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Anatomy of a New Ethnic Settlement: The Chinese *Ethnoburb* in Los Angeles

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Summary. This paper proposes a new model of ethnic settlement, the *ethnoburb*. Ethnoburbs are suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large American metropolitan areas. They are multi-ethnic communities, in which one ethnic minority group has a significant concentration, but does not necessarily comprise a majority. The paper operationalises the *ethnoburb* model via an analysis of the demographic profiles and socioeconomic characteristics of the ethnoburban Chinese population in Los Angeles in order to understand the ethnoburb's role as a global economic outpost. This analysis also highlights social stratification by country of origin, and the micro-geographies of neighbourhood and workplace, features which reveal the ethnoburb's character as an urban mosaic.

Ethnic geography influenced by traditional theoretical frameworks developed within ethnic studies, has sought to explain the social and spatial integration of immigrants into the fabric of mainstream American society. Recent critiques, however, argue for a greater sensitivity to the social construction of race and dynamics of radicalisation, the socio-spatial structuration of ethnic communities, and the role of ethnic economies in ethnic community development and globalisation processes. These perspectives inform the development of a geographical understanding of the Chinese experience in Los Angeles—the focus of this paper.

Los Angeles County is considered as one of the most ethnically diverse places in the US (Allen and Turner, 1989), as well as the most populous county in the nation in terms of total population, and also the number of

Chinese residents. As in many other cities, LA's Chinese population was historically centred in a downtown Chinatown, which can be traced back to the last century. As an ethnic enclave, contemporary Chinatown in Los Angeles remains a traditional, congested neighbourhood and an ethnic business district, and a tourist attraction. Ethnic Chinese account for more than 60 per cent of all residents (Seo, 1992), most of whom are poor and have limited formal education.

Starting in the 1960s, many upwardly mobile Chinese moved out of the Chinatown area to the suburbs for better housing and better neighbourhoods. New immigrants with higher educational attainment and professional jobs also settled directly in suburbs without ever having experienced life in the inner city. Some dispersed spatially and became socioeconomically assimilated

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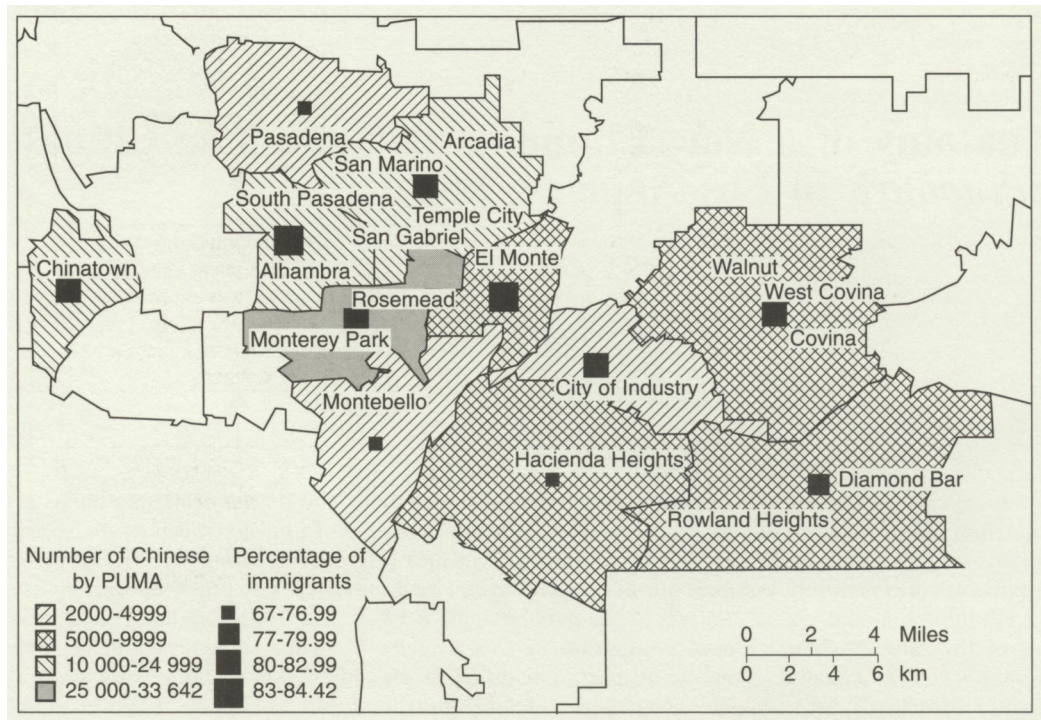


Figure 1. The Chinese population in the San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles County, 1990. *Source:* 1990 5 per cent sample PUMS.

into mainstream society. However, a new form of Chinese concentration, complete with economic activities and social life, also emerged in the suburbs. By 1990 there were more than 158 000 Chinese in the San Gabriel Valley, located in the eastern suburban area of Los Angeles County, making it the largest suburban Chinese concentration in the nation (Figure 1). The San Gabriel Valley is now a multi-ethnic community (more than one-third non-Hispanic white, almost one-quarter Hispanic, almost one-fifth Asian and Pacific Islanders and less than 5 per cent African Americans in 1990). Chinese people comprised almost 10 per cent of the total, a share lower than the Chinatown area, but higher than the county (less than 3 per cent) and much higher than the national average (less than 1 per cent).

The spatial transformation of LA's Chinese community over recent decades has already generated interest among scholars (Fong, 1994; Horton, 1989, 1992, 1995; Lai, 1988; Wong, 1989; Zhou, 1996; Zseng,

1994a, 1994b), as well as the mainstream public media (Arax, 1987; Kotkin, 1991; Schoenberger, 1993; Tanzer, 1985). Past studies provide valuable information and insights about the San Gabriel Valley Chinese community. However, they tend to focus either on certain aspects of the area (for example, ethnic economy, in the case of Zseng and Zhou; or politics, in the case of Horton), or on only one city (Monterey Park, see, for example, Fong and Wong). No study has yet assessed this suburban ethnic concentration comprehensively, nor have scholars focused on the new geographical parameters of ethnic settlement.

In this paper, the San Gabriel Valley phenomenon will be addressed from a geographical perspective by first providing a conceptual model of a new ethnic settlement type: the ethnoburb. The 1990 census Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS; see Appendix) will then be examined as a means of documenting the socio-spatial structure of the ethnoburb, and how such structures

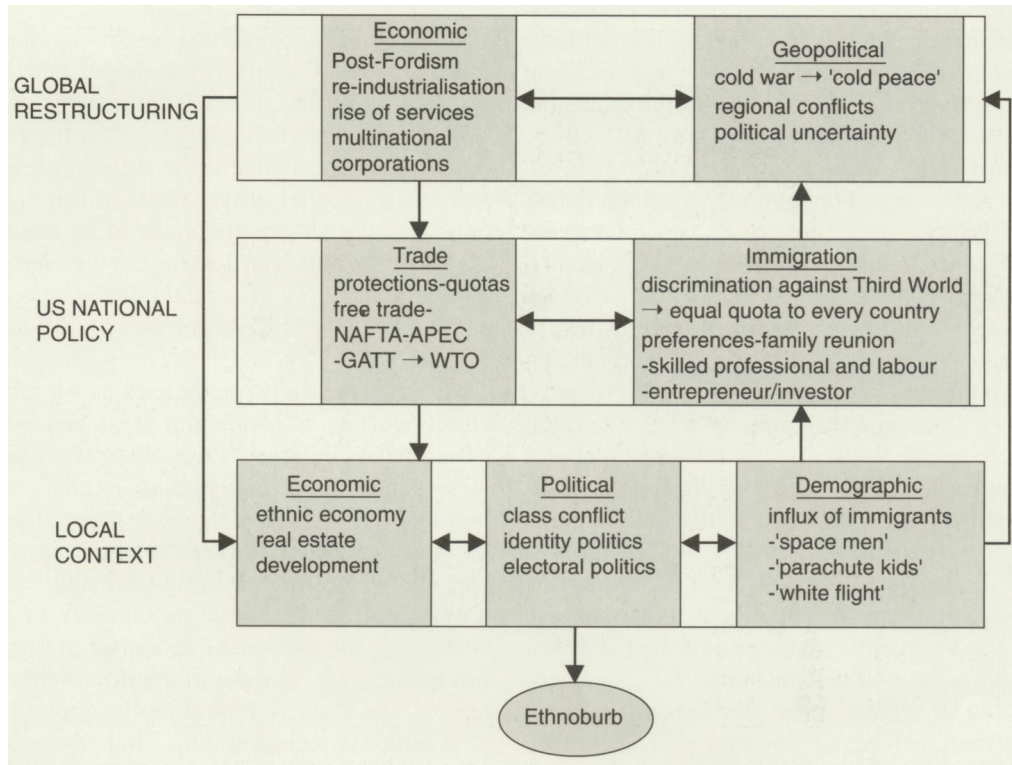


Figure 2. The formation of an ethnoburb.

reflect to the ethnoburb's role as a new outpost in the global economy. The focus is primarily on the linkages between ethnoburban economic features and social characteristics (especially stratification) to highlight the relationships between international economic restructuring, geopolitical shifts and a variety of local conditions shaping the formation of ethnic communities in Los Angeles.

