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**Chinese Americans, Forever Foreigners:**

**Chinese Americans in the Western United States before and after the**

**Chinese Exclusion Act**

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## Abstract

Prima della metà del XIX secolo, la curiosità degli americani per la cultura orientale si affermava inizialmente con un atteggiamento di osservazione e persino di apprezzamento. L'abbigliamento, il cibo, l'alloggio, i trasporti e persino l'istruzione e l'intrattenimento del popolo cinese spesso attiravano la partecipazione dei bianchi americani. Tuttavia, ciò è cambiato nel tempo e si è trasformato in un chiaro movimento anti-cinese.

Dopo la metà del XIX secolo, l'immagine dei cinesi negli Stati Uniti è cambiata da positiva a una negativa. Prima del 1830, l'impressione che il popolo americano aveva dei cinesi era ereditata dalla visione europea: c'erano pochi contatti tra Cina e Stati Uniti, da cui derivava l'ignoranza e l'incomprensione del popolo americano nei confronti della Cina e dei cinesi.

I cinesi entrarono in gran numero negli Stati Uniti durante la corsa all'oro in California del 1848-1855. Ciò è continuato per la richiesta di manodopera durante la costruzione della ferrovia transcontinentale. La maggior parte dei cinesi negli Stati Uniti dell'epoca proveniva dalla Cina meridionale, che era stata impoverita dopo la ribellione dei Taiping, e venne negli Stati Uniti in cerca di ricchezza. Se all'inizio l'abbondanza d'oro fece tollerare l'arrivo dei cinesi, man mano che le riserve di oro si riducevano e la competizione per l'oro si intensificava venne a intensificarsi anche l'odio per i cinesi.

L'isolamento dei cinesi nella vita e nella cultura fu la ragione principale di incomprensione e discriminazione. I gruppi nativisti iniziarono a sostenere che l'oro della California fosse prerogativa americana e si iniziò ad assistere ad abusi anche fisici dei cercatori d'oro stranieri. Dopo essere stati sfrattati con la forza dalle miniere d'oro, i cinesi si trasferirono nelle città, principalmente San Francisco, dove trovarono

lavoro come salariati e servi.

Con il declino dell'economia statunitense, l'odio contro i cinesi si intensificò anche a livello politico, come dimostrano le invettive del governatore della California John Bigler, che incolpò i coolies e i lavoratori cinesi, che avevano firmato un contratto per costruire la Central Pacific Railroad tra il 1864 e il 1869, della sfortuna della nazione.

Nel tempo, l'immigrazione cinese in California crebbe, come anche le tensioni, con espliciti casi di violenza come avvenne nella città di Los Angeles. Nel 1878, il Congresso aveva deciso di emanare e approvare la legge sull'esclusione cinese. Il Chinese Exclusion Act fu finalmente approvato nel 1882. Dopo l'approvazione dei regolamenti, la maggior parte delle famiglie cinesi dovette scegliere se rimanere negli Stati Uniti da sola o tornare in Cina per riunirsi con le proprie famiglie. I giornali di tutto il paese, specialmente in California, hanno cominciato a diffamare e ad accusare i cinesi di causare la disoccupazione dei bianchi e di molti altri problemi.

La base principale per coloro che sostengono l'esclusione dei cinesi è di tipo culturale: si sosteneva che i cinesi avessero molti vizi e pregiudizi, che fosse impossibile americanizzarli la loro vita e fosse ancora più impossibile accettare i loro standard etici e morali; a ciò si sommano le tensioni causate dalla concorrenza sul lavoro con i lavoratori americani.

La ragione di coloro che si oppongono all'esclusione cinese è che l'esclusione cinese violava la politica di libera immigrazione del Trattato Burlingame tra Cina e Stati Uniti, oltre ai principi fondanti della Repubblica americana di "libertà e uguaglianza".

Nonostante le diverse opinioni pubbliche, l'esclusionismo cinese ottenne il sostegno della maggioranza del Congresso. Il 6 maggio 1882, il Congresso degli Stati Uniti approvò il primo disegno di legge nella storia degli Stati Uniti per limitare l'immigrazione straniera, comunemente noto come Chinese Exclusion Act. Il Chinese

Exclusion Act è stata una delle restrizioni più severe all'immigrazione nella storia degli Stati Uniti. Esso vietava ai lavoratori cinesi impiegati come minatori di entrare negli Stati Uniti per dieci anni, a rischio di reclusione o espulsione.

Il disegno di legge riguardava anche i cinesi che erano stati stabiliti negli Stati Uniti. Tutti i cinesi che lasciavano e volevano rientrare negli Stati Uniti dovevano ottenere un permesso. L'atto di fatto privava gli immigrati cinesi della possibilità di ottenere la cittadinanza statunitense.

La legge esclude per dieci anni tutti i lavoratori cinesi al di fuori degli Stati Uniti. Il suo emendamento del 1884 rafforzò ulteriormente le disposizioni che consentono agli immigrati in arrivo in precedenza di lasciare gli Stati Uniti e tornare, chiarendo al contempo che la legge si applicava a tutti i cinesi indipendentemente dalla loro nazionalità. Lo Scott Act del 1888 estese il Chinese Exclusion Act, impedendo ai cinesi di lasciare gli Stati Uniti. Nel 1892, dieci anni dopo la sua approvazione, la legge fu continuata dal Geary Act senza una data di fine.

Indipendentemente dal Trattato di Burlingame del 1868, la legge del 1882 fu originariamente approvata su base temporanea, ma nel 1902 divenne permanente. Dal 1910 al 1940, la stazione di immigrazione di Angel Island, situata in quello che oggi è l'Angel Island State Park nella baia di San Francisco per gli immigrati cinesi. Fino al 30% degli immigrati cinesi vengono deportati in Cina. Il disegno di legge, prorogato da Theodore Roosevelt nel 1902, richiedeva che ogni residente cinese si registrasse e ottenesse un certificato di residenza, mentre i cinesi senza certificato venivano espulsi.

Dal 1876, il governo Qing ha protestato continuamente contro la persecuzione dei cinesi d'oltremare da parte degli Stati Uniti. A questo proposito, il governo degli Stati Uniti può sottrarsi alle proprie responsabilità non potendo intervenire negli affari locali, o semplicemente ignorandolo. La protesta del governo Qing si ritirò passo

dopo passo, tanto da firmare un nuovo trattato con gli Stati Uniti nel 1884, che vietava ai lavoratori cinesi di recarsi negli Stati Uniti per dieci anni. Questo trattato ha segnato il riconoscimento da parte del governo Qing della legittimità del Chinese Exclusion Act negli Stati Uniti. Nel 1924 e nel 1930 furono successivamente promulgate nuove norme sull'immigrazione per impedire ai cinesi di entrare negli Stati Uniti.

Durante la Seconda guerra mondiale, la Cina e gli Stati Uniti divennero alleati antifascisti e il Chinese Exclusion Act divenne un ostacolo alle relazioni sino-americane. Su suggerimento del presidente Roosevelt, il 17 dicembre 1943 il Congresso degli Stati Uniti approvò il Magnuson Act, abrogando così tutti gli atti di esclusione cinese. La legge consentì ai cinesi che già vivevano negli Stati Uniti di diventare cittadini naturalizzati senza la minaccia di espulsione e consentiva un limite annuale di immigrazione di 105 cinesi.

Tuttavia, l'immigrazione cinese su larga scala non seguì fino all'approvazione dell'Immigration and Nationality Act del 1965, firmato dal presidente Lyndon B. Johnson. La nuova legge abolì completamente il sistema delle quote di nazionalità e lo sostituì con una quota nell'emisfero orientale e occidentale: 170.000 nell'emisfero orientale e 120.000 nell'emisfero occidentale, rispetto al precedente limite di 20.000 persone all'anno da qualsiasi paese. Tuttavia, come era già successo in precedenza, alcuni immigrati possono entrare senza quote a determinate condizioni; per esempio, la nuova legge amplia le categorie di familiari che possono entrare senza quote e riserva la maggior parte delle quote ai parenti non diretti di cittadini e anche a carico di stranieri con residenza permanente.

Sebbene il Chinese Exclusion Act sia stato abrogato nel 1943, in California il divieto di matrimoni misti cinesi con bianchi non fu stato abrogato fino al 1948. In altri stati, statuti simili sono rimasti in vigore fino al 1967, quando la Corte Suprema degli Stati Uniti ha stabilito all'unanimità che un disegno di legge che vieta il matrimonio

interrazziale era incostituzionale.

Dal 2011, i membri del Congresso cinese-americano negli Stati Uniti hanno lavorato attivamente per fare pressioni sul governo affinché si scusassero ufficialmente per il “Chinese Exclusion Act” approvato più di un secolo fa. Nel 1988, il governo degli Stati Uniti si scusò per aver mandato nippo-americani nei campi di concentramento durante la Seconda guerra mondiale e offrì 20.000 dollari di risarcimento a ciascuno. Nel 1993, Clinton si scusò con i nativi hawaiani per aver inviato truppe a sostegno del rovesciamento della dinastia nativa hawaiana. Nel 2006, il governo degli Stati Uniti si è scusato con gli afroamericani per la loro precedente schiavitù. Nel 2010 il governo degli Stati Uniti si è nuovamente scusato per il trattamento ingiusto riservato agli indiani.

I motivi per cui il Congresso non si è scusato per molto tempo per il Chinese Exclusion Act sono i seguenti: in primo luogo, sebbene un numero molto ristretto di membri del Congresso e gruppi per i diritti umani americani lo abbia condannato, negli Stati Uniti in generale manca una riflessione sui danni causati dal “Chinese Exclusion Act” per i cinesi. In secondo luogo, alcune persone negli Stati Uniti hanno ancora pregiudizi nei confronti dei cinesi. Il terzo motivo è che i cinesi generalmente non hanno lottato come altri gruppi etnici per i propri diritti. Molti cinesi di seconda generazione hanno poca conoscenza della storia del “Chinese Exclusion Act”.

Secondo le statistiche, ci sono oggi più di 6 milioni di cinesi negli Stati Uniti e l’I Ching è diventata la terza minoranza etnica più grande degli Stati Uniti. I cinesi hanno gradualmente iniziato a cambiare la loro immagine nelle elezioni politiche americane, giocando un ruolo sempre più importante ed esercitando un’influenza irrilevante su varie elezioni. Anche le associazioni cinesi hanno iniziato a unirsi: più di 100 associazioni cinesi negli Stati Uniti hanno chiesto congiuntamente al membro del Congresso Judy May Chu di approvarlo e hanno esortato il Congresso a scusarsi con i cinesi.

Il 26 maggio 2011, la deputata cinese americana Judy May Chu e altri hanno presentato mozioni al Senato e alla Camera dei rappresentanti, chiedendo al Congresso di affrontare una serie di leggi che perseguitano i cinesi, incluso il Chinese Exclusion Act del 1882, e di scusarsi formalmente. La sera del 6 ottobre 2011, il Senato degli Stati Uniti ha approvato un disegno di legge all'unanimità, esprimendo scuse per il Chinese Exclusion Act della fine del XIX e l'inizio del XX secolo e altre leggi che discriminavano i cinesi. L'approvazione di questo disegno di legge ha posto fine a un secolo di stigma negativa della comunità cinese americana e ha portato giustizia, seppur tardiva.

Il disegno di legge affermava che molti dei cinesi venuti negli Stati Uniti tra la fine del XIX e l'inizio del XX secolo hanno dato un contributo significativo allo sviluppo economico degli Stati Uniti, soprattutto nell'area occidentale del paese, ma hanno subito discriminazioni e violenze razziali. Il Senato ha espresso le sue profonde scuse per queste leggi che escludevano i cinesi e l'ingiustizia che provocarono, e ha espresso il suo impegno a proteggere i cinesi e le altre minoranze etniche al fine che godano degli stessi diritti civili e costituzionali degli altri cittadini americani.

La comunità dei cinesi-americani è andata sviluppandosi e migliorando il suo status sociale. Si sono gradualmente trasformati dalla "classe operaia" alla "classe intellettuale". L'ascesa dei gruppi di immigrati cinesi nella politica americana negli anni Settanta è stata ovviamente il risultato dell'interazione di molti fattori, come lo sviluppo del movimento per i diritti civili negli Stati Uniti e il graduale rafforzamento della Cina. In secondo luogo, si è assistito a una crescita culturale e politica.



## Introduction

The term “American Chinese” or “Chinese American” broadly refers to American citizens, permanent residents or residents of Chinese descent. Their number was about 4.52 million in 2015, accounting for 23.3% of the Asian American population, and 1.2% of the total American population, which is higher than the proportion of other Asian Americans in the United States. Most of them live in metropolitan areas.

Before the American Revolutionary War, there were only a few thousand people living west of the vast Appalachian Mountains across the North American continent. After the War of Independence, the U.S. government issued several decrees to encourage immigrants to develop the west, and residents began to move west. After the second war against Britain in 1815, the United States accelerated its development of the west, among which the discovery of gold mines in California in 1848 was of historic significance for the large-scale Chinese laborers in the United States. Because before 1848, most Chinese living in the United States were mainly engaged in business.

From the "Gold Rush" in 1848 to the promulgation of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the Chinese in the United States were mainly engaged in the development of gold mines, the construction of railways, the reclamation of wasteland and the construction of factories. This research on Chinese workers in the United States is also mainly based on this period. After 1882, fewer and fewer Chinese traveled to the United States as workers.

The contributions of the Chinese to the United States, especially their early contributions to the development of the American West and the development of the economy have not yet reached the level of recognition with their contributions, although their status and circumstances have greatly improved compared with the

past.

There are various reasons for this. One of the reasons mainly lies in the structural inequality of the US economic system, which positions minority groups as subalterns. By the middle of the 19th century, with the boom of industry and the increasing demand for cheap labor, this subordination phenomenon became more prominent. In particular, ethnic minority groups belonging to people of color were generally more discriminated against than Caucasian ethnic groups.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of the 1880s and the rampant racist persecution around the 1930s are still fresh in many people's memories. Nowadays, the social and cultural outlook of the United States has undergone great changes, and the situation of its ethnic minorities has undergone similar changes in comparison to half a century or a century ago. But this kind of change is still not enough for a modern civilized society. The United States is a country made of immigrants, with many ethnic minorities and mixed races. This thesis only discusses the historical changes in the situation of Chinese Americans.

The Chinese Exclusion Movement in the United States has always been an important research topic in academia. My thesis is a preliminary study of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This thesis analyzes the historical background of the Chinese Exclusion Act, and analyzes that the root cause of the Chinese Exclusion Act is the result of the rising sentiment of the Chinese working class in the United States being exploited by bourgeois political parties. of all Chinese. Then, it analyzes the Act from the aspects of American immigration policy toward China, the actual situation of the United States at that time, and Sino-American relations.

According to historical records, the earliest Chinese who arrived in the United States were three seafarers brought back by merchant ships from Guangzhou to Baltimore shortly after the founding of the United States in 1785. Later, other Chinese seamen

and businessmen arrived in the United States. In the early 19th century, American missionaries in China began to select young Chinese students to study in the United States. By the middle of the 19th century, Chinese society, which suffered the humiliation brought about by the Opium War, lived in a state of turmoil, misery and depression.

More poor peasants were forced to leave their hometowns and go abroad to find a way to survive. During this period, as the European colonial countries plundered and exploited colonies to grab raw materials, the emerging United States also began to open up frontiers to develop its economy, which required a large amount of cheap labor.

At that time, the news that a gold mine was discovered in California was rapidly spreading. This is of course very attractive to people who are eager to find a way to survive. As a result, a large number of Chinese laborers rushed to the United States. From the 1840s to the end of the century, a total of 322,000 Chinese arrived in the United States. Among them, Chinese workers as well as merchants, artisans, servants, etc. were recruited. Most of them came from the Pearl River Delta of Guangdong Province.

After arriving in the United States, they first settled in San Francisco on the west coast and other cities and towns in California. They can be said to be the pioneers of Chinese American migration. From mining to building roads, to the development of agriculture and light industry, they greatly contributed to the development of the US.

When the Central Pacific Railway began the construction of the western section of the Trans-American Continental Railway in 1863, a large number of Chinese workers devoted themselves to this grand project. By May 1869, when this section of the railway was connected to the Union Pacific Railway in Promontory, Utah, more than 90% of the road construction workers were Chinese.

After the railway was built, many Chinese workers turned to California farmland. By 1884, more than half of California's agricultural laborers were Chinese. In addition, the Chinese have also made great contributions to the construction of fishing, clothing, footwear, and tobacco industries on the west coast.

However, the history of these Chinese pioneers is still full of humiliation. At that time, China was reduced to a semi-colonial country by whom? and had no power in the international arena. The Chinese living in foreign countries were bullied in all respects. Discrimination against the Chinese at that time was also unobtrusively reflected in a series of laws and regulations.

As early as 1852, when Chinese began to arrive in the United States in large numbers, the California legislature passed a "Foreign Miner License Tax Act", which imposed a monthly tax of \$3 on each Chinese miner. This tax revenue accounted for half of the total tax revenue in parts of California before 1870.

In 1854, it was stipulated that people of color were not allowed to testify in court against white people; in 1860, it was stipulated that Chinese children were not allowed to go to school; in 1862, it was stipulated that the Chinese who had not paid the miner's tax had to pay the police tax, which forced every Chinese to pay this tax, although the name was different; in 1872, it was stipulated that the Chinese were not allowed to own real estate and did not issue business licenses to the Chinese; in 1880, it was even stipulated that California companies or individuals were not allowed to hire Chinese. This series of blatantly discriminatory laws against Chinese is the prelude to the "Chinese Exclusion Act".

Finally, in 1882, Congress passed the "Chinese Exclusion Act", signed into effect by the President. This is a legal form that confirmed the discrimination and exclusion of the Chinese for a long time. This bill prohibits Chinese workers from going to the

United States, and the Chinese who were already in the United States are also not allowed to be naturalized. This led to the spread of the anti-Chinese movement that prevailed in California and in the whole country. The Chinese living in different places are often harassed and attacked. For example, in 1885, a riot in Rock Springs, Wyoming, resulted in 18 Chinese deaths and 55 serious injuries.

In the 1890s, American newspapers and magazines popularized a form of commenting on current affairs through cartoons and pictures. Therefore, this paper uses the cartoons, pictures and photos of that time to provide a review of the implementation of the Chinese Exclusion Act from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. During this period, white Americans have misunderstood the image of Chinese residing in the United States, and even distorted and vilified the image.

In the absence of legal protection, women are not allowed to emigrate, and even the lives of Chinese are threatened. Chinese immigrants are either forced to leave the United States or live in the United States without dignity. The number of Chinese in the United States was 107,000 in 1890. By 1920, 30 years later, it was reduced to only 62,000, a full 40% reduction. Except for Native Americans, no immigrant group has suffered such a genocidal reduction in American history.

Over time, the Chinese left or were driven out of mining areas, farmland and railways. Most of them can only settle down in some cities in California, and some people relocate to the East. With all kinds of discrimination and racial segregation, the vast majority of Chinese living in the United States can only confine themselves to the Chinese community, living in city neighborhoods that became known as "Chinatowns". They are completely excluded from American society and can only engage in the humblest labor. Those American bosses who hire Chinese people are often harassed and threatened. Therefore, Chinese people have nowhere to find employment and can only find their own way out or become domestic servants.

In a few decades, the main occupation of the Chinese was running laundry shops. Chinese restaurants were another common employment channel. Most of these restaurants were located in Chinatowns, trying their best to make people feel that they were not competing with white people.

Even in 1920, more than half of the Chinese employed in the United States worked in laundries or restaurants. The number of laundromats far exceeds the number of restaurants, because laundries do not require a lot of capital, nor do they need to know much English to be open. Despite being strictly restricted to these two professional fields, the Chinese have managed to succeed. Chinese handmade laundry has become an indispensable business in the United States. The same was true for the food served in Chinese restaurants. Stir-fried chop suey, fried noodles, and fried rice, although not authentic Chinese dishes, have become favorite dishes of Americans:

Food is a cultural tradition. The popularity of Chinese restaurants reflects how an Asian cuisine was transplanted and developed in American society. Chinese migration was a transnational flow of people, social networks, and cultural values. Chinese immigrants arrived in America with their own lifestyles, labor and vocational skills, business expertise and capital, family rituals and traditions, religious and philosophical beliefs. Food is one of the earliest and probably the most visible aspects of transnational Chinese culture in America. Canton Restaurant, with seating for three hundred, was established in San Francisco as early as 1849. A business directory in 1856 lists five restaurants and thirty - eight grocery stores among eighty - eight Chinese businesses in San Francisco. (Liu, 1)

In the face of ubiquitous discrimination, the Chinese responded by retreating and trying to be as unobtrusive as possible, similarly to European Jews living in a quarantine zone or within a fence. Chinatowns has developed their own social organization and nominated leaders to handle their own internal affairs. Unless it is a

last resort, it will never turn to local American institutions. This situation is also common among overseas Chinese in Asia and other regions. In the United States, Chinese leaders deliberately avoided courts and the political arena. This is possible in part because the Chinese in the United States live in self-contained communities, and they all come from the same? area of Guangdong.

Since the First World War, the US immigration policy has been basically restrictive. The system of quotas based on nationality is the main measure to limit the influx of immigrants into the United States. Although the 1924 "Immigration Quota Law of All Ethnic Groups" also had quotas for China, due to the existence of the "Chinese Exclusion Act", this quota could not be used at all.

