

The Push of Prejudice: Chinese Migration to New York

To the student: This question is based on the accompanying documents. It has been created in order to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of this question. As you analyze the documents, try to understand the source of the document and any point of view that is presented in the document.

Historical context: In 1848, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in Sacramento, California. Great numbers of Chinese immigrants entered the western U.S. in the gold rush that followed. When the gold rush ended, Chinese laborers worked on the transcontinental railroad, and thousands more were encouraged to immigrate as laborers. After the railroad was completed, tension increased as Chinese immigrant laborers competed for jobs with white labor. White labor retaliated with discrimination and mob violence, driving many Chinese eastward to New York. The completion of the railroad system also made it easier for immigrants on the West coast of the United States to travel eastward as they looked for work and tried to escape prejudice. By 1880, a growing Chinatown was flourishing in New York City, and a smaller number of Chinese had begun settling in other New York State cities, including Albany.

Task: Using information from the following documents and your own knowledge of history, answer the questions that follow each document in Part A. Your answers to the questions will help you to accomplish the writing assignment given in Part B.

Part A Short-Answer Questions

Directions: Read and analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions in the space provided. Prepare for the reading of the document(s) by studying vocabulary definitions that are given before each document.

Document 1

Vocabulary

Pioneers: Early settlers.

Toils: Heavy work.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848, an event which perhaps more than any other in recent times has contributed to the commercial and industrial growth of nations, first brought the people of the United States into social and business relations with the Chinese. Attracted by reports of the wealth to be found in our mines and excited by the return of some of the pioneers of their race, bearing in their hands the golden fruit of their toils, the stream of immigration began. For twenty years it grew in volume until, in 1876, the number of Chinese in California was about 100,000.

Document 1: Excerpt from State of New York Chamber of Commerce, "The Chinese Exclusion Act. Report and Resolutions. Adopted by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York." December 5, 1889. Courtesy NYS Library Manuscripts and Collections.

Document 1 Short Answer Questions

1. What discovery, in what year, helped to develop U.S.-Chinese social and business relations? _____

2. What impact did this discovery have on Chinese immigration? _____

3. How many Chinese were living in California by 1876? _____

Document 2

Vocabulary

Transcontinental: Across the continent, from one shore to the other.

Treacherous: Dangerous.

Terrain: Area of ground.

Daunting: Frightening, especially as in making a task too difficult to complete.

Embankments: Steep mounds of earth.

Meager: Insufficient.

With the California Gold Rush and the opening of the West came an increased interest in building a **transcontinental** railroad ... The first Chinese were hired in 1865 at approximately \$28 per month to do the very dangerous work of blasting and laying ties over the **treacherous terrain** of the high Sierras ... Work in the beginning was slow and difficult. After the first 23 miles, Central Pacific faced the **daunting** task of laying tracks over terrain that rose 7,000 feet in 100 miles. To conquer the many sheer **embankments**, the Chinese workers used techniques they had learned in China to complete similar tasks. They were lowered by ropes from the top of cliffs in baskets, and while suspended, they chipped away at the granite and planted explosives that were used to blast tunnels ... Without the efforts of the Chinese workers in the building of America's railroads, our development and progress as a nation would have been delayed by years.

Document 2: Excerpt of Speech by Hon. John T. Doolittle of California in the House of Representatives, Thursday, April 29, 1999. "Chinese-American Contribution to Transcontinental Railroad," Congressional Record: April 29, 1999 (Extensions), Page E822. From the Congressional Record Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov], [DOCID:cr29ap99-49].

Document 2 Short-Answer Questions

1. According to Congressman Doolittle, what percentage of the labor that built the transcontinental railroad were Chinese immigrants? _____

2. What geographic factor made the work extremely dangerous? _____

3. Without the efforts of Chinese labor in building the railroads, what would have been delayed? _____

Document 3



Document 3: Carl Albert Browne, "Regular Ticket Workingmen's Party California. The Chinese Must Go! 11th Senatorial District," 1878, lithograph. California Historical Society, Fine Arts collection, FN-30623.