The paper has been divided into the following parts: section 1 describes the conceptual model of ethnoburb formation. Section 2 analyses the demographic characteristics and socioeconomic status of the ethnoburban Chinese population to investigate the ethnoburb's role as a global outpost. Section 3 focuses on stratification within the ethnoburb, mainly by country of origin, and on the micro-geographies of neighbourhood and workplace to reveal the ethnoburb as an urban mosaic. Finally, section 4 offers a brief summary, and ties the analysis in this paper back to the ethnoburb model.

1. Conceptual Framework: The Ethnoburb Model

Based on the Chinese experience in Los Angeles' San Gabriel Valley, I have proposed a new model of ethnic settlement: the ethnoburb, or ethnic suburb (Li, 1997). The model hypothesises that in recent decades, under the influence of international geopolitical and global economic restructuring, changing national immigration and trade policies, and local demographic, economic and political contexts, a new type of suburban ethnic concentration area—the ethnoburb—has emerged (Figure 2).

Although immigration to the US and the formation of ethnic communities have always been related to socioeconomic and political contexts, the creation of an ethnoburb is perhaps more clearly shaped and propelled by changing dynamics at international, national and local levels. Global economic and geopolitical restructuring alter economic relations and the world order,

making capital, information and labour flows increasingly internationalised and creating the structural conditions for establishment of an ethnoburb. The processes of ethnic restructuring include, but are not limited to, the rise of post-Fordism, along with deindustrialisation of traditional manufacturing industries, reindustrialisation of craft sectors, rapid expansion of service-sector activities and foreign direct investment, and growth in the scale and spatial reach of multinational corporations (Beauregard, 1989; Davis, 1992; Dymski and Veitch, 1996; Scott, 1988; Storper and Walker, 1989). These processes have underpinned profound changes in domestic economic structure and labour demand, which create new needs for both high-skill professionals and low-skill labourers. At the same time, major geopolitical ruptures (such as the Vietnam War, the end of the Cold War and a variety of regional conflicts) have generated enormous pressures among affected international populations to emigrate from their home countries to the US and other industrialised countries (Allen and Turner, 1996; Liu and Cheng, 1994; Ong and Liu, 1994).

Changing national economic and immigration policies create needs for entrepreneurs and investors, as well as cheap labour (Light and Bonacich, 1988), and open the door to immigrants of different backgrounds to enter the US and populate an ethnoburb. For example, trade policies such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, stimulate structural economic change and international competition, driving some sectors (such as highly competitive craft sectors) to search for increasing numbers of low-wage workers, just as other industries (such as producer services) seeking to expand their role in international finance, trade and real estate are driven to search for more high-skilled workers (Grayson, 1995). At the same time, shifting US immigration laws, quotas and preference systems allow immigrant streams to adjust in response to these shifts in domestic labour demand (US Congress, 1965, 1991).

Such global and national conditions manifest themselves at the local level, and are overlaid onto the place-specific situations. The interplay of changing geopolitical, economic and social dynamics at different levels and their spatial expressions form new opportunities for an ethnoburb to be created at certain localities. All these changes underlie the formation of an ethnoburb, though each may play different roles to different degrees.

Ethnoburbs can be recognised as suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large metropolitan areas. The local context of the ethnoburb is characterised by both vibrant ethnic economies, due to the presence of large numbers of ethnic people, and strong ties to the globalising economy, revealing their role as outposts in the emerging international economic system. Ethnoburbs are also multi-ethnic communities, in which one ethnic minority group has a significant concentration, but does not necessarily comprise a majority. Demographic composition can change rapidly, however, due to continued and variable immigrant flows, and because the global outpost role of the ethnoburb creates certain peculiar population dynamics. Both economic circumstances and population dynamics foster social stratification in the ethnoburb.

Ethnoburbs thus function as a settlement type that replicates some features of an enclave, and some features of a suburb lacking a specific ethnic identity. They co-exist along with traditional ethnic ghettos/enclaves in inner cities in contemporary American society. As a form of urban settlement, the ethnoburb has been forged out of the interplay of economic globalisation, political struggles between and within nation-states, major policy shifts that shape the flow of migrants to the US and a host of local conditions.

2. Ethnoburb as Global Outpost

As result of economic globalisation and geopolitical shifts, the ethnoburb is formed as an urban ethnic community with extensive

external connections. Its residents come from different origins and with various arrival statuses. Its economic and occupational structures show strong connections with the globalised mainstream economy. Such characteristics result in high socioeconomic status levels among the ethnoburban Chinese population.

Geopolitical Shifts, Immigration Policy and the Ethnoburban Chinese Population

The Chinese residents of the ethnoburb come from various regions around the world, with very diverse origins and immigration status, as the result of geopolitical changes and shifting US immigration policy. The ethnoburb is mainly a community of recent immigrants from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and south-east Asia who arrived after 1965.

Ever since its formation, the ethnoburb has been seen as a hub for Chinese immigrants, a place where they can make a living and do business mainly through their own networks; eat their own types of food and go shopping in Chinese supermarkets; speak their mother tongues; and keep close ties to their countries of origin by reading newspapers in Chinese, listening to radio and watching TV in different Chinese dialects. In other words, the ethnoburb makes them feel at home. Such conditions are particularly attractive to immigrants. Through word of mouth and promotional propaganda, the ethnoburb continues to lure more Chinese immigrants coming and settling in the US to live and work, as well as Chinese immigrants already living in other parts of the US. As of 1990, first-generation immigrants composed over four-fifths of all Chinese in the sample dataset, whereas US-born Chinese comprised less than one-fifth.

Origin of ethnoburban immigrants. Although a majority of these ethnoburban Chinese immigrants traced their origins back to China (including both the mainland and Taiwan), which was the traditional origin of Chinese immigrants to this country, certain proportions of the immigrants in the ethnoburb came from other parts of the world, a

reflection of the global Chinese diaspora and the globalisation process. Although census data do not reveal the location of a respondent's last residence before immigrating to the US, information on place of birth reflects the diverse geographical origins of these immigrants in general. Therefore, place of birth is used here to represent origin countries and areas for immigrants. The ethnoburban Chinese immigrants came from 35 countries and areas, which represented all continents in the world. Mainland China (31.3 per cent), Taiwan (29.7 per cent), Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, 18.5 per cent) and Hong Kong (10.6 per cent) were the four primary sources of these Chinese immigrants; the other 10 per cent came from 29 countries widely distributed around the world.

Correlation between arrival time and key international events. As the ethnoburb model suggests, the time periods of Chinese immigrant waves to the US mainly followed major US immigration policy changes and/or significant international geopolitical events. Years of immigration reveal how various immigrant waves of ethnoburban Chinese population mirrored such changes. Immigration before 1965 was very limited, with less than 4 per cent of all Chinese immigrants coming into the US during that period. Although the change in government in mainland China in 1949 caused some immigration to the US, it did not by itself generate a significant wave of immigration. It was not until the historic 1965 Immigration Act, which gave China an immigration quota equal to any other country in the world (US Congress, 1965), that large numbers of Chinese arrived: 3.5 per cent of all Chinese immigrants in the sample came between 1965 and 1969 alone. Several important events occurred in the international arena in the first half of the 1970s—for example, the ousting of the Republic of China from the United Nations in 1971; President Nixon's visit to mainland China in 1972, which created huge waves of immigrants from Taiwan; and the 'Fall of Saigon' in 1975, which

caused refugee waves from south-east Asia. After these events, Chinese immigrants poured into the US. Their numbers tripled between 1970–74 and 1975–79. Flows have continued to grow ever since.

As Figure 3 reveals, such correlations between geopolitical events, immigration law changes and immigrant flows are not only represented by years of entry for all Chinese immigrants but, much more dramatically, by shifts in origin patterns for Chinese immigrants during different time periods. Immigration from mainland China has been continuous, from the earliest period to today, and has increased over time. Waves of Chinese immigrants born in Taiwan mainly arrived after 1965. Their numbers almost quadrupled in the second half of the 1970s after the 1970–74 period, and again more than doubled in the next five-year period after the US and the People's Republic of China established diplomatic relations in 1979. Immigration of Chinese born in Hong Kong had increased slowly but steadily in the decades before 1985. After the UK and the People's Republic of China reached their agreement in 1984 concerning the return of Hong Kong to China, growing numbers of Chinese immigrants arrived from Hong Kong.

