

The image of the American Adam in Billy Budd as compared to the image of the american adam in selected works of 19th and early 20th century literature

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Abstrak

From the time of the earliest settlements the Europeans had seen America as a New World which would give them unlimited opportunity in the future. This image was cherished especially by those who had left their homelands for greater economic opportunities. Between 1620 and 1635 England suffered from economic difficulties. Many people lost their jobs. This deteriorating condition was aggravated by insufficient crops, because most of the lands were used for sheep-raising to meet the increasing demand for wool for England's expanding wool industries. To the first immigrants, then, the new land became the land of hope.

Many settlers believed that God had granted them the American land as a second chance for them to live on after the first chance had been ruined in their previous home country. America was really a place of relief for the people who were weary of too much suffering. It was stated that when the first immigrants were approaching the American shore, they felt that "air at 12 leagues' distance smelt as sweet as a new-blown garden-. (US IS, 1978: 1-3).

Those people considered America just like the second Garden of Eden they were always dreaming about. The vast, virgin forest, extending along the eastern seaboard from the north to the south, and rich in natural resources, resembled the earthly paradise and then became the object of pursuit for the suffering people. This Edenic possibility continued to be a strong attraction and since America's beginning, the development of American society had been marked by the great tide of immigrants toward the west. This Edenic dream also became a motivating factor for the waves of later immigrants to the new world in the centuries which followed, especially in the 19th Century, where the Edenic dream was transformed into myth that had spread among the pioneers who moved west. The people believed that because the western areas were still virgin, a promising future lay ahead, in the treasure island which became a rich source of raw materials for the development of the country. .As the coastal seaboard became densely populated and the soil became incapable of producing grain, these unfavorable conditions stimulated migration to the western regions, and there came a steady stream of men and women who left their coastal farms and villages to take advantage of the frontier life of the continent.