6. Asians and Pacific Islanders

The five-county Southern California area has the largest Asian population of any metropolitan area in the United States. It has been growing rapidly since about 1970, primarily through immigration. In 1980 Asians comprised less than 3 percent of Southern Californians, but by 2000 they represented over 11 percent (derived from Table 3.2). Although much less numerous than Latinos or Whites, they have outnumbered Blacks in Southern California since the late 1980s.

Asians and Pacific Islanders is an aggregation that includes people of very different languages and cultural heritages. They are more diverse culturally than Latinos, who are unified to some degree by a common Spanish language background.

In both Southern California and the United States as a whole, Chinese and Filipinos are the two largest Asian groups (Table 6.1). Los Angeles County is easily the leading center for Filipinos and Koreans in the country, as is Orange County for Vietnamese. However, for Chinese and Japanese Los Angeles County is only the second largest center because Chinese in the five boroughs of New York City slightly outnumber those in Los Angeles County, and Honolulu County (Oahu) is the largest Japanese concentration in the country.

Asian Indians are the third largest Asian group in the United States, but in Southern California their numbers are less than in either New York or Chicago. This is because older immigrant pathways and recent high-tech employment opportunities have directed them more to other areas. Because their numbers in Southern California are so much less than the five leading groups, we do not map them specifically.

Asian Indians and smaller groups such as Thais, Cambodians, and Samoans were covered in The Ethnic Quilt and are not treated here. The chapter title includes Pacific Islanders, as does our map of population change during the 1990s, because we wished to be inclusive in our coverage. Nevertheless, Pacific Islanders comprise less than 3 percent of all Asians and Pacific Islanders in Southern California. For this reason we simplify the terminology by using “Asian” for the entire Asian and Pacific Islander aggregation.

Racially Mixed Asians

The Census 2000 counts of specific Asian groups include the numbers reporting some Asian race and another race, but they do not identify the specific races with which Asian groups are mixed. For this reason the mixed-race populations could not be fractionally assigned in order to make possible the calculation of rates of population change for the 1990s. (See chapter 2 regarding these mixed-race data and methods of handling them.) There are alternative 2000 counts of Asian groups depending on whether mixed-race Asians are included and how they are tabulated (Table 6.1, columns 2-4).

Regardless of the data used, however, it appears that the Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese populations grew rapidly in Southern California during the 1990s. Asian Indians increased also, especially in Orange County. Japanese, on the other hand, showed much less growth.

Some people reporting mixed-Asian backgrounds (Table 6.1, column 3) are ethnic Chinese from various Southeast Asian countries. For example, many individuals marked both “Vietnamese” and “Chinese” on the census questionnaire to show both their ethnic identity and the country in which they formerly lived. Thus, dual Asian identities do not necessarily reflect past ethnic intermarriage.

Despite the problems of measuring trends with the Census 2000 data, the new mixed-race data can be analyzed in terms of ethnic and county differences (Table 6.1). Column (5), representing the percentage of all members of the Asian group that reported also at least one non-Asian race, provides a useful measure of varying mixed-race proportions. Although ethnic groups may differ in the emphasis placed upon marriage within their ethnic group, a more important factor explaining group variations in racial mixing is probably the average length of time the group has lived in the United States. This is because in the United States there is much exposure to different racial groups and relatively more opportunity for marriage outside one’s own ethnic group than in the Asian countries of origin.

In all five counties, the Japanese are more likely to report a mixed-race heritage than the other Asian groups. This is consistent with the longer Japanese experience in this country, the group’s lower percentage of foreign-born (immigrants) compared to U.S.-born, and its higher rate of intermarriage compared to...
Table 6.1. Major Asian Populations, 1990 and 2000: Counties in Los Angeles CMSA

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Notes: Chinese includes Taiwanese. Data are computed for the five largest Asian groups in each county plus any other Asian group numbering 20,000 or more in any county in 2000. The three columns of 2000 data show the number reporting only that specific Asian race, the number reporting that specific Asian race mixed with another Asian race, and a number reporting that specific Asian race mixed with a non-Asian race.

Asian Population Change

Growth and dispersal. Asians in Southern California increased by one-third (over 400,000) in the 1990s. Much of this growth was dispersed in suburban areas, such as new developments in Ventura County and in southern Orange County (Figure 6.1). Such dispersed settlement tends to attract those who are more comfortable with the English language and mainstream American culture.

The maps accentuate the areas where immigrants have settled because they are the leading source of Asian growth. However, large numbers of Asians and, in particular, community leaders were born in the United States. This population typically resides outside the ethnic enclaves, usually in some suburb of either Los Angeles City or that county. Such highly assimilated, successful Asians play very important roles, but their presence is not revealed in the maps.

Enclave expansion. At the same time, growing clusters of Asian settlement are very evident. Ethnic residential concentrations or enclaves are attractive to many people because their neighbors are more likely to be friends and relatives and because ethnic markets, businesses, professional services, and cultural institutions are more accessible. Recent immigrants often feel more at home living in enclaves.

Two particularly large concentrations are the mostly Chinese population in and around Monterey Park in the Western San Gabriel Valley and the Vietnamese enclave called Little Saigon, centered in Westminster and Garden Grove in Orange County (Figure 6.1). The third largest area of Asian growth during the 1990s was in the eastern San Gabriel Valley, especially in areas with newer and more expensive homes.

