

# Normalizing diversity

## Multiculturalism in the service of urban order



*Nuestro Pueblo (Our Town), Sabato « Simon » Rodia, Los Angeles*



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### *Preliminary*

## Diversity as an urban norm

- A quantitative definition of diversity
- Performativity and normative discourses on diversity
- Urban space and power : a Foucauldian approach

## Outline

### **I- From one norm to another**

Spatial assimilation and multiculturalism

### **II- Diversity in the service of urban order**

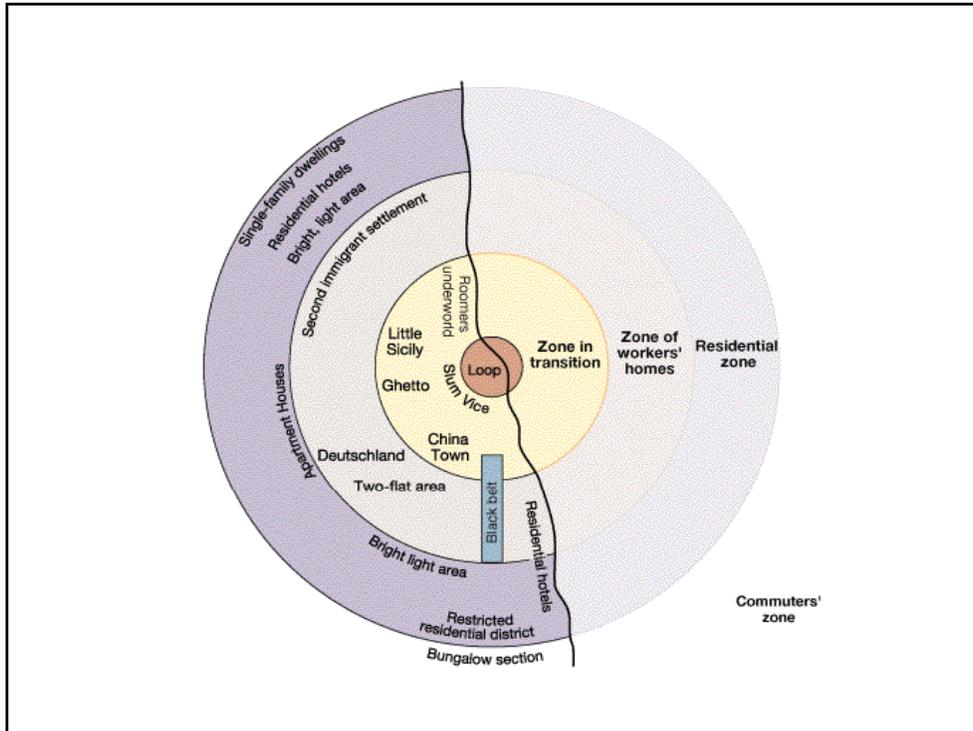
The production of the urban mosaic

### **III- Resisting the urban order**

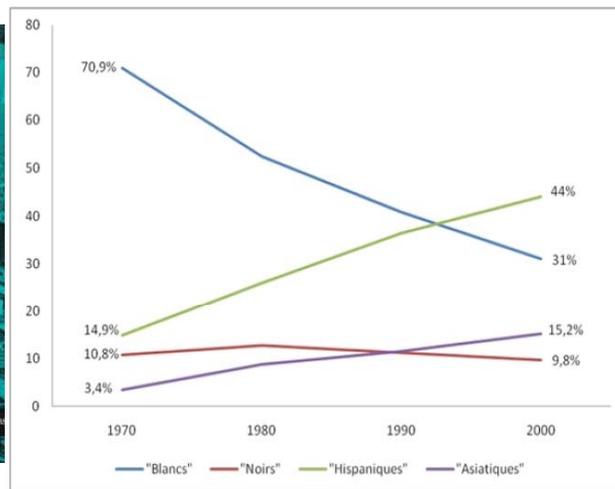
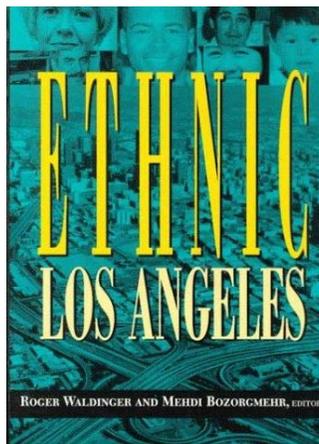
## **I- From one norm to another**

