UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
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Making and Remaking the Ethnic Museum: Governmentality, City-Building, and Ethnicity at the Japanese American National Museum, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, and the Chinese American Museum

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Visual Studies

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Making and Remaking the Ethnic Museum: Governmentality, City-Building, and Ethnicity at the Japanese American National Museum, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, and the Chinese American Museum

by

Lucena Lau Valle

Doctor of Philosophy in Visual Studies

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Professor Cécile Whiting, Chair

This dissertation examines the introduction of governmental technologies that have shaped the formation of three ethnic museums in downtown Los Angeles, the Japanese American National Museum (JANM), La Plaza de Cultura y Artes (LAPCA), and the Chinese American Museum (CAM), to provide a critical genealogy that reconstructs the histories, political rationalities, and traces the implementation of new models of financialization that converged to form these institutions. Earlier studies of ethnic museums have stressed the ways the city's ethnic museums have either constructed or contested the representation of ethnic Otherness. Instead, this dissertation examines how the formation of downtown's ethnic museums were formed by networks of governmentalities that were mobilized in the last decades of the twentieth-century that accelerated the redevelopment of the ethnic neighborhoods that surrounded these ethnic specific institutions.

This project uncovers how the disciplinary technologies of land use, zoning laws, immigration policy, and urban redevelopment, were utilized in the creation of the museums examined in this study. As I explore in this project, the creation of this trio of museums provides

a crucial key to understanding the means through which these institutions have arrived at their present configurations in the city's cultural economy. My project's focus on the formation and impact of downtown's Los Angeles' ethnic museums uncovers the various roles these institutions have played in the creative destruction of downtown Los Angeles' historic ethnic enclaves in the latter half of the twentieth century. My approach assumes that understanding the 'how' of museum-making is a crucial prerequisite to future discussions of policy alternatives and approaches to the institutional formation these museums and others like them may wish to explore to ensure their sustained economic survival and continued relevance to their audiences.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation attempts to bring greater precision to the study of three ethnic museums located in downtown Los Angeles: the Japanese American National Museum (JANM), La Plaza de Cultura y Artes (LAPCA), and the Chinese American Museum (CAM). It examines how the introduction of governmental technologies that have shaped the formation of these institutions, also influenced the representational and exhibitionary practices on view within these museums, and initiated the large-scale redevelopment and gentrification of the ethnic enclaves where these museums are situated. By governmental technologies, I refer to the ensemble of administrative techniques and procedures used in the governance of a population and the spaces they inhabit, a concept attributed to Michel Foucault's late writing concerning the formation of the modern state.[1] Prior studies and media representations have stressed the ways the city's ethnic museums have either constructed or contested the representation of ethnic Otherness.[2] Instead, this

[1] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 102–103.

[2] Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, and Carl Grodach, "Displaying and Celebrating the "Other": A Study of the Mission, Scope, and Roles of Ethnic Museums in Los Angeles," *The Public Historian* 26, no. 4 (2004), 49–71, represents one of the most comprehensive studies of ethnic museums in Los Angeles that has endeavored to examine the formation of several ethnic museums across Los Angeles that emerged in the mid-2000s, including the Japanese American National Museum, and the Chinese American Museum. Loukaitou-Sideris and Grodach's text describes the crucial differences between Los Angeles' ethnic museums, and "mainstream" institutions, which the authors suggest differ in the organizational missions, collections, and curatorial mandates of institutions serving ethnic and racial communities. Before the publication of Loukaitou-Sideris and Grodach's article, the *Los Angeles Times* published numerous articles beginning as early as the 1980s on the subject of the city's emergent ethnic museums, articles such as Larry Gordon's "As Minorities Thrive, So do Ethnic Museums," published in 1998, indicative of the way in which ethnic museums were portrayed in the *Times.* By the early 1980s, Gordon, like many of his contemporaries at the *Times* who also covered the rising ethnic museum movement maintained, also a similar position as boosters for downtown's rising museum scene as it coincided with the neighborhood's redevelopment. In this article Gordon maintains that the city's new ethnic museums represent a coming-of-age moment for the ethnic communities driving their formation, and Like Loukaitou-Sideris and Grodach, Gordon similarly argues for the creation of ethnic specific cultural institutions to serve the needs of ethnic minority groups historically excluded from "mainstream" arts and cultural institutions.

dissertation offers a critical genealogy that traces the formation of downtown's ethnic museums, to uncover how the networks of governmentalities mobilized to create these institutions were tied to the redevelopment of the ethnic neighborhoods that surrounded them. Unlike the singular sovereign power of the feudal monarchy, the formation of governmentality by late modernity signified a specific and yet complex assemblage of power shaped by the ensemble of institutions, procedures, tactics, and calculations used to disciple a population.[3] This project therefore examines the introduction of new disciplinary technologies, which represent the techniques and procedures through which governmentalities are wielded in the service of what Foucault has called, "the conduct of conduct," which play out in the varied ways through which individuals come to internalize, embody, and perform the laws, and subjectivities authorized by the state in their daily lives. In Los Angeles, the disciplinary technologies of land use, zoning laws, immigration policy, and urban redevelopment, all utilized in the creation of the museums examined in this study, have converged to form what would become three of Los Angeles' most prominent Asian American and Mexican American museums. As I will explore in this project, the creation of this trio of museums provides a crucial key to understanding the means through which these institutions have arrived at their present configurations in the cultural economy of the city.[4] My approach assumes that understanding the 'how' of museum-making is a crucial prerequisite to future discussions of policy alternatives and approaches to the institutional

[3] I wish to draw distinction here between Foucault's use of government, which refers not to the state, but rather government as the practice and exertion of power involved the guidance or oversight of individuals, families, or specific populations within these larger groupings. Foucault is often cited for his explanation of governmentality that refers to this assemblage of practices, tools, or specific knowledges as the "conduct of conduct," or the "art of governance," used in the governing of populations. Stephen Hutchinson, and Pat O' Malley, "Discipline and Governmentality," in *The Handbook of Social Control*, ed. Mathieu Deflem (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2018), 63–75.

[4] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, vol. 3, ed. James D. Faubion and trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Classics, 2020), 220.

formation these museums and others like them may wish to explore to ensure their sustained economic survival and continued relevance to their audiences. Or, as Foucault argued in 1988, before the publication of his landmark work *Discipline & Punish*: "History serves to show how that-which-is has not always been; i.e., that the things which seem most evident to us are always formed in the confluence of encounters and chances, during the course of a precarious and fragile history, and that since these things have been made, they can be unmade, as long as we know how it was that they were made."[5] Later, after recognizing how the modern nation state is constituted by its assemblages of disciplines, and not single disciplines operating in isolation, Foucault expanded his definition of unmaking to include the modification of existing disciplines and the introduction of new ones as a way of striving toward a more just society even when its emancipation is not yet possible.[6]

Foucault's genealogical critique, endeavors to uncover the assemblages of social practices and the political rationalities behind the institutions upholding the domains of knowledge, discourse, and power that can help bring to light the insecurities and uncertainties of a present that represented as stable, coherent, and self-perpetuating.[7] His theoretical approach to institutions and their disciplinary practices guide my efforts to identify how the introduction of neoliberal discourse and property relations in downtown Los Angeles have fostered these museums as spaces of ethnic display and performance. Building on recent experiments in Foucauldian genealogy in the fields of museum studies, urban studies, and political theory, in

[5] Michel Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History," in *Michel Foucault: politics, philosophy, culture*, ed. L. Kritzman (London: Routledge, 1988), 36–37.

[6] Jacques Bidet, *Foucault with Marx* (London: Zed Books), 160.

[7] Marieke De Goede, *Virtue, Fortune, and Faith: A Genealogy of Finance* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 14.

this dissertation I show how the discourses and practices of ethnic exhibition could not have reshaped the city's cultural and material landscape without utilizing the administrative, political, and market technologies to facilitate the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of downtown Los Angeles' ethnic enclaves which remade spaces of former Fordist production into neoliberal enclosures.

In this study, I argue that the incremental reimagination and reconstruction of downtown's museum footprints, and the ethnic enclaves that surrounded them has occurred as a relation between the "property-power" wielded by real estate developers in a neoliberal market economy and the "knowledge-power" exercised by governmental managers and elected officials in the planning and legislative process that support public institutions. We can think of these overlapping forms of discipline as philosopher Jacques Bidet argues, co-occurring and part of a hegemony-maintaining spectrum of competing disciplinary powers. In Bidet's model, the proprietor-power upheld by the market economy occupies one pole that produces a socially disciplinary effect on workers, investors, and consumers through its ability to accumulate surplus value from local real estate investments. While conversely, the opposing pole that occupies knowledge-power is, "upheld by institutions and the state constitutes a power over things and persons, and is exercised by individuals by virtue of their place in an organization (enterprise, administration, profession, city, army, state) and with reference to the social recognition that grants them competency."[8] In the dialectical configuration of proprietor-power and knowledge-power that Bidet proposes, both poles are not only linked to each other in their struggle for

[8] Bidet, *Foucault with Marx*, 93.

relative increases in power, they also continually modify each other, in an attempt to strike a balance where both powers can maintain their influence over the market and the state.

These struggles have played out in Los Angeles' governmental agencies such as the city's El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument (El Pueblo), which oversees the municipal spatial enclosure that contains two of the museums explored in this dissertation project. Within agencies such as El Pueblo, the exercise of knowledge-power is chiefly wielded by the curators and administrators tasked with interpreting and introducing new disciplines (rules, laws, and policies); this also functions as a process of truth-creation that property-power must adapt to in order to generate surplus value. As this study will illustrate, since El Pueblo's formation in the 1950s, tensions have arisen in the agency as real estate developers with access to proprietor-power continued to gain greater influence over the park's redevelopment, historic preservation, and privatization, igniting tensions among community members and El Pueblo's administrators concerned with how the commercializing interests of private developers would bode with the historical integrity of the site.[9]

However, in the case of Los Angeles' cultural economy more broadly, property-power not only intercedes in the creation and interpretation of governmental disciplines that serve its interests, it also has a strong say in defining what governmental competencies, or expertise and authority invested in the institutions overseeing specific domains of knowledge, that are required of government's administrative agents.[10] Thanks to an extensive archive of governmental public records, media representations, and the L.A. school of urban studies scholarship, in this project I argue that the three museums examined in this study amply illustrate the property-and

[9] Ray Herbert, "Plan to Commercialize Old Plaza Causes Rift," *Los Angeles Times*, June 8, 1970, B1.

[10] Bidet, *Foucault with Marx*, 94–97.

knowledge-power dialectic that occurred in the city's transition from Fordist industry to a neoliberal Post-Fordism in Los Angeles.

By the late twentieth century when the ethnic museums examined in this study came into formation, Los Angeles became the nexus for the intersections of place, culture, and economy which propelled the growth of the city's culture industries to expand the global reach and composition of their commodities. As urbanist Allen J. Scott contends, the cultural economies that have formed in Los Angeles have consequently become "permeated in one way or another with broadly aesthetic or semiotic attributes."[11] By the start of the millennium in Los Angeles, "aspects of black consciousness, feminism, punk fashion, or gay lifestyles" were "incorporated into the design specifications of consumer goods. Rap music and gangsta clothing represent another manifestation of the same phenomenon," not to mention the Chicano low rider car re-design aesthetic now emulated in Japan, and the commercial appropriation of street art and graffiti art provides further evidence of the global reach of the city's contemporary cultural economy.[12] In addition to the ubiquitous roles Los Angeles' film, television, and recording industries would come to play during this transformative period, when former traditional manufacturing sectors such as clothing, furniture, and jewelry would come to market their aesthetics in ways that blurred the boundaries that once distinguished them from service industries. As Scott contends, by the late twentieth century these service-sector industries would come to align themselves with the trendsetting multicultural restaurants, tourism, live theater, concerts, advertising, and magazine publishing that would become inextricable parts of Los Angeles' cultural economy. "Whatever the physico-economic constitution of such products,"

[11] Allen J. Scott, The Cultural Economy of Cities: Essays on the Geography of Image-Producing Industries (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), 2.

[12] Ibid., 2.

Scott adds, these sectors "all engaged in the creation of the marketable outputs whose competitive qualities depend on the fact that they function at least in part as personal ornaments, modes of social display, forms of entertainment and distraction, or sources of information and self-awareness, i.e. as artifacts whose symbolic value to the consumer is high relative to their practical purposes."[13] Notwithstanding Southern California's pockets of utilitarian manufacturing across the city's greater eastside and south central regions, "This phenomenon is a reflection of the tendency in modern capitalism for cultural production to become increasingly commodified while commodities themselves become increasingly invested with symbolic value."[14]

The city's museums, though previously established centers of cultural production, would not be exempted from the post-Fordist reconfiguration of property relations propelled by the introduction of neoliberal governmental technologies. Nor would they thereafter fail to reinforce the competitive advantages the city's culture industries continued to accrue at an accelerating pace, and not simply because large capitalist cities served as platforms for "leading-edge economic activity in the form of substantial agglomerations of industrial and business activity."[15] Cultural institutions, including the ethnic museums included in this study, have helped identify and reinforce downtown's local cultural characteristics. The peculiarities of place and their local histories would contribute to the emergences of new forms of cultural production in global cities in the late twentieth century. Or, as Scott elaborates, "Local cultures help to shape the character of intra-urban economic activity; equally, economic activity becomes a dynamic element of the

[13] Ibid., 3.

