. The analysis is a method for “identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79). Its systematic and objective means of quantifying and describing data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007), work well within the scope of this thesis and its data. The thematic analysis allows for extensive, written data to be distilled into smaller content-related categories and through these, it is possible to find repeated patterns of meaning (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007, Braun & Clarke, 2006). The aim of this type of analysis is to gather a condensed description of the phenomenon at hand and the outcome is categories that describe the phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). For this thesis, the analysis is done in a way that produces smaller categories and for each category, there is a specific meaning. This meaning is specified, structured, and explained with examples so that the reader may easily follow the thesis structure. For example, one of the categories is titled “America as a Saviour”, in which there are instances of America being presented as a haven, always willing to help the immigrants.

The analytical process for the thesis was generally quite straightforward. The data (see below) was collected from the *New York Times* Article Archive. I familiarised myself with the data at first, reading and re-reading the articles while noting down initial thoughts and ideas. After the familiarization process was well underway, I generated initial codes, that is, coded “interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code” (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 87). From these codes, it was possible to collate them into potential themes and then gather relevant data pieces for each overarching theme. Reviews, defining and naming of the themes were necessary to make sure that everything was consistent and that the data fit well within each category and made sense.

The New York Times was chosen as the main source for the articles as it has a vast and comprehensive archive and because most of the immigrants came to America through New York City and either travelled forward from there or stayed there. Thus, it was a natural choice through which to study the American perspectives in The New York Times Article Archive. The archive has preserved as many articles as possible, and it is as such a useful source for material. The articles do not have any credits to writers, so it can be

assumed that the articles are representative of the paper itself. And the paper can be seen to represent at least some of the New York inhabitants and their views. In the thesis, the *New York Times* articles represent the American point of view unless otherwise mentioned.

The analysis takes an inductive approach, meaning that the study of data moves from specificity and particular instances toward a larger whole, where the quantified data becomes more easily explained and ties together with the context (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). The inductive method was chosen as it is a recommended analysis method (as opposed to the deductive method) when knowledge is fragmented (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007), as is the case in this thesis where there is a lot of information about the Irish in America but at the same time some things contradict one another and a study of newspaper articles from the 1850s to the 1900s is virtually non-existent. The inductive method is a process where the data is coded without trying to fit it into some pre-existing frame of codes, which means that this type of thematic analysis is purely data-driven and that the codes are decided by the findings in the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007).

For the thesis, 29 newspaper articles were chosen from the New York Times Article Archive. The selection of articles was narrowed down with certain parameters. Firstly, within the article archives the search was set between the years 1850 and 1900. Between those years there is plenty of archive material available and thus the search had to be narrowed down from there. The archives run deep, so it would be impossible to choose every single article for this analysis. Search words and phrases that were used were “Irish immigration”, “Irish emigration”, “Irish + American”, “anti-Irish” and “pro-Irish” which produced several matches. The *New York Times* archive itself suggested the most relevant articles and, in the end, it was a matter of reading through the articles to see if they were eligible to use for the thesis. For example, the search phrase “Irish immigration” produces 164 matches in the archive, but not all of them are eligible as some are impossible to read due to quality, and most of the articles only briefly mention the Irish and move on to discuss something else entirely. The selection of articles was narrowed down to 29 and as such the selected articles had to at least mention the Irish immigrants and they had to be about the Irish in America or in Ireland rather than being correspondence from England or written by an Irish person. The perspectives are thus from a 3rd person perspective, where the Irish are merely talked about, but they are not given a voice themselves. This is because this is a study on the American perspective on the Irish immigrants. A few comments by Irish immigrants are included in the articles but

they can be spun to benefit the ideas of the American perspective. The data could also include articles where the situation in Ireland is discussed in relation to immigration or the potato blight. They could be in the form of letters, announcements, opinion pieces or any other type of writing. The articles chosen could be positive or negative in nature and had to have at least a sentence in which the Irish were mentioned in some way. For example, in one article the Irish immigrants are mentioned in relation to the material benefits that they have brought to America in the form of inexpensive labour. Articles that were discarded included for example those where the Irish immigrants were only briefly mentioned in a list of other immigrants, merely stating for example how many of them had arrived in the past year.

The themes were decided through meticulous reading and re-reading. For example, the theme “America as a saviour” was created after noticing that there were several instances where America was presented in a heroic way, saving the Irish from tyranny or even from themselves. It was a matter of seeing what the selected data contained and then noting down the potential themes and occurrences. Keywords such as “pro-Irish”, or “labour”, or “political”, and so on, were useful in noting down all the different instances of the themes. After reading the articles several times, I created an Excel sheet to keep track of all the different articles I had chosen. I marked an ‘X’ underneath every theme that occurred in each article, to imply that that specific article had something that related to that specific theme. I also used my own colour codes in the articles themselves, so that finding the correct part for each theme would be more efficient. In doing the analysis, I filtered down the articles through different Excel functions for each theme and wrote the analysis accordingly. An image of this Excel sheet is presented below. There are 10 different themes, and the biggest themes are the following: 4.1. Religion & Politics, 4.2. Foreign Criminals, 4.3. America as a Saviour, and finally 4.4. Useful Labour (see chapter 4 for detailed descriptions of all themes). Within these themes it is possible to note that toward the end of the 19th century, the Irish immigrants were more often considered to have political power and to be able to gain political office. Anti-immigrant feeling stayed rather consistent but changed form with the help of the Irish immigrants gaining a steadier hold in the political scene in America. The idea of America being a saviour was strong in the beginning of the 1850s but slowly started to change as more immigrants were warned not to come to America due to it being dangerous. These changes through time are discussed further in the discussion in chapter 5.

	date	Title of New York Times article:	Religion & Politics	Foreign Criminals	America as a Saviour	Useful Labour	Money	Unfortunate Irish	Ungrateful Immigrants	Mistreatment	"Pro-Irish"	The Irish Can Only Blame Themselves
1.	2 April 1852	Ireland in America			X	X		X				
2.	12 October 1852	Grace Greenwood in Ireland – Irish Poverty – O'Connell's Grave – Donnybrook Fair, &c.		X								
3.	13 January 1853	To the Old Folks at Home					X		X			
4.	6 July 1854	Desperate Encounter between Americans and Irish	X	X								
5.	22 March 1854	Emigration – How it Helps us	X		X	X						
6.	21 March 1854	Walks Among the New-York Poor	X			X	X			X		
7.	11 July 1854	Serious Riot between Americans and Irish at Lawrence, Mass.		X								
8.	28 May 1855	Celestial Immigration		X					X			
9.	14 July 1855	Emigration to America	X	X	X	X			X			X
10.	6 October 1855	Irish Emigration	X									
11.	25 April 1855	Immigration Checked			X	X	X	X		X		
12.	18 August 1855	Decrease of Irish Immigration	X		X					X		
13.	10 October 1855	The Lord Lieutenant – Cardinal Wiseman – Quiet In Ireland – Misuse of Public Funds	X				X					
14.	18 January 1856	Irish-Americanism	X	X	X						X	
15.	9 June 1857	Phug-Uglies and Foreigners		X			X				X	
16.	22 February 1858	Foreign Criminals in New-York		X	X	X			X			
17.	3 May 1858	Official Report from Quebec on the Treatment of Immigrants in New-York								X		
18.	21 February 1859	A New Irish Patriot	X	X								
19.	11 August 1861	Irish Stock Running out in Ireland			X	X					X	
20.	24 March 1880	Irish Husbandry	X		X							X
21.	9 May 1883	The Influx of Irish Paupers					X	X	X			X
22.	25 June 1883	Assisted immigration					X	X				X
23.	28 February 1887	"No Irish Need Apply"	X									
24.	21 May 1887	Unwelcome Immigrants					X					
25.	11 June 1887	Not a Home for Paupers	X	X	X							
26.	3 March 1889	Some Typical Irish Bulls		X								
27.	21 February 1892	Restricting Immigration	X	X								
28.	2 November 1896	Scottish-Irish Immigrants	X			X					X	
29.	15 August 1897	A Word of Warning to Irish Girls						X		X		
			14	12	10	8	7	5	5	5	4	4

Table 1. Excel structure for the articles

4. Analysis

The themes, created from the articles in the *New York Times* were created to gain an easily tangible set of data that could be studied. The themes can occur in any of the articles, in several of them, in only parts of them and the themes can also overlap. In this analysis, the codes are the following, **4.1. Religion & Politics**, includes for example descriptions of differences in religion and the Irish gaining seats in the political scene of America. **4.2. Foreign Criminals** can also include general instances of other immigrants, not just the Irish immigrants, but the overarching notion in the instances included are criminal offences and violence. It lists instances where the Irish immigrants are blamed for being “vicious” or otherwise criminally involved in things. **4.3. America as a saviour**, which notes instances where the articles in some way create the understanding that America is a kind of refuge, for example saving the Irish from the tyranny of others, helping them even when the Irish cannot help themselves. **4.4. Useful Labour** consists of articles and instances that note that the Irish immigrants are useful labour in some way or another or that they are generally more useful for America. **4.5. Money** has instances that relate to gaining money or losing money in relation to immigrants. **4.6. Unfortunate Irish**, includes instances where the articles seem to understand the misfortune of the Irish immigrants, calling it unfortunate and sad, and in some cases with the idea that it is not America’s fault. It is sad, but there is little evidence that anything will be done about it. There are also instances where the blame is put on others, where for example, the British government is blamed for the wretched Irish. In **4.7. Ungrateful Immigrants**, the articles touch for example upon the idea that America is providing so much for the Irish immigrants, yet they are ungrateful for all the help they are receiving. **4.8. Mistreatment**, comments upon the possible mistreatment of the Irish for example from a Canadian perspective. In **4.9. “Pro-Irish”**, the theme includes instances where the written text is seemingly positive towards the Irish immigrants but there are undertones and comments that state otherwise. Lastly, in **4.10. The Irish Can Only Blame Themselves**, the instances mentioned are built upon the notion that the Irish are at fault for their own misfortune and that they can only blame themselves for everything that has happened to them. The articles are presented in order of highest frequency of occurrences to lowest frequency.

4.1. Religion & Politics

“Our Irish politicians (or their influence) shut our doors against the Chinamen, but we keep them open to all the criminals, paupers, and exiles of the world. Why should this be so? Is it not time to pass the most stringent immigration laws, permitting only the desirable to land upon our shores and keeping forever out from our land the criminal and pauper element that all foreign powers appear to be dumping upon our country?”
(Restricting Immigration, 21 February 1892)

A reader of the *New York Times* wrote the above to the Editor of the newspaper. In their text, they insist that Irish politicians have shut the doors on people from China, but these same politicians are willing to keep the doors open for criminals, paupers, and exiles from everywhere else. The idea that the reader presents is that there should be some kind of barriers or laws against the “undesirable” immigrants that other countries seem happy to dump on American soil. The reader then comments that “we have enough dirt, misery, crime, sickness, and death of our own, without any of the foreign powers, and it is only such that they are desirous of getting rid of or do send to us” (Restricting Immigration, 21 February 1892). The immigrants are thus seen as dirty, filled with sickness and hatred, and there are already enough of people of that kind in the United States. This theme has 14 articles that have instances that have something to do with religion and politics. Undesirable immigrants are described as being paupers, i.e., very poor, contract labourers, criminals, and other renumerated classes (Not a Home for Paupers, 11 June 1887). Yet, the Irish politicians, or their influence, hold the notion that everyone is welcome on that soil, except of course, the Chinese. Another notable fact is that the article was posted in 1892, meaning that there were Irish people that had been able to become politicians and take their place in society. In another view, the United States has reportedly been open to immigrants due to its economic and political condition, needing more workers and more people ready to carry the society forward, giving favourable opportunities to everyone willing to take a chance:

“The economic and political conditions of the United States have always led the Government to favor immigration, and all persons seeking a new field of effort and coming hither with a view to the improvement of their condition by the free exercise of their faculties have been cordially received”.

