

# Syrian immigration to the united states from 1880 to 1920

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Syrian Immigration to the United States from 1880 to 1920 The United States received large movements of immigration during the colonial era and during 1880s-1920. Between 1880 and 1920, a period of increasing industrial development and growth, America received more than 20 million immigrants. Of these 20 million immigrants about 90, 000 of them were Syrian. Though many believed that coming to American would bring relief from religious disputes and allow them to pursue the " American dream, " once they made it to American, they realized that dream would not be a reality. The journey from being a Syrian citizen to an American citizen was not in any way an easy experience because they faced problems in their home country, they traveled and difficult long voyage to their new country, dealt with laws and special requirements to enter American, and faced racial injustices while adjusting the their new life. The reasons the Syrians left their country were to better themselves and their families but, they also migrated for safety. Syria was experiencing religious warfare between Muslims and Christians. The country was recently declared independent from French rule, so political stability was lacking. Having freedom for a ruling country that was not very helpful to your country would, I am sure, cause excitement and fighting for who would take the role of leadership. They also faced land disputes and intertribal fighting. Though, religious freedom was a defying factor for migration, it was not the number one reason Syrians came to America. The leading motivation for immigration to the United States was the temptation of financial achievement. The immigrants traveled by steam ships. The trip to America, usually in third class, was trying, and was quite costly. Depending on the circumstances, the trip alone was anywhere for 3

to 6 weeks. Occasionally the entire family would travel at once. This just showed how determined these people were to make it to America. If the families did not have enough money for the entire family to make the trip, the father would take the older children, while the mother stayed with the younger children until enough money was earned to pay for the cost of the trip for the remaining Majority of the time, young men and sometimes young woman, immigrated to the United States first, hoping to find work and save money for the passage of other family members. The Syrian immigrants typically journeyed with others from their village, or had friends or relatives waiting for their arrival in America. Most of the Syrian immigrants came to America came before the immigration acts were passed but some of them dealt with the requirements to enter the United States that were in the 1917 Act. The act required and person sixteen years of age or older, entering the country to take a literacy test. The test required them to exhibit basic reading comprehension in any language. The act also increased the tax that immigrants had to pay when they arrived in America. The act also gave the officials more power who to discriminate against and who to exclude. The other limitations did not apply to Arab immigrants. Upon entering the Country the Syrians dealt with discriminations and prejudices and even had to fight for naturalization. Syrians fought many legal battles for the recognition of being part of the " white race. " Being " white" would grant them citizenship, allow them suffrage, and allow them to be able to travel freely. They could have argues for naturalization on the basis of African origin or ancestry, but none of the cases were fought with this basis. This being understandable because the African Americans were dealing with

terrible discrimination at the time. The biggest court case dealing with the Syrian immigrants and their naturalization was *George Dow v. United States*. George Dow's petition was approved and the judge ruled that Syrians were to be considered white persons and were entitled for naturalization. This was for Syrians, a conquest over the racial discernments they encountered. or so they thought . Even after Dow won his case, Syrians still faced racism. In Georgia, the Ku Klux Klan was threatening Syrians and Nicholas Romey, a Syrian immigrant, and his wife were lynched in Florida. They might have gotten some economic success and religious freedom, but they also got the unjustified effects of racism, but these trying times could not even put a dent in the hope of the Syrians. The process to come to America for Syrian immigrants was tough and misleading. They left their country to find relief from religious and political chaos, came to American having to meet standards and requirements, and fight for their rights and citizenship. They may have been put through terrible hardships, they never gave up. That it is proven so today; there are more than 142, 897 Americans of Syrian ancestry. They make up about 12% of the Arab population in the United States, according to the United states 2000 Census. Works Cited 7 . " United States Immigration Before 1965. " 2012. The History Channel website. Nov 25 2012, < <http://www.history.com/topics/united-states-immigration-to-1965>>