



Family in front of Wah Chong Washing and Ironing, 1895.
Image: City of Vancouver Archives/AM1376--:CVA 178-2.8.

Week 5: Asian Migration into North America

CDST 250A: Introduction to Canada
By: Aydin Quach (he/him)

I acknowledge that the UBC Point Grey campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Hənq̓əmiṅəm (Halkomelem) speaking xwməθ-kwəy'əm (Musqueam) people. I am an uninvited settler on their land.

Learning Objectives

By the end of today you will be able to...

1. **Identify** key reasons for migration (to Canada)
2. **Discuss** government policies that intend to exclude certain people based on race and their effects

Guiding Questions:

Why do people migrate?

Who gets to migrate? **Who doesn't?**

Migration



Immigration



Emigration

Migration

“Movement of people” (may not be permanent)



Immigration

Wanting to move and live in a place **permanently**



Emigration

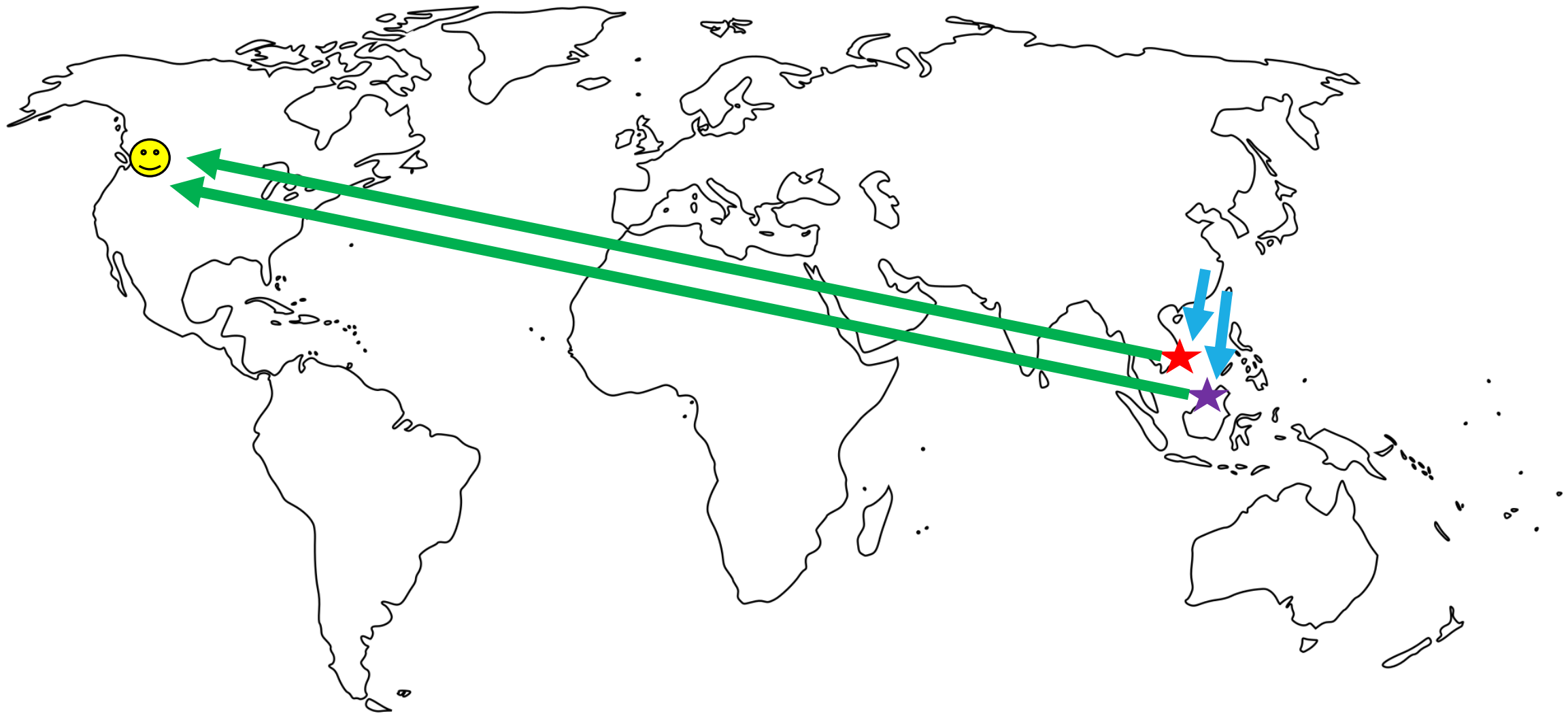
Leaving a place **permanently**

Factors for Migration

Why do people migrate?