During the Second World War, the United States and China became allies fighting side by side. As a consequence, the relationship between the two countries improved. At that time, Japan was using US policies of racial discrimination such as the "Chinese Exclusion Act" to promote the notion of "Asia of Asians", in an attempt to weaken the alliance between China and the United States.

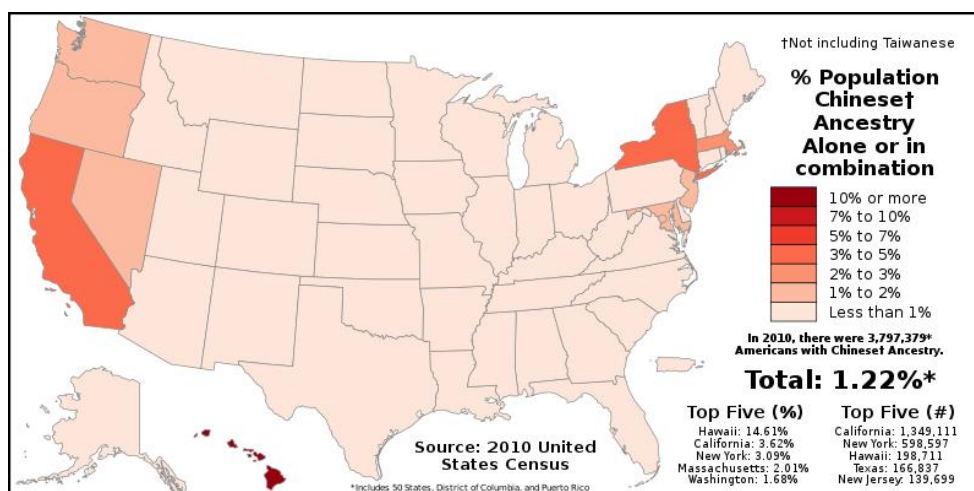
The abolition of the "Chinese Exclusion Act" did not immediately increase the number of Chinese immigrants, because the immigrant quota given to China is only 105 per year, much lower than that of other countries. The severe persecution and discrimination the Chinese have suffered for a long time can only be said to have begun to decrease, but it has not been completely eliminated. The long-term disproportionate disparity between men and women in Chinatown began to change, and the situation of the Chinese began to improve.

After the Second World War, the Chinese were no longer confined to traditional occupations such as restaurants, laundry, clothing, handicrafts, retail, and so on. More and more Chinese entered occupational fields that were inaccessible in the past, such as science and technology, engineering, medicine, education and so on. Many Chinese

have shown great talents in their professions, and some have made world-famous achievements.

The main significance of the changes that took place during this turning point moment in the history of Chinese in the United States lies in the initial acquisition of legal civil rights and the elimination of legal racial discrimination. In general, as time goes by, racial discrimination has eased, and racial prejudice no longer appears in a blatant form. But the complete elimination of racial discrimination and prejudice from law and ideology s far from being an overnight event. Therefore, when African Americans promoted the civil rights movement in the early 1960s, the growing Chinese middle class became their allies.

The most fundamental of all the changes is the awakening of Chinese ideological political consciousness and rights. From the perspective of the situation after the end of the Second World War, the Chinese society is more sectarian rather than political. This of course has historical and social reasons. Many people just stick to traditions, seek their own survival and development, or wait for the day they will finally return to their hometowns, like the fallen leaves to their roots.



Picture 1 Percentage of Chinese Americans per state as of the 2010 United States Census



# Chapter 1

## The arrival of Chinese immigrants

### 1.1 The historical background of Chinese immigrants

The first Opium War in 1840, in addition to opening the door to China with the outside world, forced China to sign unequal treaties with European and American countries to expand the scope of economic and trade etc., but also opened another door, that is, the door to immigration. And once the door is opened, it cannot be closed again.

When the Opium War broke out, China's population reached a small peak. From the 1740s to the late 1790s, the total population of the inland provinces according to the Ministry of Household Statistics had increased from 100 million to 300 million. By the 1830s, just before the outbreak of the Opium War, it had theoretically reached 400 million.

That is to say, in just 100 years, China's population increased by 300 million, while the domestic economic structure and social resource distribution model had not fundamentally changed during the same period, which directly led to a linear increase in the poor population and a series of social problems. After the Opium War, labor could be exported overseas in large quantities as capital overnight, which opened a new era.

In 1785, three Chinese sailors came to Baltimore, the earliest recorded Chinese arrival in the United States. Since then, Chinese immigrants have continued to immigrate to the United States, forming two peaks in the mid-to-late 19th century and the mid-to-late 20th century. So far, Chinese Americans have become one of the largest

ethnic minorities in the United States.

There is very little information about the arrival of three Chinese in Baltimore in 1785: in 1785 the Baltimore merchant Captain John O'Donnell sailed the Pallas to Canton and purchased a large number of Chinese items, including tea, Blue and white porcelain, silk, umbrellas, tableware, paper, cinnamon, rhubarb, opium, etc. Historians believe O'Donnell was the first Baltimore businessman to trade with China. George Washington was also very interested in the goods that O'Donnell brought back, and asked an agent to negotiate the purchase. O'Donnell became famous because of this, and he named the place where he lived "Canton" (Canton).

Returning to Baltimore with O'Donnell were three Chinese sailors and 32 sailors of other races who arrived in Baltimore on August 9, 1785, according to the Museum of Chinese in America. The names of the three Chinese people are unknown, and it is not clear whether they boarded the ship in Guangdong or other places along the way. The only certainty is that these three crew members are the first Chinese to arrive in the United States known so far. It can also be said that their arrival opened the prelude to Chinese immigration to the United States.

According to historical records, O'Donnell was ready to get married when he returned to Baltimore. He did not tell the crew who had come with him to the United States. This was the last time of his seafaring career. He sold the cargo and retired. O'Donnell His retirement left the crew stranded in Baltimore, where the three Chinese sought funding from the Continental Congress to return to their home country, but it's unclear how it ended. It is also unclear whether they remained in the United States or left the country.

“China’s domestic population experienced large-scale movement in the late imperial period caused by a combination of factors: population growth, an increase in inter-regional commerce, and the long-distance migration caused by social upheavals”

(Zou). North America became the main destination of Chinese migrants. In the subsequent two hundred years, the total number of overseas Chinese immigrants to the region, their origin, and economic and social structure have continued to change depending on the immigration policy of the host country.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the war and chaos of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom coupled with years of natural disasters caused many people at the bottom of Chinese society to leave their homes in order to make a living. All across China California started to be referred to as the Gold Mountain (Jinshan in Mandarin, Gam Saan in Cantonese). China also learned about the construction of a transcontinental railway line that required a large number of laborers:

The discovery of gold in California in the mid-nineteenth century marked the beginning of large-scale Chinese immigration to the United States. Since the 1850s, unwilling to accept a life of poverty and despair, tens of thousands of Chinese laborers embarked on the transpacific voyage and began to work in gold and silver mines in the western states. (Zhang, 8)

Furthermore, a series of incidents that broke out in the Pearl River Delta of Guangdong in the middle of the nineteenth century, such as the Sino-British Opium War, the Taiping Rebellion, and the Punti-Hakka Clan Wars, severely damaged the social ecology of the people in this area.

At the same time, the emerging capitalist countries in Western Europe, headed by the United Kingdom, were actively expanding all over the world. Demand for new markets, stimulated by efficient productivity, was increasing. Trade with China, a vast land with a large population, seemed particularly promising.

Before the War of Independence in North America, there were only a few thousand people living west of the vast Appalachian Mountains. After the War of Independence,

the US government promulgated several decrees to encourage immigration with the aim to develop the west, and residents began to move westward.

After the second war against Britain in 1815, the United States accelerated the efforts towards development. In particular, the discovery of a gold mine in California in 1848 was of historic significance for the large-scale arrival of Chinese laborers in the United States. The Burlingame Treaty (Chinese: 中美天津條約續增條約, Zhōng měi tiānjīn tiáoyuē xù zēng tiáoyuē), also known as the Burlingame–Seward Treaty of 1868, from a legal perspective, legitimated Chinese entry into the United States :

#### ARTICLE I

His Majesty the Emperor of China, being of the opinion that, in making concessions to the citizens or subjects of foreign Powers of the privilege of residing on certain tracts of land, or resorting to certain waters of that empire for purposes of trade, he has by no means relinquished his right of eminent domain or dominion over the said land and water, hereby agrees that no such concession or grant shall be construed to give to any Power or party which may be at war with or hostile to the United States the right to attack the citizens of the United States or their property within the said lands or waters; and the United States from resisting an attack by any hostile Power or party upon their citizens or their property, It is further agreed that if any right or interest in any tract of land in China has been or shall hereafter be granted by the Government of China to the United States or their citizens for purposes of trade or commerce, that grant shall in no event be construed to divest the Chinese authorities of their right of jurisdiction over persons and property within said tract of land, except so far as that right may have been expressly relinquished by treaty.

#### ARTICLE V

The United States of America and the Emperor of China cordially recognize the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage of the free migration and emigration of their citizens and subjects respectively from the one country to the other, for purposes of curiosity, of trade, or as permanent residents. The high contracting parties, therefore, join in re-probating any other than an entirely voluntary emigration for these purposes. They consequently agree to pass laws making it a penal offence for a citizen of the United States or Chinese subjects to take Chinese subjects either to the United States or to any other foreign country, or for a Chinese subject or citizen of the United States to take citizens of the United States to China or to any other foreign country, without their free and voluntary consent respectively.

#### ARTICLE VI

Citizens of the United States visiting or residing in China shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities or exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation, and, reciprocally, Chinese subjects visiting or residing in the United States shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities and exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation. But nothing herein contained shall be held to confer naturalization upon citizens of the United States in China, nor upon the subjects of China in the United States.  
([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Burlingame\\_Treaty](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Burlingame_Treaty))

These articles establish that, in order to fulfil the labor needs of mines and American railroad construction, Chinese laborers were not restricted from entering the United States and had the right to reside, but not conferred naturalization. Almost all overseas Chinese in the United States in the 19th century came from the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province. In the gold mines in California and Nevada, overseas Chinese

laborers were fundamental.

Gold was accidentally discovered in California and other newly acquired areas. The news soon shook the entire United States and the world. In those harsh times of social struggle and natural disasters, the legendary “Gold Mountain” gave people a glimmer of hope.

Foreign merchant ships also used various means to attract passengers and make profits. Through the Chinese brokers and merchants they hired, they issued a large number of posters, maps and pamphlets describing America's wealth and preferential treatment of workers in order to attract Chinese people.

The discovery of California gold in the mid-nineteenth century, the exaggeration of the American dream by American merchants, and the demonstration effect of Chinese gold diggers on their hometown compatriots, undoubtedly represented a huge temptation to the people in southern China. People in the Pearl River Delta region have crossed the ocean chasing the “golden dream”:

The Chinese were the first Asian group to immigrate in significant numbers to the United States. Although only 43 Chinese resided in the United States prior to 1850, the discovery of gold in California in 1848 initiated a dramatic and significant influx of Chinese immigrants. In the next three decades, over 225,000 Chinese immigrated to the United States. (Wong, 110)

The California Gold Rush in the late 1840s triggered the first climax of Chinese immigration to the United States. The first batch of Chinese who immigrated to the United States mainly came from the Guangdong Province, especially from the Taishan area. It is estimated that about 60% of the Chinese were from Taishan, and most of the remaining 40% were also from areas around Taishan, such as Xinhui, Kaiping, Enping, Nanhai, Panyu, Shunde, Guangzhou, Foshan, Dongguan, Zhongshan,

Baoan, Zhenhai, Hakka and Hong Kong:

Most Chinese immigrants who came to the United States in the years following the 1849 gold rush came as unattached male sojourners expecting to make their fortunes on Gold Mountain and then to return home to their ancestral villages as wealthy men. Often their families in China encouraged them to marry before setting off to the United States in hopes of reinforcing their attachment to their families and villages. Once married, their wives usually remained in China, becoming part of the husband's family, moving into his parents' home under the direction of the husband's mother, a situation that further discouraged their emigration to the United States to join their husbands. (Libby)

On January 24, 1848, a mill employee named James Marshall discovered gold nuggets near San Francisco, California. This discovery by Marshall became an important starting point for the Gold Rush. From a global perspective, this gold rush phenomenon was unprecedented.

In October 1776, the Spanish built a San Franciscan missionary station on the west coast of California, and early Spanish navigators called this area "San Francisco" (in honor of the founder of the Franciscan order). ), a port city in northern California, USA, located at the northern end of the peninsula between the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay, is the cultural and financial center of the western United States, and a city where overseas Chinese and Chinese Americans gather. Gold was discovered in San Francisco in 1848, triggering a worldwide gold rush. A large number of Chinese came in, and the Chinese called this place "Golden Mountain" (金山, jin shan) .

From Australia, Russia, North America to South Africa, the discovery of gold around the world in the 19th century sparked waves of population, material and financial flows. The ever-developing gold mining area is inundated with miners, merchants, bankers, construction workers, engineers, entrepreneurs, farmers and even priests

from all over the world. The non-Indigenous population of California, which was about 14,000 in 1848, soared to 100,000 by the end of 1849 and 300,000 by the end of 1853. Gold prospectors from Mexico, the Hawaiian Islands, Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand, southeastern China, and Western and Eastern Europe flocked to California.

Gold rush history is not just for white men. Among them, among the global gold diggers, more than 1/4 of the Chinese miners, in addition, women, locals and other ethnic minorities, together form the gold rush team. When the gold rush began to cool, many returned to their hometowns to live a more comfortable life, while others took root near the gold mining areas. In total there were about 25,000 Chinese immigrants. By 1860 the Chinese comprised from 12 to 23 percent of the population of various mining counties. (Kanazawa, 781)

This history is also related to the fate of Shanghai. In the 19th century, due to the discovery of gold mines in San Francisco, a lot of labor was needed. The ocean-going merchant ships that ran the route from San Francisco to Shanghai often abducted some Chinese people to work as laborers on the ship before leaving Shanghai. They sell. At that time, in order to find a livelihood, many Chinese people, through the arrangement of middlemen, signed contracts in the form of actual prostitution, and came to the United States in the form of a "credit system". Some Chinese were hired to act as middlemen, lobbying in various villages , to distribute the story of making a fortune.

They said that Westerners have ships that can bring people to Western countries. The middleman only takes money, a lot of money, and you can get rich on a boat. The middleman can pay the travel expenses, and you can work to pay off the debt. This kind of behavior is called shanghai in American slang. This insulting name is the epitome of semi-colonial and semi-feudal China. Since then, the word shanghai has become a verb in Western dictionaries, which means to make people unconscious and



plunder people to work on ships, or in American slang means to force others to do things (by force or other despicable means), shanghaier means abductors. In the eyes of Westerners, Shanghai in old China has also become a "trafficked city".

After gold was discovered here in 1848, Chinese immigrants flocked to the area, setting off a gold rush. In February 1848, the second month after the news of the discovery of gold in California, two Chinese men and a woman crossed the ocean from Canton to San Francisco, California, on the American Eagle. City, becoming the earliest Chinese immigrants to land and stayed in America.

In the next two years, waves of Chinese came one after another, and most of them immediately went to the gold mine Sutter's Mill to pan for gold, while a few Chinese who stayed in the city gathered on Dupont Street and Sacramento Street in San Francisco at that time as gold prospectors. Gradually formed the later "Chinatown". Many Chinese come here as "indentured laborers" to dig gold mines and build railways, to experience the hardships. Since then, a large number of Chinese workers have settled here.

The journey to San Francisco was dangerous. For 3 months in a row, they were thrown up and down by the wind and waves in the Pacific Ocean, crowded in the cargo hold, similar to the cargo, the first time they went to sea, everyone was seasick, and worse, they stayed below deck, like dozens of Like the African slaves who were trafficked years ago. The food was brought on board by themselves for 90 days, and there was no refrigerator at the time.

Many also had to bring their own water, which was kept in specially made barrels. Some captains serve hard biscuits and dried beans, which can be boiled into porridge, and the occasional piece of bacon. You may have brought a lot of meters with you before sailing. But infectious diseases are unstoppable, sometimes causing shipwrecks and fatalities. The crowded cabins also accelerated the spread of infectious diseases.

Between 1850 and 1860, dozens of ships were overloaded with disasters.

From 1849 to 1882, a total of 300,000 Chinese entered the United States, mostly concentrated in the west, which was the largest immigration wave in Chinese history. In the early days, most of them came to mine gold, but later, they were mainly engaged in road building. In 1850, the first Chinese arrived in California as cheap labor, and they immediately built homes and homes for the gold diggers here. In western gold mining areas such as California, Chinese laborers were known as the most important source of labor.

The Chinese hard laborers who first arrived in San Francisco, still wearing long gowns and braids, with gaunt faces, started their own struggles on the unfamiliar land on the west coast of the United States. They were transported directly from the Pearl River Delta to the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, secretly handed over to the local Association of Hometowns to take care of, and then headed to the gold mining area deep in the mountains.

They lived in deserted mountains and remote areas, sleeping in the open air. Whether they were mining in the early days, building roads or working on farms, they were always busy all day long, exhausted year after year, working hard day after day, year after year, and living a life of simple lifestyle. When had a little spare time, and because of language barriers and discrimination, they could only hang out with the Chinese around. Over time, Chinatowns, a relatively concentrated area of Chinese people, were formed in some American cities.

Some people take advantage of the momentum of the gold rush to go further inland, open up new mining areas and fields, and build new towns and settlements; some people disdain stability, and even continue to pan for gold across the ocean. Since 1851, the gold rush has spread to New South Wales and Victoria, Australia, and about 10,000 wealth seekers have left North America and started wandering around the

world.

Taishan is a mountainous area, and its dense population makes its agricultural products only capable of sustaining one third of the population every year. In order to survive, surplus laborers had to leave their hometowns and go to nearby big cities and ports. When they learned about the new opportunities overseas, the dream of making a fortune drove them to cross the ocean.

Relocation from the east to the west was extremely inconvenient due to long distance, vast and sparsely populated areas, and high mountain barriers. However, gold mining urgently needed a large number of laborers. Thus, instead of hiring whites on the east coast and transporting them from the Atlantic Ocean around the extreme Strait of Magellan in South America to California in the Pacific (this was the only shipping avenue), it was better for gold mine merchants to hire cheap laborers from the other side of the Pacific. It was less expensive and quicker to travel to San Francisco from Hong Kong than from Chicago (Wong, 111).

Thus, trafficking in Chinese laborers became a very profitable industry. Stimulated by huge profits, Western adventurers and commercial investment companies successively operated the Chinese labor trade.



## Picture 2 Chinese working in the U.S. for gold mining

Guangzhou was China's only trade port from 1757 to 1842, was as well as the center of personnel, trade, and information exchanges between China and the United States at that time. From 1784 to 1785, the successful maiden voyage of the American ship Queen of China to Guangzhou attracted businessmen from the east coast of the United States to come to China for business, and there was an upsurge in trade with China.

At the same time, the Pearl River Delta region was connected thanks to a dense river network and interlaced waterways of the Pearl River Delta. In this way, people in the Pearl River Delta region had more opportunities to come to cities to do business and work, increase their knowledge, and also find the necessary intermediary relationships to emigrate abroad. The links between the Pearl River Delta region and the United States provided important information for the local people to learn about the new world, especially California.

In 1862, the U.S. federal government passed a bill to build a transcontinental railway to promote economic exchanges and development between the east and west of the United States and accelerate the economic development of the west. The enterprise was jointly undertaken by Central Pacific Railroad and Union Pacific Railroad. The western section, undertaken by the Central Pacific Company, was particularly difficult due to the presence of steep mountains and desert plateaus, with complex terrain and harsh climate.

The project was originally to hire Irish immigrants as laborers, but the progress was very slow, and this led the building companies to turn to Chinese workers. Because the Chinese workers were hard-working, low-cost, and highly efficient, they were especially appreciated by railway companies and hired in large numbers. Central Pacific set up a special office in Guangzhou, which specialized in recruitment. At the height of the construction of this railway, Chinese accounted for 90% of the road

construction workers, about 9,000 people:

Chinese railroad workers on the the Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) were advanced credit by shippers, contractors and Chinese Six Companies who provided assistance to young workers in China because they possessed credible means of collecting migrant debt after Chinese workers arrived in America. Many young Chinese workers did not have the funds necessary to cross the Pacific Ocean. As a result, the institution of the Chinese Six Companies emerged to bridge the gap between high trans-Pacific passage fares and the low wealth of Chinese workers. Throughout much of the second half of the 19th century, this mode of financial inter-mediation advanced credit to transitory Asian workers who came to meet the needs of the developing American west. (Carson, 87)



Picture 3 Chinese are the main labor force in the construction of the western railroad in the United States

SOURCE: <https://www.workers.org/2021/03/55287/>

In February 1865, Chinese workers walked onto the railway construction site under the suspicion of everyone. At the beginning, the contempt for the Chinese workers was not only from the white workers, but even some leaders of the construction site

believed that the Chinese workers were physically weak and short, and were simply unable to participate in such hard work. In the end, the general contractor of the railway believes that the nation that can build the Great Wall can of course also build the railway.

In 1868, the project was extended to the Nevada—snow and frequent avalanches often blocked areas that were already open to traffic and made it impossible for trains to pass. To solve this problem, the Chinese workers built nearly 70 kilometers of snow walls along the railway in places prone to avalanches, completely avoiding the impact of snow.

In addition, thousands of feet above the river valley, they laid railroad tracks along the steep granite and precipitous shale, and if there was no place to stand on either side, the Chinese workers were suspended in baskets to work. In the final stage of the road construction competition with the company in the east section, the Chinese workers in the west section also set a world record of 16.15 kilometers of track laying in one day.

