

## World Geography

### Asian Migration

Name:

Section:

Score: \_\_\_\_/5

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Directions: Read the following article about Asian migration to Latin America and fill out the chart of questions at the end of the article. Once that's completed answer the comparison question at the end.

### Asians in Latin America

In 1990 Alberto Fujimori, son of Japanese immigrants, became president of Peru. His election underscores the fact that not only Europeans, but Asians as well, have immigrated in significant numbers to Latin America and contributed to the social, cultural, economic, and political development of the region. Every Latin American country received some Asian immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

As early as the seventeenth century, *chinos de manila* were known in Mexico City, Cuba, and other parts of Spanish America, the result of the Manila Galleon trade between Mexico and the Philippines. However, organized, large-scale Asian immigration to Latin America, consisting almost exclusively of Chinese and Japanese, did not take place until the mid-nineteenth century. Most of the Chinese went to Cuba, Peru, Mexico, and parts of Central America, while the Japanese settled largely in Peru and Brazil, and a much smaller number in Bolivia. Whether forced or free, large-scale Asian movement to Latin America was part of the international labor migration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the wake of the worldwide development of capitalism and imperialism, and specifically of the decline of slavery in Latin America.

The bulk of the early Chinese and Japanese immigrants worked under harsh agricultural labor conditions, gradually making the transition to independent agricultural or urban commercial activities. The relative prosperity experienced by Asian communities in the early twentieth century resulted in anti-Asian violence and persecution in all these countries, with the worst being the expulsion of the Chinese from northern Mexico during the Great Depression and the deportation and incarceration in the United States of Japanese Peruvians during World War II.

#### THE CHINESE IN PERU, CUBA, AND MEXICO

From 1847 to 1874 as many as 225,000 Chinese "coolies," under eight-year contracts, almost all male, were sent to Cuba and Peru, with 80 percent or more destined for the sugar plantations. In Cuba, then still a Spanish colony, the Chinese worked alongside African slaves, the chief source of plantation labor, while in Peru, where slavery was abolished in 1854, Chinese coolies supplanted black slaves. Scholars have viewed *la trata amarilla* (the yellow trade) as both a transition from slave to free labor and, even more, a modified form of slavery. Not disputed is the indispensability of Chinese labor to the maintenance of the plantation-based economies of both societies.

In Peru several thousand coolies also helped build the Andean railroad and worked in the offshore guano mines south of Lima. In the 1870s escaped coolies and free Chinese were among the pioneers who penetrated the Peruvian Amazon, building settlements, introducing trade activities and small-scale manufacturing, and cultivating rice, beans, sugar, and other crops.

In Cuba a small number in the nineteenth century were also employed in domestic service, cigarette factories, and other small manufacturing, as well as by the colonial government in large public-works projects. In the 1860s *chinos mambises* (Chinese freedom fighters) also joined fellow slaves and free blacks in the first armed struggle to overthrow Spanish colonial rule. As men who were neither slave nor free, neither black nor white, the Chinese coolies helped break down the racist ideology of Cuba's plantation system.

While free Chinese migrants continued to enter Cuba and Peru in the first decades of the twentieth century, the numbers were not large, and both governments sought to limit further Chinese immigration in the face of local protest against perceived Chinese excesses in commercial activities. The gender imbalance from the coolie period was never sufficiently redressed, and subsequent generations were increasingly mestizoized. At the end

of the twentieth century, Chinese Peruvians remained a visible minority, their presence captured by the ubiquitous chifas (Chinese restaurants). Since the Cuban Revolution of 1959, a large number of Chinese Cubans have left the island as part of the massive exodus of the Cuban middle class.

Free Chinese immigrants began entering Mexico at exactly the same time that the United States enacted Chinese exclusion and Porfirio Díaz took power in Mexico and promoted immigration along with development, particularly of the frontier region between northern Mexico and the United States. Instead of assuming laboring jobs in the mines and railroads, which were filled by Mexicans, the Chinese entered the new economic niche of local commerce and became truck farmers, small manufacturers, and, especially, small shopkeepers, forming in effect a ubiquitous petite bourgeoisie. They prospered even through the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution, in part by provisioning the various revolutionary armies.

Numbering over 24,000, the Chinese had become the largest immigrant community in Mexico by 1927. Besides large colonies in Sonora and Baja California Norte, they had also settled in every state and territory except Baja California Sur and Tlaxcala. Not surprisingly, however, their relative success inevitably generated resentment and sporadic persecution, which culminated in 1929–1930 with the expulsion of the large Chinese colony of Sonora (state bordering Arizona) and subsequent nationalization of their businesses, spelling the decline of the Chinese throughout Mexico.

