

## **The Making of Asian America by Erika Lee**

The Making of Asian America is an exploration of the Asian experience in the Americas.

The book covers immigration from Asia beginning in the 1500s to the 21st century. We meet sailors who arrived on the first transj-Pacific ships, indentured "coolies" who worked alongside African slaves in the Caribbean, and immigrants from China, Japan, the Phillipines, Korea, and South Asia. European, American, and Japanese imperialism shaped Asian immigration to the Americas.

Asian immigrants faced racial discrimination, exclusion laws, and in the case of Japanese Americans, incarceration during World War II. Despite these hardships, they showed incredible resilience and dignity.

Lee explores various Asian communities, including the Chinese, Japanese, South Asians (Indians and Pakistanis) and Southeast Asians from the Phillipines, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Each group brought unique traditions, languages, and cultural practices. She combines social and legal history, individual biographies, and broader themes.

The book challenges common stereotypes like the "model minority" by showcasing both achievements and struggles. The book emphasizes that Asian Americans are not a monolithic group but have diverse backgrounds and experiences.

In The Making of Asian America, the reader learns that what unites this immigrant experience is both the struggle against prejudice and discrimination and the resilience of Asian Americans.