A similar pattern of Asian growth in more affluent neighborhoods is found throughout Southern California, particularly where local schools are known to be excellent. This educational factor has been very important for many Asians in selecting a place to live. In previous decades a mostly Japanese enclave developed in Torrance, including both Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals as residents. Some of these residents probably moved there from nearby Gardena, a much older Japanese enclave. Torrance’s Asian-oriented stores, schools, and other institutions are easily accessible to Asian residents in the nearby Palos Verdes Peninsula. To the east, Cerritos, a newer affluent suburb dating mostly from the 1970s, has also been attractive to Asians from several ethnic groups.

In Orange County, Irvine has become a new Asian enclave. The city is seen as safe and its University High School is well known and highly respected. The nearby University of California at Irvine—where over half the undergraduates are Asian—is also an important draw. The western part of Irvine is an “edge city” with modern office buildings and manufacturing, but the east are upscale residential areas with homes constructed since the mid-1970s. With its distinctive high-tech employment characteristics, Irvine has clearly been attractive to computer engineers and other skilled professionals, many of whom are Asian. Closer to L.A.’s Downtown, three older and somewhat poorer Asian enclaves—Chinatown, Little Tokyo, and Koreatown—also grew somewhat during the 1990s. This is a

other Asian groups except Thais. Vietnamese and Koreans, on the other hand, represent more recent immigration flows. Their mixed-race proportions are lower than other Asian groups as a result of fewer years in the United States and, therefore, less opportunity to marry outside the group.

Place differences in the rates of racial mixing reflect the absolute size of the group’s population in different places. Los Angeles and Orange Counties tend to have lower percentages of mixed-race Asians. This is partly because the large numbers in each ethnic group and the greater development of residential concentrations or enclaves in those two counties create many opportunities for marriage within the group. In general, rates of racial mixing for different counties may be an important indicator of society’s relative openness and fluidity as opposed to ethnic separation or compartmentalization in those places.

Riverside and San Bernardino Counties have higher proportions of racially mixed Asians than the other counties. The attractiveness of those counties for such racially mixed people may be partly related to the recent rapid growth in those counties and their lack of established Asian neighborhoods dating from the era of racial segregation. New Asian arrivals in those counties are probably also younger and less concerned with traditional separations between ethnic groups. The highest percentage of racially mixed Asian is reached among Japanese in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, where over 40 percent of Japanese identified also with another race (usually White).

Thus, the evidence from Census 2000 of place differences in racially mixed proportions is quite clear. Newer suburban areas, with fewer members of each group and perhaps less traditional attitudes concerning ethnic separation, have tended to attract racially mixed Asians.

Asian Population Change

Growth and dispersal. Asians in Southern California increased by one-third (over 400,000) in the 1990s. Much of this growth was dispersed in suburban areas, such as new developments in Ventura County and in southern Orange County (Figure 6.1). Such dispersed settlement tends to attract those who are more comfortable with the English language and mainstream American culture.
Figure 6.1
Asian Population Change
1990 - 2000

Major Road
County Boundary

Asian and Pacific Islander
• Loss of 100 Persons
• Gain of 100 Persons

0 10 20 Miles

Los Angeles County
San Gabriel Mountains
Santa Monica Mountains
San Bernardino Mountains
San Diego County
Figure 6.2
Filipino Population Change
1990 - 2000

Major Road
County Boundary

Filipino
• Loss of 100 Persons
• Gain of 100 Persons
reminder that many recent immigrants and their children cannot afford to live in more expensive areas but still want the cultural advantages and social support associated with living in an ethnic enclave.

Altogether, the Asian population increased most in newer, more affluent suburbs. Enough Asians settled in Torrance, Irvine, Cerritos, and the East San Gabriel Valley so that each of those grew in numbers and is essentially a multiethnic Asian enclave. (See “Asian Settlement in Enclaves and Changes” near the end of this chapter.)

### Declining Asian settlements

In contrast, Asians tended to leave less expensive, older residential areas that were not distinctively Asian concentrations. Some of these neighborhoods had crime and gang problems. One such area lies on the east, north and west sides of L.A.’s Downtown and includes Pico-Union, Echo Park, Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Highland Park, and Boyle Heights. Similarly, Asians have been moving out of the older sections of Gardena, Hawthorne, Wilmington, Long Beach, Pomona, Santa Ana, and the northeast San Fernando Valley. In most cases, the former homes and apartments of departing Asians were occupied by Latinos, whose growing numbers created a strong demand for housing in lower-rent neighborhoods.

#### Filipinos

In general, the 1990s saw a net shift of Filipinos from older, poorer enclaves into economically better residential areas (Figure 6.2). Newly arrived Filipino immigrants seeking low-rent areas were apparently fewer in number than those leaving for better neighborhoods, reflecting a higher economic status for more recent immigrants. In many cases this residential change represented dispersal into newer suburbs, but in others the movement was into multiethnic Asian enclaves.

#### Patterns of population decline

The oldest Filipino enclave is the Temple-Alvarado area, located west of Downtown Los Angeles and just north of the expanding Latino neighborhood of Pico-Union. Filipinos settled first in this area over half a century ago when they were much poorer and were rarely permitted to rent elsewhere. The area has been declining over recent decades so that Filipinos still residing there tend to be older, less educated, and poorer than most Filipinos in Southern California.