The most dramatic figures relate to the Chinese born in Indochina. There was almost no such immigration before 1975, after which a huge wave appeared and kept growing until recently. Therefore, it can be safely claimed that without the Vietnam War, and the related political turmoil and war in Laos and Cambodia, we would not have witnessed the sudden surge of immigrants in large numbers from Indochinese countries.

Globalisation and Economic Status of Ethnobarban Residents

The economic activities of the ethnobarban Chinese population in the San Gabriel Valley are closely tied to the globalised economy. Many are involved in international trade and related services, and are active players in the restructured local economy. Nonetheless, the

ethnobarban economic picture retains some features of an ethnic enclave economy. The ethnoburb is also an integrated ethnic residential and business place.

The ethnoburb: an ethnic cluster of homes and workplaces.

The ethnoburb is not only an ethnic residential neighbourhood, but is also a business centre. Many ethnic businesses rely on ethnic resources for both labour force and customers. Therefore, in contrast to southern California's characteristic spatial mismatch between the geography of home and work, the ethnoburb provides both—a place to live and to work. It is an integrated business and residential outpost designed to serve globalised capital. The co-location of Chinese businesses and residences in the general San Gabriel Valley area has served to create a relatively self-contained city-within-a-city. Although not all ethnobarban Chinese hold jobs inside the ethnoburb, a much larger proportion work there than is true for most communities. This assertion can be partially confirmed by PUMS data.¹ When data on 'place of work' are cross-referenced with residence, they reveal relationships between home and work, and identify the ethnoburb's function as a set of integrated residential and business areas.

Among all the ethnobarban Chinese residents, 10.6 per cent worked in the Cities of Monterey Park and Rosemead alone; among immigrants, the percentage was even higher (11.0 per cent). PUMS data reveal that the origin of the ethnoburb—Monterey Park—remained an important employment centre for many Chinese ethnobarban residents. The extent of overall job-housing linkage was dramatic: 40.1 per cent of all ethnobarban Chinese who worked in Monterey Park or Rosemead also lived there in 1990. A total of 78 per cent of the entire ethnobarban Chinese civilian workforce of Monterey Park and Rosemead lived in the core area of ethnoburb. This again reveals Monterey Park as a hub which continued to attract Chinese workers from nearby communities. This linkage is far higher than the general workforce: among all Angelenos who worked in

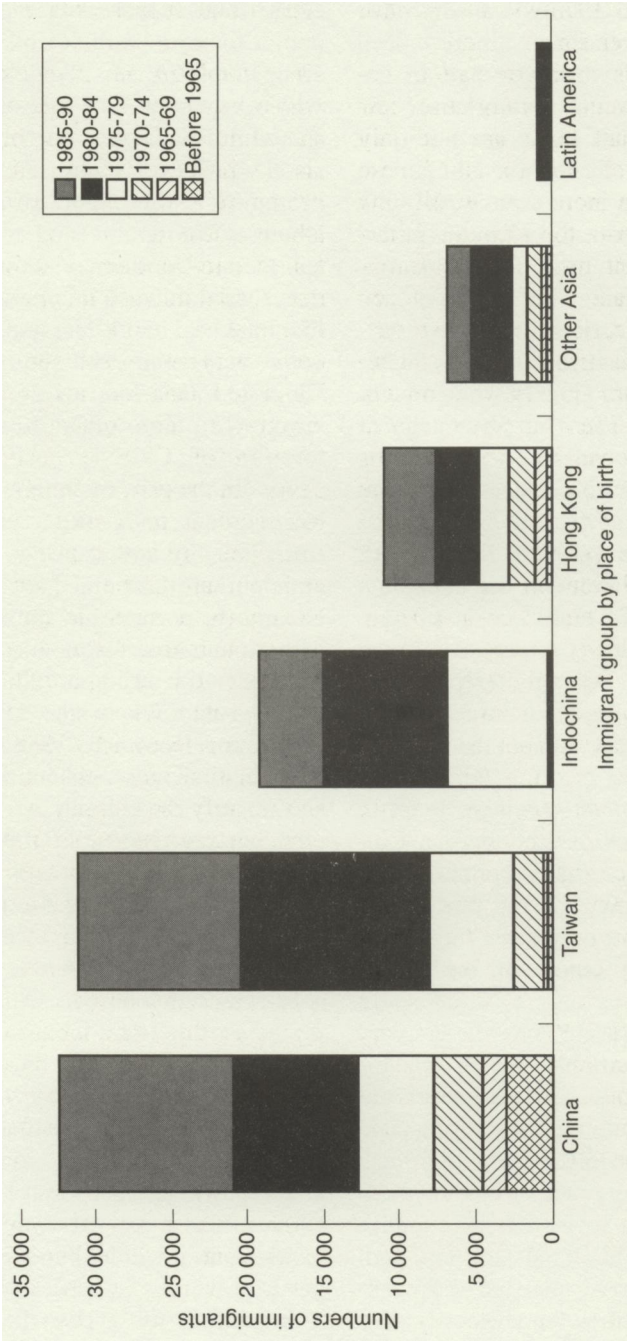


Figure 3. Year of immigration by Chinese immigrant group in the ethnoburb, 1990. Source: 1990 Census PUMS.

Monterey Park and Rosemead, only 23.6 per cent actually lived there. The average percentage of people working and living in the same PUMA in LA County was 28.5 per cent. Therefore, ethnoburban Chinese indeed were more likely to work and live in the same communities than other workers.

As an immigrant-dominated community of home and work, one of the most important characteristics of the ethnoburb is its high level of self-employment linked to the global economy, and supporting the fully functioning community. Fifteen per cent of the ethnoburban Chinese labour force were self-employed entrepreneurs, substantially higher than in the Los Angeles County workforce as a whole (10.2 per cent). The percentage of employment in self-owned businesses among immigrant Chinese (15.7 per cent) was considerably higher than that for immigrants as a whole in the county (10.1 per cent), reflecting their active roles in the economy. Moreover, the rates of employment in non-paid family businesses (1.4 per cent) were higher than the county average (0.6 per cent), indicating the family-based nature of some business ventures in the ethnoburb.

The ethnoburb: a global economic outpost. The job characteristics of ethnoburban Chinese clearly demonstrate their connection to the globalised economy, and the function of the ethnoburb itself not only as an immigrant community, but an outpost of the global economy.

Economic restructuring has been very important at global, national and local levels in the past two decades. The decline of traditional durable goods manufacturing and unionised blue collar jobs, rising high-tech industries and the resurgence of labour-intensive craft sectors due to increasing supplies of both high-skill professionals and low-skill immigrant workers have changed the economic structure of the Los Angeles area. The ethnoburb reflects such patterns of structural change. Its workforce is characterised by both high-wage, high-skill professionals, as well as low-wage, low-skill immigrant labour. Moreover, the industries of their

involvement show a strong connection to the global economy. Professional and related services, and finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE) were key industries of occupation for ethnoburban Chinese (Table 1). In comparison to Los Angeles County as a whole, ethnoburban Chinese were overrepresented in FIRE, and underrepresented in personal services. The differences were more prominent when comparing ethnoburban Chinese immigrants and all immigrants in LA County. Other services, especially producer services with international connections like banking, real estate and wholesale trade, were very important among ethnoburban Chinese with a total of 11.9 per cent of the workforce employed in these industrial sectors (Table 1).

As the result of reindustrialisation and international competitive pressures, labour-intensive manufacturing—for example, apparel, furniture and food processing—has become important for immigrants involved as both sub-contractors and as cheap labour. Such manufacturing activities involve Koreans and Latinos in the Los Angeles area (Light and Bonacich, 1988), as well as ethnoburban Chinese. Manufacturing was the second largest industry of employment for ethnoburban Chinese in 1990, its percentage higher than the county as a whole (Table 1). Within manufacturing, the garment industry (apparel and accessories) was by far the most significant, and in fact was the third-largest sector for ethnoburban Chinese workers (5 per cent of the total labour force). Ethnoburban Chinese were more likely to be involved in the garment industry than were other Angelenos. In the major blue-collar job categories (operator and labourer, precision, craft and repair), the percentage of ethnoburban Chinese was much lower than among county residents as a whole, but still comprised 13.5 per cent.

