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## Timeline of Asian American History

(items in boldface are treated in some detail in the text)

- 1790 - **Naturalization Act** prevents non-whites from being citizens; first federal naturalization statute
- 1830 - Chinese "sugar masters" working in Hawai'i. Chinese sailors and peddlers in New York
- 1848 - Gold discovered in California. Chinese begin to arrive
- 1848 - Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo concludes U.S.-Mexican War; Mexicans residing on territory ceded to U.S. can elect U.S. citizenship; includes what is now the state of California.
- 1850 - California's Foreign Miner's Tax. Enforced against Chinese miners, who often had to pay twice. Before law was voided, ½ of State's income was derived from this source
- 1852 - 20,000 Chinese pass through San Francisco to gold fields of Sierra Nevada foothills, one year later, only 5,000 due to Foreign Miner's Law
- 1853 - Territorial law passed, banning Chinese from voting in Washington
- 1854 - **People v. Hall**: California court upholds ban testimony of Chinese person against white person in criminal trial
- 1855 - "An Act to Discourage the Immigration to this State of Persons Who Cannot Become Citizens" required master of ship owner to pay \$50 for each passenger ineligible to naturalized citizenship
- 1857 - **Dred Scott v. Sanford**
- 1858 - California passes law to bar entry to Chinese and Mongolians
- 1860 - Japan sends diplomatic mission to US
- 1861 - Civil War begins
- 1862 - Law passed "to protect Free White Labor against competition with Chinese Coolie Labor, and to discourage the immigration of the Chinese into the State of California"
- 1862 - California imposes a "police tax" of \$2.50 a month on every Chinese
- 1863 - Territorial law banning Chinese from testifying in court cases involving whites in Washington
- 1864 - Territorial law enacting poll tax on Chinese in Washington
- 1865 - Civil War ends
- 1865 - Central Pacific Railroad recruits Chinese workers for the transcontinental railroad
- 1865 - Thirteenth amendment adopted, ending slavery
- 1866 - Civil Rights Act of 1866
- 1866 - **Ex Parte Milligan**
- 1867 - Two thousand Chinese railroad workers strike for one week
- 1868 - **Fourteenth amendment** ratified with its due process and equal protection clauses
- 1868 - Burlingame Treaty: The Chinese government sought, and obtained, treaty protection for the civil rights of Chinese persons in US
- 1870 - Civil Rights Act of 1870: Section 16 to protect Chinese aliens
- 1870 - Chinese railroad workers in Texas sue company for failing to pay wages
- 1870 - Fifteenth amendment adopted, formally extending the vote to African American males
- 1870 - 1790 Naturalization Act amended to include persons of African descent
- 1871 - **People v. Brady**
- 1872 - Repealed the ban on Chinese testimony in both criminal and civil cases

- 1873 - **The Slaughter-House Cases**, U.S. Supreme Ct. rejects challenge to a Louisiana statute creating a slaughter-house monopoly, narrowly construing 14th Amendment requiring the states to respect the "privileges and immunities" of citizens of the United States
- 1874 - **In re Ah Fong**
- 1875 - Page Law bars entry of Chinese, Japanese, and Mongolian prostitutes, felons, and contract laborers
- 1876 - **Chy Lung v. Freeman**, U.S. Supreme Ct. strikes down California immigration statute on federal supremacy grounds
- 1879 - California constitutional amendments include explicit provision forbidding corporations to employ Chinese immigrants
- 1880 - Burlingame Treaty renegotiated to allow U.S. to restrict, but not completely ban, immigration of laborers
- 1882 - **Chinese Exclusion Act** passed by Congress to bar immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years
- 1883 - **The Civil Rights Cases**, Court holds the Civil Rights Act of 1875 can only proscribe government acts (public conduct); it cannot under the authority of the 14th Amendment regulate actions of individuals or businesses (private conduct) even if those actions occurred in public places
- 1884 - **Chew Heong v. United States**
- 1885 - Three Chinese killed outside of Issaquah
- 1885 - Anti-Chinese demonstrations in Tacoma
- 1886 - Anti-Chinese demonstrations in Seattle
- 1886 - First alien land law in Washington
- 1886 - Residents in Tacoma and Seattle forcibly expel the Chinese
- 1886 - Chinese laundrymen win case in **Yick Wo v. Hopkins**, which declares that a law with unequal impact on different groups is discriminatory
- 1888 - **Scott Act** makes exclusion of Chinese permanent and old certificates null and void
- 1889 - **Chae Chan Ping v. United States** (The Chinese Exclusion Case)
- 1892 - **Chinese Exclusion Act (Geary Law)** extended another 10 years
- 1892 - **Nishimura Ekiu v. United States**
- 1893 - San Francisco school board claims Japanese children posed a threat of contaminating white children
- 1893 - **Fong Yue Ting v. United States**
- 1895 - Japan defeats China in war
- 1896 - Bubonic plague scare in Honolulu, Chinatown burned
- 1896 - **Plessy v. Ferguson**, upholds constitutionality of segregated train cars
- 1898 - **United States v. Wong Kim Ark**, decides that Chinese born in US cannot be stripped of their citizenship
- 1898 - Spanish-American war ends; U.S. takes jurisdiction over Philippines and annexes Hawai'i as a territory
- 1900 - 25% of all employed Chinese males in the U.S. are launderers, with 18% in agriculture and 14% working as household servants
- 1900 - Organic Act ends contract labor
- 1902 - Chinese exclusion extended for another 10 years. Immigration officials and the police raid Boston's Chinatown and, without search warrants, arrest almost 250 Chinese who allegedly had no registration certificates on their persons
- 1903 - **Yamataya v. Fisher** (The Japanese Immigrant Case)
- 1905 - Japan defeats Russia
- 1906 - US Attorney General orders federal courts to stop issuing naturalization papers to Japanese
- 1907 - Gentlemen's Agreement reached between Americans and Japanese diplomats; Japan stops issuing passports to laborers bound for United States

