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GÖÇMENİN ÇİLESİ: AMERİKA BİRLEŞİK DEVLETLERİ'NDEKİ İRLANDALI VE İTALYAN GÖÇMENLERİN ESERLERİNDE EMEK, ISLAH VE ASİMİLASYON

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ÖZ

On dokuzuncu yüzyıl Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, göçmenleri belirli kültürel ve ırksal özelliklere göre değerlendirmekteydi. Bunun sonucunda başka inanış ve ırka mensup birçok göçmeni bir nevi buyruğu altına alan, daha çok Protestan, beyaz milliyetçi bir alan oluşturdu. İrlandalı ve İtalyan göçmenler beyazdı, fakat içlerindeki vasıfsız işçi sayısının fazla olmasının yanı sıra iki grubun da ağırlıklı Katolik nüfusa sahip olması onları oldukça tartışmalı bir konuma koymaktaydı. Göçmenin ıslahı ve din değiştirmesi bu iki göçmen grubun o denli önemli parçaları haline geldi ki her ikisinin de kurgusal ve otobiyografik edebiyatları bu konuları işlemekteydi. Bu çalışma, göç deneyimindeki benzerlik ve farklılıkları ve bu deneyimin göçmen edebiyatındaki yansımalarını anlamak için İtalyan ve İrlandalı göçmen edebiyatlarından ikişer anlatıyı incelemektedir. Peder Hugh Quigley'nin *The Cross and the Shamrock* ve Peder John Roddan'ın *John O'Brien, Or, The Orphan of Boston, A Tale of Real Life* adlı eserleri didaktik kapsamları ile ondokuzuncu yüzyıl ortası İrlanda göçmen edebiyatının örnekleri iken, Pascal D'Angelo'nun *The Son of Italy* ve Constantine M. Panunzio'nun *The Soul of an Immigrant* adlı eserleri İtalyan göçmenlerin İrlandalıların halefleri olarak yirminci yüzyılın başlarında nasıl karşılandıklarını göstermektedir. Bu dört eserin analizi, bu metin yazarlarının kendi dönemlerinde göçmenlerin din değiştirme ve ıslah konularındaki görüşlerinin yanı sıra emek konularındaki durumunu nasıl resmettiklerini de ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hugh Quigley, John Roddan, Constantine Panunzio, Pascal D'Angelo, Göç.

THE ORDEAL OF THE IMMIGRANT: LABOR, CORRECTION, AND ASSIMILATION IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF IRISH AND ITALIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ABSTRACT

The racial hierarchy of the nineteenth century United States evaluated the immigrant according to certain cultural and racial traits and in doing so created a heavily Protestant, white nativist space that subjugated many immigrants of other beliefs and races. The Irish and Italian immigrants were white and yet the dominant Catholic population of the two, as well as the high population of unskilled laborers among them, put them into a very questionable place. The correction and the conversion of the immigrant became such an essential part of these two immigrant groups that both fictional and autobiographical literatures of the two featured these subjects. In order to understand the similarities and differences in the immigration experience and its reflection in the immigrant literature, this study analyzes two narratives each from Italian and Irish immigrant literatures. Father Hugh Quigley's *The Cross and the Shamrock* and Father John Roddan's *John O'Brien, Or, The Orphan of Boston, A Tale of Real Life* are examples of mid-nineteenth century Irish immigrant literature with their didactic scope, and Pascal D'Angelo's *The Son of Italy* and Constantine M. Panunzio's *The Soul of an Immigrant* demonstrate early-twentieth century reception of the Italian immigrant as successors of the Irish. An analysis of these four texts will indicate how the authors of these texts represented the

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status of the immigrants in their respective times in terms of labor, in addition to their ideas on the subjects of conversion and correction of the immigrant.

Keywords: Hugh Quigley; John Roddan; Constantine Panunzio; Pascal D'Angelo; Immigration.

