THE FILIPINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY

FILIPINO IMMIGRATION, 1903-1946

In 1898, the Philippine Islands, along with Guam and Puerto Rico, became a territory of the United States following the Spanish-American War and a concurrent revolution to remove the Spanish colonial government. For the subsequent three years, some Filipinos also sought to remove U.S. control. The conflict continued until after 1902, but on a smaller scale. The Jones Law of 1916, also known as the Philippine Autonomy Act, provided a level of autonomy for the islands, with an American appointed Governor General and a native legislative assembly. With the outbreak of World War I, the Filipinos supported the United States. In addition to buying Liberty Bonds and providing a destroyer and submarine, a Filipino militia was organized to fight on the European front.[127]

Subsequent to the American acquisition of the Philippine Islands from Spain in 1898, Filipinos started to arrive in the United States and Hawaii, the latter of which was also an American possession. Typically, Filipinos came to work or to obtain an education and some combined schooling with work on the mainland. Virtually all originally intended to return to the islands, but many sojourners eventually became lifelong immigrants, establishing families and communities in the United States. The Filipinos that were living in the U.S. before World War II decades later referred to themselves as *Pinoys* and became known as the "old-timers," which distinguished them from later immigrants.[128]

The majority of the Filipinos who came to the United States before the mid-1930s did so in response to the integration of the Philippines into the global market as an agricultural export economy. The process, which began with the Spanish, advanced under American rule. As export crops such as sugar, tobacco, and coffee grown on large-scale plantations grew more important, small-scale rice farming declined and was displaced by tenancy. Displaced workers came to Hawaii as early as 1906, where they replaced Japanese workers as a cheap labor force. Between 1906 and 1934, over 100,000 *sakadas*, or contract workers, arrived from primarily Ilocano-speaking northern Luzon. Though over 50 percent eventually returned, many stayed in Hawaii and created communities there or moved on to the mainland. The path to the United States was via Hawaii, with almost 20,000 coming to the mainland between 1906 and 1932.[129]

Most of the "old-timers" who came to the United States in the late 1920s and 1930s came from the Ilocos region in northern Luzon, specifically Ilocos Sur and

[127] Veltisezar Bautista, *The Filipino Americans: From 1763 to the Present: Their History, Culture, and Traditions* (Farmington Hills: Bookhaus Publications, 1998), 61, 83-84.
[128] Barbara M. Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans* (Westport: Greenwood Press), 13.
[129] Honorante Mariano, "The Filipino Immigrants in the United States" (Master's thesis, University of Oregon, 1933), 3-4; Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 14-15.

Ilocos Norte, and central Luzon where some had already migrated. Many were employed in low-paying "stoop work," laboring on farms or working the canneries of the Northwest or Alaska. Because of the varying seasons, some did both. Still, these wages were better than they could expect at home. Though the U.S. had replaced Spain in the government, the standard of living of the Filipino people had not really changed. In 1925, outside of Manila, the cost of living for a family of two adults and three children amounted to ninety-one cents a day. If both parents worked, their total income would be seventy-five cents a day. Even with low wages in the United States, they could do better.[130]

Unlike their Japanese and Chinese counterparts, Filipino workers could immigrate to the United States as nationals, without legislative constraints. By the 1920s, Filipinos students and laborers were self-supported and filled niches in local economies, especially as service workers in urban areas. Typically, they worked in restaurants, hotels, private clubs, and as personal servants. In rural areas, they worked in the field of agriculture. However, laws were passed by various legislatures, including Arizona, forbidding miscegenation between "white" and "Mongolian" partners. Just as Chinese and Japanese immigrants had been discriminated against, Filipinos were also targeted, not just by racist laws, but by other anti-Filipino activities, particularly in California.[131]

In the early twentieth century, Filipinos enlisted in various branches of the U.S. military service; over 5,500 served as scouts during the Philippine-American War. By 1904, the U.S. Navy started recruiting over three hundred Filipinos per year with at least 3,900 serving at any given time between 1918 and 1933. Considered superior to other mess stewards in the 1920s, Filipinos replaced African Americans as the mess steward of choice. By 1932, the Filipinos numbered 3,922 to 441 African Americans in the service, though they were limited to working in the mess hall or as musicians.[132]