Regarding job types, the majority of all working ethnoburban Chinese were white-collar workers. More than two-thirds of these people were managers and professionals, or held administrative support or sales occupations (Table 1). For Los Angeles County as a

Table 1. Occupational structure: ethnoburb versus Los Angeles County, 1990 (percentages)

	Total population		Immigrants	
	Ethnoburb	LA County	Ethnoburb	LA County
<i>Major type of industry</i>				
Retail trade	19.7	16.5	20.0	18.3
✓ Manufacturing	19.0	20.3	19.3	26.7
Professional and services	17.7	20.4	16.6	14.6
✓ FIRE <i>finance, insurance and real estate</i>	13.0	7.4	13.2	5.7
Wholesale	9.3	4.9	9.9	5.3
Communication and public utilities	6.0	6.6	5.8	4.6
Business and repair	4.0	6.5	3.9	6.9
Agriculture and construction	3.9	7.4	4.1	8.9
Personal services	3.3	3.9	3.3	5.9
Public administration	2.3	2.8	2.0	1.4
Entertainment and recreation	1.8	3.3	1.8	1.7
<i>Type of occupation</i>				
Manager and professional <i>white-collar workers</i>	32.9	25.7	31.6	16.3
Administrative support	18.3	17.6	18.4	12.7
Sales occupations	16.4	12.0	17.0	10.5
Service occupations	10.1	13.2	10.6	17.3
Operator and labourer	6.8	8.5	7.0	15.9
Precision, craft and repair	6.7	10.8	6.9	13.3
Technician and support	5.7	3.2	5.7	2.7
Transport and material moving	2.8	7.7	2.5	9.4
Farming, forestry and fishing	0.3	1.3	0.4	2.1
<i>Top ten industries</i>				
	Ethnoburb	LA county		
1. Eating and drinking places	7.6	1. Construction	5.9	
2. Banking	5.8	2. Eating and drinking places	5.0	
3. Apparel and accessories	5.0	3. Elementary and secondary schools	4.5	
4. Real estate (including insurance)	3.6	4. Hospitals	3.9	
5. Construction	3.3	5. Apparel and accessories	2.3	
		Real estate (including insurance)	2.3	
6. Hospitals	2.8	6. Theatres and motion pictures	2.2	
7. Grocery stores	2.5	7. Banking	2.0	
Not-specified wholesale trade	2.5			
8. Colleges and universities	2.4	8. Grocery stores	1.9	
9. Elementary and secondary schools	2.3	9. Aircraft and parts	1.8	
		Insurance	1.8	
10. Service incidental to transport	1.8	10. Business services	1.7	

Source: US Bureau of Census 1990 Public Use Microdata Sample (5 per cent).

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

whole, the percentage was much lower (55.3 per cent). What is really striking is the high percentage of ethnoburban immigrant Chinese engaged in managerial and professional jobs—31.6 per cent, compared to only 16.3 per cent of all immigrants in the county, a sign of the large numbers of high-skilled immigrant workers, as well as a reflection of high self-employment, since business own-

ers/partners are more likely to be involved in management and define themselves as managers.

In summary, the ethnoburb as a Chinese immigrant community not only provided a large cheap labour pool for the restructured garment industry (as did other immigrant communities in the county), it also created business opportunities for immigrant Chinese

to engage in industries serving to bridge the Pacific Ocean, allowing them to become active players in the globalised economy.

The ethnoburb: enduring features of an ethnic enclave. On the other hand, the ethnoburb retains some characteristics of an ethnic enclave in that traditional ethnic economic niches remain important sites of employment for ethnoburban Chinese. The combination of global ties and local ethnic service jobs gives the ethnoburb its unique characteristics: a fully functioning global economic outpost with a distinctive ethnic signature, formed in part as a result of recent international economic restructuring processes and changing geopolitical situations. This differentiates the ethnoburb from a traditional ethnic enclave, and mainstream economy. In 1990, 10.1 per cent of ethnoburban Chinese workers were engaged in traditional Chinese ethnic economic niches. For example, a higher proportion of ethnoburban Chinese worked in eating and drinking places (restaurants) or grocery stores than county residents in general (Table 1). And the largest sector of employment for ethnoburban Chinese was retail trade, a traditional stronghold for ethnic economies.

Therefore, the economic and occupational structure of the ethnoburban Chinese reflects the role of the ethnoburb in the globalised economy. Ethnoburban workers are concentrating on both the high and the low ends of the skill and wage distributions, and have close ties to industrial sectors involved in the global economy. The ethnoburb as a new outpost simultaneously has the ability to support and to nourish a diverse and unassimilated immigrant population, so that it can form a solid base for further expansion.

Globalisation and Social Status of Ethnoburban Residents

The ethnoburb's ties to the world economy, particularly to sectors such as banking and international trade, contribute to the overall high socioeconomic status of its residents, and their close ties to the Pacific Rim. Due to

globalisation, new types of non-traditional immigrants have appeared, such as the 'space-men' who shuttle between Asia and the ethnoburb, and 'parachute kids' dropped into the ethnoburban context by Asia-based parents seeking to prepare them for entry into the globalising workforce. 'Space-men' include Taiwan and Hong Kong businessmen who came to start their businesses and became a new type of sojourner by choice, sending their wives and children to live in Monterey Park or other adjacent communities while they themselves shuttle between Taipei, Hong Kong and Los Angeles (Tanzer, 1985; Kotkin, 1991). 'Parachute kids' are sent to study in this area by their Taiwanese parents to avoid the heated college entrance examination competitions in Taiwan, and the compulsory military service required of every young Taiwanese man. Some of these 'little overseas students', as young as 8–14 years old, live alone in properties bought by their parents, or live with relatives or friends. A *Los Angeles Times* article (28 September 1996) called these young immigrants 'parachute kids', referring to the fact that they had been rapidly inserted into a dramatically different environment and were expected to function normally without their parents' guidance.

These 'space-men' and 'parachute kids' reflect the overall high socioeconomic status of ethnoburban Chinese. In general, they are well educated, speak English well, have high incomes and enjoy good housing conditions. These features stand out in even greater relief when we compare ethnoburban immigrant Chinese to other immigrants in Los Angeles County. I will first discuss educational attainment, and then consider other measures of socioeconomic status.

Educational attainment. The Chinese value system has always stressed education. Education has been viewed as an important way to improve economic conditions, to raise social status and to glorify family ancestors. Whenever possible, Chinese parents encourage, or even force, their children to be edu-

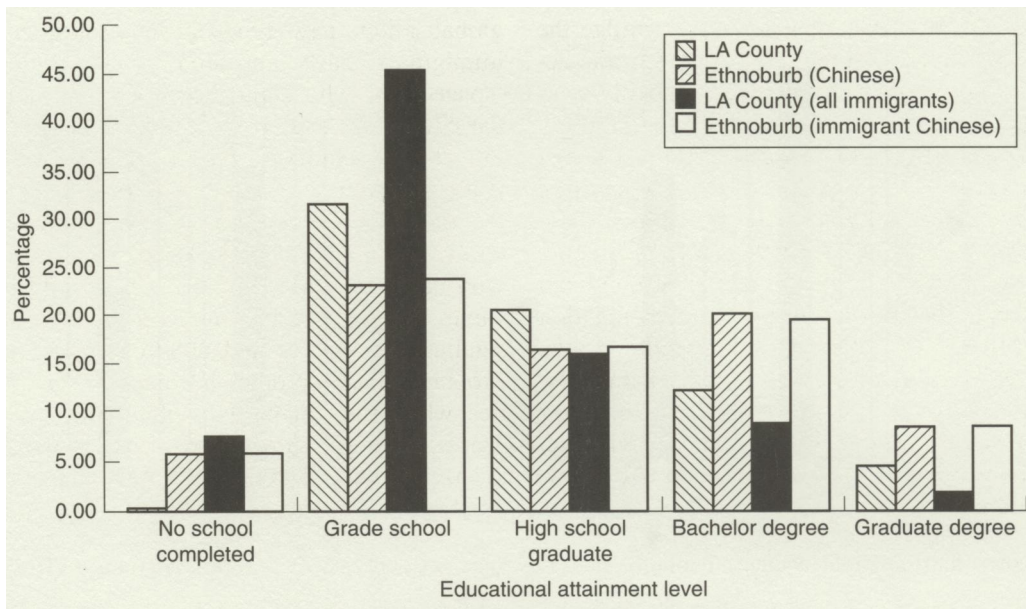


Figure 4. Educational attainment: ethnoburb versus Los Angeles County, 1990. *Source:* 1990 Census PUMS.

cated. Many Chinese parents are willing to sacrifice their own careers and lifestyles to offer their children a brighter future. One of the important reasons for Chinese immigration to the US is to offer their children better educational and job opportunities. Obviously, all Chinese students on student visas (some of whom are potential immigrants) come to the US for the sole purpose of higher education and (for some) potential career opportunities. Such traditional values of Chinese culture find expression within the ethnoburb.

Overall, the ethnoburban Chinese are well-educated with high educational attainment levels.² Of all ethnoburban Chinese in the dataset who were 15 years old or over, 29 per cent had not completed any type of school at all or did not graduate from high school; but at the high end, more than 31 per cent held at least a bachelor degree. Others fell somewhere in between (Figure 4).