Filipino population decreases are also evident in neighborhoods that developed originally in connection with the United States Navy. For most of the twentieth century, ambitious Filipino high school graduates competed for positions in the U.S. Navy. They typically began as stewards or in some other menial position, but often re-enlisted for better training and pay. Many later married and brought wives from the Philippines, followed by various family members, to their assigned navy bases. Thus, all the larger naval installations around the United States have local Filipino communities. The two major concentrations connected with the navy are Oxnard and Long Beach (Figure 6.3). A third and smaller navy-related Filipino enclave is the Naval Weapons Station in Seal Beach just east of Long Beach, although in 2000 only about 60 Filipinos lived there in navy housing.

In the Oxnard area is another navy-related Filipino enclave which declined during the 1990s. Although some Filipinos were employed in Oxnard during the 1930s as farm workers, the thriving Filipino community in the Oxnard area probably originated in conjunction with the development of the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion Center (Seabee base) at Port Hueneme in 1942. Because Filipinos played significant roles at all naval installations, further in-migration followed the construction of a naval air station and missile test center at Pt. Mugu in the early 1950s. Until the 1980s most Filipinos lived in the “Little Manila” enclave in south Oxnard, defined in 2000 by the two tracts that are over 20 percent Filipino (Figure 6.3). However, with economic success and assimilation has come the ability for Filipinos, often the children or grandchildren of Navy men, to move into newer suburban areas nearby.

The drop in the Filipino population near the harbors of Long Beach and Los Angeles was the result of improved economic status and the closure of the Long Beach Naval Shipyard and the nearby naval facilities in the 1990s (Figure 6.2). The reduced Filipino numbers are mostly evident in one tract in West Long Beach where the navy had special housing for its personnel and their families.

#### Enclaves

Filipinos increased their numbers in moderate- and high-priced neighborhoods, many of which are in or near established concentrations. The result is that Filipino enclaves are clearly evident (Figure 6.3). Carson, a suburban city dating from the 1960s, has long been popular with Filipinos, especially those leaving the navy-based community in west Long Beach in search of newer homes. A similar expansion of an earlier enclave occurred in the Eagle Rock section of L.A. City and in adjacent Glendale. And in the central San Fernando Valley, the Filipino settlement focus in Panorama City originated with health professionals employed in the local Kaiser hospital.

Particularly important was the growth of the large Filipino settlement in upscale suburbs like Walnut, Diamond Bar, Cerritos, and the Stevenson Ranch development west of Interstate 5 near Santa Clarita. Movement into the new city of Chino Hills in San Bernardino County has extended the San Gabriel Valley settlements still farther eastward. Additional Filipino concentrations in San Bernardino County include tracts close to Loma Linda University Medical Center, where health care professionals are employed, and to the west, near Interstate 15, a suburban tract of newer homes in Fontana.

#### Filipinos dispersed in older and newer suburbs

The majority of Filipinos in Southern California do not live in ethnic enclaves (Figure 6.3; Table 6.2). Partly because most Filipino immigrants enter with advanced English-language skills and earn the incomes of professionals, most have less need to settle in enclaves. The result is that Filipinos are neighbors of Southern Californians in a wide range of suburban areas.

### Chinese

Only a small proportion of Chinese in Southern California as of 2000 are descendants of immigrants who arrived in the United States in the nineteenth century. At that time and up until after World War II, most Chinese who were not servants of White people could not rent an apartment or buy a home in most parts of Los Angeles. Chinese generally had to live in restricted areas, the largest and best known of which were called Chinatowns.

#### Chinatown and vicinity

There has been a sequence of Chinatowns in different locations near Downtown Los Angeles. All have been east and south of the original Plaza until the 1930s, when Chinatown was established in its present location—just north of the Plaza. Relocation was necessary because the new Union Station was planned for the area in which many Chinese lived. The new Chinatown was planned as a focus for tourism in addition to homes for Chinese.

![Shopping arcade, Chinatown](image-url)
Thirty percent of all Filipinos live in tracts that are over 7.5 percent Filipino.
In the 1960s, however, residential shifts began to take place. Many more immigrants began to arrive near the end of that decade, and at the same time residential restrictions on Chinese became much weaker. As a result, Chinese expanded into surrounding neighborhoods. The numbers of Chinese in and near Chinatown grew through the 1980s despite the fact that the area has remained poor and not attractive to most modern-day Chinese immigrants.

During the 1990s, however, resident Chinese tended to leave the older areas that lie within a mile or two of Chinatown but not in its commercial center (Figure 6.4). This change is presumably related to a diminishing number of poor Chinese immigrants and the ability of those already in the area to afford better housing elsewhere. The same out-movement has characterized other low-rent areas to the west, between Downtown and Vermont Avenue, where poor Mexican and Central American immigrants have been eager to live. Because Latino immigrants have far outnumbered Asians and Pacific Islanders other than Chinese living in Chinatown.

In contrast to the Chinese out-movement from most neighborhoods near Chinatown, in the Los Angeles Downtown itself several hundred older Chinese moved into the attractive Angels Plaza apartments on the edge of Bunker Hill (Figure 6.4). In those apartment buildings, completed in 1981, rents for low-income seniors are subsidized by the government, making them attractive for poorer Chinese.