Despite their enlistment in the service, and though they were considered nationals by virtue of the Philippine Islands' status as a U.S. Territory, Filipinos were not eligible to become American citizens. Their children were eligible, but the immigrants who lived in the United States could not be naturalized and, therefore, could not vote or be certain of their future status. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 further limited the number of immigrants to fifty per year, while establishing a temporary Commonwealth government. This interim government was to serve until a promised independence of the islands in 1944 (it was actually 1946 due to the outbreak of World War II). Following independence,

[130] Bautista, *The Filipino Americans*, 13; Antonio J.A. Pido, *The Filipinos in America: Macro/Micro Dimensions in Immigration and Integration* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1986), 67; Mariano, "The Filipino Immigrants in the United States," 2-13.
[131] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 15-22; Mariano, "The Filipino Immigrants in the United States," 4, 29-31, 43-45.
[132] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 21-23.

Filipinos and other Asians were excluded from immigrating -- with the exception of those permitted to work on Hawaii's sugar plantations -- which meant Filipinos already in the U.S. would not be able to return if they visited their homeland.[133]

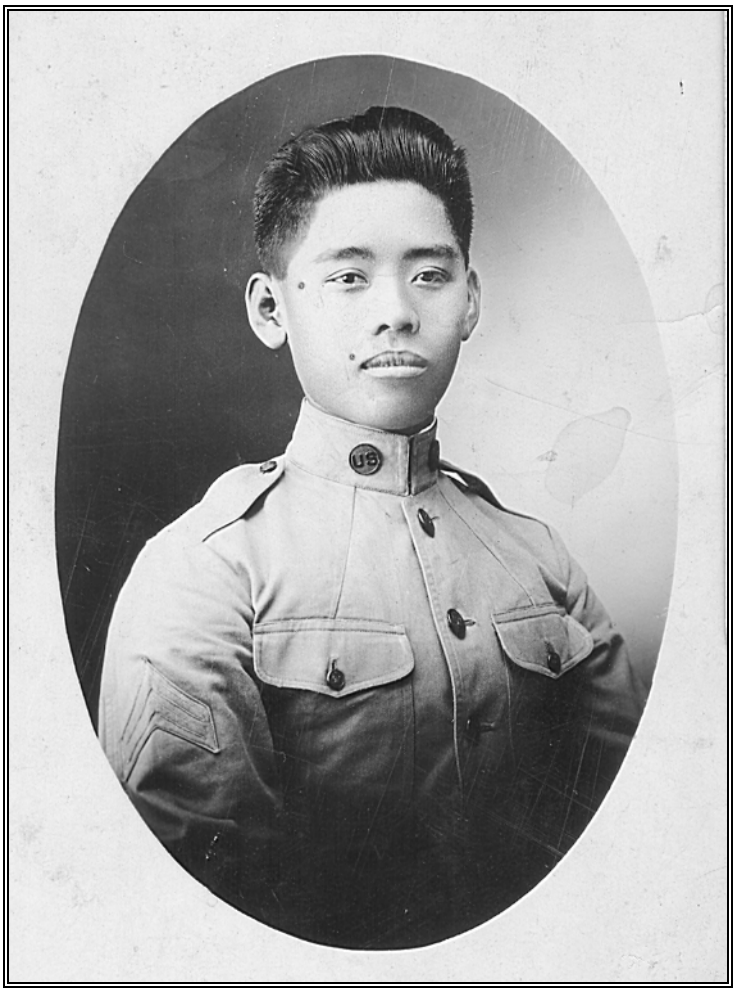

Figure 23. Felix Carbajal, ca. 1918. Copyright Sam Carbajal. Used with permission.

Due to the mechanism that brought them into the United States -- employment with the military or work in the agricultural service industry -- there was an imbalanced ratio between Filipinos and Filipinas. Bachelors relied on each other for camaraderie and created communities based on kinship, friendship, and mutual interests. Many of them married local, non-Filipino women. They established clubs reflecting provincial origins, occupational affiliations, and the need for mutual assistance. They hung out at cockfights, in pool halls, Chinese

[133] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 21-23; Bautista, *The Filipino Americans*, 85.

restaurants, dance halls, barbershops, and spaces rented out for community centers and dance halls.[134]

In some cities, "Little Manila" communities formed, especially along the coast in places such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. These communities ebbed and flowed with some members living fulltime in the cities and working in the service industry, while others were transient agricultural workers who followed the season crop harvests. Even when there was no Little Manila, such as in Phoenix, the family and friends created an extended family of parents, siblings, cousins, uncles, and aunts sometimes blurring the line of parental duties.[135]

THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY IN PHOENIX, 1920-1946

No Filipinos were recorded as living in Arizona in 1910, according to the federal census. In 1920, there were ten Filipinos listed, and by 1930, there were 472 living in Arizona. The number of Filipinos decreased in 1940 to 232. During this period, the majority of Filipinos were male and over the age of twenty-one. However, the actual numbers are distorted since many Filipinos were involved in seasonal agricultural labor and it was difficult to accurately measure their numbers.[136]

Residential Development

Eugene and Francisca Principe rented a place on south Central Avenue in 1921. The Principes were the typical Filipino couple: Eugene was Filipino, but Francisca was Hispanic. Over the next couple of decades, Eugene held a number of service related jobs; he was a janitor at the county court house, a laborer at the Westward Ho, a restaurant worker, and a cook. It was likely, due to the limited number of Filipinas, that Eugene had married Francisca, a Mexican American woman.[137]

Eugene Principe's two stepdaughters, both Hispanic, married Filipinos. Their husbands, Andres Yabo and Felix Carbajal, also worked a variety of service related jobs. As Eugene probably did, they both worked in seasonal agriculture. The Yabos and the Principes lived at the same rural address in 1932, probably as laborers, and the Principes eventually bought a home on Sonora Street (Cocopah Street), just west of 7th Avenue. The Carbajals purchased a home on

[134] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 24; Bautista, *The Filipino Americans*, 149; Mariano, "The Filipino Immigrants in the United States," 42-43.
[135] Bautista, *The Filipino Americans*, 144.
[136] Federal Census, 1940; Mariano, "The Filipino Immigrants in the United States," 18-19.
[137] Sam Carbajal, interviewed by Adrianne Dudley, 10 September 2006.

7th Avenue and Mohave Street, just a few blocks from the Principes. The Yabos built their home directly north of the Carbajals.[138]

Eugene Principe and other Filipino immigrants followed a specific pattern in settling in Phoenix. At first, their families were transient, moving from one rental home to another and holding a variety of service related jobs. Eventually, they saved enough money and purchased a house. In many instances, they rented out rooms to other Filipinos. This was true for the Carbajals, who purchased the property at 1721 South 7th Avenue in 1940 and soon rented out portions of the property to others.[139]

One of the families living with the Carbajals was the Estrils. Refugio Estril remembers the renters living in the back of the house:

> The back of it was where the Filipinos, all of them that were like seasonal, that's where they used to stay. That's when they had, none of these crazy laws anymore. The whole backyard was rows and rows of cages of roosters, fighting roosters. He even had some. My mom used to wash for them, iron for them and that was part of the income.[140]

The Phoenix Filipino Americans, perhaps due to their matrilineal connections to the Hispanic community, were primarily located in an area of South Phoenix bounded by Van Buren Street on the north, 15th Avenue on the west, the Salt River on the south, and 20th Street on the east. Many also moved into Santa Maria, a small community located southwest of Phoenix, near 70th Avenue and Lower Buckeye Road.[141]

Social and Cultural Life of the Community

Similar to the *compadrinazgo*, a form of ritual parenthood, which amalgamated god-parenthood with pre-Hispanic regional customs to form a unique and wide-ranging aspect of Filipino culture, marriage also created bilateral extensions through the creation of alliances between families and groups. According to Antonio Pido, "A family does not 'lose' a son or daughter in a marriage, but rather it gains a son or daughter plus, of course, the alliance with another group." While in the islands, these groupings may have been cross-cultural, in the United States, they became exogamous, mixing Hispanic and Filipino traditions. The result of these relationships based on matrimonial kinship shaped the way

[138] City Directories, 1921-1942.
[139] City Directories, 1940-1960; Sam Carbajal (2006).
[140] Felix Carbajal, Jr. and Refugio Estril, interviewed by Adrianne Dudley, 28 October 2006.
[141] Felix Carbajal, Jr., conversation with Vince Murray, 13 July 2006.

Filipinos conducted their activities. While their ethnicity was emphasized as Filipino, the offspring sometimes refer to themselves as *mestizo* -- mixed.[142]

Figure 24. First Inaugural Banquet and Ball of the Protective Philippine Pioneers of America, 1941. Copyright by Sam Carbajal. Used with permission.