The significance of the Pacific Railway to the United States is no less than the significance of the Great Wall to China and human civilization. The nation who built the Great Wall has made great contributions and sacrifices to the economic development of the United States, and has laid the cornerstone of American economic progress.

The high-intensity, high-risk labor of Chinese workers is very disproportionate to the treatment they receive. At the celebration ceremony held for the completion of the railway, most of the Chinese workers who made great achievements were not invited to the scene, and the Chinese workers were not mentioned at all.

In addition to sweat and blood, the Chinese workers also gave their lives. It is no exaggeration to say that the Great Railway was paved by Chinese workers with their

lives. From the end of 1865 to the beginning of 1866, five months of snowstorms caused frequent avalanches, sometimes burying the entire camp's Chinese workers. A few months later, when the snow and ice melted, the bodies of the Chinese workers were found, their hands still clenching their tools.

In addition to the poor working environment, what is even more irritating is the discrimination against Chinese workers. They made great sacrifices and received less money than white workers. The railway company paid the white workers \$35 a month and provided room and board; the Chinese workers were paid only \$26 with no room and board.

Furthermore, all Chinese workers did not have personal insurance, and the company did not undertake any obligations to the workers' families. The only large-scale protest by Chinese workers in 1867 demanding equal treatment with white workers was also rejected by the company.

In the late nineteenth century, California was characterized by extensive farming. However, while there were acres of land, swamps and bushes, manpower was very scarce. Developing California's agriculture required a large amount of labor both on farmland and water conservancy construction.

Since the main purpose of recruiting Chinese in the early US companies was to develop the west, and most Chinese workers entered the country from west coast ports, almost all Chinese who entered the United States in the early days settled down in this area. In particular, a strong Chinese presence is registered in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Southern California around Los Angeles. Many Chinese immigrants also moved to the New York Metropolitan Area.

After the completion of the Pacific Railway in 1869, most of the Chinese railway workers returned to China, and some continued to stay in the western United States,

or moved south, north, and east, spreading to the United States to form a number of immigration points centered on Chinatown.

In 1882, the U.S. Congress formally passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, the only discriminatory act in U.S. history that targeted a specific ethnic group. The promulgation of this bill was only 13 years after the completion of the railway construction by Chinese workers.

The "Chinese Exclusion Act" lasted for 60 years in the United States, and it was not repealed by the "Magnuson Act" until 1943 through the continuous struggle of generations of Chinese. However, after the repeal of the Act, the status of the Chinese in the United States has not been significantly improved, and the achievements of the Chinese workers have not been taken seriously.



## 1.2 The reaction of the American society

From the middle of the nineteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century, the U.S. policy toward Chinese workers in the U.S. passed from welcoming to exclusionary. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, China and the United States were basically isolated. Before the arrival of a large number of Chinese workers, there was a small number of Chinese in the United States, most of whom being sophisticated businessmen.

The initially welcoming attitude towards the Chinese did not last long. As an increasing number Chinese immigrants entered the United States, discrimination and persecution of the Chinese began to appear. Some factors might have contributed to this shift. Both offered cheap labor, and a fierce competition began. This triggered racist behaviors, which soon resulted into anti-Chinese riots:

It did not take long before xenophobic and racist attitudes developed among the general population, prompting considerable institutional resistance to this Asian influx. The Chinese were accused of being “dangerous,” “deceitful and vicious,” “criminal,” “coward,” and “inferior from the mental and moral point of view. (Wong, 111)

In Chinatown, the narrow alleys stretched along the roadside, crowded with cheap wooden houses and shacks, where hundreds of Chinese slept on hard plank beds, and the crowding and sanitary conditions were not much better than the cabins of migrant ships. However, these new arrivals were basically indifferent to the environment, as long as they could make money. Most of the people who arrived first worked for white miners, mining and panning for gold. Digging for gold, they could keep half of it. The mining area abandoned by the white mine owners would be immediately occupied by the Chinese, who couldn't wait to find the placer gold from the

abandoned caves.

The Chinese in California soon proved to be very good gold miners. When they were in their hometown in Guangdong, they were familiar with digging ditches, building dams, and pumping water, which was the basic work of rice cultivation. When they came to the United States to pan for gold, they applied the experience of water control in their hometown to gold panning. It was said that after passing through the mining areas that the Chinese scoured, gold could no longer be found. Of course, this advantage undoubtedly increased the hostility of the local people to the Chinese.

Before the summer of 1849, the various ethnic groups in the western gold mines had been mixed, but the largest number were white Americans from the eastern, mid-west, and southern states. Racial prejudice was widespread among whites, and Native Americans were the earliest victims. After the Natives were driven away, it was the turn of the African Americans and the first foreigners to come to the west. At this time, Chileans, Mexicans and French were the first to bear the brunt.

White Americans did not face up to the contributions of Chinese and did not respect Chinese people's personalities, and believed that Chinese who worked hard and did not have high requirements for treatment formed competition for them, posed a threat to their employment, and caused their living standards to decline.

As a result, incidents of racism, attacks, and insults against the Chinese continued one after another, and anti Chinese sentiment actually formed an influential trend of thought. Since the 1880s, the U.S. government had not hesitated to use laws to restrict the entry of Chinese. In American society, it was not uncommon to obliterate and belittle the contributions of Chinese people in the United States.

As early as 1849, rioters attacked Chinese workers in gold mines; by the mid-1850s, some settlements began to prohibit Chinese miners from living there. In response to a

renewed wave of Chinese exclusion in San Francisco and elsewhere, overtaxed taxes were levied on remaining miners, Chinese laundromats, restaurants, and Chinese businesses in all walks of life. There were also attempts to deprive Chinese of various business licenses. In 1870, the city of San Francisco prohibited the employment of Chinese people in municipal works. In 1879, an amendment to the California Constitution prohibited all businesses from hiring Chinese.

A number of decrees were also passed against the Chinese: firecrackers and gongs and drums were prohibited; Chinese people were forced to shave their hair; and corpses were prohibited from being brought back to China for burial. The latter two were especially cruel and embarrassing for the Chinese. Because most Chinese planned to return to China in the future, they would be beheaded if they do not keep their braids, because long hair was the rule of the Qing court.

And they all believed that if they were not buried in the ground in their hometown after death, their souls would wander around, helpless and never at peace. Chinese immigrants were also accused of spreading leprosy and plague.

When more and more Europeans, Asians, and Americans joined the torrent of immigration to the United States, some Americans began to reject all immigrants. In particular, Chinese laborers became one of the main targets of rejection. Since they set foot on the American territory in the middle of the 19th century, American journalists, missionaries, diplomats, labor leaders, and politicians began to pay attention to them and wrote articles, reports or pamphlets about them. The works of missionaries in the 19th century portrayed Chinese Americans as infidels in need of salvation, while journalists used exotic terms to describe the incompatibility of the Chinese:

In a series of court decisions that influenced popular opinion and the media dating from 1878 onward and that coincided with the rise of labor unions that called for the end of “cheap coolie labor”, many Americans believed that the

Chinese were unsuited for American citizenship and participation in the American way of life. Chinese women were targeted because they would have numerous children and contribute to the growth of the culturally “alien and unassimilable” population in America; so the 1875 Page Law essentially prevented the immigration of Chinese women and created a “bachelor-like Chinese society” despite the fact that one-third to one-fourth of the men were married but living separately from their wives, who were in China. (Chung)

Chinese workers’ low labor prices, diligent quality, and thrifty habits to some extent impacted the lives of local laborers in the United States. With the completion of the Transcontinental Railway in 1869 and the economic depression that began in 1873, anti-Chinese sentiment in American society gradually increased, and anti-Chinese movements emerged one after another, and this sentiment existed not only among whites, but also among African-Americans, such as W. H. Hall who worried about the menace of Chinese labor. In 1869, he began a letter-writing campaign to alert blacks to the evils of Chinese immigration. Representing California and other Western states at the National Labor Convention of Colored Men held in December of that year at Washington D.C., he strongly denounced the Chinese as “fit subjects for that class who persistently adhere to the doctrine of inferiority of races.” Hall returned home after the convention adjourned, confident that he had properly represented the sentiments of Western blacks. (Shankman, 4-5)

However, economic factors are only one aspect of the United States’ anti-Chinese attitudes, as the triggers were also strongly political and ideological. In order to win popular support and votes, the politicians of the Democratic and Republican parties deliberately catered to the anti-Chinese sentiments in society and exaggerated them. The California Senate opposition to Chinese immigration rested on the argument that:

During their entire settlement in California, they have never adapted themselves to our habits, modes of dress, or our educational system, have

never learned the sanctity of an oath, never desired to become citizens, or to perform the duties of citizenship, never discovered the difference between right and wrong, never ceased the worship of their idol gods, or advanced a step beyond the musty traditions of their native hive. Impregnable to all the influences of our Anglo Saxon life, they remain the same stolid Asiatics that have floated on the rivers and slaved in the field of China for thirty centuries of time. (Wong, 112)

The early American government and some scholars believed that the United States was a society dominated by white Europeans, and that immigrants and minorities should accept the lifestyle and values of the mainstream society. From the standpoint of the majority, assimilation was the ideal solution to all ethnic problems. The *New York Times* (“Growth of the United States Through Emigration” in 1865) warned:

We have four millions of degraded negroes in the South. We have political passion and religious prejudice everywhere. The strain upon the constitution is about as great as it can bear. And if, in addition, to all the adverse elements we now have, there were to be a flood-tide of Chinese population—a population befouled with all the social vices, with no knowledge or appreciation of free institutions or constitutional liberty, with heathenish souls and heathenish propensities, whose character, and habits, and modes of thought are firmly fixed by the consolidating influence of ages upon ages—we should be prepared to bid farewell to republicanism and democracy. (Wong, 112)

For example, the Irish, in the Civil War, the Union Army's New York Infantry Brigade, which was formed by Irish recruits, launched a charge, and their enemy happened to be the newly recruited Irish Infantry Regiment of the Confederate Army. These Irish people from both the north and the south were immigrants who just arrived in the United States. They just endured the Irish famine in their hometown together as

migrant workers, and they had not yet obtained American citizenship.

While the Irish soldiers on both sides wondered why they had to fight against their Irish brothers, the Irish immigrant soldiers of the Union Army believed that they were liberating the enslaved black slaves in the south, while the Irish immigrant soldiers of the Union Army were resisting the Northern tyranny that trampled on liberty and the constitution.

California Rep. senate Horace Page had the answer. He compared the Chinese with the Irish. Among the tens of thousands of Chinese in the United States, which one would be willing to go to war for the US? What Horace Page was saying was that the Irish were willing to fight for American values, so they were an assimilable group, while the Chinese didn't serve America in the civil war, so they were an inalienable group.

As Oregon Senator Lafayette Grover prejudiced more than a hundred years ago, the Chinese Empire had a population of 400 million people, making up one-third of the world's population. The people of China would swarm like locusts. Then Chinatown would be full in America, and Americans would find that all American cities had communities that were not integrated with mainstream ethnic groups and had their own ecology.

In the late 19th century, American society's attitude towards Chinese people was twofold. On the one hand, a hostile view, mainly voiced by some politicians, lawyers, and labor leaders, such as M.B. Starr, Willard B. Farwell, James A. Whitney. They wrote books about China and Chinese Americans. They believed that the Chinese could only be coolies and contract slaves, as they were alien, humble, and depraved. The Chinese worshiped the dead and did not believe in Christ. They were believed to have no moral training, despise American laws and maintain Chinese customs, which were considered dangerous for American society. They refused to bring their wives

and children to the United States and did not want to become American citizens.

Chinese and European Americans were described as too different, impossible to assimilate. The existence of Chinese was said to be a threat to the identity and welfare of white people. Therefore, they had to be excluded. Chinese immigrants gathered in Chinatowns, with the guild hall (huiguan/会馆) as the center, to distinguish them from white society:

- (1) Infused with a sense of native-place (xiangtu) sentiment, such mobility gave rise to huiguan
- (2) a unique type of native-place organization in Chinese society
- (3) Huiguan played a central role in the sojourning experience of immigrants within China and overseas. (Zou)

During the first 20 years after the completion of the Pacific Railroad in 1869, Chinese laborers spread out and participated in the construction, maintenance and restoration of at least 71 railroads. Before that, it was known that Chinese workers had participated in many railway constructions in the West, Northwest and Southwest. Chinese workers also left traces on the railways in the South, Midwest and even the northeast.

The Pacific Railroad, completed in May 1869, was seen as one of the beginning symbols of America's economic recovery after the Civil War. It was the first east-west railroad in the United States, greatly shortening the freight time between east and west, and promoting economic development. In this feat, more than 10,000 Chinese workers contributed greatly, accounting for about 90% of the labor force of the Central Pacific Railway Company (that is, the company that built the western section of the Pacific Railway).

Chinese workers are discriminated against and bullied, and violence against them was

constant and sometimes fatal. This was similar to the later history of a large number of Chinese who threw themselves into World War II for the United States under severe anti-Chinese sentiment.

While being hostile to the whites, the talent and perseverance of the Chinese workers in railway construction were obvious to all. Because the Pacific Railroad passed through a large number of mountainous sections, the construction conditions were extremely difficult and extremely dangerous, and white laborers more often went on strike, but after the Central Pacific Railway Company hired Chinese with a try-out mentality, the originally slow construction was immediately improved.

The Chinese Pacific Railroad workers also largely changed the way some Americans viewed Chinese, or at least changed their attitudes toward hiring. When Union Pacific participated in the construction of the Pacific Railway, it did not employ Chinese workers like the cooperative company did, but it also hired more than 200 Chinese in later projects to do the repairs of railroad tracks and coal mining.

On the other hand, a more positive attitude was especially expressed by missionaries and diplomats who had served in China, such as Pastor William Speer, Pastor Otis Gibson, and George F. Seward, the former Minister to China; white American missionaries had been active in China at least as early as the 1830s in Guangdong Province. (Marcus and Chen, 383) They sympathized with and approved of Chinese immigrants, and believed that Chinese had good qualities such as diligence, thrift, and intelligence, and were able to understand and accept the American democratic system and religious beliefs.

While working hard, the Chinese workers also maintained extremely frugal and simple habits in their lives. The Chinese workers would get up before dawn every day and work until sunset, six days a week. Most of these Chinese workers formed a living group of twelve to twenty people, and each group employed its own cook. The



most important assets that belonged to the living group were usually just various food containers.

The Chinese workers had very low requirements for living conditions. In order to reduce costs, they would build a simple hut with wood next to the stream. As for food, they only needed a bowl of rice and a cup of unsweetened tea. In this way, they could save a lot of money. An ordinary Chinese worker earned about \$30 to \$35 a month, and could often save more than \$20 in savings and send it back to his hometown in China. The original "hometown of overseas Chinese" (侨乡, qiao xiang) in the coastal areas of Guangdong and Fujian was established little by little with such money.

In addition to food containers, Chinese workers also had objects such as oil lamps, incense, cigarettes, wine bottles, dice and so on. This allows us to imagine that many aspects of their life in the United States were like an extension of their hometown: steaming a bowl of rice and passing the hard work hours; after get off work, incense and worshipping ancestors; lighting oil lamps at night, smoking a cigarette and chatted with fellow teammates for a while; Sunday was a free day, they washed clothes, and played a few games with dice. The Chinese workers transplanted this simple way of life from their hometown to the other side of the ocean.

Although the Chinese workers were hard-working and frugal, the racial discrimination and segregation intensified. Perhaps it was the low demands on wages and living conditions of Chinese workers and their silent and simple dispositions that led to prejudice and exclusion from whites:

employers desired low-wage labor, perhaps opposing exclusion because the Chinese were inexpensive, highly productive workers and their presence increased company profits and reduced the bargaining power of native workers. Some evidence suggests that exclusion was given impetus both by

depressed labor market conditions in the late 1870s and by an increased tendency for Chinese to compete directly with white-owned firms. (Kanazawa, 780)

Since most Chinese workers did not speak English and did not really understand American culture, almost two-thirds of Chinese workers in the 1860s gave themselves the same, simplest English name: John. When white laborers and railway engineers encountered groups of "Johns" and couldn't distinguish their Chinese names, the strongly racially discriminatory title of "Chinaman John" became a collective term for Chinese railway workers. A phrase in English, "Chinaman's chance", also originates from this period, and is used to express "no chance".

During this period, "John Chinaman" (John Chinaman) appeared in American newspapers and picture albums in disdain, and its image was usually the image of Chinese with long braids. Later, "John Confucius" appeared in the appearance of an official, and finally the high-IQ villain "Dr. Fu Manchu", which was common in European and American literature, film and television and animation works in the first half of the 20th century, is evil, treacherous, secretly manipulating criminal organizations, intending to subvert the Western world. In fact, until now, the "Chinese narrative" in Europe and the United States still has the shadow of "China guy", secretly projecting the anti-Chinese sentiment of the 19th century.

This kind of discrimination directly caused Chinese workers to be segregated and treated differently. Each camp along the railway was divided into two parts, one inhabited by whites and the other inhabited by Chinese. The former had all kinds of wooden houses, including churches, canteens and studios, as well as stables, special staff dormitories and so on. The Chinese part was a lot of simple one-person huts, so low that adults couldn't even stand. The place where they ate was a rudimentary table, and the Chinese workers couldn't stretch their legs when they ate.

It could be said that the railway company took advantage of the simple living conditions of the Chinese workers and deliberately lowered their living standards. The white laborers had specialized chefs to cook them steaks, while the food of the Chinese laborers was often low-grade meat, even leftovers from white workers...

The low wages of Chinese workers were the most hated by white workers. Chinese workers earned just over \$30 a month, roughly half what the railroad company paid white laborers. As the entry of the Chinese lowered the salary standard, the salary of the white people also dropped by more than two-thirds compared with the initial stage of the construction of the railway. This phenomenon occurred in various industries in the western United States. White people felt that the Chinese workers caused their wage crisis.

Chinese workers were not always content to be discriminated against. The hard work and low wages of the Chinese workers led to a lot of brutal treatment and unfair legislation, but the Chinese workers were still united. On June 25, 1867, the Chinese workers launched a general strike. In order to strive for wages and living conditions similar to those of white laborers, they demanded a monthly wage increase from \$34 at the time to \$40, and a reduction in daily working hours from 11 hours to 10 hours.

The seemingly loose group of Chinese workers showed amazing unity in this general strike: countless camps along the railway line for more than ten kilometers acted at the same time, with tens of thousands of people.

Calling it a movement, it was actually more like a silent protest by the Chinese workers—they marched quietly around the major camps for several days. The peaceful protests did not pose the slightest threat to the Central Pacific Railroad. They cut off food and other supplies to the Chinese workers a few days after the strike, split some of the Chinese workers who were not determined from within, and even threatened to replace the Chinese workers with newly liberated African Americans.

Under the repression, the general strike quickly failed. But at least this solidarity strike made white laborers and capitalists realize that Chinese workers also had the power to fight for their rights. In the following period of time, the treatment of Chinese workers was somewhat improved.

Some activists criticized the unwarranted insults and discrimination, and condemned the violence against Chinese people. They defended Chinese immigrants and believed that Chinese vices such as drug abuse and gambling were no more harmful than white vices. In their view, Chinese citizenship did not pose a threat to U.S. security, and the U.S. opposition to Chinese immigrants deviated from the very concept of advanced democracy. The system could absorb and assimilate immigrants of different nationalities in a melting pot, and its long-term economic prosperity depended on the continuous inflow of immigrants:

The history of the Chinese in the United States over the past 150 years is characterized by episodes of prejudice and discrimination; of racism, xenophobia, and exclusion; and, more recently, of contrasting and varying degrees of suspicion, tolerance, or acceptance. (Wong, 110)

In essence, the core issue was the possibility to assimilate the Chinese into the American society dominated by European Americans, and whether Chinese immigration had to be banned. In the late 19th century, given the growing anti-Chinese atmosphere that permeated the entire American society, the idea that the Chinese could not be assimilated became prevalent. By contrast, virulent racist sentiments that socially and physically segregated and isolated Chinese laborers significantly diminished the possibility of social and political interaction with whites. (Marcus and Chen, 371)

### 1.3 The beginning of the conflict

In 1848, when a defeated Mexico ceded California to the United States, news of the gold discovery made headlines in March of that year, as well as to Mexico, South America and the ports of China that were forced to open after the Opium War. American shipping companies began to appear in Hong Kong and Guangzhou, and California was portrayed as a place to live and get rich, with no insurgents, no Manchurians, and no British warships.

By the time the first Chinese miners arrived in California, the high mountains of the Sierra Nevada were already crowded with South Americans, Europeans and Americans coming for gold, and the seeds of conflict were planted. The local government and media did not have a good impression of the Chinese from the beginning. They believed that China, with its huge population, sent its dregs to the West Coast, and it was their responsibility to drive out this inferior people with strange braids:

In 1849 native miners in Tuolumne County passed a resolution prohibiting Chinese miners from working claims. In the early 1850s, Chinese miners were the targets of vigorous anti-Chinese sentiment in Nevada County. In 1859 the sheriff of Shasta County requested assistance from the governor to put down an insurrection of locals attempting to drive Chinese out of the county. Indeed, local attempts to exclude Chinese miners were made in various mining districts throughout the state, including Agua Fria, Grass Valley, Horsetown, Oregon Gulch, Middletown, Mormon Bar, Horse Shoe Bar, Columbia, Deer Creek, Rough and Ready, Wood's Creek, Foster's Bar, and Yuba River Camp. (Kanazawa, 783)

The less gold was mined, the more the conflict intensified. After sporadic riots, the

California legislature began requiring immigrant boat owners to pay a \$500 tax for each Chinese immigrant, while a foreign miners' tax, initially instituted in 1850 when all foreign-born miners were required to pay \$20 per month to obtain a license to mine for gold.' The stated aim of this tax was to exert greater control over foreign miners while raising badly needed revenues for the depleted state treasury. (Kanazawa, 784)

Taxes of all kinds were not only a means of exploitation and expulsion, but also a legitimate proof of violence. Tying Chinese pigtailed together was already a relatively friendly entertainment, and local whites often impersonated tax officials to make a fortune and used the torture of Chinese mine workers as a talk in their spare time.