(Not a Home for Paupers, 11 June 1887).

Another article, entitled “*No Irish Need Apply*” (28 February 1887), comments that in Massachusetts the Democratic City Government, when apportioning offices for the

politicians, the Irish politicians were the first to gain offices. In itself, it seems surprising that the Irish politicians were served offices first, but one can only guess what the reason for that was; perhaps there were previous Irish politicians who got to decide the order in which the offices were allocated. The ability of the Irish immigrants to practice politics was also brought into question when discussing Irish immigrants, for example, whether they are wise to try to learn the political position and political requirements in a very short period, when there are Americans who have practised and taught themselves everything there is to know about American politics for several years (A New Irish Patriot, 21 February 1859). The lack of offices for non-Irish politicians caused dissatisfaction and an organization called “The Jackson Club” was created. This club’s main message was “No Irish Need Apply” and their purpose was to secure a purely American City Government, according to the article “*No Irish Need Apply*” (28 February 1887). This message was also posted on occasion on job advertisements, to discourage Irish and Catholics from applying for the job, with “Irish and Catholic being deemed equivalent terms” (Casey & Lee, 2006: 336). There were struggles between the Irish immigrant politicians and the American politicians, creating further tension against the immigrants. In similar fashion, the political group called “Know-Nothings”, were against the Irish and their rise to power and for their religion: “a storm of Know-Nothing persecution rages against the Irish and their religion in America, the object of which is to deprive them of many of their civil rights, and if possible make it penal to profess their *faith* openly” (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). The political group are deemed not to be able to continue for long, and the writers of the article believe that the good sense of America will return and that the “bastard policy of the Know-Nothings will speedily die out” (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). The Know-Nothing group wanted to make it illegal for the Irish to profess their faith, Catholicism, and at the same time take away their civil rights in America, making the Irish immigrants face anti-immigrant sentiments and racism on a regular basis. These kinds of sentiments would, of course, not easily die out.

“‘So many more Catholics,’ says one, whose creed is first the hatred, second the fear of Papacy ; – ‘so many more Red Republicans,’ says the conservative, ‘bringing imminent peril to our institutions ;’ – ‘so many more paupers,’ says the purse-proud fellow, who thinks it chief end of man to avoid paying taxes ; – ‘so many more votes against us,’ says the politician of the very old school ; – ‘so many more to knock down our

wages, and increase the price of provisions,' says the workman, who is struggling to support a large an increasing family."

(Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854)

In the above example, the article lists examples of all the ways that the Irish immigrants were generally talked about in America and by whom. So, for example a person filled with hate and fear of papacy, of the Catholic church, would be afraid of the Catholic people coming to America, the conservative concerned about 'Red Republicans' was afraid of more extreme radical Republicans coming to America, and the worker afraid of losing money and support in raising their family would have been worried about the immigrants taking jobs. The article does well in showing in summarizing the variety of views held about the immigrants – and who is likely to hold them, and then it goes on to discuss that while the immigrants do have their 'bad' qualities, they can also be helpful and useful for America. The article discusses how everyone coming to America pays two dollars upon arrival and how the immigrants help the contractors, farmers and the like whilst also referring to the immigrants as plants ready to be plucked or as objects ready to be used for the gain of America (Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854). On the other hand, they are also Catholics, taking positions in politics, they naturally also use the products and help they receive, and with more people available to do work, there naturally is less work available.

The Roman Catholic Church is criticized for not helping the Irish in Ireland, even though the Irish have "contributed ungrudgingly to the support of the Church, of its Pope, and of its local priests – have given, indeed, in proportion to their means more munificently than any other people on earth" (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880). The church is criticized for not helping the Irish, for not giving them something in return, other than spiritual advice in their deepest misery during the Great Famine. It can also be seen that in this article, *Irish Husbandry* (24 March 1880), the Roman Catholic Church is seen as overpowering over the Irish: "its agents are in every town in Ireland, the ear of the people is always open to them, their influence is enormous, their authority unquestioned". The Irish people are seen to be blindly following the Catholic church, never questioning the religion, and there is a sense that the Catholicism is in a way poisoning the Irish with its influence. The Catholic church is also seen as the representative for all of the Irish citizens: "we have the Irish Roman Catholic clergy who [...] represent Irish opinion, declaring their organs in most unmeasured terms", perhaps even without the Irish

realizing it (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856). The same can be seen in the article entitled *Decrease of Irish Immigration* (18 August 1855), where the Roman Catholic priesthood is seen as controlling and overpowering, and that its control would slowly start to poison people in America as well through immigration.

“The Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland were in danger of being left, like the incumbents of a good many “livings” of the Established Church, without any flock over whom they could exercise pastoral control, and they are now endeavoring to arrest the movement towards this country.”

(Decrease of Irish Immigration, 18 August 1855)

In the article *Irish Emigration* (6 October 1855) the writers describe how a Catholic priest in Pennsylvania has urgently discouraged Irish Catholics from migrating to the United States on the basis that the Irish would cease to be Catholics, thus imperilling their salvation in America. The article then states that “we have no disposition here to controvert his views or to dispute the soundness of his arguments. Whatever may be thought of them, we do not doubt that his letter will be read with general interest” (Irish Emigration, 6 October 1855). The matter of salvation, of faith is in a way dismissed as a ‘general interest’, as nothing too serious. So, Catholicism could be seen as an overpowering faith, while at the same time it was just something that the Irish immigrants were held up with perhaps momentarily until they would become more American. By comparison for example in one article a person was described as “a good Protestant, and, I doubt not, a good Christian” (Irish Affairs, 10 October 1855). Protestants are preferred to Catholics, but even so, Protestantism is rarely mentioned in the articles. When talking about religion or the Irish in general, Protestantism does not occur nearly as much as the discussions about the Catholic faith. Catholicism is thought to only be good as long as the people believing in it are good Christians, benevolent, kind to neighbours, full of charity and so on, essentially, they need to have values that were good moral qualities in a person. “The Irish Catholics can maintain the freedom of their faith in the States, if they only act prudently, and warn their newspaper writers to be less intolerant on religious topics” (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). Freedom of faith was only granted if the faith was manifested in a prudent manner that bothered no one and the faith had to be benevolent and full of charity, often meaning it had to be somehow useful for the Americans, so that it was permitted.

One article notes that there had been a fight between a large party of Americans and Irish immigrants. The so-called “desperate encounter” meant that twelve to fifteen of the Irish immigrants’ houses were gutted and the furniture inside them was destroyed. The article then mentions that “the Americans then attacked the Catholic Church, broke all the windows, when the authorities and police stopped the riot. Several Americans were seriously injured” (Desperate Encounter between Americans and Irish, 6 July 1854). The article does not specify why such an event occurred, but the main message was that the Americans and the Irish had fought, which resulted in the Americans attacking Irish homes and a Catholic church. The article also does not specify whether any Irish people were injured in the fight, only that several of the Americans had been seriously injured. It may indicate how much or little they thought about the Irish immigrants, or how brutal and vicious the Irish immigrants could be, injuring the Americans in a serious manner with no damage to the Irish personally, other than their homes and their church. What it does show, however, is the fact that there were cases where the Americans and the Irish immigrants clashed and fought. Not just some occasional fighting on the streets, but more targeted, serious, fighting that also resulted in emptying homes, destroying furniture, and breaking windows in a church. Safety for faith and one’s own home could be easily stripped by the larger party. This was of course not a new sentiment, as is seen in the article entitled *Scotch-Irish Immigrants* (2 November 1896), where in a letter President Eliot of Harvard College states the following “You are doubtless aware that in the eighteenth century most of the American Colonies were distinctly unfriendly to Roman Catholics”. Implying that the situation in the eighteenth century was also dire, though perhaps only “distinctly unfriendly” in an understatement. So, Americans already had an idea of what Catholicism was and that idea was distinctly negative before the Irish immigrants started arriving in large numbers.

“With every deference to the principles of civil and religious liberty which are at the foundation of Republican institutions, it is impossible to look at the bulk of the Irish in America, without finding many apologies for some recent political movements, however much they tend to sacrifice principle at the shrine of expediency.”

(Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856)

In the example above, it is curious to find that the article writes about the Republican institutions having civil and religious liberty at its foundation when in fact there

reportedly was no safety in being able to have your own faith or safety in your home or in your work: “Considered the devious ‘foreign other,’ they were exploited both in the workplace and in the landscape of U.S. cities” (Brighton, 2008: 132). This was especially the case for Irish immigrants, which the article then of course admits to. The article presumably refers to the Know-Nothing movement, which involved anti-immigrant and anti-Roman Catholic sentiments and wanted to restrict immigration and exclude people born in other countries from voting or holding public office. There were also ideas that people needed to be resident in the United States for 21 years before gaining citizenship. Considering the life-expectancy then, and the immigrants likely already being in their 20s upon arrival to America, this did not leave much room for having a citizenship in the United States. The same article as above comments on this thus:

“[...] while there may be excuse for a desire to apply to the acquisition of American citizenship a more stringent test, and so to purge the atmosphere of the political traders who avail themselves of foreigners’ ignorance and superstition to work out their own selfish ends, we cannot withhold our fears that the spirit of religious intolerance which has recently sprung up, is only calculated to neutralize the good influences which the warfare against unwholesome politics might produce.”

(Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856)

The article seems to argue that the more the Americans resist the so-called foreign influence, the more it creates a toxic environment which can result in even more unrest and fighting. The article finds that there may be excuses for a more thorough test for citizenship in America, and that there is also the fear of religious intolerance undoing all the work that has been done to create a more wholesome and fairer political environment in America. The Know-Nothing movement is accused of creating a divided policy that is unfair to the foreign immigrants and takes away the safety to have faith, to have civil rights and to have a citizenship providing an extra safety net. The political scene for the Irish was desperate, and the article also insists that America should deprecate its violent attempts at persecuting immigrants and rather focus more energy on encouraging education against these ideas, with the help and good example of religion “when shorn of earthly guiles and mummeries” (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856). The article sees that the Irish are struggling and the situation against them is unjust and, surprisingly, argues that in this case it is fine to take inspiration from religion, once it has been stripped of earthly guiles. The article does not specify exactly which religion this inspiration

should be taken from, but the main idea is that the violence should be stopped, the Know-Nothing movement should be stopped, even though, some of their ideas are valid, such as the idea of having more thorough and stricter test for citizenship. The article attempts to find a balance between religious intolerance, violence, and wholesome politics. It also states that religion is the Irish people's great redeeming quality, that their hearts are true, and their religious sentiments are pure.