[14] Ibid., 3.

[15] Ibid., 4.

culture-generating and innovative capacities of given places."[16] The multiculturalism touted in previous decades, and today's celebrations of diversity and cultural equity, both euphemisms for the differentiations of race, class, gender, and sexuality co-occurring at the intersections of place-making, help to energize the global city's economic fortunes.

Paradoxically, geographer David Harvey argues, the global city's metabolism of diversity exerts a monetized effect which, in generating the public cultural commons that improves the quality of life of its denizens, also conversely attracts investments from hedge fund capital that trade on the surpluses of immigrant labor and entrepreneurship, while similarly affirming that locale's "values of authenticity, locality, history, culture, collective memories." Harvey here implies what he explicitly addresses in his book: the atomization of production brought on by neoliberal labor practices. Global cities like Los Angeles have undertaken institutional and material reorganization of the built environment to support emergent forms of Scott's "cognitive cultural capital," for the purposes of knowledge production ranging from software development to tourism to film making to museum curation. This process has reimagined the global city itself as the factory floor, creating new spatial domains in which value-adding cultural labor is dispersed in myriad activities of aesthetic, image, and narrative production. As Harvey reminds us, those transfers of wealth attracted to the city's dispersed sites of cultural production have raised rents in these places to the point of pushing out the people who had helped create that value.

This study attempts to uncover the origins and governing rationalities behind the three museums and the administrative practices employed within them, to reconstruct how the

[16] Ibid., 5.

incremental steps through which multimillion-dollar public and private culture industries, including museums, have accelerated the financialization of the downtown real estate market and its resulting gentrification. This approach can also show how the governmental fabric of institutional formation and museum exhibitions too participates in the construction of the built environment and shapes social relations of cultural production in at least two ways. First, it tries to show how the territory-making technology of the neoliberal spatial enclosure occurring at the intersection of property and knowledge power. [17] Second, it shows how a critique of the ideologies, social practices and administrative policies used by arts and cultural institutions can defamiliarize the museum's commodifying logics of ethnic display in what is now a majority Latinx, African American and Asian city. My close readings of this study's selected museums will therefore try to show how their poetics of exhibition and performance were, to varying degrees, also transformed by the implementation of neoliberal governmental disciplines unique to museums and cultural institutions in the late twentieth century, as well as by the market-forces they unleashed. Understanding how these museums were made, in other words, can help the city's citizens, above all the descendants of its formerly colonized subjects, see through the lens of governmental technologies to re-imagine their institutional roles in the wealthiest city of the wealthiest U.S. state. However, before taking inventory of the governmental technologies that converged to create these museums, I will review a brief history of downtown Los Angeles' cycles of creative destruction that began in the early twentieth century.

[17] Alvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, "Territory and the Governmentalisation of Social Reproduction: Parliamentary Enclosure and Spatial Rationalities in the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," *Journal of Historical Geography* 38, no. 3 (2012), 210–211.

> There is still another segment of the citadel—panopticon which cannot be overlooked. Its form and function may be more specific to the contemporary capitalist city but its mercantile roots entwine historically with the citadels of all urbanized societies. Today, it has become the acknowledged symbol of the urbanity of Los Angeles, the visual evidence of the successful 'search for a city' by the surrounding sea of suburbs. This skyline contains the bunched castles and cathedrals of corporate power, the gleaming new 'central business district' of the 'central city,' pinned next to its aging predecessor just to the east. Here too the LA-leph's unending eyes are kept open and reflective, reaching out to and mirroring global spheres of influence, localizing the world that is within reach. [18] (Soja)

We may begin to see that a succession of enclosures created these museums, resembling the way Venn diagrams may hold smaller sets of territorial jurisdictions inside a larger one; for instance, the city's historic Plaza is positioned within the larger enclosure of the city's El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, which is in turn nested within the Community Redevelopment Agency's Central Business District Project area, and so on (Fig. 1.1).

Fortunately, early twentieth century Los Angeles offers a rich archive of property-power to interpret how distinctive groups of developers went about policing, rehabilitating, and remarketing their locales before construction began. The advent of public-private partnerships at the start of twentieth century introduced the formation of aggressive local governmental apparatuses, like the city's Metropolitan Water District, were designed with significant input from land developers such as Chandis Securities, the land holding company and subsidiary of the Times Mirror Corporation, owned by the Chandler and Otis families.[19] The creation of the

[18] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 238.

[19] William Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 13. The Lakewood Plan, described by Fulton is an excellent example of

Metropolitan Water District in the 1920s, gave developers access to reliable sources of water that would become instrumental in both remaking the city's built environment and the marketing of the southern California lifestyle that would propel the city's growth machine.[20] By the mid-1950s, newly incorporated cities would later mushroom across Los Angeles and Orange County, emulating the Lakewood Plan which transformed Southern California's industrial agrarian landscape into residential and industrial suburbs.[21] Cities like Lakewood became the testing ground for new public-private partnerships (PPP), which would marry the public and private sector through contractual agreements to undertake municipal infrastructure projects. Under the Lakewood Plan, the governmentalities introduced to privatize city management would also decentralize Los Angeles County governance of these newly formed cities and generate significant financial revenue for the private corporations involved in these arrangements.[22]

Adding to the introduction of new governmentalities which encouraged the incremental privatization of city infrastructure, the state legislature's post-WWII re-purposing of federal redevelopment laws would help to further advance Los Angeles' privatized redevelopment agenda. Los Angeles city leadership would successfully lobby the state legislature for a parallel

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introduction of newly incorporated cities that contracted their services, at significantly reduced rates from the city of Los Angeles. By the post-WWII period, this model would become implemented across Los Angeles, and Orange County. Mike Davis, "Sunshine and the Open Shop," in *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, ed. Tom Sitton and William Deverell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 106–107; Mike Davis, "The Empty Quarter" in *Sex, Death and God in L.A.*, ed. David Reid (New York: Pantheon, 1992), 58–59.

[20] Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 17.

[21] Davis, "Sunshine and the Open Shop," 165. The City of Lakewood is one of the best examples of the rise in mid-century housing developments that would transform acres of farmland into a new suburban housing development paid in part by private and public funds. Part of the Lakewood plan, through which this city would later be known by, would subcontract public services from Los Angeles County at a significantly reduced rate through the utilization of home-rule legislation, which gave cities the ability to build and finance their own municipal infrastructure.

[22] Susan Macdonald, and Caroline Cheong, *The Role of Public-Private Partnerships and the Third Sector in Conserving Heritage Buildings, Sites, and Historic Urban Areas* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2014).

body of redevelopment laws enabling the city to selectively abandon some federal housing objectives and still take advantage of the federal urban renewal law's blight removing powers.[23] In 1958, the city's method of piggy-backing on the federal powers of eminent domain was wielded to displace nearly 1,200 families in Elysian Park's Chavez Ravine neighborhood, to make way for its Dodger Stadium project, completed in 1962.[24] This pattern of creative destruction in downtown's redevelopment aligns with what Henri Lefebvre described when he discussed the dynamics of implosion/explosion that could also be directed back upon on older, previously urbanized areas. The processes of implosion/explosion in the city, as Lefebvre posits, offer the opportunity to generate structural advantages for new forms of capital accumulation in a period of rapid growth.[25] Los Angeles' rapid growth and industrialization in the early twentieth century illustrates that process, evidenced in the themed racialized urban places created as tourist destinations that would become central to this emergent business model as it unfolded in the city's historic ethnic enclaves. The profitability of downtown's ethnic themed tourist destinations would also be aided by the advances in rapid transportation, by means of the newly built freeway and public transportation systems which offered new opportunities for explosive growth that attracted suburbanites back to the city they had fled decades earlier. Increased speed, which incentivized accelerated growth removed the time constraints of slower and older forms of

[23] Mara A. Marks, "Shifting Ground: The Rise and Fall of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency," *Southern California Quarterly* 86, no. 3 (2004), 241–290.

[24] Don Parsons, *Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 7, 145–146. Parsons contends that the *Los Angeles Times*, had a hand in pushing red-baiting hysteria to promote the city's clearance of the Chavez Ravine.

[25] Neil Brenner, "Introduction: Urban Theory Without an Outside," In *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization* (Berlin: Jovis, 2014), 17.

transportation and thus increased the opportunities for re-commodifying older marginalized urban places.[26]

The legislature's approval of a tax increment financing amendment to the state's Community Redevelopment Act in 1954, also further accelerated the gentrifying uses of urban redevelopment for the city's ethnic and working-class communities through the removal and fixing of structural advantages to the accumulation of capital. The introduction of tax increment financing provided a growing number of southern California redevelopment agencies access to property tax dollars that supported the agency development bonds used to finance their projects, starting with the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA) when it created redevelopment districts to remove the multi-ethnic, working class residents that would make way for a wholesale re-design of the city's downtown skyline.[27] This method of finance was used throughout the phases of downtown's redevelopment traced in this study; however, the practice ended when Governor Jerry Brown and the legislature abolished the state's redevelopment laws in 2013, causing the huge transfer of public capital to private developers. This in turn prevented the state from meeting its primary obligations to sustain the public welfare through its housing, public health, safety, and education obligations.[28] The creation of the Little Tokyo redevelopment District in 1970 (Fig. 1.2), and the Central Business District in 1975 (Fig. 1.3), were tailored to privilege the city's largest and wealthiest, downtown Los Angeles property

[26] David Harvey, "Cities or Urbanization," in *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, ed. Neil Brenner (Berlin: Jovis, 2014), 56–57.

[27] George Lefcoe, and C. W. Swenson, "The Demise of TIF-Funded Redevelopment in California," *The Planning Report: Insider's Guide to Planning & Infrastructure* (July 2014), https://www.planningreport.com/2014/07/24/demise-tif-funded-redevelopment-california.

[28] "Beyond the CRAs; Gov. Brown was right to kill the redevelopment agencies. But Something like them is still needed," *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 2013, A25.

owners, that included the *Times'* Chandler dynasty. These economic-cultural enclosures and the cultural narratives governing the planning and neoliberal development strategies made the creation of the three ethnic museums that are this study's focus possible. And yet, the most formative genealogical rupture that concerns this study did not arise until the late 1970s, when the Los Angeles CRA, and its supporters led by the *Times*, found it necessary to replace their blight removal narrative with a pro-arts/multicultural agenda to advance their plan to build a new financial center on the previously clear Bunker Hill properties.[29]

Internally, the CRA was dealt a near fatal blow to its downtown development agenda in 1977, when the courts intervened to set a $750 million cap on the amount of the tax dollars the agency could invest in the Central Business District, which would create the 1,549-acre redevelopment enclosure that included the Bunker Hill project area. Under the CRA's oversight, by the early 1980s downtown's skyline would transform dramatically, through the construction of a pair of high-rise office towers, an internationally recognized concert hall, two modern art museums, and an elite music academy.[30] The CRA's still vaguely defined redevelopment objectives for Bunker Hill, meant that the downtown bluebloods, elite Angelenos who urban planner William Fulton describes as the city's wealthiest bankers, philanthropists, and real estate developers who represented some of the earliest engineers of the city's growth machine.[31] This coterie of downtown bluebloods, included influential families like the Chandlers, and other power brokers who would have the political pull to pressure the City Council to lift the court's spending cap which extended the CRA's life for another fifteen years. This extension allowed

[29] Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 294.

[30] John Schwada, "Judge Lets Cap on Redevelopment Spending Stand: Urban Renewal: Ruling Maintains $750-Million Limit on Downtown Projects. City Sought Increase to $7.1 Billion," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct 04, 1995.

[31] Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis*, 229.

the CRA to generate more than $1.6 billion of property tax money, and secure more than twice the amount stipulated in the 1977 court ruling. The influx of property tax revenue enabled by the rulings favoring the CRA, also bolstered the growth of the CBD, and overshadowed the fraction of redevelopment dollars diverted to the south Los Angeles, further contributing to the history of uneven redevelopment in the city.[32] For over a decade the CRA searched for a more politically palatable redevelopment narrative. Gradually, the agency's new start would settle on making Los Angeles a "world class city," a bold claim it would back up with multi-million-dollar investments in architecture, cultural infrastructure, and institutions. This project would provide visibility in the form of architectural symbolism and the cultivation of culture-consumers who would flock to downtown's new high culture venues. Attracting visitors would emerge as a crucial demonstration of a newly achieved high-culture status, conveniently countering downtown's frightening image as a blighted wasteland.