Felix Carbajal was born in the village of Luna, La Union Province, on February 28, 1896. While working in Hawaii, he was inducted into the U.S. Army on June 1, 1918, where he served a year in H Company of the 1st Hawaiian Infantry, attaining the rank of corporal. Discharged in Hawaii in 1919, Felix made his way to Seattle and eventually to Phoenix where he married Micaela Franco, stepdaughter of Eugene Principe. The couple divorced in the 1940s and Felix raised four children, two girls and two boys. While the girls performed the domestic chores, the boys were put to work at an early age. Following the pattern of their father, who worked seasonally at the Westward Ho, during the summers the sons worked the fields with their father and other migrant workers.[143]

[142] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipinio Americans*, 6; Pido, *The Filipinos in America*, 18.
[143] Carbajal Family Records, Sam Carbajal; Felix Carbajal and Rufugio Estril (2006); City Directories 1930-1960.

Recalled Sam Carbajal:

> I remember picking the onions. I remember doing the carrots. We'd have to tie the carrots, bunch them up and then somebody would come in, put them in a bunch and put them in the truck and whatever. I was very young … we did that and we were still in the seventh or eighth grade, I think. And then all the sudden that stopped and we became "the elite." We went to pick grapes, now. That's all we did was grapes … and then one year we went to pick pears in Kelseyville, California. And that's another great thing about migrant workers, you get to travel. California, went to Idaho, went to Michigan, went to Texas. I mean we traveled all over Colorado. It was neat, again hard work, but Hey! It's like the travel guide right here; it's great. I wouldn't recommend it nowadays, but what can I say?[144]

Being mixed, many of the Filipinos attended St. Anthony's Church, attending Mass in Spanish. They also attended Lowell Elementary School and Phoenix Union High School. The "Old Timers" formed groups such as the Protective Philippine Pioneers of America and held functions at Prince Hall. Gambling was popular, especially cockfighting. On special weekends, many would gather at the Carbajal House or other popular meeting places and slaughter a pig.[145]

According to Sam Carbajal:

> Once a week there was a sort of like a Filipino club … you couldn't actually call it a club, but it was. All the families got together at Prince Hall. They would rent the hall every Saturday night and all of the family -- everybody -- went. There was adults, all the kids, and at Christmas time, it was great. Everybody would get fruit, whatever it is, and the bags and stuff, and toys. It was neat, I tell ya. It was a great experience.
>
> We'd do that and then at South Mountain Park, again, they'd slaughter a pig and then everyone would take pots up there and whatever. Sometime you'd go down to the river bottom, not too many of the families would go down there, but once in a while somebody would kill a goat over there and, whoa, all the cars would converge over there, right? It seemed like word got around whenever somebody was killing something.[146]

[144] Sam Carbajal (2006).
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.

THE POSTWAR COMMUNITY, 1946-1960

The community changed during this time period due to various factors: world war, access to naturalized citizenship, Philippine independence, the arrival of Filipino professionals, the migration of Filipinas, the expansion of ethnic-based institutions; and the maturation of the first generation of United States born Filipinos. During World War II, Filipinos were considered as allies unlike their Japanese counterparts. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Selective Service allowed Filipinos to serve in the military, though they were not citizens. Thousands were in active in the Pacific serving in the 1st and 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiments while others served in non-Filipino units in Europe. Naturalization was extended to those serving and during and immediately after the war, almost 11,000 Filipinos in the military were naturalized.[147]

Figure 25. Children playing at the Carbajal house, ca. 1970. Copyright Sam Carbajal. Used with permission.

[147] Posadas, *The New Americans/The Filipino Americans*, 26.

The Philippines received their independence from the United States on July 4, 1946. Two days earlier, the Luce-Celler Bill passed in Congress granting naturalization to all Filipinos who had come to the United States before passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. However, Luce-Celler also limited immigration to fifty per year.[148]

A greater number of Filipinas came to the United States after the war for matrimony or employment, particularly in the field of nursing. Prior to 1934, their numbers were miniscule in comparison to their male counterparts. In 1930, when Filipinos numbered 45,208 in the United States, 67.4 percent were living in California and 6.5 percent of these were women. By 1965, this number had grown to 67,435 Filipinas, 37.1 percent of the total population. For the most part, the women who came either married American or Filipino-American service men or pre-1934 Filipino immigrants. The nurses came for post-graduate studies and often remained to work or marry. Some also were able to immigrate under the War Brides Act of 1945.[149]

