

9-2001

Asians in Texas: An Overview, 1870-1990

Bruce A. Glasrud

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

[Tell us](#) how this article helped you.

Recommended Citation

Glasrud, Bruce A. (2001) "Asians in Texas: An Overview, 1870-1990," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 39 : Iss. 2 , Article 7.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol39/iss2/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by SFA ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in East Texas Historical Journal by an authorized editor of SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu.

ASIANS IN TEXAS: AN OVERVIEW, 1870-1990

by Bruce A. Glasrud

Although Asians settled in Texas and other southwestern states as early as the 1860s, their numbers were limited and dispersed. Whether sojourners or settlers, they saved, worked hard, and contributed to the cultural transformation of the American Southwest.¹ Nonetheless, their status in Texas society often has been stereotyped and frequently misunderstood when noted at all, even by historians. Unlike the Far West, where whites perceived larger Asian American populations as economic competitors, or during World War II, when some Asians were considered threats to national security, in Texas sporadic outbursts of anti-Asian sentiment were even more blatantly based on skin color. Despite a long history of discrimination and prejudice, Asian Texans developed viable communities in the cities, small towns, and rural areas of the Lone Star state. Asian Texans fit well Edwin P. Hoyt's assessment in *Asians in the West* that "in the story of *Asians in the West* there is high adventure, tragedy, and a promise of a different kind."²

Historical accounts of Asian Texans remain scarce. The paucity of source materials and the limited numbers present challenges to the historian that are being met by new scholars who not only have examined Asian groups but who have questioned the economic and social milieu which admitted so few to an otherwise vibrant state. An investigation of Asians in Texas poses fresh opportunities, and must begin by asking questions pertaining to purpose and method. As a starting point, why study Asian Texans? Secondly, what theoretical constructs might be applied to understand the experience of Asians in Texas? Thirdly, what typology is required to describe the ethnic evolution and composition of Asians in Texas? Next, did experiences vary among the diverse Asian groups who settled in Texas? Fifth, during what stages (periods) did Asians enter Texas? And, finally, what sources are available to study Asian Texans?

In the preface to his informative study, *The Japanese Texans*, Thomas K. Walls addresses questions that validate the study of Asians in Texas. "A partial answer," notes Wall, "is that there are special reasons why the [Asian] Texan population is so small." He continues, "although few in number," Asian Texans "deserve recognition for their contributions to the state." He argues that it is also important to study these groups because of the relationship between Asian Texans and their neighbors. And, he concludes, if the chain of understanding is ever to be broken, Asians must be seen in terms that go beyond stereotypes and misconceptions.³

A study of Asian American culture in Texas offers insights into the process of adaptation and assimilation, the interrelationships and survival skills among minority groups and their communities, and the development of white attitudes toward them. Provocative theories of the roles of Asians in Texas define them as "middlemen," as "model minorities" in a state that

disregarded minorities, or as victims of “internal-colonialism.” Obviously, all three descriptions bear a ring of truth.

Both the “middlemen” theory described by Edna Bonacich in “A Theory of Middlemen Minorities” and the arguments James W. Loewen presents in *The Mississippi Chinese* contend that Asians performed a function as economic brokers by providing stores and outlets for black Americans who were barred from white retailers.⁴ According to this theory, Asians emerged in Texas as “middlemen;” that is, they rose above the status of “other,” usually black, minorities and acted as an economic and social buffer between those minorities and the white majority. The “middleman” status was precarious and unempowered, given that the dominant white society in Texas ranked Asians somewhere between whites and blacks. While an appealing explanation, research does not always support conclusions drawn by “middleman” theories. At least until the 1960s, Asians in Texas either lived in rural enclaves (Japanese) or provided more economic services to whites than to blacks or Hispanics (Chinese).

Some scholars suggest that Asians became “model” minorities after World War II because they were more economically and socially successful than other minorities. A “model minority” theory is explicated in Harry H.L. Kitano’s and Stanley Sue’s “The Model Minorities.” However, the “model minority” perspective is criticized by prominent Asian scholars Ronald Takaki and Bob H. Suzuki. In an interview for *Teaching Tolerance*, Takaki says that “Asian Americans have not made it. The pundits and the journalists and sociologists have created a mythology.” Similarly, Suzuki, in a “revisionist analysis” of the model minority thesis, faults the cultural determinists who use the model minority concept and calls for “a more coherent theory and deeper understanding of the Asian experience in American society.”⁵

Another theoretical construct that has been applied to the study of American ethnic groups is Robert Blauner’s concept of internal-colonialism.⁶ While useful for discussing some large groups such as blacks, Mexicans, Native Americans, and even urban Asians, it seems less applicable for studies concerning peculiar situations specific to Asian Texas. It is difficult to conclude that a systematic effort kept a small and rural Asian Texan population subordinate or colonized. As various weaknesses of the above theories reveal and as Harry H.L. Kitano persuasively argues, there is “no one model that can encompass the diversity within.” Perhaps Takaki’s theory, which emphasizes a “multicultural” view of minorities in the United States,⁷ is most effective in terms of Kitano’s criteria. His approach, as will be seen, applies well to the situation of Asian Texans as well as to that of other peoples of color in the state.

