

***Urban Bayanihan: The Role of Ethnic Enclaves In The Filipino Diaspora***

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### *Executive Summary*

Ethnic enclaves are neighborhoods that were created out of redlining. For many immigrant communities, enclaves are multipurpose as they provide a space for political, social, and economic empowerment. However, these spaces are influenced and shaped by the diaspora narrative and needs of a community. The Filipino diaspora in particular paints a complex image of the development, recognition, and utilization of Filipinotown.

This study examines the role of the built environment to urban Filipino-American spaces and community development in Seattle. Research and literature has helped identify three key findings 1.) the approaches to Filipino urban space utilization 2.) the sociological approaches to the utilization of ethnic enclaves 3.) the role of entrepreneurship and an ethnic economy.

Based on the findings, this study stresses the importance of understanding the Filipino diaspora narrative when assessing ethnic enclaves as it conveys why and how space is utilized, or lack thereof. Additionally, this study recommends that Seattle Filipinotown consider implementing an economic development/incubator program that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation to bring Filipino businesses back to the neighborhood, to further reinforce the identity of Filipinotown.

Ultimately, Filipinotowns, are both social and physical manifestations. When questioned on the legality of a Filipinotown due to the lack of real estate, it is vital for communities and cities to understand that social space is equally important to an enclave's physical existence. The phrase "Seattle Filipinotown Exists" embodies both qualities and the significance of acknowledging history and the potential that the present built environment has for the future.

## **1. Introduction**

Urban spaces are utilized for residential, commercial, and recreational use, but for communities of colors, urban spaces are utilized as a survival tactic. Ethnic enclaves are neighborhoods with a concentration of a certain cultural identity such as Chinatowns, Little Tokyos, Koreatowns and more. For ethnic immigrant communities, the notion of having an enclave is useful as the space provides social and cultural services, promotes political empowerment and engagement, and helps maintain their identity (Abramson, Manzo & Hou, 2006). These communities formed in urban areas across the country as a result of discriminatory policies that prevented them from living anywhere else (Geron & Liu, 2008).

However, as of 2017, there are over four million Filipinos in the United States (US Census Bureau, 2019), and only two recognized enclaves for the community, Stockton's Little Manila and Los Angeles Historic Filipinotown. In the context of the Filipino diaspora, the development of urban ethnic enclaves have been complex when compared to other ethnic communities. Unlike many other Asian communities, the Philippines was colonized by the United States for 48 years, resulting in the fusion of American attributes into Filipino society, culture, and values and influencing the ways that Filipinos interact and utilize urban spaces.

Additionally, as a result of downtown revitalization and gentrification, ethnic enclaves are at risk of retaining their historical significance in the built environment of the spaces they occupy in American metropolitans (Vitiello, 2018). As the Filipino community may already be lacking the space to showcase its cultural identity, the pressures of gentrification may further exhaust the issue and lead to greater struggles for the Filipino community to overcome in order to find their recognition for their community's work and existence. Therefore, understanding the

risks that come with gentrification along with recognizing the lack of ethnic enclaves, it is imperative to understand how significant Filipino enclaves are, and if so, what can be done to reinforce their identity within their neighborhood.

This study seeks to address the following question: *What role do ethnic enclaves have on urban Filipino-American spaces and community development?* Observing planning methods as well as cultural influences on community development, this study serves to assess if an ethnic enclave is needed for Filipino communities to develop socially, politically, and economically. The purpose of this study is to understand how Filipinos utilize urban spaces and to provide recommendations of how space should be utilized to reinforce the identity of Seattle's Filipinotown. The analysis of this study reinforces the idea of spatial assimilation, suggesting that co-ethnic economies are vital to the livelihood of ethnic enclaves, the effects of colonialism on Filipino-American community development, and the idea of space and enclaves being formed in a different context.

## **2. Context**

### **2. 1: Brief History of Ethnic Enclaves**

Ethnic enclaves are neighborhoods in urban areas of a city in which immigrant groups or ethnic minorities are concentrated either residentially or commercially (Zhou, 2013). As immigration increased from countries such as China, Japan and the Philippines, two policies in particular regarding land use and rights led to the creation of ethnic enclaves (Wing, 2005). First, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 led to greater racial discrimination against Chinese immigrants, and presumably, to other Asian groups. This policy led to a prominent Chinatown to

form in San Francisco, where Chinese immigrants would concentrate in one area where they can share and practice their culture and old way of life (Geron & Liu, 2008). The enclaves were created as a defense mechanism that provided them a sense of community, comfort, and safety against racial discrimination from the surrounding communities. Ethnic enclaves existed as a starting point for particular immigrant groups in the process of spatial assimilation to American suburbs (Abramson, Manzo, & Hou, 2006). However, it was commonplace for ethnic enclaves to be destroyed and rioted by white communities (Geron & Liu, 2008). Second, racial restrictive covenants, or redlining, was popular in the United States in the 20th century, as the policy encouraged property owners and developers to identify areas by economic desirability, which was determined on the basis of the geology and demographics (Long, 2019). This meant that certain races could not live in certain areas, pushing people of color into blighted areas with low economic desirability. This form of segregation is a natural component to the immigrant experience in the United States. As a result of the access to limited cultural resources, individuals resort to ethnic enclaves as a transitional neighborhood for integration in contemporary American society (Logan, Zhang, & Alba, 2002).

