

The Changing Patterns of Trans-Pacific Migration: Its Past and Present

Daizaburo Yui

Introduction

There are many reasons leading people to cross national borders. They do so not only to settle permanently in other countries but also as migrant laborers, people dispatched by their corporate employers, students, and tourists. With the exception of immigrants, however, all these groups travel with the intention of returning home at some point, so most “histories of immigration” have not taken them into account. There are cases, however, when people going overseas as migrant workers or students stay permanently for a wide variety of reasons, becoming immigrants in the end. Moreover, amid the harsh waves of globalization battering the shores of countries around the world today, there are cases when temporary residents such as employees dispatched by corporations have major impacts on their host societies. Taking all this into account, we can see that immigration history as traditionally practiced has been too narrowly conceived, and that is necessary to adopt a new framework—a history of international labor migration, with a holistic approach taking into account groups such as migrant workers and corporate staffers.

Traditional histories of immigration, moreover, have tended to treat “push” factors on the part of sending countries and “pull” factors on the part of receiving countries in parallel in their analysis of the structural factors behind migration. However, in the case of migration from Asia to Western countries and their colonies, the “push” factors themselves were often created by the Western countries receiving those migrants. For example, the impact of the British and American opening of many port cities in southeastern China following the Opium War cannot be ignored as a factor behind the large-scale mid-19th century migration from that region to the British colonies and the United States.¹⁾

Accordingly, rather than analyzing “push” and “pull” factors in parallel, an approach is needed that takes into account mutual interconnections within a single “world system.” This is particularly true because, in the current age of globalization, the autonomy of the nation-state is weakening, and there is an intimate relationship between the increasingly active movement of people across borders and the situation in which cross-border flows of not only trade and investment but also finance and information have become routine matters. At the same time,

¹⁾ Yui Daizaburo “19-seiki kōhan no San Furanshisuko Shakai to Chūgokujin Haiseki Undō” [San Francisco Society in the Second Half of the 19th Century and the Chinese Exclusion Movement], in *Seiki Tenkanki no Sekai* [The World at the Turn of the Century], eds. Ito Sadayoshi, et. al. (Miraisha, 1989).

however, because it is a fact that control over emigration and immigration remains an exclusionary power of the nation-state, human movement across borders must be seen not only in world system terms but also from a “transnational” standpoint taking into account the constraints imposed by nation-states.²⁾

The “diaspora” paradigm, meanwhile, has attracted attention in recent years as a new approach in research on human migration. This term owes its origins to a Greek word for “dispersed people” driven from their homes, and the Jews, who are said to have maintained their identity even as they were dispersed around the world after the fall of the ancient state of Israel, are the archetypal diasporic group. This concept has also been applied to the people of African descent who were subjected to forced migration to South and North America as slaves, noting that they were able to maintain a common consciousness known as “pan-Africanism.”³⁾

This diaspora concept has led to critical examination of assimilation to the mainstream culture of the receiving country, something that had been taken as a self-evident premise under the “immigration” approach, and has instead highlighted the maintenance of migrants’ home cultures and ethnic networks in their new countries. As one example of current trends, there has been a conspicuous rise in migration by technical and professional employees amid globalization and the multinational transformation of corporations. Because of their confidence in their sophisticated knowledge and technical skills, they are less attached to any given state or corporation and have a cosmopolitan consciousness, leading some to argue that in that sense they can be understood in terms of a contemporary diaspora.⁴⁾

While the question of whether these contemporary technical and professional migrants are in fact “cosmopolitan” remains to be verified, it is of great significance that the introduction of the diaspora concept has brought into question the concept of immigration under which assimilation into the mainstream culture of the receiving country was taken as a given. It is probably necessary to consider the validity of this concept in studies of ethnic Asian migrants as well. The diaspora concept has had the effect, in particular, of bringing attention to the importance of not only migrant settlers but also people who stay overseas for shorter periods.

Especially in the case of the Pacific Rim, which has come in for a lot of attention as a center of world growth, there is a need for multi-dimensional research on how chain-reaction industrialization of the East Asian region has affected human movement. It is generally thought that, as industrialization progresses, it increases demand for labor within a country and shifts that country toward being a receiver rather than sender of migrants. Japan clearly shifted from being a sender of migrants before World War II to a receiver afterwards, but is development in the newly industrializing countries of East Asia today causing the same

²⁾ Brenda S. A. Yeoh and Katie Willis, eds., *State/Nation/Transnation: Perspectives on Transnationalism in the Asia-Pacific*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1–15.

³⁾ Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), ix–xii.

⁴⁾ *Ibid.*, Ch. 7.

phenomenon? If that is the case, can we expect the growth rate of the Asian-American population, which so far has been consistently upward, to begin dropping at some point?

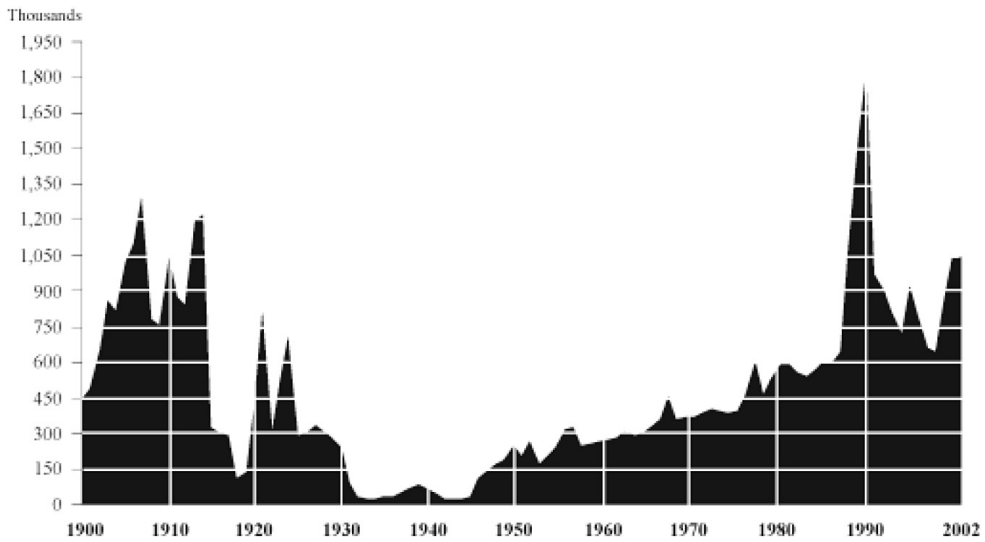
Contemporary industrialization is characterized by a shift, on the one hand, of labor-intensive manufacturing from countries such as the United States and Japan to East Asia and, on the other hand, a shift toward knowledge-intensive industries in those countries. In this process, part of an economic restructuring that took on particular momentum following the 1973 oil crisis, highly-skilled technical and professional employees dispatched by corporations have played an important role. Moreover, because ethnic Asian migrants have been prominent in migration by technical and professional staffers, it cannot be said that East Asian industrialization simply restrained the flow of people in the Pacific Rim.

