Ethnoburb versus Chinatown: Two Types of Urban Ethnic Communities in Los Angeles

Conceptual Framework: Ethnoburb

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1 I am truly grateful to Jennifer Wolch who provided substantive critiques on the paper; organizers and participants of the "Symposium on Cultural Approaches in Geography" who provided opportunities for me to present an earlier version of this paper; Chris Seidel who offered editorial assistance; and all those who participated the Chinatown surveys and whom I interviewed.

2 Ethnic settlement patterns and their relationships with ethnic identity have long been important issues for ethnic studies in the United States. Recent critiques of traditional approaches of ethnic studies argue for a greater sensitivity to the social construction of race and dynamics of racialization, the socio-spatial structuration of ethnic communities, and the role of ethnic economies in ethnic community development and globalization processes (Anderson 1987; 1988; 1991; Jackson 1987). New cultural geography, in particular has responded to the multiculturalism in contemporary society and postmodernism (Cosgrove 1983; Cosgrove & Jackson 1987). Those traditionally excluded from western society, social sciences and Humanities, the 'other', including women and ethnic minorities, have played more important roles in society and academic studies. These new perspectives inform the development of a geographical understanding of the Chinese experience in Los Angeles -- the focus of this paper.

3 Like in many other cities, Los Angeles' Chinese population was historically centered in a downtown Chinatown, which can be traced back to the last century. Contemporary Chinatown remains a traditional, congested neighborhood and an ethnic business district, as well as a tourist attraction. Beginning in the 1960s, the Chinese population
suburbanized. However, unlike scenarios predicted by traditional models, suburbanization of the Chinese in Los Angeles was not accompanied by complete assimilation, nor did only the more affluent segments of the Chinese community move to the suburbs. Instead, there was a spatial transformation of the Chinese community. While downtown Chinatown persisted, suburban areas in San Gabriel Valley emerged, characterized by high concentrations of Chinese population, strong contrasts in socio-economic status, expanding Chinese-owned businesses and industrial districts, and high levels of Chinese participation in local politics. By 1990 there were more than 158,000 Chinese in the San Gabriel Valley, making it the largest suburban Chinese concentration in the nation. The City of Monterey Park became the center of this suburban Chinese zone. In many census tracts in San Gabriel Valley, Chinese residents accounted for more than 25% of the total population. The San Gabriel Valley Chinese settlement is a new phenomenon emerging on a geographical scale that surpasses the earlier Chinatown model. It includes cities, Census Designated Places (CDPs) and unincorporated areas in the Valley with substantial numbers of Chinese people. However, as I began my investigations, I frequently read and heard people refer to Monterey Park as the "suburban Chinatown," which implied that Monterey Park was the same sort of place as downtown Chinatown, only located in the suburbs (Fong 1994; Lai 1988). Just as Los Angeles has always been thought as "atypical" in the American urban experience, Los Angeles' Chinese settlement in the San Gabriel Valley centered in Monterey Park was also considered a "unique" and isolated case of urban ethnic community formation. But the more I experienced the differences between the two Chinese communities in Los Angeles, the more uneasy I felt about such a labeling of Monterey Park. The residents of these two communities appeared to me to be distinctly different with respect to where they came from, when they came, what languages they spoke, what kinds of jobs they held, and to what socio-economic class they belong to. For instance, I personally felt alienated in Chinatown due to my language difficulties, since I do not understand or speak Cantonese at all. I felt more comfortable in the Monterey Park area, where Mandarin is commonly spoken. I continuously asked myself, why has Monterey Park as a new suburban concentration formed in recent decades? Has such a community existed before, or elsewhere? What are the underlying forces behind its formation? And what are the differences between traditional Chinatown and the new suburban San Gabriel Valley Chinese community?

In this paper, I will first briefly elaborate on a new contextual model of new suburban ethnic settlements -- which I term ethnoburb -- and demonstrate fundamental distinctions between traditional ethnic communities (ghettos and ethnic enclaves) and the ethnoburbs. I will then use some empirical data to identify some key differences between the emergent Chinese ethnoburb and contemporary Chinatown in Los Angeles, in terms of their residents' demographic characteristics, socio-economic status, and economic structure.