## *2.2: Filipino Enclaves*

The idea of place and an ethnic enclave is complex in the context of the Filipino diasporic narrative. Filipinos do not share the same exclusion story as the Chinese and Japanese communities because of the fact that the Philippines was a U.S. colony, therefore classifying Filipinos as “nationals” rather than “aliens” (Wing, 2013). However, with the Tyding McDuffie Act of 1935 granting the Philippines independence, the act reclassified Filipinos as “aliens,” barring them entry to the United States.

Filipinos immigrated to California, Washington, Alaska, and Hawai'i to work on farms, canneries, and plantations in the early 1900s in search of opportunity (Wing, 2013). Due to their high degree of mobility as agricultural workers, Filipino migrants tend to move with the seasons (Smith, 1943). This meant that during salmon season, Filipinos migrated to the canneries in Alaska, during apple season, they migrated to Washington, and during asparagus season, they migrated to California. For Filipinos migrant workers, "little Manilas" were simply just centers for leisure in between breaks or for entertainment (Smith, 1943). It was suggested that Stockton's Little Manila and Los Angeles' Filipinotown are areas for Filipino immigrants to gather and start their life in the United States, not for long term residence and community development, essentially making them transient enclaves (Takaki, 1989).

At the expense of their independence, Filipinos were forcibly granted with "privileges" that allowed for an easier assimilation to American society such as speaking English, the status of being "nationals", access to education, and land and homeownership (Bernardo, 2014). However, this is not to dismiss the oppressive history and experiences inflicted by the United States on the Filipino community and diaspora. As a result of opportunities to engage in social and economic mobility, those "privileges" allowed for Filipinos to only seek an urban ethnic enclave as a starting or transitory point rather than a long lasting settlement unlike other Asian communities because they would often move to nearby suburban communities. When immigrating to the United States, ethnic enclaves were often the first point of contact to Filipinos as it would allow for them to ease into adjusting to the United States, however, the adjustment for Filipinos was quicker due to their knowledge of the English language.. Afterwards, their "privilege" would allow them to move out of the ethnic enclave sooner. Seemingly, the

colonization and granted “privileges” for Filipinos is what allowed for an easier spatial assimilation. Spatial assimilation is a vital aspect to the Asian American experience of achieving spatial inclusion in suburban communities (Walton, 2015). United States imperialism inevitably granted Filipinos some degrees of “privilege”, however as a result, this may have influenced the way that Filipinos interact with urban spaces and the development of their physical communities.

### *2.3: Seattle Filipinotown*

The first wave of Philippine immigration to the United States began with the Pensionado Act of 1903. This was an agreement between the United States and Philippine governments that would fund students from the Philippines to study in the United States, with the University of Washington enrolling the highest number of Filipino students (Mejia-Giudici, 1998). Due to the status of “nationals” at the time of United States occupation of the Philippines, many Filipino laborers immigrated to the state of Washington to work in the agricultural industry (Wing, 2013). As a result, by beginning around 1935, Filipinos began building a significant presence within Seattle’s Chinatown-International District by establishing their own business with approximately 164 Filipino establishments concentrated around 6th Avenue and King Street (Batayola, 2019).

In July of 2017, Chinese community member Betty Lau successfully petitioned to cross out references to “historic Manilatown” (figure 1) due to the lack of historic data and real estate owned by Filipinos (Robinson, 2019). The tension between the Chinese and Filipino is rooted in power dynamics and recognition. In a 2020 interview with a Seattle Filipino community member who asked to remain anonymous, they stated that the tension comes from the Chinese community wanting to have their neighborhood be the main recognition and pinnacle of the neighborhood. The individual further reinforced the idea that Filipinos and non-Chinese



members of the neighborhood recognize their communities' existence is just as valid as Chinatown. In response to the pushback on the recognition of a designated Filipino enclave, there have been debates within Seattle's Pan-Asian community on whether or not there truly is a Filipinotown in Seattle. Former city council member Dolores Sibonga expressed that the comments of the Chinese community has essentially denied and denigrated the Filipino experience of those who have lived and worked in the International District (Shastri, 2017). In 2017, community members banded together to form the Filipino Town Coalition to advocate for the existence of the community

A RESOLUTION relating to the Chinatown/International District; identifying actions of the City and its partners that hold promise to enhance cultural identity and economic vitality, recognize history, and promote equitable development.

..body

WHEREAS, the area known as Chinatown/International District (C/ID) includes the neighborhoods of Chinatown, Japantown, ~~historic Manilatown~~, and Little Saigon; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 102455, passed by the City Council ("Council") on August 13, 1973, established the International Special Review District in the C/ID to preserve the District's unique Asian-American character and to encourage rehabilitation of areas for housing and pedestrian-oriented businesses; and

Figure 1: Resolution 31754  
Source: City of Seattle, Office of The City Clerk

within Seattle's Chinatown-International District (International Examiner, 2019). As of 2019, there were only seven Filipino establishments in the boundaries of the Historic Filipinotown (Batayola, 2019). However, in more recent years, Filipino establishments and individuals are pushing for more recognition of Filipinotown, such as the Hood Famous Bakery. Community members are emphasizing the power of taking up physical space in the neighborhood and reclaiming a lost narrative that has been disrupted by the Filipino diaspora (Robinson, 2019).

Chera Amlag, owner of Hood Famous, decided to open a location for her business in the Seattle Chinatown-International District to recognize the history and connections that Filipinos have to the area. The design of the space was intentionally curated to honor the history of Filipinos and allow for customers to understand the history of Filipino presence and businesses in the district, enabling Filipinos to feel seen (Gines, 2019).