The L.A. 200 Bicentennial Celebration of 1981, followed by the Olympic Arts Festival spawned by the city's sponsorship of the 1984 Olympic Games, the Los Angeles Arts Festivals of 1987, 1990 and 1993, and the scores of business and arts stories published in the *Times* touting the city as the Pacific Rim's economic and media capital that proliferated during that period, also strongly influenced what the CRA and its supporters meant in its reimagination of Los Angeles as a "world class" global city.[33] Increasingly, Los Angeles' local ethnic diversity came to serve as embodied metonyms of the globalization of the city's culture, as well as hi-tech

[32] Susan Seager, "Deal of the Century," *L.A. Weekly*, June 2–8, 1995, 26–28; John Schwada, "CRA Girds for Fight to Retrieve Downtown Plan Redevelopment," *Los Angeles Times,* October 19, 1995, B3; Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis,* 243–248, 253, 254; Diane Haithman, "15-Million Gift for Disney Hall Expected," *Los Angeles Times,* April 10, 1997, A1, A30.

[33] Marina Peterson, *Sound, Space, and the City: Civic Performances in Downtown Los Angeles* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 30.

manufacturing and logistics industries. The city's critical media infrastructure actively encouraged these re-significations with books, feature stories, restaurant reviews, and movies like Ridley Scott's 1982 film, "Blade Runner" which portrayed Los Angeles as a postmodern, "multicultural" dystopia or idyll of multi-ethnic harmony. Anthropologist Marina Peterson dates the shift in urban planning practice, policy, and narrative we today recognize as quintessentially neoliberal to the request for proposals (RFP) the agency issued in 1979 for the five-block area on Bunker Hill's southeast corner that would become the corporate-owned California Plaza development project.

On Bunker Hill, promotion of the multicultural marketing narrative began modestly when the agency communicated to would-be developers that their projects designs should incorporate plans for a "Central Performance Plaza" where concert artists and audiences could be seen to publicly perform and embody the city's various registers of diversity.[34] After several months of back-and-forth consultations, one of the winning projects had come to represent itself as a "people oriented, exciting, dramatic, playful and varied urban design" that could thereafter serve as "the Center" the CRA and its supporters believed the city lacked. Although the CRA did not specify the need for including a public performance space, its operatives privately communicated that objective to the competing developers. "To this end," Peterson writes, "winning designs for California Plaza initially included three major arts components: The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), a resident modern dance company, and a public performance series. Each of these projects was implemented through a public-private partnership (PPP), situating the arts in a shifting dynamic of public and private that shaped the value and meaning of the organizations

[34] Ibid., 24–25.

and their respective publics."[35] The CRA expected developers to organize and foot the bill for California Plaza's public performance programming to advance its objective of having the local population perform the city's multicultural diversity. It drove this point home, Peterson added, when it instructed one winning project developer to add the " 'the populace' to the mix of consumer segments, which consisted of Los Angeles' minority groups: Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, children and women."[36] That combination of CRA policy and practice, the carefully simulated performance of the public's cultural diversity within in a private enclosure, would require careful policing to prevent unprogrammed expressions of political resistance, particularly after the 1992 rebellion exposed the racial and class fault lines of southern California's traumatic de-industrialization and re-industrialization.[37]

The delicate balance the California Plaza's Grand Performances struck in its quasi-public displays of multiculturalism coincided with the CRA's effort to use the city's growing arts community to gentrify the Central Business District's Spring Street corridor. The agency encouraged that effect, offering property owners extra subsidies (on top of the millions it invested in CBD financial center infrastructure improvements) for renting the hollowed out garment factories, banks, and hotels they were refurbishing to artists and cultural organizations, a formula with which other global cities experimented in the late 1970s and 1980s as they raced to adopt the governmentalities of neoliberal governance.[38] The concrete examples of multicultural

[35] Ibid., 26.

[36] Ibid., 28.

[37] Ibid., 32.; Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, "Privatisation of public open space: The Los Angeles experience," *The Town Planning Review* 64, no. 2 (1993), 139–167.

[38] Rachel Kreisel, "Shock Troops of Redevelopment: Los Angeles' Art Community, 1980s," *Perspectives: A Journal of Historical Inquiry* 40 (2013), 123.

narrative and artist-driven gentrification governmentality the CRA established downtown, however, are often missed by scholars who infer these local effects from their macro-analyses of neoliberal culture industries. They often ignore how specific governmentalities of public display the agency introduced to prolong its control of downtown development would become normalized throughout the city's and county's arts administration apparatus, just in time for implementing them at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, the Chinese American Museum, and the Japanese American National Museum, when increasing rents made downtown's development potential too tempting to ignore in the decades that would follow.

Review of Literature

My examination of the formation of property power and knowledge power in downtown Los Angeles requires a precise critique of neoliberalism in global cities, one that allows us to go beyond mere description of ethnic museums to get to the intricate relations of ethnic place-making. In this study my critique of city-building processes should allow me to move between and articulate the relations between the micro-scale of a close reading of a museum's poetics of exhibition, to the uses of public architecture to communicate meaning to pedestrians and political-cultural elites, and the ongoing contestations that occur as the city's populace attempts to collaborate in, modify, or reject the implementation of governmentalities. In my project's intent to trace Los Angeles' growth for over two centuries, we will come to some understanding of how the assemblage of governmentalities, including the introduction of accounting, public health, city planning, immigration policy, and cultural policy, were used to make downtown Los Angeles' spaces and ethnic populations knowable, containable, and governable through the

construction of new spatial configurations upheld through the juridical and political enclosures constructed from laws and property relations.

Recent scholarship, largely produced by museum studies scholars in the U.K. have used Foucauldian theories of governmentality to uncover the ways in which the administrative practices, accounting, evaluation, and the curation of exhibitions in public museums and galleries have become the sites of atomized disciplinary power wielded to create the bodies of knowledge upheld by cultural institutions. Articles such as Abdullah and Khadaroo's, "The Governmentality and Accountability of U.K. National Museums and Art Galleries," signals how new usages for the lens of governmentality may apply to museum studies. These scholars ask how the techniques, procedures, and processes utilized in the operation and governance of U.K. museums and art galleries have the effect of disciplining how these institutions are overseen. In their analysis of the power effects of applied governmentalities used in the management and administration of museums and art galleries in the U.K., Abdullah and Khadaroo posit that, "Governmentality mechanisms placed subjects in a space, partitioned them, defined responsibilities, and provided visibility to create discipline," within the institutions they studied these governmental technologies included employee performance measures, accounting reports, data collection, and other tools created to make the governance of public museums accountable to their private and public stakeholders.[40] While exhibitions and public programming are the more publicly visible outputs that play a role in shaping the museum's discursive practices, Abdullah and Khadaroo remind us that administrative tools help museums rationalize and justify their conduct inside and outside of the institution. Abdullah and Khadaroo's empirical study of

[40] Aminah Abdullah and Iqbal Khadaroo, "The Governmentality and Accountability of UK National Museums and Art Galleries," *Accounting Forum* 41, no. 3 (2017), 273.

museum administrative practices reveal the assemblage of a museum's administrative and accounting practices aimed at rendering subjects governable, docile, and observable. Their work has provided a useful methodology for my own transdisciplinary reading of the archives of urban planning, redevelopment, institutional tax filing documents, as well as the institutional polices used to create museums and exhibitions examined in this study.

Ross Wilson's article "Rethinking 1807: Museums, Knowledge and Expertise," provides another useful approach to incorporating the theories of governmentality to the analysis of museums in order to understand how the content of museum exhibitions are informed by dominant social values. In this article, Wilson examines how history museums and heritage sites in Britain commemorated the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, to understand the disciplinary effects these exhibitions had on the representation of Britain's legacy of slavery. For Wilson the theories of governmentality would provide a critical lens to uncovering what he calls the diverse "practices and techniques," that revealed how the institutions included in his study each attempted to communicate a specific representation of the past. Applying methodologies of detailed discourse analysis of the exhibitions included in his study, Wilson performed a close reading of each museum's didactic materials, public outreach campaigns, and conducted surveys of attendees to identify how the assemblage of governmentalities were precisely implemented by these museums which, "acted to defuse a traumatic history by controlling the extent to which visitors were engaged with the past and its effect on the present. In attempting to locate a shared national history, institutions like the British history museums and heritage sites included in Wilson's study, reflected a vision of the past that

focused on motivating visitors to awareness and action not contemplation.[41] What Wilson's examination uncovered revealed that participants in this government-sponsored initiative often replicated the discourses about the history of slavery and abolition in the U.K., to reaffirm the dominant perceptions of Britain's role in the slave trade, and minimize alternative histories of slavery and abolition. Like the poetics of exhibition examined in the museums that comprised my study of downtown Los Angeles' ethnic museums, Wilson's work offers a useful analytic model that applies the theories of governmentality to examine how the content of exhibitions, and the institutional practices of an institution may affirm and replicate dominant cultural values.

Like Wilson's article, which applies theories of governmentality to uncover how museum exhibitions may replicate the political ideologies of the nation state, Tony's Bennett's article, "Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial Governmentality and the Circulation of Reference," offers another crucial model for applying the lens of governmentality to examine the connections drawn between the newly emerging field of anthropology, the representation of non-western people in ethnographic museums, and the governance of France's colonial outposts in Africa during the nineteenth century. As Bennett argues, the newly formed discipline of anthropology would come to play a crucial role in the development of news forms of governmentality aimed at observing, measuring and evaluating populations of French colonial subjects in Africa. For Bennett, the introduction of assemblage theory to this work suggests that the relations of exteriority between governmentalities are brought together in an assemblage, which Bennett posits, "In approaching these from the perspective of assemblage theory my purpose is to displace approaches to the relations between museums and the social which place the former

[41] Ross Wilson, "Rethinking 1807: Museums, Knowledge and Expertise," *Museum and Society* 8, no. 3 (November 2010), 176.

outside the latter, as purely cultural agents acting through the mechanism of representation, in favour of approaches which focus on how museums and the social are stitched together in varying ways within different assemblages."[42] In the context of my project, Bennett's application of assemblage theory provides a useful unifying principle through which I can move between the recent and past histories of immigration policy, the archives of visual culture, and the histories of immigrant communities that have shaped the redevelopment and resignification of downtown Los Angeles' oldest ethnic enclaves.

While there is less literature in the United States that applies Foucauldian theories of governmentality to museums, Miranda J. Brady's article, "Governmentality and The National Museum of the American Indian," is one of the few examples of a museum studies text that uses theories of governmentality to examine the formation of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington D.C. The NMAI's attempt to simultaneously cultivate Native American audiences, gain corporate sponsorships, and generate revenue for the museum, she argues is indicative of a broader discursive shift in power/knowledge formation that gives voice to indigenous forms of cultural expression and ontology, as a museum of indigenous culture in a settler society.[43] In this text Brady demonstrates how the lens of governmentality can bring deeper understanding to the representational practices deployed within ethnic museums, on display within the exhibitions, didactic signage, as well as the museum's numerous commercial spaces such as the museum café and gift shop, which she posits, "Rather than understanding the museum as repressive or empowering, I suggest we understand the ways in which it acts as a

[42] Tony Bennett, "Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial Governmentality and the Circulation of Reference," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2 (2009), 100.

[43] Miranda J. Brady, "Governmentality and the National Museum of the American Indian: Understanding the Indigenous Museum in a Settler Society," *Social Identities* 14, no. 6 (2008), 763.

technology of the self through which cultural citizens form their subjectivity." However, unlike Wilson, Abdullah, and Khandaroo, who have undertaken studies of governmentality in museums to uncover the often unseen and atomized nodes of disciplinary power upheld through the museum's multivariant administrative practices for the purposes of governance, Brady's article explores the NMAI's role in forming the subjectivities of the museum's visitors and sponsors, through which the public's attendance of the ethnic museum signals a performative cultural citizenship in which relations of civility and multicultural tolerance are highlighted. Brady's work provides a crucial lens to examine the ways in which the museums included in this study have both provided institutional visibility for Asian Americans and Mexican Americans, and contributed to a technology of self, through which museum attendance is constitutive of urban cultural citizenship for its visitors, and a signal of performative allyship among corporate sponsors.

Another text instrumental in my study of ethnic museums is Jacques Bidet's dual analysis aimed at weaving together the works of Foucault and Marx; it serves as a crucial component to understanding the role of governmentalities creating the spatial enclosure occupied by public museums in the built environment. Bidet's work illustrates how the governmentalities that constitute property-power within local, regional, or national jurisdictional spaces may invoke new policies, regulations, laws, or practices that favor new circuits of capital accumulation or starve them of investment capital.[44] Similarly, I draw on Henri Lefebvre, in his early attempts at a Marxist theory of urban place-making, theorized these interventions in terms of the explosion or implosion of property and social relations within a spatial enclosure. His model examines

[44] Bidet, *Foucault with Marx*, 91.

rapid growth as an explosive force, and its opposite, implosion, and the ways in which this combination causes the disruption of prior property relations. Tacitly marked spatial enclosures, such as red-lining districts, or explicit ones, such as districts cordoned off for quarantine or police repression, aid the marginalizing and racializing acts and representations that communicate to capital that a territory has been designated for decapitalizing implosion that will make it available for a future cycle of re-capitalization.[3945]

In early twentieth century Los Angeles, as I shall later argue, the discipline of the cordon sanitaire or spatial quarantine that was enforced in the historic Plaza and neighborhoods near it, constituted an effort to circumscribe and marginalize the peoples in these areas in preparation for new relations of cultural production. Said simply, no process of implosion/explosion, as articulated by Lefebvre, can occur in the global city without an enclosure, which for the purposes of this study consists of the project areas implemented by local governments to change land use. More, because the governmental interventions outlined in my study are recursive, one can reconstruct the layering of interventions that result in the built environments of the present. The city's creation of the Chinese American Museum inside its El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument in the 1980s aided that institution's development, much as neighboring La Plaza de Cultura y Artes also benefitted from the state's creation of the historic Plaza district twenty years later, both of which emulated a redevelopment model that relied on the economic marketability of ethnic cultural spaces perfected in Little Tokyo in the 1970s. Whether directly or indirectly, the state monument, and the zoning changes that enabled it, normalized the knowledge-creating and knowledge-circulating activities each of these museums would later carry out.

