

### The New Colossus

Taken from The Museum of City of New York website  
engraved.  
This sonnet is inscribed on a plaque at the Statue of Liberty. For many, this poem is proof that welcoming immigrants and refugees is as fundamental to what it means to be American as the idea of "liberty" itself.

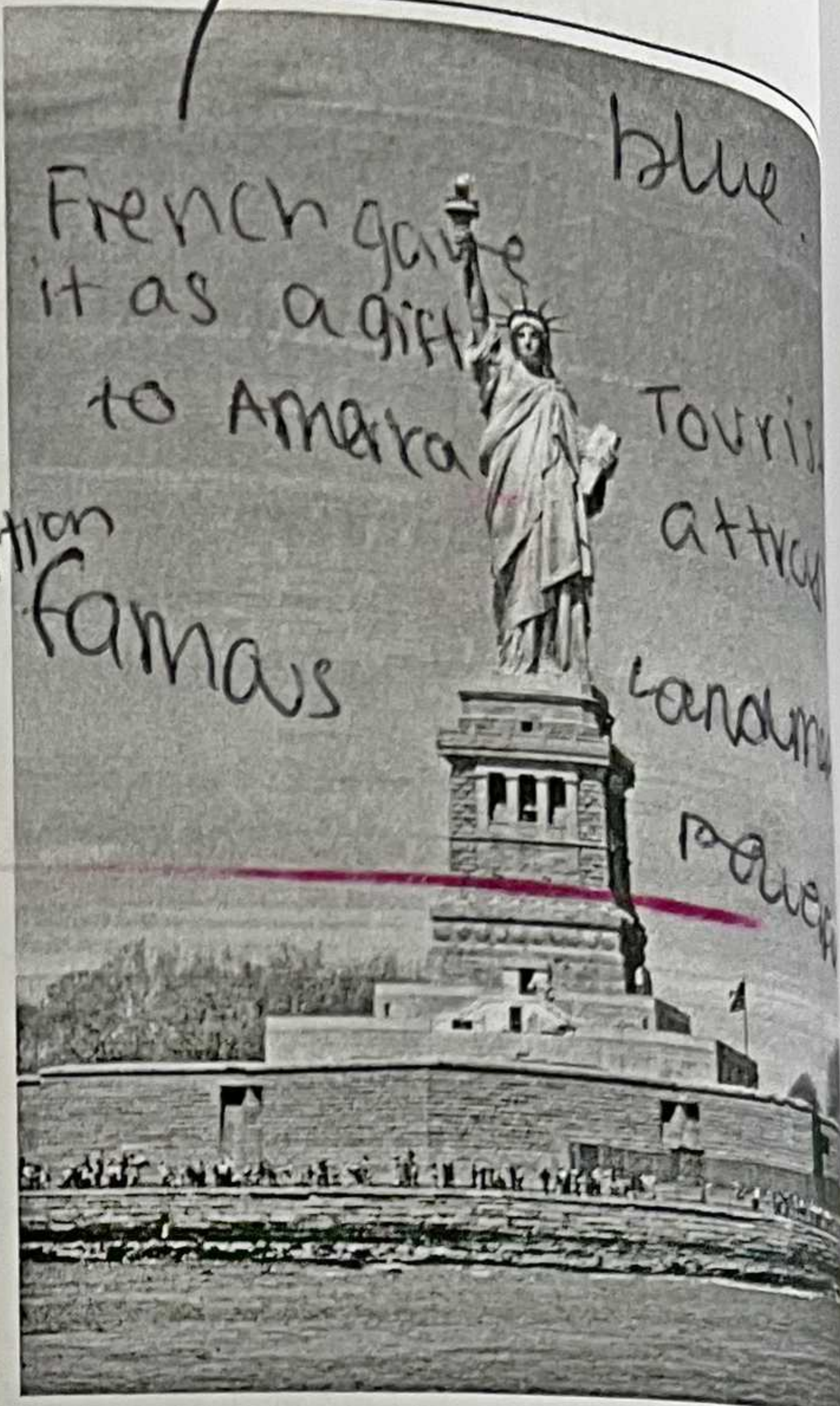
The statue, a gift to America from the people of France, was unveiled in 1886 but it was not until 1903 that these words, written 20 years earlier by a then well-known New York poet, became part of the Statue of Liberty. It would take even longer for the meanings of the words and the statue to become completely intertwined.

Peace → enlightenment  
The statue's original name, "Liberty Enlightening the World" gives us an idea of what the project's French sculptor, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, intended the sculpture to personify. Not just "liberty" itself, but also the idea that American "liberty" is a shining light guiding the whole world from the harbour of the young democracy's largest city. → America - powerful force