4.2. Foreign Criminals

“‘Foreign crime and pauperism’ are also placed in the same category with sectional agitation, squatter sovereignty, &c., and distinctly set down as amongst the things which all good citizens should set to work, might and main, to abolish” (Plug-Uglies and Foreigners, 9 June 1857). Specifically foreign crime was thought of as something everyone should work to abolish from America, along with squatters and sectional agitation to name but a few. There are 12 articles that have instances that occur in this theme. It is seen as a matter of pride where good citizens work together to abolish the thing that causes harm: the foreign criminals and paupers. Another view of this was the idea that America already has crime, why should foreigners bring more of it? “We have enough dirt, misery, crime, sickness and death of our own, without permitting any more to be thrust upon us by any of the foreign powers, and it is only such that they are desirous of getting rid of or do send to us” (Restricting Immigration, 21 February 1892). Other governments are blamed for sending their dirty paupers on to America, without taking the responsibility for them and making American citizens and the government responsible for the care of the sick foreign criminals. The idea of the foreign element being inherently bad and the American element being a burden enough is present here. In a report by the Police Superintendent on Metropolitan Crime and Criminals, according to the article *Foreign Criminals in New-York* (22 February 1858), there were 12,000 arrests in New York in a span of three months and out of those, 8,000 were Irish and over 2,000 were people from other nationalities. “The proportion of foreign criminals is as five to one in the prisons which law-abiding citizens are so heavily taxed to support” (Foreign Criminals in New-York, 22 February 1858). The same article also insists that without the foreign element of pauperism and crime, the jails, courts and workhouses in New York would be rather empty and instead of the city being badly governed and heavily taxed, it could be “a model to the capitals of the ‘down-trodden’ States of Europe” (Foreign

Criminals in New-York, 22 February 1858). The article argues that without the immigrants, especially without the Irish immigrants, New York could be a prosperous city and work as a model to other cities, to show how it should be done.

In New York, it was deemed that there have been so “many injuries wrought us by the foreign element in our population that we can hardly be suspected of any undue or unjustifiable partiality for it” (*Plug-Uglies and Foreigners*, 9 June 1857), New York was seen as almost infested by the Irish immigrants and that to avoid the Irish you only needed to leave New York and its unrest. The article *Plug-Uglies and Foreigners* (9 June 1857), shows that Americans do not want to take any accountability for the situation and that it is almost entirely out of their hands at that point. The article also comments that they have tried to present the point of view of the public in New York, the public seems quite frustrated about the ‘foreign element’. The article does however also admit that there is native crime which has “a boldness and audacity of which the wretched foreigners who so seriously menace our institutions are utterly incapable” (*Plug-Uglies and Foreigners*, 9 June 1857). Foreign criminals are deemed to be content at waging war against society in their own neighbourhoods rather than causing major problems. The foreign crime is said to be local in its operation. But still, the foreigners are a menace to American institutions.

In one article, *Emigration to America* (14 July 1855), it is questioned whether the Irish immigrants have conducted themselves in a sober, orderly, and prudent manner in America since their escape from tyrants and finding a refuge and home in America. “We fear that some of them have been a noisy, turbulent, and intolerant class, who did no credit to the character of their native country, and were of little benefit to the land of their adoption” (*Emigration to America* 14 July 1855). The noisy and turbulent people easily became the image that Americans had of the Irish, turning them into uncivilized alcoholics who fight over everything. The same article, as mentioned above, also alludes to the fact that “the conduct of some of the Irish emigrants is not what it ought to be, and to counsel them to give up their intemperate habits, their rows, their faction fights, and act in such a manner as to earn the respect of their bitterest enemies” (*Emigration to America* 14 July 1855). It is implied that the Irish would have to be taught to behave acceptably. In the article it is also mentioned that if the Irish immigrants would not calm down and if they were to disgrace themselves, it would hardly be surprising if the American citizens would deem the Irish as unworthy to share their freedom with.

The idea of the Irish being lazy and not keen on work is not only present in the

way immigrants were seen in America but also in articles written by an American visiting Ireland and reporting back to the American audience. From a visitor's perspective, the Irish in Ireland, specifically the beggars in Ireland, were a "marvellous variety of colour and texture so remarkable in their costume" and yet "you must not believe that all this outward wretchedness is real, necessary, and helpless" (Grace Greenwood in Ireland - Irish. Poverty. O'Connell's Grave - Donnybrook Fair, &c. From the National Era., 10 September 1852). The Irish beggars, or paupers, seemed to come in all shapes and colours, with some of them described as wearing mere rags, bound together by frail cords. And yet, the article argues that it does not do to trust this show, how the Irish prefer to beg rather than do any work inside or outside the workhouses. The article describes that Ireland boasts 'professional beggars' who are just acting a part to lure money from gullible tourists because the beggars do not want to work: "the professional beggar dresses, for his part, with as much care and skill as any other actor; and the whine, the limp, the melancholy tale, blindness, palsy, widow's tears and orphan's wails, are often the results of laborious practice and splendid triumphs of art" (Grace Greenwood in Ireland - Irish. Poverty. O'Connell's Grave - Donnybrook Fair, &c. From the National Era., 10 September 1852). People are warned not to fall into these cons done by the Irish, and the sentiment toward the Irish in Ireland must have been much of the same as the sentiment of the Irish as immigrants. The paupers, beggars and dirty criminals were all the same, trying to take from the good hands of the Americans rather than work for their upkeep themselves. Furthermore, the Irish immigrants are criticized when they try to help Ireland or try to find out what is happening there, because it looks like they are not grateful for what they have. Moreover, the Irish citizens in Ireland are criticized if they listen to the wild accusations happening in America, rather than focusing on their problems and trying to reform in a dignified way:

"They are apt to admire imprudent and senseless defiance of constituted authority rather than calm and dignified agitation for necessary and practicable reform. They think more highly of the windy menaces uttered thousands of miles away from the scene of trouble and danger, than of the quiet assertion of principles, whose object is the remedying of actual or supposed abuses."

(A New Irish Patriot, 21 February 1859).

Within the *New York Times* and this selection of articles, some quite creative and insulting descriptions for the Irish immigrants are noticeable. The immigrants are for example

described as “England’s mendicants” (Not a Home for Paupers, 11 June 1887.), “Celtic tyrants” (Plug-Uglies and Foreigners, 9 June 1857), “Plug-Uglies” (Plug-Uglies and Foreigners, 9 June 1857), “wide-mouthed, pug-nosed Hibernians” (Celestial Immigration, 28 May 1855), or even “Irish bulls” (Some Typical Irish Bulls, 3 March 1889). The immigrants were often likened to mere animals or even plants ready to be plucked and used, as long as they were able-bodied and willing to work. Their mental powers were criticized for example by saying that they were “crippled in all their mental and moral powers, with no instinct left but that which even the animal possesses of clinging to his progeny and the miserable roof which shelters him from the elements” (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856). The immigrants could also be described as perverse, impure, and wretched. Taking the Irish from Ireland, from their supposed rags and patches of land, can be likened to making the Irish immigrant “a murderer” out of a “vegetating animal”, their condition being so harsh that not even taking them out of Ireland would help and only makes them angrier and more violent (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856). Or, if you were to oppose an Irish immigrant in the matters of religion, that immigrant would “glow red with fanaticism” and thus the article *Irish-Americanism* (18 January 1856) identifies that the Irish are debilitated by many oppressions and disadvantages such as being rude and their religion creating interference, and thus they pose a major risk for America.

The Irish immigrants and the Americans were often set against each other. For example, in Massachusetts, two instances of riots and fights are mentioned in the analysed articles. On one occasion, some Irish immigrants had hoisted the American flag on a pole that was surmounted by a cross, which the Americans then tore down only for the Irish to put it up again. Guns and pistols were drawn and many of the Irish immigrants’ houses were gutted (Serious Riot between Americans and Irish at Lawrence, Mass., 11 July 1854). A few days earlier, there had been a fight between Americans and the Irish, again resulting in the Irish homes being gutted, furniture destroyed, and a Catholic church was attacked (Desperate Encounter between Americans and Irish, 6 July 1854). In both of the articles, the Irish suffered more losses, and it was implied that they had started the fights. The Irish were blamed for the fights when the Americans were perhaps more inclined to draw out their weapons. Furthermore, discussions about whether the Irish were all inherently bad or if a few good immigrants existed were present in some of the articles, given that they were easily blamed for riots and fights. For example, in one article it is asserted that “[...] it would appear that, as far as the Irish are concerned, the vicious

outweigh the peaceably disposed. The crimes to which they are peculiarly addicted are crimes of blood, from murder down to simple assault” (Foreign Criminals in New-York, 22 February 1858).

4.3. America as a Saviour

Immigrants fleeing their situations “[...] to the sanctuary provided by this great Republic, whose arms have always been opened wide to receive the persecuted of every clime, without distinction of race or creed” (*Immigration Checked*, 25 April 1855). This theme revolves around the sense of pride in the idea that America is always ready to take migrants in, with open arms, ready to help them succeed in the land of the free. There were 10 articles with occurrences for this theme. Articles depict the country as a haven for everyone able to make the trip and for everyone in an unjust situation. “From landlord tyranny and English misrule, the outcast and down-trodden Irish - men, women and children - cast themselves into the first vessel, and sought shelter and protection on our shores” (*Immigration Checked*, 25 April 1855).

Coming to America as an immigrant is almost seen as a luxury from the point of view of the *New York Times* articles, with one of the articles describing that while the immigrants are fleeing their situations, their memories of home become filled with hatred, and even the luxury around them in America cannot help with that (*Ireland in America*, 2 April 1852). The same article describes that the immigrants “can take deep root in this soil, and grow up with the vigorous and fruitful American tree, which is soon to overshadow this portion, at least, of the planet on which we dwell” (*Ireland in America*, 2 April 1852). There is an almost overwhelming sense of American pride present in such articles, describing America as a kind of overarching mother nature, taking care of all its children. The articles often describe the unfortunate, desperately sad situation of the Irish immigrants in an overtly critical manner, to show how bad the poor foreigners have it, only to then boast America’s greatness and ability to provide for the Irish immigrant, like parents would provide for their dear children, like mother nature taking care of the earth. America is seen as a power that can only grow in its might, with the help of the immigrants that they so courteously have rescued from unjust governments, “This prolific brood America hospitably receives” (*Irish Stock Running Out in Ireland*, 11 August 1861).

In the *Irish Husbandry* article (24 March 1880), it is explained at great length how the Irish farming is lacking and how Americans need to teach the Irish how to take care

of their lands in order to ensure a good outcome. For example, adequate fertilizing, introduction of other root crops and a more thorough cultivation is said to help the Irish take care of their harvests. The same article finds that a higher civilisation needs to be reached and the Irish cannot do that themselves, the Americans have to help. “Irish society must be reconstituted and greatly developed before the wolf will be chased away forever. The hand-to-mouth system of every man, barely supporting his own family with the direct products of his manual labour, and neither buying or selling, is not a civilized or a safe system” and therefore instructing the Irish is deemed to have to start immediately (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880). In this article, it is seen as completely necessary to advise the Irish as they are not seen as capable of taking care of themselves without American intervention.

The articles are seen to comment on the notion that the Americans have provided “extravagant” generosity and help for the Irish (for example in the article *Foreign Criminals of New-York* (22 February 1858)). The United States is also mentioned as the land of liberty (Decrease of Irish Immigration, 18 August 1855), or home of the brave, land of the free, etc. (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). America is also seen as a country where everyone has the possibility to become something great, “expand to their true size, assume their proper condition and rank” (Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854). And, if the immigrants are given space and liberty in the land of liberty, “they will speedily adopt as their own the Yankee school-house – Yankee customs – Yankee notions – even the Yankee dialect” (Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854), becoming thus better versions of themselves in the land of the free after being saved from tyranny. The American point of view is seemingly one of kindness and warmth, welcoming the immigrants to their country wholeheartedly: “Let our own, our native Yankee patriotism remain warm as at the beginning, it melts all that fall into it, though they fill all the air with their coming” (Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854). Assimilation and becoming more American is also present here in the sense that the Yankee patriotism will melt all that falls into it, creating true Americans. The immigrants are slowly more accepted in American society, once they start to present more American features and become part of their communities:

“In our cities, and just along the lines of our railroads, to a considerable extent they still insist on being recognized as Irishmen. Out in the country, though, every true man who does not disgrace the land that his slight brogue yet betrays, still loves the

shamrock and enjoys the songs of Erin, they are Americans, and their children are native Americans.”

(Emigration – How it Helps Us, 22 March 1854).

