A great range of ethnic groups, most with high proportions of recent immigrants, is included in the category of Asians and Pacific Islanders. The first four groups covered—Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Koreans—were the earliest Asians to settle in Southern California, but by the 1950s representatives of nearly all Asian and Pacific Islander groups had arrived.

**Chinese**

The Chinese were the first in the sequence of Asian groups that entered Southern California. Most of the earliest Chinese arrivals were men who hoped to find gold and to work hard as laborers for a few years in order to return home rich. U.S. immigration restrictions in the 1880s stopped the immigration of Chinese laborers and of the wives of laborers already here, leading to a decline of Southern California’s Chinese population in the early 1900s—just as the numbers of Japanese immigrants were growing. By 1990, however, renewed immigration meant that the Chinese had again become the largest Asian group in the region.

**Increasing diversity among the Chinese.** Immigrants who have arrived in the United States since World War II represent a varied group in terms of culture, language, and country of birth. In the nineteenth century the Chinese who came to the United States had roots in southeastern China—in villages near the provincial capital of Guangzhou. Because that city was known to Americans as Canton, the early immigrants have been described as “Cantonese” in cultural heritage. In fact, until 1943, when the United States again began to allow some Chinese to enter the country, nearly all Chinese immigrants and their descendants had been of Cantonese origin.

As the numbers of Chinese students, refugees, and immigrants grew slowly in the 1950s and rapidly after 1965, other regions and languages became well represented in Southern California. Most from North China speak what Westerners call Mandarin, the common language of that region but one with many dialect variations. Immigrants from Taiwan speak Taiwanese or Mandarin, but both of those languages are very different from Cantonese, which is still the language of Hong Kong. These differences in regional origin and language have meant that the Chinese in Southern California are divided into multiple social networks.

In addition, thousands of Chinese immigrants to Southern California are members of families that had been living for at least two generations in other countries, usually in Southeast Asia. That experience clearly modified the original Chinese culture. Although the Chinese in Vietnam, for example, constituted a separate, business-oriented ethnic group that did not participate in Vietnamese public institutions, many Chinese who lived in Vietnam identify strongly with that country and speak its language. At the same time, most Chinese in Southeast Asia also speak the language of their family’s ultimate origin in China, such as the chao-zhou dialect of eastern Guangzhou, which is spoken by most Chinese in Vietnam.

In other words, what may appear on the surface to be a single Chinese ethnic group is in many ways a set of subgroups. The range of subgroups is indicated in Table 5.1 by the countries of birth of Southern Californians who reported their race as Chinese.
Table 5.1 Leading Countries of Birth of Chinese Immigrants to Southern California, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth Place</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
<td>77,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>66,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>33,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong*</td>
<td>22,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>4,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>3,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>3,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>2,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>2,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>1,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Many people born in Hong Kong have parents who were refugees from the People’s Republic of China.

Although changes in the origins of Chinese immigrants have been dramatic over the more than 125 years of Chinese residence here, no less important have been changes in their distribution within Southern California.

Historic Chinatowns. In the 1860s Chinese began to settle east of the old city plaza in Los Angeles, in a place which would soon become the first of a sequence of Chinatowns in the city. That tiny enclave was focused on Calle de los Negros (Negro Alley), a narrow street just one block long which became the site of the 1871 massacre of nineteen Chinese. This was almost the only place in the city where Chinese were permitted to live unless they were servants in the homes of white families. The population grew as many Chinese men who had been scattered around Southern California in gangs of farm and construction laborers left that work and headed for a less itinerant life in Los Angeles. By 1890 a bustling Chinese quarter had grown up southeast of the plaza and just east of Alameda Street.3

Many of these early Chinese became farmers, supplying fresh vegetables to city residents. They farmed on land a mile or two to the south, irrigating their crops with water from the nearby Los Angeles River. This early entrepreneurial focus on the production and sale of fresh vegetables led to additional clusters of Chinese close to their farm areas.

In 1910 Chinatown was the clear focus of the Chinese population in Los Angeles, but some Chinese produce sellers still lived near their old vegetable fields, and a few Chinese servants were found in other parts of the city. Although Chinatown remained a residential and business center through the 1920s, Chinese families and many of the elderly bachelors began moving to other sections of the city. In 1933 the demolition of this Old Chinatown began. The space was ultimately used for the new railroad terminal, Union Station, which prompted the relocation of Chinatown in 1938.

Chinatown was resituated about half a mile to the north, between Hill and Broadway. Although this New Chinatown was designed particularly to attract tourists, the poverty of most Chinese and the restrictions on where they could live meant that Chinatown remained the heart of the “old” Los Angeles Chinese community as of 1940.4 At that time the only other Chinese residential concentration was near produce markets and industry—in the same area where Chinese had farmed forty years earlier, roughly between San Pedro Street and Central Avenue and from 7th Street south to East Adams. Residents of both areas were Cantonese in speech and customs (Fig. 3.1).

Suburbanization after World War II led many residents to move out of Chinatown and other central locations and into the older suburbs, which whites were vacating. These areas, variously pioneered by Japanese and blacks in earlier decades, became Los Angeles’ most important areas of multiracial housing during the 1960s. Thus, by 1970 many long-term resident Chinese families had moved into the predominantly black West Adams district and into predominantly Japanese Crenshaw.5 Others pushed to the east, beyond Lincoln Heights and the Mexican Eastside, into
Monterey Park and Alhambra, establishing a foundation for the large-scale Chinese immigration and settlement that would begin during the 1970s.

**Contemporary Chinatown.** Beginning in the 1960s Chinatown became much more diverse in terms of the backgrounds of its Chinese residents and business people. Immigrants whose numbers grew steadily between the 1950s and 1990 came from many different parts of China, as well as from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia. Their varied languages, identities, and cultural traditions meant that Chinatown was no longer anything like a cohesive community, and tensions between anti-Communist Taiwanese nationalists and immigrants from the Communist People’s Republic of China have been strong, though usually hidden.

Chinatown changed particularly during the 1980s, as more and more Chinese from Southeast Asia opened up businesses. Their bustling malls and shops echo some of the mood of Saigon and contrast with the older, slower-paced, and less prosperous northern part of Chinatown. Chinese-Vietnamese own many of the new food stores, clothing shops, restaurants, and malls in Chinatown. By 1996 about 60 percent of Chinatown’s businesses were owned by Chinese from Vietnam, and their successes have stood in sharp contrast to the section north of College Street, where the old businesses started by the Cantonese a half-century ago were not doing well.6

Despite the economic rejuvenation of the southern part of Chinatown, those Chinese developers and merchants who are from Vietnam and Cambodia have had great difficulty in being accepted into the traditional business elite of Chinatown. The older Taiwanese and Cantonese leaders consider the Southeast Asian Chinese very different culturally, too clannish, too aggressive, and too willing to take risks in business. In addition, they appeared to have settled in Chinatown initially to take advantage of the social services there.

Residents of modern Chinatown are poorer, less educated, less acculturated, and more recently arrived than the Chinese who live elsewhere in Southern California (Table 5.2). This illustrates the tendency for less-acculturated immigrants to live among familiar people and institutions in ethnic enclaves.

With such a large immigration of Chinese during the 1980s, apartments in Chinatown have been in short supply. Some immigrants have spilled over into surrounding areas, such as the slopes of Alpine Hill or farther on into Echo Park, and others have located east of the Los Angeles River, in Lincoln Heights. Some of Chinatown’s elderly residents rent apartments in the government-subsidized Cathay Manor, but when this sixteen-story building first opened in the mid-1980s it could house only about a tenth of the people who applied for residence.7 On the first floor of Cathay Manor is the Chinatown Service Center, an agency which treats health, language, housing, employment, and psychological problems faced by immigrants.

The census tract within which Chinatown is located is 72 percent Chinese—the most intensely Chinese tract in Southern California (Fig. 5.1). However, if ethnic Chinese from Vietnam and Cambodia who reported their race as Vietnamese and Cambodian were included, the percentage of Chinese in Chinatown would rise to 80 percent.

Chinatown continues to be an important shopping focus for Chinese in the greater Los Angeles area as well as for some tourists. For most non-Chinese it remains the best-known and

### Table 5.2 Characteristics of Chinatown Residents and All Chinese Immigrants, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Chinatown</th>
<th>Southern California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent Arriving in the United States, 1987-1990</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Speaking English Only or Very Well</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent High School Graduates</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Naturalized Citizens</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Notes*: Only the foreign-born ages 25-64 are included. Chinatown percentages are those for the PUMA in which Chinatown is located.
symbolic focus of Chinese life in the region. Its lively and bustling markets, offices, restaurants, and walkways make it a unique place in Southern California—and an interesting one to visit. However, Chinatown’s poverty and lower level of acculturation make it unrepresentative of the Chinese in Southern California. Moreover, the approximately 9,000 Chinese (including those from Vietnam and Cambodia) who live in the three census tracts of greater Chinatown constitute less than 3 percent of the Chinese population of Southern California.

The San Gabriel Valley. This large valley to the east of Chinatown became the most popular home for immigrants who could afford better housing than Chinatown. So many immigrants have settled in the valley that it reflects contemporary Chinese life in Southern California much better than does Chinatown, now an outdated symbol.

The origin of the Chinese push into the San Gabriel Valley can be traced to a single Chinese immigrant, Frederick Hsieh, who arrived as a student in 1963. Hsieh decided in the 1970s to develop America’s first suburban Chinatown, and for this he chose Monterey Park, a suburban city a few miles east of Los Angeles. Advertising Monterey Park as the “Chinese Beverly Hills” in Hong Kong and Taiwan newspapers, he attracted buyers of land, homes, and businesses. Many of these families feared political changes in Hong Kong and Taiwan and wanted a more secure investment.

For this reason Chinese immigration in the 1970s and 1980s included a higher proportion of wealthy people than is usually found among immigrants. A great many Chinese bought homes in and around Monterey Park, and many soon opened businesses in the area, frequently catering to the needs of the growing Chinese population. Other businesses that were located outside Chinese or Asian concentrations tended to serve the general population.

The white population, which had previously dominated Monterey Park culturally and politically, found it difficult to accept the immigrants. Tensions between older residents and Chinese newcomers were partly cultural and partly a function of class differences. Established residents were dismayed and frustrated by the rapid building of entire shopping centers and office complexes by rich Taiwanese. Many of the Chinese were wealthier than the whites and seemed to show little interest in acculturating to white America. Resentment was expressed in the anti-immigrant effort to make English an official language in California and in a slow-growth movement.

The San Gabriel Valley has become the largest, most intensively Chinese settlement within Southern California (Fig. 5.1). By 1990 Monterey Park had experienced such a large in-movement of Chinese and departure of whites and others that it was 36 percent Chinese and was often referred to as Little Taipei. Neighboring Alhambra was 26 percent Chinese. Significant also is the higher proportion of Taiwanese in this area compared with other sections; to some extent a Taiwanese society has been transplanted here. Mandarin has become the common Chinese language in the valley, and immigrants are easily able to live and work comfortably in this area without speaking or understanding English.

Some of the wealthiest Chinese bought homes in San Marino, a small city that had long been a prestigious symbol of gracious living for the white elite. White residents were shocked to find that immigrants were able to afford the lovely homes and estates of this city, but by 1990 more than a quarter of San Marino’s population was Chinese.

Other affluent Chinese moved into newer suburban developments in the eastern San Gabriel Valley, in places like Rowland Heights and the cities of Walnut and Diamond Bar. In response to the shopping and service needs of Chinese in these areas, a great many Chinese businesses have located together along a mile-long stretch of Colima Road in Rowland Heights and Industry (parallel to the 60 Freeway). In nearby Hacienda Heights the Taiwanese presence has been accentuated by the palatial Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple and monastery, which has attracted a higher proportion of Chinese to that portion of the valley. However, the Hsi Lai Temple was built not only to serve Chinese people in the area but to enhance understanding between an Eastern culture and that of the West. Some whites have become members of the temple.

All these residents make the eastern San Gabriel Valley the largest center of affluent Chinese in Southern California. Yet they are not isolated from a Chinese-oriented life, for they can find
whatever goods and services they need right in the valley. They feel no need to visit Chinatown.

**Other areas.** Apart from the San Gabriel Valley settlements, the city of Cerritos to the south has been very attractive to many Chinese and other Asians, who value this new city especially because of the excellent reputation of its schools. Some Chinese have moved to the wealthy community of Rancho Palos Verdes in the hills near the coast, and others in Irvine are employed in companies or are students or teachers at the University of California at Irvine campus.

In general, Chinese who could afford to do so have moved into expensive suburban homes, not in specifically Asian neighborhoods but in areas where whites have been the leading group. This is evident in West Hills and in the Granada Hills area of the San Fernando Valley. The many Christians among Chinese immigrants have frequently organized and built churches, thus providing a Chinese institutional center within these mostly white suburbs. Few Chinese have located in the areas beyond those shown in Figure 5.1 because few enjoy living so far from their work and their ethnic communities.

**Chinese-Vietnamese.** People of Chinese family heritage who had been living in Vietnam are a somewhat distinct group. They are usually called “Chinese-Vietnamese” to distinguish them from the larger group of “ethnic Vietnamese.” Although they speak Vietnamese, they have separate social networks from most of the ethnic Vietnamese and partially share an identity with Chinese from other countries. To some extent these various linkages are reflected in differences in residential locations (Table 5.3). The lower percentage of Chinese-Vietnamese in Orange County contrasts with the higher percentages in Chinatown and the Monterey Park area, and Cerritos is exceptional in having both Chinese and ethnic Vietnamese but very few Chinese-Vietnamese.

**Japanese**

Japanese are exceptional among the Asian groups in that immigrants are less important proportionately than is the long-established community of Japanese Americans. During the past three decades students and businessmen have visited, but the numbers of new immigrants coming to Southern California have been small because income and working conditions in the United States have not been sufficiently better than those in Japan to make migration attractive. For this reason Japanese families who have been Americans for three or more generations also have a larger role than do recent immigrants in defining the distribution of Japanese in Southern California.