The nineteenth century United States created a racial hierarchy that ranked the immigrant in accordance with his native land, race, education, economics, health, morals and belief. Although whiteness was essential in the obtainment of a better hierarchal status, the question of who was considered white changed as the country continued to take in immigrants from all over Europe. The Irish and Italian immigrants were visibly white and yet the dominant Catholic population of the two, as well as the high population of unskilled laborers among them, put them into a very questionable place. The correction and the conversion of the immigrant became such an essential part of these two immigrant groups that both fictional and autobiographical literatures of the two featured these subjects. In order to understand the similarities and differences in the immigration experience and its reflection in the immigrant literature, I will look at two narratives each from Italian and Irish immigrant literatures. Father Hugh Quigley's *The Cross and the Shamrock* and Father John Roddan's *John O'Brien, Or, The Orphan of Boston, A Tale of Real Life* are examples of mid-nineteenth century Irish immigrant literature with their didactic scope, and Pascal D'Angelo's *The Son of Italy* and Constantine M. Panunzio's *The Soul of an Immigrant* demonstrate early-twentieth century reception of the Italian immigrant as successors of the Irish. An analysis of these four texts will indicate how the authors of these texts represented the status of the immigrants in their respective times in terms of labor, in addition to their ideas on the subjects of conversion and correction of the immigrants.

Irish immigrants came to the United States in large numbers following the Great Famine. They encountered the first anti-immigrant sentiments of the Protestant Nativist Americans. Italian immigrants arrived at the United States largely towards the end of the nineteenth century, and thus they followed the fate of the Irish immigrant whose mass immigration in mid-nineteenth century had already created a stereotype image by this time. Some educated men of letters tried to change the perception of the immigrant by challenging this stereotype and some tried to focus on the preservation of the values of these immigrant groups. In this sense, immigrant literatures of the nineteenth century mainly focused on the problems of immigrants in the New World. Some authors intended to write novels and autobiographies to serve as handbooks for the newcomers. They urged the immigrant not to lose track of their belief, their love for the old country, but they also advised them to work hard in order to become a part of the mainstream American society. Urging or preaching, indeed, was especially a pivotal element of the Irish immigrant novels of the mid-nineteenth century Famine Generation. I will first look at the two examples from the Irish immigrant literature followed by the examples from the Italian literature in order to see the change in scope of the immigrant experience of the two mentioned groups.

The Irish Immigrant Literature: Becoming American Staying Irish

Due to the devastating Great Famine of the 1845 in Ireland, 1.8 million Irish immigrated to North America between the years of 1845 and 1855 (Miller 1988: 280). The majority of the Irish immigrants in the United States belonged to the Catholic faith

and had a love for their homeland. The Irish immigrant's Catholic faith and the labor opportunities in the domestic service and manual jobs antagonized them as non-white. The Nativist Americans refused to include the Irish into the mainstream white American society for they were concerned about the similarities between the Irish immigrant and African Americans. As a result, the nativists subjugated the Irish immigrant and this subjugation led the latter to become a part of the racial discourse by subjugating the black man to claim the white citizen status. Anti-Catholic sentiments of the nineteenth century supported the xenophobia against the Irish immigrants, as the Protestant Americans viewed Catholicism as a menace to American values, and tried to convert Catholics through education, adoption and institutionalization.

The Irish immigrants were aware of the intentions of the Protestant Americans to convert and assimilate them, and as a result the Irish immigrant literature of the mid-nineteenth century became didactic in the hopes to create an American citizen with a continuing love for Ireland and a loyalty to the Catholic Church. Similar patterns of trials and traumatic experiences of the immigrant in the New World produced three main types of novels. According to Charles Fanning, these are "Catholic-tract fiction to exhort the immigrants to keep the faith on alien soil, immigrant-guide-book fiction to instruct the newly arrived on how to get along in America, and nationalistic-political fiction to aid the cause of freedom from British rule back in Ireland" (1997: 97). The novels I analyze in this part are examples of the Catholic immigrant novels that can be categorized under Catholic-tract fiction and immigrant-guide-book fiction. Both of them are written by men of religion, and they follow a similar plot, where an immigrant Irish family or an Irish orphan are going through trials and institutions of Protestant America. They face degradation, poverty, loss of beloved ones, but the moral of the story lies in not falling prey to these troubles. These books suggest that if an Irish immigrant is a hardworking Catholic, he or she can rise to a good position in America. Moreover, the major themes of labor, toils of acculturation to the Protestant American values, and maintaining a balanced relationship between the ethnic and national identities create a centerpiece for these works. A Foucauldian approach to these texts shows that the Irish immigrants regarded themselves under constant scrutiny of Protestant Americans. My analysis of these two books will be focused on these ideas as I explore how the tract literature was used by Irish immigrant authors to mold the Irish immigrant into the desired Irish American citizen.