**The San Gabriel Valley.** The largest enclave is in the western San Gabriel Valley (Figure 6.5), where in the 1970s a Chinese developer advertised Monterey Park among Chinese in Taiwan and Hong Kong as “the Chinese Beverly Hills.” As a result, many Chinese immigrants settled in Monterey Park and the nearby cities of Alhambra and Rosemead. In the 1980s this enclave expanded into nearby cities, including more expensive ones like Arcadia and San Marino. Other immigrants headed several miles eastward in the San Gabriel Valley to Walnut, Diamond Bar, and Hacienda Heights, where a large, active Taiwanese Buddhist temple is located. This Eastern San Gabriel Valley area is called the “Eastern District” by many Chinese.

Chinese settlement in the western and eastern San Gabriel Valley can be thought of as a single ethnic suburban enclave that integrates residential areas with a great range of Chinese businesses and professional services, making immigrants feel particularly at home. This “ethnoburb” is home to Chinese from over thirty different countries or overseas areas. It is probably the single most important center in this country for international transactions and linkages between the United States and the Chinese in China, the spe-
cial area of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia. The Chinese presence in the San Gabriel Valley illustrates vividly the local expression of globalization in its cultural, social, and economic dimensions.

Within the Valley, there is some spatial patterning of Chinese according to their various countries of origin. However, the residential pattern is primarily due to their varying levels of education, income, and wealth. Because the more affluent immigrants tend to be from Hong Kong and Taiwan, people from these origins predominate in the more expensive areas like Arcadia, San Marino, and the newer neighborhoods of the eastern San Gabriel Valley. At the other extreme, Chinese from other origins predominate in the more expensive areas like Arcadia, San Marino, and the newer neighborhoods of the eastern San Gabriel Valley. The western and eastern sections of the Chinese settlement in the San Gabriel Valley are separated by industrial areas and the City of Industry.

The western and eastern sections of the Chinese settlement in the San Gabriel Valley are separated by industrial areas and poorer and predominantly Latino neighborhoods. While there is some residential mixing, there is a greater tendency for Chinese and Latinos to occupy different neighborhoods, usually defined by differences in housing costs.

During the 1990s, the San Gabriel Valley became even more closely divided by differences in housing costs. For example, Latinos tend to be from Hong Kong and Taiwan, people from these origins predominate in the more expensive areas like Arcadia, San Marino, and the newer neighborhoods of the eastern San Gabriel Valley. At the other extreme, Chinese from other origins predominate in the more expensive areas like Arcadia, San Marino, and the newer neighborhoods of the eastern San Gabriel Valley. The western and eastern sections of the Chinese settlement in the San Gabriel Valley are separated by industrial areas and the City of Industry.

The western and eastern sections of the Chinese settlement in the San Gabriel Valley are separated by industrial areas and poorer and predominantly Latino neighborhoods. While there is some residential mixing, there is a greater tendency for Chinese and Latinos to occupy different neighborhoods, usually defined by differences in housing costs.

During the 1990s, the San Gabriel Valley became even more strongly Chinese, as this group occupied the former homes and apartments of Whites and Latinos. The Hispanic change map shows this clearly in the decrease of Latinos in Monterey Park (Figure 5.1). On the Chinese change map (Figure 6.4), the eastern boundary of Los Angeles City marks a divide between areas of Chinese population increase and decrease. There has been a net out-movement of Chinese from Los Angeles, in part a response to problems in the Los Angeles Unified School District. In contrast, Chinese numbers in Alhambra, South Pasadena, San Gabriel, El Monte, Temple City, Arcadia, and San Marino continued to grow during the 1990s.

**Other Chinese settlements.** Beginning in the 1970s many more affluent Chinese moved into Cerritos and the Palos Verdes Peninsula. In the 1980s and 1990s others bought new homes in the northern San Fernando Valley. Irvine has become an important Asian enclave, with Chinese well represented. Just north of Route 73 (the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor) the tract indicated as over 14-percent Chinese represents the campus of the University of California at Irvine, where most Chinese are students in dormitories (Figure 6.5). There are also growing clusters of Chinese students near the campuses of USC, UCLA, and UC Riverside. Not shown on our maps is some dispersal into Thousand Oaks and other newer suburbs of eastern Ventura County.

Japanese

Japanese first settled in Southern California about a hundred years ago, arriving about thirty years after the Chinese. Immigrants in both groups were typically laborers at first, but because Japanese laborers were permitted to bring in “picture brides” from Japan as wives, the Japanese formed families and more stable communities than did the early Chinese. During the last thirty years, Chinese immigrants have far outnumbered those from Japan. This is because the economic success of Japan has meant that fewer Japanese have needed to migrate in order to better themselves.

The net effect of these two factors has been that, despite forced removal to internment camps during World War II, a higher per-
percentage of Japanese in Southern California are descendants of pre-World War II Southern California families than is true among the Chinese.\textsuperscript{10}

**Little Tokyo.** The leading Japanese residential and business center, Little Tokyo, emerged in the early twentieth century to the south and east of Downtown L.A. With redevelopment in the 1970s and 1980s, it was modernized. It now contains a variety of shops, restaurants, and hotels serving Los Angeles residents, particularly Japanese, and tourists and businessmen from Japan. Although it is more important as a commercial center than as a residential area, modern apartment buildings were constructed, and many older Japanese live in Little Tokyo Towers and other housing complexes.