Overall educational attainment levels among all ethnoburban Chinese were high compared to Los Angeles County in general in 1990. Ethnoburban Chinese had higher percentages in every educational attainment

category higher than 'associate degree', relative to the Los Angeles County population. Differences were even more profound among immigrants (Figure 4). Such high education attainment levels of ethnoburban Chinese immigrants indicate that they are well prepared for, and fit into, the employment trends of the region's globalising economy.

The overall high socioeconomic status of the ethnoburban Chinese population is reflected not only by higher education levels than other groups in the county, but also by their household incomes and housing conditions, to which we now turn.

Income and housing status. Income levels among Chinese in the ethnoburb were higher than the county average in 1989. Considering that the ethnoburb is an ethnic community composed primarily of recent immigrants, this implies that many immigrant Chinese arriving in the San Gabriel Valley were not poor. Moreover, since census data only reveal the money people earn during a given year, and not their capital resources (either at home or abroad), census information on income does not provide a complete picture of

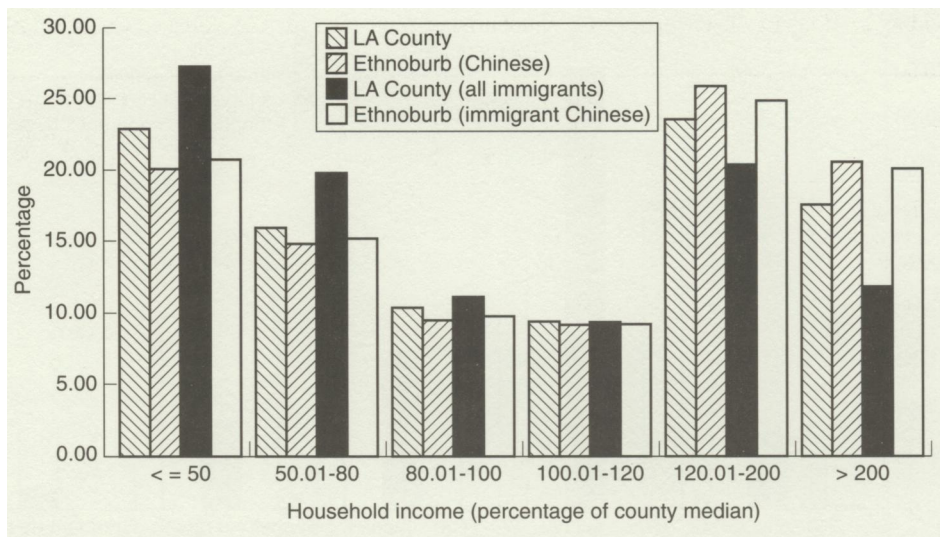


Figure 5. Household income: ethnoburb versus Los Angeles County, 1990. Source: 1990 Census PUMS.

real wealth. However, census data are good indicators of total annual income from diverse sources (including salary and wages; rental income received by landlords; dividends), reflecting major economic and job activities as employees, employers, or self-employed and investors.

Median household income of all Chinese households in the ethnoburb, at \$40 000, was \$5035 higher than that of Los Angeles County as a whole in 1989. Moreover, a higher percentage of this population had incomes 120 per cent or above the county median, and far lower representation in low-income brackets than all county households. The differences between ethnoburban Chinese immigrant households and all immigrant households were bigger (Figure 5).

Income levels of the ethnoburban Chinese varied greatly among those in different occupations. Owners of self-employed incorporated businesses had the highest overall personal income among all groups. Those who held managerial, professional or sales jobs, or who were technicians, also had higher income than the general population. For these people, high incomes resulted from their high-paying jobs.

To own property and a home of one's own has always been viewed as an important sign

of achieving success, especially for immigrants. A majority of ethnoburban Chinese households owned their homes in 1990 (Table 2), a rate surpassing that of the county, indicating that they had achieved an important element of the 'American Dream', an especially vital symbol for immigrants. Moreover, a majority of ethnoburban Chinese immigrants were home-owners, compared to the home-ownership rate among all immigrants in Los Angeles County which was almost 28 percentage points lower. Thus ethnoburban Chinese immigrants do not fit the conventional image of immigrants: they did not come poor with few financial resources but, rather, many came with capital to invest.

Similarly, in contradiction to the conventional perception of immigrant housing as more likely to be crowded, a significant proportion of ethnoburban Chinese can be considered as well-housed, especially regarding availability of space. In 70 per cent of Chinese households, each person has at least one room. The differences were more dramatic comparing ethnoburban immigrant Chinese households and all immigrant households in the county (Table 2). Clearly, there was no big problem of overcrowding among immigrant Chinese households in the ethnoburb. Therefore, as far as space is concerned,

Table 2. Housing characteristics of ethnoburban Chinese versus Los Angeles County, 1990 (percentages)

	Ethnoburban Chinese households	LA County households	Immigrant Chinese households	LA County immigrant households
<i>Tenure</i>				
Owner	66.7	48.7	66.0	38.4
Renter	33.3	51.3	34.0	61.6
<i>Owner cost (percentage)</i>				
Under 30	49.6	69.6	48.1	60.2
30–49	25.9	19.7	26.0	23.6
50 and over	24.5	10.8	25.9	16.2
<i>Rent burden (percentage)</i>				
Under 30	41.2	51.5	40.1	48.4
30–49	23.0	25.2	23.5	26.6
50 and over	35.8	23.3	36.4	25.1
<i>Crowding (persons per room)</i>				
Under 0.5	19.8	38.1	17.0	16.4
0.5–1.0	50.7	43.3	51.2	39.6
1.01–1.5	13.8	6.9	14.8	14.1
1.51 and over	15.7	11.6	17.0	30.0

Source: US Bureau of Census 1990 Public Use Microdata Sample (5 per cent).
Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

ethnoburban Chinese households were better-off than their counterparts in the whole county, and particularly than all immigrants. Regarding housing costs, many ethnoburban Chinese households did not suffer heavy housing cost burdens to their budget, especially when compared to all immigrant groups. This reflects the overall higher income of immigrant Chinese households. Considering owner cost burdens (mortgage and other housing costs as a percentage of household income), ethnoburban Chinese households had higher burdens than households in the county as a whole (Table 2). This reflects the large share of immigrants and new in-migrants. New arrival status implies newer mortgages and thus higher mortgage payments. However, renter housing burdens (gross rent as percentage of household income) among ethnoburban Chinese were more polarised than those of the county.

In general, ethnoburban Chinese are better-off socioeconomically compared to the total population in Los Angeles County. The

gaps are even more distinct among immigrants, revealing that Chinese immigrants in the ethnoburb do not fit the traditional descriptions of poor and poorly housed new immigrants. Beneath this general picture of well-being and affluence, however, are important signs of social stratification. We turn to these internal variations of the ethnoburb next.

3. Ethnoburb as Urban Mosaic

As the result of economic globalisation and associated personnel flows, both wealthy and poor Chinese joined the immigrant waves coming to the US. Thus despite its overall character as an affluent immigrant community and flourishing centre of economic activity, the ethnoburb also displays strong internal stratification along lines of national origins and geographical areas of emigration. Such stratifications are driven by the strikingly different conditions in origin countries, which create immigrant groups with different socioeconomic characteristics. These differ-

ences assume a geographical expression, as people are sorted out spatially by urban housing market dynamics.

Internal stratifications also fit into, and in turn are fed by, economic dynamics at both global and local levels. Due to the rise of FIRE and other globally linked activities, and needs for international investment, there exists an increasing demand for a workforce of white-collar, professionally trained, high-skill, multi-lingual and internationally well-connected workers. Well-educated and wealthy Chinese immigrants are ideal for such positions, and thus they become active players in the globalised economy. On the other hand, the restructured, resurgent local craft sectors (for example, the garment industry) cry out not only for managerial personnel (such as sub-contractors and managers), but also for large numbers of low-skill, low-wage immigrant workers to minimise costs and maximise profits. Such low-skill workers have no other options but to rely on ethnic networks to survive. What is interesting is that all these dynamics together create the ethnoburb as a socially and spatially stratified complex, and also undergird its coherence as a global outpost which relies on an interdependent mix of people. Such class differences within the ethnoburb may thus be a prerequisite for its growth.

Social Stratification by Country of Origin

The biggest and most obvious stratifications exist in the socioeconomic status of immigrants from different parts of Asia. Chinese born in Taiwan and Hong Kong, those born in mainland China, and those born in south-east Asia vary greatly in occupational status, educational attainment and income.