Especially after the immigrants are taught to be more American in their daily lives, they were more widely accepted. The Irish are described as having needed “benevolent men to improve their condition, and good teachers to educate their children in sound American principles” (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856) in order to become better. They are to be treated charitably and tenderly so that they have opportunities to become good Americans in a land of liberty. With regard to the English oppression, in one article it is stated that: “We still consider the United States a better home for the Irish emigrant than any colony belonging to despotic England” (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). United States is seen as the better option, the more valuable option for the Irish immigrants, than the English rule that the Irish had previously been under.

4.4. Useful Labour

“The Massachusetts of the nineteenth century, however, is quite another thing. It has welcomed many thousands of Irishmen, and they have generally proved very useful citizens” (Scotch-Irish Immigrants, 2 November 1896). Immigrants can be seen as welcomed in some of the articles as they can be very useful in labour and other matters. Life in the 19th century could be difficult as everyone had to somehow take care of their family and prices for products could be very high while simultaneously the wages were very low, barely supporting the families. Everyone was supposed to pull their weight and not be a hindrance to the economy and growth of the country: “Each individual there is supposed to contribute something to the general wealth of the State, either by his physical strength, his knowledge, or the capital he brings” (Emigration – How it Helps us, 22 March 1854). Eight articles had instances that occur in this theme. Irish immigrants were often seen as vital to labour in America, helping produce food, and build housing, and “these lasting monuments of persevering industry were chiefly reared by the imported labor of this republic” (Immigration Checked, 25 April 1855). Losing the immigrants could have meant losing in profit, losing hard-working people, sustenance and so on. “Fortunately the source of supply is not by any means exhausted, though the population of Ireland begins to decrease, and any increase of acquisition from that quarter may not

be looked for” (Emigration – How it Helps us, 22 March 1854). One article speaks of the immigrants of German and Irish origin, as if they were supplies, objects, to use. It is made to seem unfortunate that the supply of these tools is dwindling, but even if you removed half a million German or Irish immigrants, there would still sprout new ones (Emigration – How it Helps us, 22 March 1854). The immigrants are described in a similar way to plants that one can use.

“Like plants set too thickly in a bed, they cramp and crowd each other; brought hither, they thrive better, expand to their true size, assume their proper condition and rank, and ripen from discontented subjects of the old Government to be worthy citizens in the new.”

(Emigration – How it Helps us, 22 March 1854).

This objectification likens human beings to mere tools and plants that one can do anything with, while also boosting the righteousness of self. All at once, you can diminish the Irish and at the same time enhance the superiority of America, where everyone can flourish and become better versions of themselves. The ‘American dream’ is vividly present here and we can see the article undermining others for America’s gain. Other governments are seen as rulers of discontented subjects who are living in overcrowded situations where the subjects, the people, are not able to gain their true potential. Because the immigrants are cheap labour, there are many of them coming in and they are perhaps willing to do jobs the American-born citizens would rather not touch. The Americans needed the Irish and they welcomed them, “not because they sympathized with their sufferings, but because they required them to build their railroads, dig their canals, clear their forests, till their fields, and work in their factories” (Emigration to America., 14 July 1855).

An article, titled *Emigration - How it Helps us* (22 March 1854), explores the idea that were it not for the immigrants, the northern citizens of the United States would have fought the southern citizens. “Moreover, is anybody silly enough to suppose that Yankees, being human, could live in a fighting world and never quarrel with themselves, if they had not somebody else to quarrel with?” (Emigration – How it Helps us, 22 March 1854). The article supposes that if there were no immigrants, the Americans naturally would just fight each other, the immigrants just happened to be a better source to use up energy on. In a sense, the article sees the immigrants as useful since they were there to help people direct their anger at something as well as work as a reminder that they have a common danger, uniting their interests and their welfare. And according to the article, without the

immigrants, they might have had a religious war on their hands, or they might have concentrated more on “the Slavery question” (Emigration - How it Helps us, 22 March 1854). The article is rather extraordinary, and its serious tone shows how the immigrants were received. This does not only fall under the code of ‘useful labour’ but also the code of ‘mistreatment’ as you can read in-between the lines that the Irish immigrants were likened to a kind of punchbag. They were used as ‘useful labour’ while being mistreated in the form of fights and quarrels.

The article *Immigration Checked* (25 April 1855), sees that while there are negative sides to immigration to America, there are also countless material benefits as there is so much available labour. And what is more, there is a great benefit in being able to gain all the profits from the labour without having to raise the workers, meaning that the means of producing wealth are increased without effort. This has thus, according to the article, created a significant step towards rather unprecedented industrial progress, making America one of the frontrunners in development. There are no costs of rearing children when most able-bodied workers come to the country ready to work. Another article, *Ireland in America* (2 April 1852), comments that the American population has had a tremendous increase and “when has the world ever before seen such gigantic strides of a nation towards power as this, -- such vast additions to its strength, -- such ceaseless and such rapid increments of its population, -- such boundless expansion and augmentation of its wealth?”. Power-hungriness being the main message, we can also see that the Irish immigrants are considered to be vital in the process of America becoming even greater. The influx of immigrants, and cheap ready-to-go labour, meant that America could possibly strive for so much more and that the possible advancements were almost unimaginable in their scale. Expansion in America knows no bounds and its success is almost guaranteed.

Immigrants coming to America indeed meant useful labour, but at the same time, it could mean that the American-born citizens were losing work. One article, entitled *Walks Among the New-York Poor* (21 March 1854), involves interviews around some of the poorer neighbourhoods in New York, describing the harsh conditions of the people living there. One of the interviewees complained of living hand to mouth during a rough autumn and winter and not being able to get any work, “‘There ain’t no work for sich as me,’ he answered, despondingly. ‘Them Irish gits it all now’” (Walks Among the New-York Poor, 21 March 1854). The interviewee continued, “‘I used to make twenty shillin’ a day, sometimes, but the for’ners and Catholics gits it now’” (Walks Among the New-

York Poor, 21 March 1854). The foreign people, the immigrants could be seen as taking the jobs of hard-working American-born citizens who were in a difficult situation after a bad harvest, a bad winter, or a variety of illnesses in the family. Blame could easily be put on the foreign element, especially if the bad times and the arrival of new immigrants coincided.

“We will readily admit that every honest, hard-working man, be he poor or rich, who arrives in this country, is an addition to its wealth and strength; but, on the other hand, every dishonest, idle scoundrel, who seeks refuge here, more than counterbalances the honest immigrant, for he contaminates others with whom he is brought in contact”.

(Foreign Criminals in New-York, 22 February 1858).

The ‘useful immigrant’ had to be a certain kind of immigrant though. They had to be able to provide for America and to be able to work long hours like an honest and true worker. To be an acceptable type of immigrant, you had to be hard-working and strong and not just there in search of refuge while you use up the generous help from America. “Aside from all their faults – already sufficiently insisted on – there are admirable qualities, physical and metaphysical, in that Celtic race, and they contribute most desirable elements to that great composite of stocks which is working out new ethnological problems in America” (*Irish Stock Running Out in Ireland*, 11 August 1861). The article above does not provide any further explanation as to what the faults may be with the immigrants, but within the other articles it is possible to see that for example the Irish immigrants were blamed for taking jobs, lowering wages, and bringing disease and filth to America.

4.5. Money

For this theme, there were seven articles that had instances of money being discussed in some way. Charitable efforts for the Irish did exist, with some of the Americans donating money for those still in Ireland, according to the articles. However, there was not always certainty that the money went toward the right causes: “the amount, and the number of schools, to which bequests have been left, or donations made, is scarcely credible, the benevolence that prompted the bestowments being only equaled by the roguery used in perverting them to private emoluments” (The Lord Lieutenant: - Cardinal Wiseman - Quiet in Ireland - Misuse of Public Funds, 10 October 1855). On the subject of helping

Ireland through charity, according to the article *The Influx of Irish Paupers* (9 May 1883), the United States Consular Corps and the Consul-General Merritt stated the following:

“As to relieving Irish distress by contributions of money from the United States, which have always been so liberal, the charges have been so frequent in the past that much of this money has been used for other purposes that I suggest in the future the utmost care be taken in choosing the channels through which the charity is to be administered”.

(*The Influx of Irish Paupers*, 9 May 1883)

It is seen that America has been giving too much money for the welfare of Irish citizens, and that that money has not always gone to good use. And, since there is no way of knowing how this money would be spent, it is best to make sure to administer charity through some other way, possibly not even donating money. The thing that is missing from this article is where exactly this money has supposedly gone. Another person in the article *The Influx of Irish Paupers* (9 May 1883), was presented as having thought “it a pity and expressed indignation that people of the United States, in view of the terrible Ohio Valley floods, should be called upon to minister the fictitious distress in Ireland”. Not only was the hard-earned money of American citizens not going toward their own interests and their own problems, but what is more the money was going toward a ‘fictitious distress’ in Ireland. In the article it is presented almost as a fool’s errand to send money to Ireland when there were real problems in the United States.

The Irish immigrants were criticized when they were poor and unwell, for not being able to work or pay their rent, but they were also judged if they were able to earn enough money to survive and enough money to send back home to their struggling families. For example, in Pittsburgh, they found that hired immigrant girls had sent \$35,000 home to their relatives within six months (To the Old Folks at Home, 13 January 1853). Irish immigrant women often earned money by working as washerwomen, as domestic servants, through needlework, weaving or through prostitution (Casey & Lee, 2006). Some sent as little as five dollars across the sea, “a harvest reaped in the land of promise” (To the Old Folks at Home, 13 January 1853). These small deposits of money to Ireland were perhaps blamed for encouraging others to emigrate to America, enabling more and more money to be funnelled out from the “new country” and into the “old countries”. The money earned in America perhaps should have been spent on goods in America, as is the hope for a successful economy, but instead, the Irish immigrants wanted to support their families and that meant sending their earned money in bits and

pieces to Ireland. The money they earned was seen as “tokens of slow and honest toil – coined of the sweat of the laborer’s brow, and stamped with the careful economy of many weary days” (To the Old Folks at Home, 13 January 1853). This sense of pride in the hard work of a labourer is persistent and makes it even more difficult to accept that that hard-earned money was to go into some other country. There is a sense of hurt present, where it is unacceptable that someone would think of sending that money away and not using it to indulge in America’s fine luxuries – while at the same time providing a boost to the economy.

Immigrants were sent back home to Ireland if they could not show that they were able to provide for themselves. For example, fourteen Irish families were detained on the shores of America under the suspicion of being paupers, according to an article headlined *Unwelcome immigrants* (21 May 1887). At the docks, every immigrant would be examined and everyone who was deemed to be a pauper, would be detained. According to this article, the Commissioners took every precaution to prevent the paupers from landing, with the available funding they had during the rush of immigration. They had to spend precious time and money sending back poor Irish immigrants, or detaining them, when this money could have been spent on other things, or some ‘better’ immigrants who would work for their upkeep. For example, according to the article *Assisted Immigration* (25 June 1883), on a steam ship called *Furnessia*, 300 immigrants came to America from Kerry County workhouses, and most of them were not able to provide for themselves. They were so poor or ill that they were not able to work for their maintenance, which, for America would mean that most of the 300 would be new mouths to feed and people to clothe, which would mean a tremendous amount of economic effort.