Drawing insights from theoretical approaches to inter-ethnic relations (e.g., new cultural geography, assimilation and pluralism, and traditional spatial models of ethnic settlement), I have proposed a new conceptual model of ethnic settlement: the ethnoburb, or ethnic suburb (Li 1997; 1998a & b). The model hypothesizes that in recent decades, under the influence of international geopolitical and global economic restructuring, changing national immigration and trade policies, and local demographic, economic and political contexts, a new type of suburban ethnic concentration area -- the ethnoburb --
Ethnoburbs are suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large metropolitan areas. They are multiethnic communities, in which one ethnic minority group has a significant concentration, but does not necessarily comprise a majority. Ethnoburbs are created through deliberate efforts of that group within changing global/national/local contexts. They function as a settlement type that replicates some features of an enclave, and some features of a suburb lacking a specific ethnic identity. Ethnoburbs coexist along with traditional ethnic ghettos/enclaves in inner cities in contemporary American society.

Ethnoburbs as a new type of ethnic settlement are more likely to locate in the suburbs of major metropolitan areas. They are created by ethnic people (including new immigrants and later generations) under the influences of contemporary socio-economic and political structural changes. Ethnoburbs are fully functioning communities with their own internal socio-economic structures which are integral to national and international environments. They are not isolated ethnic communities, but an open system tied by information exchange, business connections and social activities with the mainstream society. Ethnoburbs have replaced or are replacing traditional downtown enclaves, as more important new "ports of entry" for immigrants in some large American metropolitan areas. After they are established, ethnoburbs continue to grow and to diffuse spatially and develop socio-economically.

Ethnoburbs as ethnic concentration areas are different from the traditional ethnic settlement types (ghetto and enclave) in the following ways (Table 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ghetto</th>
<th>Enclave</th>
<th>Ethnoburb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamics</strong></td>
<td>forced segregation</td>
<td>forced &amp; voluntary changing contexts, voluntary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spatial Form</strong></td>
<td>small scale</td>
<td>small scale</td>
<td>small to medium scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>high density</td>
<td>high density</td>
<td>medium density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>inner city</td>
<td>inner city &amp; suburbs</td>
<td>suburbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
<td>not many ethnically-bias towards services &amp; complete w/ethnically-owned businesses</td>
<td>labor-intensive sectors own business of all kinds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Stratification</strong></td>
<td>minimum</td>
<td>not much very stratified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction</strong></td>
<td>mainly within group</td>
<td>mainly within group</td>
<td>both within and inter-groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tension</strong></td>
<td>between groups</td>
<td>mainly inter-group</td>
<td>inter- &amp; intra-group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>mainly inward</td>
<td>mainly inward</td>
<td>both inward &amp; outward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td>traditional Chinatown</td>
<td>contemporary Chinese ethnoburb</td>
<td>in (19th century) Chinatown San Gabriel Valley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Comparison among Ghetto, Enclave and Ethnoburb

8 (1) Different dynamics: ethnoburbs are the result of deliberate creations of the ethnic groups involved to set up their own job and consumer markets in order to fit into broader national and international socio-economic and geopolitical contexts. Thus, the dynamics of ethnoburbs are different from those of ghettos and enclaves. Unlike ghettos in which ethnic people do not have economic power, the creators of ethnoburbs choose their potential locations with their economic strength. Unlike ghettos in which ethnic people do not own many businesses in their neighborhoods, ethnic people own a good portion or key components of businesses in ethnoburbs. Economic activities in ethnoburbs not only incorporate the ethnic economy in the traditional sense, but involve the globalization of capital and international flows of commodities, skilled labor, high tech and managerial personnel. The situation may vary among ethnic groups, depending on their population size, willingness to relocate, economic capacity, local response/resistance from the majority, and promotion or restriction by government policies. Ethnoburbs are not the result of forced segregation as ghettos, but a voluntary relative concentration of ethnic people to maximize ethnic personal and social network, as well as business connections; and to have a place with familiar language and culture.

9 (2) Geographical Locations and Density: ethnoburbs locate in suburbs, with larger geographical areas, more ethnic population, and lower density than ghettos and enclaves. They may include many municipalities and unincorporated areas, instead of just block(s) and section(s) in inner cities like ghettos and enclaves. Although there may be more ethnic people in ethnoburbs than in traditional ethnic neighborhoods, the proportion of a particular ethnic group is not as high as in the latter. The percentage of ethnic people in ethnoburbs may be as low as 10-15% in some places and they seldom become the majority of the community. Both ethnic residences and businesses are relatively concentrated in ethnoburbs within identifiable clusters, but they are not highly concentrated in one single location. Unlike ghettos and enclaves where boundaries are usually obvious, boundaries for ethnoburbs are fuzzy and largely arbitrary.

