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ASIANS IN AMERICA'S SUBURBS: PATTERNS AND CONSEQUENCES OF SETTLEMENT*

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ABSTRACT. In an effort to provide a more complex and multifaceted understanding of the process of spatial assimilation, this article explores alternative paths in understanding racial/ethnic minority residential patterns. It scrutinizes patterns of contemporary Asian Indian and Chinese settlement in two metropolitan areas: Austin, Texas and Phoenix, Arizona. Though not particularly evolved in terms of their Asian immigrant settlement or dynamics, Austin and Phoenix represent the growing number of newly emergent Asian centers throughout the nation that have developed with the rapid rise of immigration from these two countries in the past several decades. The analysis utilizes records from the 2000 census to document and map Asian Indian and Chinese settlement within each metropolitan area and to investigate whether—and to what degree—each group is clustered or dispersed. The article then raises important questions about the consequences of concentration and dispersal for the incorporation of Asian Indian and Chinese residents. *Keywords:* Asian Indians, Austin, Chinese, Phoenix, spatial assimilation, whiteness.

Once again American society is being transformed by a wave of immigration, one that began with the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. With the abolition of national quotas and the enactment of occupational and family-preference measures, the numbers of immigrants from developing countries to the United States have increased significantly. The new and rapidly accelerating immigration to the United States—from Asia, from Latin America and the Caribbean, and, increasingly (though still relatively small), from Africa and the Middle East—is unprecedented in its diversity of color, class, and national origins. Consequently, American society is undergoing remarkable changes.

The Asian community in the United States is one that has taken form largely since the enactment of the 1965 immigration legislation. Although Asians have been

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