

The Land of Dreams and the Island of Tears

Ellis Island and the Immigrant Experience throughout the 'Long' 19th Century

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The United States of America have long taken pride in being a nation of immigrants. In the 19th and early 20th century many of them came from various parts of Europe. They left the old world striving for a better life. The lecture will follow them along the many stages of their journey across the Atlantic and in their quest to become Americans. What were the reasons that drove them away, how did they organize their trip and what routes did they use? What was life like on board of the ships and what difficulties did they face, once they had arrived? From 1892 up until 1952 everyone had to pass through Ellis Island. There, within eyesight of the Statue of Liberty, the decision was made whether or not the 'golden door' would open for them or if they were sent back. Thus, that little island on the Hudson has become an icon of all the hopes and fears the joy and grief connected to the United States as an immigrant nation.

Registration for students of the "Gymnasiale Oberstufe" and teachers:

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