Document 3 Short-Answer Questions

1. In Document 3, what party wants to boot the Chinese out of California?

2. Judging from the cartoon, what kind of attitude did white labor have

towards the Chinese in California in 1878? _____

Document 4

Vocabulary

Cultivated: Tilled and prepared to raise crops.

Remunerative: Financial reward.

Vile: Disgusting.

Hoodlum: Gangster, bully.

In several counties in this State, the Chinese population outnumber the voting portion of the Americans. This is especially true of the mining counties, where the Chinamen have gathered to work over the dirt of the old Placer Mines...

CHEAP LABOR.

That is what California wants, and that is what is developing the agricultural resources of the State. Take the 70,000 Chinamen out of California, its industries would be ruined, and the lands, now so productive, would be **cultivated** without **remunerative** results. They supply, by their toil, nearly all the vegetables and much of the poultry. They are doing a large share of the farm-work, and build all the railroads and irrigating canals and ditches. They do much of the cooking, and nearly all the washing and ironing. It is said they send the money they save back to China. Why? Because they are not safe, either in person or property, here. Were they protected as citizens are, they would soon own lands, town lots and houses. As it is now, the low, the **vile**, the idle, brutal **hoodlum**, in San Francisco, and all other large towns in this State, may attack the Chinaman's house, smash his windows, and break up his furniture and beat him, and he is--only a Chinaman."

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Jan. 25, 1876.

Document 4: Excerpt from D. L. Phillips, Letter No. XVI, "Letters from California: its mountains, valleys, plains, lakes, rivers, climate and productions. Also its railroads, cities, towns and people, as seen in 1876." "California as I Saw It": First-Person Narratives of California's Early Years, 1849-1900; American Memory, Library of Congress. www.loc.gov.

Document 4 Short-Answer Questions

1. In the first paragraph, what is the population comparison the writer makes about the mining counties of California? _____

2. What does the writer think would happen to California without the labor of Chinese? _____

3. Why does the writer think that Chinese are not safe in California? _____

Document 5

“...The anti-Chinese racial hatred in Chico in 1877 was the cause of a great deal of trouble. Citizens in Chico who employed Chinese, received letters like this.

To General Bidwell:

Sir: Get rid of your Chinese help within the next two months or suffer the consequence, let this be enough...”

“...The feeling against the Chinese had become so bitter it finally ended in murder. My wife’s uncle, Chris Lemm had a piece of land he wanted cleared and he made a contract with the Chinese to clear it. The land was on Big Chico Creek about two miles east of Chico and extended to the main road leading to the mountains.

On the thirteenth of March, 1877, after their day’s work was over and they had had supper they lay down on their bunks which were in a row. About nine o’clock five men and a boy came to the Chinese camp. They pulled their revolvers and ordered the Chinese to sit on the foot of their bunks, which were about one foot off the ground. Two of the men searched the camp and got a few dollars, then they placed themselves each in front of a Chinaman and at the word fired. One did not fire as quickly as the others and a Chinaman who was to be shot threw up his hands and the bullet just grazed his arm. This Chinaman fell back on his bunk and made believe he was dead. After firing the fiends poured coal oil on the blankets which they took from the beds and put in a pile and set fire to them and then hurried away. The Chinaman, who was wounded, threw a blanket over the fire and extinguished it. Then he ran to the Lemm home. My wife was there and she said he struck the porch with a bound and banged on the door, waking all in the house ...”

Document 5: Excerpts from Moak, Sim. "California as I Saw It": First-Person Narratives of California's Early Years, 1849-1900; American Memory, Library of Congress. Online at www.loc.gov.

Document 5 Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the first sign that anti-Chinese hatred was beginning to cause trouble in the town of Chico, California? _____

2. What occurred in the Chinese camp on the Lemm property? _____

Document 6

Vocabulary

Boycott: Refusal to do business with or participate in a specific transaction.

Asiatic: Originating from Asia.

Retrogression: A state of having moved backwards.

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BOYCOTT

A General Boycott has been declared upon all CHINESE and JAPANESE Restaurants, Tailor Shops and Wash Houses. Also all persons employing them in any capacity.


All Friends and Sympathizers of Organized Labor will assist us in this fight against the lowering Asiatic standards of living and of morals.