Spatial Assimilation and Multiculturalism

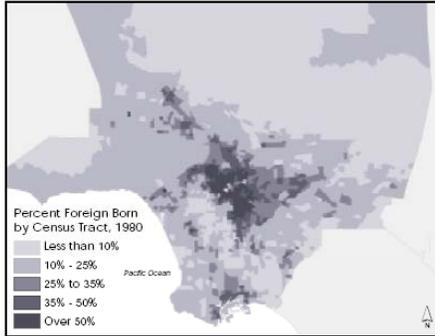
- **Spatial assimilation theory :**
  - « zone in transition », (Park, Burgess)
  - ethnic enclave, (Portes)
  - spatial assimilation, (Massey, Denton, Alba)
- **The cultural turn**
- **Multiculturalism and urban governance :**
  - ethnoburb, (Li)
  - empowering group rights, (Ghorra-Gobin)
  - politics of culture and ethnic politics



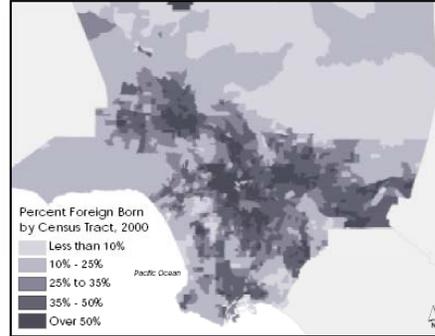
## Los Angeles, the paradigmatic city



a. 1980



b. 2000



« Sunny Los Angeles », 1964



Mural, 1983, Koreatown

**Legalize  
LA**

2011 City of Los Angeles  
ELECTIONS 選舉 選挙 선거  
BẦU CỬ ELECCIONES HALALAN



March 25 and 26

# for Immigrant Rights

**YES to Legalization!** Saturday, 3/25 Sunday, 3/26

**YES** to Keeping Families Together  
**YES** to Housing, Jobs and Health Care

**NO to H.R.4437!**

**NO** to Attacks on Immigrants  
**NO** to Criminalizing Immigrant Communities  
**NO** to the War at Home and Abroad

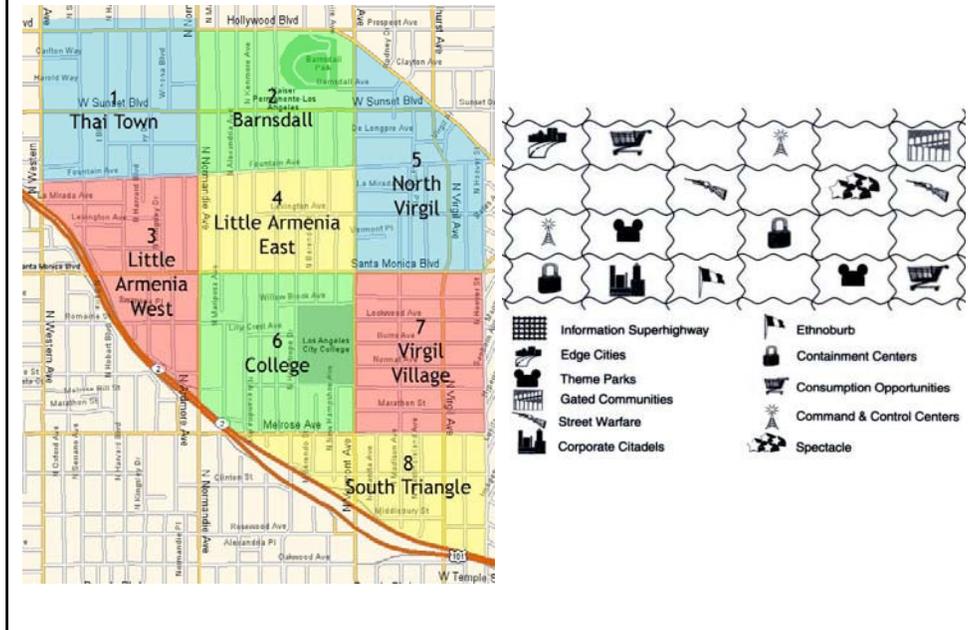
Get involved. Call Morris Ho at NAKASEC (323) 937-0703 and