The study of ethnicity is sometimes confusing because frequently similar terms are used interchangeably. The typology of descriptions for ethnic groups developed by Fred R. von der Mehden in *The Ethnic Groups of Houston* offers a method for distinguishing among members of a group. According to von der Mehden, ethnic populations fall into four basic types: (1) the foreigner, a non-

resident intending a stay of short duration, such as a tourist or a businessman; (2) the immigrant, one who came to Texas intending to remain permanently; (3) the American ethnic, generally second and later generation residents; and (4) the assimilated, descendants of intermarriages who do not view themselves as part of an ethnic group.⁸ These patterns are applicable to understanding the emergence of the Asian community in Texas.

One complex aspect of reviewing Asians in Texas is that although similarity of experiences are apparent among different Asian groups, the different nationalities, languages, and cultures lead to varied historical developments. The list of Asians who have migrated to Texas is basically a compendium of peoples from all Asian nations – Chinese, East Indians, Filipinos, Indochinese (Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam), Japanese, Koreans, and Thais.

Chronologically, the stages of growth and migration in Texas follow the guide based on ideas developed by Roger Daniels in “American Historians and East Asian Immigrants:” (1) 1870-1900, Chinese immigration, initial Japanese; (2) 1900-1924, Chinese exclusion, Japanese immigration; (3) 1925-1945, Asian exclusion, adjustment of Asian Texans, World War II; (4) 1945-1970, postwar trauma, loosening of restrictions (McCarran-Walter Act, 1952), removal of immigration restrictions in 1965, changing status; and (5) 1970-1990, accelerated Asian immigration, increased economic presence, fall of Indochina.⁹

Sources for studying Asians in Texas are typical for the study of Southern and Southwestern ethnic groups. Basic secondary works that show the similarities in experience with other Southern states include Lucy M. Cohen’s thorough treatment of *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without a History*; Etta B. Peabody’s “Effort of the South to Import Chinese Coolies, 1865-1870;” Robert Seto Quan’s and Julian B. Roebuck’s *Lotus Among the Magnolias: The Mississippi Chinese*; and James W. Loewen’s *Mississippi Chinese*, cited earlier.¹⁰ A smattering of journal articles, short monographs, and master’s theses that explore some facet of Asian Texan history have added to the once meager sources. These include such diverse monographs as Nancy Farrar’s *The Chinese of El Paso*; Kyoko Arai, *Holy Dream* (a biography); the Institute of Texan Cultures, *The Chinese Texans*; Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama*; Amy Elizabeth Nims, “Chinese Life in San Antonio;” and Ken Kunihiro, “The Assimilation of the Japanese in the Houston Area of Texas.”¹¹ While all these studies are valuable, Edward J. N. Rhoads’ “The Chinese in Texas,” Fred R. von der Mehden’s *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, and Thomas K. Walls’ *The Japanese Texans* dominate the study of Asians in Texas.¹²

Primary sources prove more difficult to trace. While the Census Bureau’s statistical data can be helpful, one can assume that the numbers for Asians in the state are low. Because the Census Bureau used different terms to reflect national origin or heritage, the totals vary. Newspapers, too, are valuable, but, white bias in news stories and few thoughtful considerations of Asian Texans

limit even this resource. Too often, even when newspapers or magazines wrote about Asian Texans they fostered unfavorable images. Lost sources further complicate the difficulty of locating primary materials. For example, prior to World War II, the Texas Japanese community published a monthly paper, *Hana Kago*; but no copies remain.¹³ Unfortunately, after the outbreak of World War II, the federal government either confiscated and destroyed the issues or Japanese Texans hid or eliminated them to prevent government misuse.

Other available primary sources include national, state, and local government records such as immigration records, court decisions, state and federal laws, and local statutes. Investigating the historical roles of Asian Texans requires a trip to the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. The Institute has made a rigorous effort to uncover sources for the researcher and the staff is helpful. Since Houston now has the largest Asian population in the state, the Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library is another valuable resource.

Asian immigration to Texas followed southern and western patterns. Chinese immigrants dominated the first stage of Asian entry to the state. Soon after the Civil War some white plantation owners brought Chinese to work in Texas to replace recently freed black slaves. These Chinese substitutes found plantation life no more desirable than did black laborers, and they left the plantations for small communities in East Texas. Most Chinese arrived in Texas with the expansion of the railroads into the state. In 1870, 250 Chinese laborers came to Texas to work on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. In 1881, a second contingent of approximately 2600 Chinese railroad laborers arrived with the Southern Pacific to work in the western part of the state. Even before the railroads were completed, some laborers sought a permanent life in their newfound state. Many worked as farmers, and when railroad construction slowed, the first large Chinese agricultural community developed in the Brazos River Valley. Others settled in West Texas towns; the railroad centers in El Paso and San Antonio, and smaller towns such as Toyah, Bremond, and Calvert were the first areas with sizable Chinese populations. An historical marker now recognizes the early settlement of Chinese in Calvert. They became grocers, launderers, or restaurant operators who catered almost exclusively to white workers.¹⁴ Some moved to Mexico, and as Evelyn Hu-DeHart noted in her article, "The Chinese in Northern Mexico," they "worked hard, lived frugally, and usually prospered. ... They often incurred the deep resentment of local populations who perceived them as unduly wealthy and clannish."¹⁵