The first of these novels, *The Cross and the Shamrock* was written by Father Hugh Quigley and published in 1853. Quigley, born in Ireland in 1819, immigrated to the United States after 1848 following a failed rebellion. According to Fanning, *The Cross and the Shamrock* is an example of Catholic-tract fiction (1999: 141). Quigley dedicates this *book* "to the faithful Irish-American Catholic citizens of the whole Union, and especially to the working portion of them, on account of their piety, their liberality, their patriotism, and their steady loyalty to the virtues symbolized by the "Cross and the Shamrock"" (2013: 3). This dedication signals Quigley's interest in the subjects of labor and religion on account of the working-class Catholic Irish Americans.

The Cross and the Shamrock starts with the deathbed scene of the widow Mrs. O'Clery, and immediately praises the good-hearted priest and the soon-to-be orphans' obedient filial characteristics. The immediate appraisal of the priest signals at the

religious tone of the book in accordance with the Catholic-tract fiction. The reader soon learns that Mr. O'Clery, who had to leave his country because of their landlord's tyranny, catches cholera on the ship and dies within a few days. Father Quigley's Catholic characters Mrs. Doherty and Norry, "the Irish servant maid from a neighboring house" (2013: 21), take pity on the orphaned children. They mention the corrupt condition of the poorhouse, where the children are most likely to be sent to. Their greatest fear, however, is "Van Stingey, whose great delight is, they say, to convert the children of Catholics to his own sect" (Quigley 2013: 23). The only danger of the Protestant American, according to Quigley, is not only his conversion politics of orphaned children but also his influence on the domestic servants. Quigley mentions that Norry cannot understand the grandeur of the Christian philosophy since she was "a long time among the Yankees, sufficiently instructed in the customs of this 'free country'" (2013: 25). The Irish maid was not able to go to her religious duties because of her work and her exposure to the American values of her mistress.

As the story continues, Quigley comments even further on the fear encountered by many Irish immigrants of the Catholic belief on the anticipated evils of the Protestant Yankees. Similar to the conversion politics of Protestant Americans of the mid-nineteenth century, the Protestant Americans in this book are also in search of orphans in order to convert them. Thus, Quigley represents the O'Clery children as victims of the Protestant America. Eugene, the youngest of O'Clery boys, dies a martyr on All Saints' Day, under the tyranny of a Protestant family, who locked, starved, and flogged him. Bridget, and her sister Aloysia, become nuns whereas their eldest brother Paul becomes the archbishop. And in the end, Patrick goes to Ireland and purchases the land his father lived on before leaving the country. Quigley shows that although orphans in an alien and cruel world, these children went from rags to riches by preserving their belief. In other words, Quigley rewards the O'Clery children for being good believers. Although he leads a life of misery, Eugene is rewarded at the end. Bridget and Aloysia are recompensed with a life dedicated to the Church. Moreover, Paul's journey is strikingly important, for he becomes a prominent figure in the Church following the path of his namesake St. Paul, who was also an influential figure in the early days of Christianity. And last but not least, as Patrick buys his father's land, he claims his Irish legacy, showing that the immigrant should not disconnect from his native land. Quigley remunerates Catholic characters, and he does not let the nemesis of the Catholic belief, the poor town master Van Stingey go unpunished. He mentions that in the end the town master "perished miserably" (Quigley 2013: 232), a fate that would please the mid-nineteenth century Catholic readers of the book.