Figure 2 is a GIS map created to understand the theory in context to Seattle's Filipinotown. The dotted line represents the boundaries of Seattle's Chinatown

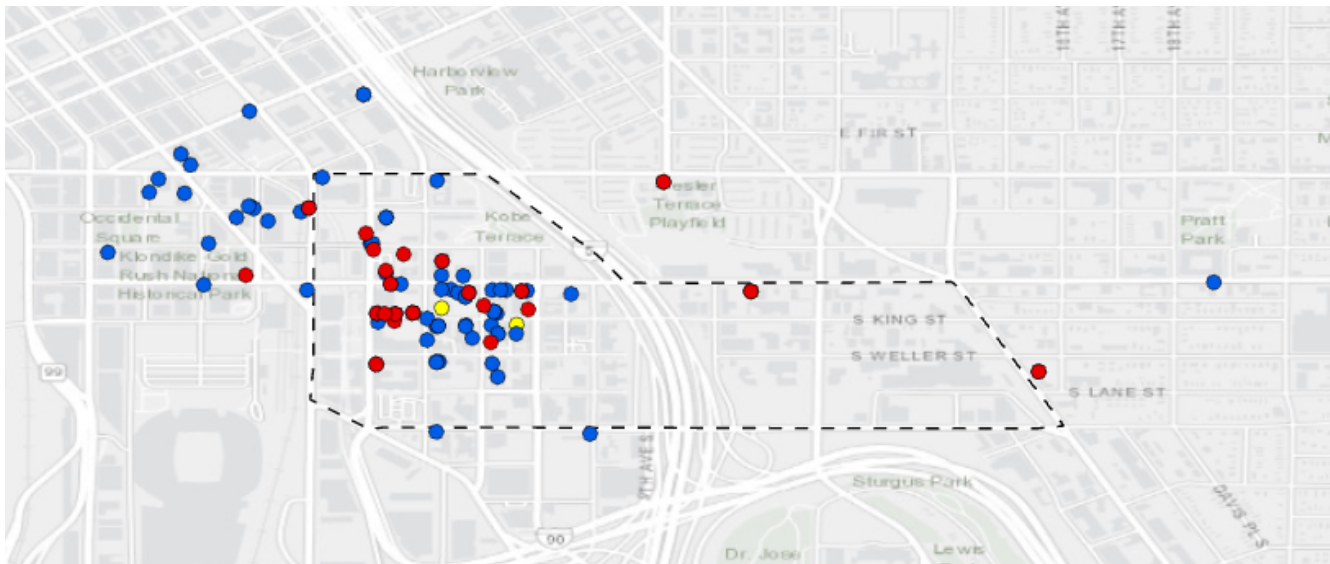


Figure 2: 1935-1975 Filipino establishments in the C-ID  
Source: Myron Bañez, 2020

International-District, and the dots represent the period in which the Filipino establishment opened (Bañez, 2020). Establishments opened from 1906-1965 are blue, 1965-1975 is red, and 1975 onwards is yellow. The figure shows the historic prominence of Seattle's Filipinotown, with approximately 165 establishments. However throughout time, establishments began to move out of the district as Filipinos had greater access to social and economic mobility. Today, there are approximately seven Filipino owned establishments in the historic Filipinotown area

ranging from offices to clothing stores that do not serve primarily Filipino goods or services, but only one, Hood Famous, is easily recognizable as a space of Filipino goods and services.

Understanding the history of ethnic enclaves, Filipino enclaves, and Seattle's Filipinotown, it is noticeable that Chinatowns and Japantowns gathered and formed physical spaces, while Filipinotowns are said to be transient with the exception of Stockton and Los Angeles. The question arises, acknowledging the Filipino diaspora, how significant are ethnic enclaves to the Filipino community?

### **3. Methods**

The data in this study was retrieved from a variety of databases including JSTOR, Proquest Research Library, Google Scholar, the University of Washington, and multiple independent research papers in history, urban planning, economics, political science and sociology, as well as peer-reviewed journals pertaining to ethnic enclaves. The studies collected are from the United States from 1920 to 2020 and include an overview of ethnic enclaves, neighborhood characteristics, political and civic engagement and preservation policy. Specifically, this research will pay close attention to studies of the Filipino diaspora, and identifying the neighborhood characteristics that create a Filipinotown. Keywords used in this research include ethnic enclave, Filipinotown, ethnic neighborhoods, placemaking, redlining, discriminatory planning policies, Asian-American diaspora, Seattle Chinatown-International District, and community development.

A variety of interviews have been conducted with academics and community members knowledgeable about ethnic enclaves to obtain a perspective on ethnic enclaves and specifically,

Filipinotowns. Interviewees include Devin Cabanilla, a prominent Filipino community member as well as founder of the Seattle Filipino Town Coalition, Lyle Del Mundo, president of the Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA), Dr. Michelle Magalong, researcher and Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Maryland, College Park, who has done research in both Stockton and Los Angeles' Filipino communities, and Dr. Domenic Vitiello, an urban planning professor at the University of Pennsylvania who's primary area of research is in immigrant communities.

Supplemental methods that have been utilized include geographic information systems (GIS) and historical assets. GIS was utilized to map Seattle's Filipinotown that will show the presence of the community from the 1930's to 1970's using self-gathered data from the Filipino American National Historical Society Headquarters (FANHS). Additionally, historical assets from FANHS will be used to review historical photos, videos, maps, newspapers, articles, and testimonials regarding Seattle's Filipinotown.