The map of Asian population change during the 1990s (Figure 6.1) shows a gain in Little Tokyo, but the Japanese map indicates no change (Figure 6.6). What appears at first as a discrepancy is really the result of much greater Asian diversity in Little Tokyo and the fact that mixed-race Japanese could not be included in the data for the Japanese change map. In the single tract that covers Little Tokyo over one-third of its Asians were not Japanese.\textsuperscript{11}

**Weakening of some enclaves in older suburbs.** During the 1990s Japanese continued to leave the old Japanese neighborhoods in Hollywood and Boyle Heights, where Japanese families had made their homes prior to 1925. Occasionally one sees remnants in the landscape of these old Japanese settlements, the most noticeable of which are the thriving Tenriko Church and Nichiren Buddhist Temple in Boyle Heights.

In the neighborhoods near the intersection of Crenshaw and Jefferson Bvlds., about three miles west of Downtown, a similar out-movement has taken place. Japanese first settled this area in the 1940s, before and after their internment in the camps. But in the 1950s and 1960s Japanese began to leave, attracted by the newer homes being built in the Gardena area which they were then permitted to buy or rent. The death of older Japanese and the departure of others from the Crenshaw area has continued to weaken the Japanese presence there.

Many Japanese have also left the older post-World War II suburbs—Gardena and Monterey Park—in which they had been prominent settlers. Gardena had been a Japanese farming community, which dated from the first decade of the twentieth century. This made it particularly attractive to Japanese families during suburban development in the 1950s. In Monterey Park, Japanese families who moved into the new homes after World War II found much initial resistance by Whites but ultimately felt accepted because they were “good neighbors.”\textsuperscript{12} Although many subsequently sold their homes to eager Chinese immigrants, Monterey Park remains an important Japanese enclave (Figure 6.7).

**Strengthening of older suburban enclaves.** Between the Pacific Ocean and Interstate 405, the Sawtelle and Mar Vista-Culver City areas, where Japanese settlement dates from before World War II, continue as important centers. There is also a thriving Japanese shopping district along Sawtelle Blvd. in West Los Angeles. The resilience of this enclave may be related to continuing investment by ethnic businesses.

The Gardena-Torrance area, including the Palos Verdes Peninsula, remains the largest Japanese enclave in Southern California (Figure 6.7). It has long been a home for U.S.-born Japanese, most of whom are third- or fourth-generation Americans. The enclave also contains many immigrants and temporary visitors from Japan, including Japanese nationals assigned temporarily by their companies to Southern California. The net movement of Japanese into Torrance and nearby cities during the 1990s tended to sustain property values and accentuate its ethnic identity (Figure 6.6).

Japanese have been moving into many of the more upscale newer suburbs with good schools that have attracted other Asians and Whites: Diamond Bar and Hacienda Heights, Cerritos, Irvine, and other newer sections of Orange County. In Pomona, the tract that is between 3 and 15 percent Japanese is the campus of Cal Poly Pomona (California State Polytechnic University), where many Japanese students live in dorms.

**Dispersal from enclaves.** Since the return of many Japanese in the late 1940s after internment, residential shifts have tended toward dispersal from former enclaves. Although this text has focused on Japanese enclaves, by 2000 only a third of the Japanese in Southern California lived in neighborhoods that were over 3.5 percent Japanese (Figure 6.7). Without the evidence from the map, Southern Californians might not be aware of the many Los Angeles or Orange County neighborhoods where Japanese comprise only a very small proportion of the residents. Most of these dispersed Japanese are the completely Americanized U.S.-born children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of immigrants.

**Koreans**

**Koreatown.** The most important Korean enclave in Los Angeles is Koreatown, where over 40,000 Koreans live. This area is best known for its Korean businesses—ranging from clothing and shoe stores to coffee shops, restaurants, travel agencies, banks, law firms, and doctors offices. With the great popularity of golf among Korean immigrants, there are also several driving ranges, visible as large netted cages. Koreatown’s businesses serve mostly neighborhood Koreans and the larger Korean community of Southern California.

Koreatown is located in a cultural and economic transition area—between the low-rent and mostly Latino neighborhoods to the east and south and the mostly White and affluent Hancock Park neighborhood to the west (Figures 6.8 and 6.9). Koreans have always represented a minority of the neighborhood residents, who are mixed ethnically but mostly Latino. However, during the 1990s the Korean presence became stronger as many Koreans bought or leased older businesses, restaurants, office buildings, and churches, thus slowly replacing traditional White-controlled institutions.

In the 1990s, the percentage of Koreans in Koreatown also increased—from about 16 percent to over 20 percent. Ten tracts in Koreatown are now over one-third Korean although none has a Korean majority. The growth of the Korean population is probably related to an increase of elderly in nursing homes and other Korean residents in new luxury apartment buildings.\textsuperscript{13} Most of these apartment buildings are in an attractive and affluent section of Koreatown north of Wilshire Blvd. that contrasts sharply with some poorer areas in the more southerly portion of Koreatown. In addition, compared to previous decades more Koreans may have been overstaying their student or tourist visas, and Koreatown probably attracts these and other undocumented Koreans because of its many opportunities to work in ethnic businesses.