In other words, when examining current human migration in the Pacific Rim, it is necessary to focus not only on unskilled workers, as in the prewar period, but also on technical and professional employees. Accordingly, in this article I would like to, after first highlighting changes in migration patterns in the Pacific Rim before and after World War II, examine how industrialization in East Asia has affected population flows in the Pacific Rim. Finally, by reconceptualizing Japanese migration to the United States as part of the macro-level composition of human flows in the Pacific Rim today, I would like to offer some projections for the future of the Japanese-American population, which is said, unlike other ethnic Asian groups, to have entered a period of stagnation.

1. Changing Patterns of Population Movements in the Pacific Rim Before and After World War II

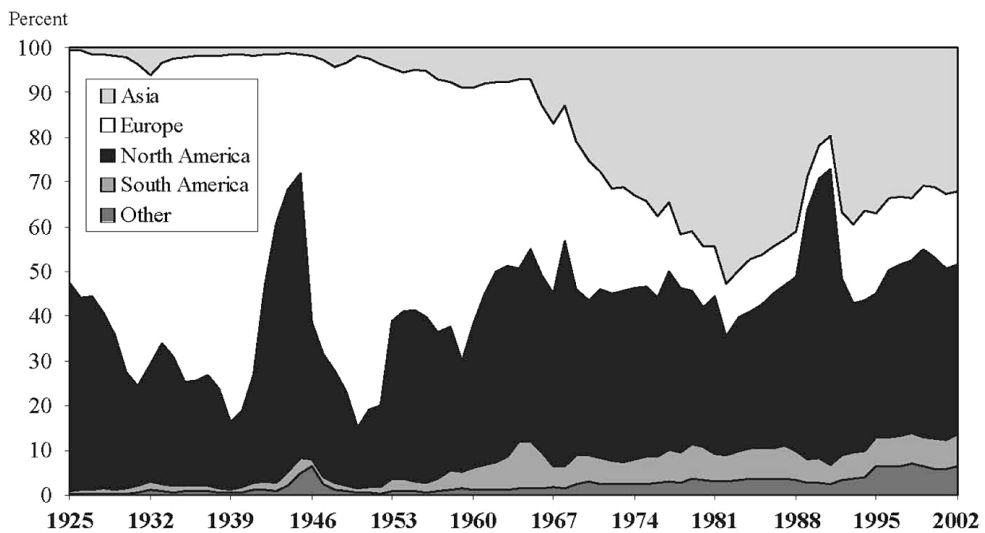
(1) Characteristics of the Prewar Period

Figure One uses Immigration and Naturalization Service statistics to illustrate annual changes in immigration to the United States between 1900 and 2002. This figure is a reminder that, even in the United States, known as a “nation of immigrants,” there are fairly large changes in the volume of immigration from one period to another, with major increases around the turn of the 20th century, from the later 19th century until the outbreak of World War I, and around the turn of the 21st century, in the years before and after 1990. Conversely, there were notable decreases in immigration during World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. The reasons for the rapid increases in immigration during the two late-century periods bear examination. Moreover, as Figure Two, illustrating changes in the origin of immigrants, shows, European immigrants were overwhelmingly dominant from the 1920s until the mid-1960s. We can also see that North American immigrants, primarily from Mexico, rose rapidly during World War II due to factors such as the Bracero Program, and continued to account for an increasing proportion of immigrants in the postwar period. Immigration from Asia, on the other hand, which accounted for a slight proportion of overall immigration during the prewar period, began to increase rapidly from about the mid-1960s to the point where it was comparable to that from North America, in contrast to immigration from Europe, which decreased sharply.



Source: U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, *2002 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2003), 5.

Figure 1. Immigrants Admitted to the USA: Fiscal Years 1900–2002



Source: Ibid., 6.

Figure 2. Legal Immigrants to the USA by Region of Birth: Fiscal Years 1925–2002

At the turn of the 20th century, why did so many people from Europe—especially from Eastern and Southern Europe—immigrate to the United States? It is often pointed out that just in that period heavy industry such as coal and steel production, centering on railroad

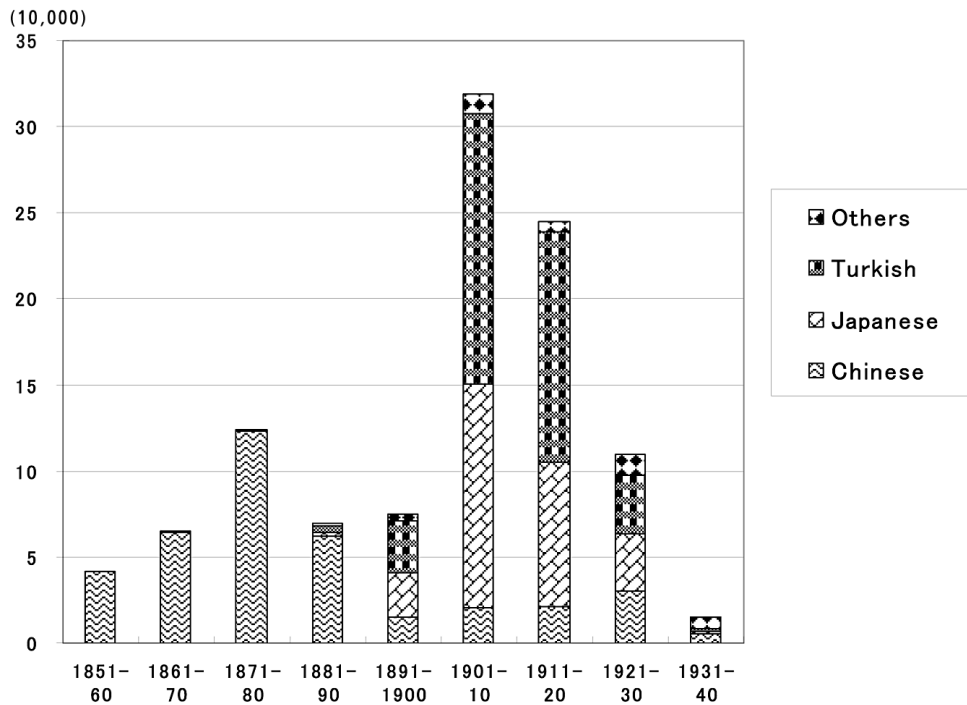
production, was growing rapidly in the United States, leading to a rapid increase in demand for industrial labor, and there is the argument that this—combined with the limited rural-to-urban migration that could be expected from a U.S. population that was then still heavily involved in agriculture—constituted a “pull factor” for immigration from Europe. Moreover, Western and Northern Europe—immigrants from which had made up the mainstream of U.S. society up to this point—were experiencing rapid industrialization by the late 19th century and had themselves become destinations for immigrants. Eastern and Southern Europe, by contrast, were agricultural regions supplying food to Western and Northern Europe. Due to the transportation revolution in shipping and railroads of this period, however, inexpensive food began to flow into Western and Northern Europe from North and South America, and it is said that Eastern and Southern European peasants, facing ruin as a result, migrated to North and South America. In other words, the “push factor” in Eastern and Southern Europe was itself caused partly by events in North and South America, and, railroad construction in North and South America was carried out with Western European capital, so late 19th century migration from Europe to the United States took place as part of the world system.

