

Constructing Identity in Narratives of Asian America

Tables: Asian Immigration to the U.S. and Canada

Adapted from Timothy FONG, "The History of Asians in America" (Chapter 1), *The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority*, 10-35. New York: Prentice Hall, 1998.

Asian Immigration to the U.S.

In the first years of the Gold Rush (1848-51), there were only a few hundred Chinese immigrants on the mainland, but 52,000 new arrivals were recorded in 1852. By the end of the nineteenth century, due to the Gold Rush and the building of the transcontinental railroad (mid- to late-1860s), 300,000 Chinese had entered the U.S.

Filipino immigrants in Hawaii moved to the mainland in large numbers to fill agricultural and service jobs following the 1924 Immigration Act, which prohibited all Asian immigration to the U.S.

Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, and Hmong immigrants arrived from the 1970s onward, with the escalation of the Vietnam War, atrocities in Cambodia, and the persecution of the Hmong in Laos. The 1990 census counted over 600,000 Vietnamese, over 148,000 Laotians, over 147,000 Cambodians, and over 90,000 Hmong.

Table 1: Immigration to the United States by Region, Fiscal Years 1820-2002¹

Region	Total 1820-2002	Between 1971-2002	% of Immigrants Since 1971
All Countries	68,217,481	21,927,843	32.1
Europe	38,816,282	3,277,140	8.4
Asia	9,479,289	7,786,444	82.1
China	1,440,285	996,982	69.2
Hong Kong	430,268	339,720	80.0
India	951,556	910,760	95.7
Japan	549,800	184,416	33.5
Korea	846,461	805,597	95.2
Philippines	1,630,142	1,507,240	92.5
Vietnam	811,495	806,820	99.4
Other Asia	2,819,282	2,234,909	79.3
America	18,506,482	11,036,894	59.6
Africa	795,428	718,955	90.4
Oceania	274,256	156,081	56.9
Not specified	345,744	79,329	22.9

¹ Adapted from Timothy Fong, "The History of Asians in America," in *The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1998). 21. Data from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website. *2002 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. 6 Feb 2004. 6 Feb 2004.

<<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/Immigs.htm>>. The version of the table here has been condensed and simplified.

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Asian Immigration to Canada

Immigration to Canada increased 20% in 2000, which exceeded the upper end of the planned range as set by Citizenship and Immigration Canada by 1%. The percentage of immigrants from each region as a proportion of total immigrants to Canada has remained relatively stable over the past five years, with a slight increase of 2% from the Asia Pacific region.

The proportion of immigrants from Asia-Pacific has fluctuated around 50%, with a low of 48% in 1998, due mainly to the considerable drop in immigration from Hong Kong. In 2000 the proportion of immigrants from Asia-Pacific recovered close to its 1996 levels.

Table 2: Immigrants to Canada by Region as Percentage of Total Immigration (Principle Applicants and Dependents)²

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Africa & the Middle East	36,503 16.1%	37,792 17.5%	32,586 18.7%	33,486 17.6%	40,779 17.9%
Asia-Pacific	124,771 55.2%	117,064 54.2%	84,197 48.3%	96,429 50.8%	120,491 53.0%
South & Central America	18,878 8.4%	17,422 8.1%	14,040 8.1%	15,223 8.0%	16,939 7.5%
United States	5,869 2.6%	5,028 2.3%	4,773 2.7%	5,528 2.9%	5,809 2.6%
Europe & UK	40,009 17.7%	38,670 17.9%	38,530 22.1%	38,930 20.5%	42,875 18.9%
Not Stated	20 0.0%	38 0.0%	36 0.0%	315 0.2%	316 0.1%
Total	226,050 100.0%	216,014 100.0%	174,162 100.0%	189,911 100.0%	227,209 100.0%

² Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures 1998, 1999, 2000. Ottawa, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000, 2001, 2002.

<www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts2000/1imm-05.html>