Most of these early immigrants were young men, usually recruited as unskilled contract workers. The resultant Texas Chinese community was predominantly male and remained so well into the twentieth century. The dearth of women meant that traditional family life virtually was non-existent, and numerically the population stagnated. A few immigrants established families; in El Paso, some Chinese males married Mexican women; in Calvert a "Black Chinese" community emerged as the result of Chinese and African

American intermarriages; and, on the rare occasion, as happened in Houston, Chinese males married white women before the twentieth century. Nonetheless, community life blossomed as males congregated for social reasons. While within their own culture they thrived, they remained targets of attacks from empowered whites. Whites feared Chinese domination of certain occupations, their race and culture, and the presence of gambling and other questionable practices such as smuggling and opium smoking.¹⁶ Opium smoking especially was egregious, because, as Diana L. Ahmad points out, "little concern was expressed when the Chinese smoked the drug, but as soon as Anglo-Americans began indulging in the habit, the communities began expressing concern over the morality of its citizens."¹⁷ By 1900 the total Chinese Texan population was 836.

ASIAN POPULATION OF TEXAS*

	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Filipinos</u>	<u>Indochinese</u>	<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Koreans</u>
1870	25				
1880	136				
1890	710			3	
1900	836			13	
1910	95			340	
1920	773			449	
1930	703			519	
1940	1,031			458	
1950	2,435			957	
1960	4,172			4,053	
1970	7,635	4,999		6,537	2,090
1980	25,461	15,952	40,000	10,502	13,772
1985			52,500		
1990		34,350			31,775

*As Thomas K. Walls aptly notes, "U.S. Census counts, especially those reflecting national origin or heritage, must be viewed with some reservation. 'Race,' 'country of origin,' 'foreign born,' 'foreign stock,' and 'nativity' are all terms that have been used at one time or another by the U.S. Census to differentiate Asians and other minorities from one another. The use of such different criteria has resulted in totals that vary according to the criteria themselves. With this in mind, the above totals should be treated as 'best guesses,' since they are, in any case, the best information available." Walls, *The Japanese Texans*, p. 81.

Japanese, and a few Chinese migrants, entered the state during the second stage of immigration. The Japanese who migrated to Texas differed from the Chinese in that frequently they came with some money, were prepared to stay, and settled in rural areas to engage in rice or truck farming. The early Japanese workers were not landless workers or peasants, but often younger sons who would not inherit the family land in their native country. They were enticed to emigrate to Texas by Japanese-Texas Emigration societies.¹⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a number of Japanese-sponsored rice colonization projects were initiated in the Lone Star state. While most failed, a few led to permanent settlements. Seito Saibara, a man with considerable influence in his home country, founded the successful Webster colony. Saibara was born into the *samurai* class, a lawyer, and a former member of the Japanese House of Representatives. In 1903 he established a settlement in Harris County where he hoped to attract about 1,500 settlers, but hardships and restrictive immigration laws limited the number to between sixty and seventy colonists. The relative success of the Japanese migrants such as Saibara led the U.S. Immigration Commission to include them in a laudatory manner in the Commission's report in 1911.¹⁹ Another prominent Japanese resident of Texas, socialist writer Sen Katayama, orchestrated an effort between 1904 and 1907 to farm rice, but his socialist commitments frequently sent him on recruiting and speaking engagements.²⁰ A third rice enterprise, the Kishi Colony, started as a successful rice farm by Kichimatsu Kishi, turned to truck farming in the 1920s, and collapsed as a result of the Depression in the 1930s. Perhaps with more presence, Saburo Arai opened a nursery, and despite setbacks, remained in the nursery business in Texas for forty years.²¹

Even these modest Japanese successes spurred white antagonism. Fostered by the American Legion, in 1920 potential Japanese immigrants were stopped at the Texas/Mexican border and forced to turn around. In 1921 white Texans followed the lead of Californians and enacted an Alien Land Law that forbade aliens ineligible for citizenship – almost exclusively Asians – to purchase land in “rural” Texas. It is interesting to note that Chinese in small towns and cities were able to buy land under the specific requirements of the law. Even this restrictive act was less damaging to Japanese Texans than its California counterpart since it did not apply to land already held by Texas residents at the time of its passage.²² The more favorable law was attributed to the Japanese Texans uniting in a spirited protest against a harsher version.