4.6. Unfortunate Irish

“Obviously, however, it is not the business of our Government to inquire into the system of government that has reduced these unfortunate strangers to beggary” (*Assisted Immigration*, 25 June 1883). In this theme, the instances all include the idea that the situation for the Irish immigrants is unfortunate, but the Americans cannot do anything about it, and it just is what it is. There are five articles with instances for this theme. The problem in Ireland is in Ireland, the problem with Irish immigrants are Irish immigrants. England’s government may be at fault, but there is nothing the Americans can do about it or would want to do about it. The Americans can also be seen as disapproving of other

governments for sending their poor, criminally inclined and sick people their way: “It is assumed that the British Government, by law, force, and oppression, has reduced to beggary large numbers of its subjects and has then deported these paupers to the United States, compelling us to receive and provide for them” (Assisted Immigration, 25 June 1883). Irritatingly, these paupers are sent to America to be taken care of by the taxpayers there, rather than in their home country and by the English government. But at the same time, “there is no hope for Ireland, under the present state of things. Her prosperity has been sacrificed to the ambition of England.” (Ireland in America, 2 April 1852).

In one article, *The Influx of Irish Paupers* (9 May 1883), the situation in Ireland is presented as miserable, distressing and poverty is the rule rather than the exception. However, the article goes on to explain that while the situation is sad, it has also become the new normal condition of life, and it is not exceptional anymore, even though the situation is still grave. As such the article notes that “it may be safely assumed that the much-talked-of “starvation point” has not been reached, however bad the situation may be, and that the local and Government authorities have abundant means at hand to relieve actual necessity” (The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883). The situation is dire, and sad, but nothing the Americans can do will help, and the situation should be handled there. The fate of the Irish and of the Irish immigrants is presented in a simplified manner and it helps create the idea that the Irish immigrants are weak and did not fight for their country.

The idea that only the able-bodied immigrants are welcome into the United States, was also continued in the idea that especially young women should perhaps reconsider migrating. Because there is a sense that America is dangerous to tourists, recent migrants and women, one article notes that “those really qualified for the change will not be turned from their purpose, and it is better, far better, to discourage the incapable element; like weakling children they are best cared for at home” (A Word of Warning to Irish Girls, 15 August 1897). Women were perhaps likened to weakling children, easy subjects to cons and being lured by men. There are also implications in the articles that particularly girls are at risk of becoming prostitutes or otherwise criminally inclined. If, however, they decide to migrate, it is their fault, and they are responsible. The situation is unfortunate, the women being easy targets for evil, but now that they have been warned, it is on their conscience and it is also acknowledged that America is truly dangerous, but nothing can be done to it. That is just how it is, and the weaklings should not consider migrating.

4.7. Ungrateful Immigrants

“Again, has it ever been told that the mission of the constellation to these shores three years ago was an enterprise of doubtful success as a charity: that the American potatoes went a-begging, so to speak, for somebody to eat them; were not thought so good as Irish potatoes (nothing American, I am afraid, is thought so good here as that which is Irish, and that some of them were returned to Queenstown and exported to the United States?”
(The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883)

According to *The Influx of Irish Paupers* (9 May 1883), there were attempts to direct food from America as a charitable effort for the Irish people in Ireland. The article states that, firstly, the people who were supposed to unload the cargos of supplies often refused to do so, unless they were paid at “extravagant prices”, and in some cases the crew on the ships had to unload everything as the people in Ireland refused, thus, making them seem lazy, ungrateful, and not willing to do any labour unless paid handsomely. Secondly, the article finds that the people taking in the food supplies had expressions filled with contempt as they did not want to send food such as Indian cornmeal to the citizens of Ireland as that is “considered food fit only for pigs” (The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883). So, the Irish are not only considered to be lazy and unwilling to do work, but also to be disgusted by the help they are offered. The article makes it appear that the Irish people are refusing to eat anything other than Irish-produced meals and that anything brought in from America was unworthy of eating. This theme includes five different articles.

One article questions whether the Irish immigrants would be as benevolent as the Americans have been toward the Irish, if for example Russians, Prussians or Greeks had come among them and started to fight on the streets or railways. “Would not the native population begin to think it right to exclude them from public offices, and declare them dangerous foes to the country?” (Emigration to America, 14 July 1855). The article tries to make the Irish immigrants see the issue from the American perspective and while doing so, emphasizes how ungrateful to the Americans the Irish immigrants are as they are taking positions in public offices and fighting in the streets. From the American perspective, for example the immigrants coming from China were described as being wholly unusable, and taking away from the country:

“Now an immigration of people who add nothing to the industry of the country, who detract from its morality, who consume almost nothing of its products, who scarcely aid its house-owners, who make poor sailors and no soldiers at all, yet who accumulate and

carry off its gold and silver, is worthy of the attention of the authorities whom it concerns, before it increases, as it threatens to do, to an alarming extent.”

(Celestial Immigration, 28 May 1855)

In that sense, the American viewpoint on the Irish immigrants and on other immigrants, Chinese, German or other, is clearly very often hostile in nature, especially when the immigrants are deemed to be of no use or ungrateful for the little help they received. Immigrants are seen to be abusing however much power they have in America and taking away from the Americans as best as they can, while giving nothing in return. The Chinese immigrants are reported to only buy rice worth a few shillings and otherwise consume no American products, buying no clothing, only selling stale candy and cigars (Celestial Immigration, 28 May 1855). The rising number of immigrants was concerning, and as such one article is worried that “the City may be as full of oblong-eyed, pig-tailed Celestials as it is at present of wide-mouthed, pug-nosed Hibernians and the square-skulled sons of Hermann” (Celestial Immigration, 28 May 1855). This almost absurdly racist statement depicts all immigrants as different in their own way but all equally unwelcome. The immigrants were to be grateful that they had received help in America, but they should use the products and services in America and not cling onto their own cultures and their own products. Another article, *Foreign Criminals in New-York* (22 February 1858), sees that the rights of foreigners have never been invaded, and that there has been sympathy for every class and condition without discrimination. And yet, “we should not, perhaps, regret our extravagant generosity, even though it has often been extravagantly abused” (Foreign Criminals in New-York, 22 February 1858). A sense of regret in generosity is very clear, and in this example, it is noted that the immigrants have often seemed not to deserve such generosity. The Irish immigrants, and German and Chinese, are depicted as kind of draining populations, draining all the good that the Americans can give until the Americans have nothing left.

Intertwining with the theme of money and economics, often the ungratefulness arises from the way that the immigrants spend their money or how they gain money. As mentioned earlier, the immigrants are criticized for being poor but also when they dare to earn money and send that money back to their families in Ireland, these “first-fruits, perhaps, of the harvest reaped in the land of promise. The cluster of grapes, like those plucked of old at Eschol, going back to assure the anxious, fainting hearts, still sojourning in the wilderness” (To the Old Folks at Home, 13 January 1853). When the immigrants

arrive in America, they are perhaps expected to stay there and to start providing for that society rather than remembering their old country and sending money back.

4.8. Mistreatment

Five articles have occurrences for this theme. In New York there were schools, where one could see the results of poverty. The children might have come to school from their homes in cellars, they often grew up among brothels, and groggeries, and roamed around in unsafe areas. According to the article *Walks Among the New-York Poor* (21 March 1854), these children were most often of foreign origin, poor Irish or Germans. Children, being naturally quite quick in assimilating new things and surroundings, the article notes that they were peculiarly quite American in their traits, describing them as “quick, keen, excitable and inquisitive, with nervous motion, and generally a native type of feature” (*Walks Among the New-York Poor*, 21 March 1854). The children are more readily and quickly described as Americans or Irish Americans than their adult counterparts as they are so quick to adapt. However, the conditions of the children were wholly unsafe and dangerous, living in cellars around brothels. Children were also quite often employed to pick up ashes or their guardians would make them beg in the streets. The children are also described as “worse morally, and more dangerous, but they are not so stupid or degraded” (*Walks Among the New-York Poor*, 21 March 1854) when compared to children in London for example. Again, we can see the juxtaposition of America versus England, where Americans are deemed to be better in perhaps the most important aspects, where the children are not stupid like the children in England.

In an article entitled as *A Word of Warning to Irish Girls* (15 August 1897), the Irish immigrants, especially the young girls, are warned off from coming to America. The article supposes that young people are leaving home under the impression that they will succeed in America without any effort and that these types of presuppositions are fostered by the false pride of those who had already migrated, writing letters describing prosperity, that according to the article does not exist. The article insists that young women often end up living in “undesirable localities” where there are obvious dangers in the environment (*A Word of Warning to Irish Girls*, 15 August 1897). “In a dense cosmopolitan population much of evil lurks, and the best efforts of experienced men are directed toward diverting the tide of immigration from such centres” (*A Word of Warning to Irish Girls*, 15 August 1897). The article describes how young women should stay home because America is too

dangerous for them and that men and evil people in general will easily take advantage of them. The article also sees that the best hope for a young Irish immigrant, is to meet their male cousins in America, but that their “intentions, good though they are, are often frustrated by the character of the people with whom they are forced by circumstances to associate” (A Word of Warning to Irish Girls, 15 August 1897). It is thus implied that even the women’s cousins could be potential danger and that there really is no hope for the Irish women in America, only plenty of risk. It is also implied that Irish male immigrants perhaps quite often become dangerous through the company they keep, meaning either other Irish immigrants or the Americans themselves. This article certainly sees that America is not safe for Irish immigrants, especially if they are female. Another article, *Decrease of Irish Immigration* (18 August 1855) states that from the perspective of an Irish Roman Catholic priest, residing in the United States, the condition of Irish immigrants is depraved in America and that those still in Ireland should not come to America “if they would not forfeit all hope of happiness in this world and the world to come” (Decrease of Irish Immigration, 18 August 1855). The article does not comment further on this idea, it only uses it as a proof that Irish immigration is decreasing and that they believe it will decrease further.

The article *Official Report from Quebec on the Treatment of Immigrants in New-York* (8 May 1858) shows that from a Canadian perspective, the Americans are mistreating the Irish immigrants. In an official report, Sir E. Ilhad, Governor-General of the British North American Provinces, called attention to “the bad treatment of passengers who make New-York their port of disembarkation, and the frauds which are frequently practiced on the unwary” (Official Report from Quebec on the Treatment of Immigrants in New-York, 8 May 1858). According to the article, the Canadian emigration is likely to change their route, as so many cases of “infamous conduct towards their steerage passengers, and particularly the females, have become public” on the routes to New York (Official Report from Quebec on the Treatment of Immigrants in New-York, 8 May 1858). The article sees that the immigrants arriving in New York are subject to overcharging, detaining for as long the immigrant has money, misdirection, and plundering by force. The article also notes that the regulations in railways and steamboats are much less strict in America, compared to Europe, meaning that much of the emigrants’ property can be lost, stolen, or destroyed. The article also cautions emigrants, particularly families and single females, against emigrating at least through the New York route. It is also advised that should the migrant want to travel to Canada, or any other Northern or

Western state, they should travel through Quebec in the summer and through Portland in the winter (Official Report from Quebec on the Treatment of Immigrants in New-York, 8 May 1858).

Regarding decreased immigration to America, the article *Immigration Checked* (25 April 1855), sees that the principal causes for such a decrease can be “fairly traced to the crusade that has been waged in some States against our imported population ; and, in a still greater degree, to the late season of unparalleled distress”. The article admits that in some states in the United States, the immigrants have had crusades against them and that they have experienced distress. It is surprising, as most other articles in this thesis are not so keen on admitting mistakes or problems that the Irish immigrants have faced, especially that the American population could be at fault in some way. The article also comments that thousands have returned to their original countries, “taking with them accounts of the sad instances of destitution which they had witnessed” (*Immigration Checked*, 25 April 1855). It is also mentioned that in the spring of 1854, a year before the publication of this specific article, the offices for emigration were overcrowded to excess by immigrants waiting for their applications to go through, but now they are almost deserted. It is seen as a relief to be rid of many “embarrassments incident to a large immigration” while at the same time “the result may show that the advantages lost, are far greater than the evils escaped” (*Immigration Checked*, 25 April 1855). Large immigration is seen to have inevitable problems but the loss of immigrants travelling back to their home countries is also seen as a loss in advantage and a gain in escaping evils.