Quigley's novel also includes musings on the questions of Nativism, immigrants, labor and naturalization. He thinks that the Irish Catholic immigrant should be accepted into the American society, since a Catholic and a foreigner discovered the continent of America. He follows this argument with the contributions of the Irish immigrant to the foundation and development of the United States:

> It was not all native blood that was spilled in the establishment of the republic. It was not native genius alone that created the constitution, laws, and institutions of our country. It was not "natives," of course, that first discovered, settled, or established the several states that form the grand Union. It was by emigrants, by "furriners," that all these things were done. What, therefore, can be

> more ungrateful, if not more unjust, in the "nativists," than to attempt to rob the poor emigrant of the rewards of his labor and merit, in order that they may enjoy all the fruit of the latter's toil?
>
> … For, if you turned off all the "furriners," not only would you sink in wealth and resources, —your ships unmanned, your factories unworked, your canals and railroads undug, and your battles unfought, —but your very blood would corrupt, and turn into water! (2013: 64-65).

Well aware of the lot of Irishman in manual jobs such as canal digging and railroad business, he also states that it was the foreigner who fought for the United States. Many Irish men of letters used this tactic of stating the martial contributions of the Irish to the United States, especially in the American Revolutionary War and Mexican-American War. This statement would allow them the opportunity to prove the natives that the Irish had accepted America as their new country and were willing to die for it. Also, Quigley shows that the US needed the foreigner for the development of the economy and challenges the nativist ideas that the foreigner is there to corrupt the country. He also demonstrates the changing political influence of the naturalized Irishman when he talks about the “Irish adopted citizen” who “by the power he exercises in his vote, is solicited by candidates, from a town officer to the president” (Quigley 2013: 67). However, he does not only talk about the importance of the immigrant to the United States economy, but also about the toils of the immigrant within that slave-like economic system. Murty, a green Irish immigrant, muses on the similarity of the labor market to slavery and says, “The poor here, besides their poverty and wretched slavery, working eighteen out of twenty-four hours, are almost wicked in condition” (Quigley 2013: 116). The toil of the New World is upon the Irish immigrant as he slaves under these conditions. Just following this passage, the narrator announces that “Paul was now a free man,” free from apprenticeship, which gives him the right “according to the terms of the implied contract, not only to receive support and clothing, but wages” (Quigley 2013: 117). Although the conditions of the apprenticeship and the laborer were shown quite similar to slavery, there was another job, which was far more dangerous than these two: domestic service.

Quigley writes about “this servant boy and that hired girl” who attend to the religious duties of their Protestant masters “in violation of the precepts of the church” (2013: 147). The book shows how dangerous the Protestant household is for the innocent Catholic domestic servant, by showing their going astray as they accept the master’s religion. The language of master/servant relationship in this text also signals how degrading it was for a white man to work in domestic service. Actually, this “metonymical relation between slaves and physical labor had brought into disgrace a number of occupations, including domestic service, thus rendering them impossible for many capable white men and women of the lower classes” (Buonomo 2014: 63). By keeping the Irish immigrant and the African American slave in the same class, the Protestant American masters distanced themselves from these two groups that were under their economic standing and social superiority. In *Reading the Stranger*, Leonardo Buonomo argues how this kind of Anglo-Saxon Protestant superiority reinforced the xenophobic fear of the other in politics, domestic service, and in literature between the years of 1830-1860. He focuses on texts written by American writers to understand the evaluation and acceptance of the immigrant into the

American society. Buonomo argues that during this period especially the Irish immigrants were viewed as a threat to the American values because of their Catholic belief.

As Buonomo and these novels suggest wages, labor, and economics were some of the important issues within the nineteenth century Irish immigrant novel. Father Quigley not only shows how to protect the faith and Irish identity, but also shows how not to fall prey to the slave-like conditions of the labor market that exploited immigrants. Father John Roddan, like Father Hugh Quigley, wrote within the genre of Catholic immigrant novels and addressed the labor issues with a more religious point of view. Roddan was born in 1819 in Boston to Irish immigrant parents. He worked as editor in Boston *Pilot*, and published his only novel *John O'Brien, Or, The Orphan of Boston, A Tale of Real Life* in 1850. According to Fanning, "the novel is probably partly autobiographical" since Roddan, like O'Brien, lost his father around the age of eight (1999: 94). However, the novel's value as an immigrant story lies at its didactic tone rather than its autobiographical aspect.