Reasons for Migration

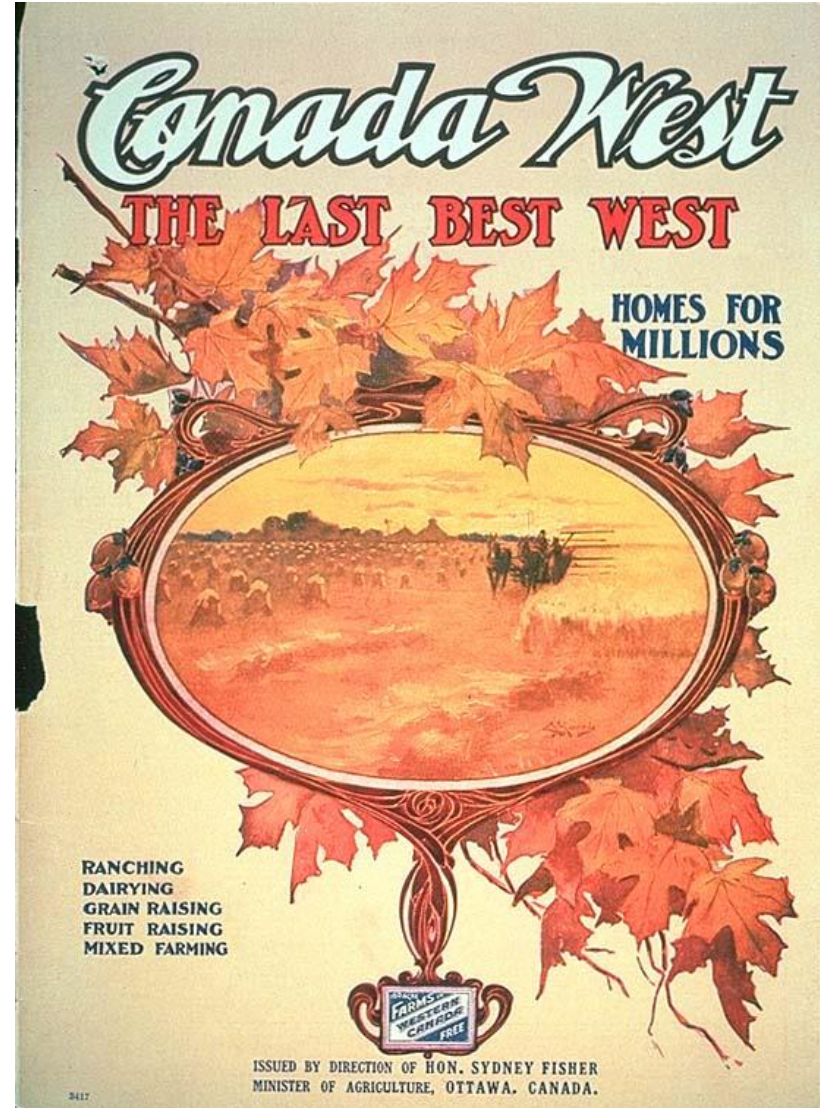
1. Looking for work opportunities (better wages, jobs, work environments)
2. Environmental (Climate/Weather)
3. Cultural (Language, Religion, etc.)
4. Love/Marriage
5. Escaping war/persecution
6. Higher standard of living
7. Higher education (University, Work Training, Graduate School)



21.9% of Canada's total population is made up of "immigrants" (StatCan, 2016)

Historical Asian Migration to Canada

Who gets to migrate? **Who doesn't**?