While the conflict exploded at the end of the century, discrimination against Chinese was not a new phenomenon in itself. Thus, it might be worth taking a step back to focus on some crucial moments. In the early years of the gold rush, Chinese immigrant shared a feeling of nostalgia for their homeland, and did not mean to settle in the United States permanently:

It is commonly believed that, unlike other immigrants, most of the Chinese came to California, or “Gold Mountain” as it was called, as sojourners, expecting to work for a time, accumulate their fortune, and then return home to China to live life at a higher socioeconomic position than when they left. Hence, their orientation toward the United States was not as immigrants but as “birds of passage,” here today and gone tomorrow. (Wong, 111)

The Chinese, especially immigrants from Guangdong, were mostly shorter and slimmer than the average white male. Since gold mining is a physical task, at first locals and gold prospectors from Europe or South America did not regard them as a threat. However, as the shallow gold gradually dried up, the efficiency of Chinese people's hard work and perseverance became apparent.

They bought a large number of gold rush land leases that others gave up, and they were able to continue mining the sands. Since the Chinese were more efficient, they gradually gained the upper hand in the gold rush. The Americans claimed that the Chinese had robbed American wealth and began to persecute Chinese workers. In 1849, the first anti-Chinese riot occurred in the United States.

However, this early rejection of Chinese mine workers in the United States was only a part of the entire trend of xenophobia on the west coast of the United States. This trend manifested itself in scattered, unorganized, and regional expulsions, looting, and killings.

As gold diggers, Chinese often fought with Native Indians. There was a deep conflict between the two from the very beginning. The Indians could not resist the supremacy of the white people, but when they saw the Chinese, they felt that the Chinese were peaceful and could be bullied, so some small-scale conflicts often broke out between the two groups. During the conflict, the Chinese held wooden swords and the Indians held spears, and the two sides lined up to fight. When the two sides began to fight, the news would spread immediately, this kind of thing was often regarded as a kind of holiday entertainment, attracting many people to watch. Authorities also didn't want to interfere, and often sat on the sidelines.

At that time, the Chinese were different from Westerners because of their language, culture, customs, and clothing, and they were not accustomed to dealing with other ethnic groups in their daily lives. When the Transcontinental Railway was completed, many Chinese who remained in the United States were scattered in the western United States and had to switch to other industries. Those with small savings would open restaurants, laundries, groceries stores, herbal stores and other small activities. They could only hide in Chinatown and organize themselves:

Extending their migration to California in the mid-nineteenth century, ethnic Chinese in San Francisco brought the huiguan structure with them and formed many native-place associations to serve their needs in a foreign land. The San Francisco huiguan assumed the role in mutual aid and self-protection; they guided Chinese immigrants' interactions with the larger society in California in response to the socioeconomic, cultural, and political needs of the Chinese migrant to survive in a more estranged and discriminatory social environment. Crucial to the inquiries into the life experiences of the nineteenth-century ethnic Chinese in California, the San Francisco huiguan certainly deserve more comprehensive study. (Zou)

Moreover, in 1873, an economic crisis broke out in the United States. There were 1,500 unemployed workers in San Francisco, and 12,000 Chinese who were fired by railway companies also entered the city. It was precisely during this difficult time that Chinese immigration also reached the climax of the century. This exacerbated the competition for jobs between Chinese and white people. Since the beginning of this decade, small-scale both unorganized and organized anti-Chinese activities had begun to spread to cities and towns, and even nationwide.

In order to divert white people's anger and alleviate class contradictions, politicians blamed white unemployment and economic crisis on Chinese immigrants, who became the scapegoat for the crisis:

Racist legislation was passed in an attempt to restrict or exclude the Chinese from immigrating to the United States. In 1852, California imposed a \$50 head tax on each Chinese passenger who arrived by ship. This legislation was enforced for 20 years before it was declared unconstitutional. In 1855, a capitation tax of \$50 was required of all passengers who were aliens ineligible for citizenship, but this was declared unconstitutional 2 years later. In 1858, the California legislature passed an act that sought the prevention of



further immigration of Chinese to the state. In his inaugural address of 1862, California Governor Leland Stanford pledged that “the settlement among us of an inferior race [meaning the Chinese] is to be discouraged”. (Wong, 112)

The anti-Chinese sentiment that had begun in California soon spread to Washington. American politicians openly stepped onto the frontier of anti-China for their own interests. The fundamental cause of the economic crisis lied in the capitalist system itself, and the economic development of the United States at that time could not digest so much labor force at that time.



Picture 4 Chinese are portrayed as yellow peril

As mentioned, since the early days, most Chinese immigrants only aimed to earn money in the United States, and then return home. Therefore, it was difficult for them to integrate into mainstream American society, as they had never meant to do so:

These ties to home were exacerbated by anti-Chinese racial discrimination that resulted in the enactment of laws by the state of California and, after California's attempts to restrict immigration were ruled unconstitutional, by the United States' federal government, which were intended to discourage or prohibit Chinese immigration. The Page Law prohibited the importation of women from China, Japan, or any other Asian country for the purposes of prostitution. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers, including their wives. That law remained in force until December 17, 1943. The effect of these laws was to freeze the percentage of Chinese women in the United States at an abnormally low level and to perpetuate the bachelor society of Chinese men in America. (Libby)

The early Chinese American society was a bachelor society dominated by adult men. The United States formulated and implemented anti-Chinese laws and this dramatically reduced the number of Chinese women emigrating to the United States. Under such circumstances, Chinese Americans were obliged to remit money to the family to support their parents, wives and children, while the wives remained at home to take care of their in-laws and raise their children.

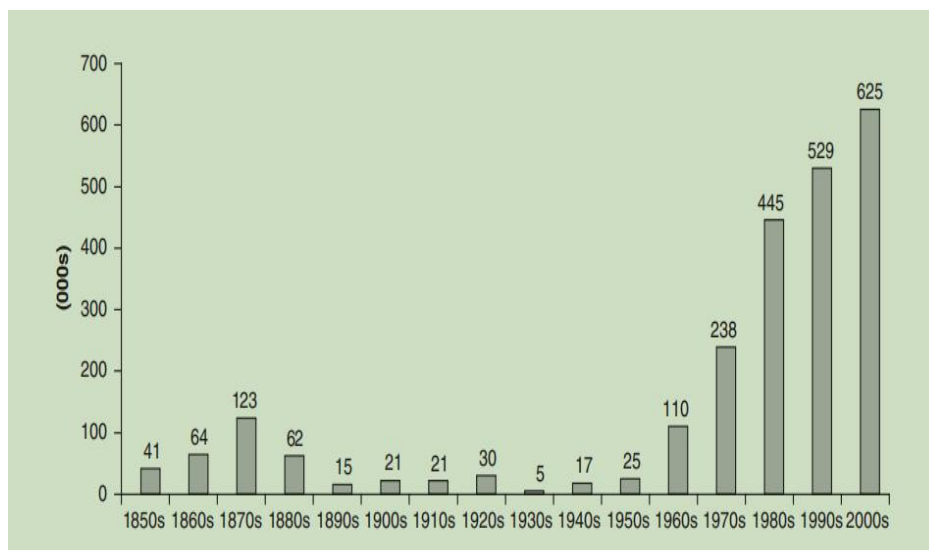
The Chinese Exclusion Act was born under this social background. In fact, its introduction caused the wave of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. to hit a trough, and it also affected the lives of the Chinese émigrés. As a federal bill, it effectively legalized discrimination against Chinese in the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Act made the living conditions of Chinese in the United States far from ideal:

In the late nineteenth century, negative stereotypes of the Chinese were based on European pseudo-scientific theories supporting the racial superiority of Anglo-Saxons and the inferiority of the Chinese. The strange dress, customs, non-Christian beliefs, and activities of the Chinese spurred the anti-Chinese movements, which were often violent. The growth of the popular media and

the aspirations of politicians who could unify diverse groups against the Chinese led to the popular clamor to take legislative action. (Chung)

The state government of California and its local authorities repeatedly enacted and implemented laws that discriminated against and exclude overseas Chinese, while allowing the series of anti-Chinese atrocities that occurred during this period. Local legislative exclusion had a twofold nature: first, it extended laws originally aimed at other non-white groups to the Chinese; second, it formulated discriminatory laws specifically targeting the Chinese. From the 1860s to the 1880s, many western states (e.g., Oregon and Washington) emulated California, and successively passed laws that discriminated against and excluded Chinese, and many appalling Chinese anti-Chinese atrocities took place.

Although these laws were later declared to violate the U.S. Constitution and were repealed, their implementation still caused serious material losses and mental damage to the majority of overseas Chinese, not to mention the anti-Chinese riots in various places.



Picture 5 Chinese Immigrant Arrivals by Decade

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2003

## Chapter 2

### The Chinese Exclusion Act

#### 2.1 Anti-Chinese riots

Before the summer of 1849, the peoples of the gold mines of the Western region were always mixed, but the greatest numbers were white Americans. Racial relationships were not quite good and Chinese workers became one of the main objects of exclusion. As Professor Chang explains,

Racial and ethnic tensions simmer just below the surface in virtually all multi-ethnic societies, but it usually takes an economic crisis to blow off the lid of civility and allow deep-seated hatred to degenerate into violence. When our livelihoods are at stake, when we are desperate, when families are uncertain where their next meal is coming from, when adults fear for the futures of their children, it is natural to ask why fortune has treated us so cruelly.

And in these moments, we are all vulnerable to explanations that easily assign blame to some outside group. Perhaps it goes back to our primitive origins, when in threatening times our personal safety was best assured by sticking with our own tribe. But for whatever reasons, a general rule of history seems to be that the more people feel insecure about their own well-being, the more likely they will join with those of close affinity in striking out at some alien group. (Chang, 119)

The entire culture of Chinese migrants was the target of anti-Chinese sentiments. The eating habits of Chinese workers were different from those of whites. They hated the

taste of Chinese food, as well as the language (Cantonese) and living habits of Chinese workers. As a consequence, there were often incidents of collective humiliation, robbery and massacre of Chinese workers by Whites in the western United States.

In the 1850s, Chinese immigrants poured into the United States. The Californian government began to take legislative action against Chinese workers. As early as 1850, the California Congress passed a bill to tax each foreign miner \$20 per month, which forced the exodus of miners from Mexico and other South American countries, so Chinese workers became the largest group of foreign miners. In 1852, for example, it enacted the Foreign Worker License Tax Act, which imposed a monthly tax of \$3 per foreign miner. In fact, the Act was aimed at Chinese workers.

The attitude of the United States in the 1860s to welcome Chinese laborers and Chinese immigrants to support the development of the West gradually changed to "exclusion of Chinese". Because with the end of the Civil War, a large number of soldiers were disarmed and returned to their home, immigrating from the eastern part of the United States to the western part of the United States. These immigrants could not find jobs, so they angered the Chinese immigrants and felt that the Chinese workers took their jobs.

At this time, Chinese immigrants came to the United States, and they encountered extreme hostility from white laborers as soon as they landed. At this time, white laborers may have just begun to have a sense of rights protection, and they wanted to fight for various rights such as shortening working hours and increasing wages, but unexpectedly, waves of Chinese people came one after another. Most of these Chinese people had pigtailed, looked strange, were short in stature and couldn't speak the language, but they did their jobs without any hesitation. No matter how hard or tiring they were, they were willing to do it.

To the white people, these Chinese immigrants were completely like aliens. More and more white laborers became angry with these innocent Chinese, so that racial violence continued. At that time, some white people thought that Chinese people ate mice, and some white people even thought that Chinese people would not die.

These unjustified targeting and the escalating violence forced the Chinese to abandon mining area to pursue other industries:

Western states such as California proposed anti-Chinese legislation on a statewide scale, but the national government often refused to pass similar laws due to the 1868 Burlingame-Seward Treaty, which prevented American influence from dominating China's internal affairs. It also simplified the immigration process in both countries. A grand success for American commerce and industry, the treaty initially brought a steady influx of Chinese workers and offered economic stability. (Stanton)

By the 1860s, the anti-Chinese riots had subsided somewhat, as the Chinese were taking on the specific task of building the Transcontinental Railway, making up for the serious shortage of labor in railway construction. Thanks to the new railway, opened to traffic in 1869, the journey from the east to the west of the United States, which originally took 6 months, was reduced to 6 days. Nonetheless, the railway did not seem to bring the expected advantages:

Worse, the transcontinental railroad did not bring the prosperity that many in California had hoped it would. While it did open eastern markets to western manufactured goods and some agricultural products, it also allowed shipment of inexpensive eastern products into California, which hurt local industries. The new factories in San Francisco were no match for the older, more established factories on the East Coast, and those who had traveled west to escape eastern sweatshops and mill towns, to seize new opportunities and

build new lives, found instead mass unemployment and ruthless competition for jobs. Many of the competitors for these jobs were Chinese, and by the end of 1870 there were one Chinese and two whites for every job in San Francisco. (Chang, 120)

These new white immigrants had a hard time in California, and it was difficult to find a job. They quickly pointed the finger at Chinese immigrants, believing that Chinese workers were taking their jobs and driving wages down. Thus, violent incidents against Chinese people happened one after another, and the exclusion of Chinese people gradually became the mainstream trend:

As would be expected, many California businessmen, eager to cut costs in hard times, hired the Chinese because they were usually willing to work longer hours for less than half the pay. Further exacerbating racial tensions, some businessmen also used the Chinese as strikebreakers, just as had been done on the East Coast. In 1870, a traveler reported, “In the factories of San Francisco they had none but Irish, paying them three dollars a day in gold. They struck, and demanded four dollars. Immediately their places, numbering three hundred, were supplied by Chinamen at one dollar a day.” (Chang, 120)

The American labor movement was in full swing, and labor groups took to the streets to strike and demonstrate in order to resist capitalist exploitation and improve working conditions. The solution for the capitalists was to hire Chinese workers with low wages and use them to disrupt the strikes organized by the trade unions, which drove a wedge between workers and alienated the Chinese from the rest of the working community.

As an extension of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, although not explicitly mentioning the Chinese, the Civil Rights Act of 1870 did improve their situation. Based on this

bill, the federal government repealed some discriminatory taxes against Chinese people in California.

This improvement was not bound to last for long. In fact, with the economic crisis of the early 1870s, small-scale and unorganized anti-Chinese activities in gold mines began to spread into cities and towns, and organized, large-scale and even nationwide anti-Chinese sentiment began:

In the 1870s, when America slid into a nationwide depression, the Chinese became that scapegoat, especially in regions where they clustered in the greatest numbers. During an earlier era of prosperity, some Chinese might have been lulled into a false feeling of security when they moved into white neighborhoods or signed contracts with white businessmen. But when the prosperity vanished, the Chinese had to face just how resented, even loathed, they were by their white neighbors and competitors. (Chang, 119)

On October 28, 1880, a newspaper reported that there was public discussions about driving the Chinese out of Denver. On October 30, 1880, a group of Democratic supporters organized a street march, many holding anti-Chinese slogans. On October 31, 1880, two Chinese people and some white people started to quarrel, and this small matter quickly became big, causing an anti-Chinese riot. A mob of about 3,000 burned down most of the buildings in Chinatown and also killed Lu Yang, who worked at the Sing Lee Laundry. This Chinatown was destroyed. Denver's Chinese population was estimated at 238-450 at the time:

By two o'clock a crowd of approximately three thousand people gathered at the scene of the fight in Denver's Chinatown at Blake and Wazee Streets, between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets. The milling mob, composed of the alleged illegal voters, Irishmen, and some Negroes, called for the death of the Chinese and shouted: "Garfield's a Chinaman," and "Hurrah for



Hancock." (Wortman, 280)

After the riots, the Chinese formed a smaller Chinatown. At the beginning of the 20th century, Denver's Chinese population grew to about 3,000, but the constant intimidation of the Americans made the Chinese leave, and in 1930 the Chinese population dropped to 160.

In addition to discriminatory legislative targeting, Chinese people are also subjected to unprovoked hostility and insults from white people on a daily basis. Moreover, whites were responsible for lynching and riots against the Chinese:

Large numbers of whites, seeing their livelihoods threatened by Chinese competition, began to feel as if the Chinese were somehow part of a giant, secret conspiracy to undercut the American working man. They complained, with some basis in fact, that the Chinese worked for less money, rarely spent what they had, and tended to keep their capital within the community, shopping at Chinese groceries and importing their food from China. They also believed that the Chinese who sent part of their money home to China were draining the country of its currency, its very lifeblood, while they ignored the larger contributions made by these Chinese in America. Anti-Chinese clubs soon flourished throughout California, pressuring officials in San Francisco to pass a series of municipal ordinances against Chinese residents, designed to drive them out of the city. (Chang, 122)

In 1871, over 500 mobsters attacked and looted Los Angeles Chinatown, and about 20 Chinese were lynched due to the manslaughter of a white man in a fight between two Chinese gangs. In the Rock Springs Massacre in Wyoming in 1885, white miners massacred 28 Chinese miners and injured 15 others. There, "The end of the silver boom", Chang reports,

had created a labor excess in the area, and white miners, unable to compete with the low wages the Chinese accepted, conspired to drive out their competition. Arming themselves with knives, clubs, hatchets, and guns, they headed for the local Chinatown, robbing and shooting the Chinese they met along the way. Once they reached Chinatown, they ordered the residents to leave within one hour. The Chinese quickly packed their belongings, but the white mob grew impatient and began torching shacks, shooting many of those who ran out to escape the fire and smoke. Some of the residents were forced back into the inferno, where they burned to death. Those who managed to escape hid in the mountains, where, exhausted from lack of sleep and food, some died from exposure or were eaten by wolves. Hundreds of stragglers were rescued by passing trains. [...] local authorities, unable to quell the riot, called in federal troops to protect the Chinese. (Chang, 134)

The Chinese Los Angelenos who were killed were not nameless. The Los Angeles Daily News printed a record of those whose names were known. There is Chee Long Tong. He was reputed to be a doctor. He was shot through the head and hanged. There is Wa Sin Quai, shot in the abdomen and legs. There is Chang Wan, resident at Doctor Tong's house. He was hanged. There was Long Quai, hanged. There was Joung Burrow who was shot through the head and left wrist. Another with no name, but was guessed later to be Won Yu Tuk, hanged, was a cigar manufacturer in life. Wong Chin – hanged, and three cartridges were found in his pocket. There was Tong Wan who was shot, stabbed, and hanged and there was Ah Loo, hanged. Wan Foo was hanged. Day Kee was hanged. Ah Was was hanged. Ah Cut, shot in the abdomen and extremities. He was a liquor manufacturer. There was Lo Hey, hanged; Ah Wen, hanged; and Wing Chee, hanged. There was Fun Yu who was shot in the head and died October 27. (Jew, 122-123)



Picture 6 The Rock Springs Massacre

Source: History.com

<https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/rock-springs-massacre-wyoming>

From the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, such attacks and deportations against Chinese people included occasional acts of the people and organized actions led by the government. There were hundreds of incidents throughout the western states of the United States.

The reason why the white people's hatred and rejection of the Chinese were becoming more and more rampant is also related to the non-resistance of the Chinese. When white hooligans beat Chinese arbitrarily on the street, the Chinese passing by generally do not help the Chinese. There have been several vicious incidents of white hooligans going to Chinatown to make trouble in San Francisco, and the "Los Angeles Chinese Massacre" in Chinatown has also occurred in Los Angeles.

On October 24, 1871, Chinese in Los Angeles fell victim to mob violence after a gang war. The incident is believed to have started when two Chinese gangs fought over a Chinese woman. A white police officer who heard gunfire in Chinatown approached

the scene to investigate. A shot was fired at him, and the wounded and bleeding officer cried out for help. A white man rushed out to help him, and he was soon killed in the crossfire. By this time, hundreds of angry thugs had gathered, eager for revenge against the entire Chinese community. The thugs were brutal, and the Chinese did not unite to resist:

With howls of “Hang them! Hang them!” the mob dragged innocent Chinese residents from their houses, gunned them down, lynched them in the streets. They looted houses in search of gold, cut holes in buildings at random and fired their pistols inside. As many as two dozen Chinese may have been murdered. A highly respected Chinese doctor, who begged in both English and Spanish for his life, ended up dangling from a noose, his money stolen and one of his fingers cut off by a mob impatient to steal the rings he wore. The rioters also seized a young boy, whose fate was described by journalist P. S. Dorney: “The little fellow was not above twelve years of age. He had been a month in the country and knew not a word of English. He seemed paralyzed by fear—his eyes were fixed and staring, his face blue, blanched and idiotic. He was hanged.” (Chang, 123-124)



Picture 7 Chinese immigrants who were murdered during the massacre

Faced with hostility and discrimination from whites, some Chinese choose to return to China or divert to Australia or Canada to continue digging for gold, while others switched to work in the service industry. Mark Twain described the situation of discrimination against Chinese in the United States in this way:

a Chinaman had no rights that any man was bound to respect; that he had no sorrows that any man was bound to pity, that neither his life nor his liberty was worth the purchase of a penny when a white man needed a scapegoat; that ... nobody befriended them, nobody spared them suffering when it was convenient to inflict it; everybody, individuals, communities, the majesty of the State itself, joined in hating, abusing, and persecuting these humble strangers. (Twain, 80)

## 2.2 The introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act

White people felt that Chinese earned dollars, but didn't spend it in this country, instead they sent money to family in China, which was the culprit of the economic recession. Various workers' unions were born during this period, but their enemies were not the capitalists, but the Chinese.