With the exception of Jews fleeing pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe, who traveled to the United States as families, most of the Eastern and Southern European immigrants to the United States during this period around the turn of the 20th century were unaccompanied male migrant workers, some of whom ended up settling in the United States for a variety of reasons.⁵⁾

While prewar immigrants from Asia were few in number, it is worth noting the prominence of the chain migration phenomenon, as illustrated in Figure Three. Until the 1880s, Chinese migration, sparked by the discovery of gold in California in 1848, accounted for most Asian migration to the United States. While over 360,000 Chinese migrated to the United States in the latter half of the 19th century, a far greater number—said to total some 4.42 million between 1876 and 1899—migrated to Southeast Asia. That is because, with much of Southeast Asia colonized by the European powers, several types of plantations were expanded, and Chinese were mobilized to supply labor. Similarly, albeit in small numbers, Chinese and Indians were sent to the distant Caribbean islands as low-wage workers to replace black slaves following the abolition of slavery in the Western European colonies there in the 1830s. As these examples show, the impact of the global reach of British colonial rule on Chinese migration in the 19th century cannot be ignored.

However, the rise of the Chinese population in the United States was accompanied by a xenophobic movement, resulting in the adoption in 1882 of the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibiting the further entry of Chinese workers, leading to a drastic drop in Chinese immigration. From the 1890s on, conversely, there was a noticeable increase in the arrival of

⁵⁾ United States, Immigration Commission, *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1911), vol. 1; Mori Satoshi, *Amerika Shihonshugishiron* [A History of American Capitalism] (Kyoto: Minerva Publishing Co., 1976), 161–173.



Source: Ibid., 12-13.

Figure 3. Asian Immigration to the United States Before World War II by Country of Origin

people from Japan and the Turkish Ottoman Empire. That is because, with the completion of a railroad across the continent, cheap grain and corn began arriving on the West Coast, leaving producers there no choice but to shift to labor-intensive crops such as vegetables and fruit, Japanese immigrants were welcomed as low-wage agricultural workers. However, following Japan's victory in 1905 in its war with Russia, a Japanese exclusion movement began to come to the fore, and first generation Japanese immigrations were classed as aliens ineligible for citizenship in the 1924 immigration law, making further migration difficult. Demand remained for low-wage farm workers on the West Coast, however, and the decline in Japanese immigration was accompanied by an increase in the arrival of Filipinos. That is because, with the Philippines having become a U.S. colony as a result of the 1898 Spanish-American War, Filipinos were able to enter the United States without being subject to the restrictions of immigration laws. Filipinos, accordingly, did not appear in Immigration and Naturalization Bureau statistics, so their numbers are not reflected in Figure Three, but they also become the objects of an exclusionary movement as hard times dragged on following the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. Under the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, which promised independence to the Philippines 10 years hence, Filipinos, like other Asians, become subject to a ban on new arrivals under immigration law, and their migration fell sharply. Prewar Asian immigrants, as we have seen, tended to arrive at first as migrant workers in response to demand for low-wage

labor, with some staying on as permanent settlers. When the population of any group rose to a certain level, however, it was met with an exclusionary movement and laws were passed barring further migration, leading to the phenomenon of other Asian groups arriving instead in a type of “chain migration.”⁶⁾

(2) Characteristics of the Postwar Period

The first characteristic of this period is that discriminatory laws toward Asian immigrants were abolished one after another from the time of World War II until the early 1950s. This was in part because the Allied Powers had to resolve racial discrimination in their own countries so they would be in a position to criticize things such as the Jewish holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime. First, the Chinese Exclusion Act was abolished in 1943. That is because, with China counted as one of the great Allied powers, it was diplomatically and militarily disadvantageous to discriminate against immigrants from that country. This legal measure made it possible for first-generation Chinese immigrants to naturalize, but the national origin quota system instituted in 1924 remained in effect for new arrivals, limiting Chinese immigration to just 105 people per year.⁷⁾

Even so, it was quite significant that laws that discriminated against Asian immigrants began to be abolished, and this trend continued into the postwar years. That is because diplomatic considerations continued to play a role after the war, with the United States, in conflict with the Soviet Union, deepening its involvement in Asia. Accordingly, laws discriminating against Filipino and Indian immigrants were abolished in July 1946, and the 1952 Walter-McCarran Act abolished laws discriminating against Japanese and Korean immigrants. This made it possible for first-generation Japanese immigrants to take citizenship but, at the same time, the “Asia Pacific triangle” clause was introduced, severely limiting new immigration from each Asian country to just 100 people a year. This clause was not abolished until the adoption of the 1965 immigration act.

The second characteristic of this period was that, because of the postwar stationing of U.S. troops in many areas of Asia, there was an increase in marriages between U.S. soldiers and local women, and, under special legislation, these “war brides” were able to enter the United States without regard to national quotas. There was also an increase in people forced to leave their homelands due to the Chinese Revolution and the other revolutions and conflicts taking place across Asia entering the United States as refugees.

The third characteristic was the abolition of entry quotas on non-West European immigrants under the 1965 immigration act, which instead gave priority to reuniting families and attracting skilled immigrants. In addition, because yearly limits were established

⁶⁾ Lucie Cheng and Edna Bonacich eds., *Labor Migration under Capitalism: Asian Workers in the United States before World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 60–64.

⁷⁾ Daizaburo Yui, “From Exclusion to Integration: Asian Americans’ Experiences in World War II,” *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 24, no. 2 (December 1992): 63–67.

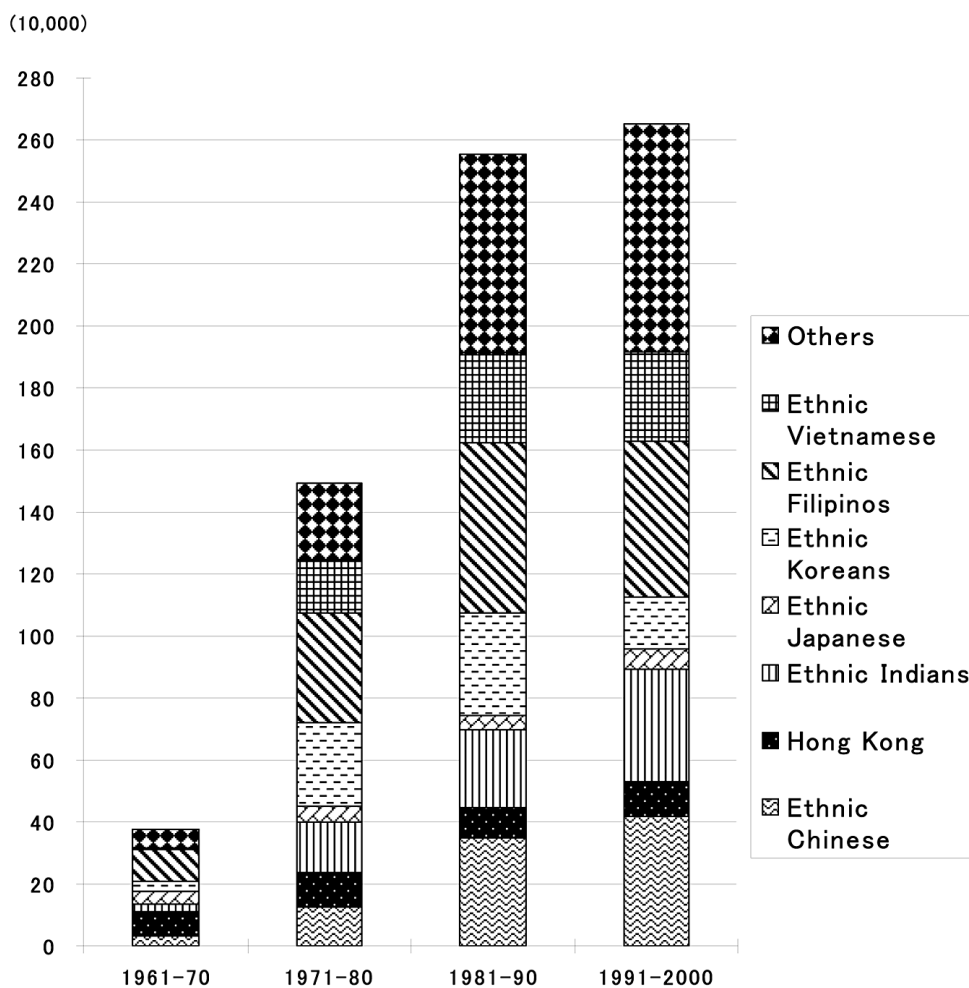
maintaining the previous level of some 170,000 from the Eastern Hemisphere, and, for the first time, of 120,000 from the Western Hemisphere, illegal immigration from Central and South America began to increase.