As two of the newly industrialised countries (NICs), both Taiwan and Hong Kong have developed at a very rapid pace during the past several decades, to become indispensable components of the global economy. They have produced highly trained professionals and skilled labourers, many of whom emigrated to the US. As a colony, Hong Kong has had a British education system for

the last 100 years, and Taiwan has adopted an American-style system since World War II. Both adhere to their Chinese traditions of emphasis on the values of education. Therefore, many people from these two areas are very well educated, with academic degrees or professional training, including English ability. Because many are highly educated and well trained, and some were wealthy people in their origins, many of these Chinese immigrants earn high incomes, are well housed, hold professional jobs or own businesses, and thus have overall higher socioeconomic status relative to the general US population.

On the other hand, the Chinese born in south-east Asia are more likely to be akin to Vietnam War refugees who immigrated to the US after the 'Fall of Saigon' (the largest group from south-east Asia). A majority of them did not plan to emigrate from their own countries, until the political situation forced them to do so. As US allies forced to flee, many lost their fortunes when they left their countries. Others escaped in boats or fled overland. Therefore, they were the least-prepared group among all major Chinese immigrant groups—many were from rural backgrounds, less educated and trained, and without strong spoken English ability. When they arrived, many were forced to rely on public assistance, or held blue-collar or lower-ranking public-sector jobs. They had much lower earnings.

The situation of Chinese born in mainland China was more complicated. Because of census definitions, it is difficult to identify those born in mainland China, but who had lived in Taiwan or Hong Kong for years before immigration, versus those coming straight from the mainland. Thus this group is more fragmented in terms of socio-economic characteristics, educational attainment, occupational structure and income levels. Their overall situation was better than that of those born in Indochina, but not as good as that of those born in Taiwan or Hong Kong. Their age structure also leans more towards the older side than the other three major groups. As economic reforms in mainland China have accelerated, levels of affluence

have risen, and many newly wealthy people have begun to participate in the globalised economy. A growing number have come to the US as immigrants or as business people able to benefit from the 1990 immigration law.

One of the foremost distinctions among immigrants from different origins relates to their economic and occupational characteristics. As demonstrated by Table 3, Taiwan- and Hong Kong-born Chinese immigrants had higher percentages engaged in professional and related services, and FIRE. They also had the highest percentages in managerial or professional jobs among all groups, many came to LA as investors and/or business people to establish or operate businesses in the ethnoburb. Immigrants born in China were more likely to work in the retail trade and manufacturing, compared to ethnoburban Chinese immigrants in general, but the largest job category for China-born immigrants was similar to those born in Taiwan and Hong Kong—i.e. managerial or professional jobs. Although these three groups held similar order in terms of job prestige, China-born immigrants had lower job prestige than Taiwan- or Hong Kong-born, since they had lower percentages engaged in managerial or professional jobs, and more in service and labour categories. The largest share of Indochina-born Chinese immigrants was, in contrast, involved in some type of manufacturing activity, as they entered the low-wage local labour force. Indochinese percentages in blue collar jobs (precision production/craft/repair, and operators/labourers) were highest among all major place-of-birth groups, though administrative support was the largest percentage within this group. Hence, among the four major immigrant groups, Indochina-born immigrants stood on the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder. These facts again demonstrate that immigrants born in Indochina were the least-prepared group, since many of them lost everything because of the war, and left their countries penniless and without technical or psychological preparation for immigration.

Different jobs generate different income levels (Figure 6). Therefore, not surprisingly, the highest median personal income in 1989 was gained by immigrants born in Hong Kong (\$21 005), followed by Taiwan (\$20 000; these two groups had incomes several thousands of dollars above the county median of \$16 000); and then mainland China (\$12 500). The Chinese immigrants born in Indochina had the lowest median income among all groups (Laos: \$12 012; Cambodia: \$12 000; and Vietnam: \$10 619.5). Over 50 per cent of those born in Hong Kong or Taiwan had incomes at least 120 per cent above the county median; only 12.3 per cent of Indochina-born residents were in that category, while almost 40 per cent of them had less than 50 per cent of the county median. The biggest internal polarisation existed among the China-born group: a majority (50.4 per cent) had incomes 80 per cent or below county median, whereas the other 35.7 per cent had at least 120 per cent above it. Immigrants born in Indochina also had the highest percentage (15.7–27.9 per cent) receiving public assistance among all immigrant groups. Rates among all other groups were lower than 10 per cent.

Differences in education and language skill contribute to the dramatic differences in economic status and income levels by place-of-birth group. Chinese born in Taiwan and Hong Kong had the highest educational attainment levels among all ethnoburban Chinese. The Chinese born in Taiwan had the top educational level, with 43.4 per cent having at least bachelor degrees, followed by those born in Hong Kong (39.4 per cent) and in mainland China (27.0 per cent). As expected, immigrants born in mainland China were more stratified with respect to their educational attainment levels. Despite their large share of high degrees, the group also contained large numbers of people who did not have a high-school diploma. The lowest educational attainment was among people born in Indochina, over half (54.2 per cent) of whom did not have high-school diplomas.

Table 3. Occupational structure of ethnoburban Chinese immigrants by place of birth, 1990 (percentages)

	Taiwan	Hong Kong	China	Indochina
<i>Type of industry</i>				
Retail trade	16.7	17.4	23.5	22.9
Manufacturing	14.9	16.8	22.0	25.8
Professional and services	19.0	22.5	14.9	8.9
FIRE	14.4	13.9	11.0	12.6
Wholesale trade	14.9	7.0	7.8	9.2
Transport, communication and public utilities	7.0	7.0	5.0	4.8
Business and repair	2.7	4.6	3.4	5.6
Agriculture, mining and construction	4.0	2.8	4.9	3.2
Personal services	3.1	1.7	4.5	2.9
Public administration	1.8	3.8	1.4	2.6
Entertainment and recreation	1.6	2.5	1.7	1.7
<i>Type of occupation</i>				
Manager and professional	41.4	36.5	29.6	11.1
Administrative support	17.6	21.4	14.4	23.7
Sales occupations	22.2	13.2	15.0	16.5
Service occupations	7.0	9.4	14.2	11.6
Precision, production, craft and repair	3.1	3.8	8.8	14.2
Operator and labourer	2.7	2.7	10.3	13.7
Technician and support	4.2	11.3	4.6	3.7
Transport and material moving	1.5	1.6	2.7	5.1
Farming, forestry and fishing	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.4

Source: US Bureau of Census 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples (5 per cent).
Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

*Spatial Variation within the Ethnoburb:
Micro-geographies of Home and Work*

The socioeconomic conditions among different groups are profound, and have strong implications for residential location within the ethnoburb. For instance, in the cities of El Monte, La Puente, Industry and South El Monte, immigrants born in Indochina of Chinese descendants composed the largest group (36.3–42.5 per cent of all Chinese immigrants). In places like Arcadia, Covina, Hacienda Heights, Rowland Heights, San Marino, Temple City, Walnut and West Covina, all relatively up-scale neighbourhoods, immigrants born in Taiwan were the largest group. In Diamond Bar, Taiwan-born Chinese immigrants comprised a majority. Immigrants born in mainland China were the largest group in other communities inside the

ethnoburb, such as Alhambra, Monterey Park, Pasadena, Rosemead and South Pasadena.

Given the strong socioeconomic and spatial stratification of ethnoburban residents according to country of origin, it is not surprising that, as a place, the ethnoburb is a complex mosaic of neighbourhoods and workplaces marked by social contrasts and economic differences. In what follows, we look ‘inside’ the ethnoburb to illustrate its internal differentiation, and to put the ethnoburb in the larger context of the San Gabriel Valley.

The ethnoburb: a complex mosaic of neighbourhoods. As traditional up-scale neighbourhoods, Arcadia and San Marino house wealthy households and rich single people.

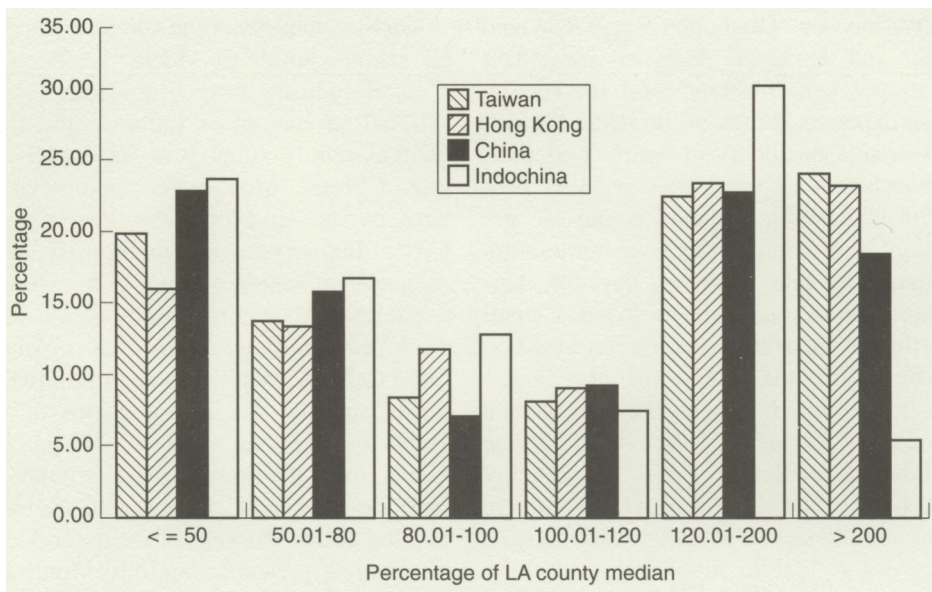


Figure 6. Household income by immigrant group in the ethnoburb, 1990. *Source:* 1990 Census PUMS.