Limitations to the research of this study include the inaccessibility to a variety of resources for financial and geographic reasons. Namely, access to specific books and journals such as renowned Filipino sociologist familiar with Filipino enclaves, Dr. Dawn Mabalon's book, *Little Manila Is In the Heart*.

## **4. Findings**

### **4.1: Summary of Literature Findings**

Key findings of the studies in this research display 1.) approaches to Filipino urban space utilization 2.) the sociological approaches to the utilization of ethnic enclaves 3.) the role of entrepreneurship and an ethnic economy. Although some of the research in this study is a broad understanding of ethnic enclaves rather than a microfocus on the Filipino community, there are foundational ideas that are relevant and that will be discussed in the discussion and analysis of the findings. Transcripts of questions asked to gather information from a variety of stakeholders can be found in Appendix I. Tables summarizing all of the studies used in the findings section can be found in Appendix II.

### **4.2: Approaches to Filipino urban space utilization**

As a result of 48 years of United States colonization of the Philippines, American cultures, values, and benefits were introduced to the Filipinos. However, this has affected the ways that Filipinos in the United States utilize and interact with urban spaces. The research of John Logan, Richard Alba, and Wenquan Zhang in a 2002 study compares multiple ethnic neighborhoods to nonethnic neighborhoods and predicts which group members live in those neighborhoods and how they advance economically. They identified ethnic neighborhoods and analyzed who lives in them, and compared ethnic and nonethnic neighborhoods along a variety of social and economic dimensions such as language, education, employment, and income. After establishing these variables, they used city type as city or suburban as the control variable. They found that ethnic enclaves are just starting places for minorities, and they eventually move to the suburbs and establish ethnic concentrations within the suburbs. Their research identifies that

generally, all ethnic enclaves are almost always located in the central city and are predominantly low income. Due to the physical, economic, and social conditions of ethnic enclaves, these neighborhoods are seen only as a transitory residence from which people could achieve economic mobility and move to the suburbs (Logan, Alba, Zhang, 2002).

In a 2015 study by Emily Walton, her research combines Asian enclaves with health and environmental variables depending on the type of ethnic enclave including: immigrant enclave, community of constraint, and resurgent community. The research design includes two major variables that are census data to define what an ethninc neighborhood is, utilizing California Health Interview Surveys, CHIS, data to perform a multivariate analysis on health and ethnicity. Additional variables such as education, gender, median income and more were used as well to help map and give a profile of specific cities with a predominant Asian community. Walton's research presents three relevant findings, 1) Asian American and immigrant success is not solely on white assimilation, but also on the environmental factors and the area in which and how individuals grow up 2.) The environment in which one may also have been determined by the cultural groups values and characteristics 3.) Compared to other Asian groups, Filipinos are highly integrated in U.S. society both residential and linguistically.

Joseph Bernardo's 2014 research is a holistic view of the existence of Filipinotown and if it is physical or social. The research entails the Filipino community of Los Angeles and the ideas of how globalization, race and imperialism by the United States shape the fabric of the built environment for immigrant communities. Results were drawn upon through a variety of assets such as, historical archives and papers that are located in library collections at UC Berkeley, UCLA, University of Southern California, and the University of Maryland, College Park, oral

histories and community engagement, as well as reviewing historical maps and media such as photos and videos. Bernardo has two main findings: first, Little Manila/Historic Filipinotown emerged and evolved because of the material and discursive shifts of U.S. empire, and second, as cities become more global and heterogeneous, those in power will continue to shift racial logics in order to maintain both material and discursive forms of spatial hegemony that favor whites and the affluent. The second identifies refers to the colonization of Filipinos and the “privileges” that were granted to them such as the introduction of American education and language. As a result, Bernardo stresses that Filipinos experienced an easier process of spatial assimilation when compared to other Asian groups.

#### *4.3: Sociological approaches to the utilization of ethnic enclaves*

Trisha Tiamzon performed a study on elderly Filipino community members and their lived experiences specifically with assimilation, and the longing to reconnect with their roots and community via ethnic networks in 2013. The research design is purely from interviews with first generation Filipino immigrants from Las Vegas aged 45 to 80, with thirteen being male and sixteen being female. Tiamzon concludes that ethnic enclaves are both an entrance and destination for the Filipino American experience in the United States. As Filipinos immigrate to the United States, they often gravitate to areas that are predominantly Filipino, and from there, once they have understood the way America works, they disperse and move out. However, coming towards the end of their life, they come back to Filipino enclaves to be surrounded by community because of communal spirit being a predominant Filipino value. Interestingly, “coming back to an ethnic network” placed equal emphasis on the bodies of people to the existence of a space.

In a 2006 study, Dan Abramson, Lynne Manzo and Jeffrey Hou researched the urban landscape of Seattle's Chinatown-International District and the interesting case of a pan-Asian neighborhood with ethnic enclaves adjacent to each other. To understand how multicultural politics and the geography of immigration presents challenges in place identity, they gathered data that was drawn upon from census data, individual interviews, and community design and planning process meetings. A major finding within the study is the idea of place attachment. Place attachment refers to bonds that people develop with places in their lives, which form through the steady accretion of experience in place over time, and place attachments are influenced by our socially constructed identities.