John O'Brien, orphaned at a young age, experiences the conversion attempts of Protestant Americans just like the O'Clery children. The reader learns that John's father came to America in 1816, met his wife in Califax, Canada, and eventually moved to Boston. However, after his death John is left an orphan and we see him on the streets of Boston as he comes across Calvinists, Unitarians, Revivals, Universalists, Baptists, Orthodoxes, Episcopalians, and Methodists. John, with a satiric tone, tells his experiences with these people and his adventure in the United States on his way to becoming a chief clerk. John, however, is different than Paul O'Clery, since he gets in trouble quite often. He is accused of robbery and although he is innocent, is sent to the House of Reformation. John gives an exquisitely detailed picture of this institution's prison-like space and regulations. First, he explains how different grades of boys, such as cabinet ministers, head monitor, monitor of keys, monitor of police were ranked in order to monitor the other boys of lower grades. Later, he talks about the two lower grades "who were not considered as belonging to the community" (Roddan 2015: 52). These lower grades had to do the worst jobs, could sometimes talk between themselves but never with boys of upper grades, and if this last rule was broken the boy from the upper class "was sent down to the grade of the boy spoken to" (Roddan 2015: 52). O'Brien, as "a new comer belonged to the third malgrade" (Roddan 2015: 52). The higher grades resemble the American social and economic classes of higher status, and the two lowest grades to the immigrant and the African American classes. As in this institution, these two lowest classes of people could interact with each other in real life, but their shared class similarities did harm the immigrant working class by dragging them down on the social ladder to the disadvantaged level of the African American man.

Not only people but also the space of the House of Reformation is highly interesting when analyzed in Foucaldian terms. O'Brien describes this place that has two rows of rooms along a long corridor, and adds; "There was a window in each, and above every door an empty space, which served to admit air, and to enable a listener to know what might be going on in the rooms" (Roddan 2015: 53). The monitor could punish the unruly boys and report them. The paradox of this place, however, is in its

failed attempt to be a school and not a prison. This institution, O'Brien says, "professed to be, not a house of correction, but a house of reformation" (Roddan 2015: 54). This failure is grounded in the carceral space and at the power of the 'monitors' displayed over the boys of lower grades. Foucault argues that discipline "is a type of power, a modality for its exercise" and adds that, "it may be taken over … by 'specialized institutions (the penitentiaries or 'houses of correction' of the nineteenth century)" (1995: 215). In this American institution, different techniques are used to discipline the fellow inmates of O'Brien. He says that some of the boys who tried to escape from the House were expelled from the community, whipped, confined to a solitary cell for three days up to a month, or chained in the garret of a supposedly haunted house. And if another boy tried to talk to the "expelled" boy, he was given the same punishment as well. O'Brien recalls how severe these punishments were and states that these kinds of punishments could easily make someone lose his mind. In Foucauldian terms, this kind of punishment as a discipline act "arrests or regulates movements" (Foucault 1995: 219). Discipline in the case of these boys, most of whom were Catholics being turned into Protestants, was deconstructing. Foucault says:

> It [discipline] must also master all the forces that are formed from the very constitution of an organized multiplicity; it must neutralize the effects of counter-power that spring from them and which form a resistance to the power that wishes to dominate it: agitations, revolts, spontaneous organizations, coalitions—anything that may establish horizontal conjunctions (1995: 219).

Institutions were used to shape the undesired immigrant Catholic children into Protestant Americans. The Protestant farmer family that adopted the O'Clery children, and the House of Reformation O'Brien was sent to all display the same characteristics. They all aim to eliminate or neutralize, as Foucault says, the Catholic out of the orphan's system and raise him a Protestant. This systematic and institutionalized effort to convert the orphan into the norms of the Protestant society shows its effect on O'Brien, who for a short period feels like he grew "more and more like a Protestant" (Roddan 2015: 55).

Loyalty to the Catholic belief, and the attacks on its integrity, reflect the Irish immigrant's fear of the Protestant America. These two novels are abundant with threats to the Catholic belief, and they advise the immigrant to protect his Irish ethnicity and warn him against the institutionalized conversion as well as the immigrant's labor exploitation in the United States. They both serve as guides to the newcomers, who by the time these books were published constituted the largest immigrant group in America. The successors of the Irish in the unskilled labor market, the Italians were subjected to a similar degradation on the social and economic ranks. The following success narratives show the Italian immigrant's rise from rags to riches.

