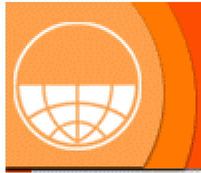

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Asian Immigration to the United States

A unit of study for Grades 8-12

Padma Rangaswamy
and
Dorothie Shah

Organization of American Historians
and the
National Center for History in the Schools
University of California, Los Angeles

For additional copies of this unit, as well as other teaching units and
resources, please write or fax:
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COVER: Clockwise from upper left: Hmong children at school (HOPE Academy: Hmong Open Partnerships in Education). http://www.lnschools.com/hope; Surendra Shah with family before immigrating to the United States (see page 50); Vietnamese refugee rescued from a boat (National Archives NWDNS-428-N-1176806); Young American born Koreans who were students at a community language school in San Francisco, ca. 1930 (U.S. Department of Energy, Hanford Site "Asian and Pacific American Experience"; Itsuko Miura Mizuno before immigrating from Japan to the United States (see page 38); Center: Filipino-American artist (Victorio a. Velasco Collection, Acc.#1325, 1948; special collections Division, University of Washington).
Cover design by Marian McKenna Olivas

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Acknowledgments

This publication is the result of a collaborative effort between the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS) at the University of California Los Angeles and the Organization of American Historians (OAH) to develop teaching untis based on primary documents for United States History education at the pre-collegiate level.

Author Padma Rangaswamy (University of Illinois, Ph.D, 1996) is a historian, author and active member of Chicago's Asian Indian community. Her most recent publication, *Namasté America: Indian Immigrants in an American Metropolis* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), is a comprehensive study of Asian Indian immigration. She has also contributed several entries to Asian American encyclopedias. She has taught World History, American History and Asian American History at many universities including the University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola University, North Central College, and Dominican University. She is currently Visiting Professor at Northwestern University where she teaches a course on "The Asian Indian Experience in 20th century United States."

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David Vigilante, Associate Director of the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), has served as editor of the unit. Gary B. Nash, Director of NCHS, has offered suggestions and coordinated with the Organization of American Historians (OAH) for co-publication. Marian McKenna Olivas created the unit design including the charts, graphs, and photos.

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"Our beautiful America . . . flourished because it was fed from so many sources—because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples."

—-President Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks upon Signing the 1965 Immigration Act

"The best way to contain Asian dynamism is to absorb it as the United States is doing. Business people keep pointing out that it is far more cost-efficient to import the rest of the world's talent than to train citizens at home."

—-Robert D. Kaplan, "Travels Into America's Future," *The Atlantic Monthly,* August, 1998, 37–61

Introduction

I. Approach and Rationale

Asian Immigration to the United States is one of several teaching units with primary sources produced by a joint effort of the National Center for History in the Schools and the Organization of American Historians. These units are the fruits of collaborations between history professors and experienced teachers of United States History. They represent specific issues and "dramatic episodes" in history from which you and your students can delve into the deeper meanings of these selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative. By studying crucial turning points in history the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected issues and dramatic episodes that bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

These teaching units are based on primary sources, taken from government documents, artifacts, magazines, newspapers, films, private correspondence, literature, contemporary photographs, and paintings from the period under study. What we hope you achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to have your students connect more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

II. Content and Organization

Within this unit, you will find: Teacher Background Materials, including Unit Overview, Unit Context, Correlation to the National Standards for History, Unit Objectives, an Introduction to *Asian Immigration to the United States*; and Lesson Plans with Student Resources. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. Although these lessons are recommended for use by grades 8–12, they can be adapted for other grade levels.

The Teacher Background section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to teach this unit. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The Lesson Plans include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. The resources consist of primary source documents, handouts and student background materials, and a bibliography.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction.

Teacher Background Materials

I. Unit Overview

Since 1965 the rapid growth of immigration from Asia has contributed to the tremendous diversity in the racial and ethnic composition of the United States population. In the 1990 census, Asian Americans represented the fastest growing group of immigrants, but the diversity among Asians is even more complex than indicated by census data. They represent a multitude of language groups and have many different countries of origin. For instance, Chinese-speaking immigrants may come from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries. Asian Indians who speak any one of the 18 official languages of India may come from India, England, Fiji, South Africa, or the Caribbean. The reasons Asian Americans immigrate and their situations in the United States are no less diverse than their national origins. They could be well-heeled entrepreneurs seeking better economic opportunities or destitute boat persons fleeing political persecution.

How do different Asian Americans define themselves? How does the media define them? Why are Asian Americans in the United States in larger numbers than ever before? Should the nation welcome them as much-needed workers in the American economy or worry about the social welfare burden they might impose? Should Euro-Americans be concerned that they will somehow create a very different American culture or should they be glad that Asian Americans might enrich the fabric of our lives through new and exciting contributions? Answers to these questions can be attempted only after a study of the new Asian immigration in historical perspective, an analysis of the forces that have governed U.S. attitudes towards Asian immigration in the past, and an examination of the reasons why Asians immigrate to the United States. The material in this unit provides some of the resources that can be used to address these issues.

Students will examine advertisements and other popular media to determine how they reflect changes in American society. They will learn to interpret statistics presented in graphs and tables. They will read American legislative acts and survey relevant global events listed in chronologies. They will read statements made by a great variety of Asian immigrants to learn what prompted these people to leave their lands of origin to come to the United States.

Primary and secondary sources presented in this unit will complement U.S. history textbook content on late twentieth-century U. S. history, including Cold War competition with the USSR, the impact of U. S. military involvement in Indo-China, and the impact of technological innovation on Asian immigration to the United States.

II. Unit Context

The history of Asian immigration to the United States has received scant attention in schools and colleges but is an integral part of American history. It raises issues about diversity and democracy, capitalism and economic opportunity, racism

and discrimination, property rights and citizenship rights, all of which are critical to a full and broad understanding of our common heritage as Americans.

This topic belongs to several eras from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. This unit will set the history of Asian American immigration in the wider context of American immigration legislation and global events and will examine motivations for Asian immigration. It is designed to augment other chapters in recent American history both by presenting information and by engaging students in activities that help them understand factors which affect migration, bring about social change, and influence United States policy.

III. Correlation with National Standards for United States History

This unit is designed to accompany Standards 2A and 2B of Era 6, "The Development of the Industrial United States, 1870-1900;" Standards 2A and 3A of Era 7, "The Emergence of Modern America, 1890-1930;" and Standard 2B of Era 10, "Contemporary United States, 1968 to the Present," in *the National Standards for United States History*, *Basic Edition* (Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1996).

IV. Unit Learning Objectives

1. To investigate legislation regulating immigration to the United States.
2. To assess policies regarding Asian immigration to the United States.
3. To research factors affecting decisions by Asians to immigrate to the United States.
4. To analyze interaction between global economic and social conditions and immigration to the United States.
5. To formulate positions and to propose policies to regulate future immigration in the best interests of the United States.
6. To examine statistical information regarding immigration from Asia to the United States.

V. Historical Background of Asian Immigration

Asians were among the very early immigrants to the United States, and like other immigrant groups they have contributed to the building of America. Yet millions of Asian Americans who have been in the United States for more than three generations are still mislabeled "foreigners," and their history in America remains misunderstood. At the dawn of the twenty first century, more and more immigrants from Asia continue to arrive in the United States, answering the call for highly skilled labor in computer and information technology industries, shattering outdated images of immigrants as "huddled masses yearning to breathe free." To understand these Asian immigrants it is necessary to examine the history of each of the major Asian groups, differentiating among people from China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and countries in Southeast Asia.

The first recorded arrival of people from Asia in the modern era occurred in 1790 when Filipino sailors escaped imprisonment aboard a Spanish galleon docked in New Orleans and fled into the bayous. The first large-scale Asian immigration to the United States took place when the **Chinese** came to work the gold fields of Northern California in 1848. American capitalists supported unfettered immigration in those years and welcomed the heavy Chinese immigration of unskilled workers; but organized labor opposed it, first on economic grounds, accusing the Chinese of lowering wages and increasing unemployment among natives, and later on racial and social grounds. For the first time in American history, racism was openly used as an argument for restricting immigration. The anti-Chinese movement led to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which prohibited the admission of unskilled Chinese workers to the U.S.

The years 1890 to 1924 marked the initial period of **Japanese** immigration that was also punctuated by anti-Japanese movements. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 excluded Japanese and Koreans from immigration, the Alien Land Acts of California denied Asians property rights, and the Immigration Act of 1917 denied entry to all Asians from a "Barred Zone" in Asia. Immigration from Asia was effectively prohibited by the Immigration Act of 1924, which banned admission of persons ineligible for citizenship, a category that included all Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Asian Indians.

Filipinos were allowed unrestricted entry to the United States as "nationals" since the Philippines formally became an American colonial territory in 1902, but there was surprisingly limited immigration. Filipinos were defined as aliens under the Philippine Independence Act of 1934, and from 1935 to 1946, when the Philippines gained independence, they had an immigration quota of 50 persons per year. After 1946, the annual quota rose to 100 persons a year and immigrants were granted naturalization rights. By 1960, there were only 176,000 Filipino immigrants in the U.S., a low number given the close ties between the two countries.

The first significant wave of immigration of **Asian Indians** to the United States took place between 1900 and 1920, when nearly 7,000 agricultural workers, mostly Sikhs from

Punjab, came to the Pacific Coast. They also worked in the lumber and railroad industries, alongside the Japanese and the Chinese. Like other Asian immigrants, they became targets of the hostility and suspicion of white Americans, who campaigned vigorously against the "ragheads" and "the Hindoo menace." Immigration from India to the United States virtually stopped when Congress passed exclusion laws in 1917 and 1924.

Immigration from Asia halted completely during World War II. During this time, anti-Japanese sentiment reached its zenith with the U.S. government-sanctioned incarceration of nearly 110,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps.

Small gains for Asians were made after World War II when racial bars to naturalization were removed in 1952 and token quotas of 105 immigrants per annum were granted to Asian nations. Small numbers of non-quota immigrants were allowed to enter, chiefly war brides and other relatives.

Whereas before World War II there were harsh restrictions on immigration from Asia and American policy was one of exclusion and overt racial subordination, there was a change in U.S. policy after the war. American global interests, both economic and political, expanded dramatically, and the United States saw itself as the champion of the new free world. Meanwhile, many Asian nations threw off the yoke of colonialism, becoming proud, independent states that America could no longer humiliate with its discriminatory immigration policies.

The 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act reflected this new world order and marked a watershed in Asian American immigration history. It eliminated earlier discriminatory racial quotas and made possible the entry into the U.S. of millions of immigrants from Asia. Comparison of immigration statistics shows that Asian immigration, which was negligible during the period 1901–1930 (3.7%), rose slightly during mid-century, and increased dramatically from 1961 to 1989 (33.4%).[1]

The conditions for Asian immigrants had changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. Whereas earlier they had been primarily single laborers, subject to exclusion, racially oppressed, and denied citizenship, since 1965 Asian immigrants have been mostly middle class, including professionals and entrepreneurs who have come with families to America. Asian immigrants no longer face overt and state-supported racism. Today Asian Americans are an increasingly significant minority in the United States.

[1]Source: Douglas S. Massey, "The New Immigration and Ethnicity in the United States," *Population and Development Review, 21. No. 3* (September 1995), 634. See also Figure 2b.

VI. Lesson Plans

1. The Asian Americans Immigrants
2. Regulating Asian Immigration
3. Global forces and Asian Immigration
4. Why Do Asians Come to the United States?
5. The Future of Immigration Policy

WASHINGTON

Lesson One
The Asian Americans Immigrants

A. Organizing Questions

1. How many Asian immigrants have entered the United States?
2. When did they come?
3. Where did they come from?

B. Lesson Objectives

- ♦ To recognize changing immigration patterns in U. S. history.
- ♦ To examine the extent and variety of Asian immigration.

C. Lesson Activities (two days)

Day One

1. Divide the class into small groups of three to five students. Ask students to select a recorder/reporter. Distribute copies of advertisements featuring photos of people from recent publications. Ask students to answer the following questions.

   a. What do you notice about faces in these ads?

   b. What is the significance of the diversity represented in these ads?

   c. What do these ads indicate about the population of the United States?

   Have the reporter from each group share their answers to these three questions.

2. View the video film: "Train # 7, Immigrant Journey" by Hye Jung Park and J. T. Takagi. Invite students to respond to this portrayal of the changing face of New York City and to comment on what this suggests about the United States. The film is available for rent or purchase from Third World Newsreel (see bibliography for additional information).

3. Review basic guidelines for reading graphs.

4. Homework:

   Students should answer each of the following questions before class on **Day Two**.

   a. Carefully examine information in **Documents 1-A** and **1-B**.

   b. During what decade did the maximum number of immigrants enter the United States?

   c. How many immigrants arrived during that peak immigration decade?

   d. From what area of the world did immigrants come from 1820 to 1945?

   e. From which areas did an increasing number of immigrants come to the United States between 1965 and 1989?

Examine the statistics in **Document 1-C**.

5. List the five decades the largest number of people came from Asia to United States.

6. How many times greater was the number of Asian immigrants who came to the United States between 1971 and 1980 than the number who came one century earlier (1871-1880)?

Review the charts in **Documents 1-D** and the series of graphs in **Document 1-E.**

7. What is the main difference between “Immigration” statistics and “Population” statistics?

8. Name the six groups that had the highest rate of growth between 1980 and 1990.

9. Name the six largest Asian groups in the United States.

10. What information in these documents accounts for the fact that the Chinese-American and Filipino-American populations are significantly larger than other Asian-American groups in the U.S.

11. Which three Southeast Asian groups had a significant increase in immigration after 1975?

Day Two

1. Direct students to exchange papers and to correct answers to homework questions.

2. Ask students to calculate the number of their classmates who should represent each of the six major Asian population groups in order to represent their portion of the total Asian-American population. For example, in a class of 25 students

   6 would represent Chinese

   5 would represent Filipinos

   3 would represent Japanese

   3 would represent Indians

   3 would represent Koreans

   2 would represent Vietnamese

   3 would represent other Asian immigrants

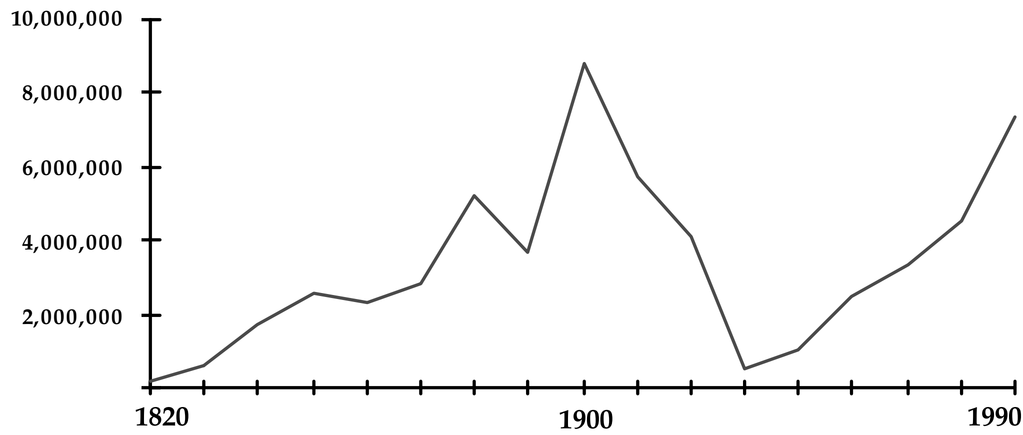
3. Divide the class into six groups representing six major Asian immigrant groups. Provide cardboard for placards (approximately 14 x 8 inches or 12 x 6 inches) and markers. Students in each group should make a placard with the name of the major Asian immigrant group in the United States they represent. On these placards students should write the year of the first major immigration from the land of origin. Illustrate placards with flags of the lands of origin of these immigrants. (Check an encyclopedia or the Internet for information.) In order to graphically represent their portion of the U.S. population, the designated number of students should stand with appropriate placards.

> ***Note***
>
> *The "Other Asian Immigrants" might hold smaller placards listing countries of origin of these immigrants. Immigrants whose rate of growth between 1980 and 1990 exceeds 200% should be written in a bright color contrasting with other placards.*

4. Homework:

   Students should read Background Information about Asian immigrants in the United States (**Student Handout 1**). Then they should write specific statements regarding what statistics reveal about Asian-American diversity, education, work, and income.