## Ethnoburb and Ethnic Politics



## Los Angeles, urban mosaic



## II- The production of the mosaic

### Diversity in the service of urban order

- **From a majority-minority to diversity**
  - Numerically small ethnic groups are recognized rather than the majority-minority (Waldinger)
- **Liberal « laissez faire », public interventionism and urban order**
  - Redistricting
  - Creating « ethnic enclaves » : the common interests of the immigrant elites and the municipal authorities

## Ordering the city

- Asserting power, reinforcing spatial boundaries
- To demarcate space on behalf of a community plan fall under the area of « disciplinary powers » (Foucault)
- Discipline and safety, two techniques for exercising power and ordering the city in the name of diversity

## Little Armenia in Los Angeles

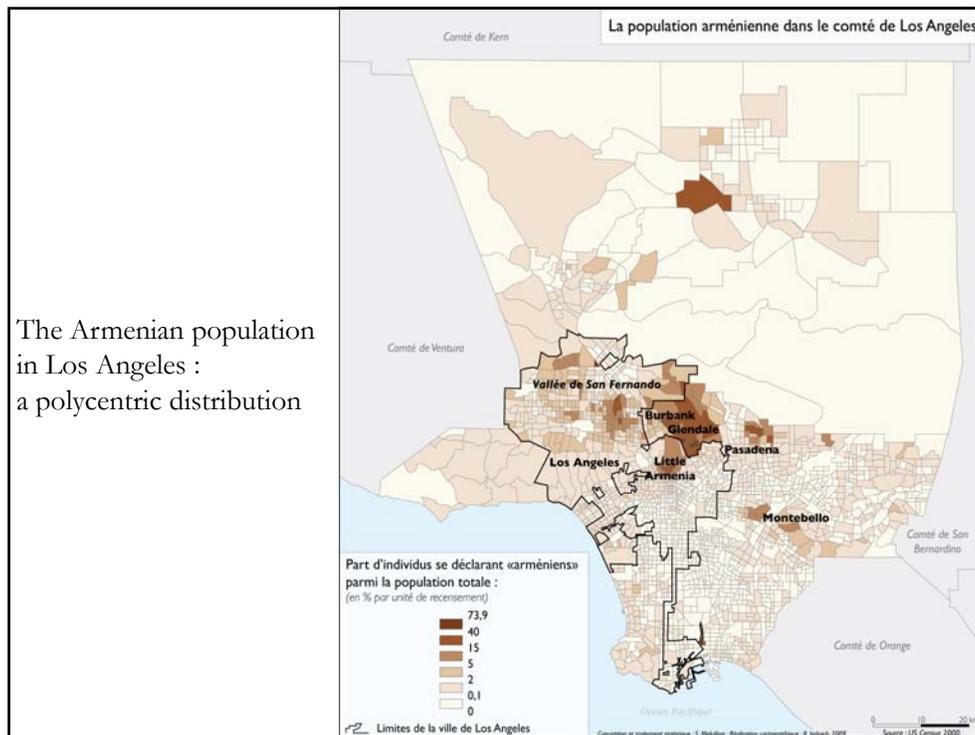
« The Armenian business and residential community in this area has indicated an **overwhelming support** for an official « Little Armenia » designation by the City of Los Angeles. The significance of an official « Little Armenia » designation would be the **promotion of neighborhood pride, multi-cultural/ethnic exchange, and tourism** giving the Armenian community a more identifiable presence and voice in Los Angeles », lettre à la ville de Los Angeles, 2001



Sister Cities : Los Angeles and Erevan, 2007

### III- Resisting the urban order

- **Living outside the « ethnic enclaves »**
  - polycentricity
  - the multiple representations of Little Armenia
- **Resisting the community norms**
  - individualization process and individual resistances
  - sharing the city : interethnic coalitions





- Multiculturalism and diversity as the dominant urban norms in the service of urban order
- Thinking diversity beyond the neighborhood/enclave level and the « urban mosaic » model
- Minority coalitions and urban governance

**Thank you**