AMERICA vs. ASIA

Progress vs. Retrogression

Are the considerations involved.

BY ORDER OF



*Silver Bow Trades and Labor Assembly
and Butte Miners' Union*

Document 6: Broadside. "Flyers distributed by Silver Bow Trades and Labor Association and Butte Miners Association in Support of Chinese and Japanese Boycott," circa August 1898. National Archives and Records Administration Pacific Alaska Region (Seattle). www.archives.gov, ARC 298113.

Document 6 Short-Answer Questions

1. What action does the flyer call for? _____

2. What impact would such an action have on Chinese and Japanese people living in the area of Silver Bow and Butte, Montana? _____

3. What words in the flyer give evidence that the unions had prejudiced and racist attitudes towards Asians? _____

2. What route does the poster advertise? _____

3. In what city do express trains leaving from San Francisco connect with
steamer lines to European ports? _____

4. What effect would the advertising of “quick time and cheap fares” for travel
to New York have on Chinese immigrants who were trying to leave California?

Document 8

Name	Albany Address	Birthplace/Birthdate	Port of Entry
Lee Share Dun	55 Green Street	China; 7/18/1904	San Francisco, CA
Chu Que	92 Dove Street	Oakland, CA; 1881	Malone, NY
Lee Soo Lung	192 Green Street	San Francisco, CA; 1880	Malone, NY
Chu Joe	148 ½ Hudson Avenue	San Francisco, CA; 3/19/1884	
Eng Yuen Tong	19 No. Pearl Street	China; 1875	San Francisco, CA
Louie Gim	72 Green Street	San Francisco, CA; 1888	New York, NY
Lee Yin	71 Center Street	China	San Francisco, CA
Lee Hing	53 Green Street	China; 1868	San Francisco, CA
Joe H. Long	81 Green Street	China; 1867	San Francisco, CA
Jew Sing	81 Green Street	San Francisco, CA; 1869	

Document 8: Excerpted data of ten selected records from the New York Chinese Exclusion Index, National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region.

Document 8 Short-Answer Questions

1. Out of the ten selected records from the New York Chinese Exclusion Index, how many Chinese residents of Albany had given their birthplace as San Francisco or Oakland, CA? _____

2. Out of the ten selected records, how many Chinese residents of Albany entered the country through the Port of San Francisco? _____

3. What conclusion about Chinese migration from California to New York can you draw, judging from the selected records? _____

Document 9

Vocabulary

Cooley: Cheaply hired Chinese laborer.

Writ: Written command, scripture.

Prophecy: Prediction of the future.

TO THE WORKINGMEN OF THE EASTERN STATES!

HEAR YE!

Your fellow Workingmen of California have for years been using every means in their power to get rid of CHINESE CHEAP LABOR, but Rich Corporations, the monied men, backed by a Republican Press and President, have crushed all their efforts, and now they lie helpless at the feet of their masters, and can only cry to you for deliverance.

Cooley Cheap Labor rules the market there, and will do the same here by and by, if the blow is not struck now. As Holy Writ says: "NOW IS THE DAY OF YOUR SALVATION." Workingmen now is your time to mortally wound the double-headed monster YELLOW SLAVERY, and check the growing, grasping power of Corporations.

Brethren, are you Ready for the Question?

If you hesitate, let me tell you, in words of prophecy, if you don't do it now peacably by your ballot, your children will have to do it by their blood.

A FORMER RESIDENT OF CALIFORNIA.

Document 9: Broadside. "To the Workingmen of the Eastern States," New York State Library Manuscripts and Collections. No date.

Document 9 Short-Answer Questions

1. To whom is the document addressed? _____

2. Who supposedly wrote the document? _____

3. What is the purpose of the document? _____

4. What conclusion can be drawn from the document about the migration of Chinese labor from California to the eastern states? _____

PART B

Using information from at least six of the documents in Part A to support your thinking, and your own knowledge of history, write an essay describing the experience of Chinese immigrants to the United States. Explain the type of work Chinese laborers did, the response of American labor to Chinese immigrants, and the migration pattern that resulted from anti-Chinese prejudice in the western United States. Your essay should be well-organized and include an introduction, at least three paragraphs, and a conclusion.