**Early laborers and families.** When Chinese laborers were excluded in the 1880s, the Japanese became the major labor source for Hawaii and the western states. In contrast to the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.3 Chinese-Vietnamese in Selected Areas, 1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerritos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardena-Hawthorne-Lawndale area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West San Fernando Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinatown area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterey Park-Alhambra-Rosemead area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Note:* The data are two separate but only partial indicators of the Chinese-Vietnamese population in Southern California. The total of this group can be estimated from the total of Chinese born in Vietnam (33,589, shown in Table 5.1) plus Vietnamese reporting Chinese ancestry (11,597). However, this total of 45,186 does not include the U.S. born children of the former group. It appears that at least three-quarters of Chinese-Vietnamese reported their race as Chinese on the census questionnaire. This is consistent with findings at the national level (Rumbaut 1995, 245).
Chinese, however, potential emigrants were screened by the Japanese government, and only men who were healthy, literate, and ambitious were allowed to leave.¹¹

From 1890 to about 1900 most Japanese men who came to Southern California worked on farms, citrus ranches, and railroads—doing the physical labor that the Chinese had done in previous decades. The rapidly expanding city of Los Angeles needed construction workers, and many Japanese responded. For instance, the Pacific Electric Railway hired Japanese workers to break a strike of Mexican workers in 1903. Also, more than 2,000 Japanese moved to Los Angeles after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire and because of the increasingly vicious anti-Japanese mood there during those years.¹² Furthermore, business opportunities abounded in Los Angeles, and some Japanese immigrants opened retail shops or restaurants. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, many thousands immigrated directly from Japan or moved from Hawaii or San Francisco.

Through an informal arrangement in 1907 between the United States and Japanese governments, known as the Gentlemen’s Agreement, Japan agreed to prohibit the emigration of laborers, while the United States agreed to allow the immigration of merchants, farmers, and the wives and children of Japanese men already here. This led to a large flow of “picture brides”—women chosen on the basis of their photographs to be wives of Japanese men already in this country. At the same time, many of the older single men returned to Japan.

As a result, families were established at an early period, and by 1920 a second generation was appearing. Although the U.S. Congress stopped all immigration from Japan in 1924, the foundation for a Japanese American community had been laid. By 1930 the 35,000 Japanese in Los Angeles County constituted 36 percent of the Japanese in the entire state.

**Internment.** In early 1942, soon after the Japanese invaded Pearl Harbor, Japanese residents of Southern California and most other parts of the West were forced by the U.S. government to leave their homes. Because they were considered a potential threat in the war against Japan, nearly all the Japanese were required to live in various desert camps for about three years, an experience usually called internment. Two-thirds of those arbitrarily sent to the camps were the U.S.-citizen sons and daughters of immigrants, rather than Japanese nationals.

After 1945 most Japanese returned to Southern California to face huge economic losses. They had not been able to earn income during internment, and many families’ property had been either sold in a panic before evacuation or damaged or stolen during internment. Because the internment experience was so demoralizing and such an important watershed in the history of Japanese in Southern California, our interpretation of specific settlements covers first the period before 1942 and then the post-1945 years.

**Little Tokyo.** Within the city of Los Angeles, the most important early Japanese enclave was centered around 1st Street between Alameda and Los Angeles Streets—an area which, by 1905, Americans were already calling “Little Tokyo.” Employment agencies, several boarding houses for Japanese laborers, and train stations were nearby, as were the companies that signed up crews of Japanese to clean people’s homes.

Although the first Japanese businesses were not located in Little Tokyo, by 1910 they were clustering more on 1st Street because of its lower rents and its central location for serving the growing concentration of Japanese workers and families. And as more Japanese settled in Little Tokyo, earlier residents tended to move out, and Japanese frequently bought up already established retail shops. By 1915 Japanese owned twelve restaurants, six general stores, nine barber shops, fourteen hotels, and more than fifty other businesses on 1st Street between Central Avenue and Los Angeles Street.¹³ These served both neighborhood Japanese and others who would come into Little Tokyo to shop.

The Japanese in Little Tokyo constituted only about a third of the neighborhood residents, but the area continued to be an important residential and business center for Japanese in Los Angeles until 1942 (Fig. 3.1).¹⁴

**Other Los Angeles enclaves.** Because of housing discrimination on the part of whites, Japanese residential enclaves
appeared only in certain less attractive residential neighborhoods. These were typically near commercial or industrial areas or on low land that was poorly drained. Often they were near black settlements.

Japanese with higher incomes were not allowed to buy or rent in better areas. Thus, Japanese tended to cluster in those neighborhoods where a few earlier arrivals had become somewhat accepted. In part, the choice of enclave was also a function of social networks based on prefecture of origin in Japan. Japanese usually bought or rented from whites who were departing for newer suburbs.

Between 1906 and 1910 Japanese began to move into three neighborhoods. These came to be called the Virgil Avenue (also called Madison Avenue) neighborhood; 10th Street (later, Olympic Boulevard), which was called “Uptown” by the Japanese; and the West Jefferson Street area (Fig. 3.1), identified as “Southwest” by some Japanese. Over the next two decades these developed into Japanese and multiracial enclaves. Most had a Japanese grocery store and a Japanese church and school. Some Japanese residents were clerks, doctors, or restaurant owners; at least half the men were day laborers, nurserymen, or landscape gardeners who worked on the estates of white families in Hollywood or the Wilshire area.

Tensions with the surrounding white population occasionally flared. In 1919 white residents in the 10th Street area attempted with some success to replace all Japanese tenants with whites by raising rents excessively. Although some Japanese moved out of the 10th Street area and some of those who remained hired guards for protection, the enclave persisted. Still farther south was the West Jefferson area. Few whites remained there in the 1920s, when most Japanese were moving in, but its moderately priced and attractive homes made it the premier black settlement in Los Angeles, and black homeowners were willing to rent to Japanese.

Beginning in the late 1920s some Japanese families with higher incomes began to extend the West Jefferson enclave by moving a few blocks to the west. Houses became available when whites anticipated black and Japanese encroachment and chose to leave the area. This spatial expansion of Japanese settlement in the direction of newer residential construction was led by those Japanese with more money. As both Japanese and blacks moved into white areas, home prices generally dropped. By 1940 the Japanese enclave extended as far west as Van Ness Avenue.

Another larger Japanese enclave was in West Los Angeles near Sawtelle Boulevard, between the Veterans Hospital and Pico Boulevard. Almost all of the men were gardeners who tended the grounds of wealthy families in nearby Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, and Beverly Hills. Women found other work, for landscape gardening was a man’s job. The Sawtelle neighborhood had both boarding houses for single men and bungalows and apartments for families, as well as the usual church and grocery stores.

To the east of Little Tokyo and the Los Angeles River, a Japanese enclave also developed in Boyle Heights. Beginning with the building of a Japanese Buddhist temple in 1904, its early focus was around 2d and Savannah Streets. The temple and the continued availability of land for farms and nurseries just east of the city enticed more Japanese. With numerous new bungalows, Japanese churches, large and well-kept homes, Boyle Heights attracted many former residents of Little Tokyo. It was probably the most attractive and largest of the areas in Los Angeles where Japanese lived during the 1920s, and in 1940 it was home to more than 3,000 Japanese (Fig. 3.1).

Terminal Island. An important concentration of Japanese fishermen existed during these pre-1942 years. Although Italian and Croatian immigrants were also important in establishing the local fishing industry, these Japanese lived and worked by themselves. After the harbor for the city of Los Angeles was improved in the early twentieth century, a Japanese fishing village was developed at Fish Harbor on the west end of Terminal Island, across the main harbor channel from San Pedro. From the early 1920s until 1942 it was home to more than 2,000 people. Most of the mackerel, tuna, and other fish were canned right in the village. Those Japanese who were not fishing or operating restaurants or stores worked in the canneries, and all lived in houses or boarding houses owned by the canneries. The U.S. government took over that part of the island in February 1942 and soon demolished the housing.
When former Japanese residents returned in 1945 to find the village destroyed, they scattered to San Pedro, Long Beach, and elsewhere.\footnote{Perhaps because nearly all the families had originated from the same prefecture in Japan and because growing up on Terminal Island had been such an indelible experience, the aging former residents and their children still gather at annual picnics and occasionally revisit the island.}

**Irrigation farming.** In the 1890s Japanese immigrants were typically viewed as replacements for earlier Chinese workers on citrus ranches and vegetable farms. However, soon after 1910 Mexicans were taking their places, and many Japanese in Southern California were operating their own farms. Japanese farmers took advantage of the agricultural demand during World War I and raised sugar beets, lettuce, cabbage, celery, various vegetables, and strawberries. Later, many Japanese came to specialize in flowers and nursery stock.

Independent farming of specialty crops not raised by white farmers was a good occupation for Japanese for several reasons. Many had come from farm families in Japan, no direct competition with whites was involved, and English-language skills were not necessary. However, the Alien Land Laws, which began in 1913 and remained in effect until 1948, made it illegal for immigrant Japanese to own or rent land in California. The existence of those laws persuaded some Japanese to leave farming and open nurseries on rented urban land. Although agricultural ownership was possible through U.S.-born children, 90 percent of 1,500 Japanese farmers in Los Angeles County in 1940 were tenants, paying cash rent to use small plots for their horticulture.\footnote{Independent farming of specialty crops not raised by white farmers was a good occupation for Japanese for several reasons. Many had come from farm families in Japan, no direct competition with whites was involved, and English-language skills were not necessary. However, the Alien Land Laws, which began in 1913 and remained in effect until 1948, made it illegal for immigrant Japanese to own or rent land in California. The existence of those laws persuaded some Japanese to leave farming and open nurseries on rented urban land. Although agricultural ownership was possible through U.S.-born children, 90 percent of 1,500 Japanese farmers in Los Angeles County in 1940 were tenants, paying cash rent to use small plots for their horticulture.}

Japanese farms were distributed throughout Southern California, but most were in Los Angeles County to the south and southeast of Los Angeles City—from El Segundo and the Palos Verdes Peninsula east to Downey and El Monte. In addition, Japanese constituted three-quarters of the farmers in the Venice and Mar Vista areas, where they specialized in celery, flowers, and nursery products.

**Early Gardena.** The first independent farming by Japanese in the broad zone south of Los Angeles City was in Moneta, now a part of the city of Gardena. What became the highly successful and large Japanese farm community of Gardena had its beginnings in 1902, when a Japanese husband and wife arrived from Hawaii and bought some land already planted in strawberries.\footnote{What became the highly successful and large Japanese farm community of Gardena had its beginnings in 1902, when a Japanese husband and wife arrived from Hawaii and bought some land already planted in strawberries.}

The crop’s success persuaded the husband to lease and buy more acres. By 1906 other Japanese couples had settled and bought land, usually with money saved from work in Hawaii or northern California. Farming was done by family units, and a Japanese cooperative growers’ association was formed the next year. Strawberries were profitable because they could be easily shipped to the large city market in Los Angeles via the rail line from Redondo Beach, and after 1909 refrigerated boxcars made possible sales in San Francisco, Chicago, and elsewhere.

After about 1913 Japanese farmers began to grow more vegetables because of a strawberry-plant disease and higher prices for vegetables during World War I. In addition, worry over potential loss of leased or owned land under the new Alien Land Laws made it preferable for farmers to grow crops, such as vegetables, which required a commitment to only a single year of farming on any one plot. With an intensive farming focus already developed in Moneta, new arrivals often found better opportunities elsewhere, and Japanese farming became dispersed over much of southern Los Angeles County.

The foundations of Japanese settlement in the Gardena and South Bay areas were thus laid with early landownership by farm families and the development of organizations for mutual support and marketing. Social networks based on Japanese region of origin were also important. In about 1930, more than 30 percent of Gardena residents had roots in the Hiroshima area. By that time the Japanese community in the Gardena area had its own stores, professionals, publications, cultural organizations, and recreational activities, making it virtually independent of the local white communities.

**Orange County farms.** Some early Japanese followed railroad or farmwork or letters from friends and headed to counties around Los Angeles, where many families later opened grocery stores or other businesses in small hamlets. Most of them, however, became farmers. In 1930 Orange County contained 1,600
Japanese, while Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties each had nearly 600 Japanese residents.

Several Japanese settlements, all connected with farming, grew up in Orange County. The Seal Beach-Bixby Japanese farm community was spread across the county line but sold its produce in Long Beach. Anaheim was the most important settlement, with a school, church, and several stores to serve the dispersed Japanese community. Irvine Ranch had several villages for its Japanese farmworkers, and other small communities were located in the modern cities of Garden Grove, Orange, Fountain Valley, and Huntington Beach.

Return to Southern California in 1945. After three years of internment, many—but not all—Japanese chose to return to Southern California. They were joined by others who had formerly lived in the Central Valley or elsewhere but had heard about Los Angeles and specific Japanese enclaves during discussions in the camps.

In 1945 and 1946, however, the continued wartime housing shortage and discrimination made reestablishment more difficult. Japanese even had trouble gaining access to houses and shops which they owned, and for a time many lived in trailer camps, abandoned army barracks, or hostels while housing and other claims of losses were sorted out. By the end of 1947, almost 90 percent of Japanese in Los Angeles County had some permanent housing.

In rural areas, the loss of leased Japanese farmland during the war and the rapid subdivision of former farm areas for new homes resulted in a major geographical shift of Japanese from rural Southern California to urban areas. After a few years those newcomers and many old-time residents who could afford to do so moved into or toward newer suburbs. Regional economic expansion and a decline in discrimination made it possible for them to shift out of narrow occupational niches and later to improve their status substantially.