They attract mainly affluent Chinese and their families. As the result, these areas have not only kept their high status, but have even seen their status rise. On the other hand, the 'East District' (East San Gabriel Valley area) is a relatively recently developed series of outer suburbs of Los Angeles County. Cities and places in the East San Gabriel Valley area are mainly upper-middle class neighbourhoods, and have become new favourites among ethnoburban Chinese. Therefore, ethnoburban Chinese in Arcadia, San Marino, Pasadena and East San Gabriel Valley cities and places like Rowland Heights, Diamond Bar, Hacienda Heights and Walnut have overall superior status as indicated by skills, income and education, and housing circumstances.

In these areas, immigrants from Taiwan or native-born people (especially in Pasadena) comprised large percentages. About one-fifth or more of all working Chinese engaged in professional services (varying from 18.9 per cent in Hacienda Heights to 44.2 per cent in Pasadena). And at least three-fourths of these residents had white-collar jobs. Half of all ethnoburban Chinese who were in the highest income bracket (\$200 000 and more

in 1989) lived in the Arcadia and San Marino areas alone, and they were all immigrants; and almost one-tenth of these people had incomes at least three times the county median. The Chinese in Pasadena had the highest education attainment levels (with 59.6 per cent having at least bachelor degrees), followed by Diamond Bar and Rowland Heights (54.7 per cent) and Hacienda Heights (52.8 per cent) and Arcadia, San Marino and Temple City (48.9 per cent). And in Hacienda Heights, Pasadena, Diamond Bar and Rowland Heights, Covina and West Covina and Arcadia, San Gabriel, San Marino and Temple City, higher percentages of people spoke English well or very well than the average of ethnoburban Chinese (ranging from 73.4–68.7 per cent).

Regarding housing conditions, in recent-immigrant-dominated Hacienda Heights, Rowland Heights and Diamond Bar, homeownership rates among ethnoburban Chinese in 1990 were as high as 88.3 per cent, a clear sign of relatively rich new immigrants. The rate was even higher than the high percentage native-born Pasadena (50.6 per cent). Among all Chinese home-owners, more than 45 per cent of those households in Arcadia,

San Marino or Diamond Bar, Rowland Heights and Hacienda Heights spent less than 30 per cent of their total income on housing expenses. Much of the housing stock in this area is decidedly up-scale. This indicates that residents are indeed wealthy people who came with financial resources: not only they can afford expensive homes, but also they are able either to pay off their mortgages rapidly or only to spend a small proportion of their large income on housing. However, more than one-third of Chinese owner-households in Walnut had to allocate more than 50 per cent of their total income into housing expenses. This is probably caused by the fact that those who moved to Walnut and other new suburbs were likely to be upwardly mobile households seeking more spacious housing, who were willing to add to their housing burden. In the same token, renter payment burdens also varied among neighbourhoods. While 48.5 per cent of Pasadena renters could spend less than 30 per cent on housing, 58.2 per cent in Hacienda Heights had to spend more than 50 per cent of all their income on housing.

As residential neighbourhoods, these up-scale communities had high percentages of non-Hispanic white people (40–50 per cent), and low proportions of Latinos (less than 20 per cent) and even lower percentages of African Americans (usually less than 5 per cent). These were newer, owner-occupied, single-family neighbourhoods. Ownership rates varied from about 60 per cent in West San Gabriel Valley to as high as 77 per cent in the relatively newly developed East San Gabriel Valley, and up to one-third of the residential buildings were built during the 1980s. Over 70 per cent were detached single-family houses. Up to half of these households had incomes of at least 200 per cent the county median and a majority of households (owner or renter) did not have to spend more than one-third of their total income on housing. More than one-third of all houses in Arcadia and San Marino were valued at more than \$400 000 in 1990. Therefore, up-scale Chinese are likely to live in neighbourhoods where other wealthy people tend to live.

On the other hand, the Chinese who live in El Monte, South El Monte, La Puente and City of Industry have low status. As a traditional stronghold of Latino population, El Monte mainly lures low- or lower-middle class Chinese. Most upper-middle-class Chinese bypass El Monte, La Puente and the City of Industry (mainly an industrial area, as its name indicates) on their path of eastward expansion. About one-quarter of the Chinese workforce in these areas was involved in retail trade, and another one-fifth in manufacturing activity. Their proportions of white-collar occupations were 10–15 percentage points lower than those living in richer areas, and one-fifth each of these Chinese worked as blue-collar workers or held service jobs. No Chinese person living in El Monte earned more than \$100 000 in 1989; and over 50 per cent had incomes less than half the county median. Ethnobarban Chinese living in these areas also had the lowest educational attainment levels of all areas within the ethnobarb. Over one-third of all of those in La Puente, South El Monte and City of Industry did not graduate from high school. Severe crowding conditions existed in more than one-fifth of Chinese households.

In these areas, Hispanics continued to comprise the overwhelming majority, much higher than in other parts of the San Gabriel Valley, accounting for almost half of the total population. Non-Hispanic whites were less than 16 per cent. Overall, these communities are lower-middle-class or lower-class neighbourhoods. For example, over 30 per cent of all households in El Monte had incomes of only 50 per cent of the Los Angeles County median or lower, and the city's home-ownership rate was the lowest among all San Gabriel Valley communities (41.3 per cent).

Ethnobarban Chinese living in other parts of the ethnobarb (Alhambra, Monterey Park, Rosemead, San Gabriel and Temple City) are in the middle in terms of their overall socio-economic status between those in Arcadia, San Marino and the 'East District', and those in El Monte area. Almost equal proportions of workers in these areas were engaged in

professional and related services, retail and manufacturing (15–25 per cent). About 60 per cent were white-collar workers, while around 10 per cent worked as blue-collar workers, or held service occupations. While about 5 per cent of these residents had incomes three times or more than the county median, some 40 per cent of them had less than half the median. Some one-quarter of Chinese residents did not graduate from high school, whereas another one-third or more had at least bachelor degrees. The Chinese households here were about equally split between owning and renting their homes; crowding levels were low; and overall housing cost burdens were moderate. In general, these areas—the core and zone of earliest establishment of the ethnoburb—had the highest overall percentages of Asian and Pacific Islander populations (from 33.9 per cent in Alhambra and South Pasadena to 44.9 per cent in Monterey Park and Rosemead); Latinos counted for about 15 per cent; and non-Hispanic whites were the smallest component. In these communities, between one-fifth to one-fourth of all households had incomes of 50 per cent of the county median or less, and the other 12–13 per cent had incomes of 200 per cent or more, suggesting diversity within the area. Households were about equally divided between owner- and renter-occupied. And a large majority of all houses were valued in the middle ranges (\$100 000–\$399 999) bracket. These neighbourhoods thus appear to be solidly middle class.

The ethnoburb: a complex of business districts. As described by the ethnoburb model, the ethnoburb is not only a mosaic of residential areas, but a complex of business districts. Differentiation of business districts can be identified spatially on the basis of various labour force characteristics and different economic structures, to indicate their different roles in the local economy. Table 4 demonstrates some of these spatial variations by using three sub-areas within the ethnoburb which were identified individually by the census as workplaces, and by comparing them with the ethnoburb as a whole.

The Chinese workforce in Pasadena had overall higher education levels and better-spoken English abilities, whereas those who worked in Monterey Park and Rosemead were more polarised in their socioeconomic conditions. The latter had overall higher educational attainment, but lower spoken English ability than all ethnoburban Chinese workers. Therefore, the Monterey Park area as an employment centre offered job opportunities for those Chinese professionals who do not speak English very well, and who as a result suffer status loss. This demonstrates that the ethnoburb (at least the core of it), continues to hold some of the characteristics of an ethnic enclave, where less-assimilated immigrants can not only find ways to survive, but also become an important force to promote growth.

The three areas also had different economic structures. Monterey Park and Rosemead's Chinese economy focused more on retail, Pasadena more on professional and related services; and El Monte more on manufacturing. Although managers and professionals were the largest occupational category in all three sub-areas, higher percentages of the workforce in El Monte were operators and labourers, due to its manufacturing activity. Monterey Park and El Monte also had higher self-employment rates than the ethnoburb overall.