Immigration to the United States by Decade
Fiscal Years 1820–1990

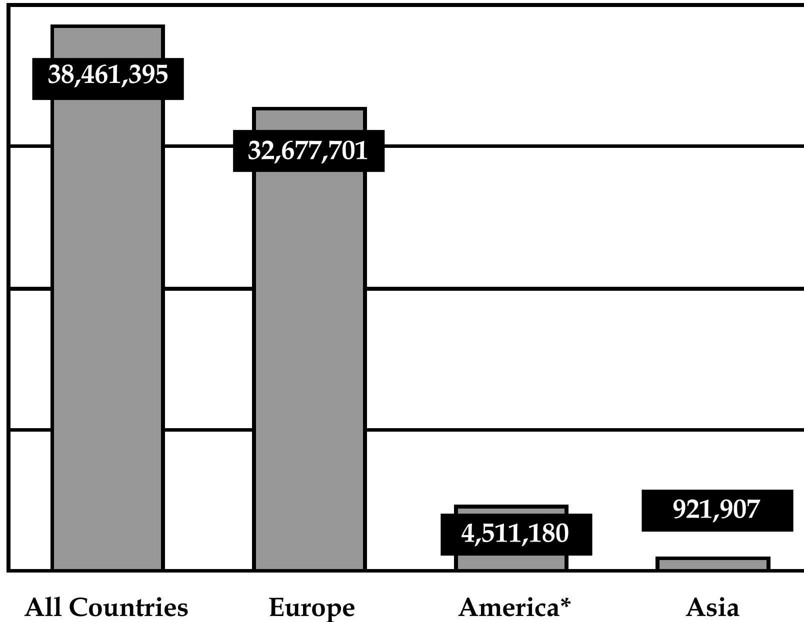


Decade	Number of Immigrants
1821–1830	141,439
1831–1840	599,125
1841–1850	1,713,251
1851–1860	2,598,214
1861–1870	2,314,824
1871–1880	2,812,191
1881–1890	5,246,613
1891–1900	3,687,564
1901–1910	8,795,386
1911–1920	5,735,811
1921–1930	4,107,209
1931–1940	528,431
1941–1950	1,035,039
1951–1960	2,515,479
1961–1970	3,321,677
1971–1980	4,493,314
1981–1990	7,338,062

Source: "Immigration by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence, Fiscal Years 1820–1989" In George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, *America. A Narrative History,* Third ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), A40-41

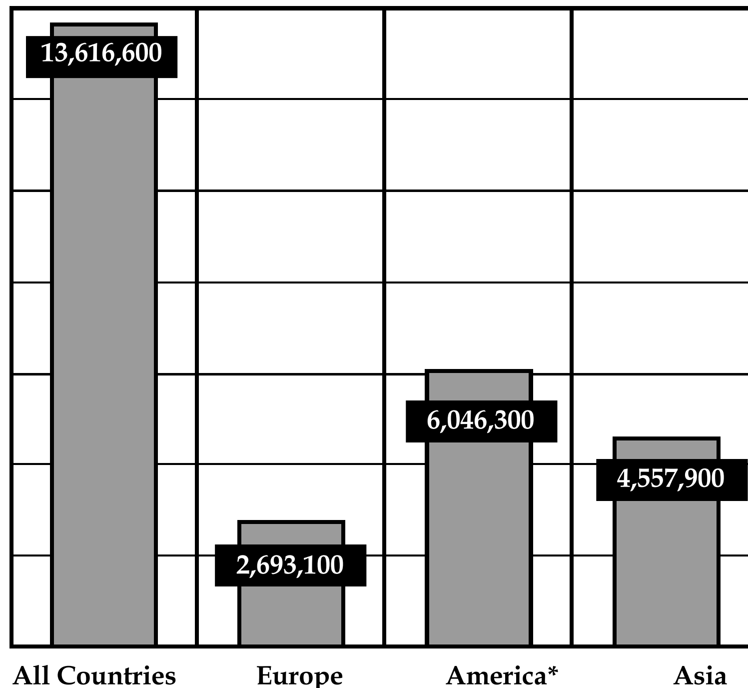
IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

Figure 1: Immigration to the United States 1820–1945



Source: Table 4, *U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service Annual Report for 1945*

Figure 2: Immigration to the United States 1961–1989

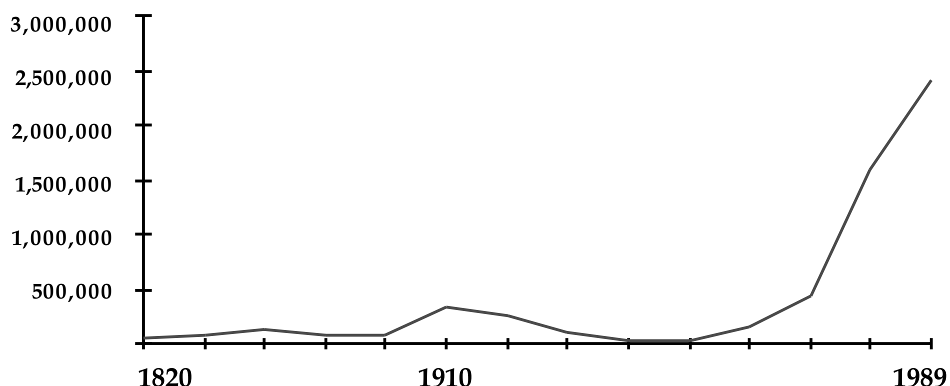


Source: Table 7, "Immigrants, by Country of Birth: 1961–1989," *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1994*

* America refers to North and South America outside the United States

IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES FROM ASIA

Immigration to the United States from Asia 1851–1989*



Decade	Number of Asian Immigrants
1851–1860	41,538
1861–1870	64,759
1871–1880	124,160
1881–1890	69,942
1891–1900	74,862
1901–1910	323,543
1911–1920	247,236
1921–1930	112,059
1931–1940	16,595
1941–1950	37,028
1951–1960	153,249
1961–1970	427,642
1971–1980	1,588,178
1981–1989	2,416,278

*Includes China, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, Korea, Phillipines, Turkey, Vietnam, Other Asia.

Source: "Immigration by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence, Fiscal Years 1820–1989" In George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, *America. A Narrative History,* Third ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), A42–48.

IMMIGRATION VS. POPULATION

Asian Population in the United States

Census Year	Total U.S. population	Total Asian and Pacific Islander population	Asian and Pacific Islanders as % of total U.S. population	Total Asian population	Asians as % of total U.S. population
1970	203,300,000	1,500,000	0.8%		
1980*	226,545,805	3,726,440	1.6%	3,466,874	1.5%
1990	248,709,873	7,273,662	2.9%	6,908,638	2.8%

* More than 20 Asian and Pacific Islander population groups were identified in the 1980 census, compared with only five in the 1970 census.

When new Asian and Pacific Islander groups were identified in the 1980 census, it became possible to compare the growth of many different population groups between 1980 and 1990.

It is important to distinguish between "Immigration" figures and "Population" figures.

"Immigration" figures for Asian countries show the number of people entering the United States from those countries.

"Population" figures for Asian countries show the number of people in the United States claiming ancestry from those countries. These figures include American-born descendants of immigrants. Many immigrants leave the United States and return to their land of origin or move on to other countries also, thereby reducing the Asian population in the United States.

Immigration was one major factor accounting for the doubling in the proportion of the Asian and Pacific Islander population from 0.8% in 1970 to 1.6% in 1980, and nearly doubling yet again in 1990 to 2.9%.

Large numbers of immigrants came from China, India, Korea, and the Philippines following the adoption of the Immigration Act of 1965, and more than 400,000 Southeast Asian Refugees came to America between 1975 and 1980 under the Refugee Resettlement Program.

In addition to immigration and natural increase, the growth in numbers was also due to changes in the census race definition to include more groups in the Asian and Pacific Islander categories.

Diversity of the Asian American Population

The Asian American population brings tremendous diversity to an already diverse United States, but the variety within this diversity is also enormous. No longer is it just the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos.

Several different groups are identified within the Asian American population, and 12 of these are named in the following table. They do not include the separate groups in the Pacific Islander population, namely the Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, Micronesians and Melanesians.

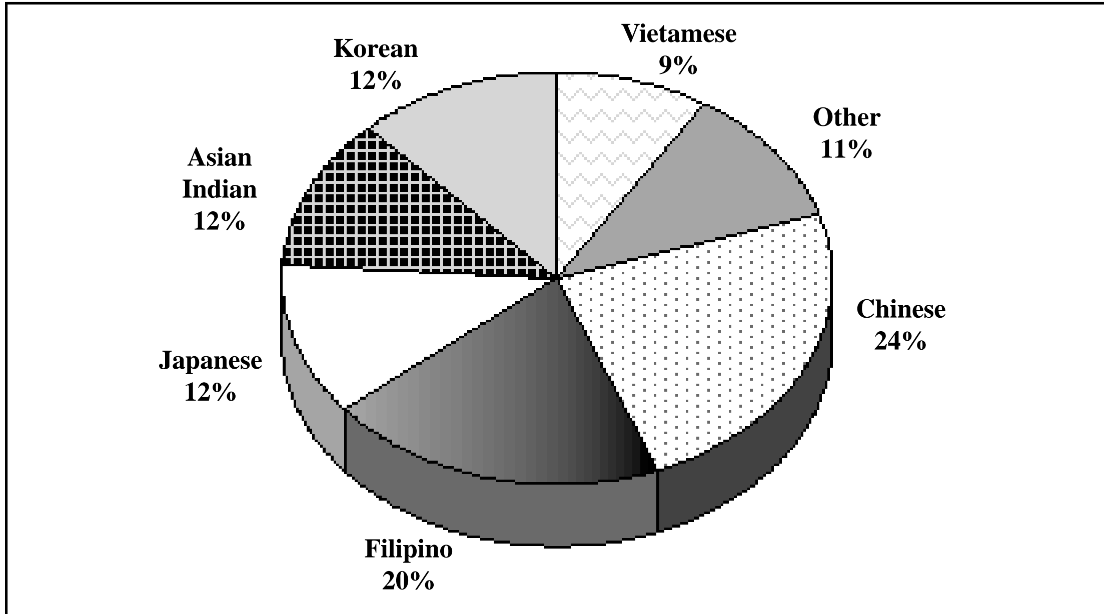
The following table shows the growth of the major Asian American groups identified in the U.S. Census of the population between 1980 and 1990.

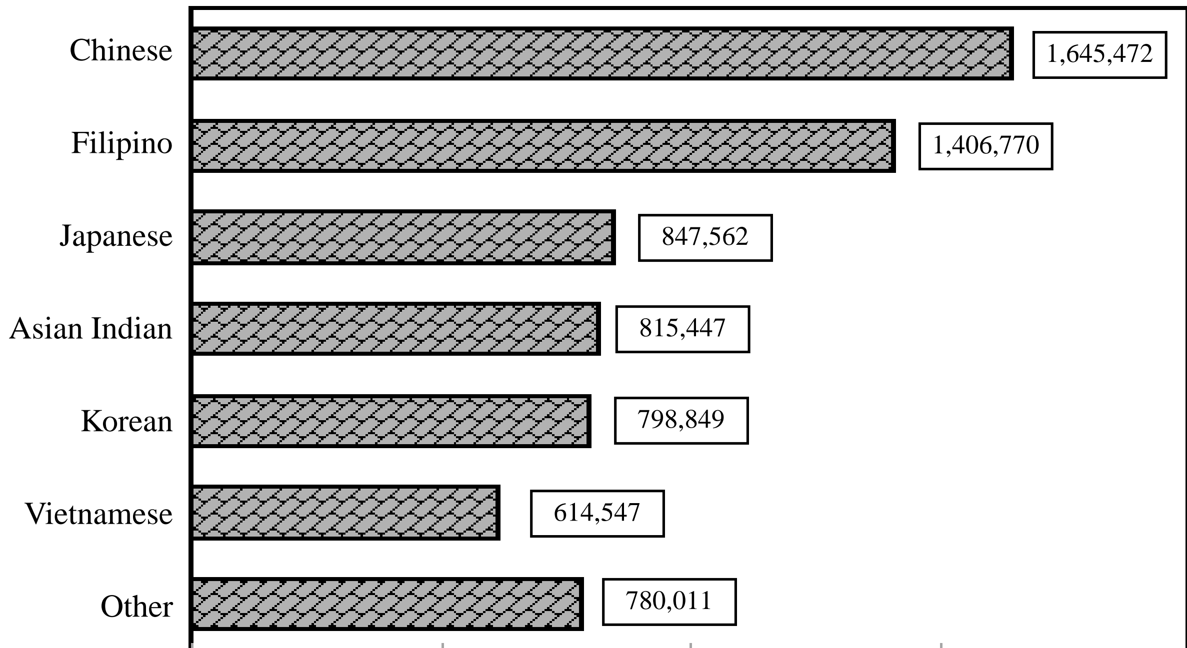
Population Growth Among Major Asian Groups

Population	1980	1990	% Growth
Total Asian	3,466,874	6,908,638	99%
Chinese	812,178	1,645,472	103%
Filipino	781,894	1,406,770	80%
Japanese	716,331	847,562	18%
Asian Indian	387,223	815,447	111%
Korean	357,393	798,849	124%
Vietnamese	245,025	614,547	151%
Laotian	47,683	149,014	213%
Thai	45,279	91,275	102%
Cambodian	16,044	147,411	819%
Pakistani	15,792	82,903	413%
Indonesian	9,618	27,634	187%
Hmong	5,204	90,082	1,631%

United States Population 1990

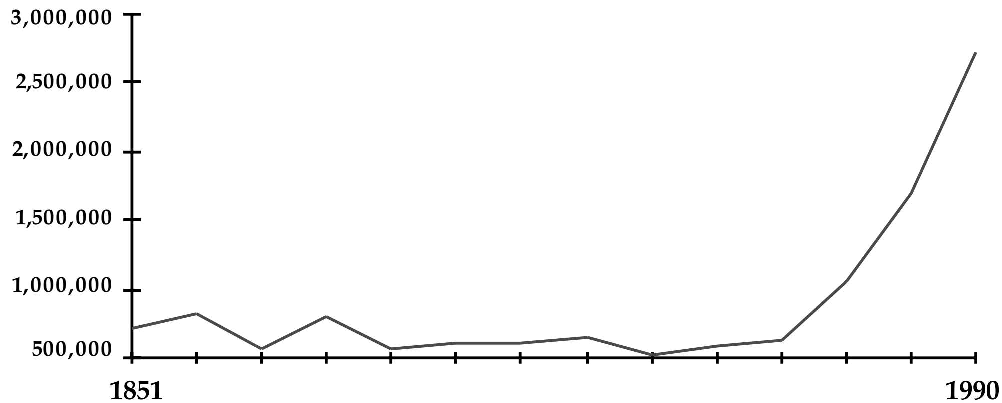
Total U.S. Population:	248,709,873
Asian and Pacific Islander Population:	7,273,662
Asian Population:	6,908,638





Source: "Table 3. Selected Social and Economic Characteristics for the Asian Population 1990," In *We the Americans: Asians* U.S. Department of Commerce: Economics and Statistics Administration, 1993.

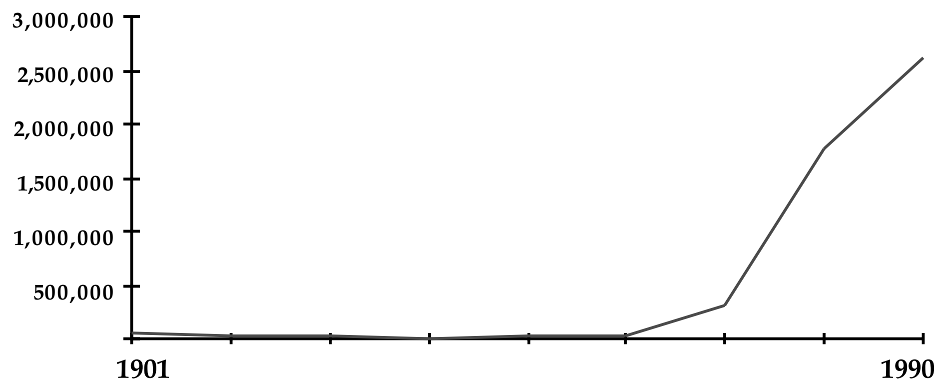
Immigration to the United States from China, 1851–1990



Decade	Number of Chinese Immigrants
1851–1860	41,397
1861–1870	64,301
1871–1880	123,201
1881–1890	61,711
1891–1900	14,799
1901–1910	20,605
1911–1920	21,278
1921–1930	29,907
1931–1940	4,928
1941–1950	16,709
1951–1960	25,198
1961–1970	109,771
1971–1980	237,793
1981–1990	444,962

Source: "Table 4.1 Chinese Immigrant Arrivals by Decade," In Pyong Gap Ming, ed. *Asian Americans* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995), 60.

IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES FROM INDIA, 1901–1990

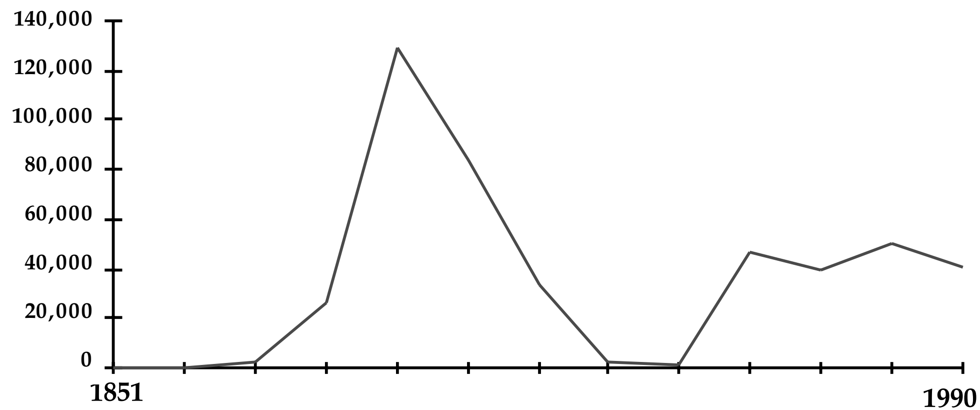


Decade	Number of Indian Immigrants
1901–1910	4,713
1911–1920	2,082
1921–1930	1,886
1931–1940	496
1941–1950	1,761
1951–1960	1,973
1961–1970	31,200
1971–1980	176,800
1981–1990	261,900

(Indian immigration to the United States between 1820–1900 totalled only 716.)

Source:Padma Rangaswamy, Table 2 and Table 4 In *Post-1965 Immigrants from India in Metropolitan Chicago: The Imperatives of Choice and Change* (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1996), 141, 145.

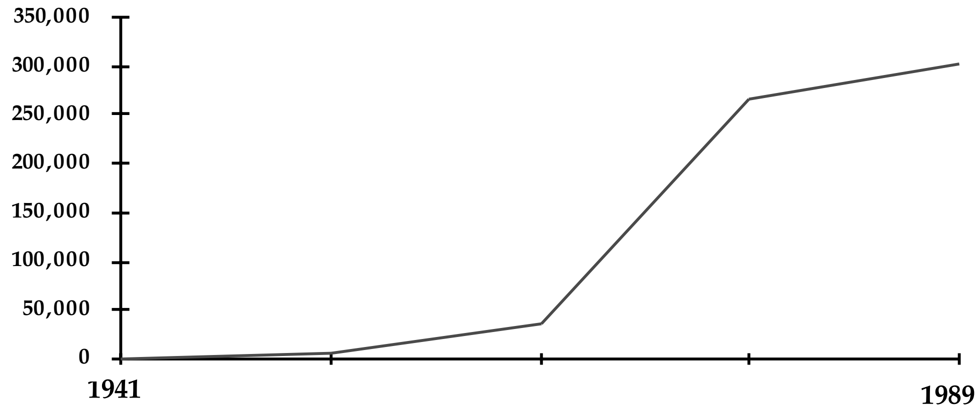
IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES FROM JAPAN, 1861–1989



Decade	Number of Japanese Immigrants
1861–1870	186
1871–1880	149
1881–1890	2,270
1891–1900	25,942
1901–1910	129,797
1911–1920	83,837
1921–1930	33,462
1931–1940	1,948
1941–1950	1,555
1951–1960	46,250
1961–1970	39,988
1971–1980	49,775
1981–1989	40,654

Source: "Immigration by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence, Fiscal Years 1820–1989" In George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, *America. A Narrative History,* Third ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), A42- 48.

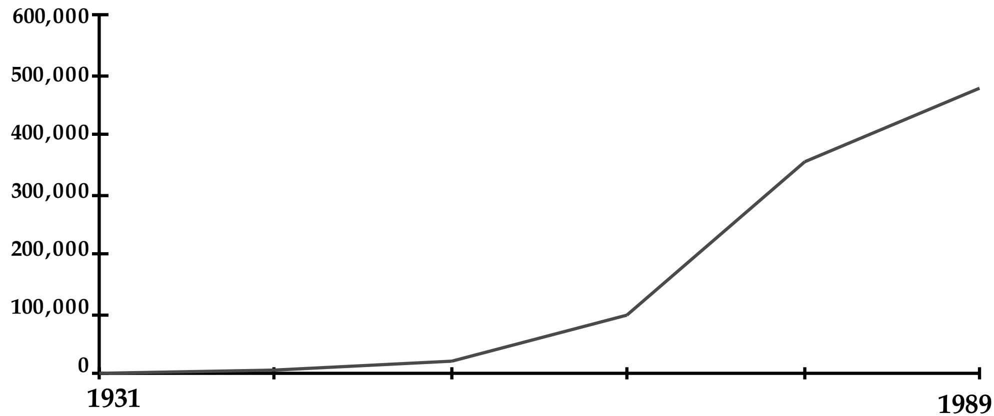
IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES FROM KOREA, 1941–1989



Decade	Number of Korean Immigrants
1941–1950	107
1951–1960	6,231
1961–1970	34,526
1971–1980	267,638
1981–1989	302,782

Source: "Immigration by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence, Fiscal Years 1820–1989" In George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, *America. A Narrative History,* Third ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), A42- 48.

Immigration to the United States from the Philippines, 1931–1989

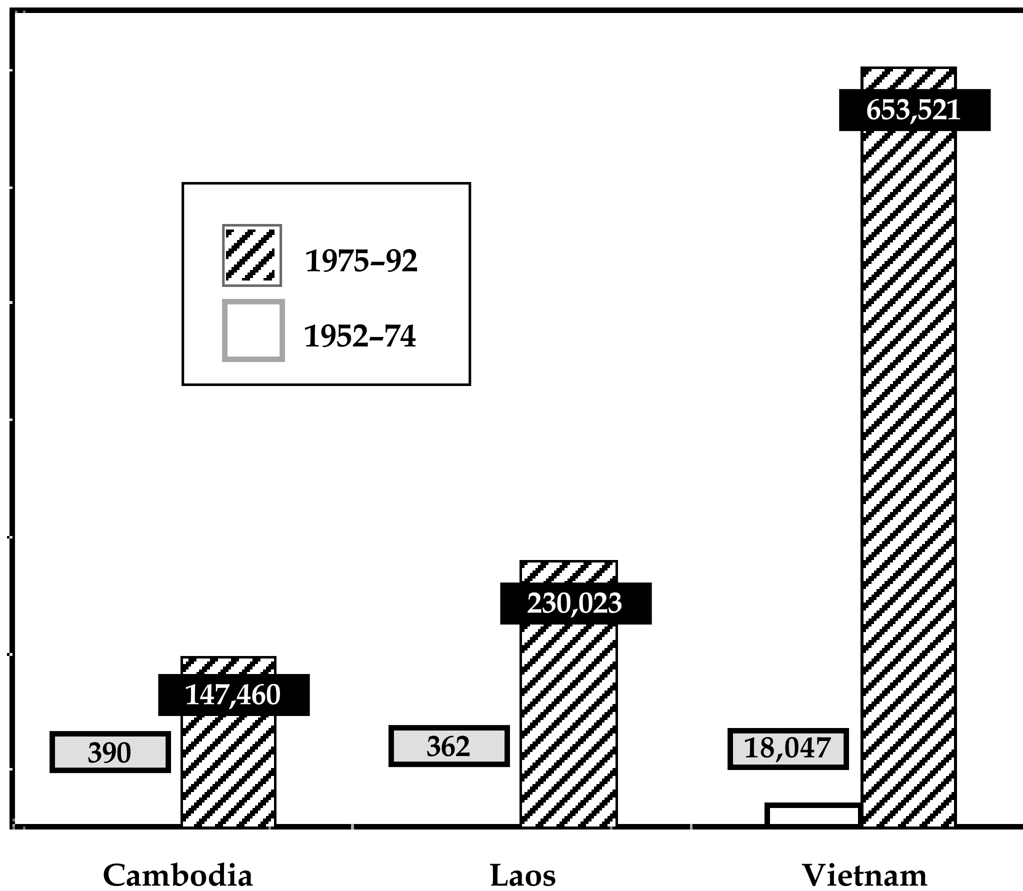


Decade	Number of Filipino Immigrants
1931–1940	528
1941–1950	4,691
1951–1960	19,307
1961–1970	98,376
1971–1980	354,987
1981–1989	477,485

Source: "Immigration by Region and Selected Country of Last Residence, Fiscal Years 1820–1989" In George Brown Tindall with David E. Shi, *America. A Narrative History,* Third ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), A42- 48.

Immigration to the United States from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam

Pre-1975 Immigrant Arrivals, 1952-1974
Post-1975 Refugee Arrivals, 1975-1992



Source: "Table 9.1 Arrrivals in the United States from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, 1952-1992" In Pyong Gap Ming, ed. *Asian Americans* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995), 241.

Historical Background

The graphs and tables in this section reveal patterns of immigration to the United States since 1820 when immigration records were first maintained, setting Asian immigration against the backdrop of total immigration to the United States. They show the periods of highest immigration in United States history, when waves of immigrants arrived on American shores, first from northern and western Europe, and later southern and eastern Europe. They also show periods of low immigration, when global events like world wars and the Great Depression adversely affected immigration to the United States. Lastly, they show how Asian immigration has risen and fallen over the years, increasing dramatically after 1965.

It was not until the 1980 census that many Asian groups were identified and counted as a separate group. Comparison between the 1980 and 1990 census data reveals some very significant patterns of growth in the Asian American population. A close look at the 1990 census figures reveals important socio-economic characteristics and the tremendous diversity among the Asian American groups.

According to the 1990 census, approximately 66% of Asians lived in just five states: California, New York, Hawaii, Texas, and Illinois.

Immigration contributed heavily to the growth of the Asian population. Although two-thirds of Asian Americans were foreign born, the vast majority of Japanese Americans were born in the United States. Most Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians have arrived only recently and thus, most were born in Asia. The median age of Asians is 30 years, compared to the national median of 33 years.

Asians value education very highly. Although only 20% of Americans have a bachelor's degree, 38% of Asians have bachelors or higher degrees. Asian Indians have the highest educational attainment rates for both men (66%) and women (49%). Fewer than 9% of Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong are college or university graduates.

Nearly two-thirds of Asian Americans speak an Asian language at home. Many like the Hmong and the Cambodians live in households where no one speaks English "very well."

Asian immigrants are industrious; 67% are employed while only 65% of all Americans are currently in the labor force. Sixty percent of Asian women work compared to 57% of all women in the United States.

Because of their education, Asian Americans tend to work in higher paying occupations. Almost one third of Asians are in managerial and professional specialty jobs compared to one in four Americans. Asian Americans also hold technical, sales, and administrative support jobs in higher proportion (33%) than all Americans (31%).

However, studies show that Asians do suffer from discrimination and are paid less than white Americans for the same type of work.

When looking at income levels, it is helpful to look at both median family income and per capita income. Asian American families have higher median family incomes ($41,583) than all Americans ($35,225), but that is due not only to their education, but because they have more family members in the work force. Only 13% of American households have three or more workers, while 20% of Asian families do. Consequently, the per capita income of Asian Americans is lower, at $13,806, than the national per capita income of $14,143.

Variations among the Asian American population are very broad. The Japanese had the highest per capita income of $19,373, compared to the Hmong who had the lowest at $2,692. The Hmong are also among the most recent Asian immigrant groups, and have not yet had the time needed to become financially stable in a new land.

Some Notable Asian Americans in Government Service

NASA, http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/lu.html

Edward Tsang Lu (Ph.D.)
NASA Astronaut

AAPI Initiative, http://www.aapi.gov/singh.htm

Shamina Singh, Executive Director of the first White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs)

Heritage Foundation, http://www.heritage.org/staff/chao.html

Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Labor, 2001–
Former Chairman Asian Studies Center Advisory Council

U.S. Army Public Information, http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/photos/Apr1999/newcsa.html

Gen. Eric K. Shinseki
U.S. Army, 34th Chief of Staff

Lesson Two
Regulating Asian Immigration

A. Organizing Questions

1. What United States legislation regulated Asian immigration?
2. Why were these laws passed?

B. Lesson Objectives

- ♦ To examine laws regulating Asian immigration to the United States.
- ♦ To consider how laws reflect public attitudes.

C. Lesson Activities (two days)

Day One

1. Have students read **Student Handout 2**, Historical Background.
2. Distribute **Student Handout 3**, "Chronology of United States Immigration Legislation," for student reference.
3. Form students into four small groups and have each group select a recorder/reporter. When group members have completed the tasks specified below, they should begin working on the chart, **Student Handout 4**, which will be completed with information from other groups on Day Two.

   Group I: Carefully read **Document 2-A**, "The 1917 Immigration Act."

   a. List all of the categories of people who were excluded from immigrating to the United States.
   b. Check all of the categories that you agree should be excluded. Why?
   c. Explain why other categories should be included.

   Group II: Carefully read **Document 2-A**, "The 1917 Immigration Act."

   a. List all of the exceptions to exclusion.
   b. Would you allow any other exceptions?
   c. What does the map in **Document 2-B** indicate about regulations regarding immigration? Does this map remind you of other legal restrictions based on ethnic origin? Explain.

d. Do these maps remind you of other legal restrictions based on ethnic origin? Explain.

Group III: Carefully check **Document 2-C**, “The 1924 Immigration Act.”

a. What restrictions on immigration were imposed by this Act?

b. According to tables in **Document 1-E**, how many immigrants from China, India, and Japan were allowed to enter the U.S. each year under the specified quotas of the 1924 Act, **Document 2-C**?

Group IV: Carefully read **Document 2-D**, “The 1965 Immigration Act.”

a. What criteria were established for immigrants seeking to enter the U.S.?

b. How did revisions of regulations controlling immigration change opportunities for Asians to enter the United States?

4. Many Indians regard the first member of their family to immigrate to the United States to be the “locomotive for their family train.” What does the diagram in **Document 2-E** illustrate about the power of a single immigrant to be “a locomotive?” You may wish to extend the lesson by showing “So Far From India” by Mira Nair. This documentary film examined a young immigrant’s life in New York as well as his experiences when he visits his family in India. (See Bibliography for information on acquiring the film.)

Day Two

Have students use information from small group reports to complete the chart in **Student Handout 4**, “Provisions of Legislative Acts Regulating Immigration from Asia to the U.S.” The chart should be turned in for teacher evaluation.

Historical Background

Immigration law in the United States is a federal responsibility, and Congress has total and complete authority over immigration. By legislating who may enter the country, how long aliens may stay, and when they must leave, the government decides the fate of millions of people who want to immigrate to the United States.

Immigrants are considered "aliens" until they become naturalized with full rights of citizenship. Immigration of people from Asia was regulated until the middle of the twentieth century not only by immigration law but also by denying Asians rights of citizenship. Aliens who have made the United States their home, who live and work and pay their taxes here, are nevertheless subject to deportation and do not enjoy the same rights and privileges as United States citizens.

The history of exclusion of Asians goes back as far as the first federal piece of legislation on immigration and naturalization, the 1790 law that reserved the rights of citizenship to only "free, white males." The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act singled out people of an entire nation for exclusion and was the first overtly racist piece of immigration legislation. The Immigration Act of 1917 was the culmination of decades of anti-Asian sentiment in America. It effectively cut off all immigration from Asia by creating a "Barred Zone" (known as the "Asia Pacific Triangle"). Natives of this area were declared inadmissible to the United States.

In 1924, Congress passed the "national origins quota law," which set the annual quota for any country or nationality at 2 percent of the number of foreign-born persons of such nationality resident in the continental United States in 1890. Though this was aimed specifically at people of southern and eastern European origin, who immigrated in large numbers after 1890, the law had the effect of excluding people from Asia even more effectively than the 1917 law. The 1924 law introduced the provision that, as a rule, no alien ineligible to become a citizen shall be admitted to the United States as an immigrant. This was aimed primarily at Japanese aliens.

Sen. Patrick A. McCarren
U.S. Democratic Senator 1932–54
U.S. Senate biographical files

A new law, the McCarran-Walter Act, passed in 1952 brought into one comprehensive statute the multiple laws that had until then governed immigration and naturalization to the United States. The 1952 law made all races eligible for naturalization, allowed all countries a minimum quota of 100 but retained a modified version of the national origins quota system to include nationalities in the United States in 1920. It also introduced a quota preference for skilled aliens whose services were urgently needed in the United States and for relatives of U.S. citizens and aliens. This enabled many Asians to enter the U.S. and to bring their families as well.