[39] Brenner, "Introduction: Urban Theory Without an Outside," 17–18.

Methodology

My study offers a reconstruction of the urban fabric's disciplinary weave. In this study will point out moments of rupture and continuity to show how what some refer to as today's neoliberal "ethnic growth" machine was in fact the product of successive state and corporate interventions keenly interested in the display of the racial other. This process began with the knowledge-making interventions of the *Los Angeles Times* reporting of the city's redevelopment combined with the efforts of local governments honed to normalize southern California's twentieth century growth agenda. I will show how the poetics of ethnic display operating within these museums serve to express the interventions of successive governmentalities as a constitutive dynamic. My study of ethnic museum-making in Los Angeles achieves its understanding of the ways these institutions occupy the intersection of property-power and knowledge-power, and to undertake this analysis I have inventoried my study's assemblage of museum governmentalities as follows:

- The creation of new forms of private or public property applied to new areas of cultural production, tax laws, copyright, local regulations, and financial subsidies facilitating the creation of non-profit institutions used to underwrite and normalize the commodification of cultural production through grantmaking, to artists and arts organizations, and introducing planning policies that create zones of cultural creation, performance and consumption.

- Laws, policies, and practices to discipline populations, such as the census or narratives of ethnic display, through which the state quantifies and measures the political economic life of the nation,[40] and through which it deploys categories of difference – race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion, etc. – that reify the political, social, and cultural norms of national citizenship and non-citizen Otherness.

- The policy, institutional practices, and multicultural narratives the CRA innovated in the 1970s to advance a fine arts institution-building agenda as the new redevelopment

[40] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 100-102.

rationale for Central Business District and adjacent downtown areas. The CRA's re-signification of its categorization of "blight" in the built environment and economy served to re-construct the city's image as a multicultural host of "world class" fine art institutions to fund multi-million-dollar museums, public library, concert hall, and office towers that made these destinations visible in the city's new skyline.

- Criminal and civil law, policy, and narrative practices, including police powers of arrest, surveillance, and immigration control, as well as the introduction of health, safety and zoning codes and regulations that authorized local governments to discipline bodies and property by imposing a *cordon sanitaire* or other jurisdictional enclosures that reinforce bio-power.[41]

- California Community Redevelopment Acts of 1945 and 1954 (abolished in 2013) that gave cities and other local agencies the fiscal authority to divert local property tax revenue to the redevelopment agency and to incur long-term bonded debt to raise the capital to fund development within specially drawn territorial jurisdictions due to their designation as economically declining "blighted" districts or neighborhoods.[42]

- Charter city law, policy, fiscal technology, and related discourse embodied in the "contract cities" model that facilitated and normalized outsourcing through the subcontracting of governmental functions.[43] These neoliberal practices were adopted in other public sectors, such as museums, and public education.

- Joint Powers authority codified in California Governmental Code, sec. 6,500, enacted in 1949, and revised thereafter, permitting local and state governmental agencies to form new governmental entities, such as the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, which invested with the authority to collect revenues and incur debt for the purpose of combining "their powers and resources to work on their common problems" within territorial enclosures defined for those purposes.[44]

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[41] Thomas Lemke, "'The birth of bio-politics': Michel Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality," *Economy and Society* 30, no. 2 (2001), 191; Michael C. Behrent, "Foucault and technology," *History and Technology* 29, no. 1 (2013), 55.

[42] Health and Safety Code Division 24, §§ 33000 - 37964 as authorized by Article XVI, Section 16 of the California Constitution.

[43] Gary Miller, *Cities by Contract: The Politics of Municipal Incorporation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 12, 20–21, 48.

[44] Trish Cypher and Colin Grinnell, *Governments Working Together: A Citizen's Guide to Joint Powers Agreements* (Sacramento: California State Senate, Local Government Committee, August 2007), 3, 10.

- The well-established practice of political patronage through which L.A. County Supervisors who regularly vote for a fellow supervisor's pet project because they expect the beneficiary of that vote to return the favor at a later date.[45]

Description of Chapters

What follows, then, is a genealogy or reconstruction of the histories and political rationalities that converged in the formation of the museums I have identified for study. The process that led to the formation of these museums could be said to begin in the late nineteenth century when downtown property owners orchestrated the private-public partnerships that would later transform Olvera Street, Old Chinatown, and later Little Tokyo into destinations for the display of racial and ethnic Otherness to Anglo tourists.[46] That process culminates in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century consolidation of a neo-liberal political economy. Each chapter of this dissertation aims to illustrate how the neighborhoods where the city's ethnic museums are situated each followed a similar pattern through which city agencies worked to reinscribe and uphold new territorial boundaries that would eventually facilitate the redevelopment of these neighborhoods nearly a century later.

In Chapter One, "Refashioning Little Tokyo: The Japanese American National Museum and the Rebirth of Little Tokyo," I begin with an analysis of the city's turn towards multi-cultural arts and cultural policy introduced in the 1980s. These policies would become one of

[45] Supervisor Gloria Molina inherited the benefits of a system that limited electoral competition; incumbents routinely received 90 percent or more of the campaign contributions, most of it from developers. Challengers would have to draw comparable sums from donors already committed to their opponent. "Not surprisingly, only eighteen office holders shared five supervisor's seats from 1945 to 1990, with average tenures of fourteen years on the board. 'Most [supervisors] either retired voluntarily or died in office,' writes election historian J. Morgan Kousser. "Their margin over their chief opponents has averaged a whopping thirty-six percent, and they have usually gathered a sufficiently large majority (not just a plurality) of the vote to avoid November runoffs." The discretionary powers of county government reinforced the supervisor's hold on power by giving them wide latitude in controlling services provided in their districts. Even with term limits, Supervisor Molina used this system of political patronage to garner the other supervisor votes for her La Plaza de Cultura y Artes project. J. M. Kousser, *How to Determine Intent: Lessons from L.A*. (University of California at Berkeley: Institute of Governmental Studies, 1991) 10.

[46] David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso, 2014), 100.

the primary narratives driving downtown Los Angeles' redevelopment efforts. Such narratives instrumentalized downtown's reinvention as a neoliberal global city, and the highlighted the role that ethnic museums like JANM would play in the formation of new cultural discourses and public policies supporting multiculturalism. As this chapter argues, JANM's formation would create a repeatable model for introducing redevelopment efforts that would formalize new urban redevelopment governmentalities that leaned on the arts as an economic generator under the auspices of multicultural arts policies. In this chapter I trace how Little Tokyo's redevelopment efforts began in the 1950s driven by Japanese American community members, and by the 1970s center around the CRA's comprehensive reconstruction of the neighborhood that would make way for international investment and tourism. What emerges from JANM's creation and Little Tokyo's re-fashioning as ethnic tourist destination by the early 1980s, illustrates how formalized multicultural arts and cultural policy would become adopted across Los Angeles' city and county government to serve as the new neoliberal rationale for re-inventing Los Angeles as a global metropolis.

Chapter Two, "Romance of the Picturesque: Exhibiting Mexican American Mythologies of Place in Los Angeles' Historic Plaza District," examines the creation of La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, the city's first museum dedicated to Mexican American themes and content. Located in El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes took its name from the city's historic Plaza, and adjoining Olvera Street, to draw corollary linkages to some of the city's earliest Mexican and Mexican American historic sites. As a result La Plaza de Cultura y Artes naming was part of a larger effort on the part of the museum's founders to leverage the museum's location among historic buildings across from Olvera Street, one of the city's oldest sites of Mexican American ethnic tourism in downtown Los Angeles. In this chapter I argue that

the deployment of governmentalities used in the creation of La Plaza de Cultura y Artes contributed to the ongoing re-imagination of Mexican American ethnic tourism in downtown Los Angeles that has reemerged at the center of the city's growth machine. To illustrate this argument, I explore the earliest foundations of ethnic tourism in Los Angeles' historic Plaza to examine the social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped La Plaza de Cultura y Artes' formation, and the museum's role behind the creation of new governmental enclosures that has generated new jurisdictional zones dictated by law and public policy. Together these have produced the cultural artifact we today know as of the city's historic Plaza district.

Chapter Three, "*Implosion/Explosion:* Reterritorializing Chinatown at CAM and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument," examines how the cycles of deterritorialization and reterritorialization forming Old Chinatown, the site of Los Angeles' oldest Chinatown adjoining the historic Plaza. This chapter traces the lineage of the governmentalities and social practices deployed to portray Chinese people as nonhuman aliens, and Old Chinatown's space as unsafe and unsanitary reinforced through turn of the century artifacts of visual cultural, print media, public health and immigration law to late twentieth century city planning documents used in the neighborhood's social and economic isolation and destruction. In applying Lefebvre's model of the dialectic of implosion/explosion to illustrate Old Chinatown's formation, destruction, and eventual resettlement, I argue, that this recursive pattern of destruction and creation enabled the development of the city's urban and suburban Chinatowns, which would drive CAM's project to reclaim Old Chinatown for the museum's creation. By understanding CAM's origins in Old Chinatown, I contend that the governmentalities of twenty-first century ethnic display that established the city's first Chinese American museum in downtown, have also

introduced neoliberal museum practices, presents a glimpse into the tactics used by small ethnic museums as they continue to struggle for institutional survival.

Together, these chapters provide a critical genealogy of the formation downtown's ethnic museums that emerged in the late twentieth century, to uncover how the networks of governmentalities that were mobilized in their creation were contingent on the redevelopment of the ethnic neighborhoods that surrounded them. My post-disciplinary approach to uncovering the institutional histories of ethnic museums in downtown Los Angeles has drawn together a close study of Los Angeles' cultural political economy by the turn of the twenty-first century, constructed through close readings of the community histories, representational practices, and the political rationalities that have informed the areas of law and public policy which shaped the formation of these institutions. As I will articulate throughout this project, an examination of the city's ethnic museums allows us to understand the complexity of institutional formation at the turn of the twentieth century, it can also uncover the processes of ethnic place making in the city, and connected analytic and critical approaches to understanding how local memories and their lived subjective spaces. By looking closely at the administrative and representational practices used by each institution examined in this study I seek to uncover the changing terrain of museum practices, examined from the inside out.

Chapter One: Refashioning Little Tokyo: The Japanese American National Museum and the Rebirth of Little Tokyo

The Japanese American National Museum (JANM) was incorporated as a private nonprofit organization in 1985, making it Los Angeles' first museum created solely to protect and recover the histories of Japanese Americans. Over the museum's thirty-five-year history, JANM's institutional mission to recover Japanese American visual art and material culture has informed the museum's exhibition and preservation efforts. However, JANM's formation in the mid 1980s was also a product of the city's highly contested drive for urban renewal projects designed to transform downtown. Since the inception of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in the 1950s, these projects have targeted ethnic enclaves across downtown Los Angeles under the auspices of modernizing the city and abating blight. In JANM's case, the city's redevelopment efforts led to the formalization of new urban redevelopment governmentalities that linked the arts as economic generator with the promise of a newly coined multicultural equity.[1] The introduction of multicultural arts across municipal agencies that included the city's Department of Cultural Affairs, Community Redevelopment Agency and County Arts Commission proposed, the introduction of multicultural arts and cultural policy that strove to reflect the city's emerging racial demography and ethnic urban topography transforming the city's arts and cultural institutions. For the city leaders who sought to institutionalize multicultural arts and cultural policy, this model of urban redevelopment, whether expressed in news articles, policy papers, regulations, or laws, asserted that ethnic and racial self-

[1] In the 1980s, the least nuanced pluralist rationales for multiculturalism were celebrated as extensions of the civil rights movements of the 1960s. Critics such as Angela Y. Davis, however, would soon contest the ways the discourse's vague celebrations of diversity and pluralism effectively erased the unique class histories of racial and cultural difference.

representation could become a corrective to the models of assimilation imposed during previous decades.[2]

JANM's formation coincided with a moment when public multicultural arts festivals such as the Los Angeles Festival, and before that, the construction of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on Bunker Hill, would make cultural tourism throughout the city's ethnic enclaves the new tourist-friendly normal. In turn, the success of the Los Angeles Festival would inspire discussion among cultural leaders, artists and critics over Los Angeles' role as the capital of the Pacific Rim.[3] Concerns regarding the growing necessity for multiculturalism in the arts was not solely isolated to Los Angeles, as Sacramento-based California Arts Council deputy director of programs would state in 1991, "Multiculturalism is *the* issue of our time; we're in the midst of it."[4] Four years after JANM's debut, formalized multicultural arts and cultural policy, which is to say its governmental development recipe, would become adopted across Los Angeles' city and county government to serve as the new neoliberal rationale for re-inventing Los Angeles as a global metropolis. The formalization of JANM's strategy to solidify community, legislative, and donor support would also provide a much-needed counter-narrative to the electorate's increasing opposition to the growing tax burden of redevelopment. One of the earliest of such plans targeted the city's history of inequitable funding practices, which had concentrated most of its

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[2] In his book *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles*, historian Mark Wild has examined the formation of Americanization in Los Angeles' east side ethnic enclaves. By the 1920s when various ethnic groups increased dramatically across the city, churches such as All Nations Church in downtown Los Angeles offered a range of Americanization aimed at the assimilation of recent immigrants and their first-generation children.