In California, unemployed whites were calling for companies to hire only whites and threatening to eliminate companies that provide jobs to Chinese migrants, while setting fire to local Chinese neighborhoods. More absurd taxes and bills were being enacted all over California through democratic process.

Politicians found that if they wanted to get the votes of the majority of white workers, they must oppose the Chinese, so that all legislation against the Chinese could be passed as soon as possible. Some inflammatory xenophobic theories often gave politicians an electoral victory.

On May 6, 1882, President Chester A. Arthur signed the Chinese Exclusion Act. This was the first immigration law in U.S. history to target a specific ethnic group. The Act prohibited Chinese workers and their relatives from entering the country, prohibited Chinese nationals from becoming U.S. citizens, and prohibited Chinese who have returned to visit relatives from returning to the United States. At the same time, it was stipulated that only businessmen and government officials who held English-language documents of the Chinese government could enter the United States, and Chinese who entered the country illegally would be deported after the promulgation of the Act.

Two years later, Congress passed amendments to apply the Chinese Exclusion Act to all Chinese, even if they had acquired U.S. citizenship. In the worst assumptions of Chinese Americans, they did not expect such a situation. The Chinese Exclusion Act gave the green light to the violent and murderous riots that followed. Although many

Chinese businessmen in the United States were closely monitored by the government. Chinese companies must report the number of "company partners" twice a year to prevent Chinese workers from entering the country pretending to be "businessmen".

In addition to closing the door on new immigrants, the Chinese Exclusion Act also had a serious impact on Chinese in the United States. As a federal act, it essentially legalized the institutional environment that discriminated Chinese people in the United States, and the discrimination and exclusion of Chinese people from local governments to the public was more unscrupulous. For example, many states passed the Alien Land Act, which prohibited immigrants without citizenship to buy and own land. Like in the case of African Americans, the Anti-miscegenation Law prohibited Chinese from marrying whites:

Like blacks, the Chinese were described as heathen, morally inferior, savage, childlike, and lustful. Chinese women were condemned as a "depraved class," and their depravity was associated with their physical appearance, which seemed to show "but a slight removal from the African race." Chinese men were seen as sensuous creatures, especially interested in white women. (Takaki, 101)

As a reaction to the political, economic, social and institutional tension, the Chinese in the United States launched a series of protests. They used legal weapons to defend their legal rights in court. For example, the Chinese also fought these discriminatory bills in court, in trials such as Chae Chan Ping vs. United States, United States vs. Ju Toy and more, but most of them ended in failure:

In Chae Chan Ping v. United States, a laborer (Chae Chan Ping) who had lived in San Francisco since 1875 and had obtained a legitimate return certificate before departing for China in 1887, was denied permission to disembark upon his return to California on October 7, 1888. His case went all

the way up to the Supreme Court, which upheld the Scott Act, ruling that as the United States “considers the presence of foreigners of a different race in this country, who will not assimilate with us, to be dangerous to its peace and security, their exclusion is not to be stayed.” Continuing in this vein, the highest court in the land labeled Chinese immigrants a people “residing apart by themselves, and adhering to the customs and usages of their own country.” As such, the Chinese in America, the Court decided, were “strangers in the land.” (Chang, 136)

Wong Chin Foo, the first person to self-identify as “Chinese American,” employed a similar strategy in “Why Am I a Heathen?” (1887), which appeared in the *North American Review*. In 1868, Wong immigrated to the United States at the age of seventeen under the sponsorship of Christian missionaries, but after witnessing violently enforced racism, he decided that being a moral heathen was better than being an immoral Christian. Wong observed, “Though we may differ from the Christian in appearance, manners, and general ideas of civilization, we do not organize into cowardly mobs under the guise of social or political reform, to plunder and murder with impunity.” Baffled furthermore by the Christian idea that anyone can be saved no matter what they had done during their lives, Wong cannot imagine sharing a heaven that would admit anti-Chinese activists. (Cheung, 47-48)

During the same period, in the growing wave of xenophobia, immigrants from other countries suffered as well as the Chinese. In 1891, 11 Italian immigrants were murdered by a white mob who abused their lynching in New Orleans. In 1897, dozens of Slavic and Polish miners were attacked, killed or wounded by a group of white mobsters in Pennsylvania. In 1909, Greektown in South Omaha, Nebraska, was set on fire by more than 3,000 whites, a Greek child was killed and an entire immigrant community was forced to relocate.

In addition to work, American society also seemed not to appreciate the isolation of



Chinese workers. Many American newspapers reported on how Chinese workers had no interest in integrating into American society. They contemptuously called both whites and blacks “gweilo” and were unwilling to associate with them:

One of the main complaints against Chinese immigrants in the past was the idea that they were unassimilable. Opponents used Asians' alleged inability to become "real" Americans as an excuse to exclude them and to deny them participation in American political and social life. A series of landmark decisions in the lower federal courts and the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the exclusion. (Song, 385)

The word “ghost” or “gweilo” (鬼佬 in Chinese) is used among Chinese to refer to non-Chinese, and it has a layer of contempt. The idea of “Ghosts” was and is still used to demarcate the lines between the Chinese and everyone else. It also became a trope for imagined fears. (Song and Srikanth, 9) Chinese-American writer Maxine Hong Kingston was very familiar with this word since childhood:

America has been full of machines and ghosts - Taxi Ghosts, Bus Ghosts, Police Ghosts, Fire Ghosts, Meter Reader Ghosts, Tree Trimming Ghosts, Five-and-Dime Ghosts. Once upon a time the world was thick with ghosts, I could hardly breathe; I could hardly walk, limping my way around the White Ghosts and their cars. There were Black Ghosts too, but they were open eyed and full of laughter, more distinct than White Ghosts. (Hong Kingston 96-7)

Chinese communities were mainly self-sufficient, provided by their own people with everything they needed, including food, clothing, housing, transportation, schools, hospitals, and even casinos, prostitutes and opium. Chinese workers had no desire to integrate into American society.

In 1868, the United States signed the Burlingame-Seward treaty for two purposes: first, to ensure the legalization of U.S. labor recruitment in China; second, expand foreign trade with China, enhance the strength of the United States in China, and open the Chinese market.

But things did not quite go as expected. Fourteen years after the Treaty had come into effect, the U.S. trade with China was still at a low ebb. In the 1870s, with the growth of anti-Chinese sentiment, the enthusiasm of the United States to rapidly expand foreign trade with China waned. The Burlingame-Seward Treaty became the target of all anti-Chinese sentiments. The exclusion of Chinese naturally became the theme of American political life, and the American government had no time to take into account the development of business and market development in China.

Laborers were not the only ones who held negative views of the Chinese. From the point of view of assimilation, large parts of the American society believed that the Chinese could not be assimilated. The fact that the Chinese in the United States often lived together and formed so-called Chinatowns, reducing contact with the mainstream society outside, further confirmed the view that the Chinese were mysterious and incomprehensible.

Most Chinese immigrants were poor laborers. They endured all kinds of discrimination in foreign countries and lived hard at the bottom of society. In the face of endless difficulties and challenges, many people chose to help each other and so Chinatown was born.

No matter where they go, the Chinese would bring their unique culture and living habits formed by a civilization for thousands of years, forming Chinese settlements and business activity areas that were different from the culture of the host country. The exclusion of Chinese people also forced the Chinese to establish Chinatowns to 'self-preserve'.

For the first generation of Chinese immigrants to the United States, Chinatown is more of a "sanctuary." In Chinatown, where the Chinese lived together, people could communicate in local accents, and working in shops operated by the same town or clan also absorbed part of the labor force of Chinese workers, enabling them to survive on this land for a long time. But Chinatown was also a product of institutional discrimination in the United States.

However, Chinatown was often not a particularly ideal residential area. It was usually densely populated with tens of thousands of immigrants from China, and it was usually a place so dirty that white police were completely reluctant to enter. A place that lacked normal government management would naturally breed organizations like gangs. Many gang-themed films tend to glorify gangster organizations but the reality is not that glorious.

Gangs were never a good existence. There were gangs that collected protection fees while maintaining order in Chinatown. This situation was only a little more organized than a group of hooligans. The income source of these triads was to operate prostitution, gambling and drugs on the one hand, and to collect protection fees from various stores in Chinatown on the other hand.

These gangsters looked arrogant and domineering, and to put it bluntly, the victims were all their own compatriots. They never dared to confront the police directly, or even cross the border to territory outside of Chinatown, let alone any comradeship, and could not expect them to one day stand up to protect Chinatown. Even within the gang organizations, there was no good brotherhood, and most times there were just internal clashes and violent killings.

American people believed that regardless of race, language, religion, or customs, it was impossible for a Chinese to become an American. In terms of race, the Chinese

are Mongolian (Mongoloid, yellow), with different physical characteristics from Caucasian (Caucasian, white); in language, the Chinese brought “their” language to the United States, they did not have the will to learn English and could not communicate with them at all; in religion, the Chinese were pagans who worshiped idols and ancestors, incompatible with the mainstream Christian beliefs in the United States; in terms of customs, the Chinese had many rituals and habits that were deemed as incomprehensible:

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act had prohibited entry to Chinese workers, indicative of a race- and class-based politics, because according to the act, “in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof.” (Okihiro, 4)

In 1879, members of Congress from the Pacific Coast states followed suit, prompting Congress to pass a bill in the same year limiting the number of Chinese entering the United States to 15 per ship. But President Rutherford B. Hayes refused to sign the law because he thought it violated the traditional American spirit of free immigration. Privately, however, President Hayes also gradually started to believe that Chinese and blacks, like the Indians, belonged to a “weaker” ethnic group, and that their massive immigration would be harmful to the United States, so he agreed to restrict Chinese immigration.

The exclusionists debate returned with energy in February 1881, “in the United States Congress when California senator John F. Miller, known for anti-Chinese sentiments, introduced a bill to bar Chinese immigration for the next twenty years” (Chang 131). As Chang reports,

Comparing the Chinese immigrants to “inhabitants of another planet,” Miller argued that they were “machine-like ... of obtuse nerve, but little affected by

heat or cold, wiry, sinewy, with muscles of iron; they are automatic engines of flesh and blood; they are patient, stolid, unemotional [and] herd together like beasts” (Chang, 131).

While those defending the rights of Chinese in the U.S. advocated that Chinese exclusion violated the founding principles of the American Republic, the pressure of the public opinion eventually led exclusionists to gain the upper hand. On May 6, 1882, the U.S. Congress passed the first bill in history to restrict foreign immigration, the “Law Concerning the Implementation of the Provisions Relating to Chinese Treaties”, which is commonly known as the American Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.



Picture 8 Anti Chinese poster 1880s, San Francisco

Source: AsAmNews

<https://asamnews.com/2019/10/03/the-journey-of-a-paper-son/>

In China, the Chinese Exclusion Act aroused strong dissatisfaction among the Chinese people, especially the commercial ports in the Guangdong region and the Yangtze

River Basin, and the commercial interests of the United States in China were adversely affected. Therefore, it can be said that the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was a huge damage to Sino-US relations, which caused Sino-US trade to experience a period of silence and delayed the growth of US trade with China.

The introduction of a series of Chinese Exclusion Acts marked the end of the era of laissez-faire immigration in the United States and the beginning of a period of restriction. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was amended several times, and it became more and more severe: after Chinese workers left the country, they were not allowed to return to the United States, regardless of whether they had valid documents. Generally, Chinese students, teachers, businessmen, diplomats, and tourists had to go through the original port of departure before they could enter the United States. In 1892, the 1882 Act was extended for ten years (Song, 385); Chinese were obliged to carry a residence permit with them, and those who violated the law would be deported, and Chinese had no right to obtain bail.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1898 was extended to the Hawaiian Islands. In 1902, all Chinese Exclusion Acts were extended for ten more years, and their scope was extended to the Philippine Islands. In 1904 the U.S. Congress inserted a provision in a general appropriation bill to extend the Chinese Exclusion Act indefinitely.

In principle, as long as they did not work in the United States, Chinese people could still live in the United States. However, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the vast majority of immigrants from various countries were workers.

From 1882 to the 1920s, in the face of unrelenting anti-Chinese sentiment, many were forced to or chose to return to China, thus contributing to a steady decline in the Chinese population during the first four decades of this period and rising Chinese nationalistic sentiment. The Chinese Exclusion Act was extended indefinitely in 1902 and 1904, which caused China's boycott of American goods in 1905. China's boycott

of American imports in 1905 was a concrete expression of this emergent sense of nationalism. (Wang, 187)

Such a discriminatory bill had not only been recognized by the American people, but even publicly supported by American politicians and judges. Theodore Roosevelt actively promoted the “Chinese Exclusion Act”, and the US Supreme Court even ruled that the Chinese Exclusion Act was constitutional and explained that the Chinese belonged to another race, they could not be assimilated, they were incompatible with the local residents, they lived in isolated groups, and they refused to abandon their own customs. In the eyes of white Americans at the time, Chinese people did not deserve human rights.

The bill also affects Chinese who have settled in the United States. Any Chinese who leave the United States and want to re-enter the United States must obtain a permit. And the act deprived Chinese immigrants of their U.S. citizenship, thereby permanently isolating them. After the bill was passed, Chinese Americans in the United States had few opportunities to reunite with their families or start family life in their new homes.

One of the declared purposes of the American Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was to protect immigrants from other countries in the United States by restricting the entry of Chinese laborers into the U.S. labor market so that they could find jobs relatively easily:

On May 6, 1882, Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act, which legally prohibited Chinese from freely entering the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Act became the first national legislation that banned immigrants based on race. For decades after the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Law, more laws and regulations were imposed to bar the Chinese from freely entering the United States, The 1888 Scott Act prohibited over 20,000 Chinese from

re-entering the United States, because their certificates of identity had been declared null and void when they had temporarily departed to visit their families in China. (Song, 385)

The Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited new Chinese immigrants from entering the United States, and did not deliberately deport old immigrants. As a result, many Chinese entered the United States by forging their identity as the sons of Chinese Americans. This is called a contract son. In the era of no paternity test, all you need to do is bribe a local official in China and issue a fake birth certificate.

The Chinese Exclusion Act not only affected Chinese laborers, but also had a profound impact on Chinese women. In the history of Chinese exclusion in the United States since the mid-19th century, women were the earliest victims.

The Page Act, promulgated by the United States in 1875, prevented most Chinese female immigrants from entering the United States. The law was basically aimed at preventing Chinese workers from settling in the United States. The "Page Act" nominally prevented Chinese prostitutes from entering the country, so as not to bring venereal diseases and cause social deterioration. However, the identification of a Chinese woman as a prostitute was highly subjective. In effect, it became a means of preventing most Chinese women from entering the United States:

The Page Law intimidated all women considering emigration: the number of Chinese women entering the United States between 1876 and 1882 declined from the previous seven-year period by 68 percent. In 1882, during the interval of a few months between the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act and its enforcement, 39,579 Chinese slipped into America. But this massive migration included only 136 women, testifying to the effectiveness of the Page Law. (Takaki, 40)



In California in the middle of the 19th century, Chinese immigrants were mainly men, and the number of women was only one tenth of that of men. This is why many Chinese women who first arrived in the United States became prostitutes. This situation is the same as that of the first white women who arrived in the West from the East. It is a social problem caused by gender imbalance:

The policies of the U.S. government, on the other hand, were designed to keep out Chinese women. The Page Law, passed in 1875 to prohibit the entry of prostitutes, was enforced so strictly and broadly it served not only to exclude Chinese prostitutes but also to discourage Chinese wives from coming here. Chinese women seeking to emigrate to the United States had to undergo rigorous interrogation and cross-examination by U.S. officials stationed in China. (Takaki, 40)

In their hometown of Guangdong, down-and-out farmers would sell their daughters to Guangzhou for the equivalent of \$5, or simply abandon them. Organized human-trafficking gangs bought girls in Guangzhou for fifty dollars and bribed customs and immigration officials so the girls could arrive in San Francisco as "goods."

It was a lucrative deal, \$200 to \$500 a girl in San Francisco, and even \$1,000 for a pretty little girl. The Civil War ended the slavery system, but human trafficking was preserved. Most girls would be bought by brothels, and a small number would become "unpaid maids" of wealthy families: this is the decency of "the tool of lust" statement.

The Chinese prostitutes living in the "pigeon cage" also became the target of the media. In the smallpox epidemic in San Francisco in 1862, although the Chinese accounted for less than 5% of the cases, the investigation committee still blamed the smallpox on the brothels in Chinatown. It is claimed that the laboratory of infectious

diseases was located in the heart of the city, and it discharged deadly toxins and polluted the streets day and night. This Chinese cancer must be uprooted. The medical profession therefore asserted that the arrival of Chinese prostitutes triggered the syphilis epidemic.

The Page Law is supplementary to the acts in relation to immigration, and is also known as the Oriental Exclusion Act because of its main target. At this point, the era of so-called "open borders" in which the United States could immigrate freely had come to an end. Under the influence of the Page Law, the proportion of Chinese women in California dropped sharply from 6.4% of the Chinese population in 1870 to 4.6% in 1880:

In America, Chinese women found themselves in a world of men. In 1852, of the 11,794 Chinese in California, only seven were women — a ratio of 1,685 males to every one female. Eighteen years later, of 63,199 Chinese in the United States only 4,566 were female — a ratio of fourteen to one. (Takaki, 121)

This made it even worse for the Chinese laborers. It became extremely difficult to marry a Chinese wife locally. Many people turned to form families with Irish female immigrants who were at the bottom of society, too. Therefore, there were many Eurasian mixed blood among the first generation Chinese in the United States.

The extremely low number of Chinese-American women living in the continental United States prior to World War II was given more than one explanations. Some scholars believe that it was because China's domestic society was patriarchal at that time, emphasizing the majesty of the father and the husband, so married women could only be at home with their husbands and children, and serve their in-laws. The traditional Chinese culture valued loyalty and filial piety, and filial piety at home was considered a more important virtue than accompanying a husband in a foreign land.

Chinese women staying behind in Guangdong sang lyrics of loss:

Dear husband, ever since you sojourned in a foreign land.

I have lost interest in all matters.

All day long, I stay inside the bedroom, my brows knitted;

Ten thousand thoughts bring me endless remorse.

In grief, in silence.

I cannot fall asleep on my lonely pillow. (Takaki, 10)

Other scholars believe that the main reason for this serious gender imbalance is that most of the Chinese men who came to the United States only worked for the purpose of earning money. Many of them never thought of immigration, but instead wanted to return home one day. They sent the money they earn back to China to feed their families instead of bringing their families to the US, where the cost of living was much higher than in China.

However, the main reason is the Chinese Exclusion Acts: harsh legal provisions explicitly prohibit Chinese laborers and Chinese women from entering the United States, resulting in a sharp decrease in the number of Chinese immigrants who stayed in the United States from 1882 to 1943.

Many believe that the American Civil War, which ended with the victory of the North over the South, meant the rout of slavery and the racist ideology that underpinned it - The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln in 1863. During the "Reconstruction Period", the United States successively passed three constitutional amendments, granting equal rights to American citizens of different races and colors (including freed black slaves).

But the reality was that white supremacy was on the rise at the time, and racism was not unique to the South. In the South, in order to counteract the effects of the

Emancipation Proclamation and the aforementioned constitutional amendments, states quickly passed so-called Jim Crow laws restricting the freedom of blacks, depriving them of the right to vote, restricting where they lived, how they could move, etc. At the same time, the Ku Klux Klan, a secret civil organization, was established to promote the idea of “white supremacy” by violent means.

At the same time, the US immigration law entered a period of so-called "nativism", focusing on xenophobia:

As historian John Higham has described so powerfully in *Strangers in the Land*, the Italians, Jews, Irish, and other European-immigrant groups were victims of labor exploitation, social ostracism, and the sharp barbs of intolerant American nativism. Nevertheless, immigrants of European ancestry had certain advantages in America. The promise of this new world for them, as F. Scott Fitzgerald portrayed it, was mythic: here an individual could remake himself — Gatz could become Gatsby. (Takaki, 12)

The Literacy Act of 1917 prohibited illiterate people over the age of 16 from immigrating to the United States based on educational attainment. Immigrants were tested before entering the United States and were not admitted if they cannot read 30-40 words on a common paper written in their native language:

The Exclusion Act of 1882, the first legislation in U.S. history to bar the entry of a group on the basis of race, demonstrated a class bias by exempting certain elite groups; such exemptions can also be found in later immigration legislation such as the 1917 Immigration Act. These included “ [e]lite Chinese diplomats and merchants, students and travelers, native-born U.S. citizens, some laborers, and some wives,” although such exemptions did not guarantee entry into the United States. (Marcus and Chen, 369-370)

The “Emergency Quota Act” of 1921 established a “quota system” for immigrants to the United States, stipulating that the number of immigrants from other countries to the United States each year should not exceed 3% of the country's immigrant population in the 1910 U.S. census. The Immigration Act of 1924 further reduced the annual immigration "quota" to 2 percent of the immigrant population in the 1890 census. Since then, Chinese immigration to the United States has basically stopped:

Furthermore, the 1924 law supported the formation of families in European-immigrant communities, allowing European-immigrant men to return to their homelands and bring wives back to the United States. Their wives were accorded non quota status, that is, there were no limits to the number of European women who could come here as wives. The law had the very opposite effect on Asian-immigrant communities. Seeking to prevent the development of Asian families here, it barred the entry of women from China, Japan, Korea, and India. Even U.S. citizens could not bring Asian wives into the country, for the latter were classified as "aliens ineligible to citizenship" and hence inadmissible. (Takaki, 14)

In 1917, the Chinese Exclusion Act was applied to Japanese and Turks. In 1924, the United States simply introduced the "Asian Exclusion Act" specifically for Japanese and other Asians, completely eliminating Asian immigration. In the United States today, 66% are Caucasians, 16% are Hispanics, 12% are African Americans, and only 4% are Asians. It can be seen that Asians are still the smallest group.