Korean settlement expanded westward in the 1990s from Koreatown into the Park La Brea area. Some economically successful Koreans moved into the more expensive Country Club Park and Hancock Park neighborhoods, which are over 8 percent Korean. The proximity of those better areas to Koreatown means...
a much shorter commute to work than would be possible from the suburbs.

The northward shift of Koreatown that occurred during earlier decades has continued, as departure from the southern portion (between Pico Blvd. and San Marino Street) of the traditional Koreatown is clearly evident (Figure 6.8). In the poorer parts of Hollywood, there was also some Korean out-movement. Koreans may have moved out of these areas partly because of the growing numbers of poor people, mostly Latinos.

**Korean businesses in South Central.** Although few Koreans live in South Central Los Angeles (Figure 6.9), many own businesses there. Since the early 1970s, Koreans have been more likely than the average immigrant to buy retail businesses or develop their own new business. Those who lacked enough capital to buy in the suburbs frequently bought grocery or liquor stores in poorer parts of Los Angeles, often in South Central. Their patrons were neighborhood residents, usually Blacks or, increasingly, Latinos.

Prior to the 1992 riot that was triggered by the acquittal of the police officers in the Rodney King beating case, cultural and economic differences between Korean merchants and Black customers made for much suspicion and resentment between the two groups. In the destruction that followed, many of the businesses that were burned were Korean-owned. For many Korean merchants the riots were devastating. Some moved temporarily away, but most eventually returned to Los Angeles. By 2000 several hundred Korean grocers were again doing business in South Central Los Angeles. The widespread availability of liquor in South Central has been a related issue. Many Koreans who owned liquor stores that were destroyed in the riots did not rebuild, a leading factor in reducing by 20 percent the number of stores in South Central selling liquor.

The riot also prompted many Koreans who remained in business to rethink their earlier aloofness regarding both their customers and the larger American society. Many Koreans resolved to play more active roles in the political process. Korean merchants appear to be showing a new respect for and friendly treatment of their Black and Latino customers. However, most Korean merchants still feel stressed by cultural tensions with their clientele.

**Suburban enclaves.** The most significant residential shifts during the 1990s involved departures from older, poorer areas and settlement in more affluent areas, often leading to growing concentrations of Koreans (Figure 6.8). In earlier decades Koreans had followed Japanese suburbanites into the once-rural historic Japanese settlement of Gardena. However, in the 1990s many Koreans, like many Japanese, moved out of their modest apartments and homes in Gardena. Koreans also left ethnically mixed areas of Hollywood and Arleta in the San Fernando Valley. On the other hand, Korean population increases occurred in many of the same areas where other Asians live—Hacienda Heights, Diamond Bar, Cerritos, Irvine, and the Torrance-Palos Verdes Peninsula area. The net effect is a clearly growing set of Asian ethnic communities in some of the more attractive suburban cities of Southern California (Figure 6.9).

Some other Asian suburban settlements are mostly Korean. This is the case in Glendale, where many Koreans have upscale homes in the hilly southeastern section of the city. The enclave continues to the north, in the valley between the Verdugo and San Gabriel Mountains, in cities like La Cañada-Flintridge. In the San Fernando Valley, the recently developed Porter Ranch area of Northridge and adjacent Granada Hills have become a residential focus for more affluent Koreans. In Orange County, Garden Grove has a major Korean settlement, and the enclave in Fullerton has expanded geographically into Buena Park and across the county line into La Mirada.
By 1990 it held the largest Vietnamese population in the United States.

Voluntary refugee agencies arranged sponsors for refugee families in many parts of the United States, but in Orange County so many churches and other organizations offered to sponsor families that Orange County immediately received a large Vietnamese population. Asians and Pacific Islanders

Vietnamese

Nearly all the first Vietnamese in Southern California arrived as refugees beginning in 1975. The initial group was evacuated from Saigon in late April, when the Americans and South Vietnamese were defeated by the communist forces based in the north.

Little Saigon. Many in this first wave of refugees were processed through the Camp Pendleton Marine base just south of Orange County. Volunteer refugee agencies arranged American sponsors for refugee families in many parts of the United States, but in Orange County so many churches and other organizations offered to sponsor families that Orange County immediately received a large Vietnamese population.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the many Vietnamese who had been scattered across the country struggled to adapt to American society and its economy. However, most Vietnamese in such places felt isolated, and many migrated to be closer to members of their extended families and other Vietnamese. Orange County was one place that attracted many migrants from other states. By 1990 it held the largest Vietnamese population in the United States.

Orange County’s older suburban cities had apartments and houses that were not too expensive, as well as jobs in nearby electronics assembly (Figure 6.11). Bolsa Avenue in the city of Westminster and adjacent sections of Garden Grove were slowly built up with new Vietnamese shopping centers. These contained numerous restaurants and noodle houses and bakeries, doctors’ and lawyers’ offices, grocery and shoe stores, and travel agents—all patronized by the Vietnamese community. Later this growing concentration became the place of publication for several Vietnamese newspapers and magazines as well as the center for Vietnamese television, video, and radio production. Vietnamese have kept the area as attractive and safe as possible because it symbolizes their community to themselves, to non-resident Vietnamese, and to other Americans.