Min Zhou's 2014 study on Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles serves to understand a community perspective for how ethnicity and social capital and mobility shape ethnic enclaves. Zhou draws upon a variety of multidisciplinary research on international migration and ethnicity to understand the topic. Zhou found that community can be found in social spaces, and does not need to be rooted in a physical locale. In order for a community to exist socially, there must be existing physical establishments of that ethnicity, because the existence of ethnic establishments allows for coethnics of the community to converge and utilize the social spaces for their community.

#### *4.4: Role of entrepreneurship and an ethnic economy*

Michael Liu and Kim Geron's 2008 study is on Asian-American activism in urban communities regarding topics such as housing, land use, community preservation and labor. To perform this study, they draw upon histories of Asian-American activism within ethnic enclaves. Ethnic enclaves serve to be the center of cultural and economic life for minority groups. They



found that in order to sustain the community, there has to be businesses and economic opportunity for the residents. Understanding the importance of entrepreneurship and economic vitality, they identify three characteristics common amongst ethnic enclaves: co-ethnic owners and employees, spatial concentration, and sectoral specialization. Specifically, creating a coethnic economy allows for a central location for goods and services to the ethnic community that preserve cultural identity.

In a 2013 study by Min Zhou, Zhou studied the concentration of ethnic enclaves and a coethnic economy. The research design is based on an analysis of existing literature regarding the topics of various ethnic enclaves ranging from Little Italy to Thaitown and the role of entrepreneurship. An established ethnic economy is vital to the formation of ethnic enclaves. Zhou finds that a co-ethnic economy central to a specific ethnicity is essential, as it allows for greater retention of cultural resources. Beyond the idea of an enclave as a shelter for disadvantaged communities, Zhou stresses the need that ethnic enclaves must possess the potential to develop a stream of economic opportunities as an alternative path for social mobility.

The same 2014 study by Min Zhou's on Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles additionally found that due to the density of diverse ethnic groups in one neighborhood, the group with a sizeable enclave economy tend to assert greater prominence of its ethnic identity in the neighborhood, because when ethnic businesses are incorporated within the community, the coethnic identity becomes highly visible.

#### *4.5 Interview Findings*

A series of interviews were performed with various community members with prominent roles in their local Filipino communities as well as academics. Unanimously, the findings of the

interviews affirm that ethnic enclaves can exist as social places that are equally significant as physical locations. Interview questions for the individuals can be found in Appendix I.

Devin Cabanilla is a prominent member of Seattle's Filipino-American community and the founder of the Filipino Town Coalition that advocated for the recognition and advancement of Seattle's Filipinotown. Cabanilla in a 2020 interview about Seattle's Filipinotown states "Filipinotown is a historical memory." There is also no core to the physical community because Filipinos are spread throughout the Puget Sound from the Chinatown-International District to suburbs such as Bellevue, Redmond, Tukwila and Port Orchard. When asked "what makes a Filipinotown?" Cabanilla informs that Filipinotown is made up of people, not the place, so as long as there are people, food and music, that is a Filipinotown. Stockton's Little Manila plays a critical role in the formation of the Filipino-American identity with urban spaces as it has been the epicenter of Filipino life in the United States during the 20th century. In a 2020 interview, Jaelyn Sanidad, Little Manila Community Educator, stated that Filipino enclaves do not need murals, buildings or parks named after Filipino heroes in order to be recognized as a Filipinotown. A vital component to what it means to be a Filipinotown is the people, their power and how they can apply this power to any space. The perceptions of how a Filipino enclave can exist to members from the Filipino communities of Seattle and Stockton, Cabanilla and Sanidad respectively, illustrate and support the claims made by Abramson, Manzo, Hou, and Zhou, that ethnic enclaves can exist socially by a group of people.

To further understand the role of ethnic enclaves from an academic standpoint, two academics were interviewed. Dr. Domenic Vitiello is a professor of urban planning at the University of Pennsylvania with research interests in immigrant communities and ethnic

enclaves. In a 2020 interview, Vitiello states social networks of people allow for an ethnic enclave to exist socially and beyond physical barriers set by a city plan. As Filipinos are community oriented people, Vitiello's statement reinforces and supports the idea that communal spaces and relationships are just as relevant as a physical locale. Dr. Michelle Magalong is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Maryland, College Park, who has performed research on Los Angeles Filipinotown and Stockton's Little Manila. In a 2020 interview, Magalong states that signs are just physical manifestations of an existence, and ethnic enclaves can exist anywhere as long as there is a population of the specific ethnic group. It is vital for a neighborhood to take a community based approach to planning and prioritizing people and social groups to uphold the sustainability of the neighborhood. Additionally, Magalong draws upon personal experiences in Los Angeles Historic Filipinotown of gathering in a space every 2nd of September to celebrate Philippine culture, and to her, an event like such is a Filipinotown within itself. Drawing upon similar responses in the interviews by the community members, it is clear that from an academic's perspective, space can be formed socially.

Apart from the sociological approaches to ethnic enclaves, one individual was particular in noting the importance of an ethnic economy. In a 2020 interview with Lyle Del Mundo, president of the Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA), one of the primary organizations vital to Los Angeles Historic Filipinotown community, he states that an abundance of local Filipino owned businesses are markers that are capable of identifying a Filipinotown. Del Mundo's recognition of the importance of Filipino businesses is in line with the claims by Zhou stating that for a community to reinforce its identity, it is imperative to establish more businesses.