[3] Rachel Kreisel, "Shock Troops of Redevelopment: Los Angeles' Art Community, 1980s," *Perspectives: A Journal of Historical Inquiry* 40 (2013), 119–123, https://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Perspectives/Vol40/rachelkreisel.pdf.

[4] Jan Breslauer, "Fear of the M Word: Multiculturalism Is Sweeping the Arts Community of L.A., 'the Capital of the Third World.' It Promises to Shift Power and Money to Minorities-and That's Making Some People Anxious," *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1991, 3.

redevelopment capital investments in the downtown area, rather than nearby working-class communities like South Los Angeles. A multicultural task force and affinity groups of private and public funders were quickly assembled to determine the best ways to use arts and cultural institution-building to help remedy these historical inequities in arts and cultural funding.[5] This movement to institutionalize multiculturalism produced a web of intersecting cultural and economic policies that would take formal expression in governmental techniques intended at rendering ethnic and racial difference both economically viable and culturally intelligible.[6] Museums like JANM would become an integral part of the direct implementation of these experiments in governmentalities aimed at integrating the intersecting spheres of cultural political economy.

This chapter investigates the impact of the specific governmentalities used first to create JANM, and how these were later applied in the museum's representation of Japanese American ethnic identity. Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality, in this context refers to the art of governing manifested through an ensemble of institutions, practices, policies, and tactics exerted to discipline a population's conduct of conduct.[7] JANM's creation utilized an ensemble of methods for governing deployed by community members, city leaders, and state legislature first directed at the museum's visitors, and thereafter invoked with subsequent downtown redevelopment initiatives. The techniques of governance used inside and outside JANM not only

[5] Allan Parachini, "Revision in System of Grants Allocation Urged: Arts: An L.A. Panel Recommends Defining Recipients Only as Artists or Presenters of Art, Not by Discipline. Fair Access to Funds within a Diverse Community Is Sought," *Los Angeles Times*, July 5, 1991, 6.

[6] Aminah Abdullah and Iqbal Khadaroo, "The Governmentality and Accountability of U.K. National Museums and Art Galleries," *Accounting Forum* 41, no. 3 (2017), 270.

[7] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, eds. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 102.

disciplined how and where collective memory was located in Little Tokyo, they also provided the narrative with which the city's political-cultural and economic elites forged new alliances to leverage the project's private and public funding. Additionally, and more pertinent to this study, JANM's formation while novel in the 1980s, would become the preferred redevelopment strategy guiding the formation of other ethnic cultural institutions that emerged across the city at this time.[8]

I argue that the dearth of critical political-economic histories of downtown museum building during this period have naturalized the city's present ensemble of museum governmentalities and have instrumentalized the neoliberal re-invention of the global city. Today these methods of governance have become inextricable in the management and formation of arts and cultural institutions globally. Starting with the history of Japanese American community formation, I survey the early history of immigration policies that shaped neighborhoods such as Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights to illustrate how community displacement and the economic decline of these neighborhoods by midcentury, would make these regions of the city attractive to the CRA decades later. In turn, this chapter also provides a close reading of two of JANM's early exhibitions and pedagogic practices to examine the lasting impact these policies would have on the construction of ethnic and racial identity. By reconstructing JANM's origins from the archives of public policy, urban redevelopment, Asian American studies, and cultural political economy these intersecting bodies of knowledge further uncover the assemblage of governmental techniques used inside and outside JANM.

[8] It is crucial to note that the California African American Museum (CAAM) in Exposition Park was one of JANM's most influential predecessors. Founded in 1977, CAAM navigated the corridors of city leadership and statewide policy that made the state's first large-scale African American Museum possible. CAAM's creation similarly coalesced community revitalization efforts initiated in preparation of the revitalization of Exposition Park before the 1984 Olympic Games.

Exclusion and Containment: A Survey of Early Twentieth Century Anti-Japanese Immigration Policy

The earliest influx of Japanese immigrants arrived on the west coast of the United States by the turn of the twentieth century, first arriving in the territory of Hawai'i by the 1860's to work on the island's fruit and sugar plantations. However, by the late nineteenth century, immigration policies, both stateside and in the Kingdom on Hawai'i, focused on curtailing the arrival of Japanese immigrants and became increasingly rigid. Comparatively, this was not the case for Chinese immigrants, who were the target of an increasingly comprehensive tapestry of national and statewide laws created for the purposes of excluding, containing, and stripping Chinese immigrants of their political agency, and social mobility. Yet, by the turn of the twentieth century the exclusionary laws aimed at prohibiting the immigration of the Chinese to the U.S. mainland would broaden to include Asian immigrants from other countries.[9] During a small window of time at the start of the twentieth century, Japan was temporarily exempted from the immigration prohibitions that applied to immigrants from other Asian counties. Between 1859 to 1905 the U.S. granted Japan most favored nation status motivated by Japan's newly opened trade ports, its military power over China and Korea, and victory over Russia during the Russo Japanese War in 1905.[10] Warm relations between Japan and the U.S. encouraged the creation of early immigration treaties that dictated the terms of Japanese migration to the U.S.,

[9] Chinese exclusion laws prohibiting Chinese immigration were continually renewed and expanded during the last decade of the nineteenth century, and by 1902 anti-Chinese immigration laws soon included Hawai'i and the Philippines.

[10] Shinya Murase, "The Most Favored Nation Treatment in Japan's Treaty Practice During the Period 1854-1905," *The American Journal of International Law* 70, no. 2 (April 1976), 280.

and for a time supported the political alliances between both nations.[11] On the U.S. mainland, Japanese immigrants in California, Washington and Oregon occupied niche ethnic economies in agriculture, fishing and the service economy. And yet, despite an apparent welcome during the century's first decade California's gradually increasing Issei population became the focus of anti-Japanese attitudes and actions, justified by the prior century's Yellow Peril narrative.[12] Amid growing anti-Japanese sentiment in San Francisco, the San Francisco Board of Education introduced a district-wide regulation in 1906, calling for the formal segregation of Japanese children in San Francisco's public schools.[13] This policy required Japanese students to attend "Oriental Schools" created by the San Francisco Board of Education for the purpose of segregating the city's Chinese, Korean, and Japanese students. Japanese officials flatly rejected the San Francisco Board of Education's policy, countering that the new policy violated the terms of the Treaty of 1894, which initiated trade and peace between both nations.

By 1907, the Japanese and American governments would arrive at an arrangement dubbed the Gentlemen's Agreement overturning the segregation orders, and in exchange the Japanese government agreed to impose new restrictions on outward migration to the U.S. The conditions of the Gentlemen's Agreement prohibited Japan from issuing passports to the

[11] Kiyo S. Inui, "The Gentlemen's Agreement How It Has Functioned," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 122, no. 1 (1925), 190.

[12] Using Japanese American generational designations rooted in Japanese numerical, such as ichi, ni, san for one, two, three. By the early twentieth century, the term Issei would be used in description of the first generation of Japanese Immigrants who arrived in Hawai'i and the mainland United States by the late nineteenth century. The term Nisei pertains to the second generation of U.S. born Japanese Americans who were young children or infants during incarceration. Sansei refers to third generation Japanese Americans, who are very often the children of Nisei. Among Japanese Americans these generational designations contain their own legacies of generational tension that will not be examined in detail in this project but should be noted undergird some discussion of these groups.

[13] Racially segregated schools were created in San Francisco as early as the 1850s, schools such as the city's "Oriental Public School" created in 1859 were an example of the way Jim Crow laws incorporated racialized minorities in California. Even before the passage of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, segregated schools were created throughout California for Asian, African American, Mexican, and Native American children.

continental U.S. for new immigrants, apart from parents, children and wives of existing migrants.[14] While the policy was never officially ratified by U.S. legislation, the Gentlemen's Agreement lasted for a period of nearly one year and was considered a short-term concession to the racial segregation restricting Japanese students from attending San Francisco's public schools.[15] On the streets of San Francisco, anti-Japanese mob violence erupted twice that year, led by the Asiatic Exclusion League a group affiliated with labor unions advocating for anti-Asian nativism and outright white supremacism.[16]

Before the passage of the Gentlemen's Agreement in 1907, California's Japanese populations continued to increase, growing to 10,151 people statewide by the turn of the century. The Gentlemen's Agreement effectively curtailed overseas migration to the continental U.S., making it more difficult for Japanese migrants to secure passports through legal avenues. [17] In reaction to the new law, Japanese immigrants figured out ways to work around the law, taking part in regional migration as well as introducing the practice of picture brides, a Japanese matchmaking tradition that encouraged the betrothal of Japanese women to Issei immigrants, one of the few categories of immigration permitted by the Gentlemen's Agreement.[18] Despite the stringency of the Gentlemen's Agreement, populations of Japanese immigrants slowly increased.

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[14] Shiho Imai, "Gentlemen's Agreement," *Densho Encyclopedia*, last modified November 27, 2019, accessed March 8, 2020, https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Gentlemen's%20Agreement/.

[15] Some historians such as Kiyo Sui Inui, suggest that the segregation of public schools in San Francisco that inspired this legislation was a direct result of the destruction of several public schools caused by the great earthquake of 1906, which resulted in the reduction of segregated Japanese serving schools.

[16] Asiatic Exclusion League, Finding Aid, "Asiatic Exclusion League Records," larc.ms. 0145, *Labor Archives and Research Center*, San Francisco State University. https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c89k4c1p/entire_text/

[17] M.P. Cullinane, "The `Gentlemen's' Agreement - Exclusion by Class," *Immigrants and Minorities* 32, no. 2 (2014), 140.

[18] The term picture bride refers to the early twentieth century practice where photographs of women in Japan were used to arrange potential marriage with Japanese migrant men in the US.

In Los Angeles, the city's Japanese immigrant population increased by 40% over a twenty-year period. Beginning with a population of 500 Issei residents, by 1920, this population increased to 19,911 people by the early 1920s, making up 5.2% of the city's total population of over half a million people.[19] As the population of Issei grew, communities of Japanese immigrants formed in cities across California. Also known as "Japantown," these enclaves of Japanese immigrants provided cultural connection and mutual aid for the residents of these communities.

As Japanese immigrant communities formed over the first decade of the twentieth century, the Alien Land Law was introduced in 1913, added to an assemblage of laws targeting Asian immigrants. While not explicitly labeled an immigration policy, the Alien Land Law prohibited foreign born immigrants, and new immigrants from buying residential or agricultural land in addition to possessing long-term leases beyond a period of three years. California legislature's nativist majority, which advocated for protecting of the American polity from socially "undesirable" immigrants, next introduced the euphemism, "Aliens Ineligible for Citizenship," to buttress its anti-Japanese public policy. The intent of the term, "Aliens Ineligible for Citizenship," functioned as a blanket categorization for all Asian immigrants and their descendants. Through the prohibition of the sale and lease of real estate, the Alien Land Law kept Asian immigrants in cycles of short-term tenancy that perpetuated the overcrowding and transitory housing conditions found in many immigrant enclaves. In its application, this law also rendered immigrant populations vulnerable to the selective city enforcement of public health and

[19] These populations increases have been traced by historian Lon Kurashige in his book, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 17, as well as the reports produced by the National Parks Service (U.S. Department of the Interior), "Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California (Japanese Americans)," last modified November 17, 2004, www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views4b.htm.

sanitation under the medical pretext of disease reduction.[20] By the 1920s the assemblage of anti-Japanese immigration policies implemented during the last two decades would finally find its most acute expression in the California Supreme Court ruling of U.S. vs Ozawa, which unilaterally denied Japanese immigrants (and other non-white immigrants) the right to immigrate into the continental United States outright. This law that sought to directly intervene on the emigration of Japanese to California through explicit prohibition. The Immigration Act of 1924 would become national law two years after the U.S. vs Ozawa ruling, effectively ending all immigration from Japan and maintaining the prohibition against all other Asian-origin immigration, except for the U.S. territory of the Philippines, while conversely increasing the quotas for northern and western European immigration.[21]

Reading across the archive of early twentieth century immigration laws, it is clear these policies attempted to constrain the flow of Japanese immigrants to the United States, and to prevent the structural assimilation of Asian Americans. The result of these laws caused a dual phenomenon of exclusion and containment, like the policies imposed on Chinese immigrants a century earlier. For Japanese American immigrants living in the Los Angeles, these restrictive immigration policies would also directly lead to the formation of Japanese American ethnic enclaves. Housing segregation in Los Angeles was imposed across the city through a combination of *dejure* and *defacto* methods that included restrictive housing covenants, redlining

[20] Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939*, American Crossroads, vol. 20 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 75.