Between 1934 and 1946, there was no significant Filipino immigration to the U.S. and the primarily male Filipino population aged and declined. The onset of war and the removal of Japanese to interment camps created economic opportunities for Filipino Americans and created a media portrayal of all Filipinos as loyal friends of the United States and enemies of Japan. In 1946, as a reward for this loyalty, the federal government increased the annual immigration quota to one hundred and made Filipinos eligible for citizenship.[150] The McCarran-Walter Act only allowed one hundred Filipinos to immigrate per year, though about 32,000 actually did.[151]

It is virtually impossible to determine the actual number of Filipinos who were living in Arizona after World War II from census records. Due to residential location and intermarriage with Mexican American women, the families of the Filipinos who had settled in South Phoenix have become closely integrated into the larger Hispanic community. However, at the same time, they continue to maintain a distinct Filipino identity, which is reinforced by the close ties between interrelated families. At this date, there are still two small but distinctly Filipino communities, located at 7th Avenue and Mojave Street, and at Santa Maria, which is just outside of the Phoenix city limits.[152]

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[148] Ibid., 26-27.
[149] Ibid., 27-28; Bautista, *The Filipino Americans*, 95.
[150] Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 90.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics On Population Totals By Race, 1790-1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970-1990, For Large Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States," *Working Paper* 76 (Washington: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005); U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1953b; Felix Carbajal, 13 July 2006.

THE ASIAN INDIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Similar to Asia, the term India is subject to interpretation. The current country is huge, comprising a major part of the Indian subcontinent and containing dozens of distinctive ethnic groups. Most of India was under British rule between 1856 and 1947, which at that time included the areas that are now Bangladesh and Pakistan.

In the late eighteenth century, a few Asian Indian sailors were in New England and, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, Asian Indian merchants began establishing small communities in the eastern United States. However, there was no significant immigration of Asian Indians to the U.S. until after 1900. Like the majority of Asian immigrants, the Asian Indians came first to California. Most of the early immigrants came from the Punjab, an area in northern India and Pakistan. The majority of these Asian Indians were Sikhs, though some Hindus and Muslims immigrated as well. The Sikhs are a militant caste that follows a monotheistic belief -- Sikhism -- and in which male members take the name Singh, which means lion.[153]

The early Sikhs arrived in California as sojourners and worked in lumbering and railroads. Later, they turned to agriculture, initially as laborers, and then as proprietors and tenants. They experienced much of the same types of legal and extralegal discrimination as other Asians. Due to the disproportionate male to female ratio of immigrants, 58:1 in 1930, many Sikhs married Hispanic women typically from Mexican and Mexican American migrant worker families. For other Asians, such as the Chinese and Japanese, there were enough immigrant women for endogamous marriages. This was not the case for the Asian Indians and, similar to Filipinos, exogamous marriages were common during this era.[154]

In 1946, Congress passed legislation allowing naturalization and a small immigration quota for persons of races indigenous to India. The number of Asian Indians had been decreasing during World War II, but the 1946 act, the granting of independence to India in 1947, and immigration reforms in 1952 and 1965, did not create the drastic increase in immigration from India that had been expected.[155]

ASIAN INDIAN AMERICANS IN PHOENIX, 1931-1960

Asian Indians were in Arizona as early as 1900, when eight were listed in the federal census. Their numbers never grew very large; about thirty lived in Arizona during the 1930s and 1940s. In 1931, a small number of Sikhs moved into the

[153] Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 96-97.
[154] Ibid., 96-102.
[155] Ibid., 101, 103-104.

Salt River Valley. While some took on jobs as laborers, others farmed and ranched on land near the Salt River. Through subsequent decades, the number of Asian Indians in Phoenix remained small, possibly little more than a dozen. While agriculture appears to have been the primary employment opportunity, after World War II, a few branched out into other industries. By the 1960s, some Asian Indians found work as nurses, mechanics, office workers, and retail store clerks, while a few remained in the agricultural industry.[156]