## ***5. Discussion***

Diaspora plays an imperative role in the immigrant experiences with the built environment. Filipino enclaves have been subject to debate over the legality, recognition, and spatial existence within the contemporary Asian-American community (Shastri, 2017).

Addressing Filipinotown and Filipino urban space utilization has presented itself as a prominent issue within neighborhood planning associations, municipal government, and community organizations, especially for Seattle. However, the findings of the literature and interviews in this study suggest ideas regarding the relationship between Filipino communities and the built environment as well as potential solutions for Seattle's Filipinotown.

Inevitably, ethnic enclaves become a complex topic. While questions may arise about addressing the matter, it is crucial to understand the potential root cause: imperialism. As studies suggest, physical Filipinotowns formed sparsely because of the situations and conditions that early Filipinos endured. Imperialism has masked itself as a "privilege" by introducing Filipinos to the English language and American education (Bernardo, 2014). This has allowed for an easier transition and spatial assimilation to the United States and American society when compared to other Asian immigrant groups, as Filipinos were able to obtain white collar jobs and converse with Americans (Walton, 2015). While Filipinos were granted with opportunities, it is not to dismiss the oppressive history that the United States imposed on the Philippines during colonial rule. Nonetheless, understanding the Filipino experience, imperialism can be used as an analytical tool that has framed and shaped the way that Filipinos interact with ethnic enclaves. Although literature suggests that ethnic enclaves played a significant role in the formation of cultural identity for immigrant groups, physical space was not as significant for Filipinos.

Imperialism granted Filipinos access to greater opportunities in the American economy and society, which allowed for them to utilize an enclave as a starting point, and move to the suburbs.

Community development can take shape in the form of ethnic enclaves as well as social networks. The analysis of the literature and interviews of this study stress the proportional importance of social space to physical spaces. The embedded value of communal spirit, or *bayanihan*, in the Filipino culture has played a more significant role in community development than the built environment. Research studies have shown that in a general sense, ethnic enclaves may exist beyond the physical locale. However, when understanding the micro perspective of Filipino enclaves in Seattle, Los Angeles, and Stockton, it is unanimous that Filipinos in particular, rely heavily on the social network of the community more so than the physical space provided. This idea rings true as community members from the three cities have identified that all a Filipinotown needs is people and food, whether it be at a bakeshop, a random park, or at someone's home. With the caveat that social spaces are equivalent to physical spaces or manifestations, signages and urban design features are what brings attention to the community and that social community exists despite the lack of real estate (Cabanilla and Magalong, 2020).

Although a social network can exist in place of a dense area that can easily be signified as an ethnic enclave such as Chinatowns, there should at least be a handful of existing physical establishments of that ethnicity. The idea of a coethnic economy and avenues for entrepreneurship allows for the coethnic group to converge and utilize the social spaces for their community (Zhou, 2013). While the existence of a physical establishment may bring recognition to the community, it also serves the purpose of a hub for cultural resources that the community

can access in order to make cultural meals, have access to cultural attire, and more (Geron and Liu 2008).

### *5.2: Potential Solutions*

The findings and analysis of the studies present two recommendations that can be implemented to understand the best method to address how space is used by the Filipino community, 1) providing more opportunities for social networks 2) developing more space for Filipino economic development.

Social networks are vital to community development. Evidently from the literature and interview findings, an ethnic enclave can exist as a social place. What this may look like is the gathering of Filipinos in a variety of settings ranging from festivals to community meetings. Magalong recalls times in which Filipinos would gather on a specific day in a specific place, and that gathering is their form of Filipinotown. Filipinotowns should be able to provide more opportunity for community members to gather in social groups. Potentially, through a variety of interests or specific groups, for example, facilitating or partnering with social networks like Filipinos in health care, Filipinos college students, Filipinos from a specific hometown in the Philippines. As the literature suggests, social networks are of equal importance to a physical locale for an ethnic enclave. However, Zhou notes the need for at least a handful of establishments of the coethnic in order for that to be a space for the social network in order to meet frequently either leisurely or for community organizing purposes.

To reinforce the cultural identity, coethnic establishments should be present. The literature presents an idea of the coethnic economy. As the purpose of the coethnic economy is to supplement social networks, it also works to be a core of cultural resources and assets such as

groceries and services. Applying this idea to Seattle's Filipinotown (figure 2), as Filipinos began to shift from services such as grocery stores or cafes, they shifted to services like clinics and law firms in suburban areas. This resulted in the outflux of Filipino establishments in the district, therefore leading to the "loss" of the community identity. Inevitably, it is imperative now more than ever for Filipinos to consider opening up a business in the Seattle Chinatown-International District to help further reinforce the identity of Filipinotown.

### *5.2: Recommendation*

When faced with opposition if their Filipinotown exists, it is imperative for community members to understand tangible solutions to potentially alleviate the situation. Based on an analysis of the findings, this research recommends that the Seattle Filipinotown community encourage the implementation of a community incubator to encourage innovation or to bring Filipino businesses into the district in order to reinforce the Filipinotown identity (figure 3). Although many community members in various Filipino enclaves agree that Filipinotown can exist socially, Zhou (2013), Geron and Liu (2008) stress the importance that a coethnic economy has for any ethnic enclave as it provides access to cultural resources and the density of establishments works to create a physical identity of a community. Zhou's 2014 study specifically notes that if a social community is to be formed, there must be coethnic establishments where the community members can converge.