Japanese could immigrate until 1924; Chinese, forbidden from immigration by the Exclusion Acts, faced a different status. Three changes affected the Chinese community during the years from 1900 to 1924: (1) some of the males from the small communities of eastern and western Texas moved to larger cities such as San Antonio and Houston; (2) Chinese women began migrating to Texas, albeit in small numbers; and (3) United States General “Blackjack” Pershing brought five hundred Chinese to Texas after his mission in Mexico against Pancho Villa. As Charles C. Cumberland points out so well in “The Sonora Chinese and the Mexican Revolution,” considerable, and occasionally brutal, discrimination on the part of Mexican revolutionaries against the Chinese precipitated Pershing's alliance with the Mexican Chinese.²³ These former Mexican residents settled in San Antonio, which soon supplanted El Paso as the predominant Texas Chinese community.²⁴

The third stage of Asian experience in Texas covers the years 1925, the period dominated by the Johnson-Reed National Origins Act of 1924, through

1945, and culminates with the end of the Second World War. During this stage of Asian Texan history, laws excluded them from immigrating to the United States but existing residents began to assume new roles and to encourage participation in Texas communities. In Texas a gradual increase of Chinese women diluted the previously almost all-male population. As Edward Rhoads recently indicated, as a result "a normal conjugal family society" emerged among Chinese Texans late in the 1920s and in the 1930s.²⁵ Occupational patterns diversified, and fewer Chinese went into the traditional laundry business. Also, Texas-born Chinese began to make their presence felt, but continued discrimination did not change. Many Chinese found it difficult to own land because of their alien status, and they were kept from public swimming pools and other facilities. Yet during this time the Chinese community in Texas matured, forming commercial, family, and political associations and making formal efforts to maintain ties with China. By 1930, there were still only 703 Chinese residents in Texas, including the Pershing Chinese. Since most Chinese Texans came from Canton, by 1940 the primary Chinese language spoken in the state was Cantonese.²⁶

By 1925, the Texas Alien Land Law, a decline in rice cultivation, and the National Origins Act plagued Japanese Texans and prevented extensive growth of the community. During the remainder of the 1920s and 1930s they remained mainly agricultural. One third lived in Harris County, almost one half were women, and by 1940 sixty per cent were nisei (second generation). Japanese occupations included owning nursery stores, engaging in truck farming, and owning and managing restaurants. The decline of rice farming, which was a cooperative venture, generally meant a dispersal of the Japanese to more individually based agricultural pursuits or led others to El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio, as it did the Chinese.²⁷ The arrival of children to the Japanese generally reinforced an attachment to the newly established local communities.

Since this stage of Texas history includes World War II, it is important to note that while it proved a disaster for Japanese Texans, it allowed more opportunities for Chinese Texans and ended with additional immigration of Asian Americans. When the United States entered World War II in 1941 and China became an ally of the United States, restrictions on Chinese immigration were relaxed with the repeal of the Exclusion Acts in 1943. During the war the number of Chinese in Texas doubled. But many Japanese Texans, as residents of the southern military defense zone, were arrested immediately after the outbreak of the war and sent to harsh internment camps, not to the Relocation centers where the majority of West Coast Japanese were incarcerated. The Texas Japanese population was augmented further when the United States government pressured Peru and other Latin American nations to force Japanese citizens to relocate to Texas internment camps such as the one at Crystal City. As San Franciscan Edison Uno later remarked, "housing accommodations for the Crystal City 'overflow' were awful."²⁸ Texas, along with other Western states, had played host to one of the most outrageous violations of a group's constitutional rights in the history of the United States.²⁹

From 1945 to 1970, as a result of loosening immigration and citizenship restrictions of the McCarran-Walter Act and the Immigration Act of 1965,³⁰ the Asian population in Texas surpassed that of the wartime years. While the San Antonio Chinese community declined in the postwar period, a large new group of Chinese entered Texas because of the repeal of exclusion laws in 1943. Thus, between 1950 and 1970 the Chinese Texan population tripled. By 1965, there were more than 2,500 Chinese in Houston, which became the new center of Chinese activity in Texas; by 1970, forty eight per cent of the Chinese in Texas lived in Harris County. Some of the more recent Chinese migrants came from neighboring Southern states, and in Houston they established businesses in black neighborhoods much as they had in their former homes; thus they were serving as “middlemen.”³¹

Two distinct Chinese Texas communities emerged and reduced the homogeneity that distinguished the prewar Chinese community: first, those from old-stock, peasant culture in China, who arrived as unskilled laborers. Their American-born descendants, when speaking Chinese, spoke Cantonese; “in short,” as Edward Rhoads noted, “they were the Chinese who up until then had been synonymous with the Chinese in America.”³² The second group consisted of post-World War II immigrants who generally spoke Mandarin and who were products of a more elite Chinese culture. Chinese Texans during these years began participating in the larger political and social community – since they no longer found themselves excluded from citizenship – and in 1964 San Antonio residents elected Tom J. Lee as the first person with a Chinese heritage to the state House of Representatives. Significant developments also included new births and new immigration, which brought the sex ratio to parity, and changes in Texas Chinese relationships with China; after decades of close ties, they were now “cast adrift,” as Rhoads pointed out.³³

The ending of World War II and the closing of the internment camps caused a few Japanese internees to remain in Texas, and others from elsewhere in the country moved to Texas for a new start. By 1970, the Japanese Texan population stood at 6,537. After World War II an increasing number of Japanese Texans moved to the cities.³⁴ Japanese successfully worked to overcome the wartime stigma, and as a result became known by some as a “model minority.” However, as Japanese youth argued so persuasively in the 1960s, they did not consider themselves to be model minorities. They had problems also. Education provided a significant means for the Japanese Texan community to mature. Despite these postwar opportunities in the state, many Japanese Texans faced extensive discrimination and prejudice.³⁵