Had it not been for an accidental factor, the number of Chinese would have been even lower. In 1906 , various birth and entry records in government departments of San Francisco were destroyed by a devastating earthquake and subsequent fires.(Zhao, 142) As a result, many Chinese people could claim to be born in the United States, or that their parents were born in the United States, thus obtaining American citizenship and residency.

Some Chinese could bring their children to the United States, including the so-called paper sons: Chinese living in China or already in the United States, claiming to be children of Chinese-Americans, it is possible to avoid the restrictions of the Chinese Exclusion Act and immigrate to the United States:

Regardless of the unfair treatment and animosity that waited for them in the United States after the exclusion act's passage, many Chinese people still saw America as the land of opportunity. The number of immigrants from China was actually higher during the exclusion era than it had been before.

Those risk-takers fought for what they wanted, battling “fiercely against the laws and the ways they were enforced [and] charging the U.S. government with racial discrimination and injustice”. Later, when the U.S. Supreme Court barred federal courts from taking Chinese immigration cases in 1905, those immigrants negotiated “their way through exclusion, instead of attempting to dismantle the laws altogether”. (Stanton)

After obtaining the status, register the number of children in China with the Immigration Bureau, and sell the "vacancies" of these children to those young people from the same country who want to immigrate to the United States, which are called “paper sons” or “paper daughters”.

“Paper son” was a product of the special historical conditions of American society at that time. The "Chinese Exclusion Act" made it impossible for Chinese workers to enter the United States through legal channels. Often, the only way to enter the United States was by purchasing fake identification documents. According to historical data, “Paper sons” can be traced back to the 1880s, when some Chinese immigrants began to use fake documents to help Chinese who were not their children to enter. Afterwards, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake provided an opportunity for more

Chinese to use “Paper son” to enter the United States.

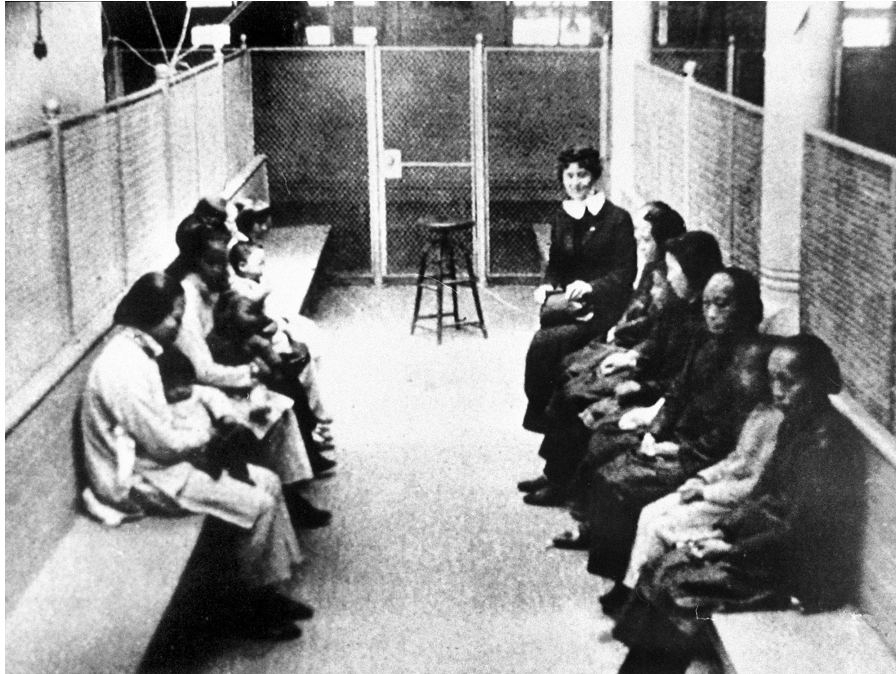
According to the law at the time, any party, as long as there were two witnesses to testify (Chinese testimonies were also accepted) who were born in San Francisco, will have their birth certificate reissued and be given American status. The local government was unable to prove that the Chinese were not born in the United States, and many Chinese received American status as a result. After these Chinese received U.S. citizenship, and they applied for U.S. citizenship for their children born in China.

When Chinese returned to China to visit relatives, they usually stayed for 1 to 3 years. When they returned to the United States, they would declare to the US immigration authorities that they had children born in China and apply for their US citizenship. Even if they had no children, they would still declare so because it was a lucrative business. In the 1930s, a “paper son” could fetch hundreds or even thousands of dollars, depending on the age of the buyer.

For immigration inspection, the United States had separate checkpoints on the east and west coasts: Ellis Island on the east coast checks the entry of European immigrants from the Atlantic Ocean; Angel Island on the west coast, located in the San Francisco Bay, an immigration checkpoint set up by the United States for the entry of Chinese immigrants:

From 1910 to 1940 the immigration station on Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay served as the gateway and processing and detention center for an estimated 175,000 immigrants seeking to enter the United States. Most immigrants processed at the island facility were Asian; the majority was Chinese. The result of the discriminatory Chinese exclusion laws (1882-1943) that prohibited all but a few exempt classes of Chinese to apply for admission into the country, Angel Island embodied America's racist, gate-keeping efforts. It was especially designed to exclude and restrict immigrants

believed to be a threat to the nation. The immigration station on Angel Island closed as a result of a fire in 1940. (Lee)



Picture 9 Chinese immigrants detained at Angel Island, in the San Francisco Bay

Source: *The New Yorker*

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-lost-poetry-of-the-angel-island-detention-center>

Most Chinese who wanted to immigrate to the United States were sent to Angel Island for detention when the boat arrived in San Francisco. After a rigorous interrogation, immigration officials decided whether they could enter the United States.

During the three decades, Angel Island was also an immigration checkpoint that violated human rights established by the U.S. government:

One of the most central aspects of Angel Island history is to understand it on its own terms, rather than as a West Coast version of Ellis Island. This is



important not only because the actual immigrant experience at both detention centers were so different, but also because they represented very different strands of America's complex relationship with immigrants and with immigration. Ellis Island was built to process mostly European immigrants, who might have been the targets of restriction, but never exclusion. They were admittedly targets of anti-immigrant sentiment and stereotyping, yet they were still considered "white" and hence, eligible for U.S. citizenship. (Lee)

Angel Island immigration station was like a prison for Chinese immigrants, and there were often shortages of supplies. Many Chinese immigrants could only vent their emotions by writing poems on the walls. "Detention in the Wooden Building" (1910) is a translation of a poem written by a Chinese detainee at the immigration station on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. For instance, the poet describes the insufficient bedclothes at Angel Island with the following allusion: "At night, we wrap ourselves in a single blanket, / Just like Min Qian wearing clothes made of rush". (Chinese American Voices , 121)

## Chapter 3

# The Chinese in the Western United States after the Exclusion Act

### 3.1 The Chinese after the Chinese Exclusion Act

The Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 lasted 62 years. During those years, as Chang writes, “limbo, not fully accepted by white American society, yet not able —or not willing—to return to China and sacrifice their American earnings” (Chang 154).

During all the period leading to the Exclusion Act, and even after its promulgation, the press, especially some famous political satirical cartoons, played a key role in shaping a negative image of Chinese. These comics only provide part of the information, and other information is left to the readers to associate or interpret.

Comics are good at conveying messages with images and words, and their publicity effect is far more profound than pure words, and it is more effective in forming images. Most of these political satires or pictures were from the more famous political weekly magazines of the time, such as *Harper's Weekly* and *The Wasp*. From the content of these two political satirical cartoons, we can know the negative views on the Chinese at that time:

For example, a stereotypical caricature of Chinese laborers emerged, depicting them primarily as laundrymen. Americans stereotyped Chinese individuals in that way because running a laundry was one of the least desirable jobs on the market. It was possible to start such an enterprise without much capital, experience, or an American-style education. In addition, the business attracted Chinese immigrants because it was, in most

cases, a guaranteed way to get a job in an American city and could even earn them enough money to support a family back home. (Stanton)

In terms of religious beliefs, the religion of the Chinese was regarded as paganism. Many Americans believed that the Chinese worshiped pagan gods with evil appearances in the temple. In this regard, devout Christians thought that the Chinese were evil heretics who worshiped their dead ancestors, which was surprising and incomprehensible to Christians.

Before the end of the 19th century, most Chinese immigrants in the United States did various hard labor in farms, mines, railways or white homes. After the beginning of the 20th century, many Chinese left or were driven out of their traditional workplaces and started self-employment, mainly opening low-cost laundries and Chinese restaurants. According to statistics, in 1920 more than half of the Chinese in the United States worked in laundromats or restaurants. The Chinese initially set up businesses and businesses by relying on mutual aid associations spontaneously organized by the Chinese in Chinatown:

As always, restaurants remained a popular place to work. By 1920, roughly a quarter of all Chinese workers in the United States worked in restaurants. Most of these were tiny mom-and-pop enterprises, in which the owner worked as cook and dishwasher and his wife—if he had one—as the waitress and cashier. A few Chinese with sufficient capital rented their own buildings, installed expensive Asian decor, and hired battalions of chefs, waiters, and hostesses. (Chang, 158-159)

Because the Chinese and Chinese businesses cannot obtain loans from American banks and other financial institutions, only through mutual aid societies among the Chinese could they raise funds to invest in their business. Each member of this organization takes turns to use the mutual aid money invested by others, and each

member earnestly abides by the rules of the mutual aid association and repays the money on time so that other members can use it again. Before 1950, the Chinese invested in business and established enterprises basically using this method.

The 1884 amendment to the Chinese Exclusion Act, based on race, stated that the Act would apply to all Chinese regardless of their nationality. The Scott Act (passed in 1888) stipulates that even if they have a certificate of return, American Chinese workers cannot return to the United States once they leave, and ordinary Chinese such as businessmen, students, officials and tourists must enter the United States from the same port. The act immediately prevented more than 20,000 Chinese from re-entering the United States.

The Geary Act, passed in 1892, extended the Chinese Exclusion Act's time limit on Chinese labor immigration for another 10 years, and stated that all Chinese workers must be registered, otherwise they would be deported out of the country. Ten years later, as Chang explains,

nothing changed, either in the West or in Washington, D.C. When the Geary Act expired in 1902, Congress passed yet another exclusion law, this time extending the period of exclusion indefinitely and continuing to deny naturalization to the Chinese already in the United States. In 1904, Ng Poon Chew, founder of *Chung Sai Yat Po*, San Francisco's first Chinese-language daily newspaper, described what it felt like to be Chinese in America: "all Chinese," he wrote, "whether they are merchants or officials, teachers, students or tourists, are reduced to the status of dogs in America. The dogs must have with them necklaces"—here Chew is referring to the residence certificates—"which attest to their legal status before they are allowed to go out. Otherwise they would be arrested as unregistered, unowned dogs and would be herded into a detention camp." (Chang, 140)

The Geary Act also added more stringent requirements:

1. Cancel the habeas corpus order toward the Chinese, and the Chinese shall not apply for bail;
2. Chinese have no right to testify in court;
3. Chinese in the United States must be sponsored by "reputable" white Americans before they can register to stay in the United States (immigrants from other countries do not need to register);
4. The Chinese must stick the residence permit on their body, and those who violate it will be deported immediately.

The Geary Act was an unacceptable insult in any way. Many Chinese organizations issued announcements calling on 110,000 Chinese in the United States to launch a movement of disobedience, because there was no country in the world that treated Chinese in this way except the United States. The Chinese began to appeal to the Chinese envoys, asking them to help the Chinese resist such injustice.

In order to prevent politicians from representing Chinese interests, the act not only prohibited Chinese from entering the United States, but also prohibited Chinese in the United States from becoming American citizens and having the right to vote.

In August 1893, an 85-member delegation arrived in the United States on behalf of the Qing government. After a series of negotiations, the delegation issued an ultimatum to the United States: if Congress could not immediately repeal the Geary Act and protect the Chinese in California, then the Qing court would make sure that Americans in China would all be deported.

But the tough ultimatum turned into a joke, and the two sides finally signed a "The Gresham-Yang Treaty", in which the Americans would provide machinery and railways for the factories in the Self-Strengthening Movement (洋务运动, yang wu

yun dong) . In exchange, the Qing government upgraded the "Chinese Exclusion Act" as an international treaty that expressly stated that the United States had the right to require Chinese migrants to register. It couldn't be clearer here: the Qing government abandoned its people.

Two years later, the Chinese Navy was wiped out in the Bohai Bay. The failure of the Sino-Japanese War made the American Chinese realize that the Americans would not stop oppressing the Chinese, and the Qing court would never defend the rights of the compatriots. Chinese Americans could only rely on themselves, such as changing the name of the store to English and giving themselves an English name. In addition to this, some people also cut their braids.

In 1904, The Gresham-Yang Treaty expired, and the United States hoped to renew the treaty for another ten years and extend the exclusion zone of Chinese laborers to overseas territories such as Hawaii and the Philippines. The proposal was firmly opposed by the Chinese government, and the U.S. government immediately ordered the ambassador to China to negotiate directly with the Qing government.

The Chinese in California had a hunch that the Qing government would yield again, and decided to preempt it. At the end of April 1905, North American Chinese businessmen sent a telegram to the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce, saying that they hoped to mobilize the domestic masses to boycott American products and force the United States to change its policy of exclusion from China. The Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce issued a call in May, including banning U.S. machines, rejecting U.S. merchant shipping, and not acting as a translator for U.S. firms.

The campaign had the full cooperation of business, academia and the media. But the Qing government did not take this opportunity to negotiate with the United States. Instead, it reached an agreement with the United States in August, agreeing to come

forward to suppress the boycott. On February 13, 1906, under pressure from the United States, the Qing government announced a severe crackdown on the boycott movement. Although it failed to force the United States to make concessions on the Chinese exclusion policy, the anger of the Chinese in the United States was completely ignited.

The turbulent wave of Chinese exclusion in the United States has aroused strong indignation among Chinese at home and abroad. In 1905, a massive boycott of American goods broke out in major cities along the coast of China, and received strong support from overseas Chinese in Hawaii, Canada, Cuba, Indonesia, the Philippines and other places. Affected by this, U.S. exports to China dropped sharply, causing the U.S. government to panic:

Oddly enough, the most dramatic protest against America's discriminatory measures was undertaken in China, by a group of activists seeking a ban on American goods and businesses until the exclusion policy was repealed. On July 20, 1905, the Chinese in Shanghai initiated a full-scale boycott. They quit working for American companies, moved their homes and businesses out of American-owned buildings, and pulled their children out of American schools. Some 90 percent of the businesses in the Chinese district of the city displayed placards supporting the boycott. Chinese businessmen canceled contracts with American firms and refused to buy or sell American products; demonstrators prevented American ships from unloading their cargos; newspapers refused to run American advertisements.

(...)

So effective was the boycott that it devastated many American businesses in China and deprived the United States of some \$30 million to \$40 million worth of trade. It hurt textile mills in the American North and cotton

plantations in the South. In Canton, Standard Oil's sales plummeted from about 90,000 cases of fuel monthly to 19,000. So low had American firms fallen in esteem that the British American Tobacco Company found it difficult to even give away free cigarettes to its agents in China. (Chang, 141-142)

The spirit of self-improvement and nationalism displayed by the Chinese at home and abroad in the movement greatly encouraged the Chinese in the United States, and to a certain extent forced the US government to ease the persecution of the Chinese. In this regard, the US government is often perfunctory, and the Qing government has failed to propose countermeasures.

Under the influence of these bans, many Chinese immigrants lived lonely lives: their families were unable to travel to the United States, and mainstream American society shut them out. However, the Chinese Exclusion Act and other prohibitions did not stop the tide of Chinese immigration to the United States.

The real history is that the hostility of white laborers to Chinese immigrants became more and more serious, until they repeatedly looted Chinatown in a violent way, and smashed, looted and burned innocent Chinese immigrants. The Chinese were clearly innocent victims in these riots.

Many Chinese were brutally beaten simply because of their race. The Act also affected Chinese who settled in the United States. Any Chinese who left the United States and wanted to re-enter the United States must obtain a permit. And the act deprived Chinese immigrants of their U.S. citizenship, thereby permanently isolating the Chinese. After the Act was passed, Chinese in the United States had few opportunities to reunite with their families or start family life in their new homes. Until June 18, 2012, the U.S. House of Representatives voted unanimously, and the United States officially recognized in the form of legislation that the Chinese



Exclusion Act passed in 1882 was a mistake.

During the period when the Chinese Exclusion Act took effect, the living conditions of Chinese in the United States were very poor. They were severely ostracized in the labor market, with companies refusing to hire Chinese. They were also unable to obtain licenses for higher-paying occupations such as doctors and lawyers. In the period after the introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the average occupational status of Chinese Americans dropped sharply, and the social upward path was severely blocked.

Their career choices were mostly limited to service industries or low-end handicrafts. During this period, it is conservatively estimated that more than 30% of Chinese people worked in laundry rooms and Chinese restaurants. In the 1880s, two-thirds of the more than 300 laundry rooms in San Francisco were run by Chinese:

According to the 1920 census, almost 30 percent of all employed Chinese worked in laundries: out of a total of 45,614 Chinese workers, 12,559 were laundry people. Opening a laundry appealed to many immigrants because it was a fast way to establish one's own business. It required almost no start-up capital—just a scrub board, soap, and an iron—and operating costs were low since the laundry owner usually saved rent by living in his shop. It also required no special training.

(...)

The reality of the laundry business was harsh. Most Chinese washer men survived only because they lived frugally and charged at least 15 percent less for services than white laundries, leaving them with razor-thin profit margins. The work consumed almost every waking moment. Breathing steam and lint, the laundryman labored on a wet, slippery floor, washing and pressing, using

an eight-pound iron heated over a coal stove, and then folding his customers' clothes by hand. The finishing work—the starching of detachable items, like collars, cuffs, and shirtfronts—required attention to detail and time. Collars had to be handled delicately lest wrinkles form. They were first pressed through a special mangle, then moistened with a tiny brush, and finally each was rolled by hand. (...) On some days, a laundryman might labor twenty hours continuously, without even stopping to eat. (Chang, 163-164)

In an extremely unfriendly social environment, the Chinese in the United States still use their efforts and ingenuity to strive for a unique living space. The traditional view is that after the exclusion of the Chinese, they increasingly confined their lives to Chinatown and became increasingly isolated from the outside world. The Chinese actually showed a more discrete geographic distribution after the Chinese Exclusion Act. They left cities in the West and moved to areas of the Northeast, Midwest, and even southern states that were previously underpopulated by China.

In 1880, nearly 97% of Chinese people lived in the western states of the United States. By 1950, this proportion had dropped to less than 60%, and the decline in this proportion was even more than that of the great black migration movement in the first half of the 20th century (The Great Black Migration).

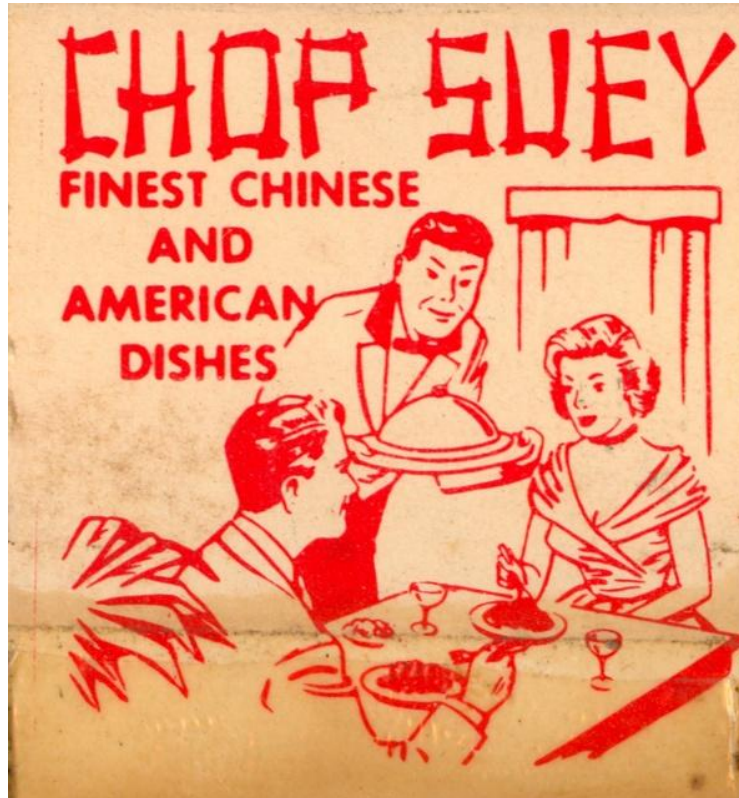
It was from this period that Chinese restaurants began to spread across the American states following the footsteps of the Chinese. Using ordinary ingredients such as sliced meat, celery, and bean sprouts, a “chop suey” invented by Chinese chefs has conquered the stomachs of Americans, and even set off a wave of “chop suey” in major cities in the United States such as Chicago and Philadelphia. Chinese food has since become an integral part of American recipes:

Regardless of the size of the operation, many Chinese sensed that profits could be made not by offering authentic cuisine from their homeland, but

instead dishes that looked Chinese but appealed to the American palate. Chow mein (“fried noodles”), for example, was invented when a Chinese cook accidentally dropped a handful of Chinese pasta into a pot of simmering oil. When the crisp, golden-brown result delighted his customers, he added the item to his menu. It was an instant hit with his American patrons, and other Chinese restaurants quickly added the new concoction to their own offerings.