10 (3) Internal Stratifications: polarization of socio-economic status and occupational structure of ethnic residents in ethnoburbs is much greater than in ghettos and enclaves. Therefore, the formation and manifestation of ethnoburbs not only involve racial conflicts between different ethnic groups, but also class conflicts within the ethnic group itself. Both wealthy and poor people live in these ethnoburbs, although often in different sections of one city or in different but nearby cities. The establishment of ethnic owned and operated businesses (both "ethnic" in traditional terms or "professional" in modern ways) attracts more new immigrants to live and seek jobs in suburban clusters. Increasing numbers of immigrants strengthen the ethnic socio-economic structure, also that structure increases potential class conflicts within the ethnic group.

11 (4) Functionalities: The 19th century ethnic enclaves of Europeans in the suburbs

12 which primarily were the results of "invasion and succession" -- concentrations of better-off long time immigrants and/or later generations who moved from downtown districts. In contrast, ethnoburbs become new "ports of entry" for immigrants of all different socio-economic backgrounds. Unlike those traditional ethnic neighborhoods of enclaves and ghettos in which ethnic people are primarily inward looking and form self-contained communities, ethnoburbs are more open to the outside world. Ethnic people in ethnoburbs are looking both inward and outward in terms of their socio-economic and political
pursuits. They have more contact and interactions with other ethnic groups in terms of economic activities, social affairs and political involvement. They are more actively involved in mainstream politics and community affairs than in ghettos and enclaves. On the other hand, ethnic people in ethnoburbs show the continuity of ethnic solidarity through the very establishment of ethnoburbs. Once an ethnoburb is established, it becomes a new hub for the ethnic group. Ethnicity is reinforced through a network of economic, social, and political relations. Although there are class differences and conflicts within the ethnic group, whenever facing common problems in society they often unite under the banner of group consciousness and fight for their rights. Ethnic consensus revives as a basis for further growth.

**Ethnoburb and Chinatown Comparison**

**Data Sources and Methods of Analysis**

13 In this paper, I will focus on the aspects of different demographic, socio-economic profiles and functionality between ethnoburbs and ethnic enclaves by analyzing empirical data on the San Gabriel Valley ethnoburb and downtown Chinatown in Los Angeles.

14 I compare spatial, population, and economic structures of the ethnoburb and Chinatown, through an analysis of census data to portray the changing distribution of Chinese population, and an analysis of Chinese business locations, and their correlation with residential patterns. The Chinese residential and firm-level business distribution information is used to illustrate the spatial forms of the Chinese community in Los Angeles in terms of change over time and diffusion over space. Census data for Los Angeles County at the census tract level and information about Chinese businesses (for 1982, 1994 and 1996) are collected and mapped. It illustrates the broad relationships between residence and business location patterns. Results of such information allow me to illustrate the nature of ethnic economic structures in these two places, and how their respective ethnic economies are differentially connected into the global economic network through business transactions.

15 The ethnoburb model argues that ethnoburbs form under dynamics different from downtown Chinatown, and also have spatial forms and internal socio-economic structures which differ from the latter. The task then is to reveal the dimensions of these differences between downtown Chinatown and the San Gabriel Valley ethnoburb. I analyzed micro-data samples from the 1990 census (the Public Use Microdata Samples, PUMS) to elucidate demographic, socio-economic and occupational characteristics and demonstrate differences between the ethnoburb and Chinatown. Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to retrieve and analyze PUMS data subsets on the ethnoburb and Chinatown, including cross-tabulate age, birth place, immigration status, and other demographic characteristics with socio-economic conditions such as income, home ownership, and welfare recipiency to provide statistical profiles of the two places. Eleven Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) within San Gabriel Valley were selected as the study site, including 22 cities, 12 Census Designated Places (CDPs), and some parts of unincorporated Los Angeles. There were a total of 6,540 Chinese people and 1,934 Chinese households in this sample subset, represent 128,624 Chinese people and 37,245 Chinese households in the San Gabriel Valley (Li 1998a). One PUMA (06508) was used to represent the downtown Chinatown area for the purposes of comparison to the ethnoburb sample...
data. Chinatown itself occupies only a few census tracts within this PUMA. However, this PUMA is the smallest geographic unit for which randomly selected PUMS data are available equivalent to that of the San Gabriel Valley Chinese ethnoburb, and will be referred as Chinatown hereafter. The Chinatown data subset contained 644 Chinese people and 178 Chinese households, representing 11,683 Chinese people, and 3,814 Chinese households, though the sample size was too small for further detailed statistical analysis. Demographic characteristics, socio-economic profiles and occupational structures of the ethnoburban Chinese and Chinatown Chinese provided in this paper were based on these two randomly selected and weighted samples in order to represent all Chinese population in the two different communities.