The enclave became widely known as Little Saigon. Whereas the city of Saigon in Vietnam was renamed “Ho Chi Minh City” in 1975 in honor of that communist Vietnamese leader, in Orange County the name “Little Saigon” reminds everyone of the pre-communist period and the strongly held anti-communist views of local Vietnamese community leaders.

During the 1990s the number of Vietnamese in Orange County doubled because of the arrival of new immigrants from Vietnam and a high birthrate among earlier arrivals (Figure 6.10). The stores of Little Saigon now sell everything from handmade artwork, silk, and clothing for the fashion-conscious consumer to Asian herbs, fresh seafood, books, and Vietnamese music CDs. Some of the many restaurants show the influence of French cooking from the colonial past, and others specialize in Vietnamese regional cuisine. Residentially, the enclave has expanded into parts of several cities—Fountain Valley, Tustin, Huntington Beach, and Santa Ana. In 2000 Vietnamese comprised half the residents of some neighborhoods in the extended Little Saigon area (Figure 6.11).

The net migration of Vietnamese into Orange County from other parts of the country that characterized the 1980s stopped in the 1990s. Thus, Vietnamese in America became more settled. Orange County in 2000 was home to about 12 percent of Vietnamese in the U.S., the same as 1990.

Other enclaves. Nationally, the second most important Vietnamese concentration is in the San Jose (Silicon Valley) area, where many Vietnamese have worked in electronics and as assemblers of computer equipment. Los Angeles County has the third largest Vietnamese population, although growth here during the 1990s was not as rapid as in many other places.
Vietnamese, which explains why business signs in the Vietnamese language are common. Because their families had lived for some generations in Vietnam, many of these Chinese-Vietnamese identified themselves as Vietnamese on the census questionnaire and thus appear on this map.

In any walk through Los Angeles’ Chinatown, particularly its busy southern half, one may observe numerous small shops and professional services run by Chinese-Vietnamese. Many of these businesses are in multistory arcades built in the late 1980s and 1990s with multilingual signs in Chinese, Vietnamese, and other languages. Although some of these Vietnamese-Chinese live in Chinatown (Figure 6.11), probably most business owners and many of their workers live a few miles to the east in Monterey Park or nearby areas.

**Local changes.** The 1990s pattern of Vietnamese residential shifts in Southern California has been mixed (Figure 6.10). There has been some movement out of poorer areas, such as Santa Ana and Long Beach, and movement somewhat closer toward larger Vietnamese neighborhoods. This occurred in the West San Fernando Valley, the Gardena-Hawthorne area, and the San Gabriel Valley. At the same time, Vietnamese have increased in numbers a few miles away from their major concentrations, perhaps because of dispersal into better neighborhoods from which the familiar churches, temples, grocery stores, etc. are still easily reached by car. Thus, Vietnamese have moved to Diamond Bar and Chino Hills. Similarly, in Orange County there has been some dispersal into more expensive homes of Irvine and central and southern Orange County.

**Asian Settlement in Enclaves and Changes**

The summary distribution of Asians clearly indicates their importance in some areas of Southern California (Figure 6.12). Census tracts that are over 40 percent Asian indicate particularly significant concentrations. The two largest enclaves are in the Monterey Park area of the western San Gabriel Valley and in Walnut, Rowland Heights, and nearby places in the eastern San Gabriel Valley. The separate Asian settlements in Cerritos and Little Saigon also stand out—as do Gardena, Torrance, Irvine, Chinatown, and Koreatown to a lesser extent. Asian students in dormitories or nearby apartments are evident at campuses of the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and at Irvine (UCI), as well as at the University of Southern California (USC).

During the 1990s Asians tended to settle among other Asians (Table 6.2). In 2000 over 30 percent of Asians in Southern California lived in census tracts that were over one-third Asian. This trend toward increasing ethnic concentration is consistent with the higher level of Asian-White residential separation as measured over the same decade (Table 7.2).

In 1990 Filipinos and Japanese were the two Asian groups least likely to be living in enclaves. This should be directly related to higher levels of assimilation to mainstream American culture, indicated by their higher proportions of people who speak English only or very well. The trends of these groups diverged during the 1990s, for reasons that are unknown to us. Filipinos became the only large Asian group that decreased its residential concentration while Japanese tended to relocate toward
Japanese enclaves. The other Asian groups clearly increased in proportions living in enclaves despite the higher threshold value defining enclaves as of 2000.

Traditional understanding of enclaves. In the United States, according to both immigrant spatial assimilation theory and empirical research, residents of ethnic enclaves have had lower levels of income and cultural assimilation than members of the same group living outside such enclaves. As immigrants or ethnic groups assimilate culturally and economically, they should leave enclaves. Over the long run, enclaves for any ethnic group should diminish, particularly in today’s world where people can so easily stay in touch through telephones, email, and automobiles.

New phenomenon of higher-status enclaves. The cultural dimension of Asian enclaves seems consistent with the traditional theory of immigrant spatial assimilation. Living in an enclave probably still enhances immigrants’ cultural comfort and convenience to ethnic stores and institutions. Thus, the overall growth of Asian enclaves during the 1990s in the Los Angeles CMSA can probably be explained by the 45-percent growth in the number of people born in Asian countries. A 39-percent increase of number of speakers of Asian and Pacific languages, and the 10-percent increase in the speakers of those languages who did not speak English very well.