Italian Immigrant Literature: Labor and Assimilation

In this section, I will analyze two Italian immigrant autobiographies written in the early twentieth century. Pascal D'Angelo's The *Son of Italy* and Constantine M. Panunzio's *The Soul of an Immigrant* reflect their own experiences in the New World. Their experiences show that the reception of the Italian Americans by the dominant culture was also problematic. Labor influenced this reception, as Italian immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries inherited manual labor from Irish

Americans as well as the implications with blackness. Moreover, they were criminalized and discriminated as a result of the Anti-Catholic movement. These aspects of the Italian immigrant experience led the immigrant to assimilation with a continuing loyalty to the Italian culture. In this sense, the Italian immigrant's newly formed American identity offers varied approaches to the Italian American texts. As a result, in D'Angelo's narrative, the focus will be on labor whereas in Panunzio's narrative it will be on the assimilation of the immigrant.

Pascal D'Angelo was born in Italy in 1894, and he immigrated to the United States in 1910. His autobiography is an example of the toils of the immigrant labor market in the early twentieth century, which it seems, was not very different than the conditions of the late nineteenth century labor market. He starts his narrative with his early childhood memories of landlords and poverty in Italy. He thinks his people have to emigrate to have new possibilities and even power since "[e]very bit of cultivable soil is owned by those fortunate few who lord over us. … And what is it that saves the man and keeps him from being ground under the hard power of necessity? The New World!" (D'Angelo 1975: 47-48). For D'Angelo and his father, America is an escape from the tyranny of landowners, drought, hunger, and poverty. However, their dream of a better life in America fails after the father and son's continuous failed attempts to have a better and steady job in America. The American Dream fails for the D'Angelo men, and the father gives up trying like many who dreamed of a better future but for whom being an immigrant became a heavy cross to bear. Pascal D'Angelo's father returns to Italy after a few years, thinking that they did not make any progress since they "are not better off than [they] started" (D'Angelo 1975: 115).

D'Angelo, however, prefers to stay in the New World in spite of all his suffering. Working together with a gang, swarming with people of his own town, D'Angelo worked at manual jobs, which required him to use the pick and shovel. He encounters people who speak "strange languages" and who might as well "have been phantoms for all the influence that they had upon us or for all we cared about them" (D'Angelo 1975: 70). However, he is influenced indirectly from the racial discourse around him. He himself is called by Americans and other people around him as "Pat." Since he worked at gangs that built highways and railroads, the confusion is understandable. He was an immigrant and shared the presumed 'color' of the Irish. However, he does not identify with the Irishman as a fellow laborer, but with the Poles who according to him were poor laborers like Italians. Another group of laborers he feels "fraternized" with are Mexican laborers. D'Angelo refuses to see the Irish as fellow laborers, because by late nineteenth century, the Irish started to rise on social ladder, and this reflected negatively on their attitude towards immigrants of other nationalities. Once the Irish started to hold political power, they were no longer building railroads and paving the streets, because by the 1890s they had left these manual jobs to their successors—Italians (Daniels 1990: 195). The Irish, who shared the same social status with the blacks from the perspective of the white nativists, in this way, gradually left behind the identification with the African American man to the Italian immigrants. However, even though the Irish achieved success, the epithet of "Pat" given to D'Angelo by Americans indicate that they still associated the Irish with manual labor.