Early enclaves re-created. The old Japanese enclaves of 1940 and 1950 have continued to exist (Fig. 3.2). This remains true despite the decline of Japanese numbers due to reduced immigration and to suburbanization. The various neighborhoods have also seen in-movement by blacks, Mexicans, Central Americans, and Koreans. In 1990 the old enclaves of Boyle Heights, Virgil Avenue, 10th Street, and Sawtelle are still visible (Fig. 5.2), and some have expanded in area.

Although the southern edge of the Virgil Avenue neighborhood was destroyed in the 1950s to make room for the 101 Freeway, more than 250 Japanese remained in that enclave as of 1990. Additional Japanese now live in the enclave’s extension to the northeast into Echo Park and Silver Lake. Many residents are the elderly sons and daughters of the early immigrants, but the area is also home to younger families and newcomers from Japan. Two miles to the south, Japanese have been equally persistent in the Olympic Boulevard enclave, despite the settlement of many hundreds of Koreans and Latinos during the intervening decades. Japanese settlement has also expanded somewhat to the west, into the more expensive homes of Country Club Park.

In the case of West Jefferson, a shift to newer housing in contiguous areas to the west, past Crenshaw Boulevard, occurred in the late 1940s and 1950s. The new area was by 1950 the largest and most important in-town Japanese enclave, usually called Crenshaw (Fig. 3.2). Japanese residents shopped at the Japanese-dominated Crenshaw Square, at the intersection of Crenshaw and Jefferson Boulevards. Although in the 1970s and 1980s many Japanese moved out of Crenshaw, in 1990 more than 2,200 were still living there.

The Japanese also returned to Venice, Culver City, and Mar Vista, where farms and nurseries were still common in the mid-1950s. Although farmland was being replaced by housing tracts, many families probably remained in the area as some men became involved in retail sales of nursery goods to new suburban residents.

A bit to the north, in Sawtelle, three-quarters of employed Japanese men in 1946 were landscape or maintenance gardeners on the estates of the wealthy whites. Two-thirds of them had lived in Sawtelle before the war. Work in contract gardening continued to attract young men as apprentices. In the early 1950s the supply of apprentice gardeners was augmented by a special immigration of Japanese refugees from natural disasters. These men,
mostly from two towns in Kagoshima, settled into prewar enclaves, particularly Sawtelle. Some men brought families. Single men stayed at the boarding houses, which functioned into the 1960s as employment centers and banks for the new immigrant gardeners.

More recently, the Sawtelle enclave has been invigorated with new stores and offices. It and the Mar Vista enclave have coalesced into a major Japanese population center (Fig. 5.2).

**New suburban developments.** During the decade after World War II much new housing became available on the fringes of already built-up areas, and many people who could afford the move did so. Also, the anti-Japanese hostility of the prewar period, at least in urban areas, came to be replaced by greater acceptance, and white developers and homeowners were much more willing to sell or rent to Japanese and other minority families than they had been before the war. For the Japanese, recently constructed subdivisions were especially good locations for the nursery business.

Suburbanization opened up lower-cost housing in older areas that had not permitted Japanese residents before the war. For example, in the 1950s many Japanese left Boyle Heights for new homes in Monterey Park, the adjacent part of East Los Angeles, and Montebello—just north and east of the Mexican Eastside. The deconcentration has continued, with Japanese settling in newer homes in Monterey Hills and South Pasadena or much farther east—in Industry and Hacienda Heights.

The modest new homes in the eastern San Fernando Valley also attracted many Japanese, particularly new families being formed by the U.S.-born who had been teenagers or young adults in the internment camps. Some initial settlement was on segregated blocks, but such segregation declined sharply in the 1950s. The low percentage of Japanese in Sun Valley, North Hollywood, and Pacoima as of 1990 is deceptive: Japanese community centers came to be located in these places, and a language school, a Buddhist temple, and annual festivals continue to attract people (Fig. 5.2).

**Gardena and Torrance.** The most important Japanese suburbanization has occurred in the greater Gardena area. As rural land disappeared, many families who had farmed before the war became suburban dwellers. They were joined by families who moved south from Crenshaw, Olympic Boulevard, and the other enclaves in Los Angeles to the tract homes that were being built. During the 1950s Gardena’s Japanese population grew to five times its 1950 total. Nearby cities—primarily Torrance, Redondo Beach, and the Harbor Gateway section of Los Angeles—have absorbed additional growth (Fig. 5.2).

The size of the Japanese American community in and near Gardena makes possible an almost completely Japanese-oriented life for those who wish it. This means attending a Japanese school or judo club; being active in a Japanese church, scout troop, and the Japanese Cultural Institute; celebrating traditional holidays; joining all-Japanese clubs and volleyball and baseball teams; socializing completely with Japanese Americans; and finding a Japanese American spouse. Some Japanese American teenagers from outside Gardena perceive the “Gardena girls” as somewhat distinctive in hair, dress, makeup, and ability to speak Japanese. People raised in the “Japanese ghetto” of Gardena may feel uncomfortable with whites. In contrast, young people who grew up in mostly white neighborhoods elsewhere in Southern California are not apt to think of themselves as Japanese or as different from their white friends.

An important but separate component of the large Japanese population in the Gardena-Torrance area has been Japanese nationals (citizens of Japan) who are living temporarily in the United States. There are musicians, artists, journalists, and entrepreneurs. The most prominent of the Japanese nationals are executive managers of companies like Toyota and Honda. Typically the men are assigned to Southern California for a few years but do not plan to settle permanently.

Most such families live in the more expensive homes of Torrance, Palos Verdes Estates, Rancho Palos Verdes, and various Orange County cities. They enjoy the low, ranch-style houses and ocean views, and the area is easily accessible to the offices of Japanese corporations in Orange County and southern Los Angeles County. The more affluent play golf and tennis, and several dozen of them are members of the Rolling Hills Country Club. They support local Japanese choral societies and shop in the Yaohan supermarket in Torrance.
These Japanese visitors have only superficial contact with local Japanese American families, most of whom are third- or fourth-generation Americans. Because the cultures of each are so different, it is not surprising that they constitute two separate societies. As the children of the visiting managers become partially Americanized, however, their parents often seek to reinforce their Japanese identity by means of private Japanese schooling on weekends. Japanese Americans sometimes consider the newcomers rude, spoiled, or ostentatious, but the wealthy sojourners from Japan have helped fund Japanese American businesses in Gardena, as well as the Pacific Square shopping center.

**Modern Little Tokyo.** After Japanese residents were ordered to depart in 1942, their apartments and shops in Little Tokyo were taken over by blacks, who had also been suffering a shortage of housing. Japanese returned from the camps and reestablished their ownership of property, but for more than twenty years Little Tokyo remained poor, like other old sections near downtowns in American cities. However, beginning about 1970, urban renewal revitalized and reshaped Little Tokyo into a modern commercial complex, designed both to accommodate visiting Japanese businessmen and tourists and to symbolize the culture and prosperity of Japan and Japanese Americans. The area thrived especially during the 1980s, prior to the economic recession that began in 1990.

Little Tokyo’s redevelopment has been supported by individual Japanese Americans, the U.S. government, Los Angeles city government, and Japanese corporations. Over the past twenty-five years the various new hotels and cultural centers, restaurants and banks, walkways and shopping malls, gardens, sculptures, and Buddhist temples have eliminated the look of poverty that characterized old Little Tokyo. At the east end of the row of historic buildings on 1st Street is the Japanese American National Museum, expressly dedicated to preserving and sharing the Japanese American experience.

With the widespread availability of suburban housing after World War II, Little Tokyo was never again a leading residential center for Los Angeles’ Japanese. In 1990 it was home to fewer than 700 Japanese, nearly all of whom lived in one of three attractive apartment complexes. Most were foreign born, and many were elderly and had low incomes. For these residents, the Japanese food stores, the accentuation of Japanese culture in renovated Little Tokyo, and the companionship of other immigrants combine to make decent homes for many whose children and grandchildren live in the suburbs.

**The geographical stability of Japanese urban enclaves.** Most enclaves of pre-1942 settlement remain evident in the 1990 distribution, and most old Japanese neighborhoods have persisted in the same place or have shifted only slightly, despite incomes that permitted mobility. In 1933 a similar observation was made: “They [the Japanese] do not like to move from place to place, but once they move they become settled for a long time.” This, as well as the continued gatherings of former residents of the Terminal Island fishing village, suggests that greater emotional links to home places might be a trait found among older Japanese immigrants.

Two additional factors help explain the residential stability of early Japanese enclaves. Compared with the early Chinese in Los Angeles, the higher proportions of married-couple families among the Japanese resulted in greater rootedness in neighborhoods. Also, with diminished immigration from Japan, the proportion of U.S.-born was much higher in 1990 among the Japanese than among the Chinese or other Asians. This indicates the greater role of the earlier settlements in the 1990 residential distribution of Japanese. Related to all this are mobility differences among generations: older immigrants and their children, who themselves were typically elderly in 1990, have been more likely to remain in the enclaves than have the third generation, who typically live in middle-class white areas.

**Filipinos**

Most Filipinos in Southern California arrived after the major 1965 change in U.S. immigration law. Nevertheless, like the Chinese and Japanese, Filipino settlements existed before that time, and some of them have continued to be important.

As with other Asian ethnic groups, differences over time in the numbers and characteristics of immigrants are primarily a
function of changes in U.S. immigration laws. Because the Philippines was U.S. territory, Filipinos were not restricted by the 1924 immigration law which prohibited any immigration from Asian countries.38 From 1924 until 1934, when another U.S. law limited entry to only fifty Filipinos per year, the Philippines was the only Asian source for agricultural workers in California and Hawaii.

Most Filipino men who came to California during those years were laborers. They planned on staying only for a few years, and few women accompanied them.39 The men were either single or had left their wives at home. The result was that among Filipinos in California in 1930 men outnumbered women sixteen to one. In contrast, those who were recruited for plantation work in Hawaii often brought their wives and established families there.

Most of the men never returned home, however, partly because they could not afford the passage and partly because meager earnings here would make their sojourn a failure in the eyes of people back home. Some Filipino men married white women out of state since interracial marriage was illegal within California before 1948. Today, many U.S.-born Filipinos are descendants of the early migrants; a few of the old men were still living as of 1990.

There is substantial diversity among Filipinos. Chinese families settled in the Philippines, as they did elsewhere in Southeast Asia, but intermarriage between Chinese and Filipinos has been prevalent enough that the Chinese ethnic distinction is less important in the Philippines than in other Southeast Asian countries (Table 5.1). Nevertheless, regional differences in language within the Philippines remain significant among immigrants in Southern California, as do social connections based on locality of origin. Thus, Filipinos frequently describe themselves as internally divided with respect to language, region of origin in the Philippines, and politics.40

Many people who are not Filipinos are unaware of the large numbers of Filipinos in Southern California because their cultural impact has not been large. Few Filipinos have attained higher public offices, and Filipino ethnic organizations tend to focus on internal group matters. Basic landscape characteristics also play a role in a group’s visibility. Filipino settlements lack distinctive religious buildings because most Filipinos simply become part of local Catholic or sometimes Protestant churches, and their ethnic institutions are not readily noticed by the general public. Filipino restaurants are small and have never achieved a market beyond the ethnic group itself, and the low percentage of self-employed among Filipinos means that signs promoting Filipino-owned business are not common.

Early settlement. The first large group of Filipino migrants arrived in Los Angeles in the 1920s. Some in this first wave had been superior students who migrated with the intention of continuing their studies in this country—the land that supposedly exemplified democracy, justice, and opportunity. Instead, they found racial animosity. Most Filipino immigrants, however, were not educated. Some who settled in cities became busboys or dishwashers in restaurants, managers of pool halls or barber shops, or servants of rich white families. Other Filipinos ended up as farmworkers. For most, dreams of a better life in California never came true.

A small Filipino section in Downtown was evident by the mid-1920s in its collection of barber shops, pool halls, restaurants, dance halls, rooming houses, and employment agencies. Filipino houseboys and chauffeurs strolled the area when off duty from their work for the elite of Hollywood.41 In those days many of the Filipino bachelors who gathered on Main Street (near the present-day Children’s Museum) left Los Angeles during the summers. They worked in the vegetable fields of the Central Valley or in the fish canneries of Alaska. For that transient population, Los Angeles was essentially a popular wintertime base.

The location of this “Manilatown” in the late 1920s amid the poor and homeless of Los Angeles reflected the poverty of Filipinos. Of no less importance, however, was the fact that this area (including the nearby red-light district) was the only area in the city where whites allowed them to rent. Over the next few years the area within which Filipinos could rent rooms expanded slightly. By 1933 many men had left the old district between Main and Los Angeles Streets and moved north, closer to Sunset Boulevard and Figueroa Street. Others had found apartments and bungalows in immigrant neighborhoods. There were several
Figure 5.1
Chinese
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.2
Japanese
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.3
Filipino
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.4
Korean
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.5
Asian Indian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.6

Pakistani
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.7
Vietnamese
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.8
Cambodian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.9
Laotian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.10
Thai
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.11
Indonesian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.12

Samoan
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.13

Hawaiian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.14
Guamanian
Percent of Population
1990

Statistics and percents are for the Los Angeles CMSA (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties), 1990.
Figure 5.15
Asian and Pacific Is. Household Income
1989
Filipino rooming houses south of Downtown (near Grand Avenue and 25th Street), and other Filipinos lived just to the west, near Temple Street. Filipinos were simply not wanted in white neighborhoods, except as houseboys, valets, or chauffeurs.