While the 1965 immigration act did abolish the last ethnically and racially discriminatory US immigration provisions, it was not necessarily intended to encourage immigration from Asia. If anything, it was more that with the election of the Catholic John F. Kennedy as president in 1960 and the rise of the African-American civil rights movement in the 1960s, it was no longer possible to sustain quotas based on national origin that also discriminated against non-WASP whites from Eastern and Southern Europe. However, as Figure Two shows, there was not in fact an increase in European immigration following enactment of the 1965 immigration act, with the industrializing Southern European countries beginning to attract immigrants of their own and socialist Eastern European countries placing restrictions on emigration.

There was, conversely, an unintended increase in Asian immigration, the result of people arriving as “war brides” or refugees making use of the family reunion provision of the new law to bring family members to the United States one after another. In addition, the United States had no choice but to accept large numbers of Indochinese refugees following the collapse of the South Vietnamese regime in 1975. Moreover, while the provision in the 1965 law giving preference to skilled immigrants was capped at 20 percent of total immigration, many of these spots were filled by people from Asia, with its strong emphasis on academic achievement. Of the 130,000 immigrants allowed under this provision in 1970, for example, it is said that 62 percent were from Asia. In concrete terms, this led to the arrival of many skilled and professional workers such as doctors, nurses, engineers, and scientists to the extent that many Asian countries conversely faced a “brain drain.”⁸⁾

The three factors outlined above led to an increase in Asian immigration to the United States, with the passage of the 1965 immigration act of particular importance. This increase is illustrated in Figure Four which shows, for example, that the number of Asian immigrants rose from some 427,000 in the 1960s to 3.7 times as many — 1,588,000 — in the 1970s, and to 2,738,000 in the 1980s. Growth slowed in the 1990s, with 2,795,000 Asian immigrants arriving, due in part to the adoption of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, which, to counter illegal immigration, included both penalties for employers who knowingly hired illegal immigrants and provisions allowing for the legalization of illegal immigrants who had been in the United States for a certain period of time, and resulted in a sudden increase in Central and South American immigration. At the same time, however, the 1990 immigration act also provides for the preferential admission of highly educated professional workers, leaving open the possibility for a further increase in Asian immigration, but demand for highly educated professional workers is also increasing in many Asian countries as they develop more

⁸⁾ Paul Ong, Edna Bonacich, and Lucie Cheng, eds., *The New Asian Immigration in Los Angeles and Global Restructuring* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 56–59.



Source: Ibid., 13-14.

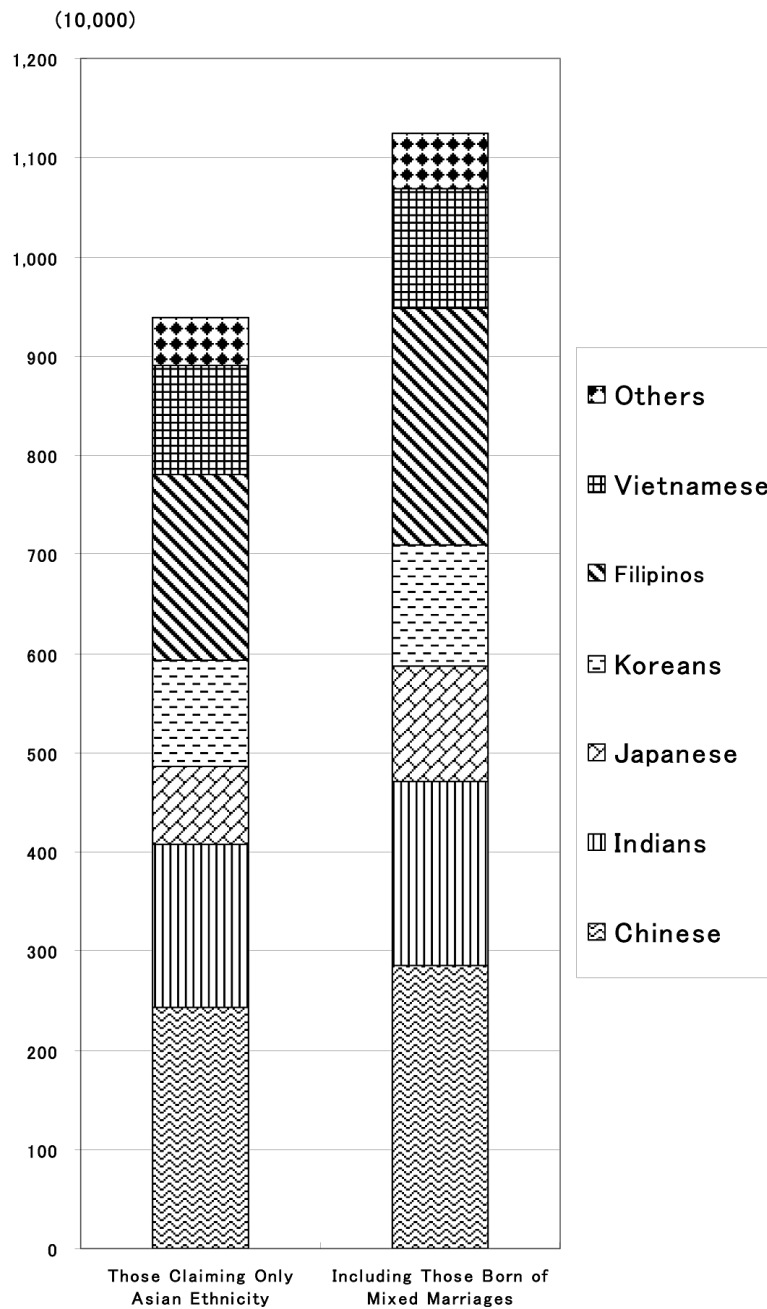
Figure 4. Asian Immigration to the United States since the 1960s by Country of Origin

sophisticated industrial structures, so it is difficult to predict whether Asian immigration to the United States will continue to increase.⁹⁾

As a result of this rapid increase in Asian immigration following the 1965 immigration act, the 2000 Census reported that those who selected “Asian” as their sole ethnic identity came to 10.17 million (3.6 percent of the total population). Including those who selected multiple ethnic identities, the total came to 11.85 million (4.6 percent), making Asians an ethnic group that cannot be ignored in the United States as shown in Figure Five.