Under a community incubator program, this would function as an opportunity for community members to have access to resources that would educate them on managing a business such as professionals in areas of marketing, finance, and more. As social networks are integral to Filipino community development, this program may serve to be a consistent series of

workshops and meetings amongst the Filipino entrepreneurs in order to create a sense of community, or *bayanihan*, that would allow them to collaborate and engage with each other throughout the business development process.

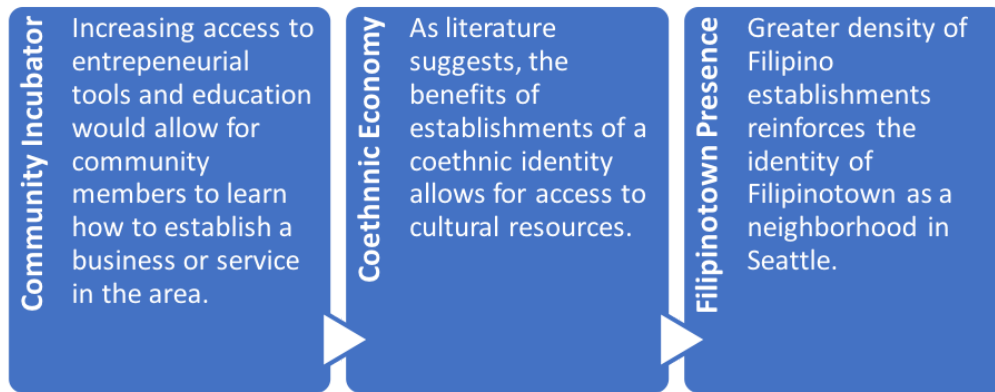


Figure 3

## 6. Conclusion

Filipinotowns are as resilient and multifaceted as the Filipino people. Studying ethnic enclaves is crucial to understanding ethnic community development and historic preservation as these neighborhoods are subject to gentrification and downtown revitalization across the country. However, studying Filipinotown will further help councilmembers and community members understand what a community can do to assert its place and history in a city. As this research suggests, although Filipinotowns have been absent as a result of imperialism, Filipinos have been able to create community through social networks. To of equal significance, Filipinotowns must establish coethnic businesses to manifest their neighborhood through potential programs such as incubator programs. The findings of this research hopes to empower Filipinotowns to reinforce the significance of their neighborhood and understand that although their history and existence



has been overshadowed by the narratives of other ethnic enclaves, taking action now to preserve centuries of history is imperative.

Filipinotown exists through *bayanihan*, the Tagalog word that translates to the communal spirit of a town or neighborhood working towards a particular goal. As Filipinotowns are able to exist socially, *bayanihan* plays an integral role, where the communal spirit and people are what makes the Filipino enclave. In order to further assert the existence and place of Filipinos in America, *community members* must work together to achieve that common goal for their neighborhood. Although Filipinotown is a transitory point for many in diaspora, it is critical for community members to protect the spaces that shaped their identity. As Filipino national hero Jose Rizal once said, “He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination.”

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## ***Appendix I: Interviews***

### ***4.3a: Interview Questions with Devin Cabanilla from Seattle Filipinotown***

- What is your relationship to Filipinotown/Little Manila?
  - What are your favorite memories here?
    - What is the role of barber shops?
      - Would you say Filipinotown is infused into Chinatown?
- In your opinion, what is the essence (or being special) of being a Seattle Filipino?
- Can you tell me more about the Filipino community in Seattle?
- What feeling do you get when you are in a Filipino space?
- How is community developed/celebrated in Seattle?
- What is the focal point of the Filipino community here, and how is it utilized?
- Do you think recognition of an enclave would further strengthen community development? Explain why or why not.
- What do you think your Filipino community needs right now?

- What makes a Filipinotown?
- Is it physical or social

#### 4.3b: Interview Questions with Jaelynn Sanidad from Stockton Little Manila

- What is your relationship to Filipinotown/Little Manila?
  - What are your favorite memories here?
- In your opinion, what is the essence of being Filipino?
- Can you tell me more about the Filipino community in Stockton?
  - Why did they immigrate?
- What feeling do you get when you are in a Filipino space?
- How is community developed/celebrated in Seattle?
- What makes a Filipinotown?
- What is the focal point of the Filipino community here, and how is it utilized?
- Do you think recognition of an enclave would further strengthen community development?
- What do you think are the benefits/challenges of having an ethnic enclave?
- What do you think your Filipino community needs right now?

#### 4.3c: Interview Questions with Dr. Domenic Vitiello from the University of Pennsylvania

- What role do ethnic enclaves have in the city?
- Were/are there any policies that were implemented throughout history that shaped the formation and current condition of enclaves on the national level?
- What are the benefits/challenges of having an ethnic enclave?
- Referring to *The planned destruction of Chinatowns in the United States and Canada since c.1900*
  - What does reviving a Chinatown look like (pg 6)?
- In Seattle, the city funded Chinatown and other organizations to develop a dense concentration of affordable housing in the 1980s and 90s, is this rare?
  - Are ethnic enclaves able to exist socially rather than physically?
- What components are needed to create an ethnic enclaves?

*4.3d: Interview Questions with Dr. Michelle Magalong from the University of Maryland and former researcher on LA Historic Filipinotown and Stockton Little Manila*

- What is your relationship to Filipinotown/Little Manila?
- Do you think recognition of an enclave would further strengthen community development?
- What did LA Historic Filipinotown do that was successful
- What makes a Filipinotown?
- Can it exist physically or socially?