Two other Asian groups who arrived in Texas during and/or after World War II were Filipinos and Koreans. By 1970 the Filipino population in the state stood at 4,999, many of whom came as brides of servicemen. Despite that number, not much has been written about them. Jim Harris’ “Filipino Beliefs and Customs” is a valuable starting point for the study of Filipino Texans. To add to the ethnic spirit of that city, Filipinos in San Antonio celebrate their

heritage with a Philippine Fiesta. Koreans, who arrived as early as 1905 but were sometimes counted as Japanese by the Census Bureau, numbered 2,090 in 1970. As a result of the Korean War, many of them also arrived in Texas as brides of servicemen.³⁶

After 1970, following the prior removal of federal racial and ethnic immigration restrictions, Asians immigrated to Texas in increased numbers. Over the next two decades this immigration, together with peoples of color already in the state – including African Americans and Hispanics – led to a diverse and multicultural Texas society. Most Chinese immigrants continued to reside in Houston, which overshadowed San Antonio as the largest and most influential Texas Chinese community; by 1980 more than one half the Chinese in Texas resided in Harris County. During this same period, although the Japanese population has not increased as dramatically, natural birth rates, migration from other states, and new immigration from Japan – in the latter group especially educators and businessmen – augmented the Japanese Texas community.³⁷ In addition to Chinese and Japanese residents, immigrants from Korea, India, and the Philippines sought opportunities in Texas. Unlike earlier Chinese and Japanese settlers, immigrants from those nations often arrived as professionals or as students. By 1990 over 31,000 Koreans, located principally in Dallas and Harris counties, could be classified as belonging to one of three groups: wives of servicemen; small business entrepreneurs; and professionals. Koreans held two additional characteristics: women outnumbered men three to two, and the Korean Associates facilitated a continuation of cultural values and support of individuals.³⁸

As mentioned, in this stage of Texas' ethnic history, the population grew steadily with the arrival of new immigrants from Asia. An increasing number of people immigrated to Texas from Indochina – Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia – as a result of nationalist-led victories in those lands. There have been three distinct surges of recent Indochinese migration, each reflecting differing circumstances in the homeland and each exhibiting variations in the type of immigrant. The first and smallest wave consisted of those who came to the state before the fall of Saigon in 1975. The collapse of anti-communist governments signaled the next major increase of refugees from Indochina. The final and most significant wave that began late in 1977 differed from the first two in many ways. The newest refugees were poor and turned to a traditional way of living by fishing on the Texas Gulf Coast, thereby incurring the wrath of white fishermen and sparking renewed membership in the Texas Ku Klux Klan, which harassed the fishermen in sporadic and sometimes nationally publicized incidents. The Indochinese migration to Texas, and especially to Houston, dwarfed the numbers of earlier Asian immigrants. From fewer than 100 settlers before 1975, approximately 5,000 were residents by 1977. By 1980 the numbers increased to 20,000 and by 1983 to almost 50,000.³⁹

By the 1980s, the earliest Asian arrivals in Texas, the Chinese and Japanese, mostly concentrated in Dallas, El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio. The Japanese consist of three groups: (1) temporary residents – businessmen,

government officials, students, and tourists; (2) the progeny of those who came in the first half of the century; and (3) those who have taken up permanent residence since World War II. The Chinese community is not quite as diverse; two segments of the community are the descendants of the first arrivals, principally Cantonese, and the more recent arrivals who speak Mandarin. Three interlocking elements of Chinese culture remain, however, as a foundation of community life: (1) the role of the family; (2) the desire for education; and (3) a strong achievement motivation. Among the children of Chinese and Japanese Texans, many attend college and then leave the state; for Koreans, Filipinos, and East Indians, loneliness and frustration sometimes are a part of their life, but few leave; and for Southeast Asian refugees, life at first in Texas is bleak. But, their children are also completing high school and entering Texas colleges. Whether most leave after completing their education is a question of import to the future well-being of the state.⁴⁰

Varied experiences mark the history of Asian Texans and continue to influence the current generation. As Fred R. von der Mehden stated, "they (ethnic groups) generally seek a plural society, basically American in its values, but accepting and sustaining cultural heterogeneity."⁴¹ Perhaps one measure of adaptation for Asian Texans is their roles in popular fiction. By that measure, Asian Texans have reached a point of assimilation into Texas culture that remains, for many Texans, a bit apart. Mark Shigata, a Japanese Texan, is the lead character (fictional police chief of Bayport) in a series of detective stories written by Anne Wingate.⁴² However, other Asian Texans face poverty and are threatened by the Ku Klux Klan and other forms of discrimination. But Texas society, especially in the urban areas, is being invigorated by these varied ethnic groups.

In a poll taken on August 15, 1999, Texans were asked what made Texas so great. The most frequent answer was "its people."⁴³ And well it ought; one of the fascinating and intriguing aspects of Texas as it moves into the twenty-first century is that despite formidable opposition Texas has become one of the most diverse states in the nation, and that diversity is one of its great strengths. On the other hand, the poll indicated that a few white Texans listed "minority populations" as the number one problem in Texas. Overall, the Asian Americans who have resided in Texas for more than a century have helped Texas and Texans become a multicultural society in which multiculturalism is appreciated, taught, and encouraged.