However, the relatively high economic status of most Asian enclaves is unexpected. Most Asian enclaves in Southern California are not the poor areas consistent with traditional theory. Our description in this chapter of Asian enclaves as middle- and upper-income areas has been confirmed for 1990 by Hum and Zonta. According to their research, Asian professionals, executives, and managers in Los Angeles County were as likely to settle in enclaves as were those in low-skilled occupations, although the two different occupational groups tended to settle in different enclaves. Higher-status enclaves attracted 42 percent of new Asian immigrants who worked in professional positions. In addition, findings by other researchers demonstrate that residents of Asian enclaves in Los Angeles County did have much higher incomes than average as of 1990.72

Whereas traditional lower-status enclaves developed under conditions of cultural and financial constraints, the higher-status enclaves seem to result from voluntary spatial concentration made possible by the more-than-adequate financial resources of many Asian immigrants. Most Asians, including the many who arrived during the 1990s, can afford a wide range of places within Southern California. Their choice of an enclave residential location must reflect their preference for this, presumably for the traditional reasons of cultural comfort and convenience to ethnic resources.

It is significant that different Asian groups have often moved into the same enclaves. These multiethnic Asian enclaves are attractive suburban areas with good schools. It is likely that this location must reflect their preference for this, presumably for the same group living outside such enclaves. As immigrants or ethnic groups assimilate culturally and economically, they should leave enclaves. Over the long run, enclaves for any ethnic group should diminish, particularly in today’s world where people can so easily stay in touch through telephones, email, and automobiles.

Table 6.2. Enclave Settlement of Asian Groups, 1990 and 2000: Los Angeles CMSA

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian Total</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census STF1; Census 2000 race tables.

Notes: Ethnic enclaves are all census tracts in which the group is represented at more than three times their percentage of the total population, as explained in chapter 1. Threshold values are the lowest percentage values that define enclave settlement for any group and year. Thresholds and percentages for the Asian total include fractionally assigned mixed-race Asians, but calculations for specific groups are based on those reporting only a single race.

5. Quinsaat (1976).
8. The composition of the Asian population in Los Angeles’ Chinatown (tract 2017) in 2000 was as follows: A total of 3,944 individuals identified only as Chinese. An additional 136 persons reported themselves as both Chinese and another Asian race, mostly Chinese-Vietnamese and Chinese-Cambodian. Another 37 were Chinese mixed with some non-Asian race, most likely White. Completely separate residents in the same tract were the following Asians who reported themselves by only a single race: 337 Vietnamese, 110 Cambodians, 19 Filipinos, 17 Japanese, 17 Asian Indians, 16 Koreans, 16 Thais, and 29 other Asians.
9. The description of this Chinese “ethnoburb” is based primarily on Li (1998). The various factors leading to the development of the large Chinese enclave in Monterey Park and the San Gabriel Valley are thoroughly explained in Li (1999). Also, Monterey Park has been much studied as a testing ground for interethnic relations, socially and politically. Two recent studies that cover that body of research are Fong (2001) and Saito (2001).
10. The extent to which old Japanese communities persist today depends on their pre-World War II size and changes since that War. Los Angeles and the agriculture-based Japanese settlements in the Gardena-Long Beach area and Orange County have had viable Japanese communities for over eighty years. Because the former Japanese settlements of Riverside and Oxnard were smaller, only a few current residents of those areas are likely to be descendants of the old pioneering families.
11. In addition to the 657 residents of Little Tokyo (tract 2062) who checked only Japanese on the census questionnaire, 188 Koreans, 77 Chinese, 26 Thais, 21 Filipinos, 10 Lao, 5 Vietnamese, 4 Sri Lankans, 3 Asian Indians, 2 Indonesians, and 1 Cambodian were counted. Also, 35 others marked two Asian race categories, and another 57 identified themselves racially as both Asian and non-Asian.
13. Edward J. W. Park of Loyola Marymount University suggested these explanations of the growth of the Korean population in Koreatown.
14. Charles Kim, Executive Director of the Korean American Coalition, interviewed March 2002.
16. Robinson-Jacobs (2002). According to Charles Kim, the strong opposition of Black community leaders to the proliferation of liquor stores in South Central expressed through the requirement to obtain a new conditional-use permit was the main factor in the decision by many Koreans not to return to that business in South Central.
17. Park (2001).
25. U.S. Census Bureau (1996b), Tables 27, 28; U.S. Census Bureau (2002c), Table D.P.2. The much greater preference for living in enclaves on the part of foreign-born Asians compared to U.S.-born Asians in Los Angeles County was demonstrated in survey results from the early 1990s (Charles 2001), 265.
27. Because Census 2000 data on income and occupation are not yet available, we use calculations by Logan, Alba, and Zhang (2002) for 1990 to show that residents of most Asian enclaves in Los Angeles County had income levels substantially above average. The median income of all households in Los Angeles County in 1990 was $34,965 (U.S. Census Bureau 1999b). Listed below for each group are the median incomes of households in enclaves within Los Angeles County but outside Los Angeles City, as reported by Logan, Alba, and Zhang (2002), 314-315. Chinese - $43,601; Filipino - $45,628; Japanese - $46,626; Koreans - $49,432; Vietnamese - $57,885. Thus, only Vietnamese households had a median income close to the county average.