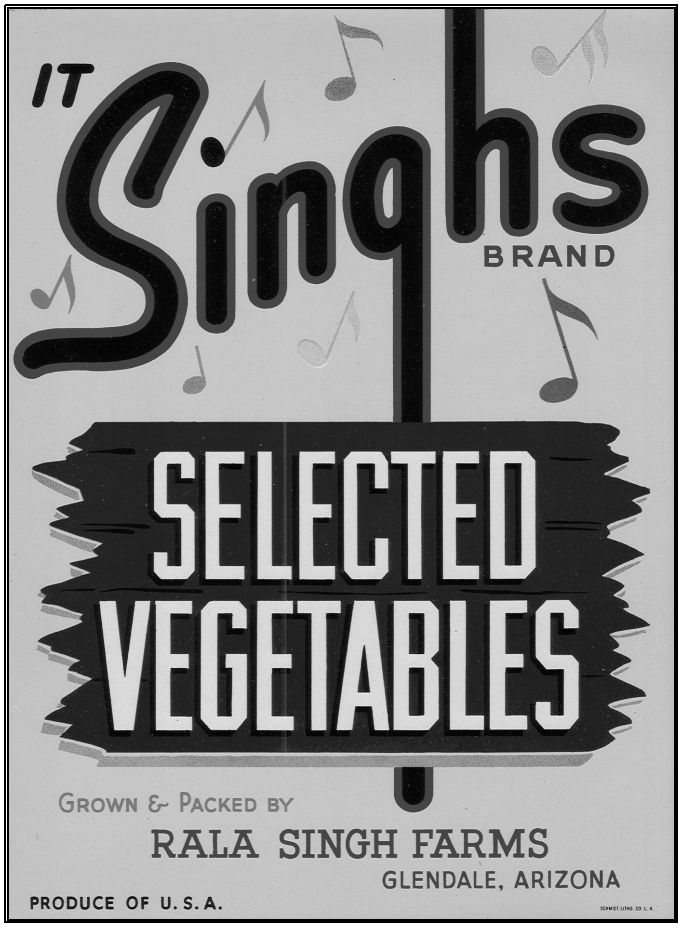

Figure 26. Rala Singh Farms label, ca. 1955. Courtesy of Vince Murray.

Jiwan Singh, a native of India, purchased about thirty acres south of the Salt River in 1938. After working in Texas and Arizona's Gila Valley, Singh moved his family to their new home in 1946. Like many Asian Indian immigrants, Jiwan was married to a Hispanic woman. Accompanied by his family, he started a dairy farm on 12th Street, a quarter-mile north of Broadway Road. Within a couple of years,

[156] Federal Census, 1900; City Directories 1931-1965.

Jiwan's oldest son Albert, now married, built a house just to the south of the main house. In 1956, his younger son Adam built a house to the north for his family.[157]

Both Albert and Adam found work outside of agriculture, the former in machine shops and the latter in the aeronautic industry. Ramona, the oldest daughter, went to work for F.W. Woolworths in Phoenix until she married and started a family of her own. Amelia, the youngest, went to school at UCLA and later worked at the university as a librarian. While the children of Jiwan Singh may have deviated from agricultural pursuits, the family farm is still in operation and is still in the family's possession.[158]

Another Asian Indian who did quite well in the farming business was Rala Singh. Singh was born in the village of Palmal, District Ludhiana, in the state of Punjab, in 1907. He immigrated to the United States in 1947, and arrived in the Salt River Valley shortly thereafter. He initially partnered with Joe Wood in a vegetable shipping operation called Singh and Wood, with its offices and warehouse at 404 South 4th Street, Phoenix. Wood soon left the partnership. Singh operated his own large farming operation in the West Valley, known as Rala Singh Farms. His operation eventually covered over 11,000 acres in the Litchfield Park area, and by 1960, he closed his downtown Phoenix office and moved all operations to Glendale.[159]

[157] Adam Singh, conversation with Vince Murray, 12 December 2006.
[158] Ibid.; City Directories 1947-2005.
[159] City Directories, 1947-1960; *Valley India Times* 13 November 2002 and 13 February 2003.

OTHER ASIAN AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS

KOREANS

In 1882, the United States signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Korea (then known as Joseon or Choson), which allowed Koreans to settle anywhere in the United States. At the time, few Koreans took advantage of the provisions offered in the treaty, though there were some political exiles living in the U.S. as early as 1885. By the turn of the century, internal, international, and environmental conditions in the country led many to seek a better life outside of Korea. The country was overrun by the Japanese and Chinese in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), which ended with Korea's independence being defined by the Japanese government. Japan forced economic, social, and educational reforms that favored Japanese interests. A drought in 1901 also provided conditions that made immigration more tempting.[160]

The first Koreans immigrated to the Hawaiian Islands in 1903. 121 laborers were brought in to work for the sugar plantations and to replace Japanese and Chinese workers who could not immigrate to the islands after United States annexation. The plantation owners were also concerned with the Japanese workers who were organizing and demanding higher wages and living conditions. By 1905, over 7,000 Koreans were working in Hawaii. An additional 1,033 were employed in Mexico.[161]