### **THE JAPANESE IN PERU AND BRAZIL**

Japanese immigration to Peru and Brazil began in 1899 and 1908, respectively, and continued into the 1970s, with the high point (over 60 percent of the total) during the interwar decades of the 1920s and 1930s. Early Japanese immigration to Latin America resembled that of the Chinese in that the vast majority went as contract laborers, but the patterns soon diverged, with three distinguishing features. First, the Japanese contracts were of shorter duration, and the Japanese made a relatively quick transition from plantation labor to independent farming. Second, from the beginning the Japanese government acted to control and regulate migration through licensing immigration companies and protecting the migrants' rights and interests once overseas, including subsidizing immigrant colonization activities. Third, while men still outnumbered women, the Japanese government encouraged the migration of women, ensuring in turn the integrity of migrant families, the formation of new families, and the continuity of Japanese traditions in the adopted homelands.

By 1924 most of the Japanese in Peru had left the plantations for independent farming or for Lima and other cities and towns throughout the country, where they opened up a variety of small businesses in the service and food sectors. Large numbers of free immigrants continued to arrive until after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. During World War II, under pressure from the United States, a willing Peruvian government deported 1,429 Japanese citizens and residents to concentration camps in the United States, while confiscating Japanese-owned property and nationalizing Japanese businesses.

The Japanese community of Peru managed to recover from this act of infamy and to grow in the postwar years. As the largest immigrant community in Peru, they numbered 32,002 in 1966, almost evenly divided between men and women, with more than half living in Lima and the vast majority of them second, third, or fourth generation. Through reproduction and some continual immigration, the population had grown to over 50,000 by the early 1970s and has remained stable.

In 2000, early in Fujimori's third term, a government scandal caused him to go into exile in Japan, where he remained for five years. The Japanese government revealed that he had never given up his Japanese citizenship. Japan denied Peru's extradition requests, but in 2005 Fujimori was arrested in Chile and in September 2007 was extradited to Peru. He awaited trial there on charges of corruption and sanctioning death-squad killings. While his daughter, Keiko Fujimori, was quite popular (she was elected to the Peruvian Congress in 2006), he remained a controversial public figure in Peru.

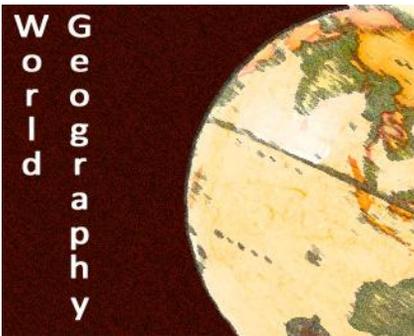
Japanese immigration to Brazil represents the largest and longest continuous flow of people from Asia to Latin America: A total of 237,466 migrated between 1908 and 1961. By the late 1970s the Japanese Brazilian population had grown to over 700,000 (three-quarters Brazilian-born), making it the largest Japanese community outside Japan and the most prosperous and successful Asian immigrant community in Latin America.

Always heavily concentrated in São Paulo city and state (90 percent in the late twentieth century), Japanese immigrants have made significant contributions to both the agricultural (rice, cotton, vegetables, and especially coffee) and, later, the industrial-commercial (manufacturing, shopkeeping, international trade) development of the country. They were also instrumental in the early colonization of the vast Amazon region. Although in the immediate postwar years the majority of Japanese Brazilians were a rural middle-class of small and medium landowners—having won the all-important concession to own and lease land—living in hundreds of Japanese settlements, they have become since the 1960s a highly educated, urban middle-class, active in Brazilian economic and political life.

By the late twentieth century the once prominent Chinese immigrant communities of Latin America had declined significantly, the result of absorption into the larger society by miscegenation or assimilation or departure by voluntary exodus or expulsion. In contrast, Japanese immigrants and their descendants in Brazil and Peru continued to grow in size and prominence, retaining their distinctive identity while also increasingly integrating into the national life. Despite this growth, some Japanese Brazilians, called Dekasegi, meaning "working away from home," returned to Japan during the economic turmoil of the 1980s in Brazil. As of the early 2000s over 200,000 Japanese Brazilians live in Japan and are the largest group of Portuguese speakers in Asia.

**Source:** Hu-DeHart, Evelyn. "Asians in Latin America." *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*. Ed. Jay Kinsbruner and Erick D. Langer. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008. 370-373. *World History in Context*. Web. 19 May 2016.

<b>Asiatic Migration to Latin America</b>	
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Japanese</b>
<b>When and why did they come to Latin America?</b>	
<b>Where in Latin America did they primarily settle? (For each country provide estimates for how many migrated)</b>	
<b>In what types of industries did the Asian immigrants get involved in?</b>	
<b>How did the Asians impact the areas they move to both culturally and developmentally?</b>	
<b>How were the Asian migrants impacted by moving to Latin America?</b>	



# World Geography

## Asian Migration Thought Question

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Section: \_\_\_\_\_  
Score: \_\_\_\_/5

Directions: Using what you know of the experience of migrants who can to Anglo America explain three similarities and three differences between the experiences of Asians who came to Anglo America, and those who came to Latin America. You may need to do additional research to complete this assignment.

### Contrasting Migratory Experiences

Similarities	Differences
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.