The most important piece of legislation for Asian immigration to the United States is the *1965 Immigration and Nationality Act*. This Act abolished the national origins quota system and granted immigrant visas on a first-come, first-served basis for relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens and for persons with special skills needed in the United States. Thanks to these provisions, thousands of highly trained and skilled Asians came to America, and they were soon joined by their families so that by the year 1990, the Asian population in the United States made up nearly 3% of the total. Many other laws also made it possible for Asians to come to the United States. These laws were a more direct result of American military involvement in Asia.

Undocumented aliens who enter the U.S. illegally are an important but little understood segment of any immigrant population. In the case of Asian immigration, distance and geography make it difficult for people from Asia to enter the U.S. illegally, but many Asians overstay their legally granted visas and manage to remain in the U.S. In addition, since 1990, boatloads of undocumented Chinese have arrived on both the east and west coasts. In 1986, Congress granted amnesty to many undocumented aliens, but strict enforcement of immigration laws has resulted in deportation of many undocumented aliens during the 1990s.

Angel Island Immigration Station

Angel Island, Men's Barracks

Once the Chiniese Exclusion Acts were passed, the Angel Island immigration station mostly served as a detention center for excluded Asian immigrants.

Photos: Angel Island Association: http://www.angelisland.org

CHRONOLOGY
UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

1790 — **Federal Statute** established a uniform rule for naturalization —a two year residence requirement. Only free white males could be citizens. Immigration from Europe was unrestricted.

1868 — **Burlingame Treaty with China:** in exchange for economic incentives and advantages granted to American merchants and shippers by China, Chinese immigrants were allowed entry to the United States.

1870 — **Naturalization Act** prohibited the entry of wives of Chinese laborers. Chinese were denied the right to become U.S. citizens.

1882 — **Immigration Act**, The Chinese Exclusion Act, established selective regulations and prohibited admission of unskilled Chinese workers. Chinese merchants, students, teachers, diplomats, and travelers were permitted to enter the U.S.

1907 — **Gentlemen's Agreement** prohibited further immigration of Japanese and Korean laborers. Wives and children of Japanese immigrants were permitted to enter Hawaii and the U.S. and families began to build communities.

1917 — **Immigration Act** established a "Barred Zone," which included India as well as East Asia and prohibited entry of natives of countries within that region.

1921 — **Ladies' Agreement** banned emigration of "Picture Brides" from Japan.

1921 — **The National Origins Quota Law** limited immigration in any one year to 3% of the number of that nationality already in the United States, based on the 1910 census.

1924 — **Immigration Act** revised the 1921 quota limiting immigration to 2% of the 1890 census; the act prohibited immigration of aliens who were ineligible for citizenship, a category that included Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Asian Indians.

1934 — **Tydings-McDuffe Act** established a quota of 50 Filipino immigrants per year and promised independence to the Philippines by 1946.

1943	**Magnuson Act** repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, made Chinese eligible for citizenship and set a token quota of 105 immigrants per year from China.
1945	**War Brides Act** permitted U.S. servicemen to bring their Asian wives and children to America as non-quota immigrants.
1946	**Luce-Cellar Bill** granted citizenship rights to Asian Indians and Filipinos and established a quota of 100 immigrants per year from India and the Philippines.
1952	**McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act** assigned an immigration quota of 100 per year to each Asian country with a ceiling of 2,000 per year from the Asian-Pacific triangle. Persons of all races became eligible for citizenship. Thus many Asian immigrants who had lived in the U.S. for decades became naturalized citizens.
1953	**Refugee Relief Act** allowed 3,000 Chinese to enter the U.S. as refugees of the Chinese Civil War.
1962	Refugees from the Peoples Republic of China (mainland China) were granted special permission to enter the U.S.
1965	**Immigration Act** reversed decades of discrimination against Asian immigrants. The number of immigrants from any independent Asian country who could enter the U.S. was increased to 20,000 with an annual limit of 170,000 from the Eastern hemisphere. Immediate family members (spouses, children, parents) of U.S. citizens were granted preference and a quota preference was established for skilled aliens whose services were urgently needed in the U.S.
1975	**Indochina Migration and Assistance Act** established a resettlement program for refugees following the communist victories in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.
1979	**Orderly Departure Program** permitted 20,000 Vietnamese family members of earlier immigrants to enter the U.S. each year
1986	**Immigration Reform and Control Act** established a system of amnesty for undocumented aliens admitted to the U.S. by 1982 to establish legal residence and become eligible within seven years to apply for citizenship. Knowingly hiring undocumented aliens became illegal.

The Immigration Act of 1917

The following are excerpts from legislation regulating immigration enacted on February 5, 1917.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the word "alien" wherever used in this Act shall include any person not a native-born or naturalized citizen of the United States.

Sec. 3. . . . The following classes of aliens shall be excluded from admission into the United States:

> All idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded persons, epileptics, insane persons; persons who have had one or more attacks of insanity at any time previously; persons of constitutional psychopathic inferiority; persons with chronic alcoholism; paupers; professional beggars; vagrants; persons afflicted with tuberculosis in any form or with a loathsome or dangerous contagious disease; persons . . . mentally or physically defective . . . which may affect the ability of such alien to earn a living; persons who have been convicted of or admit having committed a felony or other crime . . .polygamists, . . . anarchists, or persons who believe in or advocate the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States, ... or teach the unlawful destruction of property; . . . prostitutes, or persons coming into the United States for the purpose of prostitution or for any other immoral purpose; . . . or receive in whole or in part the proceeds of prostitution; persons hereinafter called contract laborers, . . who migrate to this country [with] offers or promises of employment. . . skilled or unskilled; persons who have come in consequence of advertisements for laborers printed, published, or distributed in a foreign country; persons likely to become a public charge; persons who have been deported, . . . persons whose tickets or passage is paid for . . .by any corporation, association, society, municipality or foreign Government. . . stowaways, except that any such stowaway, if otherwise admissible may be admitted in the discretion of the Secretary of Labor; all children under sixteen years of age, unaccompanied by or not coming with one or both of their parents, . . . persons, who are natives of islands not possessed by the United States adjacent to the Continent of Asia, situated south of the twentieth parallel latitude north, west of the one hundred and sixtieth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich, and north of the tenth parallel of latitude south, or who are natives of any country, provinces, or dependency situated on the continent of Asia west of the one hundred and tenth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich and east of the fiftieth meridian of longitude east from Greenwich and south of the fiftieth parallel of latitude north, except that portion of said territory situated between the fiftieth and the sixty-fourth meridians of longitude east from Greenwich and the twenty -fourth and thirty-eighth parallels of latitude north and

> no alien now in any way excluded from, or prevented from entering the United States, shall be admitted to the United States.

The provision next foregoing, however, shall not apply to persons of the following status or occupations: Government officers, ministers or religious teachers, missionaries, lawyers, physicians, and chemists, civil engineers, teachers, students, authors, artists, merchants, and travelers for curiosity or pleasure; nor to their legal wives or their children under sixteen years of age. . . .

The following persons shall also be excluded from admission, . . .to wit:

> All aliens over sixteen years of age, physically capable of reading who can not read the English language, or some other language . . . any admissible alien, . . . legally admitted and any citizen of the United States, may bring in or send for his father or grandfather over fifty-five years of age, his wife, his mother, his grandmother, or his unmarried or widowed daughter, . . whether such relative can read or not; and such relative shall be permitted to enter, . . .

All aliens who shall prove to the satisfaction of the proper immigration officers to the Secretary of Labor that they are seeking admission to the United States to avoid religious persecution in the country of their last permanent residence, . . . [shall be exempt from the operation of the illiteracy test]. . .

Provided further, That skilled labor, . . . may be imported if labor of like kind unemployed cannot be found in this country, . . .

Sec. 28 . . . This Act shall not be construed to repeal, alter, or amend existing laws relating to the immigration or exclusion of Chinese persons or persons of Chinese descent[2], except as provided in section nineteen hereof.

Source: H.R. 10384, *An Act to Regulate the Immigration of Aliens to, and the Residence of Aliens in, the United States.*

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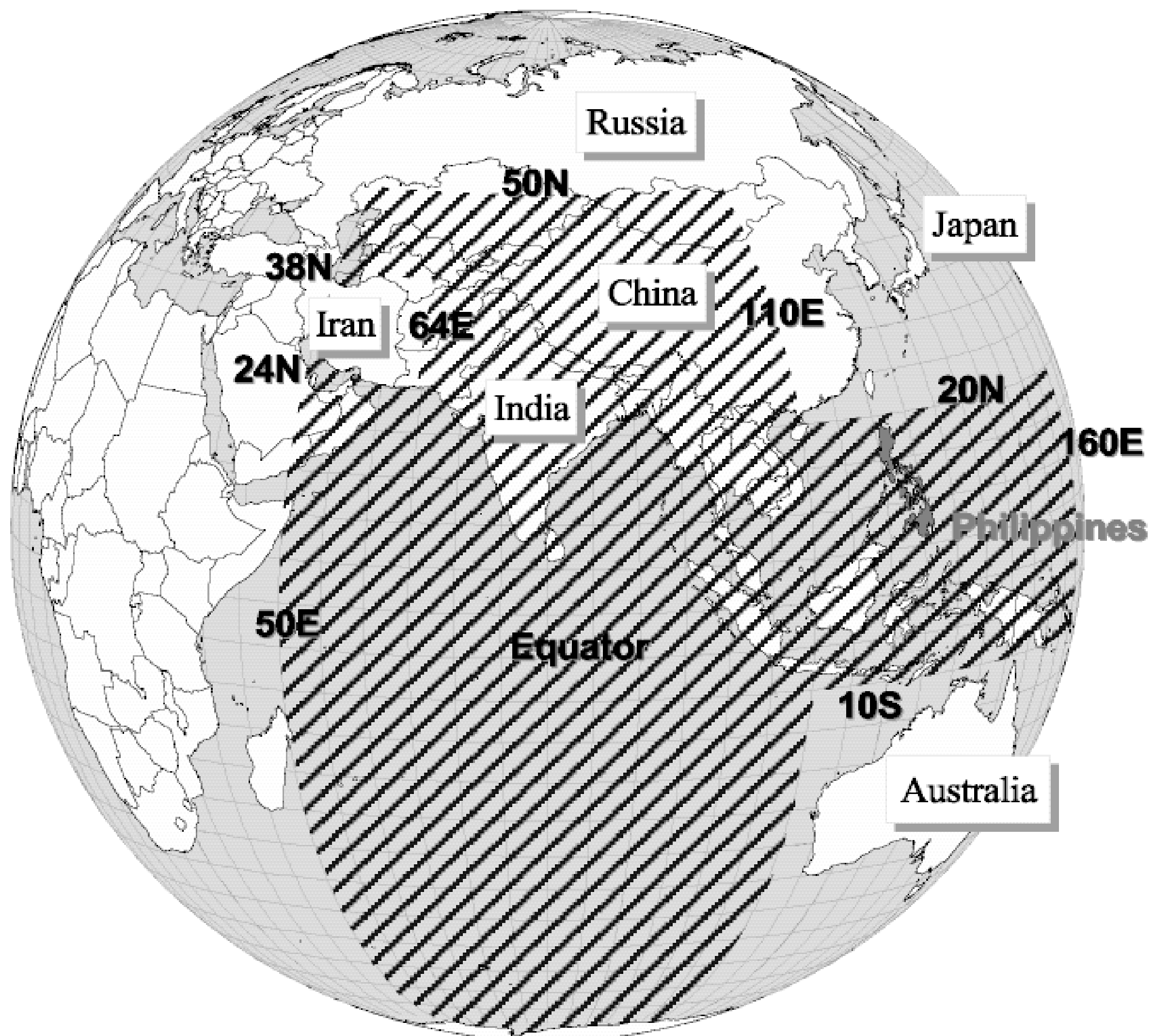
[2] For details of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 see the NCHS-OAH unit *Early Chinese Immigration and the Process of Exclusion*.

Map of "Barred Zone"

The 1917 Immigration Act established a "Barred Zone," (known as the "Asia Pacific Triangle") which included India as well as East Asia and prohibited entry of natives of countries within that region.



Map by Professor Sandra Arlinghaus, PhD, The University of Michigan

An Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens into the United States
May 26, 1924

In 1921 the "Quota Law" limited immigration to 3 percent of the number of persons of each nationality already in the United States as recorded in the 1910 census. In 1924 Congress changed the quota to 2 percent and based the data on the census of 1890. The act also excluded Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Asian Indians. The following is an excerpt from the 1924 law.

NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS

Sec. 11. (a) The annual quota of any nationality shall be 2 per centum of the number of foreign-born individuals of such nationality resident in continental United States as determined by the United States census of 1890, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100.

(b) The annual quota of any nationality for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1927, and for each fiscal year hereafter, shall be a number which bears the same ratio to 150,000 as the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920 having that national origin (ascertained as hereinafter provided in this section) bears to the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100.

(c) For the purpose of subdivision (b) national origin shall be ascertained by determining as nearly as may be, in respect of each geographical area which under section 12 is to be treated as a separate country (except the geographical areas specified in subdivision (c) of section (94) the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920 whose origin by birth or ancestry is attributable to such geographical area. Such determination shall not be made by tracing the ancestors or descendants of particular individuals, but shall be based upon statistics of immigration and emigration, together with rates of increase of population as shown by successive dicennial United States censuses, and other data as may be found to be reliable.

(d) For the purpose of subdivisions (b) and (c) the term "inhabitants in continental United States in 1920 does not include (1) immigrants from the geographical areas specified in subdivision (c) of section 4 or their descendants, (2) aliens ineligible to citizenship or their descendants [e.g. Chinese, who were denied citizenship Sec. 14, Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882], (3) the descendants of slave immigrants, or (4) the descendants of American aborigines.

Source: H.R. 7995, 68th Congress, 1st Session, May 26, 1924.

Immigration and Nationality Act
October 3, 1965

The McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 codified U.S. immigration laws and left intact the basic provisions of the quota system of 1924. The act did remove the ban on Asian immigration. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, excerpted below, made substantive changes in the earlier McCarran-Walter Act.

H. R. 2580, An Act To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act, and for other purposes.

Sec. 201. (a) Exclusive of special immigrants defined in section 101 (a) (27), and of the immediate relatives of United States citizens specified in subsection (b) of this section, the number of aliens who may be issued immigrant visas or who may otherwise acquire the status of an alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence, or who may, . . . enter conditionally (i) shall not in any of the first three quarters of any fiscal year exceed a total of 45,000 and (ii) shall not in any fiscal year exceed a total of 170,000.

(b) The “immediate relatives” referred to in subsection (a) of this section shall mean the children, spouses, and parents of a citizen of the United States: *Provided*, That in the case of parents, such citizens must be at least twenty-one years of age. . . .

(c) During the period from July 1, 1965, through June 30, 1968, the annual quota of any quota area shall be the same as that which existed for that area on June 30, 1965. . . .

(d) Quota numbers not issued or otherwise . . . shall be transferred to an immigration pool. . . . The immigration pool shall be made available to immigrants otherwise admissible under the provisions of this Act who are unable to obtain prompt issuance of a preference visa due to oversubscription of the quotas, or subquotas as determined by the Secretary of State. Visas and conditional entries shall be allocated from the immigration pool within the percentage limitations and in the order of priority specified in section 203 without regard to the quota to which the alien is chargeable. . . .

Sec. 2. Section 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (66 Stat.175: 8 U.S.C. 1152) is amended to read as follows:

(a) No person shall receive any preference or priority or be discriminated against in the issuance of an immigrant visa because of his race, sex, nationality, place of birth or place of residence, except as specifically provided in section 101 (a) (27), section 201 (b), and section 203.

Sec. 203. (a) Aliens who are subject to the numerical limitations specified in section 201 (a) shall be allotted visas or their conditional entry authorized, as the case may be as follows:

(1) Visas shall be first made available, . . . to qualified immigrants who are the unmarried sons or daughters of citizens of the United States.

(2) Visas shall next be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are the spouses, unmarried sons or unmarried daughters of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

(3) Visas shall next be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are members of the professions, or who because of their exceptional ability in the sciences or the arts will substantially benefit prospectively the national economy, cultural interests, or welfare of the United States.

(4) Visas shall next be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are the married sons or married daughters of citizens of the United States.

(5) Visas shall next be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are the brothers or sisters of citizens of the United States.

(6) Visas shall next be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are capable of performing specified skilled or unskilled labor, not of a temporary or seasonal nature for which a shortage of employable and willing persons exists in the United States.