At the same time, it should not be overlooked that there are major differences in

⁹⁾ Ibid., 52-53, 64-65.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *We the People: Asians in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2004), 1.

Figure 5. Asian Immigrants in the USA (Census 2000)

population growth rates among different groups of ethnic Asians. Of those who selected “Asian” as their sole ethnic identity in the 2000 Census, the 2.42 million (23.8 percent) ethnic Chinese were the largest group, followed by 1.68 million ethnic Filipinos (18.3 percent) in second place, 1.64 million ethnic Indians (16.2 percent) in third place, 1.11 million ethnic Vietnamese (10.9 percent) in fourth place, and 1.07 million ethnic Koreans (10.5 percent) in fifth place. Japanese-Americans, once the largest group, had fallen to sixth place, at 795,000 (7.8 percent). That is because, with postwar Japan becoming a country that no longer exports emigrants, there has been a sharp drop in new immigration, but it should not be overlooked that there is a small group of new Japanese immigrants known as the “new issei (first generation immigrants).” If one takes into account ethnic Japanese who claim more than one ethnic identification, Japanese-Americans gain about two percentage points to 1.15 million (9.7 percent of all Asian-Americans) because of their high incidence of intermarriage with other groups. A similar trend can be seen among other “old immigrant” groups such as Chinese and Filipinos who began settling in the United States before the war, but intermarriage rates are comparatively low among “new immigrants” such as Indians, Vietnamese, and Koreans.¹⁰⁾

A decade-by-decade comparison, as shown in Figure Four, illustrates that, in contrast to ethnic Chinese (including those from Hong Kong), Indians, and Filipinos, whose numbers have grown since the 1960s, new immigrants from Japan, as noted above, have been few in number. While the scale of new immigration from South Korea began to decline in the 1990s, whether this was due to the increasing sophistication of that country’s industrial structure is a question worth examining. The proportion of immigrants belonging to “other Asian groups,” meanwhile, has been increasing since the 1980s, particularly among people from countries such as Cambodia, Laos and Pakistan, and those of Middle Eastern origin.

2. World Economic Restructuring and Asian Migration

(1) The 1973 Oil Crisis and the Restructuring of the U.S. Economy

The oil-producing countries’ major increase in the price of crude oil in 1973 brought an end to high growth in the advanced countries, forcing them into a period of slow growth. During this post-oil crisis period of slow growth, countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore made use of low wages to attract foreign capital and pursue a course of export-led industrialization, leading to the emergence of the newly industrializing economies (NIEs) in East Asia. Because the labor movement was severely restricted under “developmental dictatorships” in most of these countries, they tended to have unchanging low-wage structures. With advanced countries such as the United States, meanwhile, losing the ability to compete internationally in labor-intensive industries, those industries were increasingly transferred to East Asia and Central and South America by means of direct investment, so the trend toward NIE growth gained even further momentum. In the advanced countries, on the other hand, there was a growing trend toward a more sophisticated industrial

¹⁰⁾ U.S. Census Bureau, *We the People: Asians in the United States* (Washington DC: GPO, 2000), 1.

structure specializing in high-tech sectors such as information and communications and in the financial and service sectors. This kind of transformation in economic structure, known as “restructuring,” took place in Japan as well. The shift to a higher-value yen following the 1985 Plaza Accord led to an outpouring of direct investment in developing countries, and an accelerating shift of labor-intensive manufacturing to Southeast Asia. This added impetus to industrialization in the East Asian NIEs, where the middle class began to grow and several notable cases took place in the 1980s of dictatorial regimes falling and being replaced by democratic governments. As a result, wages began to rise in the East Asian NIEs, and the wave of industrialization spread outwards as foreign corporations moved their factories to lower-wage surrounding countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia. This wave has now reached China and Vietnam as well, and trade within Asia is beginning to increase as a proportion of the region’s total trade.

In advanced countries such as the United States, meanwhile, at the same time that demand increased for the technical and professional employees who were essential to high-tech sectors such as information and communications, in the large cities that played home to the managerial and financial core staff of multinational corporations that had advanced overseas demand also grew for low-wage workers doing tasks that could not be shifted overseas such as construction, retail sales, and cleaning, as well as for highly skilled technical employees. There were also moves to compete with cheap imports from the NIEs in labor-intensive sectors such as the production of women’s garments by hiring low-wage immigrant workers in cities such as New York and Los Angeles. As part of the process of restructuring, in other words, demand increased in advanced countries such as the United States for both technical and professional employees and for unskilled low-wage workers, and newly arriving immigrants could be divided into these two types.¹¹⁾

This kind of world economic restructuring has continued since the end of the Cold War as part of the “globalization” focusing on the liberalization of finance, information and communications taking place under the overwhelming predominance of the United States, adding even further momentum to international human movement.

(2) Globalization and Asian Immigrants

According to the 2002 United Nations International Migration Report, the number of migrants worldwide, which came to 75 million in 1975, had risen to 175 million in 2000 following a particularly rapid increase in the 1990s. This is due to a trend toward advanced countries actively welcoming immigrants in response to declining birthrates and aging populations, and the average proportion of immigrants in advanced countries has grown to 8.7 percent. Of the 21 million people who migrated in the 1990s, North America absorbed 13 million, while Europe accepted 8 million. The United States remained the country that was home to the most migrants in 2000, with some 35 million, followed by Russia with 13 million,

¹¹⁾ Ong, *New Asian Immigration*, 8–19.

and Germany with seven million.¹²⁾

Amid this intensification of international migration at the end of the 20th century, Asia has seen not only migration to the United States but also, significantly, movements of migrant workers to the Middle Eastern oil producing countries and population movements within East Asia in response to the region's industrialization.

Table One provides a comparison of migration in the 1980s from South Korea, India, the Philippines, and Indonesia to the Middle East, other parts of Asia, and the United States. Labor migration to the Middle East got its start when the newly prosperous oil producing states, facing a labor shortage amid a construction boom following the major increase in crude oil prices of 1973, began importing unskilled labor from East and South Asia. As Table One shows, moreover, South Korea, which sent an average of 33,000 people to the United States each year, was sending an average of 171,000 to the Middle East. Other countries were also sending far greater numbers of people to that region than to the United States, with India sending an average of 25,000 people to the United States and 340,000 to the Middle East, and the Philippines sending 35,000 to the United States, compared to 486,000 who went to the Middle East. U.S. restrictions on immigration by unskilled workers were one reason for this trend, but it is also a fact that the sending countries saw the remittances sent by workers in the Middle East to their families at home as a valuable way of improving those countries' international balances of payments.¹³⁾

However, the outbreak of the Gulf War following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991 led to a drastic drop in the numbers of these migrant workers in the Middle East, and there was an increase in the number of people going instead to work in neighboring countries in response to the progress of industrialization in East Asia. With the rapid growth of Singapore's economy, for example, a "growth triangle" was formed with its other points at Johore, Malaysia, and the Riau islands of Indonesia, and it became common for workers to migrate across national borders.¹⁴⁾ A similar trend was seen in other Asian NIEs, with South Korea and Taiwan becoming destinations for foreign workers from the mid-1980s. Although there was a trend toward increased restrictions on foreign workers amid the economic slowdown sparked by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, it is said that later-industrializing countries such as Thailand and Malaysia are also starting to become destinations for foreign workers as they move toward more sophisticated industrial structures.¹⁵⁾

¹²⁾ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *International Migration Report 2002* (New York: United Nations, 2002), 2-4.