4. Conclusion and Implications

The ethnoburb is a global economic outpost with extensive international connections and striking internal stratifications. The ethnoburb's demographic and socioeconomic characteristics reflect its role in global economic activities. Moreover, internationalisation of economic affairs and growth in transnational personnel flows have resulted in internal socioeconomic stratification within the ethnoburban Chinese population. Composed largely of immigrants from a wide variety of origins, the ethnoburban population reflects global geopolitical changes and shifts in US immigration policy. The ethnoburban Chinese are generally highly educated, rela-

Table 4. Internal variation in the Chinese workforce and economy in the ethnoburb, 1990 (percentages)

	Monterey Park and Rosemead	El Monte	Pasadena	Ethnoburb
<i>Workforce characteristics</i>				
<i>Educational attainment</i>				
No high school diploma	22.2	20.0	7.9	29.0
High school—some college	44.6	46.8	33.5	39.6
Bachelor degree or higher	33.2	33.2	58.6	31.4
<i>Spoken English</i>				
Not at all	4.8	3.2	1.5	8.0
Speak not well	25.8	26.3	4.9	20.9
Speak well	39.9	35.6	31.3	32.5
Speak very well	27.5	19.3	50.4	31.5
<i>Immigrant group by birthplace</i>				
China	34.4	36.8	27.3	31.2
Taiwan	33.4	26.4	22.2	29.7
Indochina	17.8	21.8	14.5	18.5
Hong Kong	10.7	8.6	21.6	10.6
<i>Place of residence for workforce</i>				
Monterey Park and Rosemead	40.1	17.4	13.7	24.7
El Monte	5.1	13.6	5.5	5.5
Pasadena	1.7	0.0	25.0	3.3
The other part of the core ethnoburb	38.2	33.4	39.4	37.8
All other ethnoburban areas	14.9	35.6	16.4	28.7
<i>Economic structure (type of ownership)</i>				
Private for profit	75.1	64.6	60.7	69.0
Private non-profit	2.0	5.7	16.8	4.8
Government	5.3	8.3	12.0	9.8
Own not incorporated	8.9	13.0	6.2	9.1
Own incorporated	7.7	8.5	3.9	5.9
Unpaid family business	1.0	0.0	0.6	1.4
<i>Top five industries^a</i>				
	<i>Monterey Park and Rosemead</i>	<i>El Monte</i>	<i>Pasadena</i>	
	Retail (25.1)	Manufacturing (34.2)	Professional services (35.5)	
	FIRE (21.1)	Retail (14.4)	FIRE (15.3)	
	Professional services (17.6)	Professional services (10.9)	Manufacturing (13.9)	
	Manufacturing (10.3)	Personal services (7.9)	Retail (13.8)	
	Communication (6.0)	Business and repair (7.3)	Communication (4.0)	
<i>Top five occupations^a</i>				
	Manager/ professional (35.8)	Manager/ professional (28.2)	Manager/ professional (46.2)	
	Administrative support (16.8)	Operator and labourer (23.2)	Aministrative support (16.4)	
	Sales occupations (15.9)	Aministrative support (13.4)	Service occupations (9.1)	
	Service occupations (12.4)	Sales occupations (12.3)	Technicians (9.0)	
	Precision & craft (6.7)	Precision and craft (10.1)	Sales occupations (8.9)	

^aMeasured by percentage of people involved.
Source: US Bureau of Census 1990 Public Use Microdata Samples (5 per cent).
Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

tively affluent and well-housed. The workforce is concentrated in sectors strongly impacted by economic restructuring, and has close ties to international business. Thus in many respects the ethnoburb is a reflection of the ability of highly mobile capital to set up coherent, effective outposts in world cities like Los Angeles, from which to direct international business activities and to open new markets. The San Gabriel Valley strategy has been to develop a spatially dense albeit suburban configuration in which social and economic networks can develop and reinforce this role, and in which immigrant cultural needs can be met.

Despite its overall affluence, there are clear 'pockets of poverty', strongly linked to national origin, education, English language skills and labour force characteristics, that create class stratification within the ethnoburb. This stratification, triggered by the influx of immigrant groups with dramatically different levels of financial and human capital, is highly functional from the perspective of developing a spatially contiguous, economically integrated residential/business hub. The main divisions are between Chinese from Taiwan and Hong Kong, and those from China and Indochina. The latter groups, who have come to Los Angeles mostly as a result of geopolitical changes and national political and economic conflicts, have lower educational attainment and incomes, and a greater likelihood of housing affordability problems. They are concentrated in low-skill occupations and low-wage manufacturing sectors, and in retail services. This polarisation on the basis of national origin and socioeconomic status finds its geographical expression in the spatial differentiation of the ethnoburban landscape. The poorest groups, from Indochina, are predominantly located in El Monte, while the most affluent groups from Taiwan and Hong Kong, reside in upscale communities, such as Arcadia and San Marino. The ethnoburb thus forms a socio-spatial structure serving to integrate more marginalised groups from Indochina and China within the local immigrant community and the global economy.

The tightly-knit character of the ethnoburb and its relatively self-contained nature, slow the process of immigrant assimilation both for the marginalised groups and for the affluent segments of the population. Ultimately, however, the superior educational and economic status of the Taiwan/Hong Kong portion of the Chinese population can be expected to allow these groups to exert substantial control on their rate of assimilation. Again, this suggests that their high socioeconomic status provides them with more freedom of choice in the assimilation process, but does not guarantee a quick one-way integration with the American mainstream due to the existence of the ethnoburb itself. In contrast, marginalised groups from Indochina may be mired in closed ethnic economies and neighbourhoods, thereby reducing their chances for upward mobility as well as assimilation into the mainstream society.

This analysis of the Chinese ethnoburb has been primarily descriptive in nature. Future investigations may take both quantitative and qualitative directions to enhance what has already been done in this research. Future efforts may extend this study through the use of multivariate modelling. For example, logistical regression analysis of the determinants of ethnoburb formation would tease out how much the changing economic and demographic contexts that characterised the past several decades have influenced the creation and growth of the ethnoburb. Such quantitative work can allow the conceptual model of ethnoburb formation to be more rigorously tested, and analysed comparatively across other cities in the US. On the other hand, more qualitative work, such as in-depth interviews and extensive surveys, should be conducted with Chinese residents and businesses, as well as with those of other ethnic groups. The purpose of such research would be to determine how the development of the Chinese ethnoburb impacts on their way of life and/or doing business, shapes their respective ethnic identities and solidarity, and interacts with other facets of American society.

Notes

1. 'Place of work' in PUMS refers to a census respondent's workplace during the calendar week preceding the date the census was taken (Bureau of the Census, 1992, pp. B32–B33). As 'place of work', PUMS data only listed a few PUMAs individually, and lumped most other PUMAs into groups. Within the ethnoburb, for instance, only Monterey Park and Rosemead (PUMA 05400), El Monte (05800) and Pasadena (06300) were listed as a 'place of work'; other PUMAs in San Gabriel Valley were grouped with foothill and westside areas.
2. The highest level of school completed or the highest degree received among all people who were at least 15 years old in 1990 (Bureau of the Census 1992, p. B-4).
3. Despite the recent Independence Movement in Taiwan, governments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait (mainland and Taiwan) admit that a unified China has to include Taiwan Island. Therefore, I define all those people who identified themselves as either 'Chinese' or 'Taiwanese' when responding to the 1990 census questionnaire as Chinese in my sample.

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Appendix. Data Sources and Methods of Analysis

The primary data source for this paper is the 1990 Census—5 per cent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS). A statistical software package, Statistical Analysis System (SAS) is used to retrieve and

analyse PUMS data sub-sets on the ethnoburb and the general information on Los Angeles County. Results presented here are based on weighted data, and thus reflect population characteristics with respect to demographic, socioeconomic status and housing conditions.

Although 1990 census data are now eight years old, the census is still by far the most comprehensive and reliable data source compared to other sources of data. The census offers an excellent snapshot of the ethnoburban Chinese and general populations, and their socioeconomic and housing characteristics.

Eleven Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) within San Gabriel Valley were selected as the study site, including 22 cities, 12 Census Designated Places (CDPs) and some parts of unincorporated Los Angeles County. Although not all cities and CDPs of this selected San Gabriel Valley area are centres of the new Chinese settlement, the zone represents the general location of the ethnoburb. The number of Chinese in the 5 per cent sample included all those people who indicated on their 1990 census questionnaire that they were 'Chinese' or 'Taiwanese'.³ There were a total of 6540 Chinese people and 1934 Chinese households in this sample sub-set, representing 128 624 Chinese people and 37 245 Chinese households in the San Gabriel Valley.