- 1907 - Executive Order 589 (President Theodore Roosevelt) makes it illegal for Japanese with visas to Hawai'i, Canada, or Mexico to re-migrate to the continental United States
- 1909 - 7,000 Japanese plantation workers strike major plantations on Oahu for 4 months
- 1910 - All major political parties have anti-Japanese planks by this time
- 1912 - President Woodrow Wilson says about the Japanese: "We cannot make a homogenous population out of a people who do not blend with the Caucasian race."
- 1913 - First Alien Land Act passed in California, prohibiting "aliens ineligible to citizenship" from owning land or leasing land for longer than 3 years
- 1915 - Passage of state law barring Asian immigrants from taking "for sale or profit any salmon or other food or shellfish"
- 1917 - Immigration Act of 1917 passed, Congress creates Asiatic Barred Zone; all Asian immigrants except Japanese and Filipinos banned by order of Congress
- 1920 - Japan stops issuing passports to female emigrants whose marriage arrangements were facilitated by an exchange of photographs ("picture brides")
- 1920 - Alien land law in CA amended by initiative to close loopholes
- 1921 - Alien Land restrictions passed in Washington state against Asians
- 1922 - **Takao Ozawa v. United States**, declares Japanese not eligible for naturalized citizenship.
- 1922 - Cable Act declares any American female citizen who marries "an alien ineligible to citizenship" would lose her citizenship
- 1923 - **Terrace v. Thompson**, U.S. Supreme Court upholds constitutionality of alien land laws
- 1923 - In **United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind**, the Supreme Court rules that racial exclusion is based on the "understanding of the common man."
- 1924 - Immigration Act (National Origins Act) prohibits "aliens ineligible to citizenship" from immigrating, virtually ends Japanese immigration
- 1928 - Filipino farm workers are driven out of Yakima Valley.
- 1930s - Supreme Court introduces "nondelegation doctrine"
- 1934 - Tydings-McDuffie Act makes the Philippines a commonwealth and promises full independence in 10 years. Filipino immigration to the U.S. limited to 50 per year
- 1937 - Washington state legislature attempts to pass an anti-miscegenation law
- 1937 - Alien land restrictions in Washington extended to Filipinos
- 1939 - Canada, as part of British Commonwealth, enters World War II against Germany
- Late 1930s - Justice Department compiles list of Japanese resident aliens who were potentially "subversive" and "dangerous"
- 1941 - March: Justice Dept. and War Dept. reach secret agreement to coordinate an internment of "enemy aliens"
- 1941 - December 7: Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i bombed by Japan: Justice Dept. immediately arrests enemy aliens, most of whom are Japanese
  - December 8: Declaration of war against Japan
  - December 9: Nationally syndicated newspaper columnist, Westbrook Pegler, suggests concentration camps for "alien Japanese," and disloyal Italian and German Americans
  - December 12: Territory of Alaska placed under Western Defense Command
  - December 19: General DeWitt advocates "collect[ing] all alien subjects fourteen years of age and over, of enemy nations and remov[ing] them to the Zone of the Interior"
- 1942 - February 13: DeWitt makes final recommendation on the evacuation of Japanese from Pacific Coast
  - February 19: Franklin Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, calling for evacuation of all Japanese and Japanese Americans living on the Pacific Coast inland to internment camps
  - February 21: Tolan Committee begins conducting nationwide hearings on the question of internment
  - Early March: DeWitt issues public proclamations, designating Military Areas #1 and #2, warning future evacuation, and encourages voluntary resettlement outside of Military Area #1