(7) Conditional entries shall next be made available by the Attorney General . . . to aliens who satisfy an Immigration and Naturalization Service officer at an examination in any non-Communist or non-Communist dominated country, (A) that (I) because of persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion they have fled (I) from any Communist or Communist dominated country or area, or

(II) from any country within the general area of the Middle East, and (ii) are unable or unwilling to return to such country or area on account of race, religion, or political opinion, and (iii) are not nationals of the countries or areas in which their application for conditional entry is made; or (B) that they are persons uprooted by catastrophic natural calamity, as defined by the President, who are unable to return to their usual place of abode. . . .

For the purpose of the foregoing the term general area of the Middle East means the area between and including (1) Libya on the west, (2) Turkey on the north, (3) Pakistan on the east, and (4) Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia on the south. . . .

Sec. 204 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) no more than two petitions may be approved for one petitioner in behalf of a child as defined in section 101(b) (1) (E) or (F) unless necessary to prevent the separation of brothers and sisters and no

petition shall be approved if the alien has previously been accorded a nonquota or preference status as the spouse of a citizen of the United States or the spouse of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, by reason of a marriage determined by the attorney General to have been entered into for the purpose of evading the immigration laws.

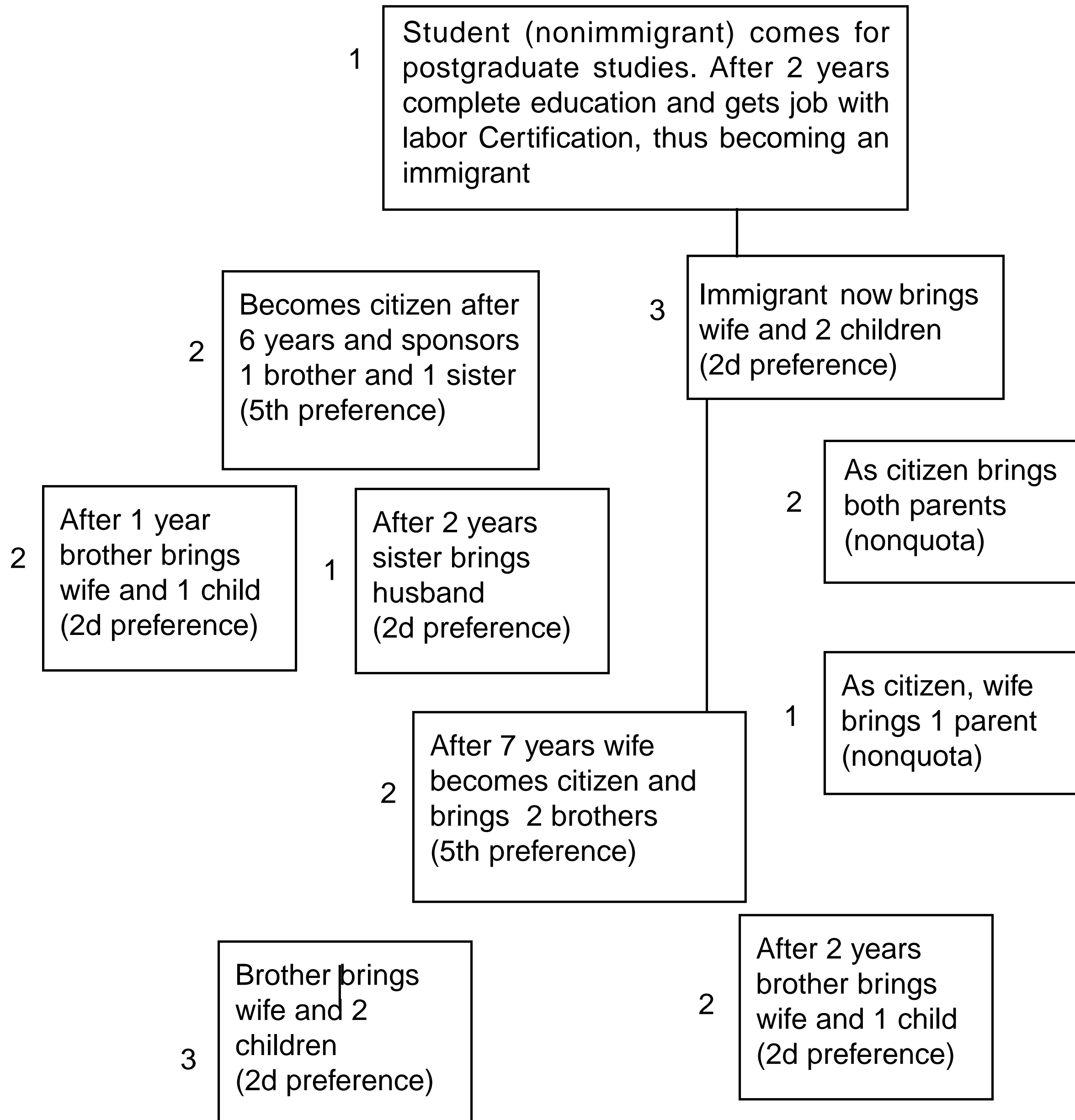
Source: Public Law 89-238, October 3, 1965

Itsuko Miura Mizuno with her mother, Haruko Miuro..
The ship in the background carried Itsuko from Yokohama, Japan to live in California.

Photo Courtesy of Itsuko Miura Mizuno

Chain Migration Chart Showing Possible Migratory Pattern under 1965 Immigration Reform Act

The numbers to the left of the boxes represent the number of new immigrants brought by the relative alread established in the United States.
See page 37, Section 203.(a) of ***Docuement 2-D*** *for a description of the rules regarding immigration preferences.*



Source: Adapted from David Reimers, *Still the Golden Door: The Third World Comes to America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 95.

Provisions of Legislative Acts Regulating Immigration from Asia to the U.S.

Complete the following chart and submit for evaluation.

Act	Provisions	Effect on Americans	Effect on Asians
1917 Act			
1924 Act			
1965 Act			

Lesson Three
Global Forces and Asian Immigration

A. Organizing Questions

1. How have global events affected Asian immigration to the United States?
2. To what extent have U. S. actions in the world encouraged or discouraged Asian immigration?
3. Why is the Immigration Act of 1965 considered to be watershed legislation?

B. Lesson Objectives

- To identify major world events that influenced Asian immigration.
- To examine America's role in world events relevant to Asian immigration.
- To analyze the interconnectedness between world events and the role of the U.S. in encouraging or discouraging immigration.

C. Lesson Activities (two days)

Day One

1. Have students read **Student Handout 5**, Factors That Encouraged Immigration From Asia After World War II.
2. Read aloud **Document 3-A**, excerpts from "The New Frontier in Space" by President John F. Kennedy (1961) and **Document 3-B**, President Johnson's "Remarks on Signing the Immigration Act (1965). "
3. Students should form small groups to discuss the following questions.
    a. What are significant differences between these two presidential addresses to Congress?
    b. How are these two speeches related to one another?
    c. How did changes in immigration law contribute to the recruitment of scholars from abroad? To what extent did the 1965 act help in achieving the goals set by President Kennedy?
    d. What did President Johnson predict in his "Remarks upon Signing the Immigration Act (1965)"?
    e. What do statistics regarding Asian immigration presented in Lesson 1, **Document 1-E**, reveal about predictions made by President Johnson in 1965? (Cite specific evidence.)

f. How did *The Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975,* **Document 3-C,** affect immigration from Asia to the United States? (See the graph on Immigration from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam in Lesson I, **Document 1-E**.)

4. Read **Document 3-D**, "A High-Tech Home for Indians."

5. Homework:
Have students examine the Chronology of Global Events Influencing Asian Immigration to the United States, **Student Handout 6**. This chronology should be studied along with the Chronology of United States Immigration Legislation (**Student Handout 3**) since global events have been significant factors in the history of Asian immigration to the United States. Have students:
   - List Events Which Encouraged Asian Immigration to America
   - List Events Which Restricted Asian Immigration to America

Day Two

1. Review homework and discuss factors that encouraged and restricted Asian immigration to the United States. Consider the key question, Why is the Immigration Act of 1965 considered to be watershed legislation?

2. Homework:

   Have each student write a well organized five paragraph essay [introduction, three examples or pieces of evidence, conclusion] expressing an opinion about the significance of the Immigration Act of 1965. Turn in the essays for teacher evaluation.

Factors That Encouraged Immigration From Asia After World War II

Despite recruitment of laborers from Asia to serve as agricultural workers and to help build the transcontinental railway in North America in the middle of the nineteenth century, there was little opportunity for families from Asia to settle and establish roots in the United States. By 1882 anti-Asian sentiment in the U.S. was so strong that the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. Subsequent legislation dramatically restricted opportunities for Asians to immigrate to the United States until after World War II.

Throughout the postwar years and especially in the early 1960s, several factors favored the removal of prejudicial clauses in American immigration policy and encouraged immigration from Asia.

1. The expanding postwar economy in the United States created a strong **demand for labor**, especially in technical fields such as science, engineering and health care. The Cold War competition with the Soviets created a need to build a decisive lead in military weapons and space technology, fueling the demand for qualified highly skilled workers. Despite the preferential treatment given to European countries, the U.S. failed to attract adequate levels of immigration from Europe.

2. **Slow European immigration** indicated that Europeans were either not interested or were unable to migrate to the U.S. The postwar economies in Europe were booming, triggered by the Marshall Plan. Far from sending migrants abroad, European countries were attracting large numbers of immigrants themselves. The Cold War cut off immigration from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which had sent large numbers of immigrants to the U.S. before the worldwide depression in the 1930s.

3. **The emergence of America as a leader of the free world** after World War II made it difficult for the American government to pursue blatantly discriminatory immigration policies, which were biased against " colored" peoples abroad. The **success of the Civil Rights Movement** of the 1960s made racial discrimination untenable in the domestic arena as well. Removal of racial barriers in the 1965 immigration law led to an unprecedented flow of immigrants from Asian countries, especially those with a large pool of skilled human resources like India, China (including Taiwan), Korea, and the Philippines.

4. **The failure of U.S. intervention in Vietnam** was another unexpected factor that contributed to the rise in Asian immigration. For political and humanitarian reasons, the U.S. had to accept thousands of fleeing refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

The rise in Asian immigration can thus be attributed both to changes in U.S. legislation and global forces beyond the control of the U.S. elsewhere in the world. It has resulted in a diverse mix of immigrants, ranging from highly educated, professional or skilled workers seeking economic betterment to desperate refugees seeking political sanctuary. Together, they make for a new kind of immigrant whose motivations for immigrating to the U.S. are varied and complex.

National Archives, NWDNS-428-N-1176806

South China Sea—This woman and her three children were among 28 "boat people" fleeing Vietnam finding refuge on USS Wabash after being picked up by a whaleboat. (August, 1979)

The New Frontier in Space
President John F. Kennedy, 1961

> President Kennedy outlined his policy of a "New Frontier in Space" in a speech soon after taking office. In order to catch up with the Russian space program, Kennedy recognized the need for expanding the nation's pool of highly skilled technicians and ultimately attracted new professional immigrants to the United States. Immigration quotas, however, held back the number of the scientists and engineers permitted to enter the United States from Asian nations.

The great battleground for the defense and expansion of freedom today is the whole southern half of the globe—Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East—the lands of the rising peoples. Their revolution is the greatest in human history. They seek an end to injustice, tyranny, and exploitation. More than an end, they seek a beginning.

And theirs is a revolution, which we would support regardless of the Cold War and regardless of which political or economic route they should choose to freedom.

For the adversaries of freedom did not create the revolution; nor did they create the conditions which compel it. But they are seeking to ride the crest of its wave—to capture it for themselves.

Yet their aggression is more often concealed than open. They have fired no missiles; and their troops are seldom seen. They send arms, agitators, aid, technicians and propaganda to every troubled area. But where fighting is required, it is usually done by others—by guerrillas striking at night, by assassins striking alone—assassins who have taken the lives of four thousand civil officers in the last twelve months in Vietnam alone—by subversives and saboteurs and insurrectionists, who in some cases control whole areas inside of independent nations.

With these formidable weapons, the adversaries of freedom plan to consolidate their territory—to exploit, to control, and finally to destroy the hopes of the world's newest nations; and they have ambition to do it before the end of this decade. It is a contest of will and purpose as well as force and violence—a battle for minds and souls as well as lives and territory. And in that contest, we cannot stand aside.

We stand, as we have always stood from our earliest beginnings for the independence and equality of all nations. This nation was born of revolution and raised in freedom. And we do not intend to leave an open road for despotism.

There is no single simple policy which meets this challenge. Experience has taught us that no one nation has the power or the wisdom to solve all the problems of the world or manage its revolutionary tides—that extending our commitments does not always increase our security—that any initiative carries with it the risk of a temporary defeat—that nuclear weapons cannot prevent subversion—that no free people can be kept free without will and energy of their own—and that no two nations or situations are exactly alike.

Yet there is much we can do—and must do. The proposals I bring before you are numerous and varied. They arise from the host of special opportunities and dangers which have become increasingly clear in recent months. Taken together, I believe that they can mark another step forward in our effort as a people. I am here to ask the help of this Congress and the nation in approving these necessary measures.

Finally, if we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny, the dramatic achievements in space which occurred in recent weeks should have made clear to us all, as did the Sputnik in 1957, the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, who are attempting to make a determination of which road they should take. Since early in my term, our efforts in space have been under review. With the advice of the Vice-President, who is Chairman of the National Space Council, we have examined where we are strong and where we are not, where we may succeed and where we may not. Now it is time to take longer strides—time for this nation to take a clearly leading role in space achievement, which in many ways may hold the key to our future on earth.

I believe we possess all the resources and talents necessary. But the facts of the matter are that we have never made the national decisions or marshaled the national resources required for such leadership. We have never specified long-range goals on an urgent time schedule, or managed our resources and our time so as to insure their fulfillment.

Recognizing the head start obtained by the Soviets with their large rocket engines, which gives them many months of lead-time, and recognizing the likelihood that they will exploit this lead for some time to come in still more impressive successes, we nevertheless are required to make new efforts on our own. For while we cannot guarantee that we shall one day be first, we can guarantee that any failure to make this effort will make us last. We take an additional risk by making it in full view of the world, but as shown by the feat of astronaut Shepard, this very risk enhances our stature when we are successful. But this is not merely a race. Space is open to us now; and our eagerness to share its meaning is not governed by the efforts of others. We go into space because whatever mankind must undertake, free men must fully share.

I therefore ask the Congress, above and beyond the increases I have earlier requested for space activities, to provide the funds which are needed to meet the following national goals:

First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal before this decade is out, our landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish. We propose to accelerate the development of the appropriate lunar spacecraft. We propose to develop alternate liquid and solid fuel boosters, much larger than any now being developed, until certain which is superior. We propose additional funds for other engine development and for unmanned explorations—explorations which are particularly important for one purpose which this nation will never overlook: the survival of the man who first makes this daring flight. But in a very real sense, it will not

be one man going to the moon—if we make this judgment affirmatively, it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there. . . .

Let it be clear—and this is a judgment which the Members of the Congress must finally make—let it be clear that I am asking the Congress and the country to accept a firm commitment to a new course of action—a course which will last for many years and carry very heavy costs: 531 million dollars in fiscal '62—an estimated seven to nine billion dollars additional over the next five years. If we are to go only half way, or reduce our sights in the face of difficulty, in my judgment it would be better not to go at all . . . .

This decision demands a major national commitment of scientific and technical manpower, material and facilities, and the possibility of their diversion from other important activities where they are already thinly spread. It means a degree of dedication, organization, and discipline which have not always characterized our research and development efforts. It means we cannot afford undue work stoppages, inflated costs of material or talent, wasteful inter-agency rivalries, or a high turnover of key personnel.

New objectives and new money cannot solve these problems. They could, in fact, aggravate them further—unless every scientist, every engineer, every serviceman, every technician, contractor, and civil servant gives his personal pledge that his nation will move forward, with the full speed of freedom in the exciting adventure of space. . . .

Source: *Public Papers of the President of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961* (Washington D.C., 1962), 396–398, 403–405.

President Kennedy announcing the goal of landing a man on the moon, May 25, 1961
Photo: National Air and Space Museum
http://www.nasm.edu/galleries/gal114/SpaceRace/sec300/314l5p5a.jpg

Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks upon Signing the Immigration Act (1965)

In 1963 President John F. Kennedy asked Congress to revise the nation's immigration laws. The Johnson administration continued to call for immigration reform and in 1965 Congress responded. President Johnson delivered this address upon signing the bill on Liberty Island at the base of the Statue of Liberty.

This bill that we will sign today is not a revolutionary bill. It does not affect the lives of millions. It will not reshape the structure of our daily lives, or really add importantly to either our wealth or our power.

Yet, it is still one of the most important acts of this Congress and of this administration. For it does repair a very deep and painful flaw in the fabric of American justice. It corrects a cruel and enduring wrong in the conduct of the American Nation.