By the late 1940s the situation was improving somewhat. New U.S. laws enabled more Filipinos to immigrate. Earlier state laws making marriage with whites illegal were overturned, and much new housing was being built in Los Angeles. Equally important, the U.S. Supreme Court had declared unenforceable the restrictive covenants on property deeds that had legally prohibited homeowners from selling or renting to people who were not white. In 1952 Filipinos who wished to buy a house could still find owners who would not sell to them. Nevertheless, the social and legal changes of the postwar period, combined with the economic growth, made homeownership possible for many Filipinos. 42

**The Temple-Alvarado area.** Forty years ago a cluster of homeowners and Filipino businesses and clubhouses was developing near Alvarado Street to the northwest of Downtown. Construction of the 101 Freeway in the early 1950s destroyed part of this Filipino section, shifting it slightly southward to the area near Temple Street and Beverly Boulevard. 43 In the early 1960s this concentration was augmented by the arrival of Filipinos who had been residents of Bunker Hill. (Housing in that once-attractive neighborhood had been deteriorating for decades, and its low-income residents of varied ethnic identities were evicted to clear space for an up-the-hill shift of Los Angeles’ more expensive offices, banks, and hotels.)

During the 1970s some newly arrived Filipino professionals settled first in the Temple-Alvarado area but later moved to more desirable areas. By the 1980s this had become the Filipino enclave to which less-acculturated, poorer, and more recent immigrants often gravitated. 44 The oldest ethnic organization, the Filipino American Community of Los Angeles, has always been based in the Temple-Alvarado neighborhood and still functions as a social-service center there. 45

In 1990 the old Filipino neighborhood around Temple Street, Beverly Boulevard, Alvarado and Rampart Streets remained strong (Fig. 5.3). In that multiethnic and mostly Latino area Filipinos constitute only about a fifth of the population. However, the area has churches (a few identified as Filipino), restaurants, medical clinics, a new Luzon Plaza shopping center, and immigrant social-service agencies that serve poor and elderly Filipinos. Many of the elderly used to be farmworkers, waiters, or hotel bellhops, but others are parents of adult immigrants who were persuaded to join their children in the United States. A wall mural on Temple Street across from Rosemont Elementary School—a collaborative effort by about twenty young Filipino Americans—dramatizes the choices between a good life and a bad one that today’s youth must make.

Because this Filipino settlement is the oldest and best-known concentration in Los Angeles, some Filipinos have attempted to have the area officially identified as “Philippine Town” or “Filipino Town.” 46 However, many of the better-educated and more affluent immigrants who live in outlying areas have not wanted Filipinos to be associated in the public’s perception with a neighborhood as poor as Temple-Alvarado.

**The Navy connection.** From 1902 through 1992 the U.S. Navy recruited Filipinos into its ranks, primarily as stewards and mess boys. 47 The young men who were selected viewed the Navy as an excellent way to improve their position, and most of them reenlisted for training in technical areas such as jet-engine maintenance. They also saw enlistment as a fast track to U.S. citizenship, which could lead to the entry of their close relatives as permanent residents in this country.

The oldest Filipino settlement based primarily on enlistment in the U.S. Navy is in West Long Beach, and in 1990 this constituted one of the leading Filipino ethnic concentrations. The same harbor area may well have been home to Filipino workers in fish canneries during the 1930s and 1940s. The census of 1940 records several hundred Filipinos in the census tracts very close to the harbor of Los Angeles, but it is not clear to what extent these were canner workers or Navy personnel. 48 It seems likely that most of them were civilian workers in fish canneries, because the 1950 census counted only ninety-seven nonwhite...
men in the military workforce and residing in the three tracts closest to the Navy installations.\footnote{147}

The number of Filipino enlisted men stationed in Long Beach grew during the 1950s and 1960s, and some returned briefly to the Philippines to choose wives. Some families lived in Navy-owned housing, but most lived nearby in regular homes and apartments. In addition, Filipinos who were not in the Navy were able to immigrate to the United States if they were close relatives of Navy men, their wives, or others who had become permanent residents or citizens of the United States. During the 1970s and 1980s the increase in the non-Navy Filipino population of West Long Beach was much greater than was that of Navy personnel.

The census tract with the highest Filipino percentage in Southern California is in West Long Beach. This strongly Filipino neighborhood includes St. Lucy’s Catholic Church, the clear religious focus of the Filipino community. Although the U.S. Navy closed most of its operations in Long Beach after 1990, the West Long Beach Filipino community will persist because it has become substantially independent of direct employment links with the Navy.

Another large concentration of Filipinos is found in Oxnard, which is too far to the west in Ventura County to be shown in Figure 5.3. Filipinos in the military there are stationed at either the Point Mugu Naval Air Station or the Construction Battalion Center in adjacent Port Hueneme. In Oxnard, as in West Long Beach, the direct Navy connection has been dwarfed in recent years by the large immigration of relatives often only distantly related to the original Navy recruits. Filipinos also live and work at the U.S. Naval Weapons Station at Seal Beach and in nearby parts of Orange County.

**Nearby suburbs.** During the past two decades many Filipinos have moved out of these older concentrations and into more attractive neighborhoods, where they have often been joined by newly arrived immigrants. Many residents of the Temple-Alvarado area or elsewhere became able to rent or buy homes in Silver Lake, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Glendale, and Eagle Rock—areas that were considered suburbs of Los Angeles more than fifty years ago. In Eagle Rock the local schools and Catholic churches experienced a major influx of Filipinos during the 1980s, and new Filipino restaurants and markets suddenly appeared on Colorado Boulevard.\footnote{50} Thus, an expanded Filipino enclave has emerged in the area between Temple-Alvarado and Eagle Rock (Fig. 5.3).

Within this area many Filipinos live in East Hollywood. This concentration is strongest near the large hospitals (Kaiser Hospital, Hollywood Presbyterian, and Children’s Hospital), where many nurses are employed.

In the San Fernando Valley Filipinos have found the North Hills and Arleta area attractive, because friends, relatives, and an active Catholic parish are nearby. Buying a single-family house is less costly in such older neighborhoods, and a sense of shared Hispanic and Catholic identity with the predominant Latino population makes some Filipinos feel more comfortable in areas like the increasingly Latino East Valley. Many Filipinas in the eastern San Fernando Valley work as nurses in the large Kaiser Hospital in nearby Panorama City.

In southern Los Angeles County, as in the city of Los Angeles, are Filipino enclaves in which an older concentration is matched with a nearby suburban area. In Carson, single-family houses were typically built in the 1960s and are more expensive than are those in Eagle Rock. However, the proximity of Carson to West Long Beach has meant that Filipinos in West Long Beach who wish to reside within an active Filipino community have not had to move far to improve their situation. One out of every six residents of Carson is a Filipino, and five tracts in southern Carson are more than one-quarter Filipino. The high proportion of Filipinos in Carson’s population may partly explain why Filipinos there have been more politically involved than they have been elsewhere.

**More distant suburbs.** As the influx of Filipinos grew after 1970, large numbers of professionals and others with higher incomes began to move into newly built homes in the Cerritos area and the eastern San Gabriel Valley. Moreover, the excellent reputations of the schools there have been an important attraction to Filipinos and other Asians.

During the 1970s Filipinos were particularly directed to the new single-family houses, apartments, and condominiums in the
Woodside Village section of West Covina. By 1990 the number of Filipinos in Woodside Village had grown to 2,900, which represented 21 percent of the tract's population.

In the 1980s the eastward thrust of settlement in the San Gabriel Valley continued. Filipinos with relatively high incomes bought homes in nearby Walnut, Rowland Heights, Industry, La Habra Heights, and Diamond Bar. Others moved to new developments in the Chino Hills and elsewhere in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

The great range of incomes within the contemporary Filipino population are a striking contrast with the 1930s poverty of Filipinos in Los Angeles. This is reflected in the greater diversity of Filipino settlements today.

**Distinctions among Filipino communities.** Some Filipino enclaves were once socially distinct because they were settled through separate chain migrations. This is suggested by the fact that Filipino communities in Hawaii and New York developed from two essentially different chain migrations and histories. The former represents family linkages that reach back through plantation-worker connections, whereas the latter derives from the post-1965 immigration of professionals. If a similar distinction is applied to Southern California, the early Filipino community in West Long Beach, with its original Navy connection, may represent different sets of social networks from those in the Temple-Alvarado area.

By the 1980s, however, Filipino communities had become interconnected. Through residential mobility and occasional personal ties in the Philippines, more affluent Filipinos from older settlements (Long Beach–Carson and Temple-Alvarado–Eagle Rock) have joined recently arrived professionals in Cerritos and the eastern San Gabriel Valley.

**Koreans**

The first Koreans in Los Angeles—laborers and students—came at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1906 only 60 Koreans lived in Los Angeles County. They established a Presbyterian mission, which symbolized the early Korean presence and served as the focus of their changing distribution. For more than twenty years the mission was in the Bunker Hill area of Downtown, but in the late 1920s it was relocated to the area west of the University of Southern California. That refocus made sense because many Koreans were students at USC and because the area west of the campus was racially mixed and had low rents. By 1939 the total number of Koreans in the county had risen to 300. Although Korean businesses were dispersed over a wide area, most Koreans lived between Vermont and Western Avenues, from Adams Boulevard on the north to Slauson Avenue on the south.

From the first, the Koreans’ path to economic survival and success seemed to be entrepreneurship. Fruit and vegetable stands and grocery stores were the most common forms of self-employment. Some Koreans were wholesalers and retailers of herbs, hats, and novelties. Still others were owners of laundry, trucking, and “Chinese” restaurant businesses. Although many had been trained for professional careers, restrictions on better jobs and discrimination meant that Los Angeles in 1939 had only two Korean doctors and no lawyers, engineers, dentists, or educators.

**Origins and expansion of Koreatown.** With closer Korean-American ties after the Korean War and increased immigration after the 1965 changes in U.S. immigration law, the number of Koreans in Southern California grew. So did the clustering of their homes in what was coming to be called Koreatown. In 1972 a third of all Korean households listed in Korean directories for Southern California were located in Koreatown, a level of geographical concentration that was understandable for the rapidly growing Korean community.

Over the years the Korean community crept northward. In the 1950s and 1960s this was partly due to the northward expansion of black settlement that followed the elimination of most legal supports of discrimination in housing. By 1972 Koreatown was north of Pico Boulevard. During the 1980s, as the number of Koreans in Koreatown increased from 12,000 to 35,000, Koreatown expanded geographically, reaching north past Wilshire Boulevard and west past Crenshaw Boulevard. This shift was partly a response to the increasing numbers of poorer Central Americans in Pico-Union and Westlake.
Although the movement of Koreatown westward and northward has represented a retreat from the expanding zone of poor Latinos and blacks, it has also permitted more affluent Koreans to remain in the greater Koreatown area but live in more attractive housing in mostly white areas—Hancock Park and Country Club Park. These geographical changes are consistent with both the socioeconomic separation between Koreans and the other groups and the increasing economic success of many Koreans.

**Modern Koreatown as a residential area.** Despite the name, the majority of Koreatown’s residents are not Korean. The proportion of Koreans rose during the 1980s—but only from 11 percent to 16 percent. In most census tracts Latinos are the largest ethnic group, and in only one tract do Koreans outnumber them. Thus, Koreatown’s people are less Korean than some might imagine.

For Koreans, however, Koreatown is the most important enclave. It frequently attracts new arrivals, who live there for a few years until they have adjusted somewhat to Southern California. Although most new immigrants settle first near friends or relatives, those without personal ties in Los Angeles and others who wish to minimize the discomfort of contact with the non-Korean world can live in Koreatown. The large numbers of Koreans there make possible the services and institutions that make strangers feel somewhat more at home, and in many ways Koreatown encourages an attachment to Korean culture and society. Elderly Koreans, in particular, enjoy the pervasiveness of Korean culture in Koreatown. This, together with the lower cost of renting apartments there compared to outlying areas, means that Koreatown’s residents tend to be older and poorer than most Korean in Southern California.

In the Downtown area not far from Koreatown is a tract which was 39 percent Korean in 1990. In an old, declining neighborhood (Olive Street between 7th and 8th Streets) a single apartment building with a renovated interior housed 276 Koreans. Even though the area lacks Korean stores and institutions, the apartments are a sought-after residence for low-income, elderly Koreans because rents in this “Section 8” building are federally subsidized.

**Koreatown businesses.** Koreatown is the center of a wide range of Korean-oriented services. Many banks and accounting, real-estate, insurance, and law firms are located in large Korean-owned office buildings on Wilshire Boulevard, Western Avenue, Olympic Boulevard, and other commercial streets. Other businesses are located in older buildings or in bright shopping centers and minimalls built in the 1970s and 1980s. The largest retailing center is Koreatown Plaza on Western Avenue—a sumptuous, Korean-designed four-story indoor mall.

Koreatown contains more than 400 Korean medical offices, plus numerous providers of herbs and acupuncture. There are also boutiques, beauty salons, travel agencies, gasoline stations, car dealers, clothing and wig stores, laundries, videotape rental shops, book and magazine stores, bakeries, grocery stores, night clubs, and more than 200 restaurants. Organizations have meetings at Korean restaurants, Koreans from the suburbs host wedding receptions and parties there, and every October the Koreatown Festival attracts Koreans from all over Southern California. Almost a dozen hotels serve businessmen, tour groups, and other visitors from Korea.

Korean businesses are often owned by immigrants who were highly educated, often as professionals, but were unable to achieve the success they expected while working for an American-run business or organization. Difficulties with English, lack of sufficient acculturation, and discrimination are likely explanations. In any case, many men obtained enough capital from friends and relatives or Korean rotating-credit associations and banks to finance a business. Most businessmen and women prefer to join Korean trade associations and make business arrangements with other Koreans. This is an understandable reaction to perceived discrimination by white wholesalers and to increases in store rents charged by white landlords after Koreans had made their businesses successful.