- March 18: War Relocation Authority (WRA) created by executive order: a civilian agency designed to run the relocation centers
- March 21: Congress passes Public Law 503, which criminalized violations of duly authorized military orders
- March 24: DeWitt begins issuing series of 108 Civilian Exclusion Orders, including Public Proclamation No.3, which imposed a curfew on all enemy aliens as well as citizens of only Japanese descent
- March 27: Public Proclamation No.4 issued, known as the "freeze order," which prohibited enemy aliens from voluntarily leaving the designated military areas
- March 28: Minoru Yasui walks into Portland, OR police station and demands to be arrested for curfew violation (first legal test of DeWitt's orders)
- May 16: Gordon Hirabayashi turns himself into FBI headquarters to challenge the exclusion order, a calculated act of civil disobedience; Hirabayashi charged with two counts of failing to obey exclusion order and disobeying curfew, even though intended to challenge only the exclusion order
- May 30: Fred Korematsu picked up by police while walking down the street in San Leandro, CA
- June: Yasui's lawyer, Earl Bernhard, chooses to waive Yasui's right to jury trial, opts for bench trial
- July 20: first official policy statement regarding resettlement of evacuees issued
- September: civil court jurisdiction extended to jury trials;
  - only about 250 internees leave camps under student leave policy
- October: government prosecutors call Hirabayashi's father as their first witness;
  - Dillon Myer, new WRA director, initiates new liberalized leave regulations
- November 1: an evacuee who had cooperated with WRA and was suspected of being an "informer" was beaten by group of unidentified men
- 1943 - January: Secretary of War announces creation of all-Nisei combat unit, and registration efforts ensue
  - **Regan v. King**: citizenship by birth upheld by 9th circuit
- 1943 - Justice Department presents extraordinarily selective evidentiary record in support of the constitutionality of the internment
- 1943 - Congress repeals the Chinese Exclusion Act, but allows only 105 immigrants annually, Chinese Repealer signed by President Franklin Roosevelt
- 1943 - **Hirabayashi v. United States** decided trial court
  - Yasui v. United States** decided by trial court
- 1943 - May 10-11: Supreme Court hears oral arguments in **Hirabayashi, Yasui and Korematsu** cases
  - June 1: First **Korematsu** opinion issued by Supreme Court
  - June 21: Supreme Court issues **Hirabayashi** ruling
- 1944 - July 1: President Roosevelt signs Amendment to the Nationality Act of 1940 into law, which allowed the disaffected Japanese Americans to renounce their U.S. citizenship
  - October: Supreme Court hears oral argument in **Korematsu**
  - December: Supreme Court issues second **Korematsu** ruling
- 1944 - **Ex Parte Endo** decided by U.S. Supreme Court
  - United States v. Fujii**
- 1945 - War Relocation Authority notes that 120,313 Japanese and Japanese Americans lived in the internment camps from 1942-1945
- 1945 - Congress passes War Brides Act
- 1945 - **United States v. Okamoto**
- 1946 - Last of those detained in internment camps are released
- 1946 - Naturalization rights granted to Asian Indians and Filipinos, quotas set for each