NOTES

¹See Lawrence Michael Fong, "Sojourners and Settlers: The Chinese Experience in Arizona," *Journal of Arizona History*, 21 (1980), pp. 227-256; and Heather S. Hatch, "The Chinese in the Southwest: A Photographic Record," *Journal of Arizona History*, 21 (1980), pp. 257-274; on the Southwest. For issues raised in another section of the West, see Bruce A. Glasrud and James A. Halseth, eds., *The Northwest Mosaic: Minority Conflicts in Pacific Northwest History* (Boulder, Colorado, 1977).

²Edwin P. Hoyt, *Asians in the West* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1974), p. 9.

³Thomas K. Walls, *The Japanese Texans* (San Antonio, 1987), pp. 7-8. Quotation on page 7.

⁴Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Middleman Minorities," *American Sociological Review*, 38 (1973), pp. 583-594; James W. Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese: Between White and Black* (Cambridge, 1971). Other authors who consider this theory include Harry H.L. Kitano, "Japanese Americans: A Middleman Minority," in *The Asian American: The Historical Experience*, edited by Norris Hundley, Jr. (Santa Barbara, 1976), pp. 81-100; and Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Toward a Theory of Minority Group Relations* (New York, 1967), chp. 2.

⁵William Petersen, "Success Story: Japanese American Style," *The New York Times Magazine*, January 9, 1966; William Petersen, *Japanese Americans: Oppression and Success* (New York, 1971). See Harry H.L. Kitano and Stanley Sue, "The Model Minorities," *Journal of Social Issues*, 29, no. 2 (1973), pp. 1-9, for an explication of the model. Ronald Takaki, "Reflections from a Different Mirror," *Teaching Tolerance*, Spring 1994, pp. 11-15; Bob H. Suzuki, "Education and the Socialization of Asian Americans: A Revisionist Analysis of the 'Model Minority' Thesis," *Asian-Americans: Social and Psychological Perspectives*, vol. 2, edited by Russell Endo, Stanley Sue, and Nathaniel N. Wagner (1980), pp. 155-175, quote on p. 175.

⁶Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," *Social Problems*, 16 (Spring 1969), pp. 393-408; Robert Blauner, *Racial Oppression in America* (New York, 1972). These comments in no way denigrate the overall importance of Blauner's model; it is a valuable part of the concept of understanding the relationships of peoples of color with the dominant group(s) in the United States. For an article explicating "internal colonialism" and its relationship to Asian Americans, see John Liu, "Towards an Understanding of the Internal Colonial Model," in *Counterpoint: Perspectives on Asian America*, edited by Emma Gee (Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 160-168. Liu argues for another phrase or model, that of "neo-colonialism."

⁷Harry H.L. Kitano, *Race Relations*. (2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1980), p. 224; Ronald T. Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* (Boston, 1993).

⁸Fred R. von der Mehden, "Introduction, Houston's Ethnic Heritage," in *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, edited by Fred R. von der Mehden (Houston, 1984), pp. 3-7.

⁹Roger Daniels, "American Historians and East Asian Immigrants," *Pacific Historical Review*, 42 (November 1974), pp. 449-472.

¹⁰Lucy M. Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without a History* (Baton Rouge, 1984); Etta B. Peabody, "Effort of the South to Import Chinese Coolies, 1865-1870," Masters thesis, Baylor University, 1967; Robert Seto Quan, with Julian B. Roebuck, *Lotus Among the Magnolias: The Mississippi Chinese* (Jackson, 1982); Loewen, *Mississippi Chinese*.

¹¹Nancy Farrar, *The Chinese in El Paso* (El Paso, 1972); Kyoko Arai, *Holy Dream* (Houston, 1960); Institute of Texan Cultures, *The Chinese Texans* (San Antonio, 1978); Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama* (Princeton, 1964); Amy Elizabeth Nims, "Chinese Life in San Antonio," Masters thesis, Southwest Texas State Teachers College, 1941; Ken Kunihiro, "The Assimilation of the Japanese in the Houston Area of Texas," Masters thesis, Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, 1951. See also William Field, "Chinese in Texas," in *The Handbook of Texas, A Supplement*, edited by Eldon Stephen Branda (Austin, 1976), pp. 167-168; Philip L. Fry and John L. Davis, "Japanese in Texas," in *The Handbook of Texas, A Supplement*, edited by Eldon Stephen Branda (Austin, 1976), pp. 440-441.

¹²Edward J.M. Rhoads, "The Chinese in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 81 (1977), pp. 1-36; von der Mehden, ed., *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*; Walls, *The Japanese Texans*. In addition to the works mentioned, von der Mehden and Rhoads have published articles for *The New Handbook of Texas* and von der Mehden for his own compendium; those articles will be cited later.

¹³Walls, *The Japanese Texans*, p. 118.