4.9. “Pro-Irish”

If you do not count the fact that the Irish immigrants were thought to be useful labour or that they may have had some other uses for America, there were four articles that contained what could be characterized as ‘pro-Irish’ sentiments, although these instances were not necessarily very positive in nature. For instance, an article called *The Irish Stock Running Out in Ireland* (11 August 1861), states this of the Irish: “Aside from all their faults - already sufficiently insisted on - there are admirable qualities, physical and metaphysical, in that Celtic race, and they contribute most desirable elements to that great composite of stocks which is working out new ethnological problems in America”. This is a kind of backward compliment which insists that while they do have their faults, they also have admirable physical and metaphysical qualities. But herein we also see that the

Irish are complimented more on their physical capabilities and usefulness rather than anything else, given that the title of the article also indicates that the Irish are seen as useful objects, a stock of Irish workers, rather than humans with needs and wants. Fortunately, the same article does also highlight the “alacrity with which they have rushed to the defence of free institutions, and the valor with which they have illustrated our battles” (*The Irish Stock Running Out in Ireland*, 11 August 1861). Understanding immigrants and embracing them for who they are, is not a one-way road, it naturally takes time and both parties involved (the recipient country and the immigrants) probably have to prove themselves, before prejudices can be forgotten and trust can be built. Nevertheless, the article *The Irish Stock Running Out in Ireland* (11 August 1861), also comments that the valour and alacrity of the Irish have “done much to extinguish ancient prejudices and teach us what genuine and noble human qualities underlie the surface-characteristics of the fine old Irish stock”. One other article simply noted that there has previously been an outburst of “pro-Irish enthusiasm” (*Plug-Uglies and Foreigners*, 9 July 1857), but that the enthusiasm has since changed due to crime and foreign influence that the country was not prepared for.

Another article, titled *Scotch-Irish Immigrants* (2 November 1896), includes the reply of President Eliot of Harvard College to J.D. O’Connell of the statistical department of the United States Treasury. In this article, President Eliot is described by O’Connell as having neglected to give the Irish people their due credit for their achievements, loyalty, and devotion in the struggle for liberty and independence by the colonies. The Irish are thus described by O’Connell as loyal and devoted to America in a way that Americans liken themselves to be. The reply of President Eliot includes the notion that he was not aware of the Irish element in the population of the colonies during the 18th century, and he apologizes that he failed to mention them earlier. He also mentions in his reply that Massachusetts has “welcomed many thousands of Irishmen, and they have generally proved very useful citizens” (*Scotch-Irish Immigrants*, 2 November 1896). So, it is possible to see that at a higher level of society, the Irish were given credit for being loyal and devoted, as O’Connell’s comment makes clear. And it is also possible to see that, at least in Massachusetts the Irish immigrants have generally proved to be useful citizens. But here we again see the notion of ‘usefulness’ (as discussed in 4.4. Useful labour) which seems to be one of the main elements by which immigrants, or perhaps all humans are measured.

In the data, there is one reference to the redeeming qualities of the Irish religious sentiments and heart of religious feeling (in *Irish-Americanism*, 18 January 1856), “but how is such a race, alike sensitive and stupid, proud and poor, tenacious and elastic, religious and superstitious, to be treated?” (*Irish-Americanism*, 18 January 1856). How do you treat a population of people who are proud, poor, religious, and stupid all at the same time? It is also possible to see in this example how the immigrants are rarely praised without at the same time including insults about their stupidity and poverty and the like, never giving them too much credit for their efforts but always keeping them at arm’s length. As for how the article proposes the Irish should be treated, the following is noted: “tenderly and charitably, with gentle allowance for those errors which are more the fault of the tyranny under which they have groaned, than their own nature” (*Irish-Americanism*, 18 January 1856). The article recognizes that the Irish have been under intense pressure and that they are not at fault for their situation, but rather the English are to blame. Furthermore, the nature of the Irish, their supposed stupidity or religious feeling is not deemed to be the main reason for the problems, which is an uncommon result in the articles analysed for this thesis, as further explained in the next section.

4.10. The Irish Can Only Blame Themselves

The contemporary English opinion of the Great Famine and the mass immigration tended to be that it was a disaster that happened to the Irish as a result of their own way of life which was thriftless and improvident (O’Brien & O’Brien, 1994). In a similar fashion, in the data for this thesis, the Americans seem to have a similar view on the matter. There were four clear instances in the articles where the blame was clearly put on the Irish themselves. In a sense, the Irish could only blame themselves for their misfortunes.

The article entitled *Assisted Immigration* (25 June 1883), goes into depth concerning the governmental issues in Ireland and how the British government is somewhat at fault for all of it. The article also insists that if the British government is to send “paupers, idiots, and lunatics” to America, they must be sent back even if the two governments are “near friends” (*Assisted Immigration*, 25 June 1883). The causes of the immigrants’ poverty “have no place in the discussion”, and while the article acknowledges that most of the immigrants arriving in America have no means to provide for themselves, the article still states that “here is an opportunity to demonstrate that we consider these people only as paupers, not as the victims of a tyrannical and oppressive

governmental system” (Assisted Immigration, 25 June 1883). So, while the article does recognize the difficulties of the immigrants, being ruled unjustly, it also wants the reader to know that the people are not considered to be victims and that they are mere paupers, perhaps taking advantage of those who help them and not making the situation better for themselves. The systems they have are not at fault, the Irish themselves are.

“The lack of bread in Ireland is not due to English oppression, nor to the avarice of landlords, nor to a sterile soil and unkind climate, but largely to the faults and follies of the people themselves” (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880). The idea that the Irish can only blame themselves is explored widely in the article *Irish Husbandry* (24 March 1880), where it is insisted that the present methods for farming are suicidal for the country and its people and that there is a grave moral lesson to be taught to the Irish about how to take care of their lands. The article presents the idea that nothing can be changed in Ireland and in the behaviour of the Irish people, no political or economic measure can safeguard them until the peasants in Ireland learn how to reform. The writer of the article insists that “emigration is not only unwise, but unnecessary” (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880), in the sense that Ireland is losing its labour force to America and other countries and all the costs of rearing children fall upon Ireland without any of the benefits. In the article, Belgium and Holland are compared to Ireland, where Belgium and Holland are of similar sizes, yet these countries are not struggling as much with the potato crop’s failure. “There is cultivated land enough in Ireland to give 29 acres to each of her 481,000 farmers, yet 207,000 of them try to keep soul and body together on holdings ranging from 1 to 15 acres, and only 21,000 have as many as 100 acres” (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880). As stated in chapter 2, the farmers tended to divide their land into equal pieces for their children before the famine, which provided very little for the children as the acreage was small. During the famine, the farmers left land only to their eldest son, resulting in the rest of the children having to come up with something else to live on. This, paired with the potato blight, created an impossible situation for the Irish people. Yet, the article states that “it is perfectly plain that Irish farmers, even under the spur of their present necessities, do not get, and do not try to get, one-quarter as much produce from their land as it might easily be made to yield by the exercise of common intelligence and a little industry?” (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880). It is easy to judge others from across the pond, and in the case of Ireland, they were judged not to have common knowledge and the willingness to correct their situation. It is deemed to be perfectly plain that the Irish farmers are at fault, simply because they lack the knowledge and effort to feed their people.

The same article also notes that a few years earlier there were prizes given out to best-managed farms in Ireland and it did wonders on small farms, which showed “what might be done with more hard work, skill and brains, and less ‘potheen,’ shillelah, and black pipe” (Irish Husbandry, 24 March 1880), where *potheen* or *poitin* is alcohol distilled from potatoes, and *shillelah* or *shillelagh* is a type of stick used for fighting and as a walking stick. The image the writer has of the Irish farmers, and of the Irish immigrants, is that they are using the viable potatoes left from the potato blight as produce for alcohol while they fight and are unruly. The article also notes that a higher civilisation in Ireland must be reached and to do so, Americans must instruct them forward. The Irish immigrants are depicted as wild, alcoholic, and disrespectful toward the help they are getting.

The article titled *The Influx of Irish Paupers* (9 May 1883), sets out to report on the distress in Ireland and to see if the situation truly is dire. According to the article, an investigation was conducted by the United States Consular Corps in Ireland and in that investigation, they found that all previous reports on the matter were exaggerated. The reports stated that they did admit that the situation was grave, but the current prevailing matters were not exceptional in character. “In the poorer agricultural districts the situation of the peasantry is miserable, and abject poverty is the rule, but sad as it is, it has been the same for years, and has become the normal condition of life” (The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883). They also find that the so-called “partial” failure of the potato crop has “to some extent aggravated the situation” (The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883), diminishing the profoundly serious situation in Ireland into mere exaggerations and beyond the help of America. If the situation has been miserable and sad for years, what can the Americans do about it? They also find that there “is little or no chance for improvement in the immediate future” for Ireland, no matter what way you looked at it (The Influx of Irish Paupers, 9 May 1883).

Those who migrated from Ireland to America were fleeing for a reason, whether it be starvation, poor living conditions or simply because there was no work available. But, in the article *Emigration to America* (14 July 1855), the immigrants are claimed to have fled from Ireland “without taking time to consider maturely the prospects before them, and the dangers and difficulties they would meet in a strange land. They rushed headlong from their native country, instead of battling for land and life”. The struggles in Ireland are not recognized, and from the perspective of Americans it almost seems ridiculous that they would flee Ireland as there are prospects there. What is curious in this

article is that it also recognizes that America can be dangerous and difficult to navigate for an immigrant. It is odd, since most of the articles tend to reside on the side of America being a saviour and without mentioning danger or difficulty. And the article also seems to insist that the Irish immigrants are not considering their departure much at all and are just flinging themselves across the seas, without a second thought about how to save their lands and country, making the Irish immigrant seem rather untrustworthy and flighty.

5. Discussion

The Great Famine happened between 1845 and 1852, but its effects were very long lasting, meaning that the Irish were struggling for years to come. In this thesis, half of the articles were written in 1854 or 1855, indicating that that was when perhaps most of the immigrants were arriving or that that was when they were most noticeable. One point to remember is that the New York Times Article archive only starts from the year 1851, meaning that the earliest phase of the immigrants arriving to America is not reported. There is also a significant gap in the articles that were chosen, between 1861 and 1883, which incidentally, is also the period of the American Civil War and its aftermath (1861-1865). The Irish were seen to be a significant problem before that, but perhaps not significant enough to be considered worth writing about during the Civil War. Another significant point to note about the dates of the articles is that closer to the end of the century, the Irish were more often noted as politicians in America, taking office or gaining a higher status in society. While they were ridiculed, mistreated, and often discussed in racist terms, they were also strong enough to rise to power and advance themselves. This created perhaps even more tension in the relationship between the immigrants and the American-born citizens as the Irish were gaining political offices and taking positions from the American-born citizens. This could have caused the articles to warn the Irish not to migrate to America due to it being unsafe during political unrest. And yet another point to consider is that the single set of articles that were studied, reflect the opinions of New York residents and more specifically the readers of the *New York Times*, which catered to an urban audience. There is little data to support what kind of a target demographic the *New York Times* had in the 19th century, but it is possible to theorize that that audience was largely made up of white, male individuals who had higher levels of education and income, as for example the poor could not afford to set aside money for the paper and lower literacy levels, etc. If it were so, the highly educated people would also have more power and thus their influence on the immigrants would be considerable. And the articles influenced their readers toward anti-immigrant sentiments. This readership idea, of course is only a theory.