In 1986 Koreatown was the location of 26 percent of the Korean businesses in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, which indicates that business operations are slightly more likely to be located in Koreatown than are the Korean people themselves. More significant, however, is the lower rate of self-employment among Koreatown residents and the fact that 59 percent of
Korean storekeepers in South Central. In May of 1992 the acquittal of four white Los Angeles policemen accused of beating a black man precipitated a major riot in South Central. The riot had a major impact on the Korean community. Within South Central, Korean retailers typically owned gasoline service stations or “mom and pop” stores that sold liquor and some groceries to black and Latino customers. Most owners of these stores would have preferred to be located in an area of higher incomes and less crime but at the time could not afford the higher prices of stores elsewhere. Korean merchants who were successful in South Central typically sold to more recently arrived immigrants. This has meant that Korean store owners in South Central were some of the least acculturated of Koreans, a fact which exacerbated the cultural tensions between blacks and Koreans.

In 1990 Korean men and women were overrepresented in retail liquor operations at seventeen times the average rate (Table 8.6). Nevertheless, fewer than three percent of employed Koreans were working in that industry.

After the rioting in 1992 Koreans found themselves ignored or blamed and have been understandably resentful. The riot also prompted many of them to change their attitude toward living in this country. With their future dependent on increasing sales to others, many Korean merchants have made a stronger commitment to the United States and have resolved to treat non-Koreans in a friendlier manner.

Dispersal to the suburbs. Koreatown is less important for Koreans than in the past. Despite enlargement of the area defined as Koreatown, the proportion of Los Angeles County’s Koreans living in Koreatown has dropped from a third in 1972, to 30 percent in 1980, to 24 percent in 1990. Koreans living in Koreatown constitute only 18 percent of the total number of Koreans in Southern California.

As reasons for moving out of Koreatown, Koreans cite a desire to be closer to work or their church or the opportunity to own a home. Nevertheless, this dispersal has really been made possible by the improved finances of many Koreans and by the growth of Korean enclaves in the suburbs. Most Koreans who still live in Koreatown do so because they cannot afford to live in better areas. Apart from its bright, new stores and offices, Koreatown’s older and deteriorating housing correctly reflects its status as a low-income area with much crime.

A shift of Korean businesses out of Koreatown has also occurred. This is partly because merchants want to reach the growing market of suburban Koreans. In Koreatown the merchants traditionally served Korean customers rather than the area’s total population, and some of those entrepreneurs simply decided to follow their customers to the suburbs. An even larger factor in the suburbanization of businesses has been a broadening of the customer base. Because by 1989 at least three-quarters of Korean businesses in Los Angeles County were targeting the general population as their primary clientele, moving the business to a high-income suburban area made it easier to reach this general market. Merchants who remain in Koreatown are also trying to reach the non-Korean market.

Suburbanization of Korean entrepreneurs has been even more frequent since 1992. The riot and fear of crime have impelled many to leave Koreatown and South Central.

Suburban enclaves. Korean information networks regarding new housing opportunities tend to lead to the development of suburban enclaves rather than to widespread dispersal in the suburbs. Friends and relatives, real-estate agents (most of whom are Korean), and the Korean Times constitute the leading sources regarding housing. New residential clusters are soon noticed by Korean entrepreneurs, who locate to serve that market and thus add to the growth of the enclave.

The development of suburban enclaves is important because these provide Korean-oriented environments almost as complete as Koreatown. Speaking English is still difficult for most adult immigrants, but the growth of Korean stores in those places and the easy availability of Korean television throughout the Los Angeles area mean that immigrants in the suburbs may be living in predominantly white areas but are not at all isolated from Koreans and their institutions.
Although Christianity is a minority religion in Korea, most Korean immigrants to the United States are Christians. Two-thirds of Koreans in Los Angeles attend a Christian church twice a month or more, and Korean church congregations have been likened to an extended family. Thus, the location of Korean churches in the suburbs is an important factor in decisions about moving. Churches are widely found in the areas where Koreans have settled, partly because many congregations have been able to rent facilities during the week from other Protestant churches while planning to build their own.

In 1972 Gardena was the only suburb with a relatively large Korean population, but by 1990 several areas of Southern California had sufficiently large Korean populations to constitute enclaves (Fig. 5.4). In some cases Koreans have selected some of the same areas preferred by other Asians, such as Garden Grove, Cerritos, Rancho Palos Verdes, and Diamond Bar. Such places have seen more Korean settlers since 1992, and some Koreans refer to a section of Garden Grove Boulevard in Garden Grove as “Koreatown South.”

In Carson the Korean cluster has been mostly people with low incomes. In 1980 more than 600 Koreans were living at the Scottsdale Townhouses, a relatively low-priced housing complex, but by 1990 those numbers had been cut by more than half.

Many affluent Koreans have settled north of Koreatown, in areas of high-cost homes which are fairly accessible to Koreatown: the Los Feliz district of Hollywood, Glendale and the cities immediately north of it (La Crescenta and La Cañada–Flintridge), and the northern San Fernando Valley.

The San Fernando Valley. During the 1980s Koreans with a wide range of incomes settled in the valley, and their presence encouraged the growth of Korean businesses to serve their needs. The Korean enclave that developed in the north-central part of the valley was home to 4,000 Koreans in 1990.

Korean settlement and an ethnic economy have been more pronounced during the 1990s, especially since the 1992 riots encouraged departure from Koreatown. The more affluent Koreans bought large single-family houses in post-1970 developments in Porter Ranch and Granada Hills, north of the 118 Freeway; many others found attractive homes on the valley floor in North Hills. Fear of crime prompts many to choose houses in gated communities, and Koreans often cluster in a single development, as they have since 1990 in Burnet Villas and Lafayette Villas, just north of Nordhoff Street.

Korean businesses which serve the Granada Hills enclave are most often found just to the south. In the older Van Nuys area rents for Korean businesses are relatively low; and Korean one-story shopping centers, banks, markets, videotape rental stores, and restaurants line Van Nuys Boulevard between Saticoy and Vanowen Streets. Another shopping center, near the intersection of Nordhoff Street and Sepulveda Boulevard, is mostly Korean, and a former Alpha Beta supermarket has become the Korean-owned California Super Market.

Thus, Korean settlement in the San Fernando Valley illustrates the process of business and population dispersal out of Koreatown. The high proportion of immigrants among adult Koreans, unfamiliarity with American society, and widespread discomfort with the English language mean that Korean settlement in outlying areas is often clustered as enclaves rather than being dispersed within those suburbs.

Asian Indians

People whose origins lie in the modern country of India are clearly included in this category, but it also probably includes most other South Asians—those from adjacent Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The few Asian Indians from Guyana, Trinidad, Fiji, and East Africa presumably also checked this identity. Ancestry data, which identifies specific nationalities, shows that 80 percent of Southern Californians reporting their race as Asian Indian also listed their ancestry as Indian. Another 13 percent indicated Pakistani ancestry, while 5 percent reported they were Sri Lankan and 2 percent, Bangladeshi. This range of South Asian origins in Southern California means that Asian Indians include Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Christians, although Hindus are probably most numerous.

Asian Indian men (Punjabis, mostly Sikhs, from the Punjab region) came to California in the early twentieth century. Between
1907 and 1911 most found work as agricultural laborers. Later, many were able to lease or buy farmland themselves, especially in the Sacramento Valley. In 1917 Congress barred most Asians, including those from India, from immigrating. Indians who had already arrived were not at first subject to the restrictions of the Alien Land Laws because their racial identity was in question. However, a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1923 declared that Asian Indians were not whites and thus were not eligible for citizenship or landownership.

After 1946 immigration from India resumed, but the low quota meant that only about 300 entered the United States in an average year. Diverse in their regions of origin, high level of education, and urban orientation, most of these newcomers were a distinct contrast with the rural Punjabis. Many of them settled in San Francisco or Los Angeles, where they were joined by some descendants of the earlier immigrants. In 1960 the U.S. census counted people in terms of foreign stock—those born in another country plus their U.S.-born children. At that time the Indian and Pakistani foreign stock numbered 1,925 and 151, respectively, in Los Angeles County—harbingers of the much larger population that was to arrive after Congress opened the gates to Asian immigrants in 1965. Although most immigrants since 1965 came directly from India or Pakistan, many others lived first in Britain, Germany, Canada, or East Africa.

**Dispersed settlements.** By 1990 Asian Indians were widely scattered throughout Southern California (Fig. 5.5). Most individual census tracts which appear as having higher proportions of Asian Indians do not represent significant clusters because the number of Indians represented in each is so small. Fluency in English and high levels of educational attainment and income mean that they do not need to live in enclaves. The dispersed nature of Asian Indian communities is also evident statistically. Of twelve major immigrant groups in Los Angeles County in 1990, Asian Indians were least segregated from non-Hispanic whites. Moreover, the diversity of regional origins, languages, and religions included in the relatively small Asian Indian population means that residential enclaves are less likely to develop. Asian Indians’ continued emphasis on educational attainment is illustrated by the fact that the campuses of the University of Southern California and of the University of California at both Los Angeles and Irvine appear as part of the distribution (Fig. 5.5).

Depending on their financial resources and preferences, Asian Indians live in neighborhoods which range from modest to very expensive. None of the Asian Indian concentrations that appear on the map is in a poor area. Slight Asian Indian concentrations are most evident in wealthy areas, many of which lie above the floors of the main basins and valleys where less affluent people live: Rancho Palos Verdes and Cerritos; Anaheim Hills and Irvine in Orange County; and Claremont and Walnut in the San Gabriel Valley. Many residents of these areas came from wealthy families in India; others have simply earned high incomes as professionals or managers in California.

**The San Fernando Valley.** Most Asian Indians live in the western San Fernando Valley and on its northern fringes. The latter area, including Porter Ranch and Granada Hills, lies just north of the 118 Freeway. (The large tract that is so visually prominent at the top of Figure 5.5 represents a similar development of new homes just west of Valencia. However, this tract should not be emphasized because in 1990 it was home to only forty-seven Asian Indians.) A small Hindu temple in Chatsworth, a Muslim mosque in Northridge, and a Sikh temple in North Hollywood serve worshippers; but these are small, unobtrusive, and located in commercial and industrial areas in order not to arouse antagonism among local residents. There has been much difficulty in gaining approval for additional places of worship that are at all architecturally distinctive and located in residential areas.

The comparatively high proportion of Indians in the western San Fernando Valley is partly related to the engineering background and aerospace employment of many South Asian immigrants. In addition, Hindus may be attracted to that part of the valley, as well as to Malibu and eastern Ventura County, partly because of their proximity to the Hindu Temple that was built in the mid-1980s in rustic and narrow Malibu Canyon. The temple is not well located in terms of access from Indian residential areas, but its isolation eliminates many objections to the dramatic South Indian temple style.
The Culver City area. The Palms, Mar Vista, and Culver City settlements of Asian Indians are distinctive in being much more urban than suburban and in being centrally located. The area has an abundance of Asian Indian shops, restaurants, and other businesses. It contains many Pakistanis and Muslims, as well as Hindus from India. Entrepreneurs seem to cultivate a multicultural South Asian spirit which to some extent overcomes the traditional barriers of nation, religion, and region. We expect that the same observations could be made about most Asian Indian shops and businesses because, if for no other reason, their survival in Southern California depends on achieving a broad-based clientele. Family businesses owned by Asian Indians are sometimes managed during the day by the wife while the husband is employed in a larger company, perhaps as an engineer. Such responsibility is not normally given to women in South Asia and represents an improvement in women’s status after emigration.

Little India. A shopping area, known as Little India, in southeastern Los Angeles County has become the preeminent Asian Indian commercial center in Southern California. In the 1970s the number of Asian Indian families in the adjacent upper-middle-class suburb, Cerritos, was increasing, because Cerritos had a reputation for excellent schools and was in easy reach of engineering and related employment at McDonnell-Douglas, IBM, and Bechtel. Nearby La Palma and Buena Park in Orange County also attracted many Asian Indians, partly because homes were less expensive.

As more Indians settled in Southern California, particularly in the Cerritos–Artesia area, the potential market for a major Asian Indian shopping center became clearer. Stores and offices along Pioneer Boulevard had been developed in the 1940s, often by merchants of Dutch or Portuguese ancestry who had been originally attracted to the area when it was a center for dairying. However, by the early 1970s these businesses were declining because they could not compete successfully with the large, new malls. Asian Indians steadily bought up older businesses from owners who were usually eager to sell.

By the late 1980s Pioneer Boulevard between 183d and 187th Streets was vibrantly Asian Indian, with many jewelry stores, groceries, restaurants, candy and spice shops, clothing stores, insurance and travel agencies, and videotape rental stores specializing in Indian movies. Little India has become the largest focus of Asian Indian businesses in the western United States, drawing customers from outside California. Not surprisingly, the differences represented by the commercial and population shifts in Artesia—from the earlier conservative and white Americans to the more affluent shoppers and residents from South Asia—have resulted in tensions and barriers between old-timers and newcomers. These have been heightened by the highly visible nature of the ethnic shopping center that is Little India. In Little India the signs, window displays, and types of stores, as well as the dress and appearance of crowds, accentuate the cultural contrasts between Indians and the white merchants and residents.

Social separation. Asian Indian families who are widely scattered in suburbs are unobtrusive and welcomed by most whites, and, as we have pointed out, the level of residential segregation between Asian Indians and whites is low.

Although Asian Indians’ English-language skills and high average economic status would suggest much interaction with whites, partially hidden cultural differences are real and result in mostly separate social worlds of Indian and white families. This situation is illustrated in Artesia and by the frequency of white-homeowner objections to Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim places of worship designed in traditional styles.

Pakistanis

Because nearly all people of Pakistani ancestry presumably reported their race as Asian Indian, the distribution of this group is similar in pattern to that of Asian Indians. The history of immigration is similar to that of the Asian Indian group as a whole, especially because no separate country of Pakistan existed before independence from British colonial control in 1947. In that year Pakistan was partitioned as a mostly Muslim country from predominantly Hindu India. For this reason, Pakistani immigrants are highly likely to be Muslim in religion, in contrast to the greater religious diversity within modern India.
Nevertheless, both Muslims from India and Pakistani immigrants are likely to speak a common language, Urdu, such that the two nationalities, which share religion and language, are often considered as a single group, Indo-Pakistanis. Although Muslims believe that their common religion overcomes, Muslims in the Los Angeles area are substantially fragmented by differences of religious tradition within Islam, country and region of origin, and politics. Indo-Pakistanis are estimated to be the second largest religiously active Muslim group in Southern California—smaller in numbers than Arab Muslims but larger than African American members of the Nation of Islam.