Supplementary information were provided by face-to-face interviews in the ethnoburb and two Chinatown Assessment surveys (including one business and one residential versions) carried out by Asian American Economic Development Enterprises, Inc. during summer, 1994. As a volunteer of that organization, I not only participated in the survey, but played important roles by designing survey questionnaires, interviewing people, and drafting final report. During the surveys, a total of 51 Chinatown businesses were interviewed, and 57 residents either filled out survey questionnaire or were interviewed. The business version was conducted by trained interviewers either face-to-face or over the phone. Languages used in such interviews included English, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Resident survey was conducted during three focus group meetings. Most of the respondents are either parents of the pupils who are attending Castelar Elementary School, or residents of Cathy Manor Senior Housing.

The census (including PUMS) and business location analyses permit me to assess the changing demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Chinese population, compare the current situation of Chinatown and the ethnoburb, and discover similarities and differences among the two groups of Chinese people. It also reveals the extent of socio-economic polarization within the ethnoburb as a proxy for complexity and heterogeneity of the ethnoburb relative to the traditional Chinatown enclave. Surveys and interviews add personal stories to the aggregated census data to provide broader overall picture to our understanding of such a changing ethnic enclave.

The Ethnoburb Surpassing Chinatown as a Center of Chinese Population and Business Activities

Back in 1980, the Chinese population in Los Angeles County was relatively small, but highly concentrated. About three fourth of all census tracts had less than 50 Chinese. Only 7 tracts had more than 1,000 Chinese each. The tract with the largest Chinese population had 2,929 Chinese, and was located in downtown Chinatown. The Chinese were clustered in a path originating in Chinatown and extending to the eastern suburbs, centered around the City of Monterey Park. This pattern indicates that by 1980, the Chinese ethnoburb in San Gabriel Valley had already formed, but had not yet detached from Chinatown — the traditional center of Chinese people in Los Angeles. Looking ten years ahead, the Chinese population in LA had increased rapidly, and remained highly concentrated. In 1990, the tracts with fewer than 50 Chinese in Los Angeles County fell to less than half of all tracts. On the other hand, the tracts with more than 1,000 Chinese increased to 49. The ethnoburb not only grew, adding a large numbers of Chinese, but it matured in a sense that it formed its own center and distinctive spatial form. The largest
Chinese population in one single tract rose to 3,834, and was located inside the ethnoburb. Similarly, most tracts with 1,000 Chinese and over were in the ethnoburb. It is obvious that in terms of the total number of Chinese and its spatial scale, the San Gabriel Valley ethnoburb had become by 1990 a more important Chinese residential area than Chinatown. What more important is that during this ten-year period, the ethnoburb not only grew at its original site, but expanded to the Eastern part of San Gabriel Valley. In the meantime, the Chinese also increased their presence along the Pacific coast, and southeastern part of the county.

The ethnoburb is more important than Chinatown as a Chinese business district as well, although different Chinese business have different location patterns depending on the types of business, their labor supply and customers (Li 1998b). The Chinese economy in Los Angeles County includes firms that fill both "ethnic economic niches", e.g., Chinese restaurants, markets, beauty salons, and realtors, as well as professional businesses in the modern sense, such as attorneys, doctors, and financial institutions. Different types of Chinese businesses also target different customers. Some of them serve both Chinese and non-Chinese communities, others provide services and commodities mainly to Chinese customers, or some rely on the Chinese communities for labor while others do not.