1857–1884 (Early Immigration)

1885–1922 (Head Tax/Anti-Immigration)

1923–1946 (Exclusion Act)

1947–Present (Post-World War II)

1857–1884 (Early Immigration)

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1947–Present (Post-World War II)



1857 – 1884 (Early Migration)

Chinese labourers, detraining camp, Petawawa, Ontario. Credit: Meredith, C.P. / Library and Archives Canada / C-068863

1857-1884 (Early Migration)

- Many immigrants from Asia coming to Canada for work (fishing, mining, construction, military muscle, logging)
- Gold discovery in 1857 starts the rush of Chinese migrants to the Lower Mainland of B.C, San Francisco, and Yukon. By the time most Chinese arrived, the Gold Rush was over...
 - “Gām sāan/ 金山” or “Gold Mountain” becomes the name and the dream of Chinese migrants
- Many Chinese ended up building the Canadian Pacific Railway connecting Canada from Atlantic to Pacific Ocean
- The intention was not to stay in Canada, but to go home after making money
- Higher wages than what they might get in their home countries made moving out to Canada enticing



SUMMER 1881, SOUTH CHINA...

GAM SAAN IS
LOOKING FOR IRON
ROAD WORKERS
AGAIN!

... WE MUST
NOT MISS THIS
OPPORTUNITY!



BUT...
OLD UNCLE TOLD ME
THE CHINESE WERE
MISTREATED BY THE
RED HAIRS

HELL WITH
THE OLD FART.
HE ONLY WANTS TO
KEEP THE GOOD
STUFF FOR
HIMSELF



YEAH.
OLD SAUSAGE
FACE IS TRYING
TO SCARE US
AWAY FROM GAM
SAAN WORK!

Escape to Gold Mountain, A Graphic History of the Chinese in North America
by David Wong



1885–1922 (Head Tax/Anti-Immigration)

Indian passengers aboard the SS Komagata Maru in 1914.

Image: James Luke Quiney fonds/City of Vancouver Archives/AM 15984-:CVA 7-122.

1885–1922 (Head Tax/Anti-Immigration)

- Development of policies to stop Asian people from “taking over” the population of Canada:
 - **“Continuous Journey Regulation”** → Needing to enter Canada directly via boat trip with **no pit stops**
 - Komagata Maru Incident (Indian migration)
 - **Chinese Head Tax** → A tax on Chinese men to bring their families over to Canada
 - \$200-\$500 per “head” (\$5,000 – \$12,500 in 2022)
 - Could be more expensive for women and children
 - **“Gentleman’s Agreement”** in 1908
 - Limited Japanese immigration to 400 men a year
 - **Financial barriers to immigration were increased**
 - Minimum \$200 required in savings

Dua, Enakshi. "Exclusion through Inclusion: Female Asian Migration in the Making of Canada as a White Settler Nation."

- Stopping women from migrating to Canada...
 - Why? → to stop Asian men from having Asian children (**Eugenics**: the practice of controlling human reproduction)
 - Many Asian men become homeless or poor bachelors living in the slums of cities

Breakout Discussion (15 mins):

1. Who was affected by these policies of discrimination? How did this hurt migrants?
2. How does stopping women/men from migrating to Canada affect migrant communities?



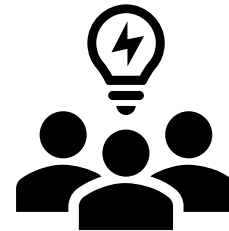
Think (by yourself)

1 min



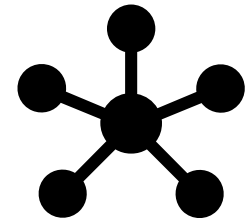
Pair (with a partner)

4 min



Multiply (find another pair)

5 min



Share (with the class)

5 min



Anti-Asian Riots of 1907 in Vancouver

Source: Library and Archives Canada

*"That Canada should desire to restrict immigration and remain **a white man's country** is regarded as **not only natural, but necessary** for economic, political and social reasons."*

- WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING'S DISSERTATION ON ORIENTAL IMMIGRATION TO CANADA, 1908