¹⁴For a discussion of Chinese in nineteenth century Texas, see Peabody, "Effort of the South to Import Chinese Coolies;" Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South*, pp. 84-89; Farrar, *Chinese in El Paso*; Doris Black, "The Black Chinese," *Sepia*, 24 (January 1975), pp. 18-24; Institute of Texan Cultures, *The Chinese Texans*; Rhoads, "Chinese in Texas," pp. 1-36; Willard G. Books, "East Meets West: El Pasoans of Chinese Descent," *Password*, 28 (Summer 1983), pp. 58-66.

¹⁵Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "Migrants to a Developing Society: The Chinese in Northern Mexico, 1875-1932," *Journal of Arizona History*, 21 (1980), p. 275.

¹⁶Rhoads, "The Chinese in Texas;" Nims, "Chinese Life in San Antonio;" Black, "The Black Chinese;" Institute of Texan Cultures, *The Chinese Texans*.

¹⁷Diana L. Ahmad, "Smoking Opium: A Chinese Vice Spreads into Texas, 1870-1900," p. 7. (Presented to a session at Western Social Science Association, Fort Worth, 1999). Copy in possession of author. Ahmad notes that the cities of El Paso, Fort Worth, and Galveston early enacted ordinances which covered smoking opium in dens.

¹⁸On early Japanese Texans see George S. Bruce, "Japanese Colony in Texas," *Farm and Ranch*, 25 (August 25, 1906), pp. 1-2; John B. Cornell and Robert J. Smith, "Japanese Immigrants Abroad," *Rice University Studies*, 61 (Fall 1970), pp. 267-282; Walls, *Japanese Texans*, pp. 32-33, 39-42; Kiyoko Tanabe, "The Japanese Immigrant in the Houston-Harris County Area," Masters thesis, Rice University, 1956; W. Jett Lauck, "Japanese Farmers in Texas," *Texas Magazine*, 6 (September 1912), pp. 355-363.

¹⁹Kiyoko T. Kurosawa, "Seito Saibara's Diary of Planting a Japanese Colony in Texas," *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Sciences*, 2 (August 1964), pp. 54-80; Kiyoshi K. Kawakami, "Japanese on American Farms," *Independent* (October 26, 1905), pp. 962-967; Walls, *Japanese Texans*, pp. 42-53; U.S. Immigration Commission, "Japanese Rice Planters and Truckers in Texas," *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 25 volumes (Washington, D.C., 1911), vol. 22, pp. 463-481.

²⁰Kazuhiko Orii and Hilary Conroy, "Japanese Socialist in Texas: Sen Katayama," *Amerasia Journal*, 8 (1981), pp. 163-170; Walls, *Japanese Texans*, pp. 55-59, 126-127; Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama*.

²¹Gwendolyn R. Wingate, "The Story of The Kishi Colony," *Las Sabinas: The Official Quarterly Publication of the Orange County Historical Society*, 9 (January 1983), pp. 16-33; Robert Wooster, "Kishi Colony," in *The New Handbook of Texas*, edited by Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, and Roy R. Barkley (Austin, 1996): vol. 3, pp. 1132-1133; Kyoka Arai, *Holy Dream* (Houston, 1960); Gwendolyn Wingate, "The Kishi Colony," in *The Folklore of Texan Cultures*, edited by Francis Edward Abernethy and Dan Beaty (Austin, 1974), pp. 327-336.

²²Lillie May Tomlinson, "The Japanese Colony in Orange County," *Texas History Teachers' Bulletin*, 14 (December 1927), pp. 141-145; Walls, *Japanese Texans*, pp. 119-122; S. C. Hoyle, "How Orange County Solved the Jap Question," *Farm and Ranch*, 43 (May 17, 1924), p. 3.

²³Edward Eugene Briscoe, "Pershing's Chinese Refugees: An Odyssey of the Southwest," Masters thesis, Saint Mary's University, 1947; Edward Eugene Briscoe, "Pershing's Chinese Refugees in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 62 (1959), pp. 467-488; F. B. Worley, "Five Hundred Chinese Refugees," *The Overland Monthly*, 21 (April 1918), p. 293; Charles C. Cumberland, "The Sonora Chinese and the Mexican Revolution," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 40, (May 1966), pp. 191-211. On anti-Chinese discrimination in Mexico see also Leo M. D. Jacques, "The Anti-Chinese Campaign in Sonora, Mexico, 1900-1931," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1974; Leo M. D. Jacques, "The Chinese Massacre in Torreon (Coahuila) in 1911," *Arizona and the West*, 16 (Autumn 1974), pp. 233-246; and Leo M. D. Jacques, "Have Quick More Money Than Mandarins: The Chinese in Sonora," *Journal of Arizona History*, 17 (1976), pp. 208-218.

²⁴Kenny Woo, "The Chinese Colony in San Antonio," *The Junior Historian of Texas*, 5 (1955), pp. 6-8, 12; Nims, "Chinese Life in San Antonio."

²⁵Edward J.M. Rhoads, "Chinese," *The New Handbook of Texas*, edited by Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, and Roy R. Barkley (Austin, 1996), vol. 2, p. 86.

²⁶Rhoads, "Chinese in Texas," pp. 1-36; Nims, "Chinese Life In San Antonio;" Institute of Texan Cultures, *The Chinese Texans*.