The Koreans were employed in agricultural labor and as cooks, launderers, and janitors. They did not integrate or assimilate, preferring to use their own language and keeping a sojourner's orientation. Subsequent to the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Korea became a Japanese protectorate and the latter country ended immigration of Koreans to the United States, probably to protect the jobs of the 31,000 Japanese already in Hawaii. In 1910, when Japan formally annexed Korea, the number of migrants remained static. No significant number of additional Koreans came to the United States nor could the existing immigrants return to their homeland. Between 1910 and 1924, the majority of Koreans that came to the U.S. were "picture brides," women who were matched up with husbands via a mail order system. In 1924, the Oriental Exclusion Act, which prohibited immigration from Asia of foreign-born wives and children of U.S. citizens of Chinese ancestry, put an end to this practice. [162]

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[160] Hyung-chan Kim, ed., *The Korean Diaspora: Historical and Sociological Studies of Korean Immigration and Assimilation in North America* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, Inc., 1977), 3-5; Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 113.
[161] Kim, *The Korean Diaspora*, 5-6; Yo-jun Yun, "Early History of Korean Immigration to America," Hyung-chan Kim, ed., *The Korean Diaspora: Historical and Sociological Studies of Korean Immigration and Assimilation in North America* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, Inc., 1977), 33.
[162] Kim, *The Korean Diaspora*, 4-6; Yun, "Early History of Korean Immigration to America," 39-40; Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 135.

The census records do not differentiate Koreans from other Asians and because of the influence of Chinese and Japanese on the culture, Korean names do not typically stand out in city directories. Dorothy Robinson stated in a 1976 interview that the San Marcos Hotel in Chandler employed Korean service workers, which probably came via an agency in California. There is no record of Koreans being used in Phoenix area resorts or as personal servants. The only identified Korean living in Phoenix prior to 1940 was Chillay Jhung who, as early as 1938, was working as an herbalist out of 128 South 2nd Street.[163]

The next major group of Korean immigrants arrived in the United States between 1951 and 1964 and were a heterogeneous group of Korean War orphans, students, and the wives of servicemen. So far, none of these have been identified as migrating to the Phoenix area, though it is assumed some may have been residing at the Luke and Williams air force bases. With the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, more Koreans settled in the U.S. than ever before.[164]

SOUTHEAST ASIANS

Southeast Asians typically came to the United States as refugees from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Their status was the product of the United States' involvement in Vietnam after World War II. The first refugee group consisted of military personnel, civil servants, teachers, farmers, fishermen, employees of Americans, and Catholics who recognized that their middle- and upper-class lifestyle would be incompatible with a communist regime. The majority were educated and nearly half of the household heads were born in North Vietnam and left for the south after the French defeat at Dienbienphu in 1954. The immigration was primarily in family groups, though there was a sizable number of single males. The next group consisted of refugees who arrived in the U.S. after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. They consisted of Vietnamese, Laotians (primarily Hmong), and Cambodians displaced by the Vietnam War, the genocidal regime of Cambodian leader Pol Pot, and other economic and environmental issues. Between 1975 and 1984, 700,000 Southeast Asians immigrated to the United States representing one in seven Asian Americans at the time.[165]

Phoenix has a substantial Southeast Asian population. Out of the 1,149 Cambodians living in Arizona in 2000, 1026 were living in the Phoenix area. Laotians are smaller in number with 940 in Arizona and 648 in the Phoenix area. The largest number is the Vietnamese with 12,931 in Arizona, 10,176 in the Phoenix area, and 5,301 within the city limits. Though the number of Southeast

[163] Dorothy Fulwiler Robinson, interview by Karin Ullman, 1 July 1976; City Directories, 1939-1947.
[164] Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 117-118.
[165] Ibid., 145-150.

Asians in Phoenix is sizable, the timeframe for the immigration of these groups -- post-1975 -- is outside of the range of this report.[166]

[166] Mark E. Pfeifer, comp., *U.S. Census 2000, Cambodian Population, by State* <http://www.hmongstudies.org/CambodianAmericanCensusData.html>, accessed 16 July 2006; Mark E. Pfeifer, comp., *U.S. Census 2000, Laotian Population, by State* <http://www.hmongstudies.org/CambodianAmericanCensusData.html>, accessed 16 July 2006; Mark E. Pfeifer , "U.S. Census 2000: An Overview of National and Regional Trends in Vietnamese Residential Distribution," *The Review of Vietnamese Studies* , 2001 1(1), 9.