*4.4a: Interview Questions with Lyle Del Mundo from Los Angeles Historic Filipinotown*

- What is your relationship to Filipinotown?
- In your opinion, what is the essence of being Filipino?
- What feeling do you get when you are in a Filipino space?
  - How about commercial and social spaces?
- How is community developed/celebrated in LA?
- What makes a Filipinotown?
- What is the focal point of the Filipino community here, and how is it utilized?
- Do you think recognition of an enclave would further strengthen community development?
- What do you think are the benefits/challenges of having an ethnic enclave?
- What do you think your Filipino community needs right now?
- What do you think LA/HiFi did right
- What advice would you give to Filipinotowns?

**Appendix II: Table of Findings**

*4.2: The effects of U.S. imperialism and colonialism on the Philippines*

Author, Date	Study Population and Location	Study Purpose	Findings
Logan, Alba, Zhang. (2002)	Asian populations in New York and Los Angeles	Defining ethnic and non ethnic neighborhoods through social and economic dimensions.	People tend to avoid jobs in ethnic zones as they gain greater access to financial resources and improved economic situations

Walton. (2015)	Asian populations in United States	Study the health of Asian Americans in ethnic enclaves.	Filipinos are less reliant on tangible resistance from ethnic enclaves because they are at an advantage in society as a result of history rooted in U.S. imperialism. Compared to other Asian groups, Filipinos are highly integrated in U.S. society residentially and linguistically
Bernardo. (2014)	Filipino population in Los Angeles	Explore Filipino migration and spatialization from a lens of gender, class, and imperialism.	After being seen as “loyal” Americans worthy of citizenship and on an upward economic mobility, assimilation in suburban communities was easy for Filipinos. U.S. imperialism shaped and manifested the role of Filipinos in urban space throughout the 20th century and beyond

*4.3: Sociological approaches to the utilization of ethnic enclaves*

Author, Date	Study Population and Location	Study Purpose	Findings
Abramson, Manzo, Hou. (2006)	Seattle Chinatown-International District	Understand the Pan-Asian dynamic and characteristics of ethnic enclaves in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District	Successful preservation depends on the active presence and engagement of those who feel an attachment to the site to be preserved, and the translocal experience (i.e., the frequent absence, dislocation, or migratory or non-resident status) of many social groups presents special challenges to those efforts.  Place attachment refers to bonds that people develop with places in their lives, which form through the steady accretion of experience in place over time. Evidence shows that place attachments are influenced by our socially constructed identities
Tiamzon. (2013)	Filipino population in Las Vegas	Assess social networks during the aging process for Filipino-Americans	Due to the history of colonization and status of Filipinos as US nationals, Filipinos were not as dependent on ethnic enclaves.
Devin Cabanilla. (2020) Community Member and Founder of Filipino Town Coalition	Filipino population in Seattle	Gather more information on Seattle’s Filipinotown from a community perspective	Filipinotown is a historical memory. There is also no core to the community because everyone is spread. Filipinotown is made up of people, not the place, so as long as there is people, food and music, that is Filipinotown.
Jaelyn Sanidad. (2020) Little Manila Community Educator	Filipino population in Stockton	Gather more information on Stockton’s Little Manila from a community perspective	I don’t think that you need murals and buildings and parks named after Filipino heroes in order for a place to be dubbed as a Filipinotown. The people and their power are what make a Filipinotown, and they can apply this power to any space.
Michelle Magalong. (2020)	Filipino population in Los Angeles and Stockton	Gather more information on LA’s Filipinotown and Stockton’s Little Manila from an academic perspective	Ethnic enclaves can exist as long as there is a population of the specific ethnic group

Domenic Vitiello. (2020)		Gather more information on ethnic enclaves from an academic perspective	The social network of people allows for an ethnic enclave to exist socially and beyond physical barriers set by a city plan
Zhou. (2014)	Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles	Study the formation of Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles through the lens of social capital.	Community can be found in social spaces, and does not need to be rooted in a physical locale. The existence of ethnic establishments allows for coethnics of the community to converge and utilize the social spaces

*4.4: Role of entrepreneurship and an ethnic economy*

Author, Date	Study Population and Location	Study Purpose	Findings
Liu and Geron. (2008)	Asian populations in United States	The role of activism in the formation and vitality of ethnic enclaves.	Three characteristics are common amongst ethnic enclaves: co-ethnic owners and employees, spatial concentration, and sectoral specialization. Creating a co-ethnic economy allows for a central location for goods and services to the ethnic community that preserve cultural identity.
Zhou. (2013)	Asian populations in United States	Examine the history of ethnic enclaves and the importance of a coethnic economy.	Beyond the idea of an enclave is a shelter for disadvantaged communities, ethnic enclaves must possess the potential to develop a stream of economic opportunities as an alternative path for social mobility
Zhou. (2014)	Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles	Study the formation of Chinatown and Koreatown in Los Angeles through the lens of social capital.	Due to the density of diverse ethnic groups in one neighborhood, the group with a sizeable enclave economy tend to assert greater prominence of its ethnic identity in the neighborhood, because when ethnic businesses are incorporated within the community, the coethnic identity becomes highly visible.
Lyle Del Mundo. (2020)		Gather more information on Los Angeles' Filipinotown from a community perspective	There are historic markers that identify a Filipinotown, such as renaming streets, street signs, gateways, and an abundance of local Filipino owned businesses.