Those businesses mainly serving Chinese customers or depending on Chinese labor supply are almost exclusively located in Chinese communities. The numbers of these types of firms grew rapidly, and they became more concentrated in the ethnoburb during the 1980s. This is true for both ethnic and professional types of businesses. For example, Chinese medical clinics, which primarily offer acupuncture and Chinese herb medicine, can be considered as a professional type of business. There were a total of 19 clinics in Los Angeles County in 1982, whereas in 1994 the number skyrocketed to 164. In the early 1980s, with few exceptions, these Chinese medical clinics located mainly in those places where the Chinese people -- their customers -- were concentrated, and were almost equally split between Chinatown and the western portion of the incipient ethnoburb. None at all existed in the East San Gabriel Valley area. In recent years, the numbers increased dramatically inside the ethnoburb, in both Eastern and Western San Gabriel Valley, where more Chinese are living. Overall, professional businesses are more likely to locate inside the ethnoburb (Chinese Yellow Pages, 1983, 1994, and 1996). This is a good indicator that the ethnoburb is a new type of ethnic settlement where professional services are more important than in Chinatown.

Demographic, and Socio-Economic Contrasts between Ethnoburb and Chinatown

Compared to the ethnoburb, which has been created under global, national and local contexts and which has stronger global connections and internal stratifications, Chinatown continues to be a typical inner-city ethnic enclave. It is mainly comprised of immigrants of Chinese descendants from mainland China and Southeast Asia, with a much older age structure and longer duration of residence in the U.S. Overall socio-economic status of its residents is lower, and traditional ethnic economic niches and occupations dominate its economy. These characteristics are detailed below, to highlight the strong differences between the traditional Chinese ethnic enclave and the new ethnoburban development model.
The foremost characteristic of the ethnoburb is that it is truly multi-ethnic community. In the City of Monterey Park, the heart of the ethnoburb where the percentage of Chinese population was the highest among all ethnoburban communities, the Chinese accounted for 36% in 1990 (Bureau of the Census, 1990 STF1a). In Chinatown, however, ethnic Chinese was majority, accounting 62% of total population (Seo 1992).

The ethnoburban Chinese population is composed largely of immigrants from a wide variety of origin countries, reflecting geopolitical changes, shifts in US immigration policy, and the global Chinese Diaspora. While more than 61% of ethnoburban Chinese immigrants traced their origins back to China (including both mainland and Taiwan), the other 39% came from 33 countries or areas in the world. On the other hand, Chinatown has more "old-time overseas Chinese" who came from less diversified origins, compared to the ethnoburb. In Chinatown, a majority (52.6%) of Chinese immigrants were born in China, followed by those born in Indochina (30.8%). Only a small proportion came from Hong Kong (8.6%) or Taiwan (1.3%). Chinatown's immigrants have been in the U.S. much longer on average compared to those in the ethnoburb who are mainly recent immigrants: 10.2% came before 1965. Among China born immigrants, the percentage was even higher (16.1%). Many of these immigrants came either during 1965-1969 due to changing immigration law, or in 1980-1984 due to the end of Vietnam War and secondary migration within the U.S. None of the Indochina-born immigrants came to the U.S. prior to 1970. Therefore, Chinatown is a community primarily comprised of immigrants from two main sources -- China and Indochina -- many of whom are long time settlers. The community has largely been passed over by the newer waves of immigrants from Asia.

Chinatown is also a neighborhood of mixed age groups with larger percentages of elderly people. In contrast, the ethnoburb is a young, energetic community with an age structure strongly leaning toward younger age groups. The average age of Chinatown Chinese (36.2) was almost four years older than that of the ethnoburb. The age profile for Chinatown Chinese in 1990 did not have the sharp contrasts between younger and older ages, but was more balanced among almost all age groups younger than 70 years old. Elderly people composed a much higher proportion of Chinatown Chinese than in the ethnoburb. Therefore, Chinatown is an aging community compared to the ethnoburb.

Chinatown Chinese had low levels of education attainment and English ability, compared to the ethnoburban Chinese and the county population in general. Ethnoburban Chinese received better formal education and have superior English language skills than their Chinatown counterparts, which are in turn reflected in income levels, occupational structure and housing conditions. Such differences were even more dramatic between ethnoburban immigrant Chinese and Chinatown immigrant Chinese, whose educational levels were the lowest. Almost 44% of them did not graduate from high school, and only about 15.8% had a bachelor degree or higher. The figures for the ethnoburb, on the other hand, were 29% and 31% respectively.

Chinatown continues to be a linguistically isolated ethnic island. Almost 45% of the Chinatown Chinese did not speak English at all, or did not speak it well. Almost two-third of China-born immigrants belong to the same two categories. In contrast, 64% of ethnoburban immigrant Chinese claimed that they speak English well or very well. An overwhelming majority (94.5%) of all Chinatown Chinese spoke a language other than English at home. The percentage was 97.4% for immigrant Chinese, and as high as 80.4% even for native-born Chinese. Speaking Chinese is probably the only way that American
born generation and their non-English speaking parents can communicate. All old-timer "overseas Chinese" (immigrants coming before 1965) spoke Chinese at home.