¹³⁾ Hayase Yasuko, ed., *Ajia Taiheiyō Chiiki ni okeru Kokusai Jinkō Idō* [International Population Movement in the Asia-Pacific Region] (Chiba: JETRO and Institute of Developing Economics, 2001), 6-7.

¹⁴⁾ Fu-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung, eds., *Emerging World Cities in Asia Pacific* (Tokyo: United Nations Press, 1996), 423-430.

¹⁵⁾ Hayase, *Ajia Taiheiyō*, 10-12; OECD, *International Migration in Asia* (Paris: OECD, 2001), 7-17.

Table 1. Annual Average Number of Workers by Destination Sent by Major Asian Labor-Exporting Countries (unit: thousands)

	1980-89 Middle East	1980-89 Asia	1981-90 USA
Korea	171.4	18.5	33.3
India	340.4	—	25
Philippines	486.4	110.1	35.4
Indonesia	65.3	13.3	1.4

Source: Asian Labor Migration Database maintained by United Nations Polulation Division, cited in Hayase Yasuko, ed., *Ajia Taiheiyō Chiiki ni okeru Kokusai Jinkō Idō* [International Polulation Movement in the Asia-Pacific Region] (Chiba: JETRO and Institute of Developing Economics, 2001), 20; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *2002 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2003), 14, except for statistics on Indonesia, which are drawn from *Statistical Record of Asian Americans*, 412.

Table 2. Advancement Number of Japanese Companies to the USA

	Company No.	%
-1966	12	1.2
1967-71	28	2.8
1972-76	69	6.9
1977-81	118	11.9
1982-86	231	23.2
1987-91	536	53.9
Answered Companies	994	95.1
Company No.	1045	100

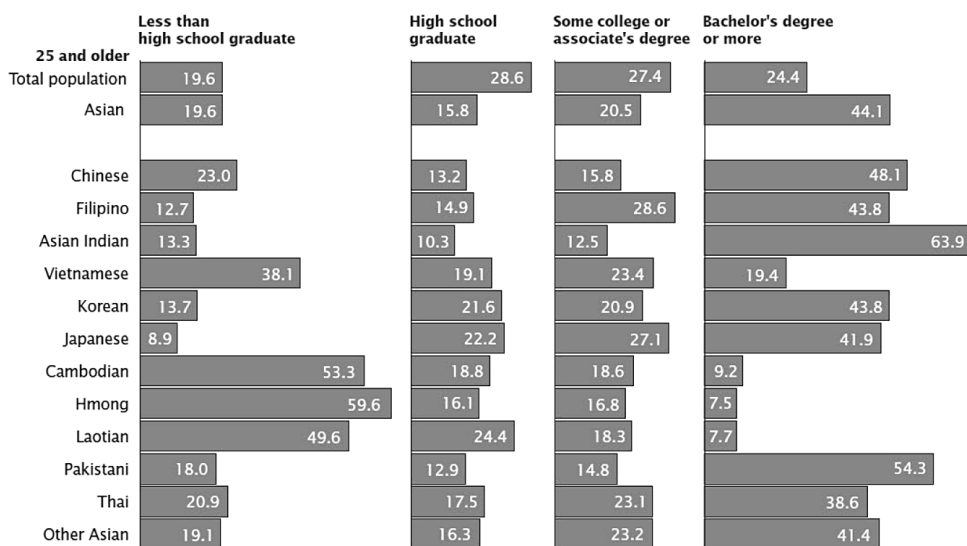
Source: Nihon Bōeki Shinkōkai [Japan External Trade Organization], *Zaibei Nikkei Kigyō no Keiei Jittai* [Managerial Situations of Japanese Manufacturing Companies in the USA] (Tokyo: JETRO, 1992), 11.

(3) The Bifurcation of Asian Migrants in the United States

While the movement of labor within Asia is becoming more common, as we have seen, there is a trend toward discrimination based on education and skills. Singapore, for example, welcomes highly skilled foreign workers not unskilled laborers.

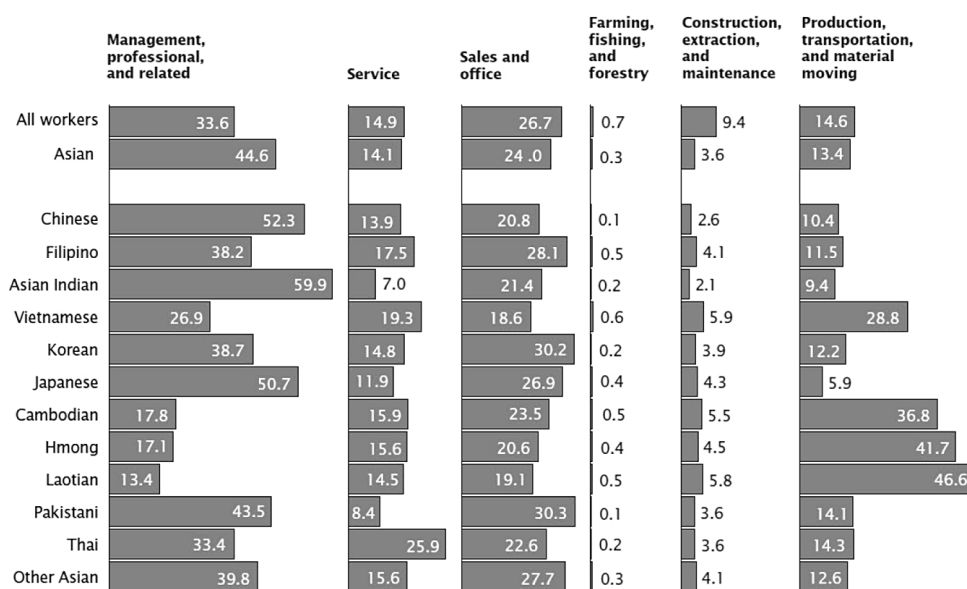
A similar trend is seen in the United States, where there is an increasing bifurcation of Asian migrants into highly educated workers who take technical and professional jobs, on the one hand, and those with little education who take unskilled jobs. This can be seen in Figures Six through Eight, based on data from the 2000 Census.