²⁷Walls, *Japanese Texans*; Tanabe, "The Japanese Immigrant in the Houston-Harris County Area;" Edward J. M. Rhoads, "Japanese," *The New Handbook of Texas*, edited by Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, and Roy R. Barkley (Austin, 1996), vol. 3, pp. 909-910; Margit Nagy, *Remembering the Alamo Japanese-Style: Shigetaka Shiga's Monument As Tribute to the Alamo Heroes* (San Antonio, 1989).

²⁸Walls, *Japanese Texans*, pp. 143-203; Edward N. Barnhart, "Japanese Internees From

Peru," *Pacific Historical Review*, 31 (1962), pp. 169-178; C. Harvey Gardiner, *Pawns in the Triangle of Hate: The Peruvian Japanese and the United States* (Seattle, 1981); Warren Page Rucker, "United States-Peruvian Policy Toward Peruvian-Japanese Persons During World War II," Masters thesis, University of Virginia, 1970; Edison Uno, "Episodes of Evacuation: Crystal City Internment," *Pacific Citizen*, March 10, 1967.

³For examples, in addition to works cited above, see "Japanese in Houston Area Are Rounded Up," *Houston Post*, December 9, 1941; Kami Kamisato, "The Story and Diary of Mrs. Kami Kamisato," in *Internees: War Relocation Center Memoirs and Diaries*, compiled by Takeo Kaneshiro (New York, 1976), pp. 32-36; Takeo Kaneshiro, "The Diary of Takeo Kaneshiro," in *Internees: War Relocation Center Memoirs and Diaries*, compiled by Takeo Kaneshiro (New York, 1976), pp. 372-100.

⁴In 1952 the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act repealed the Asian exclusion provisions of the previous restrictive immigration law, and allowed Asians to become citizens. In 1965, restrictions were completely removed during Lyndon Johnson's administration.

⁵Rhoads, "Chinese," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 2, pp. 86-87; Edward C. M. Chen and Fred R. von der Mehden, "Chinese," in *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, edited by Fred R. von der Mehden (Houston, 1984), pp. 63-79.

⁶Rhoads, "Chinese in Texas," p. 33.

⁷Rhoads, "Chinese," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 2, pp. 86-87; Chen and von der Mehden, "Chinese," *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, pp. 63-79; Thomas M. Woodell, "Un-organizations: The Family Associations of the Chinese," in *The Folklore of Texan Cultures*, edited by Francis Edward Abernethy and Dan Beaty (Austin, 1974), pp. 319-322; Edward C. M. Chen and Fred R. von der Mehden, *Chinese in Houston* (Houston, 1982).

⁸von der Mehden, "Japanese," *Ethnic Groups of Houston*, pp. 101-112.

⁹von der Mehden, "Japanese," *Ethnic Groups of Houston*, pp. 101-112; Rhoads, "Japanese," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 3, pp. 909-910; Walls, *The Japanese Texans*; M.S. Brooks and Ken Kunihiro, "Education in the Assimilation of Japanese: A Study in the Houston Area of Texas," *Sociology and Social Research*, 37 (1952), pp. 16-22.

¹⁰Jim Harris, "Filipino Beliefs and Customs," in *The Folklore of Texan Cultures*, edited by Francis Edward Abernethy and Dan Beaty (Austin, 1974), pp. 341-343; Edward J.M. Rhoads, "Koreans," in *The New Handbook of Texas*, edited by Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, and Roy R. Barkley (Austin, 1996), vol. 3, pp. 1157-1158. For a comparison, see Don Chang Lee, *Acculturation of Korean Residents in Georgia* (San Francisco, 1975).

¹¹Rhoads, "Chinese," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 2, pp. 86-87; Chen and von der Mehden, "Chinese," *Ethnic Groups of Houston*, pp. 63-79; von der Mehden, "Japanese," *Ethnic Groups in Houston*, pp. 101-112; Rhoads, "Japanese," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 3, pp. 909-910.

¹²Rhoads, "Koreans," *New Handbook of Texas*, vol. 3, pp. 1157-1158.

¹³Fred R. von der Mehden, "Indochinese," in *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, edited by Fred R. von der Mehden (Houston, 1984), pp. 81-99; Gene Lyons, "The Newest Americans: Viet Nam Comes to Texas," *Texas Monthly*, 4 (June 1976), pp. 96-101, 141-146; Gene Lyons, "The Second Wave," *Texas Monthly*, 8 (October 1980), p. 118; John Bloom, "A Delicate Balance [Vietnamese Fishermen]," *Texas Monthly*, 7 (October 1979), pp. 256-258; Fred R. von der Mehden, "Vietnamese," in *The New Handbook of Texas*, edited by Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, and Roy R. Barkley (Austin, 1996), vol. 6, p. 748.

¹⁴For general overview of these issues in one Texas city, see von der Mehden, ed., *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*.

¹⁵von der Mehden, "Introduction," *The Ethnic Groups of Houston*, p. 7.

¹⁶Anne Wingate, *Exception to Murder* (New York, 1992). There were three earlier novels starring this Japanese Texas detective.

¹⁷Anna M. Tinsley, "Poll: People Make Texas Great," *San Angelo Standard-Times*, August 15, 1999, pp. 1, 12.