David Jung, who opened a noodle company in Los Angeles in 1916, is credited with creating the fortune cookie. (...) Chop suey, a fried hodgepodge of vegetables and meat, enjoyed an enormous following among Caucasians and became an icon of mainstream culture by the early twentieth century, when Sinclair Lewis mentioned it in his novel *Main Street* (1920). It varied greatly by region, as chefs tailored their food to suit local tastes. On the East Coast, some Chinese restaurants even offered chop suey sandwiches. (Chang, 159)

Most Chinese immigrants learned the restaurant trade in the United States when other jobs were not available to them. Chinese concentration in the restaurant business illustrates how the racialized environment drove the Chinese into menial service occupations. From 1900 to the 1960s, most Chinese restaurants in America were called chop suey houses, and chop suey was synonymous with Chinese food in the United States. When numerous chop suey houses spread across American cities, food became a tangible component of Chinese American ethnic identity. (Liu, 2)



Picture 10 Old poster of a Chinese-American restaurant

Source: American Heritage

<https://www.americanheritage.com/mixed-bits-true-history-chop-suey>

The Chinese in the United States have not given up their expectations and training for the next generation due to hardships. They also made unremitting efforts for their children's right to education. Since the 1860s, California has implemented a segregated education policy. Chinese, like African Americans and American Indians, were in principle not allowed to study in public schools set up for whites.

Although they were also taxpayers, the Chinese cannot enjoy public education resources, and their children can only study in private Chinese-style schools. In 1877, 30 San Francisco Chinese businessmen gathered more than 1,300 signatures to petition the Board of Education and the state legislature to open a public school for the Chinese, but the petition failed.

From today's point of view, this "separate but equal" principle of treating ethnic minorities is still discriminatory, but this is already a progress that the Chinese are striving to promote. Since then, the Chinese have continued to challenge relevant laws in court, striving for more equal education rights. Since the Chinese Exclusion Act came into effect, Chinese families in the United States have paid more attention to investing in their children's education.

After the Chinese exclusion, the demand for labor in the western United States remained high. Another populous country in Asia, Japan, has a narrow land and dense population. After the Meiji Restoration, it was in the early stage of modernization. A large number of landless peasants poured into the cities, and the unemployment rate remained high.

Faced with the success of Japanese immigrants in California in the agricultural field, the racists drew from the bottom line, enacting one draconian bill after another that would restrict Asian immigrants from owning land. Finally in 1913 California formally signed the ban on foreigners buying land. But Japanese immigrants were still able to acquire land by exploiting loopholes in the act:

Many soon learned that it would be a hard road to travel if they remained in agriculture. In California, any Chinese who aspired to be landowning farmers found their dreams thwarted by a state law called the 1913 Alien Land Act, which barred aliens ineligible for citizenship from owning land, even if they could afford to buy it. (Chang, 157)

Subsequently, in 1920 and 1923, California passed two more stringent bans on foreigners buying land, completely blocking the possibility of the Japanese acquiring land in California. Other states followed suit, and the American dream of Japanese immigrants was completely destroyed.

However, the Japanese exclusionists in the United States felt that these were not enough. In 1924, the US Congress passed a “Japanese Exclusion Act” similar to the Chinese Exclusion Act. Except for diplomats and other situations, only 40 Japanese people can enter the United States every year, and all foreigners who cannot obtain American citizenship are prohibited from entering the country. At that time, except for Asians, all other countries had the right to obtain U.S. citizenship.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Japanese immigrating to the United States continued to increase, while the number of Chinese continued to decrease, and the spearhead of the “Asian exclusion” movement in American society turned to the Japanese.

The Chinese and Japanese in the United States were both Asian minorities, and in the white American society of the time, they shared the same “disease”. On the one hand, Chinese immigrants sympathize with the experience of Japanese immigrants, and on the other hand, they lament the weakness of the motherland compared with the firm measures taken by the Japanese government to support their own immigrants.

During the period 1882-1943, the Chinese were in a difficult situation. Because they are prohibited from competing with whites, Chinese can only work in laundry rooms and open Chinese restaurants. Because of being discriminated against, the Chinese tried their best to avoid contact with the outside world, and everything was settled inside Chinatown. For a long time after that, Chinatown was ruled by Chinese gangs.



Picture 11 A family-run Chinese laundry in California around 1910

Source: Life of Guangzhou

<https://www.lifeofguangzhou.com/knowGZ/content.do?contextId=13467&frontParentCatalogId=175>

Even during the Great Depression, the Chinese were reluctant to go even if they were hungry. Receiving relief from the US government showed to what extent the Chinese were afraid of the American society:

By the 1930s, they were largely concentrated in major cities, usually in their own racially segregated neighborhoods. The Great Depression did not affect the Chinatowns of 1930s as badly as the crisis of the 1870s, largely because of the self-sufficiency of these ethnic communities.

The knowledge that they could not get easy access to white venture capital had long ago instilled in them certain protective habits, such as frugality, reliance on family connections, and avoidance of frivolous debt. Isolated from white mainstream America, deeply distrustful of white banks, most Chinese businesses had established their own informal credit systems.

Aspiring entrepreneurs would borrow money from their own relatives, or partner with other Chinese immigrants to create a bui, a pool of capital into which they would make regular deposits and out of which loans would be made at mutually agreed rates of interest. (Chang, 191-192)

Among the various ethnic groups who come to the United States, the Chinese were in one of the worst situations. The fundamental reason is that the appearance and culture of the Chinese are very different from the white Americans, and the Chinese never thought of integrating into the United States. They were actually refusing to integrate into this society.

To sum up, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, both China, which was poor and weak, and Japan, which rose rapidly and became a world power, all encountered the problem that their own immigrants were rejected by the US government and people.

Although the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed, many laws against Chinese were not ended until the 1970s. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act officially outlawed racial discrimination in all public places, and laws across the United States prohibiting interracial marriage were not fully repealed until 1967. It was not until June 18, 2012 that the U.S. House of Representatives formally apologized for the Chinese Exclusion Act enacted in the past. At this point, 130 years have passed since the Chinese Exclusion Act was issued.



## 3.2 Changes before and after World War II

In July 1937, the Japanese invaders launched a full-scale offensive. Facing the weak Chinese army, the Japanese were victorious. After the breakout of the war, the federal government slowly changed the way it treated the Chinese. At that time, Chinese Americans were jointly boycotting Japanese products and besieging Japanese factories and companies. A small number of Chinese began to march on the streets to protest the sales of steel and crude oil by American companies to Japan. To avoid escalating conflicts, the government pledged to transform and renovate Chinatowns across the country:

Chinese Americans also led boycotts of Japanese owned businesses. For the Japanese American-owned Ota Tofu Company in Portland, these boycotts led to a huge drop in Chinese patrons, when previously, people from the neighboring Chinese American community had formed a sizeable part of their customer base. (Chan, 213)

By the end of 1941, the bombing of Pearl Harbor prompted the United States to join the war, China and the United States became allies, and the Americans turned the blame on the Japanese overnight. In order to avoid being confused, Chinese organizations in America began to distribute registration documents with the national flags of China and the United States to the Chinese to prove that the holders of the certificates were Chinese. American media also wrote articles to remind Americans who cannot distinguish Asian faces, so that the American public could understand the difference between Japanese and Chinese faces.

According to statistics from the U.S. General Administration of Enlistment, during World War II, more than 13,000 Chinese served in the U.S. Army, accounting for 17% of the total number of Chinese in the United States. of people died overseas:

The bombing of Pearl Harbor was one of the most tragic incidents in the history of the United States. Without it, however, Chinese Americans would not have been able to enter defense industries or the armed services. Since the United States and China were allies against common enemies during the war, American images of Chinese began to change from negative to positive ones. (Zhao, 140)

The recruitment of Chinese into the U.S. military began in the Pacific War. On December 8, 1941, the Japanese Air Force launched a surprise attack on the U.S. naval and air base at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands of the Pacific Ocean, and the U.S. Pacific Fleet suffered a devastating blow. The next day, the United States officially declared war on Japan, and the Pacific War broke out.

Since then, the U.S. government conscripted Chinese into the military. For a time, there was an upsurge of overseas Chinese sending their sons and sons to sign up for the army in Chinatowns in major cities in the United States. In February 1942, 2,600 Chinese enlisted in the 76th Recruiting Bureau of San Francisco alone, and more than 150 graduates from one Chinese school enlisted in the army. In June, more than 170 Chinese in New York City joined the army and went to fight in Europe and the Pacific.

The war posters also appealed to Chinese youth living in the United States. In the European battlefield, the Chinese participated in the battle of the 3rd and 4th Infantry Divisions of the US Army. In the Asian and Pacific theaters, the Chinese participated in the operations of the U.S. 6th, 32nd and 77th Infantry Divisions. World War II marked a turning point in Chinese American life. For the first time, Chinese Americans began to be accepted by the larger American society. Chinese-American women were not only given the opportunity to take jobs traditionally held by men, but were also allowed to demonstrate loyalty to their country. (Zhao, 139)

Overseas Chinese living in the United States established the "New York General Committee for Overseas Chinese Relief" in New York, United States. Situ Meitang, an overseas Chinese leader, also initiated the organization of 54 overseas Chinese groups in New York City, and established the "New York Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese National Salvation Funding Association" as an organization for coordinating the relief work in New York. During this period, Boston established the "New England Rescue China Committee", San Francisco established the "Republic of China National Anti-Japanese National Salvation Association" and other organizations.

In order to support the fight against Japanese invasion, the monthly donation of overseas Chinese reached 13.5 million yuan, of which the total monthly donation of overseas Chinese in South-east Asia ranked first in all continents in the world, with an average of 7.34 million yuan. If compared with the average monthly donations of individuals, the overseas Chinese in the United States ranked first. There were 103,000 overseas Chinese in the United States, and the total monthly donation was 583,000 US dollars, and the average monthly donation per person was about 5.6 US dollars.

From 1939 to 1940, overseas Chinese in the Americas carried out special donation activities for national salvation by aviation in order to strengthen the air force of the motherland's war of resistance against Japan. This alone raised more than US\$6.3 million. On New Year's Day in 1938, overseas Chinese in San Francisco raised more than 30,000 US dollars in one day.

Guangdong is a large province of overseas Chinese. There were more than 40,000 Cantonese overseas Chinese who returned to China to participate in the Sino-Japanese War. For example, the Guangdong Air Force, from captains to pilots, were almost all overseas Chinese. At that time, there were only about 200 overseas Chinese pilots

returning from the United States. Many members of the Flying Tigers led by General Chennault were also overseas Chinese.

In order to help the domestic anti-Japanese war, the overseas Chinese also launched a non-cooperation movement against Japan. The overseas Chinese in the United States launched the "Picketing of Iron and Enemy Movement", advising overseas Chinese and Americans not to send steel, hardware and other materials to Japan. Overseas Chinese groups and local friends formed a picket team of thousands of people to patrol the wharf day and night, preventing scrap iron from being shipped to Japan.

Taking advantage of the wartime alliance, Chinese President Chiang Kai-shek's wife, Soong Meiling went to the US Congress in 1943. In her speech, she called on the United States to assist in the fight against Japan, and at the same time asked the Congress to repeal the long-outdated "Chinese Exclusion Act". After the speech, Soong Meiling appeared on the cover of Time Magazine in March. On December 17, 1943, President Roosevelt repealed the 61-year-old Chinese Exclusion Act and other unequal treaties.

The Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed by Congress during World War II. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Americans shared their hatred and began to sympathize with China. At that time, most Americans couldn't tell the difference between Chinese and Japanese. Chinese reporters who ran news on Capitol Hill hung a "I am Chinese" identification card on their chests. Some American magazines also published photos of Chinese and Japanese to let American society understand the difference between the appearance of Japanese and Chinese:

Galvanized by the plight of their families, and horrified by reports of Japanese atrocities, Chinese Americans rallied to promote public awareness of the Sino-Japanese War. Most Chinese immigrants had not been formally educated in the United States and were not fluent in English, but they did

their best, however imperfectly, to make Americans aware of the situation in the Far East. The publicity campaign was waged both within and beyond the Chinese community.

In general, the recent émigrés used Chinese newspapers, radio programs, and street demonstrations to disseminate within the Chinese communities news of the dire plight of China, while the American-educated Chinese used the English-language press and the lecture circuit to reach a broader segment of Americans. In New York City, the Chinese Hand Laundry Alliance distributed thousands of English-language fliers through their laundry shops, asking Americans to boycott Japanese goods. (Chang, 205-206)

As well as the grand welcome received by Mrs. Chiang's visit to the United States in 1943, a group of pro-Chinese congressmen advocated for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in Congress. On February 18, 1943, after Soong Meiling delivered a historic speech in Congress, the House Immigration Committee immediately held a hearing on the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, and President Roosevelt Jr. expressed his support. The House and Senate successively passed the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which President Roosevelt Jr. signed into effect on December 17, 1943. The infamous Chinese Exclusion Act, which lasted 61 years, was officially over.

Objectively speaking, the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act is inevitable under the climate of Sino-US cooperation against Japan. During Soong Meiling's visit to the United States in 1943, the U.S. government and Congress took advantage of the situation and gave the Chinese a big gift:

After America's entry into the war, President Roosevelt invited Meiling Soong to visit the United States. In November 1942, she arrived to rally support against Japan's campaign of aggression. The following spring, she

embarked on a one-month cross-country tour, visiting New York, Wellesley, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The tour was a triumph. The articulate Soong attracted tens of thousands of supporters, captivating American audiences with her beauty, charisma, and elegance. The darling of the American media, her image graced every major magazine and newspaper.

(...)

Madame Chiang Kai-shek became the first Chinese woman and second woman ever invited to address a joint session of Congress, and she earned a standing ovation. One congressman was later heard to mutter, “Goddamn it, I never saw anything like it; Madame Chiang had me on the verge of tears.” (Chang, 213-214)



Picture 12 On February 18, 1943, Soong May-ling became the first Chinese national to address Congress in Washington, D.C. — only the beginning of a six-week tour to win American support for China’s cause.

Source: SupChina

<https://supchina.com/2021/02/17/soong-may-ling-historic-congress-address/>

The reasons for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act can be mainly attributed to the following four points. While Asian countries, were once victims of the racially

discriminatory immigration policies of the United States, Japan took advantage of this to incite anti-American sentiment by denouncing the Chinese Exclusion Act and other “historic crimes” against Asian immigrants. the U.S. government needs to eliminate Japan’s distorted propaganda by repealing the Chinese Exclusion Law, thereby improving the Chinese people’s impression of the U.S. government, enhancing mutual trust between China and the United States, and consolidating the wartime alliance.

Second, “racism” became notorious overnight because of the propaganda and practice of Nazi Germany. The Anglo-Saxon racism that had long supported the Chinese exclusion in the United States quickly lost its market, and the Chinese Exclusion Act also lost its “theoretical basis”.

Third, the improvement of China’s international status, the heroic performance of Chinese Americans in World War II, and the changes in the appearance of the Chinese community greatly improved the attitude of American society and public opinion towards the Chinese; this laid an important foundation for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act.



Picture 13 70 years ago, the U.S. was full of pro-Chinese propaganda, encouraging friendship with a wartime ally.

Source: The Diplomat

<https://thediplomat.com/2015/08/when-the-us-and-china-were-allies/>

Fourth, the active promotion of people from all walks of life. The Chinese realized that this was the perfect time to change their status in the United States, and they took action. Many Chinese organizations put pressure on the U.S. Congress through various means to express their strong desire to repeal the Chinese Exclusion Act.

In the process of abolishing the Chinese Exclusion Law, organizations and individuals in the United States sympathetic to China and the Chinese played a leading role, the most representative of which was the “Citizens Committee for the Abolition of Chinese Exclusion” established in May 1943. They publicized the abolition of the Chinese Exclusion Law in the news media and at rallies to guide the direction of public opinion; through extensive social relations, they lobbied government officials



and members of Congress, greatly increasing the possibility of abolishing the Chinese Exclusion Act. For example, as we read in Chang:

After Madame Chiang's tour, Senator Warren Magnuson introduced a bill repealing the Chinese Exclusion Act. Enjoying wide support and passed on December 17, 1943, the bill abolished exclusion, provided for an annual quota of 105 Chinese immigrants, and gave Chinese who had entered the country lawfully the right to naturalization. While the quota was extremely low, especially compared to admission rates for many European countries, the Magnuson Act was a landmark in Chinese American history: for the first time in six decades, foreign-born Chinese could become American citizens. (Chang, 214)

The Magnuson Act stipulates that only 105 immigration quotas are given to Chinese. Fortunately, the United States promulgated some special decrees after the war, such as the McCarran-Walter Act, which opened a small door for the Chinese to legally immigrate to the United States. These legal reforms began with the McCarran-Walter Act or the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act and culminated in the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act or the Hart-Celler Act. The years contained by this era were marked both by ethnic struggles against racism and accommodations that allowed one to exist in a nation openly hostile in law and custom to the presence of Asians on its soil. (Song and Srikanth, 24)

Between 1944 and 1965, about 66,100 Chinese immigrated to the United States, and their arrival injected new vitality into the Chinese community in the United States.

However, large-scale Chinese immigration did not follow until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, also known as the McCarran-Walter Act, passed (rejected by Truman, but ultimately overturned by Congress). The Act amends and consolidates previous laws

on immigration, naturalization and nationality. It removes race as a barrier to immigration and naturalization, leaving some otherwise ineligible countries with a quota of at least 100 visas per year.

The new law completely abolished the nationality quota system and replaced it with an eastern and western hemisphere quota: 170,000 in the eastern hemisphere and 120,000 in the western hemisphere, compared with 20,000 per year in any country:

The Act, which replaced the previous discriminatory system and instead established preference categories based on family reunification and professional skills, is often portrayed as an embodiment of the American civil rights agenda in immigration regulation. The law is indeed monumentally significant, both for its assault on racial bias in immigration law and also for the tremendous new immigration it allowed into the country. Not only did radical changes in immigration law in 1965 change the entire system of immigration regulation that had been in place since 1924, but the composition of America's primary immigrant groups was also drastically altered. While the vast majority of pre-1924 immigrants came from Europe, the bulk of post-1965 immigrants enter from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. (Lee)

But, as it had been done since 1921, some immigrants were allowed to enter without quotas on certain terms. The new law expanded the categories of family members who can enter without quotas and reserved most of the quotas for non-immediate relatives of citizens and even dependents of foreigners with permanent residency status.

Although the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943, in California the prohibition of intermarriage between Chinese and white people was not repealed until 1948. In other states, similar statutes remained in place until 1967, when the U.S.

Supreme Court unanimously ruled that a bill prohibiting interracial marriage was unconstitutional:

The law was repealed in 1943 after China became a U.S. ally in World War II. But the strict immigration quotas continued for years later. It was not until the Immigration Act of 1965, which eliminated previous national-origins policies, that Chinese immigration to the United States was allowed without stringent restrictions. (Rivas)

Under the oppression of mainstream American society, Chinese communities gradually formed “Chinatowns” and survived on their own in their own way. Chinese, especially Cantonese, is the common language in Chinatown. Because the local government neglected the management and service of Chinatown, the associations and even gangs formed to control the large and small affairs in the community. Some federations would find jobs for the new immigrants, help them send letters and money back to China, and even provide medical services.

In the meanwhile, some Chinese immigrants with families in the US gave birth to children who automatically became US citizens because they were born in the US. As a result, Chinese immigrants without citizenship began to use their children’s identities to buy houses, start businesses, and make investments, and their children gradually had the opportunity to integrate into mainstream American society. During World War II, mainstream America’s sympathy for China loosened restrictions on Chinese occupations, allowing many children of Chinese immigrants to enter the U.S. military and wartime businesses:

Some worked for the government as interpreters, code-breakers, and intelligence analysts. One notable example was Colonel Won-Loy Chan, a 1936 Stanford graduate who attended the Military Intelligence Service Language School after Pearl Harbor. As part of the U.S. Army’s G2

intelligence and a member of General Joseph Stillwell's staff, Chan served in the China-Burma-India theater and later headed the Pacific Military Intelligence Research Section in Camp Ritchie, Maryland. Under his direction, a team of translators, some of them Chinese American, gathered and disseminated captured documents from the Pacific battlefield.

Chinese Americans also went to the front lines. Today, anyone envisioning men parading in World War II American military uniforms would see no Chinese faces, yet during the war, ethnic Chinese men gave their lives in numbers disproportionate to their presence in the country. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Chinese served in the military, representing about 20 percent of the Chinese population in the continental United States. (Chang, 214-215)

Under the new situation, many Chinese began to send their children to university for further studies or to study specialized occupations, and the number of Chinese professionals has increased since then. In 1940, only 3 percent of Chinese in California were professionals, by 1950 it had risen to 6 percent, and by 1960 to 18 percent.