[21] Shiho Imai, "Ozawa v. United States," *Densho Encyclopedia*, last modified April 16, 2014, https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Ozawa%20v.%20United%20States/.

and the imposition of sundown laws that worked to segregate the city's pockets of communities of color both racially and economically.[22]

For this reason, neighborhoods without explicit housing covenants barring the sale of homes to Jews, African Americans, and Mexicans, such as Boyle Heights on the city's eastside which would become the site of one of the city's oldest Japanese American communities. With origins in the late nineteenth century, Boyle Heights and neighboring Lincoln Heights were first inhabited by affluent whites who built impressive Victorian homes with views of the Los Angeles River. Yet, by the turn of the twentieth century Boyle Heights experienced a wave of white flight that made the neighborhood an attainable home for immigrants of Eastern European descent, as well as Mexicans, African Americans, and Asian Americans.[23] By 1920, Little Tokyo formed, becoming the city's largest Japanese American enclave, second only to Boyle Heights, across the Los Angeles River. Where Boyle Heights offered residents a modest variety of housing options that included clapboard Craftsman style bungalows, stucco garden apartments, and brick multi-family rooming houses; Little Tokyo offered a dense urban community clustered on a small tract of land located between East First, Alameda, San Pedro, and Temple Streets in downtown Los Angeles. Little Tokyo was also located on the periphery of downtown's patchwork of ethnic enclaves that include Chinatown, Manila Town, the city's historic Plaza, and Bronzeville, one of the city's oldest African American entertainment and shopping districts located along Central Avenue. As the map of Little Tokyo created by the CRA illustrates, Little Tokyo's spatial enclosure resembled a small trapezoidal notch carved out of the larger footprint

[22] Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 2018), 159–165.

[23] While Boyle Heights continues to undergo dramatic shifts in demography in the present moment, vestiges of the neighborhoods multiracial past are evident in the proximity of Evergreen Cemetery, Chinese Cemetery, and Mount Zion Cemetery which were created for the burial of ethnic and racial minorities prohibited from purchasing burial plots.

of downtown's Central Business District (CBD), flanked by the city's ethnic enclaves (Fig. 1.2). In the corresponding CRA map denoting downtown's CBD, this map provides a stark illustration of the relationship to power and economic infrastructure denoted in each spatial enclosure. The territory occupied by the CBD solidified downtown's politically influential nodes of power such as City Hall, Los Angeles Police Department Headquarters, *The Los Angeles Times*, and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on Bunker Hill, later completed in 1964 (Fig. 1.3). Occupying a small pocket of land of the CBD map's southeastern corner, Little Tokyo's proximity to the other large ethnic enclaves residing in downtown expressed the intentional spatial and economic segregation of racialized communities from the loci of economic and cultural power.

In the years before World War II, however, Little Tokyo experienced nearly two decades of economic freedom and spatial growth that remained unmatched until the 1980s. As historian Lon Kurashige explains, from 1920s through early 1940s Little Tokyo offered Japanese immigrants the opportunity to establish their own businesses that catered to Issei clientele and their second and third generation families.[24] These ventures included Japanese-owned restaurants, grocery stores, import shops, candy stories, hotels, barber shops, bathhouses, medical clinics, and pool halls serving to the needs of the growing intergenerational community.[25] Before World War II an array of cultural institutions also formed to meet the cultural, spiritual and growing political interests of the city's growing Japanese Americans that settled in Little Tokyo, these institutions included the Los Angeles chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), a national civil rights organization, as well as a number of Christian churches, a Buddhist temple, and the *Rafu Shimpo*, a bilingual Japanese-English newspaper. In turn,

[24] Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 20.

[25] Ibid., 19.

community centers, Japanese-language schools, and arts organizations also emerged in Little Tokyo, which helped maintain a connection to Japanese cultural practices for first- and second-generation immigrants.

However, by the start of World War II, Little Tokyo's "Golden Age" faced violent disruption with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's enactment of Executive Order 9066. Executive Order 9066, which called for the forced removal and mass incarceration of all Japanese Americans in concentration camps located throughout the western U.S. The military delivered removal notices to all individuals of Japanese origin and posted evacuation orders throughout Japanese enclaves. Residents of both Little Tokyo, and other Japanese communities throughout the city such as Little Osaka on the city's westside, were forced to abandon their property, businesses, and they were effectively separated from their neighborhoods and communities. To justify the enactment of this law, the U.S. government designated a total of 112,000 individuals of Japanese origin as enemy threat, even though nearly two thirds of this population were comprised of American citizens.[26]

After the war, the forced removal of Japanese Americans in Los Angeles led to the dispersal of Japanese Americans throughout Southern California, well beyond the boundaries of Boyle Heights, Little Tokyo, and Little Osaka. Following the return of Japanese Americans from concentration camps in 1946, Little Tokyo became spatially smaller in scale, and it was also constrained by periods of economic hardship. Although the population was significantly smaller, this partial return to Little Tokyo, helped sustain the role of the neighborhood as a symbolic and cultural hub, containing the indelible connections to the communities' early history. Yet, by the

[26] Lynn Thiesmeyer, "The Discourse of Official Violence: Anti-Japanese North American Discourse and the American Internment Camps," *Discourse & Society* 6, no. 3 (1995), 330.

1950s and 1960s, the narrative of Little Tokyo's increasing social and economic blight became a prevailing concern among Japanese American community members concerned with lack of economic opportunity for its residents, growing drug use among Nisei and Sansei youth, and the increasing economic vulnerability of elders in Little Tokyo.[27] These concerns would drive the earliest the coalition of community organizers who advocated for Little Tokyo's redevelopment by mid-century.

JANM's Birth: The Creative Destruction of Little Tokyo

Formed in 1948, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was established to, "attract private investment into economically depressed communities; eliminate slums, abandoned for unsafe properties and blight throughout Los Angeles."[28] For the nearly 60 years that the CRA was active in Los Angeles, the agency paired economic revitalization with dual outputs of historic preservation and the construction of new real estate developments.[29] Due in part to the formation of the ethnic enclaves that developed in and around downtown Los Angeles, the CRA's efforts at blight abatement also coincided with an effort to expand the city's central business district to revive the economies within the district. Little Tokyo's relationship with the CRA started in the early 1960s, and it took twenty years to bring the CRA's revitalization plan into fruition.

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[27] Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 20.

[28] Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles. CRA Arts Policy, March 3, 2005. http://www.crala.org/internet-site/Other/Art_Program/upload/ArtPol010511.pdf

[29] It is important to note that CRA's connection to economic development also coincides with Los Angeles' increased position in global economy. By the early 1960s the CRA and the Los Angeles Times would continue to promote the "World-Class City" designation.

As the CRA's 60s-era architectural model illustrates, the revitalization of East First Street was part of a larger and more comprehensive plan that reconstructed much of Little Tokyo's existing footprint through the construction of hotels, skyscrapers, and the designation of cultural landmarks (Fig. 2.1). Although the neighborhood was significantly smaller after the war, the CRA's plan would serve as a marker for the promise of the kind of increased economic viability needed to reshape downtown Los Angeles' skyline. Putting Little Tokyo's cultural significance at the forefront of their plan, the CRA would frame the revitalization of East First Street as the cultural lynchpin for Little Tokyo's ensuing re-invention through redevelopment. The CRA formalized policies such as the "Downtown Art in Public Places" program in 1985, which brought targeted redevelopment efforts and public art projects to Bunker Hill, the Central Business District, and Little Tokyo.[30] Like the other ethnically specific museums included in this study, JANM's formation and its viability as a multi-million-dollar cultural institution would serve as a hybrid economic generator and cultural signifier validating the redevelopment of Little Tokyo. As visual and spatial artifacts of governmental ensemble, the CRA maps and architectural model document how by midcentury redevelopment agencies used their power to create project boundaries through the application of eminent domain to acquire property, select and negotiate the terms of development, harness funding through property tax and bond debt and lobby for city ordinances, regulations or state or federal legislation to finance the project. Little Tokyo's redevelopment would invoke these governmentalities of redevelopment through boundary making, eminent domain, and acquiring funds through the agency's legislative intervention.

[30] Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, CRA Arts Policy, March 3, 2005. http://www.crala.org/internet-site/Other/Art_Program/upload/ArtPol010511.pdf

In the 1960s, interest in Little Tokyo's redevelopment was initially driven by Japanese American community leaders concerned with the economic decline that impacted the neighborhood. After the war predominantly Japanese American suburbs grew in Torrance and Gardena in Los Angeles' South Bay, as well in Alhambra and Monterey Park in the San Gabriel Valley, each becoming satellite communities for the Japanese Americans who did not return to Little Tokyo after the war. Despite the decreases in population and businesses, Little Tokyo retained a sizable community of Issei senior citizens and recent Japanese immigrants as well as other low-income tenants. Among the earliest supporters of Little Tokyo's redevelopment included prominent Japanese American community leaders, that included actor and *Rafu Shimpo* columnist George Yoshinaga. Yoshinaga advocated for a modest redevelopment plan that would preserve remnants of the Japanese American culture and history that had survived the 1942 evacuation of the neighborhood. In 1963, Yoshinaga's efforts were joined by Reverend Howard Toriumi, Senior Pastor of the Union Church in Little Tokyo. Reverend Toriumi stepped into the role of Little Tokyo community spokesperson, eventually bringing Little Tokyo's concerns to city hall. At city hall, Reverend Toriumi was urged by city leaders to create a formalized community-based redevelopment organization, known as the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Association (LTRA), to gain the attention of city leadership and the CRA.[31]

Early in Little Tokyo's revitalization efforts, community advocates supporting redevelopment first sought support for general capital improvements that included widened streets and the historical preservation of the Nishi Hongwanji Temple, that would eventually become JANM's first location. This early phase of Little Tokyo's redevelopment represented the most conservative interpretation of the plan advocated for and by Japanese American community

[31] Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 187–188.

leaders. This iteration of the neighborhood's redevelopment was designed to displace the fewest number of the neighborhood's long-term residents. In 1969, the Little Tokyo Community Development Advisory Committee (LTCDAC) was formed, and it included of community members, the CRA, and representatives of the City of Los Angeles. Under CRA leadership, Little Tokyo's redevelopment plan would go from a moderate effort to improve streets and historic architecture to include a 67-acre project construction plan creating new housing, commercial buildings, and cultural institutions. To realize this vision, the CRA's project would lead to the displacement of hundreds of residents. Under the CRA's helm, Little Tokyo's redevelopment would ignite a power struggle between community leaders and outside developers attempting to take control of the district's development agenda. This struggle, however, also represented the city's first test of neoliberal globalization as a practice, even if not yet expressed in explicit ideological terms, when city leadership used its formidable redevelopment power there to attract corporate investment from Japan. This shift in funding and oversight also strove to harness market forces to make new hotels and banks planned for Little Tokyo more accessible and attractive to the influx of Japanese tourism and the Pacific Rim trade dollars that would ensure the city its tax revenue fraction of the development's long-term profitability.[32]

Beyond the paradigms of Los Angeles' city politics, the CRA was adopting redevelopment practices that were part of a broader reimagining of cities brought to the fore by urbanists such as Jane Jacobs.[33] Jacobs had championed the vibrancy of Greenwich Village in

[32] Scott Harris, "Plan for Little Tokyo Development Gains: Ambitious Project for 7.8 Acres of City Land Would Mix Commercial, Public Use," *Los Angeles Times*, January 20, 1988, 1.

[33] Kreisel, "Shock Troops of Redevelopment: Los Angeles' Art Community, 1980s," 125–128.

the early 1960s in resistance to modernization plans of New York City, proposed by Robert Moses. In 1980s Los Angeles, however, preservation of a historic neighborhood went hand in hand with big developers. Where before, when ethnic enclaves such as Little Tokyo were considered economically peripheral to the city's central business district, the redevelopment plan that crystalized by the 1980s re-framed downtown's ethnic enclaves as material embodiments of the city's ascendancy to Pacific Rim cultural and economic capital.[34] A struggle developed between overseas Japanese investors and local Japanese American community and was played out in other cultural institutions in Little Tokyo, erupting mostly notably in the formation of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC). But JANM's private and public supporters cooperated to better position the museum, the JACCC and the Japan-America Theatre as the cultural anchors justifying the cultural impact promised in the CRA's redevelopment plan.[35] To do this, JANM would occupy the historically preserved Nishi Hongwanji Temple, and the museum plan would serve as the impetus for much of the restoration unfolding along North First Street.