To first examine Figure Six, a comparison of educational attainment among ethnic Asian groups, it shows that, while nearly half of immigrants from Indochina failed to finish high school, over half of those from India and Pakistan are college graduates, as are nearly half of those of Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Japanese descent. Figure Seven shows, moreover, that



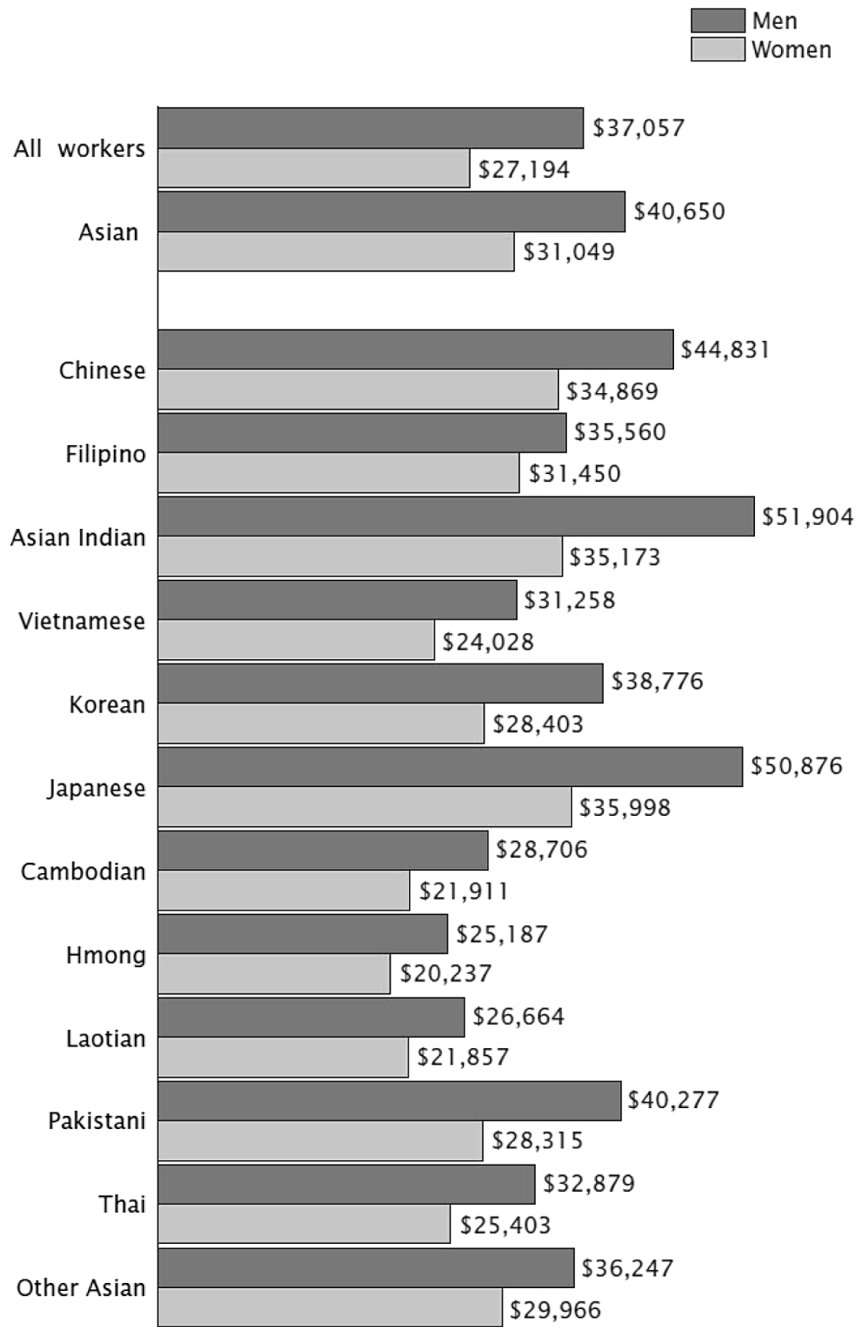
Source: Ibid., 12.

Figure 6. Educational Attainment of Asian Immigrants in the USA: 2000



Source: Ibid., 14.

Figure 7. Occupation of Asian Immigrants in the USA: 2000



Source: Ibid., 15.

Figure 8: Median Earnings of Asian Immigrants by Sex in the USA: 2000

while over half of ethnic Chinese, Indians, and Japanese hold managerial or professional jobs, some 30 percent to 40 percent of ethnic Indochinese work in sectors such as production and transportation. Figure Eight, in addition, comparing median annual incomes, shows that, while ethnic Indian and Japanese men had medians of over \$50,000, those of Cambodian, Laotian, and Hmong descent trailed at only around \$25,000.

This all goes to show that there is a bifurcation taking place among Asian ethnic groups in the United States between, on the one hand, those such as ethnic Chinese, Indians, and Japanese, who tend to be highly educated and employed in well-paid technical and professional positions and, on the other hand, ethnic Indochinese, who tend to be poorly educated and employed in low-paid blue-collar jobs. There is, of course, variation within each ethnic group, so this bifurcation represents only the average situation, and the proportion of ethnic Asians as a whole who are highly educated and engaged in technical and professional jobs is extremely high compared to the US average.

It is clear in that sense that the increase of Asian immigrants in the United States is making a major contribution to the supply of technical and professional employees, who are in increasing demand as society becomes increasingly sophisticated in accordance with the revolution in information and communications. Because, moreover, there are many Asian migrants who travel to the United States after completing high school in their home countries or who attend college in the United States and remain, taking jobs, after graduation, this has undoubtedly caused a “brain drain” in Asia. However, whether this trend will continue is an interesting point for discussion, given that it can be foreseen that professional employees in the United States will be recruited by their home countries as the industrial structure becomes even more sophisticated in countries around Asia, and that this makes it unclear whether Asian migrants to the United States will continue to increase at their present pace.

3. The Advance of Japanese Corporations Into the US and the “New Issei”

(1) The Advance of Japanese Corporations Into the US

It was in the mid-1970s, when U.S.-Japanese economic friction began to heat up, that the advance of Japanese corporations into the United States began to attract notice, with manufacturers of electrical appliances such as televisions starting to assemble their products in the U.S. as a way around American import restrictions. As a result of intensifying friction in the auto business in the 1980s, Japanese carmakers began to move into the U.S. in a serious way, and the increase in the value of the yen following the 1985 Plaza Accord made it a matter of course for corporations that were highly dependent on exports to the United States to begin manufacturing there. A 1991 JETRO survey, for example, found that there were 1,563

¹⁶⁾ Kawamura Tetsuji, ed., *Gurōbaru keizaika no Amerika Nikkei Kōjō* [Japanese Factories in America Amid Economic Globalization] (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shimpusha, 2005), 6–15; JETRO, *Zaibei Nikkei Kigyō Keiei no Jittai* [The Facts about Japanese Corporate Management in the United States] (Tokyo: JETRO, 1992), 10–11.

Japanese manufacturing plants in the United States. Of the 994 plants responding to the survey, only four percent had been set up in 1971 or earlier, while 19 percent were opened between 1972 and 1981, and 77 percent were set up between 1982 and 1991.¹⁶⁾

With the bursting of the economic bubble in Japan in the early 1990s, it is said that some 10 percent of Japanese enterprises, led by banks and securities companies, pulled out of the United States. With the U.S. economy going strong in the 1990s, however, manufacturing firms with significant sales in the United States tended to maintain their presence there. With the U.S. market remaining important to Japanese manufacturers, North America accounted for 49.9 percent of Japanese direct foreign investment as of 2001, compared to 19.2 percent in East Asia, and 18.4 percent in the EU.¹⁷⁾

(2) Characteristics of Japanese Society in the U.S.