- 1947 - War Brides Act amended to admit Chinese wives of citizens without regard to the quota limit and allow citizens to petition for their spouses to join them
- 1948 - **Japanese American Claims Act** (Evacuation Claims Act) passed, allowing limited redress for those dispossessed of their property during internment
- 1948 - **Oyama v. California**, U.S. Supreme Court denounced land ownership laws based on alienage status as an illegitimate form of racial prejudice
- Takahashi v. Fish and Game Commission**  
**Shelley v. Kraemer**
- 1949 - 5000 highly educated Chinese in the US granted refugee status after China institutes a Communist government
- 1949 - **Acheson v. Murakami**
- 1952 - Immigration and Nationality Act (McCarran-Walter Act), Congress abolishes last racial limitations on immigration and naturalization. Token quotas still remain.
- 1954 - **Brown v. Board of Education**, ended segregated education  
**Bolling v. Sharpe**
- 1956 - California repeals alien land laws
- 1959 - U.S. Attorney General Roberts states that 5,409 of the over 5,700 Nisei who had renounced their citizenship had asked that it be returned; almost 5,000 had already recovered their citizenship by this time
- 1959 - Hawai'i becomes fiftieth state of the union
- 1965 - Immigration and Naturalization Act gives equal quota to all countries and favors immigration of professional classes
- 1965 - Amendments made to McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act
- 1965 - Asian Americans number 1 million
- 1965 - **Hitai v. Immigration and Naturalization Service**
- 1966 - Washington voters on fourth try repeal Alien Land Law
- 1969 - Students at the University of California, Berkeley, go on strike for establishment of ethnic studies program
- 1971 - **Pentagon Papers** case
- 1973 - Supreme Court grants aliens right to practice law
- 1974 - **Lau v. Nichols** rules that school districts with children who speak little English must provide them with bilingual education
- 1976 - President Gerald Ford rescinds **Executive Order 9066**, issues proclamation and apologizes
- 1978 - National convention of the Japanese American Citizen League adopts resolution calling for redress and reparations for the internment of Japanese Americans
- 1980 - **Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) created**
- 1981 - Last unaltered copy of the Final Report discovered by government archivists
- 1982 - CWRIC concludes that the "broad historical causes which shaped these decisions were race prejudice, war hysteria and failure of political leadership"
- 1982 - Justice Arthur Goldberg sends letter to Judge William Marutani, criticizing the *coram nobis* effort as unnecessary and potentially damaging
- 1983 - **Hirabayashi, Korematsu, and Yasui** file writ of *coram nobis*  
**Hohri** class action lawsuit filed  
February: CWRIC releases report of its internment investigation, entitled PERSONAL JUSTICE DENIED  
June: CWRIC gives recommendations on Wartime Relocation  
October: Government files response to **Korematsu** petition  
November: Hearing on **Korematsu** petition held
- 1984 - January: Judge grants government's motion to vacate **Yasui's** conviction and dismiss his petition  
April: Judge issues written opinion on **Korematsu** petition

- May: Government's motion to dismiss **Hirabayashi's** petition denied
- 1985 - **Hirabayashi** puts his former prosecutors on trial on misconduct charges
- 1986 - Immigration Reform and Control Act imposes civil and criminal penalties on employers who knowingly hire undocumented aliens
- 1986 - February: Judge issues written **Hirabayashi** opinion, requiring vacation of Hirabayashi's conviction on evacuation charge, but declined to vacate the curfew conviction
- 1986 - **Hohri v. United States (Hohri I)** decided
- 1987 - On appeal, unanimous 9th Circuit **Hirabayashi** opinion issued, agreeing with the trial court that the U.S. government doctored the documentary record, reversing curfew conviction and remanding case with orders to vacate both convictions
- 1988 - **Hohri v. United States (Hohri II)** decided
- 1988- Passage of **Civil Liberties Act of 1988**, reparation legislation by US Congress for Japanese Americans interned during WW II
- 1989 - President Bush signs into law an entitlement program to pay each surviving Japanese American internee \$20,000
- 1990 - Asian Americans number 7 million, 2.9% of the national population
- 1993 - Congress adopts and President Clinton signs into law Public Law 103-150, the "Apology Resolution," to acknowledge the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i and offer apology to Native Hawaiians on behalf of the U.S. for the overthrow
- 1995 - **Adarand Constructors v. Pena, Ct.** held that strict scrutiny is to be applied to evaluate federal affirmative action programs
- 1996 - Gary Locke elected governor of Washington state, first Asian American governor on the US mainland
- 1996 - Proposition 187, which restricts social services for immigrants passed by nearly 60% in California
- 1999 - December: Dr. **Wen Ho Lee** sues FBI and the Justice and Energy Departments, alleging that they engaged in racial profiling, violated his privacy and wrongly portrayed him as a Chinese spy
- 2000 - July: Government's prosecution of Dr. Lee begins to collapse on multiple fronts  
September: Dr. Lee set free after nine months in solitary confinement and vilification as a spy
- 2001 - April: 2000 census data figures released; Asian Americans number 10.2 million or 3.6 % of the population (plus an additional 1 million who marked Asian and white; an additional 550,000 who marked Asian and one other (non-white) race)
- Poll commissioned by the Committee of 100 shows that 1 in every 4 Americans has negative views of Chinese Americans