Almost four years after his arrival in the United States, D'Angelo also becomes

part of the racial discourse. In order to find a job, his gang goes to the South, where "there are negroes" (D'Angelo 1975: 98). According to him, the commissary system they experience in West Virginia is white slavery: "The laborers—white men—were guarded by ferocious negroes with guns which they used at the least excuse. And this in free America. No wages are paid, and the men are told that instead of expecting any they themselves are in debt to the company" (D'Angelo 1975: 111). Feeling enslaved within this system, and ground under the 'autocracy' of the foremen, he starts to improve his English. His good knowledge of English makes him known among his gang members, the American brakemen and conductors who talk of him as "that queer Italian laborer" (D'Angelo 1975: 146). Some of his fellow workers felt that his English would help him make progress in America, whereas some "insisted that a man who was born a laborer could never rise" (D'Angelo 1975: 158). Valerie Babb in *Whiteness Visible* says that the experiences of English-speaking immigrant writers and non-English speaking immigrant writers changed because of the 'language barrier': "In telling their stories of transformation, immigrant autobiographers generally defined being made into Americans broadly, as gaining the freedom to fulfill personal potential through acquiring education, economic security, and partaking in democratic processes" (1998: 121). In order to change the course of the worker, and "fulfill his personal potential," D'Angelo quits manual labor and starts to write poetry because he becomes "annoyed at the chains of physical labor around [his] new-born soul" (D'Angelo 1975: 160). He takes his poems to an Italian newspaper "hoping that I might find some encouragement there from people of my own blood" (D'Angelo 1975: 167). Not finding the support he looks for, he falls into poverty, yet he never loses hope. A man of no education, D'Angelo studies hard to gain success in poetry, and when he earns it in the end, he remembers his fellow workers who "recognized that at last one of them has risen from the ditches and quicksands of toil to speak his heart to the upper world" (1975: 185). His story lacks philosophical musings on the condition of the immigrant, or his identity. It is a straightforward story of a man who describes what happens to him in this new country on his way to the American Dream.

Panunzio's autobiography, on the other hand, is full of musings on the condition of the immigrant, his acculturation and assimilation into the American society. Born in Italy in 1884, Panunzio immigrates to the United States in 1902. The America has a different picture in his mind, since he, from early childhood, heard of "the continent which 'Colombo,' one of our countrymen, had long ago discovered" (Panunzio 1922: 59). Similar to Father Hugh Quigley, Panunzio attempts to adopt America through Colombo, whose presence in history is used by Quigley to stress his Catholic belief, and by Panunzio to stress his nationality. This is their attempt to show to the American society that both the Catholics and Italians have been crucial to the foundation of and progress in America.

Panunzio upon his arrival works at many manual jobs as soon as he hears that the only jobs available for the Italians was 'pick and shovel.' Panunzio remembers in Molfetta, his hometown, manual labor was seen as degrading. However, he works in all kinds of manual jobs in America and takes pride in his "toil and in being independent. "A new birth of freedom," our immortal Lincoln would have said, and with it came the consciousness that this was possible only in America" (Panunzio 1922: 179). An adopted American, he becomes a part of the national discourse. And in a manner of

duty, he talks about assimilation of the immigrant: “with the unprecedented way in which the American public has turned its attention to the all-important question of the assimilation of the immigrant, it became increasingly clear to me that I owed it to my adopted country to give the story to the public” (Panunzio 1922: x). Assimilation is the utmost concern of Panunzio. According to him, assimilation occurs through an American education and the tolerance the Americans show to the immigrant during his Americanization process. This process helps to free the immigrant from poverty and degradation as he adapts to American values. Nevertheless, this adaptation to the mainstream values is just another submission according to Bourdieu:

> The awakening of political consciousness is often bound up with a whole process of rehabilitating and rebuilding self-esteem, which, because it involves a reaffirmation of cultural dignity that is experienced as (and indeed always is) liberatory, implies a submission to the dominant values and to some of the principles on which the dominant class bases its domination, such as recognition of the hierarchies linked to educational qualifications or to the capacities they are supposed to guarantee.” (1984: 395)

This suggests that one is never free from the influence of the dominant class. According to Bourdieu, the liberatory effect of having a political consciousness is deceptive, since it only allows the person a limited space to move between dominant class values. Panunzio’s narrative recognizes the educational hierarchies mentioned by Bourdieu as he highlights that his American education contributed to the “growth of what I call my American consciousness” (1922: 179). Even though some fellow students were “honoring [him] with a ‘dago’ now and then,” many of his student friends and professors accepted him with his Italian identity, which he calls an “accident of birth” (Panunzio 1922: 168).