Speaker McCormack and Congressman Celler almost 40 years ago first pointed that out in their maiden speeches in the Congress. And this measure that we will sign today will really make us truer to ourselves both as a country and as a people. It will strengthen us in a hundred unseen ways.

I have come here to thank personally each Member of the Congress who labored so long and so valiantly to make this occasion come true today, and to make this bill a reality. I cannot mention all their names, for it would take much too long, but my gratitude—and that of this nation—belongs to the 89th Congress.

We are indebted, too, to the vision of the late beloved President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and to the support given to this measure by the then Attorney General and now Senator, Robert F. Kennedy.

In the final days of consideration, this bill had no more able champion than the present Attorney General, Nicholas Katzenbach, who, with New York's own "Manny" Celler, and Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts, and Congressman Feighan of Ohio, and Senator Mansfield and Senator Dirkson constituting the leadership of the Senate, and Senator Javits, helped to guide this bill to passage, along with the help of the Members sitting in front of me today.

This bill says simply that from this day forth those wishing to immigrate to America shall be admitted on the basis of their skills and their close relationship to those already here.

This is a simple test, and it is a fair test. Those who can contribute most to this country—to its growth, to its strength, to its spirit—will be the first that are admitted to this land.

The fairness of this standard is so self-evident that we may well wonder that it has not always been applied. Yet the fact is that for over four decades the immigration policy of the United States has been twisted and has been distorted by the harsh injustices of the national origins quota system.

Under that system the ability of new immigrants to come to America depended upon the country of their birth. Only three countries were allowed to supply 70 percent of all the immigrants.

Families were kept apart because a husband or a wife or a child had been born in the wrong place.

Men of needed skill and talent were denied entrance because they came from southern or eastern Europe or from one of the developing continents.

This system violated the basic principle of American democracy—the principle that values and rewards each man on the basis of his merit as a man.

It has been un-American in the highest sense, because it has been untrue to the faith that bought thousands to these shores even before we were a country.

Today, with my signature, this system is abolished.

We can now believe that it will never again shadow the gate to the American Nation with the twin barriers of prejudice and privilege.

Our beautiful America was built by a nation of strangers. From a hundred different places or more they have poured forth into an empty land, joining and blending in one mighty and irresistible tide.

The land flourished because it was fed from so many sources—because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples.

And from this experience almost unique in the history of nations, has come America's attitude toward the rest of the world. We, because of what we are, feel safer and stronger in a world so varied as the people who make it up—a world where no country rules another and all countries can deal with the basic problems of human dignity and deal with those problems in their own way.

Now, under the monument which has welcomed so many to our shores, the American Nation returns to the finest of its traditions today.

The days of unlimited immigration are past.

But those who do come will come because of what they are, and not because of the land from which they sprung.

When the earliest settlers poured into a wild continent there was no one to ask them where they came from. The only question was: Were they sturdy enough to make the journey, were they strong enough to clear the land, were they enduring enough to make a home for freedom, and were they brave enough to die for liberty if it became necessary to do so!

And so it has been through all the great and testing moments of American history. Our history this year we see in Vietnam. Men there are dying—men named Fernandez and Zajac and Zelinko and Mariano and McCormick.

Neither the enemy who killed them nor the people whose independence they have fought to save ever asked them where they or their parents came from. They were all Americans. It was for free men and for America that they gave their all; they gave their lives and selves.

By eliminating that same question as a test for immigration the Congress proves us worthy of those men and worthy of our own traditions as a nation. . . .

Over my shoulder here you can see Ellis Island, whose vacant corridors echo today the joyous sound of long ago voices.

And today we can all believe that the lamp of this grand old lady is brighter today—

and the golden door that she guards gleams more brilliantly in the light of an increased liberty for the people from all the countries of the globe.

Source: T. H. Breen, ed., *The Power of Words: Documents in American History, Volume II: From 1865* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), Chapter 13, "Multicultural America."

Photo: Courtesy of Surendra P. Shah and Dorothie C. Shah

Relatives gather to bid Surendra Shah (Front Row, second from left) farewell on his departure from Bombay in August, 1959. He was the first immigrant from the Bahsinore Gujarati community to leave Bombay for the United States where he earned an M.S. in Civil Engineering (1960) at Lehigh University.

THE INDOCHINA MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1975

The following are excerpts from an act to enable the United States to render assistance to, or in behalf of, migrants and refugees from Southeast Asia.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, That this Act may be cited as "The Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975."

Sec. 2. (a) Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) there are hereby authorized to be appropriated, in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes, $155,000,000 for the performance of functions set forth in the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (76 Stat. 121), as amended, with respect to aliens who have fled from Cambodia or Vietnam, such sums to remain available in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section. (b) None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act shall be available for the performance of functions after June 30, 1976, other than for carrying out the provisions of clauses . . . of sections . . . of the Migration and Refugee Act of 1962 as amended. . . .

Sec. 3. In carrying out functions utilizing the funds made available under this Act, the term "refugee". . . . shall be deemed to include aliens who (A) because of persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion, fled from Cambodia or Vietnam; (B) cannot return there because of fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion; and (C) are in urgent need of assistance for the essentials of life.

H.R. 6755

A HIGH-TECH HOME FOR INDIANS

Cindy Rodriguez, in an article "A High-Tech Home For Indians" published in the *Boston Globe*, July 22, 2000, illustrates how demand for people with particular skills spurs immigration. The following is an excerpt from the article.

Lakshmi Manchi leans over the edge of the pool. . . [and] warns her 5-year-old son, Lokesh, "Don't swim out too far." Anywhere else, Manchi might stand out. Not at Lord Baron apartments. Here, Indian mothers dressed in traditional saris push strollers through the winding asphalt roads of the 380-unit complex waiting for their husbands, in button-down shirts, to arrive home.

The residents call it Indiatown. It's about as close to Bombay as one can get in the predominantly white communities that line Route 128, Boston's high-tech corridor. . . .

"At the end of the day, when you go to Lord Baron it's like going back to your own country," said B.C. Krishna, vice president and chief technology officer of Open Market Inc. in Burlington.

Past Lord Baron, glimmering in the distance, are the technology companies that lured them to America. In communities surrounding the metal-and-glass buildings that house billion-dollar fiber-optic and computer-chip ideas are signs that Indians are making their mark on Boston's cultural map.

When the high-tech job explosion sent a ripple throughout the world, no other foreign-born group came as close to filling the void as Indians have. Last year, 29,640 Indians arrived in the United States under the H-1B visa program for highly skilled workers. . . .

It's a supply-and-demand equation. U.S. technology companies, which can't find enough qualified employees, search overseas. They send headhunters to Indian universities to offer jobs—sometimes to half a graduating class.

In Silicon Valley, Indians run nearly 7 percent of the high-tech firms started since 1980, according to an article in Upside, a technology magazine. Here, along Route 128, Indians are gaining momentum too. With high-tech growth on their side, this is their moment.

"This is a select group of people coming from urban areas of India; educated, middle-class people who have skills and speak English," said Madhulika Khandelwah, professor of Asian-American Studies at U Mass-Boston. "That puts them at an advantage. . ." in meeting demands of the high-tech industry in the United States.]

Source: Cindy Rodriguez, "A High-Tech Home For Indians," *Boston Globe*, July 22, 2000

Chronology
Global Events Influencing
Asian Immigration to the United States

Global Interconnectedness of Events has been significant in the history of Asian immigration to the United States. This chronology should be considered along with the chronology that lists major legislative acts affecting immigration (**Student Handout 3**).

1790 Filipino sailors flee imprisonment from Spanish ship docked in New Orleans

1836 Recruitment of Chinese laborers to work on Hawaiian sugar plantations

(Subsequently, Japanese and Filipino laborers were recruited)

1839-42 Opium Wars in China—peasants unable to pay taxes levied to pay for war lose their lands; 1856-60 foreign competition undermines domestic industries

1848 War against Mexico, U.S. annexation of California (Asian immigrants in California become the first substantial group of Asian Americans)

1848 Construction of Trans-Continental Railway in North America; Chinese laborers are recruited for this project

1853 Commodore Perry enters the harbor at Nagasaki disrupting two centuries of Japanese isolation

1880 Japanese laborers are introduced in California

1876 English language instruction is mandated in Japanese Middle Schools

1883–93 Approximately 100 students and diplomats from Korea enter the U.S. for training

1885 Japanese government legalizes emigration to the U.S. and allows the first shipload of contract laborers to go to Hawaii.

1898 The Spanish-American War (Spain cedes the Philippines to the U.S., and Filipinos become “American Nationals” recruited to work as agricultural laborers in Hawaii and the U.S.)

1898 Hawaii annexed as a territory of the U.S.

1903–45	Oppression of Koreans by Japanese Imperial Control
1900–20	Introduction of Asian Indians to supplement other Asian laborers in the U.S. Asian immigrants prohibited from leasing or buying land in the names of their children, a practice which by-passes earlier restrictions on alien land ownership
1924	Increased recruitment of Filipino laborers (American nationals) to replace other Asian laborers
1928	Nationalists under Chiang-Kai Shek unified China
1935	Commonwealth of the Philippines established; Filipinos recruited to serve in the U.S. Navy
1937–45	War between China and Japan
1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor; U.S. enters World War II
1941–45	Japanese occupation of the Philippines
1945	World War II ends with defeat of Japan
1945–52	Postwar occupation of Japan by the U.S.
1946	Independent Republic of the Philippines established
1946–49	Civil War between Nationalists and Communists in China; flight of Nationalists to Hong-Kong, Taiwan, and U.S.
1947	India wins independence following 200 years of British colonial control
1947	Cold War begins (U.S. vs. USSR, Democracy/Capitalism vs. Communism)
1949	Victory of the Chinese Communists over the Nationalists; establishment of the People's Republic of China (Stranded Chinese professionals and students in the U.S. are permitted to stay as a result of the 1948 Displaced Persons Act)
1950	Chinese forces invade Tibet, depose Dalai Lama, and make Tibet part of China
1950–53	Korean War
1957	USSR launches *Sputnik*, earth's first satellite

1954	Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia win independence from French colonial rule and Vietnam is partitioned with North Vietnam under communist control
1959	Hawaii becomes the 50th state of the U.S. increasing Asian American population
1966–76	Cultural Revolution in China
1975	Defeat of U.S backed government in South Vietnam leads to the fall of Saigon
1975	Indochina Migration and Assistance Act establishes a resettlement program for refugees following the communist victories in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos
1975	Thousands of Laotians, Mien, and Hmong who had cooperated with the U.S. in battling the North Vietnamese seek asylum as refugees from the Communist supported Pathet Lao
1979	Orderly Departure Program permits 20,000 Vietnamese family members of earlier immigrants to enter the U.S. each year
1989	Tiananmen Square Massacre in Beijing, China and crackdown on dissidents in People's Republic of China
1992	Chinese Student Protection Act permits students from People's Republic of China to remain in the U.S.
1996	Welfare Reform Act denies legal immigrants benefits like food stamps, welfare, and Supplemental Security Income, motivating many long-time registered aliens to become citizens.
1997	Return of Hong Kong to People's Republic of China ends British colonial rule
1998 to present	Information technology revolution fuels worldwide demand for skilled workers

Lesson Four
Why Do Asians Come to the United States?

A. Organizing Question

What factors are most significant in the decisions made by individuals to leave their lands of origin to immigrate to the United States?

B. Lesson Objectives

- Examine anecdotal accounts of motivations for immigration.
- Determine dominant factors in individual decisions to immigrate to the United States.
- Evaluate the impact of global events and/or U.S. immigration legislation on individual decisions to immigrate to the United States.

C. Lesson Activities (two days)

Day One

1. The class should begin with an overview of motivations for immigration **(Student Handout 7).**

2. Immigrant Voices

   Statements by individual immigrants, **Documents 4-A**, should be distributed to students. Select from the 38 short readings depending on the number of students in the class. These could be cut and pasted on 4 x 6 cards and read aloud during this class session. Each student should decide which of the following motivations was most significant to "his or her individual" and announce the factor/s after reading the immigrant's statement. (More than one factor may be evident.)

   1. Educational Opportunities
   2. Occupational or Professional Opportunities
   3. Life Style in the United States
   4. Family Connections
   5. Political Turmoil in Land of Origin
   6. Asylum (Sanctuary)

3. Homework:

   Students should write well-organized answers to each of the following questions:

   1. What are several reasons that Asians came to the U.S.?
   2. To what extent did circumstances in the land of origin affect decisions to immigrate?
   3. What are several specific ways in which global events are related to individual decisions to immigrate?

Day Two

1. Invite an Asian immigrant to visit class to tell his/her story about what prompted them to leave Asia to come to the United States. (A copy of interview questions and information from this curriculum unit may be furnished to the class visitor to guide the presentation.) Students should be encouraged to ask questions. Ethnic organizations and area colleges or universities are good sources of contacts.

2. Homework:

   Students should conduct interviews of Asian immigrants. You may wish to have individual students conduct an interview or have students work together in teams of two or three to interview one individual. After interviews students should:

   - identify factors influencing decisions to immigrate to the U.S.
   - look for similarities and differences in interview responses.

   Arrangements for interviews should be scheduled at the convenience of the interviewees. Students should request permission to use tape recorders in addition to taking notes. Students should graciously thank interviewees for their assistance.

   You may wish to use the guide on the following page to help students to collect information from immigrants.

   After interviews students should:

   - identify factors influencing decisions to immigrate to the U.S.
   - note similarities and differences in interview responses.
   - show how U.S. legislation regulating immigration was significant.
   - indicate what global events were significant in prompting interviewees to come to the United States.

Suggested Interview Information

1. Name
2. Land of Origin (Place of birth)
3. First Language
4. Second/Third Language
5. Education
6. Occupation
7. Marital Status
8. Number of brothers ________ sisters ________ children ________
9 Date of Arrival in the United States
10. Other family members in the United States (list)
11. Did you or another family member decide to immigrate to the United States?
12. If another family member, who?
13. What were major reasons for the decision to come to the United States?
14. What, if any, circumstances in your land of origin were significant in your decision to immigrate to the U.S.?
15. Did you or do you intend to stay in the United States?
16. If you intend to return to your land of origin, what are major reasons why?
17. If you are unsure about staying in the United States, what might persuade you to stay?
18. What might prompt you to leave the United States?
19. What expectations about life in the United States were important to you or your family when you decided to come to the United States?
20. How has life in the United States fulfilled your expectations?
21. In what ways, if any, has life in the United States failed to meet your expectations?
22. What would you tell someone who is considering immigrating to the United States?

Factors Influencing Decisions of Asians to Emigrate

Many factors have attracted Asians to come to the United States since legislation in 1965 made it possible. Some of the causes are rooted in the country of origin, such as political instability in Indo-China. Factors such as educational and economic opportunities available in the United States attract immigrants. In addition, there are causes rooted in the countries of origin, such as political instability in Southeast Asia.

1. **Education**. Even before the 1965 liberalization of restrictions on Asian immigration, American higher education, reputed to be the world's best, attracted thousands of international students from Asia. Foreign graduates returned to professorships in their homelands and helped spread academic programs based on the American system. An increase in the number of student exchange programs after World War II made it easier for foreign graduates to immigrate to the United States. Many exchange students from developing countries became future immigrants. The number of East and South Asian foreign students in American colleges rose from 10,000 in the mid 1950s to 142,000 in the mid 1980s.[3]

2. **Labor**. The United States economy provided an attractive incentive by easily absorbing and rewarding qualified Asian professionals. Many middle-class, English-speaking professionals have been drawn by the better working conditions and higher salaries in the United States. There is a great disparity between wages in the United States and earnings of laborers in developing countries. Many of the sending Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Taiwan, and Korea are still industrializing. They have labor intensive manufacturing economies which cannot absorb the large numbers of skilled professionals graduating from engineering and medical schools.[4]

The 1965 Act reserved 20% of immigration for "occupational preferences" allowing both skilled and unskilled workers to immigrate without the sponsorship of a relative or employer, thus allowing the market economy in the United States to fuel immigration. For example, to fill the shortage of nurses in the United States, at least 25,000 Filipino nurses migrated between 1966 and 1985. In 1964, of the total number of 5,762 immigrant scientists and engineers in the United States, only 14% were Asian. By 1970, the total had risen to 13,337, and 62% of them were Asian. Of the 2,012 Foreign Medical Graduates (FMGs) in 1965, about 10% were Asian. In 1972, 70% of the 7,144 FMGs were Asian.[5]

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[3] Paul Ong, Edna Bonacich, and Lucie Cheng, eds. *The New Asian Immigration in Los Angeles and Global Restructuring* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 57.

[4] Pyong Gap Ming, ed., *Asian Americans* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 14.

[5] Ong *et al*, 58.