Not surprisingly, Chinatown Chinese had low incomes, and more were reliant on public assistance. Median personal income was $6,636 in 1989, more than $8,300 lower than that of ethnoburban Chinese. Median household income was $23,288 ($16,712 lower than that of ethnoburban Chinese, and also much lower than the county median). Almost 45% of Chinatown households had incomes less than 50% of the Los Angeles County median, and 14.8% received some public assistance income. Chinatown Chinese were also disadvantaged in terms of housing, compared to their ethnoburban counterparts. They were more apt to live in crowded conditions, and had much lower home ownership rates (30.7%). Only about a quarter of Chinatown households lived in single family detached housing, as expected given Chinatown's location in downtown Los Angeles, but crowding problems were severe among renter households, 34% of renter households had more than 1.5 persons per room. This demonstrates not only a general pattern of difference between older downtown and newer suburban settings, but also a reflection of the lower socio-economic status of the Chinatown Chinese compared to ethnoburban Chinese.

In terms of economic structure, Chinatown is still a traditional ethnic enclave with trade as its most important economic activity. In 1990, service jobs and laborers continued to be the main occupational categories of residents, together accounting for 42.4% of all workers. Retail trade was more important in Chinatown than in the ethnoburb, engaging 31.6% of all working Chinatown Chinese residents -- much higher than in the ethnoburb. Manufacturing was more important in Chinatown (26.4%) than in the ethnoburb as well. On the other hand, both professional & services and FIRE were far less important in Chinatown. Only 17.5% of Chinatown residents held managerial and professional jobs; and total white collar jobs counted for 44.4%, while in the ethnoburb, two-thirds of those who worked in 1989 had white collar jobs. The rate of ethnic entrepreneurship among Chinatown Chinese residents (7.2%) was also lower than that of the ethnoburban Chinese. Again, immigrants were more likely to own their businesses. Businesses owned by Chinatown residents were mostly in retail trade, manufacturing or FIRE. What is interesting is that many Chinatown business owners and/or operators live in the ethnoburb (Li 1995). For them, Chinatown is only a place to work, not to live. They cited the following reasons for their choice of living in communities outside Chinatown: better location and school, cheaper and larger housing, quieter, safer, less crime than Chinatown, and close to businesses and/or family and friends.

Chinatown is more self-contained spatially than the ethnoburb. This can partially be demonstrated by relative low vehicle ownership rates (70.1%, compared to the ethnoburb's 93.3%) and high reliance on public transportation (about one fifth of Chinatown residents relied on public transportation to and from work; and another 8.1% walked). Such conditions are more likely to restrict the length of journeys to work. These facts again indicate the overall lower socio-economic status of Chinatown Chinese, and their constrained life circumstances and work choices.

Conclusion

In summary, An ethnoburb differs in many ways from the traditional ethnic settlement types (ghetto and enclave): located in suburbs, ethnoburbs occupy larger geographical areas, have larger ethnic populations, and lower ethnic densities than ghettos or
The dynamics of *ethnoburb* formation are different from ghettos and enclaves. Although *ethnoburbs* and contemporary ethnic enclaves are both influenced by general trends such as economic restructuring and social polarization, these two types of ethnic communities have experienced different kinds of impacts, and to different degrees.