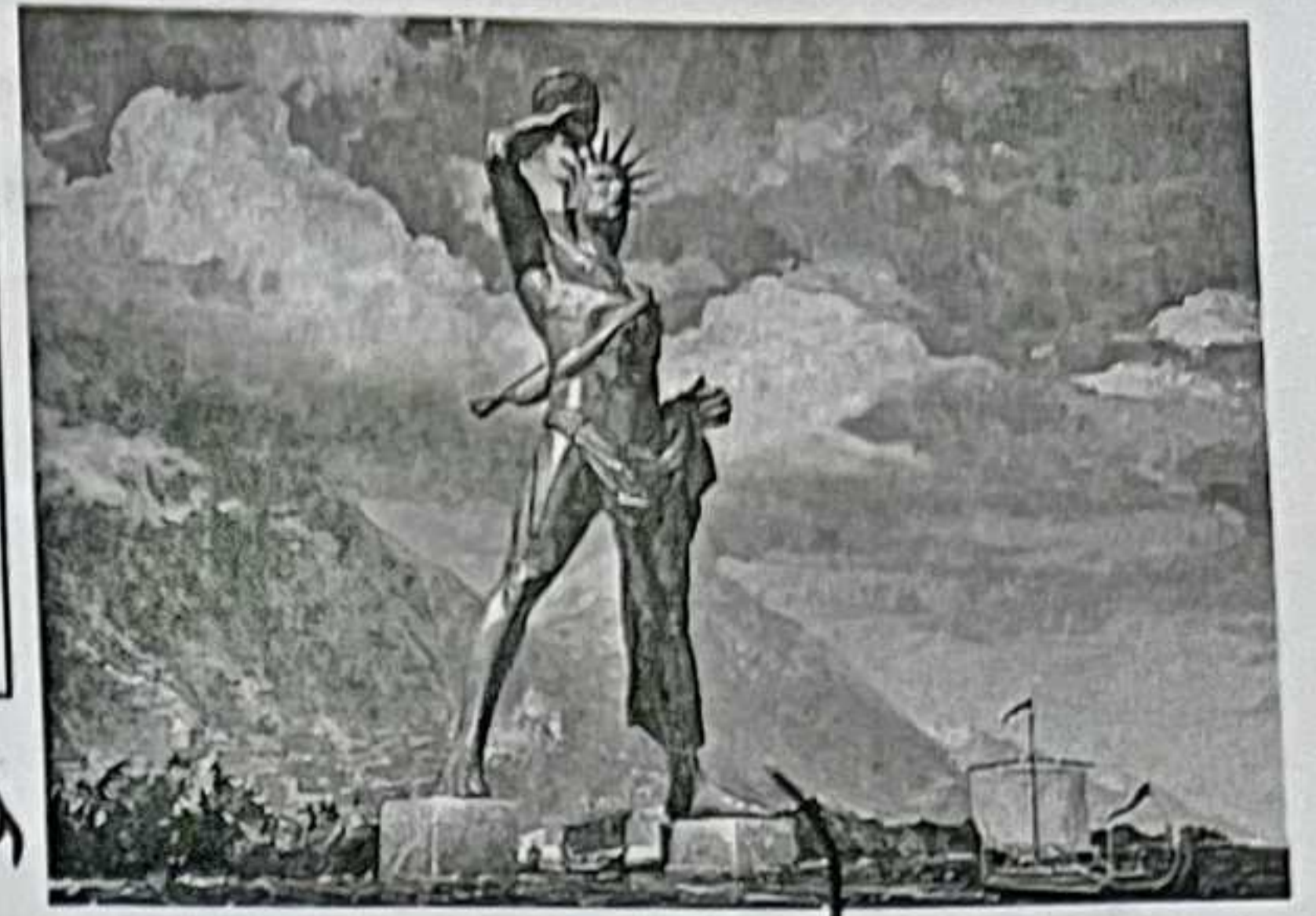
In 1875, the French formally announced the gift of a statue to America to celebrate their independence and the abolition of slavery. France and America set up an agreement in which the French people would contribute to the cost of construction of the sculpture, while the American people (rather than the government) would pay for the statue's pedestal.

Fundraising for the pedestal was difficult. To build up excitement, parts of the statue appeared in various exhibitions and in public places. For one exhibition, a well-known poet and activist wrote a sonnet titled The New Colossus. As a Jewish woman, she wanted to raise awareness of the flood of poor Russian Jewish immigrants and refugees arriving in New York in the 1880s. Therefore, in her poem, she describes the statue as a symbol of refuge as well as liberty.

In 1903, the poem was installed on a plaque inside the statue's base. Also in that year, 600,000 immigrants came through Ellis Island, the island next to the statue where immigrants arriving in America were processed. Each of them had a chance to ponder the meaning of the copper sculpture as their ships arrived in New York harbour. The newly arrived immigrant looking up at the Statue of Liberty is one of the lasting images of the era of Ellis Island immigration.



The title refers to the ancient statue the Colossus of Rhodes, built in 280BC in Greece, which was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.



### The New Colossus

by Emma Lazarus, 1883

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

Beautiful imagery  
peace  
statue NOT like this  
soldier attacking

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name

strength and power  
protection  
empowering woman  
light - warm welcoming -> hope

looking out for every visible for all

Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

protection  
dominant powerful  
natural force  
oxymoron can be personification  
commanding menacingly

'Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!' cries she  
With silent lips. 'Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

enjambement  
frustrated = to be desperately trying

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

most unreachable  
luxury shiny wealth

Brazen - made of brass / bold  
Beacon - torch  
Pomp - the use of ceremony / display of magnificence  
Teeming - crowded  
Tempest-tost - tossed by storms

everybody is welcomed in New York.

positive ending  
because she is going to protect them