

Segregation of Asians in U.S. Metropolitan Areas: 1980-1990

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Abstract

Owing to a remarkable expansion of immigration since 1965, the Asian population of the United States has grown rapidly in recent years. By 1990, many U.S. metropolitan areas had come to house substantial Asian populations, raising interest in patterns and processes of spatial assimilation for diverse Asian groups. This analysis updates prior work by analyzing data from the 1990 U.S. Census. We describe trends in the degree of segregation and spatial isolation between 1980 and 1990 for Asians in general and for the Chinese and Japanese, the two groups with the longest history in the United States. We then consider levels of segregation for Filipinos, Indians, Koreans, and Vietnamese in 1990, and measure the degree to which Asians segregation varies with socioeconomic status. Results show that Asians experience low to moderate segregation as a whole. Moreover, even though some subgroups display moderate to high levels of residential dissimilarity, indicating an uneven settlement pattern, no group provided any indication of spatial isolation or “ghettoization” in

the manner of African Americans. In general, the prospects for Asian spatial assimilation seem good.

Key Words: Asian segregation in U.S., Asian subgroups in U.S., spatial isolation, dissimilarity, socioeconomic segregation