31 *Ethnoburbs* have been set up deliberately under these broader contexts to fit into the new globalized economy and personnel flows, whereas changes inside enclaves are mainly the more passive results of such restructuring. In other words, while economic activities and business transactions conducted in *ethnoburbs* are created as an element within the global economy, enclaves historically received overseas investment and continue to do so mostly because of their existing ethnic business establishment, or because of their location within downtown areas targeted by city planners for foreign investment and urban renewal (Davis 1992). Therefore, enclaves (like the downtown Chinatown in LA) cannot expect to keep pace, match the scale, or play the role that *ethnoburbs* (like the San Gabriel Valley) do in the global economy, particularly as it affects international capital flows. Unlike ethnic enclaves and ghettos in which a relatively small ethnic elite population dominates the social life and economic activities, the social hierarchy inside the *ethnoburb* is more fragmented. Nobody can claim control over the entire multiethnic community, but any individual or organization may play a potentially important role as social agents. Therefore, the *ethnoburb* demonstrates its nature as a new type of ethnic community. For instance, when they were asked who are the key players in contemporary Chinatown life, more than half of the 1994 Chinatown survey respondents think traditional Chinatown organizations (e.g., Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association), are still playing a very significant role in the community, though they were not as active and effective as before. In the *ethnoburb*, however, the problems and challenges people facing are dramatically different from those in Chinatown. The problems facing the *ethnoburb* not only involve how to insure the peaceful coexisting of residents of different ethnic backgrounds, but also how to develop a healthy local economy in the multiethnic/multicultural San Gabriel Valley. The challenges faced by, and solutions developed by Marshal Chuang, a successful Chinese auto dealer in Alhambra, are good examples of the complexities of building and maintaining the *ethnoburb*. The reason Chuang chose to locate his business on the "Alhambra Auto Row" along Main Street was the preexisting complex of auto dealers, as well as the potential market represented by the Chinese community in San Gabriel Valley. As soon as he started his auto sale business, he faced the challenges of serving both Chinese and non-Chinese customers, developing new markets, and understanding inter-group ethnic characteristics and relations in this multiethnic setting. In the first half of the 1990s, California's economy was hard hit by economic recession, and so were auto sales. Based on consumer surveys and marketing analyses, Chuang decided to develop used car markets to fulfill the needs of local communities, especially among Latino customers. He hired Spanish-speaking sales persons to handle such transactions. Among his 60 employees, about one-third each are Asian, Latino and Anglo (though Chinese workers are under-represented in auto parts and repair departments). Due to increasing needs within the Chinese community, he has hired more Chinese sales people in recent years than ever before. Currently about half his customers are Chinese. He investigated consumer behavior of different groups, and found out that they prefer different incentives than other types of customers: Whites and Latinos like lower down payments, while Asians prefer rebates. He then deals accordingly to promote car sales, and has become so successful that he is now one of the top
contributors to the city’s tax revenue base. In fact, auto sales in Alhambra generated one-third of the city's overall revenue budget (Chuang 1995).

Chuang has been actively involved in community life and is a community leader. He has always encouraged Chinese business people and residents to learn English and to assimilate into American society, while maintaining their ethnic identity and heritage. He has fought racialization, but seeks to minimize the "threat" to long-time residents. Being a board member of Alhambra's Chamber of Commerce for 12 years, he finished his term as its president not too long ago. During his tenure, Chuang has organized numerous events to help needy people and promote multiculturalism. He led the efforts of Chamber of Commerce to bridge the gap between East and West, and among different ethnic groups by promoting international businesses, cultural exchange and mutual understanding. On the other hand, he donated money to establish a scholarship in his father's name, to help Asian youth. Chuang's efforts have been well received in the community, and stand as a model of how to develop healthy community relations and the local economy (Chinese Daily News 1995; Shea 1995). Such challenges faced by Chuang and his colleagues are the same ones facing the entire multiethnic San Gabriel Valley ethnoburb.

In conclusion, ethnic settlement forms, such as the ghetto and enclave, traditionally played peripheral roles in mainstream society. Seen as repositories of subaltern groups to be excluded and ignored, such areas were left alone to grapple with their concerns and problems. As broader circumstances at regional, national and global levels shift dramatically, traditional models of ghetto and ethnic enclaves as isolated communities can no longer fully explain the dynamics and linkages of contemporary ethnic settlements.

Ethnoburbs have become part of the reality in today’s urban America. With the emergence of postmodernism and the new cultural geography, 'Other' voices, including neglected ethnic minorities and women, have been increasingly heard in the academic world, as well as society at large. The study of the ethnoburb can be viewed as a consequence of such concerns, and my research contributes to the new cultural geography by charting the rise of this historically marginalized group and its spatial manifestation. In demonstrating how the globalized economy played a key role in ethnoburb formation, helping change ethnic communities from self-contained to open-systems, I have suggested that cultural geographical analysis focus not only on ethnic communities themselves, but on the economic dimensions of ethnicity. We need, in short, to better understand how globalization and more integrated local ethnic economies are shaping ethnicity in new ways. Therefore, the ethnoburb phenomenon itself and the study of it raise new issues for cultural and ethnic geography in particular, and ethnic studies more generally.

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AUTHOR

LI WEI

Department of Geography & Asian American Studies Institute, University of Connecticut Storrs, CT 06269-2148, United States of America weili@uconnvm.uconn.edu