

UCLA Asian American Studies Center Press

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"How Do Asian Americans Create Places"

UCLA Professor Kyeyoung Park and Amerasia Journal

Present New Research on Asian American Communities in Los Angeles

Professor Kyeyoung Park, UCLA Associate Professor of Anthropology and Asian American Studies, has in conjunction with the Amerasia Journal, published new research on Asian American communities in California, with a focus on the Los Angeles area.

The special issue, vol. 34.3, entitled "How do Asian Americans Create Places" include six articles on the Thai, Hmong, South Asian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean communities, prefaced by a demographic profile of Asian American and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders in L.A. and the United States done by Melany Dela Cruz-Viesca, director of UCLA Census Center.

In studying Asian American communities, Park, with Amerasia editor Russell Leong note that:

"Outside Hollywood, Asian Americans have long added a global dimension to Los Angeles. Since 1960, immigration has been the main impetus of Asian population growth in the United States. With almost 5 million Asian Pacific residents, California has the largest such population in the country. This includes Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Asian Indian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Laotian, Cambodian, Hmong, and Thai. It's not surprising that L.A. County has the largest percentage of Asian Americans in the state-more than a million people, according to the U.S. Census, of whom 70 percent are immigrants. Any map of L.A. would reveal "Asian global ethno-hubs" in the central city (Koreatown, Thai Town, Chinatown, Little Tokyo) and in the San Gabriel Valley, where Little Taipei includes ethnic Chinese from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, as well as native-born American Chinese. Farther south, Cambodians in Long Beach are organizing for a Little Cambodia not far from Little India in Artesia, or Little Saigon in Garden Grove." What do the ethnohubs mean for the future? How do they connect Los Angeles to the world? These nexuses of Asian residents and commercial and cultural activities have developed a complicated network of institutions, including churches and temples, language schools, banks, book and video stores, markets, factories, and other businesses, linked with like institutions across the United States and Asia, as well.

This issue includes the following new studies:

Yí Jiemin Bao, in "From Wandering to Wat: Creating a Thai Temple and Inventing New Space in the United States," examines in her case study the theoretical,

intellectual and practical tensions and conflicts around building a Thai temple, or wat, in the Silicon Valley.

Ý Eric Yang, in "Recreating Hmong History: An Examination of www.Youtube.com Videos" examines how Hmong American students create selective versions of Hmong history through the creation of video narratives which they post on the internet.

Ý Surekha Acharya and Lalit N. Acharya present a case study: "Gender Identity among Hindu Women in the Indian Enclave of Artesia, California." They interviewed Gujarati women who worked in salons and stores in Little Artesia as workers, managers, or owners.

Ý Utilizing U.S. Census data, case studies, and field observations, Min Zhou, Yen-Fen Tseng, and Rebecca Y. Kim analyze a Chinese suburban community "ethnoburb" in the San Gabriel Valley, California. Their article, "Rethinking Residential Assimilation through the Case of a Chinese Ethnoburb in the San Gabriel Valley, California," focuses on the relatively affluent, high skilled, and educated entrepreneurial class of Chinese into a white middle class suburbia populated by Anglos, Latinos, and American-born Chinese.

Ý Looking at the older enclave of Chinese Americans and pre-World War II immigrants, Jan Lin, in a more journalistic account included in this issue, explores the development of tourism and gentrification, and redevelopment in Los Angeles Chinatown.

Ý Linda Trinh Võ, in her essay, "Constructing a Vietnamese American Community: Economic and Political Transformation in Little Saigon, Orange County," explores the establishment of Little Saigon in Orange County, California, an ethnic enclave with the advantages of both a large population base and sufficient spatial resources to sustain and expand both a commercial and residential community.

Ý Kyeyoung Park and Jessica Kim critically examine the developmental process of Koreatown in the 1990s. As one of the most densely populated, poorest, and multiethnic neighborhoods, Koreatown was subjected to redevelopment plans by the state sector as well as local and transnational (especially trans-Pacific) capitalists that resulted in its gentrification and the displacement of local small business owners and residents.

"How do Asian Americans Create Places?" is intended to stimulate more probing national research and further discussion on the relationship of space, place, gender, and race, and to raise broader questions around such issues as residential segregation, class-based work and labor, and the transnational migration and settlement of Asian groups in relation to the interlinked global economy.

his special issue of *Amerasia Journal* costs \$15.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling and 8.25 percent sales tax for California residents. Make checks payable to "Regents of U.C." VISA, MASTERCARD, and DISCOVER are also accepted; include expiration date and phone number on correspondence. The mailing address is: UCLA Asian American Studies Center Press, 3230 Campbell Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1546. Phone: 310-825-2968. Email: aascpress@aasc.ucla.edu

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