SUMMARY

ASIAN AMERICANS IN PHOENIX, 1870-1960

The pattern of historic Asian American immigration to Phoenix is directly attributable to national trends. The Chinese first arrived in Phoenix in the 1870s and their number increased with the arrival of the railroad to the south a decade later. Around the same time, in 1882 the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed and, to adapt, the Chinese developed into merchants. Prior to World War II, there had been two distinctive Chinatowns located in downtown; neither exists today.

The Japanese filled in the labor gap left by the Chinese after the Exclusion Act, especially in the field of agriculture. With land leases, the Japanese became successful truck farmers, which was not always appreciated by their white counterparts. Through the racial violence of the 1930s and the internment of 1940s, the Japanese Americans remained in Phoenix.

The Philippine Islands became a U.S. territory following the Spanish American War. Filipino-Americans were allowed to move freely in and out of the U.S. until the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, which granted the Philippine Islands independence and restricted immigration to the US. During this timeframe, Filipinos filled a void in the labor market created by restrictive measures against Chinese and Japanese. They typically provided work in agriculture and the service industries.

Other Asian Americans were in Phoenix historically. A small group of Sikhs from the Punjab were farming along the Salt River. Koreans were working in Chandler, though they are not found historically as a group in Phoenix. Other groups came to Phoenix from Southeast Asia, but not during the historic period 1870 to 1960.

ASIAN AMERICANS IN PHOENIX SINCE 1960

In his testimony at civil rights hearings in Phoenix in 1962, Judge Thomas Tang said that he believed that discrimination against Chinese was mostly a thing of the past. With the abandonment of Chinatown, Phoenix's Chinese American community was fully dispersed throughout the city and well integrated into neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. China Alley was torn down for construction of a new fire station and, by 1970, all that remained of the Phoenix Chinatown were a few restaurants, the Sun Mercantile building, and the Ying On Merchants and Benevolent Association. The same families still lived in the city, but they were no longer seen as a separate community. The same was true for the other Asian American communities: with the decline of racist attitudes and legal restrictions, they were able to find employment in any field, live in any

neighborhood, and pursue opportunities that had not been available to the parents.[167]

However, the Asian American communities do still exist through organizations, churches, and family ties. The Arizona Buddhist Temple, the Japanese Free Methodist Church, and the Japanese American Citizens League continue to provide a strong sense of community for Japanese American families. The Phoenix Chinese United Association was formed in the 1960s to bring together the many different family and benevolent associations, women's clubs, and professional organizations, and it now hosts the annual Fourth of July celebration, continuing an important tradition that had been started by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in 1937.[168]

On October 3, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, which amended the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 by repealing the national origins quota system. The 1965 Act raised the annual immigration maximum to 170,000, with no more than 20,000 per country. The federal government granted individual visas with priority given to family reunification, attracting needed skilled labor and refugees. Laws enacted since the 1920s had effectively limited the entrance of Asians into the United States; the new act removed those limitations. Whereas China and Japan had provided the majority of Asian immigrants in the early 1900s, at the beginning of the twentieth-first century their immigration numbers were surpassed by Filipinos and Koreans.[169]

Asian American immigrants who have come to the United States since 1965 have been very different from their predecessors. Approximately two-thirds of Filipino immigrants are now professionals, with a particularly large number working in the field of health care. The percentage of female immigrants has increased as well, from 37 percent in 1960 to 54 percent in 1980. Likewise, immigrants from China, Japan, India and other Asian countries come for education and professional employment opportunities, and not agricultural work, as was the case a century ago. The majority of immigrants continue to move into Hawaii and California. Future studies should focus on these latter immigrants, as well as the refugees from Southeast Asia.[170]

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[167] Luckingham, *Minorities in Phoenix*, 111; Keane, et. al., Chinese in Arizona, 36; Chiang, "The Chinese Community in Phoenix," 45, 51, 109; Tom Inoshita interview (2006).
[168] Tom Inoshita interview (2006); Luckingham, *Minorities in Phoenix*, 111, 120; Wei Zeng, "Creating Chinese American Identity, 62; *Fourth of July Celebration* 2006, Program, 13; Chiang, "The Chinese Community in Phoenix," 53.
[169] H. Brett Melendy, *Asians in America: Filipinos, Koreans, and East Indians* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), 18.
[170] Kitano and Daniels, *Asian Americans*, 91.