The question of assimilation shapes Panunzio’s life and autobiography along the line of Americanization. He recounts his early contacts with Christian Americans who tried to convert immigrants, but he believes that this kind of Americanization and assimilation does not have a positive effect on the immigrant. He also does not believe that the incarceration of the immigrant will result in assimilation. The time spent in prison raises the enmity in the immigrant towards his captors and estranges him from the society. He is not ‘corrected,’ but lost. Panunzio is sent to the jail when he rides on a train without a ticket. He is later dismissed by the judge, who “in dealing with a "foreigner" as well as a native, tempers the technicality of the law with the warmth of human consideration” (Panunzio 1922: 117). He recalls his “own personal experiences as a prisoner, as an observer in police courts, as a defender in some cases,” and says that these led him “to believe that our police system often seriously retards the assimilation of the immigrant and arouses an antagonism in him which it is almost impossible to penetrate” (Panunzio 1922: 270). Panunzio feels the shadowy effect of his prison experience for some time, but as he suggests he is assimilated into the American nation easier with the help of tolerant American people like the judge.

Panunzio’s autobiography also demonstrates his efforts to reconcile his two identities. He tries to enlist in the army even before the United States enters WW1. Upon rejection, he enlists in the Y.M.C.A. and eventually goes to his country of birth in the uniform of his adopted country. He waits until his papers are checked, and moreover he is mistaken for an American. The American uniform is a proof of his

acceptance into the American nation. However, his estranged, yet nostalgic time in Italy is a proof of his in-between-ness. Like most immigrants who could neither leave nor stay, he is torn between the two sides of his identity. In the end, he voices his pride in being Italian but makes America his final choice; “upon Thy sacred soil shall I live; there I fain would die, an American” (Panunzio 1922: 329).

The texts of Italian American experience analyzed here suggest that the Italian immigrant was not readily accepted into the American nation. However, the authors demand persistence from the Italian immigrant stating that the toil of the labor industry or the discriminations based on their Italian identity will come to an end when they assimilate into the American nation. These two texts are also important to show how the Italian immigrant becomes an active participant of the racial hegemony by situating himself in relation to other immigrants and ethnic people. In these aspects, D’Angelo’s and Panunzio’s autobiographical texts demonstrate the acculturation of the Italian immigrant and his adoption of American values within a historical context.

These four texts, written by immigrants themselves present the common experiences of immigrants from different backgrounds and nationalities. Although there is a time gap between the works written by these Irish and Italian authors, their books suggest that the immigrant experience vary only in relation to subject matter. The religious occupational background of Quigley and Roddan, as well as the intertwined relation of Catholicism to their immigrant experience in the mid-nineteenth United States reflect the prevalent problems of the Catholic Irish immigrants of the Famine generation. Their interest in the labor opportunities of the immigrant and the way they handle the question of labor also demonstrate how they view the labor market yet as another Protestant American institution. Following the example of many men of religion of the nineteenth century, Quigley and Roddan instruct the newcomer on the perils of the New World. And the evil for them is the Protestant Yankee whose sole aim is to cause the Catholic immigrant abandon the Church and his Irish origins. The poorhouse and the House of Reformation are other institutions that Quigley and Roddan declare dangerous. The danger lies in their power to have control over the immigrant who is either in need of care or under the scrutiny of the dominant group. Therefore, according to these authors, an immigrant should avoid these institutions in addition to anything that are related to Protestantism. As a result, it is pivotal in the texts of Quigley and Roddan to avoid religious assimilation at all costs.

D’Angelo and Panunzio’s narratives differ from their Irish successors since their concern about assimilation is not on the ground of religion but on labor and correction. Both authors write their experiences as laborers in backbreaking jobs. D’Angelo’s poetic personality is seen even in his toil; he narrates his experience as a man and not only as an immigrant. Panunzio, on the other hand, muses on the correction of the immigrant as a tool used for his assimilation. According to him, this strategy used by natives does not ease the acculturation process but leads to insecurities and flaws in the sentiments felt by the immigrant. Both D’Angelo and Panunzio, however, are in favor of assimilation. It is through assimilation that they achieve their dreams. Assimilation, in their context cultural and national assimilation, is something to be achieved unlike the religious assimilation feared by Quigley and Roddan. The almost seventy years gap between these Irish and Italian authors play an important role in how

they view assimilation. What these authors hang on to as immigrants on a new land, and what they expect from it differ from each other at some aspects. And yet the toil of the immigrant is still the same as life in the New World crush their identities to form new ones.

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