When comparing the very first article in the data to the very last, a few key differences can be observed. In the first article, written on the 2nd of April 1852, entitled *Ireland in America*, America is presented as a saving nation, a luxury that only the fortunate get to experience. The article presents a sad story of the Irish, showing how bad

they supposedly have it, and then extols the United States' ability to save the Irish immigrants from themselves. It is also recognized that immigration brings in considerable labour benefits. In the very last article in the data, written on the 15th of August 1897, the article *A Word of Warning to Irish Girls* is quite the opposite of the first article. The article encourages weak immigrants to stay where they are and notes that there are many undesirable localities in America, where for example women and young people are in danger of being lured by evil and men who have been influenced by circumstances to have bad intentions. Of course, the two articles are not entirely comparable, but it is still possible to note that there has been some greater recognition of the suffering of the Irish immigrants the years 1852 and 1897, and the blame is on occasion put on something other than the Irish immigrants toward the end of the century. In the 1850s, especially in 1855, the Irish immigrants were more likely to be criticized for their actions and inactions. Some slight differences can be seen in how the Irish immigrants were portrayed in the newspapers during fifty years within the data. The reason for there being more anti-immigrant articles around 1855 may be a consequence of the approaching Civil War in 1861. As mentioned in chapter 2, anti-immigrant feeling in the United States has often tended to become more intense in crisis situations and especially right before a crisis situation such as the Civil War where the slavery question became the main dividing factor in the country (Parish, 2020).

The Irish immigrants were often used as substitutes for slaves in dangerous tasks as the Irish labourers were cheap and expendable compared to the valuable investment of a slave (Casey & Lee, 2006). There was a constant influx of Irish immigrants who provided for themselves through work, whereas the slaves were a more costly endeavour for their American owners. Furthermore, the Irish immigrants were opposed to the abolition of slavery because they were afraid that it would lead “to an influx of cheap black labor into northern cities, undermining their hard-won but still precarious niche in the economy” (Casey & Lee, 2006: 372). In the articles, there were no instances where the slaves and the Irish immigrants would be compared, this is likely due to the fact that in the northern states there was not such a concentration of slaves as was the case for the southern states, and because the *New York Times* is primarily focused on the north in the articles chosen for this research. It is likely that there are some cases of comparisons between the two as they often worked closely in the southern states. Many of the Irish immigrants did not take the side of the Union, the anti-slavery side, out of fear for their own livelihoods, whereas the *New York Times* was likely to support the Union, due to its

northern location and readership. Between 1861 and 1863, around 150,000 Irish immigrants joined the Union Army, some out of loyalty to their new residence and some hoped that this patriotism would help put an end to their discrimination (The Irish Brigade, 14 March 2019). The Union officials were forced to promise enlistment bonuses, extra rations and for example Catholic chaplains to ensure that the Irish immigrants would fight with them against the Confederacy (The Irish Brigade, 14 March 2019). It is probable that the Irish immigrants and the slaves were discussed in rather similar terms on occasion as they were at the very bottom of the social pyramid, often working in dangerous and poor conditions. Their key difference, of course, being that the slaves were owned, which made them far more valuable to their owners, whereas the Irish immigrants were more expendable.

The quantified data for this thesis helps provide a general outlook on the Irish immigrants. The three largest themes in the analysis are perhaps unsurprisingly themes of Religion & Politics, Foreign Criminals and America as a Saviour. The inductive approach meant that there were no pre-existing categories, and these themes arose from the data itself, so the themes thus also came to support much of the matters discussed in chapter 2. The smallest themes, Unfortunate Irish, Ungrateful Immigrants, Mistreatment, Pro-Irish and The Irish Can Only Blame Themselves, only have five or four articles with instances for each theme, respectively. These show that the Irish were not discussed that often in terms of their ungratefulness or mistreatment, proving perhaps that they were not considered to be much more than foreign criminals who sometimes happened to be useful in labour. Their misfortunes and ungratefulness might not be worth discussing more than that which has already been said, if it does not prove to be somehow valuable information economically, politically, or socially.

Through the thematic analysis it is possible to note some key elements in how the Irish were depicted in the media during the 19th century. One of the main messages seems to be the idea of usefulness. What can be seen as useful and what can be deemed to be wholly non-useful? For the Irish immigrants, according to the analysis, it was necessary to be able-bodied, meaning they were fit enough to work in America, they had to be willing to work often in poor conditions, they had to be grateful for the opportunity while at the same time being prudent and loyal to be considered useful and therefore to have value in America. For the Irish immigrant not to be useful, they had to be poor, criminally inclined, weak, sick, violent, alcoholic, or generally not willing to work in any condition. When these characteristics were met, arguably the immigrant had no value for America.

The immigrants were often objectified into tools or plants, to show their usefulness in a different way. For example, when more immigrants were travelling to America, it was described as a new supply of immigrants. The analysis also shows that some of the immigrants, if not entirely generalized for all immigrants, were depicted as lazy, unwilling to work and did not have enough willpower to help their own country, leaving it to fend for itself. The immigrants were considered to be unwilling to work while they were in Ireland, but once the able-bodied, prudent immigrants came to America, they were considered to be rather important in the labour force of the United States. The contradictory claims perhaps derive from the way that they were described in the media in general, and from the claims that the situation in Ireland was not particularly severe and it would have just craved some American education to make the country whole again. It also shows that the appreciation for immigrants was only visible when the immigrant was able-bodied, not suffering from any illnesses or was peaceably disposed. The data and the analysis show that even within the same newspaper, there are complex differences in opinion. In some ways, the Irish are appreciated and in most ways the Irish are deemed to be foreign criminals, ungrateful and too religiously inclined. Even when the articles show some form of appreciation for them through elaborating their good qualities or work ethic, there was always a part of the article that undermined that while the immigrants do have good qualities, they also have negative qualities, and they are too different, too foreign to be accepted into society entirely.

America is presented as a saviour only as long as it benefits the country economically, politically or through industrialization, meaning that the new arrivals constitute available labour to provide growth in the structural integrity of the country. So, in the analysis it is possible to see that when the economic efforts of taxpayers and benevolent charities have not provided fast enough results for the country, the efforts are encouraged to be stopped entirely, so as to not waste money. Having to provide for poor, unskilled, and unwell immigrants with no reward was presented as one of the main messages in anti-immigrant articles, for no regard to the immigrants who were working hard or who provided their services as best as they could. By only presenting one side of the dilemma, only showing the readers how unskilled and awful the immigrants were, the readers would naturally also start to project this negativity toward the immigrants, creating an even more toxic environment. According to the articles, donated money for the immigrants was discouraged once they realized that that money might not be going where they thought it would go. The immigrants were also criticized if they were not able

to earn the money through work in America, but on the other hand they were also criticized if they indeed were able to earn some money, especially if they sent it back to Ireland. The immigrants were thus in an almost catch-22 like situation where whatever they did, they could not escape criticism. Politically speaking, in the articles it was easily argued that there is already enough crime and misery in America, so why should they accept more immigrants as they only bring more of the misery. Undesirable immigrants such as paupers, criminals, young and weak women would have been sent back to Ireland if they could not provide proof that they would be able to survive in America, according to the data. Small clubs and organisations such as the “Jackson Club” or the “Know-Nothing” group wanted to strip the immigrants of their assumed civil rights and make it illegal for them to profess faith and to be able to gain citizenship before staying in the country for 21 years. On the basis of this data, it seems that the political and religious, even economic scene in America for the immigrants was often quite impossible. And yet, America is also presented to be welcoming for all immigrants, as the country was built with the help of immigrants:

“The economic and political conditions of the United States have always led the Government to favor immigration, and all persons seeking a new field of effort and coming hither with a view to the improvement of their condition by the free exercise of their faculties have been cordially received”.

(Not a Home for Paupers, 11 June 1887).

Contradictions are present everywhere in the data. On one hand, America is a saviour of all, on the other hand immigrants should stay home where its safer. On one hand, the political and economic condition is perfect for the immigrants, but on the other hand they can face anti-immigrant sentiments in their workplace, in their homes and walking on the streets. On one hand, religious feeling is the saving factor in the Irish immigrants, their heart and passion being merited as good and pure, but on the other hand the Catholic church is controlling them, overpowering them, controlling American politics through the Irish and the Catholic church is always whispering in the Irish people’s ears. The Irish were forced to create their own opportunities, where birth right, money or pedigree did not matter: in the church and in politics. Through sheer numbers and concentration of the Irish immigrants in New York, they were able to slowly start controlling city politics in New York and other cities. Even their churches expanded from two to thirty between 1820 and 1860 (Almeida, 2001). Appreciation for the Irish immigrants started to arise in

a natural way as the Irish took more space for themselves and conducted their business in a positive manner.

It must also be noted that usually when the Irish personalities and their behaviour are discussed in the data, they are generally discussed in a way that lines up positive sides with more negative comments. For example, one article wondered “how is such a race, alike sensitive and stupid, proud and poor, tenacious and elastic, religious and superstitious, to be treated?” (Irish-Americanism, 18 January 1856). The positives are laced with the negatives, never giving too much of a compliment to the Irish. Another factor to consider is the fact that all articles were written in the *New York Times*, meaning that they present American voices, only showing their side of the story. And of course, it is relevant to mention that there was some outburst of pro-Irishness mentioned in the data (in Plug-Uglies and Foreigners, 9 July 1857), without the article elaborating on what that was or if it was real. So-called ‘charitable efforts’ in the 19th century that were listed in the articles could mean that someone once donated money perhaps through a priest to Ireland, or it could mean several people have done the same. The articles in a sense are untrustworthy, since they do not list writers, specific details, or sources for their information. They can, however, insinuate deeper sentiments toward the Irish in America and immigrants in general, and on the basis of the data in this thesis, that sentiment was almost wholly anti-immigrant in its nature. The United States’ self-image is constructed upon notions of liberty and freedom. These ideas are put on a pedestal, as is evident from the articles and especially in the theme of 4.3. America as a Saviour. These ideals of liberty and freedom are not present in the sentiments that the articles have.

What happened to the Irish was not regarded as happening because of American injustice and often not even because of English tyranny or because of bad luck; it was seen to be because of the immigrants’ inability to take care of themselves and their country. They are made to seem as if they left the country in a hurry with no proper consideration, without thinking about how to save their country and their people. They are not victims, they are not struggling upstream in an unjust system, they are paupers and thus inherently at fault for their own circumstances. It is quite easy to blame the victims and not create a more just system because the system is presented to not be at fault, the immigrants are. At least that is how the articles present the Irish immigrants. While the immigrants struggle, they also produce alcohol from the viable potatoes that they have left, instead of using it for food or growing more sustenance. The wild, alcoholic, vicious, wretched Irish immigrants are indeed miserable but that is presented

as being due to their own lack of education or will to make things better. What is worse, the situation in Ireland can also be presented as not particularly serious, with the starvation-point not even reached yet while the beggars in the streets of Ireland could be mere professional actors, pretending to be sick and poor as they do not want to work for their upkeep.