Chinese with higher education accounted for only 2% of the proportion of Chinese in 1940, and increased to 20% of the employed people in 1960. More than half of the professionals are engaged in scientific research, accounting, engineering, drawing or teaching in institutions of higher learning. By 1959, the average income of Chinese Americans exceeded that of other Americans.

After World War II, when people looked back at the Chinese Exclusion Act, they often felt "un-American", as if the only one that thwarted Nazis and racism, embraced immigrants, and practiced multiculturalism was America. In fact, it was not. Like pluralism, the ideology of "white supremacy" and "racial superiority" was also rooted

in American society and history.

Only in such a historical and cultural context can we understand the origin of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which can be said to be the result of the prevalence of white supremacy and racism after the American Civil War of 1861-1865.

Many believed that the American Civil War, which ended with the victory of the North over the South, meant the rout of slavery and the racist ideology that underpinned it - The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln in 1863; During the "Reconstruction Period", the United States successively passed three constitutional amendments, granting equal rights to American citizens of different races and colors (including freed black slaves). But the reality was that white supremacy was on the rise at the time, and racism was not unique to the South.

In the South, in order to counteract the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation and the aforementioned constitutional amendments, states quickly passed "Black Codes" restricting the freedom of blacks, depriving them of the right to vote, restricting where they lived, how they could move, etc. At the same time, the Ku Klux Klan, a secret civil organization, was established to promote the idea of "white supremacy" by violent means.

In 1871, the U.S. Congress passed a decree outlawing the Ku Klux Klan. In 1882, the Supreme Court ruled that the Act was "unconstitutional." At that time, the main goal pursued by the Ku Klux Klan, that is, to restore white domination in the South, had been basically achieved by the electoral victory of the Democratic Party, a set of "Jim Crow Laws" aimed at strengthening racial segregation.

### 3.3 The past, present and future of Chinese immigrants

During World War II, there were nearly 120,000 Chinese living in the United States, and a total of 13,000 joined the U.S. Army on the battlefield, accounting for 11% of the total number of Chinese and 22% of Chinese men at that time, that is, every 5 men. There is one Chinese who joins the army, which is much higher than that of other ethnic groups.

According to estimates by the Center of Military History, about 40% of the Chinese who joined the U.S. military during World War II were not native Americans. During World War II, Congress repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, and many Chinese became U.S. citizens through military service. citizen.

Chinese soldiers in World War II, like other ethnic soldiers, made great contributions to defending the United States, defeating Nazi Germany and Japanese militarism, but unfortunately the collective contribution of Chinese soldiers has been ignored for a long time. The Chinese American WWII Veterans Congressional Gold Medal Act recognizes the outstanding contributions of Chinese American service members.

To this end, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance launched the Chinese American WWII Veterans Recognition Project, which recognizes and recognizes all Chinese Americans who served in the U.S. military during World War II.

The prevailing situation of racism in American society did not fundamentally change until the middle and late 20th century. Under the impact of the civil rights movement, the United States successively promulgated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which abolished the segregation system and voting rights discrimination at the legal level.

But even so, the ideological struggle between "white supremacy" and pluralism is still far from over. For example, the southern state of Mississippi did not formally ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which abolished slavery in 1865, until 1995.

Today, the issue of racism still emerges from time to time in the daily lives of Americans, and many politicians still show shortsightedness or indifference to this issue in their words and deeds.

Many of the current problems in American society, including the politically correct layer on immigration, need to be traced back to the changes since the American Civil War and Reconstruction. The same is true for the experience of Chinese immigrants in American society, and the fate of Chinese immigrants. It is closely related to the experience of many ethnic groups such as African Americans, even after the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Historically, the Chinese have often become part of the wealthy class of the host country because of their tenacity and hard work. But the diligence of the Chinese has also led to envy and hatred. The local people often think that the Chinese have seized their job opportunities and taken away their resources.

In 1851, there were only 25,000 Chinese in California. By 1870, it had risen to 63,000. By 1882, the number of Chinese exceeded 100,000, but compared with the whole of California and even the United States, the number of Chinese was still small. And unlike other immigrants, the purpose of Chinese coming to the United States is to work and earn money, and they have no plans to settle in the United States.

This can be seen from the gender ratio. The ratio of male to female Chinese in the United States was as high as 20:1, and male Chinese were often already married *quando?*; by 1880, the number of Chinese leaving the United States had exceeded the

number of people who went to the United States:

The numbers alone tell a discouraging tale. Back in 1880, on the eve of the Exclusion Act, the male-female ratio in the ethnic Chinese community was more than twenty to one—100,686 men and 4,779 women. By 1920, deaths and departures had reduced the male Chinese population, while a small number of births had increased the female population, but there were still seven Chinese men for every Chinese woman.

One significant cause of this disproportion was that U.S. immigration policies prevented Chinese workingmen from bringing their wives into the country. The law automatically assigned to women the status of their husbands, so if their husbands were categorized as “laborers,” their wives would be, too, making them ineligible for admission to the country. Only the wives of bona fide Chinese merchants were welcome. (Chang, 167)

In addition to the competitive relationship, the unique appearance and culture of the Chinese have also aroused the disgust of the white people. In the eyes of the white people, the Chinese have strange braids, do not believe in Christianity, behave strangely, and are independent in groups and rarely interact with other ethnic groups. Competitive relationship and cultural hostility have made whites increasingly disgusted with Chinese people. As the representative of this group of people, American labor unions have begun to strongly advocate Chinese exclusion policies. They have vowed to drive all Chinese out of the United States.

In October 1965, when the new US immigration law came into effect, Chinese immigrants finally obtained the same rights as immigrants from other countries. In the following decades, an unprecedented wave of Chinese immigration occurred in the United States, driving the rapid growth of the local Chinese population. Between 1960 and 2011, the Chinese population in the United States jumped from 240,000 to 4.01 million, an increase of about 15.7 times:



The postwar period opened with the Chinese in America enjoying a greater level of acceptance by fellow Americans than they had ever experienced. China and the United States had fought together to defeat an empire that had attacked both nations, and their wartime amity continued into the early postwar period. This new American perception regarding the Chinese led to a whole new direction in government policy, very much easing the lives of Chinese Americans. (Chang, 222)

The repeal of the "Chinese Exclusion Act" and the rise of affirmative action made the US immigration policy gradually open. Since the mid-1960s, ethnic minorities have been legally protected in terms of choosing residential areas, education and employment, and a new generation of Chinese immigrants and their children also began to spread across major cities in the United States, and actively into mainstream American society.

Due to the improvement of economic and social status, many new Chinese immigrants no longer chose Chinatown as their residence, but turned their attention to the emerging Chinese-inhabited suburbs. All the signs seemed to point to the same thing: Chinatown is no longer the preferred place to live for a new generation of Chinese immigrants. However, Chinatowns took root in major cities in the United States and became part of urban communities. Its own long and constantly stable ethnic social structure and ethnic economy ensured the continued development of Chinatown.

The development of Chinese associations is one of the important community organizations that maintain Chinatown's connection with the outside world and prevent social isolation in Chinatown. If a building belongs to a certain hometown association or clan association, it will become a center for members of the same family, including middle-class members who have migrated to the suburbs, in the long

run. Many new immigrant associations have also established organizations such as chambers of commerce and professional associations to join forces with traditional community organizations in Chinatown to strengthen the social structure of ethnic communities and deal with matters of common concern.

With the expansion of ethnic groups and the diversification of economic and cultural activities, the community participation of Chinese immigrants has also become increasingly diverse. A resident of a Chinatown can be both an employee and customer of the ethno-economic economy, a member of an ethno-community, a member of a church, and an active member of other organizations.

The development of the ethnic economy and the stabilization of the social structure in Chinatown not only strengthens the connection between new and old Chinese immigrants, but also avoids the impoverishment and social isolation of the community, allowing Chinese immigrants with low socioeconomic backgrounds living in it to gain access to Chinatown through Chinatown. This is relatively uncommon in urban communities of other ethnicities.

Traditional Chinese groups have adjusted their pace with the changes of the times, and new Chinese immigrant groups have begun to rise in and out of Chinatown. Many Chinese community organizations have integrated American and Chinese cultures and have become an important force in protecting Chinatown from capital erosion.

Many Chinatowns are strategically located in urban centers and are often threatened by real estate developments. In this regard, the community's civil rights organizations will play a certain restrictive role in the investment of real estate capital. Coupled with the support of relevant local legislation, it is helpful to protect Chinatown.

For Chinese Americans, Chinatown has gradually lost its function as a "gathering place", but culturally still maintains its ethnic identity. Today's Chinatown is not only

one of the major Chinese community models in the United States, but also an indispensable and important part of the diverse culture of the United States.

For today's Chinese immigrants, the function of Chinatown has changed. Economically, Chinatown has changed from a traditional Chinese settlement area to a tourist area and a commercial area; culturally, the function of Chinatown is mostly expressed as a highly concentrated activity area representing Chinese culture; politically, in order to win the support of Chinese voters, all levels of the United States Candidates for government office visit Chinatown to canvass votes.

The social structure of Chinatown supports the ethnic economy, and active ethnic economic activity in turn supports the continued development of the Chinatown economy. Many activities representing Chinese culture, such as traditional festivals, dragon and lion dances, cultural markets, etc., are still held in Chinatown today, demonstrating the efforts made by Chinese organizations to enhance the image of Chinese culture.

The development of tourism has also increased American society's demand for Chinatowns in large port cities. Today, Chinatown has become an "outpost" for the spread of Chinese culture overseas. Chinatown meets the needs of all ethnic groups in the United States for Chinese food, as well as the curiosity of those interested in Asian culture.

With the increasingly tolerant living environment, the Chinese community achieved rapid development. Over the past few decades, a large number of Chinese elites have emerged in the political, business, scientific, educational, academic, cultural and sports circles of the United States, and more ordinary Chinese have also walked out of Chinatown and strived to integrate into mainstream society. Among the various ethnic minorities in the United States, they are regarded as a "model minority":

In 1982, Newsweek ran a favorable article under the headline “Model Minority.” Sociologist William Peterson had invented the term in 1966 to describe Japanese Americans, but the media soon borrowed the phrase to describe other Asian Americans, including the Chinese. Other stories soon appeared in the popular press to celebrate Chinese achievement. In 1986, both the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour and the NBC Nightly News praised the academic prominence of the Chinese and Asian American community. “Why are Asian Americans doing so exceptionally well?” Mike Wallace of CBS’s 60 Minutes asked in 1987. “They must be doing something right. Let’s bottle it.” (Chang, 301)

In the 1950s and 1960s, immigrants from China (especially Hong Kong and Taiwan) came to the United States with many educated and skilled urbanites; most of them were able to escape the constraints of living in Chinatown and better integrate with mainstream American culture ground fusion.

At the same time, immigrants without sufficient knowledge and skills to work continued to use Chinatown as their base in the United States. The streetscape and culture of Chinatown gradually froze in the mid-to-late twentieth century as young people and new immigrants from China tended to live on the outskirts of big cities.

In short, America’s Chinatowns are the product of mainstream American society’s oppression of the Chinese community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After a hundred years of independent development, today’s Chinatowns can no longer reflect the scene of contemporary China, nor can it get rid of its isolation from the mainstream American culture. However, the development and prosperity of Chinatowns is still a testimony to the perseverance and self-improvement of generations of Chinese immigrants in foreign countries:

In the 1960s, anti-Chinese discrimination remained strong, but the ethnic

Chinese were also no longer bottled up in Chinatowns, as they once were, dependent upon community organizations to protect their rights, their livelihood, and at times their lives. Indeed, some newer arrivals—the intellectuals and those members of the educational and social elite of China who had managed to find their way, however circuitously, to the United States—had not even passed through America’s Chinatowns. They had moved directly into university towns and cities, aided by their English-language skills. They also benefited from the fact that America, whose Declaration of Independence held as self-evident that “all men are created equal,” was about to confront the fearful reality of its own racism. (Chang, 244)

In 1960, the US government promulgated a new immigration law, which further improved the situation of Chinese immigrants. Under the new immigration law, Asian immigrants can move to the United States through the normal route or as refugees, and women have the same rights. As a result, the composition of immigrants has changed dramatically: the number of immigrants has increased rapidly, and the Chinese have become one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States in recent decades:

The earliest Chinese immigrants were virtually all men from Canton or the Pearl River Delta, southern coastal areas that used the Cantonese language. There were exceptions, including a few well-to-do merchants or sons of families that could be described as mercantile, but these individuals were rare, and women even more so.

(...)

The next Chinese immigrants had a broader range of geographical origins, and they included significantly more who used the Mandarin language.

Although the persons who were diplomats or from other elite backgrounds remained uncommon, they had become less scarce in absolute terms and more significant in proportional terms (because immigration exclusion ensured extremely low overall numbers). From 1949, for two generations (forty years), the bulk of Chinese immigration started not from mainland China, due to restrictions on emigration, but from Taiwan and Hong Kong. (Wu)

The prevailing situation of racism in American society did not fundamentally change until the middle and late 20th century. Under the impact of the Civil Rights movement, the United States successively promulgated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which abolished the segregation system and voting rights discrimination at the legal level. But even so, the ideological struggle between “white supremacy” and pluralism is still far from over. For example, the southern state of Mississippi did not formally ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which abolished slavery in 1865, until 1995.

The characteristics of Chinese immigrants are that they work very hard, are willing to accept relatively low wages, and at the same time live frugally and spend little, which has also become the economic reason for their boycott in the United States. When white laborers organize strikes to raise wages, the Chinese are often seen as “taking advantage” of the situation, undermining the collective bargaining action of other laborers. Chinese people’s habit of frugal food is considered a lack of contribution to the local economy. Some people in the United States still have prejudice against Chinese people.

In the context of the rise of China, the mainstream American society began to recognize the importance of the Chinese. According to statistics, there are nearly 4 million Chinese in the United States today, and it is expected to reach 6 million in 2020, becoming the third largest ethnic minority in the United States. In American

political elections, the Chinese have gradually begun to change their image and play an increasingly important role, exerting a big influence on various elections. The Chinese community also began to unite to push Congress to apologize to the Chinese.

On May 26, 2011, Chinese American Congresswoman Judy May Chu and others submitted motions to the Senate and House of Representatives, asking Congress to face up to a series of laws persecuting Chinese, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and formally apologize. They called on Chinese Americans to work hard to push Congress to pass this bill and bring this shameful history to an end:

“The unanimous passage of this bill shows that there is strong, bipartisan support for acknowledging the terrible acts perpetrated by the American government against individuals of Chinese descent,” said Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., whose grandfather was a victim of the legislation. Rep. Chu introduced a similar bill, also with bipartisan support, into the House. (Margolis)

The haze of the Chinese Exclusion Act seemed to be over, but the U.S. government did not carry out deep reflection on the historical crimes committed by it for a long time. This situation continued until 2011. On October 6 of the same year, the U.S. Senate passed Resolution 201, formally apologizing for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882-1904, acknowledging that the Chinese Exclusion Act did not conform to the principle of the United States Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal, and that it did not conform to the spirit of the U.S. Constitution. On June 18, 2012, the House of Representatives also passed Resolution 683, expressing apology for the Chinese Exclusion Act.

The apology from the US Congress was not easy to come by. It embodies the unremitting efforts of the Chinese community and people of insight from other ethnic groups. According to statistics, there are 165 Chinese groups specifically participating

in the House of Representatives apology case; there are both overseas Chinese groups in Taiwan and new overseas Chinese groups in the mainland. Of course, the fundamental reason for the apology case to pass is the improvement of the political and economic status of the Chinese in recent decades and the reborn changes in the image of the Chinese:

It's been 129 years since the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed, but the Oct. 6 Senate resolution apologizing for it was welcomed nonetheless.

The resolution also apologizes for other anti-Chinese legislation enacted in the subsequent 60 years and puts the Senate on record as affirming for Chinese and other Asian immigrants the same civil rights afforded other nationalities. (Margolis)

In addition, the improvement of China's international status and the steady development of Sino-US relations in recent years have also created a favorable external environment for the passage of the apology case.

The passage of the Chinese exclusion apology is a belated justice for the Chinese, and a milestone victory for Chinese Americans in pursuit of equality and dignity over the past 130 years. Congress recognizes and reflects on that dark chapter in American history. Taking history as a mirror is a confirmation of the founding spirit of the United States, and is conducive to preventing the recurrence of similar incidents:

As the Senate resolution notes, "[T]he contributions of persons of Chinese descent in the agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction, fishing, and canning industries were critical to establishing the foundations for economic growth in the Nation, particularly in the western United States." (Margolis)

It should be pointed out that it is unrealistic to hope that a single apology case will



completely eliminate the residual effects of the racist discrimination and the Chinese Exclusion Act, because racial discrimination is still deeply rooted in the national consciousness of the United States and penetrates into various fields such as American society, culture, politics, and economy.

In 2012, just a few days after the Congressional apology was passed, the mainstream American newspapers *The New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* did not have any news reports. This result is quite intriguing. Obviously, the passage of the Chinese-exclusion apology is only the beginning, not the end, for Chinese Americans. There is still a long way to go to enhance the status of the Chinese and protect the rights and interests of the Chinese.

## Conclusion

For Westerners, the East used to be a myth. The unique language, the vast sea of cultural classics, the splendid literature and art, and the wise philosophy and religion all make Westerners feel very magical. However, in the past two hundred years, along with the process of economic globalization, the mysterious Orientals have also been mercilessly involved in the world of Westerners.

In the early days of the founding of the United States, when the construction of the east coast came to an end and the development of the west began, the Chinese were introduced into American society as laborers. According to historical records, the earliest Asian immigrants to the United States were Chinese who arrived in the United States in the 1780s. After 1849, a large number of Chinese immigrants entered the United States.

They labored on plantations, built railways, developed mines, and reclaimed wasteland, all of which contributed to the development and construction of American society. Unfortunately, due to cultural and racial differences, these Chinese immigrants in the United States also suffered endless disasters, and the situation of these immigrants did not gradually improve until after the Second World War.

In 1960, the US government promulgated a new immigration law, and the number of Chinese immigrants increased rapidly. Especially after the 1970s, the U.S. government revised the immigration law to expand the high-tech talent team, and a large number of Chinese intellectuals poured into the United States, and the composition of immigrants has undergone major changes. Most of the new immigrants quickly entered the mainstream society of the United States and made significant contributions to the development and construction of the United States, which also attracted the attention of the American government.

The United States has always considered itself to be a city on a hill leading the progress of mankind, and believes that the democratic system in the United States represents the direction of human progress. Americans wrote impressively in the Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal, and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Americans believe that the mission of the United States is to send these creeds to the world and light the way ahead for those who are still in the dark.

American creeds may seem beautiful, but ironically, before the 1960s, these creeds had a stark racial bias. Only white people were entitled to these rights, and those who were minorities were considered inferior and not worthy of being on an equal footing with white people.

The Chinese never wanted to fight against the US government, they just wanted to make some money here, and then return home and let their poor families live a prosperous life, but even so, they were still abused and discriminated against by white people.

Under public opinion and pressure, the US Congress passed the landmark “Chinese Exclusion Act” in 1882, restricting Chinese workers from entering the United States. The Chinese living in the United States have been humiliated and discriminated against for nearly half a century since the passing of the exclusion act. The act was renewed every ten years until Soong Meiling visited the United States in 1943.

Her beauty and elegance made the Americans at that time change their impression of the Chinese. A second and more important reason for the end of the exclusion act is, that on the battlefield of World War II, the United States needed China as an ally to resist the Japanese army in the Pacific region. On December 17, Congress finally ended the half-century-long Chinese Exclusion Act.

Although the repeal of the Act ended the era of official Chinese exclusion in the United States, the Chinese living in the United States still suffer from varying degrees of exclusion and even discrimination.

However, from another perspective, why did the Chinese endure such a discriminatory bill for so long? It has a lot to do with the attitude of Eastern culture towards ruling authority. For example, even the Japanese who suffered injustice and were sent to “concentration camps” by the US government during World War II chose to remain silent after the war, and did not want to mention the sad days spent in the North American concentration camps. There are occasional cases of Chinese people in North America suing the government, but in the end they are just isolated cases. The vast majority of the Chinese chose to stay in the United States and live humbly.

Currently, 1/4 of the employed Chinese in the United States work in scientific and specialized fields. The total income of Chinese families far exceeds that of white families, and the level of education is also higher than that of white families. As a group, Chinese families in the United States are wealthy and well-educated.

However, even after the White Left came to power in the 1960s, the Chinese were discriminated against and suppressed because of their poor integration into the United States and insufficient political participation. If the Chinese cannot actively integrate into American society, nor can they unite to advocate their rights and interests, I am afraid that the situation of Chinese in the United States will continue to be difficult.

Through the study of the history of Chinese in the United States, we can clearly see that the Chinese in the United States have roughly gone through three historical stages in the past 200 years:

The first stage was from the 1780s to 1940, when racial discrimination prevailed;

The second stage, from 1945 to 1960, saw a group of scholars who demanded a re-examination of Chinese immigration, who strongly condemned the past decades, under the guidance of racial discrimination, against Asian immigrants, mainly Chinese immigrants. policies and propaganda that distort history;

The third stage is after the 1960s, when the US government expanded its high-tech talent team and revised immigration laws, so that a large number of intellectuals poured into the United States. focus on. From the above three stages of historical development, we can see that the immigration policies formulated by the US government in each period are closely centered on the development and construction of the country.

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