Like Indians, immigrants from Pakistan are apt to have middle- or upper-class origins. Of all the immigrant groups we analyze in this book, adults of Pakistani ancestry were more likely to speak English only or very well (79 percent) and to be college graduates (57 percent). Not surprisingly, many Pakistanis were pursuing careers in business, engineering, and various professions.

Although their distribution also shows a dispersal across much of the more attractive residential areas in Southern California, employment with computer, electronics, and aerospace manufacturing may well explain the location of small Pakistani clusters (Fig. 5.6). In contrast to the total Asian Indian population, however, few Pakistanis live in Cerritos and Artesia or in most of the cities of the eastern San Gabriel Valley.

The Palms–Mar Vista section of Los Angeles has probably been the traditional focus for ethnic businesses serving Pakistanis, but it is likely that Pakistanis do most of their specialty shopping at grocery stores and spice shops which serve the larger South Asian and pan-Asian populations across much of middle- and upper-income Southern California.

**Vietnamese**

Refugees from the War in Indochina entered the United States in large numbers between 1975 and the early 1980s and were joined in the later 1980s by relatives who qualified as immigrants. Vietnamese were the largest group of refugees—outnum-

bering Cambodians, Laotians, and smaller groups from mountain areas, such as the Hmong. The fact that most Vietnamese, Cambodians, Lao, and Hmong arrived in the United States as refugees rather than as immigrants has made their adjustment here different from that of other Asian groups. Because refugees did not freely choose to come to this country, they have probably faced greater homesickness, depression, and adjustment difficulties than have most immigrants. Among the refugees, differences in backgrounds have played a major role in adaptation to the United States.

**The first wave of refugees.** In late April 1975, when U.S. forces were withdrawing from Saigon and South Vietnam, the U.S. government evacuated many Vietnamese who had worked for U.S. organizations or had ties with their personnel. These people together with family members who were able to join the air lifts totaled about 150,000 individuals. They constituted the first wave of Vietnamese refugees.

People in this first wave generally had higher socioeconomic status than did later refugees, were more familiar with U.S. culture, and were more likely to be strongly anti-Communist than were later refugees. Many of them had been educated professionals or managers in Vietnam, and most of the men spoke English, having been part of the South Vietnamese and U.S. war effort. Once in the United States most could not obtain jobs at all commensurate with their backgrounds. Nevertheless by the mid-1980s they were achieving 40 percent higher incomes than were refugees who arrived between 1976 and 1979.

**Later arrivals.** After 1975 many people continued to leave Vietnam in whatever manner they could. The flow of new refugee arrivals to the United States, which peaked in the 1979–1981 period, is usually referred to as the second wave. The composition of this wave was diverse—ranging from urban businessmen and their families to farmers from the hills—but far fewer were fluent in English or acquainted with U.S. culture than were arrivals in the first wave. The second wave included many Vietnamese who had escaped to Thailand after the 1975 air lift,
as well as hundreds of thousands who had fled Vietnam and Cambodia in small boats for the shores of Thailand or Malaysia.

Perhaps the largest part of this second wave was Chinese-Vietnamese—people whose family heritage is Chinese (Table 5.1). (For more on this group, see the final section of this chapter’s treatment of the Chinese.) Beginning in 1978, Vietnam’s Communist government forced most Chinese-Vietnamese to leave the country, presumably so that their businesses and wealth could be confiscated.

By the 1980s the United Nations and Vietnam had arranged for people who were accepted by the United States as refugees or immigrants to leave Vietnam through an Orderly Departure Program. After 1981 nearly all Vietnamese who entered the United States came under this program. Like the second wave, however, this group included few educated and professional people and few who spoke English. The program ultimately allowed the departure of 61,000 political prisoners and their families, 81,000 Amerasians (children of Vietnamese women and American servicemen) and their accompanying relatives, and 161,000 who qualified as immigrants because they were close relatives of refugees already in the United States.\(^8^2\)

**Formation of the Orange County enclave.** In 1975 the large Camp Pendleton Marine training base in northern San Diego County was one of several military installations designated to receive the first wave of Vietnamese refugees.\(^8^3\) Refugees assigned to Camp Pendleton flew from temporary camps in Guam and the Philippines to El Toro Marine Air Station and were then bussed to Camp Pendleton.

In May a huge city of tents was constructed for processing the refugees. The Red Cross helped reunite families separated during the evacuation. Refugees were examined medically and interviewed, and some rudimentary classes gave refugees a preview of their new life in the United States. However, the primary function of refugee processing at places like Camp Pendleton was to connect each refugee family with a sponsor, who was responsible for arranging housing and jobs for the refugees. Refugees were not permitted to leave Camp Pendleton until approved sponsors were found for them. By the end of October 1975, all the refugees had been assigned sponsors and new homes.

Although sponsors from many parts of the United States were found for the refugees who passed through Camp Pendleton, about one-third of those refugees settled in Orange County.\(^8^4\) The people and churches of Los Angeles and Orange County were generous in their acceptance of refugees, and some Catholic and Episcopalian churches in Orange County sponsored more than ten large families.\(^8^5\) Orange County’s people and churches were particularly aware of the refugee situation because Camp Pendleton lies just to its south, but the early Orange County focus of Vietnamese resettlement was due to the location of sponsors in Orange County rather than to Camp Pendleton’s proximity. Large numbers of refugees may have been accepted more easily in Orange County than in Los Angeles County because the shock of rapid population growth was muted by Orange County’s lower density of housing and greater room for expansion.

U.S. government refugee resettlement policy encouraged dispersal across the country in small numbers, but later many refugee families left the isolation of scattered towns to join family members. These Vietnamese migrants typically headed to California, and Orange County was their most favored destination (Fig. 5.7). Migrants moved to Orange County because of its climate, the availability of assembly work in electronics, and the large number of Vietnamese and family members already there.\(^8^6\) In addition, generous welfare regulations have made California a preferred destination. During the 1980s unemployed parents qualified for Aid to Families with Dependent Children more easily in California than in other states, and a family of four received more cash assistance over a longer period in California than elsewhere.\(^8^7\)

Orange County was an area of relatively low-cost housing with work possibilities in nearby electronics and garment factories and restaurants. Thus, the refugees usually chose destinations near their relatives in the county. New arrivals also wanted neighborhoods that had bus service and were near friends, schools, and Asian markets.\(^8^8\) The close proximity of Vietnamese
residential and shopping areas resulted from the preference for living within walking distance of a Vietnamese market and the need to buy medicine, cloth, and other goods for shipment to relatives in Vietnam.

By 1990 Orange County contained 12 percent of all the Vietnamese in the United States, with Santa Ana, Westminster, and Garden Grove home to the largest numbers. At the same time that Orange County was attracting migrants from distant parts of the United States, many Vietnamese were dispersing from Orange County to other places within Southern California. The net effect was a strengthening of the general Vietnamese concentration in Southern California. In 1990, 25 percent of the Vietnamese in the United States lived in the five-county Southern California region.

Those who did not live in the leading area of ethnic concentration tended to have slightly higher incomes and be more acculturated. This is illustrated by the Vietnamese who live south of the 55 Freeway in more expensive sections of Tustin and Irvine. First-wave immigrants and their families are also probably overrepresented among these and other Vietnamese residing outside the large enclave.

**Little Saigon.** Before October 1978 the area that would become the Vietnamese commercial center of Little Saigon was strawberry fields, used-car lots, and machine shops. At first whites resisted the development of Vietnamese stores in the area, but by 1982 six Vietnamese shopping malls, plus other stores and offices, had been built along Bolsa Avenue in Westminster between Brookhurst and Magnolia Streets (Fig. 5.7). The name “Little Saigon” commemorates appropriately the city that had been home to many merchants before the Communists took it over and renamed it Ho Chi Minh City.

Little Saigon is a large cluster of several indoor malls and strip shopping centers oriented primarily to the Vietnamese market. Chinese-Vietnamese, using Chinese capital from different Asian countries, financed and built most of the buildings. A great variety of stores, restaurants, medical offices, and other businesses have appeared, as could be expected in any large shopping district serving an immigrant Asian population. Some small manufacturing plants have also appeared. However, the Vietnamese shopping areas are distinctive from other Asian centers because of the presence of many noodle houses, restaurants, bakeries, and coffee shops, many of which show a strong French influence stemming from the days of French colonialism.

Surrounding Little Saigon and extending about eight miles across northern Orange County are the single-family houses and scattered apartments of the largest Vietnamese community outside Vietnam. In 1990 over 40,000 Vietnamese were counted in this enclave. Vietnamese proportions are highest between Bolsa and Westminster Avenues close to Little Saigon, but in 1990 the Vietnamese represented no more than forty percent of any tract’s population. This is because many of the earlier white residents remained and Latino settlement has expanded into the area from Santa Ana on the east. To the north, however, the 22 Freeway keeps the smaller Korean enclave in Garden Grove separate from the Vietnamese area. Since 1990 the growth of the Vietnamese population by as much as fifty percent has resulted in greater Vietnamese proportions in the enclave and a white exodus.

The entire Vietnamese enclave in Orange County—Little Saigon and its surrounding residential area—is especially important as a cultural home. It is a comforting outpost of the familiar in the very different world of English-speaking Southern California. For Vietnamese who speak little English, it has been the most likely place to look for employment or to start a business.

**Enclaves in the San Fernando Valley.** The location of most Vietnamese enclaves outside Orange County are probably best explained by specific connections to sponsoring individuals or organizations, although the location of employment has also been important (Fig. 5.7). For example, refugees who moved directly to Long Beach from a camp in Southeast Asia reported that sponsor location was an extremely important factor behind their settlement in Long Beach. Later, despite much movement in and out of Long Beach by Vietnamese families, there was a tendency for friends and relatives to settle near those who remained.

The western and central portions of the San Fernando Valley also illustrate the cumulative effect of the general location of sponsors followed by chain migration. In 1975 some Catholic
parishes in Northridge and Canoga Park helped arrange sponsorship for some Catholic Vietnamese families. These families encouraged others to follow them. The net effect is a strongly Catholic Vietnamese population in the western part of the valley. Another group of refugees moved to the Van Nuys area in 1975 to be near sponsors, and their relatives and other refugees followed. Some of these Vietnamese were Buddhist, for whom a Buddhist Meditation Center was later created in nearby North Hills. In addition, entrepreneurs from Orange County came to the San Fernando Valley because that county was so crowded with Vietnamese businesses that new opportunities there were limited.

Some refugees who settled first in Van Nuys later bought homes in the Canoga Park area. That area was more attractive than Van Nuys, but its home prices were still relatively low compared with some other areas in the Valley. After the initial sponsorship of refugees by individuals who happened to live in the valley, later refugees settling in the western part of the valley were usually sponsored by relatives who already lived there. Work opportunities may have been an additional factor in resettlement there: Vietnamese living in this area have been employed in electronics manufacturing at three times their rate in Southern California as a whole.

As the number of Vietnamese in the western San Fernando Valley grew during the 1980s, immigrants felt more comfortable. Asian food stores serving the diverse Asian communities became more common, and Vietnamese entrepreneurs opened restaurants and other small businesses. Later, Vietnamese Catholics in two parishes were assigned their own priests and are now able to hold a Sunday Mass in Vietnamese. This has increased the attraction of the area for those Vietnamese who are Catholic.

On the northern side of the western San Fernando Valley enclave are some Vietnamese residents of a large apartment complex in which rents for low-income families are subsidized by the federal government. Farther north, outside the enclave, are scattered Vietnamese families who live in single-family houses, as well as some Vietnamese students who live in private apartments while they attend California State University, Northridge.

High-tech employment. Vietnamese may have moved to the Hawthorne, Gardena, and Lawndale area partly because of work in electronics and aircraft factories (Fig. 5.7). The area is a center for that type of manufacturing, and Vietnamese who live in Hawthorne have particularly high rates of employment in aircraft and electronics manufacturing. Northrop Aircraft’s large factory in Hawthorne is adjacent to a large, square census tract, where the 222 Vietnamese residents represented 11 percent of the total population. This was the highest percentage of Vietnamese within any tract in Los Angeles County as of 1990. However, reduced defense budgets weakened employment connections after 1990, and some of Hawthorne’s Vietnamese have moved to Carson or Gardena, where home prices are lower.

Vietnamese who live in newer housing areas outside enclaves rely more on employment in high-tech industries than do Vietnamese who live in the enclaves. In Ventura County, 28 percent of employed Vietnamese living in Thousand Oaks work in aircraft manufacturing, and 20 percent of those in Simi Valley make computers and related equipment. In southern Orange County, a similar but less-pronounced pattern is found.

Cambodians

In 1975 a group of ruthless, fundamentalist Communists led by Pol Pot took power in Cambodia. The group, the Khmer Rouge, began a three-year reign of terror and destruction. Phnom Penh, the capital city, was emptied as the Khmer Rouge forced its residents, including many skilled workers and managers, into rural areas to work in rice fields. The torture, slaughter, and labor camps they instituted forced Cambodians to try to flee across the Mekong River to Thailand. Minorities in the country—primarily Chinese and Vietnamese—were subject to especially virulent attacks and killings in an effort to wipe out their cultures. In 1978 an invasion by Vietnam and the subsequent guerrilla war led to continued deaths and flight. On average, Cambodian immigrants to the United States spent two years in Thai refugee camps before arriving here.
Many Cambodians were resettled here between 1979 and 1981 as part of the second wave of Indochinese refugees, and others followed during the next few years. By 1985 they had suffered more than other Indochinese groups from split and broken families and an inability to even contact family members who remained in Cambodia. Such problems and the nightmares of atrocities still plague most Cambodian families and have made their adjustment to the United States especially difficult. However, political conditions were stable enough in 1990 for Cambodians to begin to return home to look for relatives and, in a few cases, to stay.