Considering all the findings from the data, one thing is strikingly clear. A lot of the historical discourse surrounding immigrants in America and how they are portrayed in the media is extremely similar to how immigrants are discussed now, in the 21st century. The illegal immigrants of today are terribly similar to the so-called foreign criminals or the foreign other in 19th century America. To provide a few examples of this discourse, I searched the word “immigration” on the *New York Times*, just to see what the conversation around this topic is now. Thousands of articles show up and the archive automatically sorts the articles by relevance. The first article, deemed by the archive to be the most relevant, entitled as *Biden Opens a New Back Door on Immigration* (Jordan, 23 April 2023), discusses how there are more immigrants being allowed into the country, more specifically those fleeing Ukraine, Haiti, and Latin America. They are offered the opportunity to fly to the United States and secure work authorization as long as they have a private sponsor who is willing to take responsibility for them. Without that private sponsor it is not permitted. Without providing proof of income or support in America, the Irish immigrants in the 19th century were also not permitted in the country. The article also believes that Republicans will likely think that this is an “overly permissive immigration” policy (Jordan, 23 April 2023). Another article, *Migrant Child Labor Debate in Congress Becomes Mired in Immigration Fight* (Demirjian & Dreier, 7 May 2023) discusses how migrant children are exploited for cheap labour in America on a regular basis, and yet the legislation to prevent this is going nowhere. Immigrant children in the United States being at a record high in February 2023, the article notes that the children also undertake dangerous work that violate labour laws, working for example in slaughterhouses and construction sites in America. It is hoped that a more “stringent” policy will be restored where migrant children could be held in detention centres so that they may be deported quicker (Demirjian & Dreier, 7 May 2023). A more stringent policy was suggested on several occasions in the data for this thesis, where immigration was seen to need more restrictions. According to the articles, the Irish immigrants also worked in dangerous circumstances and many of the children were reduced to beggars on the streets, while living in brothels and groggeries.

One does not need to look much further than the policies and comments that circulated during the Trump administration in America, to see clear similarities in how the immigrants are discussed. “Give me your extreme-vetted, your ideologically certified, your elite. Send only the smartest, the best-connected, the richest to our shores. No losers, no freethinkers, and no ugly people, please”, writes one writer in an ironical opinion piece for the *New York Times* (Egan, 2 September 2016). This is said to be the point of view of President Donald Trump’s administration. Only the most valuable, useful, and elite immigrants are accepted to become part of the society in the United States. Immigrants who would be admitted to America would need to be chosen on the basis of their likelihood to succeed in America, and on the basis of their ability to be financially sufficient, so as to not waste taxpayers’ money on them. Merit, skill, and proficiency are the key aspects in a good immigrant even in the modern world, according to the media and American immigration policies. Those fleeing war, hunger, and certain death are only permitted if they somehow can bring value to a country, without requiring anything from the host country.

In the modern world, the former Irish immigrants, now Irish Americans or entirely Americans, are a significant part of American society. They are applauded citizens, and many of the current American citizens have Irish blood running through them, with more than 31,5 million residents claiming Irish ancestry in 2021 (Moore et al., 16 March 2021). The change from entirely anti-immigrant sentiments and racist statements to being a celebrated part of the American society has been significant. The change has been slow and tumultuous but now the formerly Irish citizens are part of America’s diverse cultural identity. Irish culture has become more embraced and for example St. Patrick’s Day is a widely celebrated holiday in the United States. In a sympathising message on 28th February 2022, President Joe Biden stated the following:

“Irish Americans expanded the American middle class, building ladders of opportunity that future generations could climb. They became teachers, firefighters, police officers, labor leaders, farmers, business owners, and more. Along the way, Irish Americans contributed enormously to the American labor movement — championing safe working conditions, advocating for children’s rights, and fighting racism, prejudice, and income inequality. They bravely answered the call to serve, defending our Union and its values in every battle. They continue to work on behalf of the American people as public servants — serving in the Congress, the Supreme Court, Federal agencies, the White House, and in State and local offices across the country.”

(Biden, 28 February 2022)

The Irish immigrants changed the way immigrants were seen, for better or for worse. They are now celebrated for the things that they were hated for, and they are now seen as a vital part of the society, advocating for safe working conditions and civil rights after having struggled against the system for these things for years. In President Biden's message, it is also recognized that "Many Irish immigrants arrived on America's shores to escape the Great Famine, only to face discrimination, prejudice, and poverty" (Biden, 28 February 2022), which shows that there is a form of understanding of how the immigrants were treated. The understanding, hopeful and embracing message of President Biden also brings the question of when other immigrants such as the ones migrating from Mexico might become a more celebrated part of the American society, or if the Irish level of embrace is even attainable for the current legal and illegal immigrants.

6. Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to bring insight into how Irish immigration and immigrants were portrayed in America in the 19th century. The articles studied provided a mostly American voice to reflect on the immigration to the United States. In conclusion, the Irish presence in American society slowly started to change the anti-immigrant sentiments, the more the Irish showed American manners and customs, the more readily they were accepted as part of society. If the immigrants presented themselves in a prudent, quiet manner, and never overstepping their boundaries, they would be welcomed wholeheartedly. It can also be said that the sheer number of the Irish immigrants created part of the anti-immigrant sentiment, as it is impossible for thousands or millions of people to all act prudently. However, as there were other immigrants for example of German and Chinese origin, not all of the criticism can be put on the Irish immigrants. Furthermore, part of the appeal about the Irish immigrants can be said to be that they were often deemed to be the lesser of other evils, such as the Chinese immigrants who provided nothing for American society in the 19th century, according to the articles, or the slaves who were too different, too non-white to be considered suitable.

The scope of this thesis is limited to a single newspaper and to a single set of articles within the years 1850 and 1900. These limitations mean that only a certain kind of perspective is available, and the topic is rather niche. This does, however, provide endless possibilities for further studies within this area. For example, a study on the differences and similarities between the Irish immigrants and the slaves in the 19th century, or a study on how other newspapers presented the immigrants, or even how the Irish immigrants viewed the Americans. The relationship between the historical perspective of the Irish immigrants and the perspective that Americans have of immigrants now, could also be an interesting point for a study in more depth than that which was presented here. The implications of this research can be studied further in many ways as immigration and racism have been discussed together for years and they will keep being discussed in the media for years to come.

Summary in Swedish – Svensk sammanfattning

”Vi har tillräckligt med smuts, elände, brottslighet, sjukdom och död i egen regi”:

Hur de irländska invandrarna framställdes i 1800-talets Amerika

– En tematisk analys av artiklar i New York Times

Irländska invandrare utgjorde en stor del av de nödställda i Amerika på 1800-talet efter att de tvingades fly landet på grund av den stora hungersnöden på Irland (1845–1852), som orsakades av potatispesten. På 1800-talet emigrerade miljoner irländare från sitt hemland till Amerika och där möttes irländska invandrare av många fördomar och rasistiska åsikter.

Syftet med denna studie var att ge en inblick i hur irländsk invandring och irländska invandrare framställdes i Amerika under 1800-talet. Studiet gjordes genom att analysera artiklar i New York Times mellan åren 1850 och 1900 som diskuterade Irland och irländska invandrare. Studien genomfördes med hjälp av tematisk analys, vilket är ett systematiskt och objektivt sätt att analysera omfattande data. Detta tillvägagångssätt innebar att analysen delades in i mindre innehållsrelaterade kategorier som var och en har sin egen mening. En induktiv metod användes för analysen, vilket betyder att teman bestämdes av deras förekomst i data. Denna typ av analys är därför rent datadriven, utan att den försöker passa in i några redan existerande kategorier. För avhandlingen valdes 29 tidningsartiklar från *New York Times* artikelarkiv. Urvalet av artiklar begränsades till 29 med hjälp av vissa kriterier, såsom att artiklarna måste vara skrivna av amerikaner. Därtill kunde de inte vara korrespondens från Irland eller till exempel England. Perspektivet är således ett tredje personperspektiv, där irländarna bara omtalas men inte ges egen röst. Själva analysen hade tio olika koder som användes för att kvantifiera data: religion & politik, utländska brottslingar, Amerika som räddare, nyttig arbetskraft, pengar, olyckliga irländare, otacksamma invandrare, misshandel, ”pro-irländska” och till sist, irländarna kan bara skylla sig själva.

I avhandlingen konstateras att det finns ett överflöd av, ibland överlappande, sätt på vilka de irländska invandrarna diskuteras och framställs i media. Dessa beskrivningar innefattar till exempel rasism, fördomar och olika typer av stereotyper. Samtidigt noteras deras positiva egenskaper, till exempel det att invandrarna visar sig vara användbara som arbetskraft. Amerika stoltserade ofta över sin roll som en fristad och räddare för flyktingar från runtom världen. Datat avslöjar dock en mycket annorlunda bild: även om deras hjärta

och avsikt kunde konstateras vara gott och rent, kunde invandrarna också möta invandrarfientliga stämningar i sitt arbete, i sina hem och särskilt mot sin katolska religion. Invandrarna objektifierades till verktyg eller växter och kallades smutsiga, kriminella eller moraliskt och mentalt förkrympta. De irländska invandrarna porträtterades inte som offer i orättvisa system, utan ansågs snarare vara fattigt folk som var skyldiga för sin egen olycka. Katolicismen ansågs vara en antidemokratisk religion som främjade vidskepelse och okunnighet. Den ansågs även som farlig då tanken var att den hade total kontroll över irländare som också tog kontroll över den katolska kyrkan i Amerika snabbt efter deras ankomst. Amerika växte snabbt i befolkning och även i rikedom under denna tid. Förändring, tillväxt och utvidgning var huvudteman i Amerika och samhället var ständigt i rörelse. Därtill är det också viktigt att notera att de irländska invandrarna kom till ett land med stor instabilitet på grund av konstanta förändringar som slutligen ledde till det amerikanska inbördeskriget (1861–1865). Irländska invandrare hamnade till ett land där känslan av invandrarfientlighet oftast intensifierades i krissituationer och perioden kring inbördeskriget var sannerligen inget undantag från detta. Amerikanskfödda medborgare var oroliga för att invandrarna skulle ta deras jobb, sänka lönerna och minska antalet tillgängliga bostäder samt hur invandrarna skulle kunna förändra den amerikanska livsstilen.

Sammanfattningsvis, I avhandlingen ser man att irländarnas närvaro i det amerikanska samhället sakta började förändra de invandrarfientliga känslorna. Ju mer irländarna visade amerikanska vanor och seder, desto lättare accepterades de som en del av samhället. Irländarna var välkomnade så länge som de invandrarna uppvisade sig på ett försiktigt och lugnt sätt och aldrig överskred vissa gränser. En del av tilltalandet mot de irländska invandrarna kan ha sin grund i att de ansågs vara det mindre onda av andra onda ting. Såsom de kinesiska invandrarna som ej ansågs tillföra något till det amerikanska samhället under 1800-talet, enligt data i avhandlingen, eller slavarna som var för annorlunda; för icke-vita för att anses lämpliga. Irländarna var tvungna att skapa sina egna möjligheter, där födelse rätt eller pengar inte spelade någon roll: i kyrkan och i politiken. Eftersom de irländska invandrarna var så många och koncentrerade i New York kunde de sakta börja ta större roller för sig själva och på det sättet skapa förtroende och minska invandrarfientliga känslor. Förändringen från övergripande invandrarfientliga känslor och rasistiska uttalanden till inkluderande som en viktig del av det amerikanska samhället har varit långsamt och komplicerat. De irländska invandrarna är nu en del av USA:s mångsidiga kulturella identitet och den irländska kulturen har blivit mer

accepterad och berömd. Men sättet som de irländska invandrarna diskuterades på under 1800-talet är fortfarande skrämmande relevant för liknelsen det har till diskussionen kring personer utan uppehållstillstånd i Amerika idag. Både på 1800-talet och i nutid är det endast de mest värdefulla och användbara invandrarna som accepteras för att få ta del av det amerikanska samhället. Förtjänst, skicklighet och kompetens är de viktigaste aspekterna hos en ”bra invandrare” enligt media och den amerikanska invandringpolitiken. Från avhandlingens data kan man hävda att de som flyr från krig, hunger eller en säker död tillåts inträde till Amerika endast om de på något sätt kan tillföra värde till landet utan att kräva något av värdlandet i gengäld.

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