3. **Political asylum**. Unstable conditions such as war and revolutions abroad created an unexpected rise in the number of refugee immigrants from Asia. The War Brides Act of 1945 allowed approximately 6,000 Chinese women to enter the United States as brides of men in the U.S. armed forces.[6] Other important events drove the Chinese to seek political asylum in the United States. Mao's communist victory in 1949, the oppression of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, and the persecution of those fighting for civil liberties after the massacre at Tiananmen in 1989 prompted many Chinese to leave the mainland. While many settled in Taiwan and Hong Kong, substantial numbers eventually came to the United States,

After the fall of Saigon in Vietnam in 1975, thousands of military officers, government officials, and United States employees afraid of reprisals from the new communist regime fled South Vietnam in panic and sought asylum in the United States. The percentage of Asian refugees in the United States rose from 9% in the 1960s to 39% in the 1970s to 70% between 1981 and 1988. Besides Vietnamese, the refugee population from Asia included Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong, whose numbers collectively totaled 300,000 by 1990. The educational level and English language skills of these refugees varied widely, ranging from highly skilled to almost illiterate.[7]

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[6] Ming, *Asian Americans,* 65.
[7] Ong, *et al*, 52.

Immigrant Voices

Ali and Samra Sabit left Pakistan with two suitcases and $2,000 after winning a special lottery for work visas in the United States. "We think it is a blessing from God. The U.S.A. is strong and everyone wants to come here. Here "I can go alone everywhere without my husband," Mrs. Sabir said . "Here you feel equal. We appreciate every person in this country."

—*The New York Times*, July 5, 1999, p. A 11

"It was a norm to arrange for a marriage with a boy from the U.S."

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 150

"My husband was here [in the U.S.] as a student in 1968; he got a job, came back to India to get married, and we came back together. I was always in love with America."

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 151

"My coming here was not my personal decision. My children grew up and came abroad. I retired and my son asked me to join him here in the U.S. . . . I feel that for my children this country is better; atmosphere is healthier."

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 200

"Coming here was my own decision, but it was a very difficult one on my part. My son came to the U.S. in 1986 to do his Master's. Six month later, my husband had a heart attack and died. My only son is here. He said, 'Mom, come here and we can all live together.'"

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 201

"I wanted to come here [from India] in 1952 for further studies. I couldn't come then. I got a chance to send my son for further education. I came here to enjoy my life with him. . . . There are so many things one can learn here and enjoy."

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 199

“We were middle-class, not very high; we always aspired to be more.”

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p.149)

Lakshmi Annan, who runs a folk dance school in New Jersey came to the U. S. in the early 1970s. When her daughter was four years old, her family returned briefly to India. “We thought it’s easy for us to take her back and have her adjust to the environment in India, but then it so happened that once you see the green dollar bills and the opportunities here, my husband had second thoughts and he came back here.”

—NPR’s Morning Edition, August 2, 1993

“You get educated, you want more education, you go where you can get it. Qualifications get you jobs. You get mesmerized by all the comforts. . . .”

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 149

“My husband was offered a scholarship at the University of Illinois. Because his father had lost land holdings after independence, he and his brothers needed to get more educated. That was what brought him to the U.S. I married him and I came.”

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p.150

“We came as a batch of medical students. I wouldn’t like to go back because I don’t want to lose my independence of thought and movement, which is restricted in India.”

—Rangaswamy, *Namasté*, p. 150

“If all my children come here from India, I have no alternative.”

—Rangaswamy, *Imperatives*, p. 471

"I got a fellowship to the University of Chicago and finally meant to go back to India, but when I went I couldn't find a suitable job. Academic jobs were reserved for people who were graduating from those very institutions, not for someone who had spent time abroad."

—Rangaswamy, *Imperatives*, p. 427

Itsuko Mizuno, an immigrant from Japan acknowledged her personal professional ambition and the sense of adventure which prompted her like many young people to leave their loved ones and to venture out on their own.

"I came in 1965 because I wanted to attend seminary in the U.S. I was the youngest of six children. We had no money so I borrowed enough from a friend's mother to buy my ticket to come by ship to the U.S. I had a sense of adventure, and I just wanted to "get away." I had faith in God that things would work out. Most people who came when I did went back to Japan, but I didn't even return for a visit for seventeen years.

She explained that one of her acquaintances, a war orphan in Japan, was befriended by a GI who became his legal guardian. He also settled in the U.S. but has frequently traveled back to Japan.

—Interview, Chicago, IL, July 29, 1998

"As a young man in Manila, I went to American movies. I decided I wanted to go to America where everyone had a car and a swimming pool and the houses never got dirty. So in 1960 I joined the U.S. Navy and arrived in California with $12.50 in my pocket."

—Nicasio Pagaduan, Jr.

"Wages in Manila are barely enough to answer for my family's needs. I must go abroad to better my chances," reported one immigrant.

—Takaki, p. 433

An accountant observes, "In the United States hard work is rewarded. In the Philippines it is part of the struggle to survive."

—Takaki, p. 433

"My one day's earning here in America is more than my one month's salary in Manila," according to a Filipino nurse working in the U.S.

—Takaki, p. 433

The repressive regime of President Ferdinand Marcos prompted some Filipinos to leave their land of origin. A Filipino stockbroker in the U.S. said Amnesty International's report about torture of political prisoners in the Philippines in 1976 was true. According to a *New York Times* report, the 1983 assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino played a key role in the decision of business executive Friolan Aragaon to move to the U.S. with his family.

After he had spent a decade in the U.S., Carlos Patalinghug told his friends in the Philippines, "If you work, you'll get milk and honey in America."

—Takaki, p. 433

Unable to find a job in Korea "after obtaining my B.S. in chemical engineering at Chungnam University" and after working for three years as a miner in West Germany and wandering about Europe looking for opportunities, Hee-duck Lee came to the United States where he found a lot of jobs waiting for him.

—Takaki, p.438

"The fascination of America for the Korean immigrants is to come to a free and abundant country, and breathe in its air of freedom, and make plans for a new life such that they are changing their destinies, which were fatalistically determined by tradition and history in the old country," according to Kim Ta Tai.

—Takaki, p. 437

"Medical practitioners who migrate and become American citizens have very good opportunities in the United States both personally and professionally."

—Takaki, p. 433

"The schools in Korea produce many qualified doctors. The truth is they have more doctors in Korea that they can support—not more than they need, but American cities can use more too," according to Hyung Lum Kim, who sponsored his brother and sister who are both doctors.

—Takaki, p.439

According to Jae Choi, the "reason for being of [immigrants from Korea] is to work, save, and buy a house in a good neighborhood so that their children can get a good education. That is the American dream. They work and sacrifice so that their children can become 'somebody' in this country."

—Linton, p. 131

The victory of the Communists under Mao Tse Tung prompted many people to leave China. Xiu Zhen accused by the Red Guards of being a spy was jailed during the Cultural Revolution. Finally in 1974 she was allowed to visit her mother in Hong-Kong. " I said I had to go to her because she was sick. Of course that was not the real reason." She came from Hong Kong to the United States.

—Takaki, p. 424

"The thing is, this is a good country for children to grow up in, " according to Kenny Wing Lai, an immigrant from China who runs his own construction/ remodeling company. But he also acknowledges, "There are times when I think I should have stayed in Hong Kong—that my work opportunities would have been better there. At least I wouldn't be laboring such long hours. It is very difficult here." His wife Sui Wing Lai adds, "The good thing about living in this country is that you can be anything. Once you decide what you want to be, then you work hard and can achieve it. . . . There is so much to eat in this country that we feel the abundance everyday."

—Faung & Lee, pp. 70–75

"My brother-in-law left his wife in Taiwan and came here as a student to get a Ph. D. in engineering. After he received his degree, he got a job in San Jose. Then he brought in a sister and his wife, who brought over her brothers and me. And my brother's wife then came."

—Takaki, p. 422

"The reason why I wanted to come to the United States is that I heard it is really freedom. That's the first thing. And the second was education. . . . When I was young, during the Cultural Revolution, there were no colleges to get into." Wing Ng joined her father in Hong Kong but found opportunities limited there. "In Hong Kong it is difficult to go to college, too. Only two universities. Too many people. Too much competition for jobs. The people in Hong Kong don't like the others coming in and taking the jobs. So the only jobs you can get are in the factories."

—Takaki, p. 424

May 1977—Though I am sad and many days wish I am dead, my heart continues to beat with life. My eyes well up at the thought of Pa. “I miss you so much, Pa,” I whisper to him “It is so hard to live without you. I am so sick of missing you.” It is hopeless because no amount of tears will bring him back. I know Pa does not want me to give up, and as hard as it is to endure life here day to day, there is nothing for me to do but go on.

Strange things are going on in the village as entire families disappear overnight. Kim says the Khmer Rouge terror has taken a new toll. The soldiers are executing the entire families of those whom they’ve taken away, including young children. The Angkar fears the survivors and children of the men they have killed will rise up one day and take their revenge. To eliminate this threat, they kill the entire family. We believe this to be the fate of another one of our neighbors, the Sarrin family.

The Sarrin family lived a few huts down from ours. Like our family, the soldiers also took the father, leaving behind the mother and their three young kids. The kids are our age, ranging form five to ten years old. A few nights back we heard loud cries coming from their direction. Their cries continued for many minutes, then all was quiet again. In the morning I walked to their hut and saw that they were no longer there. Everything they owned was still in the hut: the small pile of black clothes in the corner of the room, the red checked scarves, and their wooden food bowls. It has been maybe three days now and still the hut stands empty. It is as if the family magically disappeared and no one dares to question their whereabouts. We all pretend not to notice their disappearance.

When she returns from work one evening Ma hurriedly gathers Kim, Chou, Geak, and me together saying she has something to tell us. With all of us sitting in a circle waiting for her, Ma nervously walks around the hut outside to make sure no one can hear us. When she joins us, her eyes are filled with tears.

“If we stay together, we will die together,” she says quietly, but if they cannot find us, they cannot kill us.” Her voice shakes when she speaks: “You three have to leave and go far away.”

February 1980—Loung Ung left a refugee camp in Thailand with her brother Meng and sister in law, Eang Muy Tan to immigrate to the United States.

—Ung, *First They Killed My Father,* pp. 121, 123

"In my opinion, a lot of people want to live in America because they have freedom and the opportunity for a future. If you work hard, you can have everything. . . " according to Alicia Diem (pseudonym) another immigrant from Vietnam. "Everybody wants to the leave Vietnam. Even those who love the country don't like the Communists. The economy keeps going down. I lived almost ten years under the communists. Before the communists, everything was okay. We did not have a rich life like in America, but the lives are satisfied. I had a good life too. I had a good job. I had family and relatives there. I liked to stay in Vietnam. But after the Communists came, my future was nothing. I worked hard, but for nothing. My salary for one month was equivalent to one or two U.S. dollars—that is if you exchanged it on the black market. Everybody got sixty Vietnamese pias. My boss got one hundred pias a month. One month you can buy half a pound of meat for the whole family. Everybody had to sell things—furniture, jewelry, gold, diamonds—just to eat. but after our things ran out, there was almost nothing to eat. . . .You have money, you have power. I learned from America."

—Faung and Lee, pp. 68-69

Lang Ngan, a refugee from Vietnam claims, "I didn't have the Golden Mountain dream (a Chinese term for coming to America, where making lots of money fast is believed possible). I knew life wouldn't be easy. Here we had no friends or relatives, and the lifestyle was so different. . . . We went through difficulties so when we have a chance, we grab it."

—Faung and Lee, pp. 62-65

"I was afraid of the killings when the Communists came to town," explained another Vietnamese refugee.

—Takaki, p. 451

The American CIA had promised members of the Hmong and Mien ethnic groups in Laos: "You help us fight for your country, and if you can't win, we will take you with us, and we will help you live."

—Takaki, pp. 464-465

Ngoan Le recounts her family's flight from Communism in Vietnam. " I was born in South Vietnam after my family fled from the North following the installation of the Communist government in Hanoi. As a child growing up in an extended family comprising my grandmother (the matriarch), aunts, uncles, and many cousins in addition to my own immediate family of six, I did not know we stayed together and shared cramped quarters because we were refugees with limited resources.

"The adults in my family often talked about their past in the North and the relatives who still lived there. I read books about the North and dreamed of the time I could travel there to visit places where the history of Vietnam and my family began.

"Unlike the adults in my family I was a native of the South because Dalat was my birthplace and where I grew into a teenager. I have many fond memories of my walks to school every morning in the fog and strolls with my friends around the lake in the middle of the town. I also have sad memories living in a war-torn country where the sounds of bullets, fighter jets and artillery were present. There were times we went to bed not knowing if we would be alive the next morning. We went to many funerals of friends who were drafted in the military.

"As I was ending my first year at the University of Saigon, the Communist government of Hanoi gained control of South Vietnam. Dallas had already fallen in March 1975, and by April 29 my family once again found ourselves refugees. We fled from Dallas and then again from Saigon, leaving behind everything we owned and all the people we knew. We didn't even have a chance to say good-bye."

—Linton, p. 211

Forced labor programs which required elite urban business and professional persons to "go to the country to do labor, the hard jobs, to make the irrigation canals" prompted many Vietnamese who remained after the fall of Saigon to leave. According to one, "Life was very hard for everybody. All had changed!. . . I could see no future for me in Vietnam, no better life! I wanted to escape."

—Takaki, p. 452

To escape certain death, hundreds of thousands of Cambodians fled to Thailand when Vietnamese troops invaded Kampuchea (Cambodia) and overthrew Pol Pot in 1979. Over 100,000 Cambodians from Thai refugee camps have been resettled in the U.S.
Vacchira Lorh, a Cambodian refugee now living in Rochester, Minnesota acknowledged: "If they knew I had been a medical school student, I would have been killed right away."

—Takaki, p. 468

"My uncle, my aunt, and my two brothers were killed and buried in the same hole because Pol Pot's elements knew that my relatives were soldiers. Pol Pot's men killed my older sister's husband because they accused him as a political man who betrayed the Communist Party. I live with wretchedness. My parents, my older brother and sister died because the Thai sent them back into the mountains."

—Takaki, p. 469

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Interview of Lakshmi Annan, "Morning Edition," National Public Radio, August 2, 1993.

Linton, Cynthia, Editor. *Ethnic Handbook, a Guide to the Cultures and Traditions of Chicago's Diverse Communities*. Chicago: An Ethnic Coalition Publication, 1996.

Rangaswamy, Padma. *Namasté America: Indian Immigrants in an American Metropolis*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

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______________. Personal Interview of Nicasio Pagaduan, Jr., Chicago, June, 1999.

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Ung, Loung, *First They Killed My Father, A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers.* New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

Lesson Five
The Future of Immigration Policy

A. Organizing Questions

1. What are criteria for formulating a sound immigration policy?

2. Who influences these decisions?

3. What changes, if any, should be made in the United States immigration policy?

B. Lesson Objectives

- To demonstrate analytical skills.
- To utilize statistical data to support positions.
- To identify criteria for formulating governmental policy.
- To link classroom learning to responsible political action.

C. Lesson Activities (Two days)

Day One

1. Have students read the Historical Background, **Student Handout 8**.

2. Inform students that numerous immigration bills are introduced during each session of Congress to either change current immigration policy or amend existing legislation. Have students, working in groups, gather data from current newspapers, magazines, and the Internet on proposed immigration legislation. Encourage students to use THOMAS, the Library of Congress's website for current immigration bills (http://thomas.loc.gov/).

3. Role-play the simulation, "Convention to Formulate Immigration Policy for the 21st Century." Divide students into two groups. Team members should identify countries or regions from which they come and consider how their reasons for immigration should influence government policy.

Group I—Immigrants from Asia

Team I	refugees seeking asylum
Team II	relatives of previous immigrants
Team III	skilled professionals
Team IV	students
Team V	economic opportunists

Group II—Politicians, Professionals, and Businessmen

Team I	advisors to the President favoring lenient immigration policies
Team II	advisors to the President favoring restrictive immigration policies
Team III	business owners/capitalists who need laborers
Team IV	representatives of professions who need specialized, skilled staff
Team V	engineering firms, hospitals, HMO's
Team VI	Political Action Group members favoring firm restrictions on immigration

4. Students should work in teams to prepare position statements during class based on their research of current legislation.

5. Homework: Students should edit position statements and prepare for presentations.

Day Two

1. Students should present position statements and debate controversial positions.

2. Students should list elements of an ideal Immigration Act of 2001.

3. Homework:
   Give the students the choice of one of the two following options as a "Take Home" exam.

Option 1: Letter to your legislator

Write a letter to your congressperson or senator expressing a point of view regarding future immigration legislation and suggesting changes in the law.