**Long Beach.** Cambodian settlement in Long Beach began in the early 1960s, when Cambodian students first participated in an exchange program with California State University, Long Beach (Fig. 5.8). The students were well received and exchanges multiplied. Word of Pol Pot’s atrocities filtered back to Long Beach, and Cambodians and their friends in Long Beach prepared to sponsor refugees. The U.S. government and the voluntary refugee-resettlement agencies found sponsors in many places in the United States. Because Long Beach may have been the only place with a much earlier Cambodian connection, it is not surprising that it has become the largest local Cambodian community in the United States.

In the early 1980s there were few shops to serve Cambodians, and most were on a small section of 10th Street. By the late 1980s, the focus of the shopping area had shifted north, to East Anaheim Street. The neighborhood had been home to whites in the years before World War II, but over the next decades many whites moved to newer suburbs and were replaced by blacks and Latinos.

Cambodian entrepreneurs have transformed that old commercial strip into an attractive business corridor. The district contains new malls, restaurants, and offices, including the large building that houses the United Cambodian Community, a social-service agency. On side streets all around the business section is the ethnically mixed, older residential area, in which most Cambodian families rent apartments. This enclave in Long Beach is sometimes called Little Phnom Penh for the capital city of Cambodia. In addition, some Cambodians in the city live in northern Long Beach, where a large apartment complex on Long Beach Boulevard was the focus of the largest cluster in 1990 (Fig. 5.8).

**Other enclaves.** In Orange County a small cluster of Cambodians is located in Santa Ana, in the very poor South Minnie Street area. Many families are headed by women whose husbands were killed during the holocaust perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge in the late 1970s. A Buddhist temple is in the neighborhood, but there are few Cambodian shops or offices. Because most American stores do not stock the rice, fresh fish, and fresh herbs and vegetables Cambodians desire, the women try to arrange rides to either Little Saigon or Long Beach for shopping.

Cambodians clustered in one part of South Central are located in the large Pueblo del Rio public-housing project (Fig. 5.8). Cambodian families took advantage of the high vacancy rate during the 1980s at Pueblo del Rio, and nearly all of them received welfare. Accessibility to Long Beach was direct via the Blue Line commuter railroad, but by the early 1990s many families had moved away, presumably to a less-isolated location. In Pomona, Cambodians live in several of the less expensive tracts, not far from the Buddhist temple and community center on West 10th Street near Hamilton Boulevard.

Although Cambodians have tended to settle in low-rent areas, the specific locations are not as significant as the simple fact of clustering close to relatives and friends. The chain migration that has led to such small pockets of Cambodian settlement may have begun when someone found a particularly friendly and welcoming apartment manager or when a Cambodian wished to move closer to work.

In the central San Fernando Valley, chain migration originating with refugee sponsorship in 1981 led about fifty Cambodian families to a single, large apartment complex (Sunset Point Apartments) on Valerio Street. Most families have remained on welfare. The closest Cambodian Buddhist temple is in a private home in Echo Park, and residents drive to Long Beach twice a month for shopping. This isolated Cambodian settlement persists despite the lack of institutions normally associated with a successful community enclave.
**Laotians**

People who identified themselves as Laotian in the census were probably ethnic Lao who came from the capital of the country, Vientiane, or farming villages along the Mekong River. Members of other refugee groups, such as the Hmong and the Mien, may have also identified as Laotian because it is the name of their country. However, we assume that the lowland or ethnic Lao predominated in this nationality group.108

In Southern California, Laotians tend to be widely dispersed, and few are evident in Figure 5.9. As with Cambodians, the scattered pockets of Laotians in areas of low-cost housing can be explained by the desire of families to live together and by chain migration, often occurring when already settled refugees take on the official sponsorship of later, more recently arrived relatives.109

Most evident is the association with Cambodian settlements in Long Beach, Van Nuys, and Pomona. Buddhists in Pomona have built a temple, and the similarity of Buddhist religious traditions in the two ethnic groups may help explain the geographical association. Because many Lao have converted to Christianity in the United States, some clusters may be related to church locations.

In the early 1980s some Laotians were sponsored by people in Riverside County, where they worked in a mobile-home and prefabricated housing factory.110 These numbers increased sharply in 1987, just after the Whittier Narrows earthquake. Many Lao who had been living in Los Angeles County were frightened by the quake and decided to relocate to Riverside County, where they knew a person who was hiring workers in that area. (This was the same earthquake that led to the overnight flight of several thousand Hmong from Southern California to Fresno and Merced in the Central Valley.) This relocation probably explains most of the several hundred Laotians that were counted in the 1990 census in the city of Riverside and the similar numbers of both Laotians and Hmong in Banning.

Ethnic Chinese are found in both the Cambodian and Lao populations (Table 5.1). Because birth rates are high among these groups and their U.S.-born children are not counted in the above figures, it is clear that well over 10 percent of Cambodians and Lao in Southern California have Chinese family origins. Chinese-Cambodians represent only a small proportion of the large Cambodian community in Long Beach but are much more strongly represented in the Chinatown area.

**Thais**

Very few people born in Thailand lived in the United States in 1960. As a result, Thais who might have wanted to immigrate after 1965 were unlikely to have relatives here to meet the family-reunification provisions of the 1965 immigration law. However, the establishment of American military bases in Thailand in the 1960s led to increasing contact with Americans and to awareness among Thais of educational and economic opportunities in the United States. Some Thais came initially as temporary visitors to the United States or as students but were later able to change their status to legal immigrants. Others simply remained in this country illegally. Later, once the chains of migration had developed, many Thais chose to live in Southern California because their relatives and friends were already here, they liked the mild climate, and employment opportunities seemed good.

In Southern California 24,191 people identified themselves as Thai on the census questionnaire, and 1,637 Chinese listed Thailand as their birthplace (Table 5.1). It is likely that many in the former group were of Chinese family background, as explained in the section on Chinese. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that the proportion of Chinese-Thais among all Thais has changed since the late 1970s, when a survey of Thais in Los Angeles found that half had at least one Chinese parent.111 Most immigrants—both ethnic Thai and Chinese-Thai—had been born in greater Bangkok and were thus familiar with life in a large city before they settled in Los Angeles.

**East Hollywood.** Within Southern California several shifts have occurred in Thai residential and business concentrations. From the 1950s to the 1970s a small Thai enclave existed in Lynwood and a smaller settlement in Culver City, but by 1990
nearly all Thai residents had left those areas (Fig. 5.10). Some moved to multiethnic East Hollywood, where many newly arrived immigrants were settling.

At first some Thais located near Olympic Boulevard, east of Western Avenue, but by the late 1970s the growing dominance of Korean businesses in that area prompted some Thais to shift their residences and businesses out of Koreatown. Some moved two miles north to East Hollywood, where Thai restaurants, markets, gas stations, travel agencies, a bank, beauty parlors, and newspapers had already been established. The close connection between the neighborhood Thai population and these businesses has been significant, in that Thais are both employees in the businesses and the most important customers for their products and services. Thai settlement in East Hollywood has been enhanced by the presence of large hospitals that employ Thai nurses and of nearby schools that provide technical training in engineering, computer science, and applied sciences.

Although East Hollywood remains an important enclave for the Thai community, in the 1980s many Thais dispersed to the suburbs. Some bought homes or condominiums in Monterey Park and beyond, in the eastern San Gabriel Valley. Others settled in Cerritos or Bellflower. In these moves they have followed other Asians, particularly the Chinese.

**North Hollywood.** A new enclave in the San Fernando Valley has replaced East Hollywood as the leading geographical focus of Thai life. Because most ethnic Thais are Buddhists, the 1972 completion of a magnificent Buddhist temple and community center in North Hollywood made that location particularly attractive. As the temple, called Wat Thai, steadily gained in popularity as a place of worship and community center during the 1970s and 1980s, more Thais moved to nearby neighborhoods. To quell other residents’ objections to the frequent traffic congestion, the temple bought the five houses closest to it.

By 1990 the eastern San Fernando Valley, with more than 1,000 Thais, had eclipsed East Hollywood as the largest Thai enclave in Southern California (Fig. 5.10). The presence of so many Thais in the neighborhood means that the Buddhist monks at Wat Thai can follow the tradition of walking to local Thai homes to receive a Saturday morning food offering, with the person who donates the food gaining religious merit.

No other ethnic group in Southern California has a distribution so strongly oriented to a single religious center. Places of worship and community centers for most other groups are generally located after the faithful have moved into a new area. Among the Thais, however, the temple itself was the key factor behind the geographical concentration.

**Indonesians**

Indonesia’s relative lack of trade with the United States and the low level of historic Indonesian immigration have translated into small numbers of recent immigrants. Even during the 1980s, when immigration from most countries increased substantially, fewer than 12,000 Indonesians were legal immigrants to the United States. The fact that 11,620 Southern Californians identified themselves as Indonesian in 1990 is accounted for by the immigration of some subgroups prior to the 1980s and by the relative importance of Southern California as a destination.

**Subgroups of Indonesians.** The first Indonesians to settle in Southern California were a distinct group of racially mixed people who called themselves “Indos” but whom others frequently call Dutch Indonesians. They came to United States as refugees by way of the Netherlands. Indos had been marginalized and ostracized in Indonesia, especially during and after World War II. Some—particularly those with Dutch fathers—continued to identify with the Dutch after Indonesian independence in 1949. In the 1950s most migrated to the Netherlands, where they were not well received. Thousands of them later settled in Southern California.

Their numbers in 1990 can be estimated as the population reporting both Indonesian birth and Dutch ancestry. In Southern California 30 percent of the 15,455 people who were born in Indonesia had a Dutch ancestry. Of these, 70 percent were white; the remainder reported themselves as Indonesian on the race question. Thus, people of Dutch ancestry (Indos) remain a distinctive Indonesian group.
Ethnic Chinese are another important subgroup among Indonesians in Southern California. In the late 1960s, after persecution by the Indonesian government, many who were able to leave the country did so. In this way many Chinese-Indonesian professionals and business people came to Southern California, where some families opened restaurants or small delicatessens. In 1990 a total of 1,902 Indonesians identified their ancestry as Chinese, and another 3,150 Chinese reported Indonesia as their birthplace (Table 5.1). This suggests that about a third of Indonesians have Chinese family backgrounds.

The third group, which might be called ethnic Indonesians, generally arrived more recently and may be more affluent than the other subgroups. Many own businesses or are government officials, although the group also includes servants and students.

Thus, three subgroups—Indos or Dutch Indonesians, Chinese-Indonesians, and ethnic Indonesians—comprise the population of Indonesian heritage in Southern California. Here, the three are distinct and have little social contact with each other.

**Dispersal.** Indonesians have scattered widely (Fig. 5.11). The Indos never clustered together geographically, although in their early years they did so socially. It is not surprising, however, that some lived near Europeans of Dutch ancestry, the largest concentration of which was in Artesia. The PUMS data show a slight tendency for Chinese-Indonesians to locate near other Chinese. Some ethnic Indonesians have their businesses in the Hollywood area and have discussed developing a stretch of Sunset Boulevard near the Indonesian-owned Metropolitan Hotel into a Little Indonesia.

The affluence of some Indonesians is evident from the location of their residences—in places like Irvine and Laguna Hills, in Brentwood and Diamond Bar. Others live in less costly areas such as Upland, Placentia, and the central San Fernando Valley. The fact that hospitals are the leading industry of employment for Indonesian men and women suggests that the Indonesian concentration in Loma Linda in San Bernardino County (not shown in Figure 5.11) may be partly related to employment at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

**Samoans**

Because American Samoa has been U.S. territory since 1904, Samoans from those islands are U.S. nationals and can travel to the mainland without restriction, as do Puerto Ricans. However, the nearby islands of Western Samoa are an independent country and not U.S. territory. This means that Western Samoans who are considering travel to California cannot migrate or visit as they wish but fall instead under U.S. immigration laws.

World War II abruptly transformed the traditional subsistence life of Samoans. When Samoa became an important staging ground for American forces, the buildup of Navy facilities and the presence of thousands of American servicemen led to the massive infusion of cash into the economy. After the war the old economy was shattered, and almost all available jobs were directly or indirectly tied to the U.S. Navy. The closure of the Navy base in 1951 precipitated the first large out-migration to the United States.

**Long Beach, Wilmington, and Carson.** When the Navy offered some of its Samoan enlistees the chance to transfer to Hawaii, most took advantage of the opportunity. Those who were later reassigned to Navy bases in California brought their families with them, and others arranged to be “dropped off” at a California base when they completed their service. During the 1950s and 1960s these pioneers were followed by other Samoans, resulting in rapidly growing Samoan communities in and near Long Beach, San Diego, and San Francisco. Thus, settlement in Southern California close to the harbor dates from the Navy connections of the early 1950s (Fig. 5.12).

Over the next two decades tract after tract of new suburban homes was built north of Long Beach. Samoans were among the eager buyers in what would become, in 1968, the city of Carson. In 1990 the distribution of Samoans remains remarkably concentrated in the Carson–Wilmington–Long Beach area. On the northern edge of the concentration, several hundred Samoans live in a single apartment complex in the city of Compton. A separate Samoan enclave is located in Garden Grove and Santa Ana.
Since the 1950s, enlistment in the U.S. Navy has declined. Samoan men frequently work as truckers, security guards, or stevedores, which has allowed them to remain in the area. Samoan settlement can be seen as one part of the larger working-class residential area of southern Los Angeles County. Samoan businesses tend to be family-run retail and food stores, serving Pacific Islanders regardless of nationality.