As early as 1988, media outlets such as the *Los Angeles Times*, one of the CRA's most vocal boosters for redevelopment and multiculturalism, reported that Little Tokyo's redevelopment efforts along North First Street would encompass 7.8 acres of the city, at a cost of 1.25 million for the segment of the street that ran along Alameda, San Pedro and Temple

[34] Peggy Phelan, "Here and There: The 1990 Los Angeles Festival," *Drama Review* 35, no. 3 (1991), 119.

[35] Miya Schichinohe Suga, "Little Tokyo Redevelopment Reconsidered: Transformation of Japanese American Community through the Early Redevelopment Projects," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies*, no. 15 (2004), 241.

Streets.[36] Iris Yokoi, a reporter at the *Los Angeles Times* who covered much of Little Tokyo's development, reported the project would mix commercial and public use, testing out a new model in urban planning that was designed to turn a profit from the lease of public land, "Three other developers also have plans to build at Alameda and 1st. They envision a community of high-rise office towers, luxury hotels and apartment buildings augmented with museums, art galleries, upscale shops and even a martial arts center."[37] As the reporting in the *Los Angeles Times* stated, this plan was not only marketed as an extension of the redevelopment around the Los Angeles Civic Center, but also as a cultural investment designed to further attract tourist dollars. Early revenue estimates for components of this redevelopment plan anticipated more than $20 million in potential revenue over the first twelve years of this project.[38] The East First Street plan included a large municipal building, a 500 room hotel, retail and residential space, a public plaza and a museum (JANM) that would act as powerful revenue generators, all constructed on land that would be leased from the city.[39] This plan represented a clear articulation of neoliberal urban development, marrying public land with revenue-generating private industry to generate substantial revenue for the city and investors. Situating the role of local city government as the driver of this plan, would put the city in a position to directly benefit from economic competition, a detail not lost on the CRA and city hall for two reasons. On the one hand, JANM would serve as a powerful memory site for the city's Japanese American

[36] Iris Yokoi, "They Have Designs on Little Tokyo: Development: Builders Have Proposed Four Projects at 1st and Alameda, Where Hotels, Office Towers and Apartments Would Create a Self-Contained Community," *Los Angeles Times*, December 6, 1992, H3.

[37] Ibid.H.3.

[38] Journalist Scott Harris reported in the *Los Angeles Times* that the revenue breakdown for $20 million allotted, $11 million in property taxes, $17.5 million in hotel bed taxes, and $4.5 million in sales tax revenues. In 2019 dollars, this sum would amount to $43.5 million dollars in revenue over the course of 12 years.

[39] Iris Yokoi, "Little Tokyo: CRA O.K.'s Loan for Museum Expansion," *Los Angeles Times*, February 14, 1993, 5.

community leaders who advocated for the preservation of Little Tokyo through JANM's role as the symbolic and material repository of Japanese American cultural history. On the other hand, the economic benefit that JANM would provide for the city, community leaders, and developers would only sweeten the deal for all parties involved in this project.

However, before JANM could gain the financial backing to establish a nascent institution, public policy was needed to solidify access to public monies that could also further elucidate the social and cultural necessity for this project. The direct use of law to forge cultural policy is a clear instance of how technologies of governance are central to the formation of ethnic museums in the late twentieth century. California, like other U.S. states, does not possess a unified statewide cultural policy dictating a policy framework for supporting its arts and cultural institutions, and organizations across the state.[40] As a result, institutions like JANM, and its predecessor the California African American Museum (CAAM) in Exposition Park, answered that deficiency, promulgating the policies and narratives needed to generate the political support to pass legislation needed to garner state funding. In JANM's case, the city's and county's codification of cultural policy further clarified the legibility of a museum from the standpoint of the allocation of public funds.

During the year leading to JANM's formation, the museum's organizers would benefit from the passage of SB (Senate Bill) 1452, authored by California State Senator Art Torres, who represented parts of the western San Gabriel Valley.[41] JANM's strategy for acquiring state

[40] Eleonora Redaelli, "Understanding American Cultural Policy: The Multi-Level Governance of the Arts and Humanities," *Policy Studies* 41, no. 1 (2020), 80.

[41] Co-Authors of the bill included Ralph C. Dills who represented Los Angeles' South Bay cities such as Torrance and Gardena which claim significant Japanese American populations. Dills and Torres' support for this bill demonstrate the connection between the geographic dispersion of Japanese Americans throughout Southern California which helped expand the legislative support for this bill.

funding represents one of two ways that institutions can access state funds. First, institutions or non-profit organizations may lobby to become included as line-item expenditures on the governor's budget. Alternately, state funding can be acquired through the passage of a designated public policy appropriating funds for the purposes of capital outlay, which encompasses the state spending earmarked for the support of public infrastructure projects.[42] After several rounds of revisions, SB 1452 was phrased to state that the appropriations request would encompass a total of $750,00 derived from the City of Los Angeles' Special Account for Capital Outlay, a special fund designed to complement existing urban capital improvement projects focused on acquisition of fixed assets. Los Angeles County Department of Recreation and Parks would serve as the pass-through agency through which the museum could acquire these funds, but in order to eligible for these funds was JANM was also required to provide a $1 million match to the state's appropriation, providing the museum a total of $1.75 million in state and local funding toward the museum.

As one of the most traditional technologies of governance, public policy shapes how museums are funded, and in doing so shapes the scope of the museum through the legibility and visibility of the immigrant community that is the focus of the museum's exhibitions.[43] Public policy, in this case, illustrated the way an ensemble of laws and practices were mustered on the behalf of a cultural institution to perform a redevelopment objective that depended on enhancing and re-framing the perception of an immigrant community's social and cultural value. A close

[42] Proportionally capital outlay funding typically encompasses only 2.1 percent of the state budget used for infrastructure expenditures.

[43] Cultural Policy scholar Carole Rosenstein suggests in her book *Understanding Cultural Policy*, that public policy exists as a method through which governments intentionally intervene with culture in a direct way. As such public policy is a powerful tool of government action that is created and implemented to wield the power of the state behind a set of priorities.

reading of the way SB 1452 used immigrant display to construct its designation of enhanced social value shows a clear intent to leverage the social, cultural, and economic contributions made by Japanese Americans. As the bill states,

> "The Legislature finds and declares that Japanese Americans have made major contributions to the social, cultural and economic greatness of the state. The Legislature further finds and declares that the Japanese American National Museum, conceived as a depositor for documentation and preservation of artifacts which record the Japanese American experience in America, would provide valuable and necessary educational information to the public."[44]

This bill positioned the museum as an articulation of the direct and tangible capital assets that Japanese Americans had provided for the county. For this reason, it useful to follow the policy's signifying loop, which started with the rationale for the museum's creation, followed by the exhibitions and the cultural pedagogies circulated after its completion. SB 1452 also traces of the legacies of anti-Japanese immigration policy in California, which in rendering that population invisible, worked to undermine that community's efforts to agency.

This relationship between museum as a knowledge-producing public institution in service to a state's political agenda is nothing new. Museum studies scholar Tony Bennett's work, which examines the genealogy of governmentality that naturalized colonial representations of Africa in French natural history museums, revealed through the crucial role the early disciplines of anthropology provided toward achieving that racializing end.[45] While SB 1452, appeared to contradict Bennett's argument in a U.S. setting, a close reading of JANM's exhibitions provides evidence for the way the museum's curators have attempted to strike a discursive bargain

[44] California (State), Legislature, S.B. 1452, March 14, 1985.

[45] Tony Bennett, "Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial Governmentality and the Circulation of Reference," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2 (2009), 100.

through which the state granted the Japanese Americans community legitimizing recognition of their previously questioned citizenship, in exchange for that community's revalidation of a national narrative that overlooked its white supremacist legacy. The fulcrum of that exchange was the still common perception of Japanese American treason against the U.S. World War II effort. Early in JANM's tenure, the museum's exhibits hoped to reverse this misperception by stressing the Japanese American soldier's gallant military service to reframe their community as valuable citizen subjects.

Going for Broke: A Reading of the Japanese American Cultural Citizen Subject through the Figure of the Soldier and Docent

Over JANM's thirty-five-year history in Los Angeles, one of the salient themes presented in JANM's permanent exhibition, "Common Ground: The Heart of Community" is the depiction of the Japanese American soldiers during World War II. Since opening in 1992, JANM has presented at least five stand-alone temporary exhibits focused on the history of Japanese American military service. Given the history of racialized exclusion targeting Japanese immigrants starting with their earliest arrival at the turn of the twentieth century, it is no surprise that tropes of valor and sacrifice evoked in exhibitions have become a central fixture in JANM's representation of Japanese American cultural citizenship.[46] The correlation between military service and citizenship among Issei immigrants had a long history, emerging first in the late nineteenth century when a number of Issei immigrants unsuccessfully attempted to enlist in order

[46] I turn to anthropologist Renato Rosaldo's definition of cultural citizenship, which argues that participation in the national polity is negotiated by some individuals in varying degrees of influence that at times may be in contradistinction with the subject's status as legal citizen.

to receive naturalization as veterans. However, existing immigration and naturalization policies excluded Japanese immigrants from this type of conditional citizenship granted through military service by deeming them outright ineligible for citizenship. Application of this policy would change in the 1930s, led by judges in both Hawai'i and in the territorial U.S. who began to grant citizenship to Issei veterans. While the laws prohibiting the naturalization of Japanese immigrants would not change for several decades, it would take the introduction of a draft during World War II to require changes to these policies. During the incarceration of Japanese Americans at the start of World War II, military service became a visible marker through which Japanese Americans could assert their legal and cultural citizenship.[47] However, considering the assemblage of governmentalities at work in JANM's creation as a public institution, the representation of militarism in the museum's exhibitions became an ongoing project for the nascent institution.[48]

For this reason, JANM's relationship with Japanese American veteran communities is deeply entrenched in the museum's genealogy. As JANM's institutional history attests, the first stakeholders of the nascent museum included Colonel Young O. Kim, Y. B. Mamiya and a group of other Japanese American World War II veterans who served as early advocates for the museum.[49] After JANM's creation, this group of veterans would eventually form the Go For Broke National Monument, located on the same tract of land on East First Street shared by

[47] After 1942, enlistment on the mainland trailed enlistment in Hawai'i where a total of 1,500 volunteers from the continental US versus over 10,000 volunteers from Hawai'i. Part of this dramatic difference may be attributed to the presence of concentration camps in the western US, and the absence of such camps in Hawai'i.

[48] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 135.

[49] Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict*, 118.

JANM.[50] Borrowing their name from the gambling slogan, "going for broke" the moniker of this organization evoked the sense of great risk and potential loss in the service of a greater win.[51] The Japanese American veterans who made up the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Battalion, and other Japanese American troops risked mortal danger for an expected recognition of their place in the American polity.

In 1995, when JANM debuted the exhibition "Fighting for Tomorrow: Japanese Americans in America's Wars," the exhibition coincided with national debates concerning the Smithsonian's Enola Gay exhibition at the National Air and Space Museum, which was also slated for the museum's commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. An early version of the proposed Enola Gay exhibition was initially critical of the military's use of atomic weapons and included Ground Zero photographs showing the destruction caused in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This aspect of the Smithsonian's exhibition, led many conservative politicians and veteran's groups to decry the exhibition's critical representation of military history, but not whether the decades of racialized representations and anti-Asian laws enacted at the state and federal levels made the bomb's targeting more politically acceptable. The proposed Enola Gay exhibit also initiated a debate over the ethical and social implications of glorifying militarism, without acknowledgement of the destruction it caused.[52]

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[50] Like JANM's early exhibitions, the focus of the Go for Broke National Monument and Education Center is dedicated to recognizing the 442nd National Regiment, an all-Japanese American infantry regiment hailing from Hawaii and California who were the most decorated unit in U.S. history.

[51] Go for Broke National Education Center, "Preserving the Legacy of the Japanese American Veterans of World War II," July 10, 2021. www.goforbroke.org/learn/history/military_units/442nd.php.

[52] Karen De Witt, "Smithsonian Scales Back Exhibit Of B-29 in Atomic Bomb Attack," *New York Times,* January 31, 1995, 1.

Meanwhile, back in Los Angeles, JANM's "Fighting for Tomorrow," focused on the theme of "Fighting Two Wars," by referencing the dual struggles Japanese American soldiers faced abroad as soldiers, and the outward racial discrimination they faced at home.[53] Included with the exhibition, was the 1995 documentary film *Looking Like the Enemy*, directed by Karen Ishizuka and Robert Nakamura, which examined the anti-Japanese propaganda created by the U.S. military.[54] Together, the exhibition and film offered a representation of Japanese American military service that equated virtue of character and national pride in the face of widespread racism, a persisting trope depicted throughout several JANM's exhibitions about WWII. When "Fighting for Tomorrow" debuted in 1995, historian Takashi Fujitani argued that the crux of this exhibition reinforced model minority stereotypes that personified Japanese American troops as embodying the qualities of diligence and self-sacrifice. As Fujitani observed, JANM's exhibition was rife with "dominant discourses of U.S. nationalism," made clear in the exhibition's valorization of Japanese American military service.[55] However, that exchange of heroic sacrifice for the recognition of full citizenship reinforced the black/white binary of race, and so undermined the critique of biological race that Black and brown soldiers enacted with their military service during WWII against white supremacist Nazism, and further when they returned

[53] Japanese American National Museum, "Fighting for Tomorrow: Japanese Americans in America's Wars," accessed March 6, 2020, www.janm.org/exhibits/fft/.