As more Japanese corporations set up shop in the United States and their activities took on a long-term character, there was also an increase in Japanese long-term residents in the country. This can be seen in the Foreign Ministry's "Statistics on the Number of Japanese Residents Overseas," for example, which probably underestimate the actual situation because they rely on the self-registration of Japanese living in one place overseas for three months or longer, a limitation that should be kept in mind. The figures for 1986 found 88,000 long-term Japanese residents and 70,000 permanent residents in the United States. Seventeen years later, in 2003, these figures had increased to 225,000 long-term residents, 2.5 times the previous number; and 106,000 permanent residents, 1.5 times the previous number. Japanese long-term overseas residents worldwide totaled 619,000 in 2003, so those in the United States accounted for 36 percent of the total, while permanent Japanese residents in the U.S. also made up 36 percent of the worldwide total of 291,000, showing the high proportion of Japanese overseas residents who live in the United States.

Since the 2000 Census counted 795,000 Japanese-Americans, not counting those born of mixed marriages, the number of permanent Japanese residents as of 2003 came to more than 13 percent of this figure, while the total of long-term and permanent Japanese residents — 331,000 — came to over 40 percent of the number of Japanese-Americans. It would be a mistake, of course, to view Japanese-Americans and Japanese residents of the U.S. as one group, since they differ not only in citizenship but in history, lifestyle, and culture, but it is important to analyze their relationship because some permanent residents obtain U.S. citizenship and became "new Issei." The 2000 Census found that 60.5 percent of Japanese-Americans were U.S.-born, indicating that there are far fewer new migrants than among other Asian ethnic groups, of whom an average of just 31.1 percent were U.S.-born. The proportion of those who are "foreign-born but who have naturalized" came to 10.1 percent, however, and this group clearly includes the "new Issei." The total proportion of foreign-born Japanese-

¹⁷⁾ Keizai Sangyō Shō [Japan, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry], *Tsūshō Hakusho 2003* [*Trade White Paper on International Trade, Japan 2003*] (Tokyo: JETRO), Figure 2-3-30.

Americans, moreover, came to 29.4 percent, a group which no doubt includes Japanese residents of the United States.

This all shows that, while many people have the strong impression that the Japanese-American population is stagnant because there are few new arrivals, there has been a confirmed increase in the number of “new Issei.” This group includes self-employed people such as proprietors of and chefs at Japanese restaurants, people who stayed on to work after graduating from U.S. universities, and those who have taken jobs at American companies, but there also appears to be an increase in recent years of people sent by Japanese corporations for longer periods who are taking U.S. citizenship. The author gained this impression during field research in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas in 1994 and 2004. As of 2000, for example, employees sent by Japanese corporations, along with their family members, totaled some 10,000 in California. After the collapse of the Japanese economic bubble, it is said that more Japanese corporations, to reduce the expense of training employees for duty overseas, stretched their stays from the previous three to five years to a longer five to 10 years. It appears that, as a result of this lengthening of stays, employees have a hard time returning to the home office in Japan and, with their children sometimes electing to stay on in the U.S. after attending American college, it is becoming more common for the parents to decide to stay on as well. In such cases, it appears that many corporations will convert employees to local-hire status to save on expenses, but such employees still have a certain income guaranteed, so more choose to remain in the U.S.

While this is an example of how employees sent from Japan, as their stays are lengthened, become “new Issei” and, on their own initiative, join the ranks of Asian-Americans, there are other cases of Japanese residents of the U.S. becoming increasingly involved with Asian immigrant society. One reason for this is that Japanese corporations in the U.S., when they hire minority employees under Affirmative Action policies, hire a large proportion of ethnic Asians. One survey done in 1989, for example, found that of Japanese corporations’ 72,000 employees in America, 12.9 percent were of Asian-Pacific extraction, while 8.4 percent were African-American and six percent were Hispanic. The high proportion of Asian-Pacific workers at Japanese corporations stands out when one considers that, of the 37.18 million total employed people in the U.S., 2.6 percent were of Asian-Pacific extraction, while 12.5 percent were African-American and 6.5 percent were Hispanic. Moreover, Asian-Pacific employees accounted for 22.7 percent of those in office and supervisory positions at Japanese corporations.

This trend at Japanese corporations in the U.S. toward preferential employment of ethnic Asians compared to other minorities, while it may bring Japanese in the U.S. into conflict with members of other Asian ethnic groups over such things as wages and working conditions, also means that the two groups have daily contact in the workplace. In the case of the West Coast, moreover, because employees dispatched by Japanese corporations often live in the same areas as ethnic Asian technical and professional workers who have moved into the middle class, there are many cases in which they live next door to each other or their children interact as classmates at school. These friendly relationships sometimes continue even when the

Japanese employees return to Japan, so this emergence of new relationships between Japanese and Asian-Americans is a noteworthy trend.

Conclusion

This essay has examined trends among Asian immigrants to the United States and the “new Issei,” but in conclusion I would like to return to the topic I rose in the Introduction, and consider whether Asian immigrants to the United States, including the “new Issei,” in fact constitute a diaspora.

First, it is clear that today’s Asian immigrants include many highly educated people holding technical and professional jobs, and it is a fact that they see their identification with any given state or corporation in fluid terms. In that sense, they can be said to have diaspora-like characteristics. It cannot be denied, moreover, that, despite Asian-Americans’ entry into the middle class by means of their technical and professional skills, racial discrimination continues to exist in the form of a “glass ceiling” on advancement within American companies, and in that sense they are made to feel like a minority. This means that it will become necessary for them to strengthen their identification with their own ethnic groups and take part in the politics of their adopted country to press for the abolition of discrimination, so they will have no choice but to accept the premise of the nation-state, so the “diaspora” label will cease to fit.

Today’s Asian immigrants also include unskilled low-wage workers, for whom participation in ethnic politics to expand their rights is very important, making it difficult to say that they have diaspora-like characteristics. This kind of ethnic politics contains the possibility for linkages across borders with groups in other countries sharing the same culture, however, so in that sense there is a diaspora-like aspect.

Today’s Asian immigrants do have diaspora-like characteristics, in other words, but this concept does not capture everything about their situation and should be used only as a partial definition. That is because, for immigrants who have left their countries and must pursue their livelihoods in a foreign land, acquiring rights and seeking the abolition of discrimination in their new country are important matters bearing on their very existence, so there are “national” elements to their situation that cannot be ignored. At the same time, because “multiculturalism,” which respects the rights and unique cultures of minorities, has permeated immigrant-receiving societies in recent years, compulsory assimilation is not as common as it once was. Present-day immigrants, accordingly, live in an environment that makes it easy to maintain their links with their home cultures, and in that sense it can be said that they have transnational characteristics.

In closing, I would like to say a few words about how long we should expect the current growth in Asian immigration to the United States to continue. As I have already pointed out in this paper, the recent rapid growth in Asian immigration to the U.S. has been caused by increasing demand for both technical and professional workers and low-wage urban workers as a result of the global restructuring that has taken place since the 1973 oil crisis. However, because industrialization is taking place in a chain reaction across East Asia, demand for

unskilled workers in increasing in that region as well. As a result, the rate of labor migration is also increasing within East Asia, and this may act as a curb on migration to the United States. While demand for highly skilled technical and professional workers is also increasing in Asian countries as they upgrade their industrial structures, such workers will not lose their incentive for migration to the United States as long as that country maintains its leading position in technical innovation. The migration of technical and professional workers to the U.S. may drop below the current level in numerical terms, but it will continue.