

CHINESE SETTLEMENT IN ILLINOIS,
INDIANA, IOWA, AND MISSOURI

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the settlement patterns of Chinese in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Missouri from 1870 to the present time. Three hypotheses were formed after preliminary studies of census data: (1) Chinese are clustered in university communities and transportation centers, (2) Chinese have not settled in large numbers in industrial centers, and (3) after an initial settlement in a community, Chinese tend to persist in that community. Several cities with above or below average numbers of Chinese were identified by regression analysis and investigated. The information obtained in these community studies supported the three hypotheses on Chinese settlement in the study area.

Chinese are a small part of the general American population and the majority live in large cities. Chinatowns within the study area are present only in the two largest cities, Chicago and St. Louis. However, some Chinese have located in small and medium sized cities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Missouri. The function of a city is important in attracting Chinese; places with government agencies or large universities attract more than industrial centers.

The character of the Chinese population has changed through time. The majority of Chinese in the area from 1870 until 1910 were laundrymen whose families remained in China. Restaurant workers and laundrymen were the largest element in the Chinese population between 1910 and 1950. Chinese professional men and students became an important

part of the population after 1950. The number of women increased rapidly after the Second World War, and the Chinese population in the study area now has a normal ratio of men to women.

Chinese settlement was affected by the immigration laws restricting immigration. The occupational shifts are a result of the government policy of admitting certain classes of immigrants.