Adaptation to Southern California may have been particularly difficult for Samoans because of the great differences between their traditional way of life and the world of Southern California. Various Christian churches—most commonly Mormon, Congregational, or Catholic—help ease the transition. Churches are particularly important for Samoans, and much of Samoan social life revolves around them, with frequent weddings and festivals. The importance of social bonds within the Samoan community is also reflected in the strong geographical concentration of its settlement.

**Hawaiians**

In Hawaii, and presumably among migrants to California, being part Hawaiian in family lineage usually enhances one’s status. Because in Hawaii relatively few people trace their ancestry solely to native Hawaiians of Polynesian background, many Hawaiians counted in Southern California probably had mixed ancestries—Hawaiian together with various combinations of Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Portuguese, Puerto Rican, black, and white, for example. Moreover, the prestige conferred by Hawaiian ancestry may prompt a few to claim this regardless of their actual family heritage.

The total number of Hawaiians in Southern California is so small that only two tracts in 1990 contained more than fifty of them (Fig. 5.13). Nevertheless, their distribution gives hints of likely social and employment connections. First, the tendency of Hawaiians to locate in the southern part of Los Angeles County can be associated with employment in and near the harbors of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Hawaiians may express some preference for living near the ocean, but certainly the harbor area has long had the blue-collar job opportunities that most Hawaiians seek. Second, other Pacific Islanders have located in the same general area of settlement, reflecting perhaps some commonality in background or viewpoint that is expressed in the Pacific Islander festivals. The small restaurants and take-out food stores owned by Hawaiian families are widespread and are patronized by other ethnic groups from Hawaii. Third, the presence of more than 300 Hawaiians in Gardena may well be a function of cultural and personal ties with Japanese from Hawaii. Last, the cluster of Hawaiians near LAX would suggest employment in some aspect of the air-transportation industry.

**Guamanians**

Guamanians, or Chamorros, began to migrate to California only after 1950, when the U.S. Congress gave them unrestricted right to travel to the United States. Like natives of American Samoa, those who settle in California are not immigrants in the legal sense. Because Spain controlled Guam and other Mariana Islands until the late nineteenth century, most Guamanians, like Filipinos, are Catholics. The early Spanish importation of Filipino labor to replace the dwindling Chamorro population of Guam adds to the similarity in traditional culture between Guamanians and Filipinos.

Because Guamanians, Samoans, and Filipinos share past employment ties with the U.S. Navy, it is not surprising that the earliest Guamanians in Southern California lived in Long Beach. Most of the men had either enlisted in or were working as civilians for the Navy, usually at the large naval shipyard there. Chain migrations of family and friends have directed later migrants to the same sections of Long Beach near Navy housing and the harbor—especially in West Long Beach, where a Filipino community has existed since World War II (Fig. 5.14). Like Filipinos and Samoans, many Guamanians have moved into the newer suburban housing in Carson.

**Asian and Pacific Islander Median Household Income**

Extremes of wealth and poverty among Asians and Pacific Islanders in different parts of Southern California are striking
The areas with the poorest Asian population are the best-known Asian ethnic enclaves: Koreatown and the areas close to Chinatown in Los Angeles, and the Cambodian settlement in Long Beach. A closer examination reveals the low incomes in the smaller Filipino enclaves of Temple-Alvarado and West Long Beach. Somewhat better off are Asians in most tracts in northern Orange County, where the Vietnamese are particularly concentrated in Westminster and Garden Grove.

Asians living in Monterey Park, Alhambra, and Gardena tend to have moderate incomes, as do most of the Asians who do not live where their group is concentrated. On the other hand, wealthy Chinese have bought homes in Arcadia and San Marino, to the north and east of Monterey Park. Affluent Asian households in the foothills north of the San Fernando Valley and in Glendale and La Cañada–Flintridge are mostly Korean, but Chinese and other Asians can also be found in these places. Cerritos is a slightly older, upper-middle-class suburban city which has attracted a wide range of Asians, especially Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, and Asian Indians.

The greatest Asian affluence is generally found in newer housing in the hills surrounding the larger cities. Some of the most expensive Asian homes are on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, in eastern Ventura County (Thousand Oaks), and in Calabasas and other fringe areas of the western San Fernando Valley. Many Japanese executives of Japanese corporations live in Torrance and on the peninsula. The latter has been favored by other Japanese and Chinese families who can afford the homes there.

The largest areas with moderately high Asian incomes are southern Orange County and the eastern San Gabriel Valley, both of which experienced much new homebuilding in the 1970s and 1980s. Walnut and Cerritos have become attractive destinations for many Asians. West Covina, Diamond Bar, Hacienda Heights, and Laguna Niguel are also important Asian middle-income areas.

Asians who desire a new home tend not to move farther east into Riverside or San Bernardino Counties, as would many whites, blacks, and Latinos. This is because most Asians value easy access to larger cities, Asian markets, and institutions of their group over the greater isolation of a distant suburb.
2132.02 and 2133. West Jefferson, or the 36th Street enclave, was between Jefferson and Exposition Boulevards, from St. Andrews Place on the west to Budlong Avenue on the east, within modern census tracts 2220 and 2225 (Fig. 3.1). These enclaves are shown on the map of Japanese in Los Angeles as of 1940 (Hanson and Beckett 1944).

19. Tuthill (1924); Uono (1927); Strong (1933); Hanson and Beckett (1944); Mason and McKinstry (1969), 29.
22. Pre-1942 Japanese farming is covered in detail in Broom and Reimer (1949), 70–75.
34. On the north side of 1st Street are brick buildings dating from the early years of this century, with small stores and hotels. This is now the historic district of Little Tokyo. Most of the 700 residents of Little Tokyo live in a high-rise apartment building (Little Tokyo Towers) and two other residential complexes. Poverty is visible only to the south, by the edge of Los Angeles’ Skid Row and its the homeless population.
35. Strong (1933), 59.
36. Confirmation of the greater residential stability of Japanese in more recent times is possible with U.S. census data. Different ethnic groups can be compared by means of the percentages living in the same house five years earlier out of all individuals living somewhere in the United States five years earlier. Among Californians in 1970, both Japanese and Chinese had higher percentages living in the same house (59 percent and 55 percent, respectively) five years earlier than did whites (47 percent), blacks (45 percent), Filipinos (49 percent), or people of Spanish surname (47 percent). See U.S. Bureau of the Census (1972), Table 50 and U.S. Bureau of the Census (1973), Tables 5, 20, 35.
40. For the characteristics and attitudes of Filipinos in Southern California, see Morales (1974) and Kang (1996).
41. The early settlements are described by Bartlett and Bartlett (1932) and Catapusan (1934).
42. Aquino (1952).
45. Espiritu (1992), 33. Because there is no commonly used name for this enclave, we use the term “Temple-Alvarado” because it identifies a key intersection in the area.
47. For discussion of Filipinos in the U.S. Navy, see Quinsaat (1976) and Allen (1977).
48. Hanson and Beckett (1944).
52. Some features of early settlement were provided by Eui-Young Yu, Professor of Sociology at California State University, Los Angeles. Additional details are found in Givens (1939), 24. Koreans in Los Angeles in the 1970s are described in Yu, Phillips, and Yang (1982), and fascinating life histories of many Los Angeles area Koreans are reported in Kim and Yu (1996).
54. The 1980 calculations were made by Min (1993), 189, with Koreatown appropriately defined as smaller than in 1990. Koreatown as of 1990 can be easily identified in Figure 5.4. We included as Koreatown the nearly square area that was most strongly Korean, plus the three adjacent census tracts that were more than 5 percent Korean. For a detailed map of Koreatown showing percentage Korean by block, see Allen and Turner (1995).
55. Analysis of 1990 PUMS data showed that 27 percent of Korean immigrants in Koreatown had arrived in the United States after 1986. This was more than twice the average percentage for Korean residents in Southern California.


60. There are also many Korean-owned indoor swap meets and garment factories, but these are usually not located in either Koreatown or a Korean enclave. The other types of Korean businesses not associated with Korean enclaves have been gasoline service stations, grocery stores, and liquor stores serving black and Latino neighborhoods. The 1992 riots destroyed many Korean businesses.


63. Kim (1986), 80, 82.

64. Yu (1990), 12. This source reports the results of a survey of 292 Korean households in 1988-1989 and presents valuable data on topics not covered by the U.S. census.


68. Kim (1986), 64.


71. La Brack (1988).


73. The general principle is that more assimilated immigrants tend to be less clustered residentially (Allen and Turner 1996a, 21).


75. The diversity of regional origins is indicated by the first language spoken by South Asian immigrants to Southern California. It was estimated in 1980 that some 21 percent spoke Punjabi and another 20 percent, Gujarati. Next most important were Urdu (spoken primarily by Muslims), at 18 percent; Hindi, 16 percent; South Indian languages, 12 percent; and Bengali, 11 percent (Mossain 1982).

76. Dart (1993). Norwalk homeowners also objected to the traditional architectural design of a planned Hindu temple in their city. That temple, which serves many Cerritos residents, was redesigned in a Spanish style (Faris 1992).

77. Leonard and Tibrewal (1993), 149, 151.

78. The section on Artesia is based primarily on Harris (1992) and on interviews by California State University, Northridge, student Steve Kennedy.


80. Most people identify with the name of their specific ethnic group or country. However, if a wider regional label is used, Southeast Asian is sometimes preferred over Indochinese because of the latter’s association with French colonialism.


83. Processing operations at Camp Pendleton and links with Orange County sponsors are discussed in Cooper (1992).

84. Desbarats and Holland (1983), 32.

85. Alicia Cooper, former director of the International Rescue Committee office in Santa Ana, interviewed April 1996.

86. Mott (1989); Duong (1983).


88. Desbarats and Holland (1983), 32. The Vietnamese evaluation of housing in terms of local accessibility is very different from most Americans’ emphasis on the size, quality, and cost of the housing.


96. The origins of Catholic Vietnamese settlement in the western San Fernando Valley were explained by Loc Nguyen, who was directly involved in arranging sponsorship of these refugees in 1975. Nguyen, director of Immigration and Refugee Department, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, was interviewed April 1996.

97. The original refugee sponsorships and later chain migration that led to the western San Fernando Valley enclave were described by several Vietnamese ladies at the parish of St. Joseph’s the Worker, Canoga Park, with Phuong Pham assisting as interpreter, March 1996.

98. PUMS data shows that 14 percent of working Vietnamese in the western San Fernando Valley were in this industry in 1990.

99. Scott (1993). PUMS data show that Vietnamese living in Hawthorne were employed in these industries at more than twice their average rate in these industries for all of Southern California.
100. This information was provided by neighborhood residents and a postal carrier.

101. Discussion of the chaos beginning in 1975 and the characteristics of refugees in California is based primarily on Rumbaut (1989, 1995) and Kiernan (1990).

102. The early Cambodian connection with California State University, Long Beach, was explained by Elizabeth Koo, youth project director at the United Cambodian Community, in an interview with California State University, Northridge, student Howard Shain, November 1993.


105. Rose Kinsey (program coordinator at the Holmes Avenue School) and Dwieva Hahn (manager of Pueblo del Rio) explained the situation of local Cambodians, February 1992 and January 1993.

106. Cuong Kim, Cambodian-refugee case manager of the International Rescue Committee, Santa Ana, interviewed April 1996. The fact that such neighborhood clusters of Cambodians or Laotians represent social networks and were established by a single person or family is confirmed by Ruben Rumbaut of Michigan State University. In the early 1980s Rumbaut traced the origin of several such clusters in the San Diego area and was always able to identify the specific pioneer who first chose the settlement.

107. Carmen Buenrostro (manager) and Mom Sok (a resident) explained the situation of local Cambodians, interviewed April 1996. See also Nielsen (1984) and Foster (1990).

108. The assumption that the Laotian population represents primarily ethnic Lao is based on the fact that the largest and most distinctive ethnic group from Laos, the Hmong, seem to have identified themselves specifically as Hmong: their census numbers and distribution nationally conform to expectations. Although some Hmong settled in Orange County soon after they arrived in the United States, during the 1980s most moved to Fresno or elsewhere. Because only 1,557 Hmong were counted in all of Southern California in 1990, they are not treated in this book.


110. Alicia Cooper, former director of the International Rescue Committee office in Santa Ana, interviewed April 1996.

111. Details of Thais in Los Angeles in the 1970s and of the older Thai settlements, particularly East Hollywood, are based on Desbarats (1979).


115. Personal observations on this group and other Indonesians were provided by Stephen Koletty of the Department of Geography at the University of Southern California, interviewed July 1996.


117. The Dutch enclave around Artesia developed because of Dutch employment in dairy farming. Prior to its subdivision in the late 1960s, neighboring Cerritos was the single largest dairy center in Los Angeles County and was called Dairy Valley. As land values rose in the 1960s and 1970s, dairying shifted into the Chino area of San Bernardino County, where it remains focused in the 1990s.


119. For historical connections between migration, the Navy, and the post–World War II economy, see Lewthwaite, Mainzer, and Holland (1973) and Janes (1990), 22–27.

120. According to Margie McKenzie, manager of the Park Village Apartments in Compton, Samoans constituted 85 percent of the total residents (interviewed February 1992). They numbered many more than the 434 reported in the 1990 U.S. census because so many were Western Samoans who were residing in the United States illegally, having overstayed their temporary visitor visas. Park Village was popular with Samoans partly because it qualified for federal rent subsidies for low-income tenants.

121. PUMS data for Southern California show only thirty-seven Samoan men serving in the U.S. Navy in 1990.


123. The PUMS data estimated that 140 Hawaiians in Southern California worked in the air-transportation industry in 1990.

124. Because of the historical influence of Spanish culture, many Guamanians and Filipinos also reported their origin as Hispanic on U.S. census questionnaires.