Option 2: Letter to the editor

Write a letter to the editor of a local paper expressing support for current laws regulating immigration.

The assignment should be evaluated as a final exam. Provide students with the following rubric that will be used in evaluating their written assignment:

a. The student's opinion or position should be clearly stated.

b. The letter should contain specific evidence to support the position expressed.

c. The letter should follow proper letter format. (A sample format is provided in **Student Handout 9**.)

Addresses of legislators are available in the reference section of the local public library or on the Internet.

Two *New York Times* articles[8], which should be available in the archives on the Internet at www.nytimes.com, will be helpful to students in shaping their positions.

[8] Pam Belluck, "Short Of People, Iowa Seeks To Be Ellis Island Of Midwest," *New York Times*, August 28, 2000 and Steven Greenhouse, "Foreign Workers At Highest Level In Several Decades," *New York Times*, September 4, 2000.

Historical Background

Current Trends

Beginning in the 1970s, declining economic opportunities in the United States and federal government restrictions on the admission of occupational immigrants led to diminished migration of highly educated Asians and a greater use of the family reunification preference in the Immigration Act of 1965. More and more of the Asians who came in the 1970s and 1980s were less educated and less skilled relatives of immigrants who had arrived earlier. They entered a United States in which the unemployment rate increased from 4.5% in 1965 to 9.7% in 1982. Many were not fluent in English, and they struggled to gain a foothold in society. Compared to the immigrants who had well-paid professions in laboratories and hospitals, universities and businesses, many more recent immigrants worked in minimum wage jobs in retail stores or on factory floors. Many of the less-skilled immigrants, who had been sponsored by relatives, found opportunities operating ethnic food restaurants, groceries, clothing, jewelry, and video shops. These businesses enabled all immigrants to preserve their traditions and to create ethnic subcultures.

By the 1980s, both economic and social factors prompted a general uneasiness about high levels of Asian immigration. There has never been a consensus among American people regarding immigration, but with a slowdown in the economy and the increasing visibility of Asians in the American population, immigrants became scapegoats for many of society's problems.

Continued immigration from Asia has contributed to greater heterogeneity of ethnic populations, sharpened differences between generations, and prompted deep-seated worry that Asians are unlikely to assimilate as completely as European immigrants because of fundamental cultural differences. Rising racial prejudice and economic recession led to a call for a clampdown on immigration in the late 1980s. However, the economic boom of the 1990s and the information technology revolution has fuelled demand for skilled workers in high tech industries and has altered attitudes of many Americans, especially employers who are facing a severe shortage of workers when unemployment is at a 30 year low. The availability of well-trained computer experts in Asia, especially India, has prompted firms in the U.S. to recruit highly-skilled Asians to fill positions in the United States just as they did in the 1960s . In fact, these high-tech companies have succeeded in persuading the government to increase the number of temporary work visas issued annually from 65,000 in 1997 to 195,000 in 2001. The competitive advantage provided by skilled Asian immigrant software professionals is countering anti-Asian sentiments as Asian immigrants contribute to the boom in the information technology sector of the American economy.

Current Concerns

Three and a half decades of substantial Asian immigration have made Asian Americans an important segment in American society. They have formed advocacy groups and entered mainstream politics as voters, campaign contributors, and politicians. Asian American political strength prevented Congress from curtailing opportunities for immigrants to sponsor family members.

Few Americans dispute that Asian immigrants have played an integral part in the economic development of the United States, but many continue to question the place of Asian immigrants and their descendants in American society. Asian Americans, for their part, are not convinced that assimilation into an American melting pot is either desirable or attainable. In fact, Asian Americans force all Americans to consider alternatives to assimilation, to think carefully about the enduring nature of ethnicity, to address the need for understanding and tolerance, and to acknowledge the consequences of living in a multiracial, pluralistic society.

National Archives NLR-PHOCO-A-65702(6)

At an East coast aircraft factory, Philip Leung, Chinese, Marcell Webb, African American, and an unidentified worker adjust the retractable landing gear of a pursuit plane on the final assembly line. July, 1942.

[Return Address]
Street Address
City, State
Date

[Inside Address]
The Honorable
Member of the Senate
Congress of the United State
Washington, D.C. 20510

Congressman
Member of the House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20515

[Greeting]
Dear Senator:
Dear Mr. or Dear Ms.: [Congressperson]

Introduction
(what I'm writing about)

Body
(reasons for my concern, my position/opinions and evidence to support my views)

Conclusion
(request for position of the legislator and action the legislator plans to take)

[closing]
Very truly yours,

Signature
Name

Annotated Bibliography

With the rapidly changing face of Asian America, there has been an outpouring of scholarly work in the area of Asian American studies since the 1970s. Most of these recent studies provide historical overviews that refer to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Asian immigration so there is no dearth of background material, but many of the titles in this bibliography deal with the post-1965 immigration that so dramatically increased the Asian American population. Also included are writings in literature—essays, stories, poems—which provide an essential complement to the historical works.

Reference

Cordasco, Francesco, ed. *Dictionary of American Immigration History.* Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1990.

About 2,500 entries by American, Canadian, and English scholars on American ethnic groups, including essays on general immigration subjects and themes, biographical entries, immigration legislation and ethnic organizations.

Galens, Judy, Anna J. Sheets, Rudolph J. Vecoli and Robyn V. Young, eds. *Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America*, 2 vols. New York: Gale Research, 1995.

Essays on 101 ethnic groups range from 5,000 words to 20,000 words in length, and include a brief history of the country of origin, immigration statistics, history of migration to the United States and information on traditions and culture in the homeland as well as involvement in American society. It covers both large and small groups in the U.S. and must be consulted for groups that arrived in large numbers after 1965.

Kim, Hyung-chan, ed. *Dictionary of Asian-American History.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.

Over 1,000 entries on experiences of immigrants from more than ten countries in East and Southeast Asia, and the cultural, social, economic, and political impact of these groups on U.S. history. Also contains an extensive general bibliography and a chronology of events on Asian-American history.

Kim, Hyung-Chan, ed. *Asian Americans and Congress*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1996.

A documentary history on the series of immigration and naturalization laws passed by the U.S. Congress since 1790. The volume includes an overview of the basis on which Congress restricted Asian immigration, with complete chapters devoted to each major piece of legislation till the Immigration Act of 1965. Primary documents relating to the legislation are included at the end of each chapter.

Lee, Sharon M. "Asian Americans: Diverse and Growing," *Population Bulletin,* vol. 53, no.2 (June 1998). Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau.

This is a handy publication that explores the forces behind the changing ethnic, social, and demographic characteristics of Asian Americans and their effect on U.S. society.

Thernstrom, S., A. Orlov, and O. Handlin, eds. *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980.

This is essential reading on 106 groups covering more than 200 years of American immigration history. It has good statistical tables and thematic essays covering assimilation, language, law, literature, politics and other topics. Though it covers many groups not included in the Gale Encylopedia such as the Afghans and the Bangladeshis, it needs updating because of the massive numbers of new immigrants entering the U.S. in the last 20 years.

THOMAS, Library of Congress, http://thomas.loc.gov/

Federal legislative information is accessible on the Library of Congress's THOMAS World Wide Web system. The Web site provides a bill summary and status, full text of the bill, and references to the bill in the Congressional Record. This is a valuable resource for students researching current immigration legislation.

Asian Americans

Chan, Sucheng. *Asian Americans. An Interpretive History.* Boston: Twayne, 1991 (Twayne's Immigrant Heritage of America Series).

Starting with the international context, this book covers Asian immigration to the United States from the 1840s to the post-1965 immigration. It deals with the socio-economic issues of hostility and resistance to oppression, with women, families, and the second-generation, and the current status. There is also information on films about the Asian American experience.

Daniels, Roger. *Asian Americans: Chinese and Japanese in the United States Since 1850*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988.

A useful text for understanding the history and reception and social institutions of Chinese and Japanese Americans. Only the last part of the book deals with changes since 1965.

Foner, Nancy. Series Editor. *New Immigrant Series.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Ethnographic case studies of new immigrant communities describe their experience and problems as they adapt to life in America. Easy reading for high school students. Title in the series are: *Changing Identities: Vietnamese Americans, 1975-1995* by James M. Freeman; *New Pioneers in the Heartland: Hmong Life in Wisconsin,* by Jo Ann Koltyk; *From the Ganges to the Hudson: Indian Immigrants in New York City,* by

Johanna Lessinger; *Changes and Conflicts: Korean Immigrant Families in New York*, by Pyong Gap Min; and, *Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship: The New Chinese Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area,* by Bernard Wong.

Hong, Maria, ed. *Growing up Asian American: An Anthology*. New York: William Morrow, 1994.

A compilation of stories, essays and excerpts from novels and memoirs by 32 Asian American authors who share their thoughts and feelings on growing up in a culture not their own. There are depictions of late 19th-century life in America, life in the internment camps, and stories of teenage and college-age problems.

Kitano, Harry H. L., and Roger Daniels. *Asian Americans, Emerging Minorities.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988. (Second edition).

Covers all the Asian American groups from an historical and socio-cultural perspective.

Lee, Joann Faung Jean. *Asian American Experiences in the United States: Oral Histories of First to Fourth Generation Americans from China, the Philippines, Japan, India, the Pacific Island, Vietnam and Cambodia.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1991.

Through the oral histories of Americans of the various nationalities, this book explores issues critical to all Asian Americans, such as immigration, language, education, violence and resettlement. The book is divided into three parts: Profiles, Aspects of Americanization, and Interracial Marriage.

National Asian American Telecommunications Association. 346 Ninth Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103. Website: http:www.naatanet.org.

NAATA has a catalog of Asian American videos for Grades 1-12, as well as film, audiocassettes, and literature.

Takaki, Ronald. *Strangers from a Different Shore. A History of Asian Americans.* Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1989.

Taking a largely historical approach, this book describes the history of immigration and adjustment for each Asian group. It is an attempt to understand the Asians from their own point of view and hear them speak in their own voices. A popular textbook in Asian American courses at colleges and universities but has comparatively little on the contemporary immigration.

Wu, Jean Yu-Wen Shen and Min Song, eds. *Asian American Studies. A Reader.* New Brunswick, NJ. Rutgers University Press, 2000.

A multi-disciplinary introduction to Asian American studies organized in two parts: “The Documented Past” and “Social Issues and Literature.” This book deals with the experience of Americans of South Asian, East Asian, Southeast Asian and Filipino

ancestry, and covers a broad range of subjects including "Chinatown stories, nativist reactions, exclusionism, citizenship, immigration, community growth, Asian American ethnicities, racial discourse and the Civil Rights movement, transnationalism, gender, refugees, anti-Asian American violence, legal battles, class polarization, and many more. Contributors include noted scholars such as Gary Okihiro, Yen Le Espiritu, and Ronald Takaki.

Zia, Helen. *Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People.* New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000.

Combines personal experience with seminal events in contemporary Asian American history (such as the murder of Vincent Chin and the Los Angeles riots) to show the rise of Asian Americans as a politically and socially influential racial group.

Specific Asian American groups

Cambodian American

Ung, Loung, *First They Killed My Father, A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers*. New York: Harper Collins, 2000.

This gripping account of one family's fate at the hands of the Khmer Rouge describes the extraordinary love and toughness which enabled a young girl to survive the horrors of Pol Pot's regime and eventually to immigrate to the United States.

Chinese Americans

Chen, Hsiang-Shui. *Chinatown No More: Taiwan Immigrants in Contemporary New York.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

An ethnographic study of Chinese immigrants from Taiwan focusing on households in the borough of Queens in New York city, with detailed descriptions of various groups, such as workers, owners of small businesses and professionals.

Yung, Judy. *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

A rich collection of primary documents relating to Chinese American women's stories, including proverbs, immigration interrogations, poems, articles, photographs, social workers' reports and oral histories. The extensive introductions and annotations makes this a great resource for Chinese American women's history from the Gold Rush years through World War II.

Filipino Americans

Bulosan, Carlos. *America is in the Heart*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991, 10th edition.

A book about the Filipino experience in the U.S. in the 1920s and 1930s. There is a detailed description of the political and social circumstances in the home country before migration, and reasons why Filipino immigrants chose to stay in America despite racism and discrimination.

Hmong Americans

Chan, Sucheng, ed. *Hmong Means Free*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.

This is a collection of autobiographical accounts by Hmong refugees from Laos, collected by four of Chan's students who interviewed members of their own families. These personal stories tell about the refugees' experiences as mountain farmers in Laos, through war and revolution, and in refugee camps in Thailand and their lives in the United States. Chan's 60-page introductory essay provides a historical and social framework for the narratives.

Fadiman, Anne. *If the Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures.* New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998.

A compelling account of a medical case of a three-month old Hmong child in Merced, CA, that leads to the clash of two traditions—the deeply spiritual, ritualized faith of the Hmong and the modern American medical system. A tragic case history of miscommunication provides important insights into the Hmong culture.

Japanese Americans

Kikumura, Akema. *Through Harsh Winters. The Life of a Japanese Immigrant Woman*. Novato, CA: Chandler & Sharp Publishers, 1981.

The story of a Japanese woman growing up in a Hiroshima family in the early 1900s, coming to America and settling in an Japanese immigrant farming community in California is supplemented with information on traditional Japanese feudal society and Japanese American family values.

Ichioka, Yuji. *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrant 1885-1924.* New York: Free Press, 1990.

One of the most detailed books on the history of first generation Japanese immigrants describes why these people left their native country for the hard life in Hawaii and California.

Korean Americans

Lee, Mary Paik and Sucheng Chan. *Quiet Odyssey.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990.

Lee's autobiographical account of the 1905 migration of her family from Korea, where they were among the educated elite, to the United States, where they became laborers in the agricultural and mining towns of California, is augmented by excellent historical and bibliographical essays by Chan.

Kim, Elaine H., Eui-Young Yu, Anna Deavere Smith, eds. *East to America: Korean American Life Stories.* New York: New Press, 1997.

Some 30 interviews with Koreans, ranging from recent immigrants to third-generation Korean Americans, gay activists, artists, crime victims, shopkeepers grappling with issues such as racial tension, class and gender differences. The book was designed to shatter stereotypes about Korean Americans by letting them speak in their own unique voices and showing them in all their diversity.

<u>Vietnamese Americans</u>

Freeman, James. *Hearts of Sorrow, Vietnamese American Lives*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989.

Collection of oral histories divided by themes, childhood and youth in Vietnam, war, refugee camp story, escape from Vietnam, resettling in America

Hayslip, Le Ly. *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places:A Vietnamese Woman's Journey from War to Peace.* Penguin, 1990.

An intensely intimate account of the author's own experiences during the war, beginning with her childhood in a Vietnamese village, her early years as a Viet Cong courier, the torture she suffered at the hands of the South Vietnamese, the Viet Cong and the Americans, her departure for the United States with an American husband, and her return to Vietnam in 1986 to search for the family she left behind

<u>South Asian Americans</u>

Maira, Sunaina and Rajini Srikanth, eds. *Contours of the Heart: South Asians Map North America.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Selected by the Before Columbus Foundation for its 1997 American Book Award, this anthology of poems, stories, photographs and essays speaks to the diversity of the South Asian experience in North America. Writers explore different interpretations of homeland and exile, of personal identity and familial duty in a lively way that reveals the complexities and ironies of living between cultures.

Rangaswamy, Padma. *Namaste America. Indian Immigrants in an American Metropolis.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

A comprehensive history of Indian immigrants in the United States, set against the global Indian migration, with extensive documentation on the cultural, religious, linguistic, and socio-economic profile of Indians, focusing on Chicago, one of the largest communities in the United States.

Women of South Asian Descent Collective, ed. *Our Feet Walk the Sky: Women of the South Asian Diaspora.* Aunt Lute Books, 1993.

A collection of writings by women of South Asian descent that explores religious and cultural conflicts, traditional and post-colonial identities, it is the first anthology of its kind to deal with issues of family, sexuality, economic exploitation and homelands.

Film: "So Far From India" by Mira Nair, 1987, is available from University Film and Video, University of Minnesota, Continuing Education and Extension, 1313 Fifth Street, S.E., Suite 108, Minneapolis, MN.

This documentary looks at a young immigrant's life in New York City as well as his experience when he visits his family in India. Difficulties of crossing cultures and meeting expectations of the family in India are effectively presented through interviews and visuals.

Film: Train #7, Immigrant Journey by Hye Jung Park and J. T. Takagi is available from Third World Newsreel, 545 Eighth Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, New York 10018, 212 947-9277. TWN@TWN.ORG.

Focusing on individuals from several different countries including Japan, Korea, and Pakistan, documentary filmmakers Hye Jung Park and J. T. Takagi provide a vivid view of the diverse multicultural world in New York City and thus the United States.