[54] Filmmaker Robert Nakamura's life would inform many of his films. As a small child Nakamura and his family were interned at the Manzanar incarceration camp in the Owens Valley for the duration of the war. In his adulthood Nakamura would enlist in military service, and later study photography at Art Center College of Design. Manzanar would become the subject of Nakamura's first documentary exploring Japanese American experiences of incarceration. In 1970, Nakamura would also become a cofounder of Visual Communications in Little Tokyo, a community organization created to support Asian American and Pacific Islander film and media makers.

[55] Takashi Fujitani, "National Narratives and Minority Politics: the Japanese American National Museum's War Stories," *Museum Anthropology* 21, no. 1 (1997), 99.

to their segregated U.S. enclaves to launch what would grow into the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

"Fighting for Tomorrow," included military photographs and personal items once belonging to Japanese American soldiers, and outside the museum the exhibition presented World War II military vehicles and reconstructed barracks from Heart Mountain Concentration Camps, adding another level of experiential engagement with the exhibition. Many of the objects and images included in "Fighting for Tomorrow," have since remained a mainstay of JANM's permanent collection and are featured in "Common Ground." This assemblage of artifacts, ranging from the intimate to the institutional, located sites of struggle, privation, and loss, experienced by Japanese Americans during WWII both domestically and abroad. Throughout "Fighting for Tomorrow," didactic panels similarly affirmed the exhibition's narrative framework of struggle and sacrifice through the presentation of text panels featuring declarative statements such as, "Nisei soldiers performed heroically in America's battles overseas. Their achievements and sacrifices in World War II helped to change America and make it a more democratic society."[56] As a result, the exhibition's signage maintained a superficial portrayal of Japanese American valor and achievement, absent of the critique of U.S. militarism that erupted within Japanese American communities during WWII. Critical of what he described as JANM's unidimensional narrative of valor, Fujitani noted the stark absence of depictions of Japanese American military dissenters or "No-No Boys," images of disabled veterans, or women in this exhibition, revealing the entrenched logics of militarism, nationalism, and gender which unified the exhibition.

[56] Ibid., 103.

By 1999, JANM introduced the exhibition, "Common Ground: The Heart of Community," which remains on display today. As JANM's longest running exhibition, "Common Ground" functions as the museum's permanent collection displaying many items first exhibited in "Fighting for Tomorrow." In addition to displaying objects exhibited in "Fighting for Tomorrow," "Common Ground" also echoes the narrative motifs from the museum's earlier exhibition such as the reconstructed Heart Mountain Barracks, now moved inside the museum. In addition to interactive multi-media displays and learning modules designed for school groups, "Common Ground" features a trove of family heirlooms and community artifacts donated by community members gathered in 1994, at the "Family Expo: Sharing the Japanese American Legacy," that was organized by JANM.[57] After "Common Ground" debuted, historian Brian Lain, provided a reading of the exhibition in his essay, "Moving Walls across the 'Common Ground' of the Japanese American National Museum: An Examination of a National Minority Museum's Strategy of Connecting American and Japanese Values." As Lain proposed, the pairing of photographs and family heirlooms with the restored fragments of the Heart Mountain barracks, transformed the space of the exhibition as an intervention for Japanese American visitors to redress the effects of generational trauma caused by incarceration and displacement. Within the exhibition, the institutional memory of Japanese American incarceration, their systematic exclusion, and displacement was evoked through the display of heirlooms belonging to individuals affected by these policies. In his reading of the exhibition, Lain observed the contrast between an American flag displayed in the gallery presented alongside a photograph, "A daughter of Japanese immigrants holds her country's flag," donated by Mr. and Mrs. Taketaro Azeka. Since the exhibition's debut in 1999, this photograph has become a ubiquitous

[57] Akemi Kikumura-Yano, Lane R. Hirabayashi, and James A. Hirabayashi, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2007), 1–12.

promotional image, decorating souvenirs for the exhibition (Fig. 2.2). In this image, a young girl of three or four stands against a wood paneled wall wearing a black felt cloche hat over a neatly trimmed bob haircut. Looking directly at the camera, the young girl holds a miniature American flag in her small fingers. She is dressed in a fur trimmed coat, thick white tights, and shiny black Mary Jane shoes. Taken in 1918, this photograph was made long after the passage of policies like the Gentlemen's Agreement which would codify the rights of legal citizenship for Japanese Americans. The presence of the small American flag in this image evokes the desire for citizenship prohibited for aliens deemed ineligible for citizenship, concretizing the museum's narrative reach toward nationalism evoked in Fujitani's analysis of "Fighting for Tomorrow." Like "Fighting for Tomorrow," "Common Ground," also featured a similar exhibition schema which included historical photographs presented alongside objects donated by Issei and Nisei community members.

However, unlike "Fighting for Tomorrow," which maintained a narrow focus on the military service of Japanese American veterans, "Common Ground" reconstructed the details of Japanese American life through a collection of mundane artifacts including sports uniforms, high school yearbooks, musical instruments, cooking utensils, and other forms of material culture created and used by Japanese Americans. As Lain argues, the identificatory arc with familiar objects presented in "Common Ground," is harshly disrupted by the presence of the empty barracks at the entrance of the exhibition. Absent of any signs of their former inhabitants and showing only the wear of exposure to the elements, the presence of the empty barracks within the gallery erases evidence of the suffering and isolation embodied by survivors of the camps. In

turn, the blankness of this space opens the site for wide ranging interpretations among other visitors.[58]

Yet, an element overlooked in both Lain's and Fujitani's respective analyses of JANM's exhibitions is a consideration of the role played by the museum's cohort of volunteer docents who serve as guides, and museum educators. Since JANM's formation, the museum's docents have been almost entirely comprised of volunteers of Japanese American descent.[59] For many visitors, JANM's docents provide the institution with a human face through the direct exposure to Japanese American elders, and their presence as gallery guides and informal educators also function as exemplars of Japanese American cultural citizenship. While their tours are prepared through research using academic sources, JANM's docents are encouraged to share first-hand experiences with incarceration, immigration, and discrimination with the museum's visitors. JANM's use of docent guides mediates the visitor's experience with JANM's exhibitions and supplements the exhibition labels. Increasingly, ethnic, and cultural museums like JANM have embraced the "first-voice" provided by docents and educators from under-represented populations, as an effort to counterbalance the authoritative voice of the exhibits. Docents with the embodied experiences parallel to museum's exhibitions of Japanese American artistic and cultural expression, position the docent as historical experts and encourage visitors to appreciate the humanity of these guides. In turn, this shift towards implementing what museum education scholar Charles Garoain calls performative museum pedagogy, introduces critical content to

[58] Brian Lain, "'Moving Walls' Across the "Common Ground" of the Japanese American National Museum: An Examination of a National Minority Museum's Strategy of Connecting American and Japanese Values," (Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse, 2001), 144.

[59] Stephanie Taragakawa, "Visualizing Japanese-America: The Japanese American National Museum and the Construction of Identity," *Visual Anthropology Review* 18, no. 1–2 (2002), 41.

museum experiences by introducing the personal and social knowledge brought by volunteers, like JANM's Japanese American docents.

In JANM's case, the dialogic technique evoked by docents, and visitors enables the sharing of political agency within the museum, and in doing so repositions the visitors as critical participants.[60] However, JANM's reliance on volunteer docent labor which is intended to humanize the Japanese American experience through encounters with the public also depends chiefly on unpaid emotional and intellectual labor. This practice has become a model of museum education pervasive throughout the museum field and has become a matter of financial survival for museums of all sizes. Just as JANM's exhibitions and institutional formation bespoke the incorporation of late capitalist economic techniques of urban planning and institution building, inside the museum the reliance on the unpaid labor of docents and volunteers speaks to the incorporation of neoliberal flexible labor practice embraced by museums around the world.[61]

Conclusion

By 1996 JANM had undergone significant expansion, increasing both the museum's physical location, administrative staff, and the museum's financial holdings. The success of Little Tokyo's redevelopment initiated in the mid-1980s proved to bolster JANM's reputation as a new institution and cultural landmark for Little Tokyo in the decades that followed. The first

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[60] Charles R. Garoian, "Performing the Museum," *Studies in Art Education* 42, no. 3 (2001), 235.

[61] Elizabeth Hunt, "Museum Services Suffer as Unpaid Volunteers and Interns Replace Staff," *Arts Professional*, October 1, 2013, www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/museum-services-suffer-unpaid-volunteers-and-interns-replace-staff.

phase of the museum's $22 million dollar expansion began in the early 1990s, when JANM's board and staff organized an international fundraising campaign to pay for the construction of a new 84,000 square foot space designed by architect Gyo Obata called "The Pavilion."[62] "The Pavilion" would be located on the same tract of land also occupied by the Go for Broke National Monument, and the Museum of Contemporary Art's Geffen Temporary Contemporary Galleries solidifying the area's successful designation as hybrid commercial and cultural district (Fig. 2.3).

Tracing the story of JANM's formation as the first local and national institution dedicated to the presentation and preservation of Japanese American history and culture, I looked closely at the methods of governmentality shaping the intersection of cultural memory and place keeping to understand how the technologies of power used by JANM's founders were effective in bringing the museum into fruition. As I have traced throughout this chapter, understanding how ethnic cultural leaders worked closely with city agencies, makes JANM a perfect case study to trace how power and capital accumulation are fused to develop institutions. This pattern can be observed through the objects exhibited with the institution, through the public and educational programming presented at the museum and in turn through the sources of funding that enable the museum to perpetuate its mission. Funding sources provided by private and governmental agencies are often earmarked for specific uses that institutions must meet to satisfy the terms of these grants also reproduce bodies of knowledge about ethnic and racial minority populations rooted in the structural conditions and archives of public policy that shaped the formation of these communities. Once the museum opened, JANM's technologies of governance underwent change to discipline the representation of Japanese American cultural citizenship recalled within

[62] Raul Vasquez, "Architectural Fact Sheet," *Japanese American National Museum*, February 10, 1996. https://web.archive.org/web/20141010094357/http://www.janm.org/about/facilities/p_facts.html

the museum's galleries through the presentation of exhibitions and in the museum's pedagogic practices. The twentieth century age of a neoliberal economy undergirds cultural institutions such as JANM. While popular perceptions of museums, associate the creation of these institutions with a broader liberal project to disseminate history and culture of an ethnic group, the foundations of cultural institutions are in themselves part of the invisible architecture governing and reproducing social relations.

Chapter Two: Romance of the Picturesque: Exhibiting Mexican American Mythologies of Place in Los Angeles' Historic Plaza District

El Paseo de Los Angeles, known today as Olvera Street, opened to the public on Easter Sunday, April 20th, 1930. Resembling a rustic Mexican marketplace, Olvera Street remains today an open-air pedestrian mall built in a narrow alley flanking the city's historic Plaza, built after the city's founding in 1781. To create Olvera Street, its founder Christine Sterling, appealed to Los Angeles' influential city leaders and wealthy business owners to bolster support for the project. In a 1926 letter to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Sterling attempted to rally support for Olvera Street urging, "It might be well to take our Mexican population seriously and allow them to put a little of the romance and picturesqueness into our City, which we so freely advertise ourselves as possessing."[1] Delivered like a taunt, Sterling' vision for Olvera Street was shaped by earlier mass media interpretations of the city's earliest missions as well as the related material culture that had enticed her family to move from Oakland to Los Angeles nearly a decade earlier.[2]

A crucial feature of the booster pamphlets, newsreels, newspaper and magazine articles that had inspired Sterling's vision for Olvera Street and the adjoining Plaza stressed the performative and sensory aspects of what journalist and cultural historian Carey McWilliams would later call the "Hispanic Fantasy Heritage."[3] Like many others of her time, Sterling's

[1] Christine Sterling. *Olvera Street: Its History and Restoration* (Los Angeles: Old Mission Print Shop, 1933), 9.

[2] Ibid., 8.

[3] In the second chapter of his 1949 landmark cultural history, *North From Mexico: The Spanish-speaking People of the United States*, McWilliams identified the narrative motifs with which the media of his time constructed the discourse of the Hispanic Fantasy Heritage. McWilliams drew many of the fantasy motifs from the *Los Angeles Times* then directed by its editor-in-chief, Harry Chandler, and Sterling collaborator.

fantasy re-imagined Mexican Los Angeles through a decidedly romantic Spanish lens, a cultural imaginary expressed with exaggerated costumes, misleading food labelling and narrative motifs performed by Olvera Street's merchants to construct an immersive environment attractive to tourists. To perpetuate this fiction, Sterling's imaginary implicitly and explicitly recast the city's lived Mexican and mestizo culture and people as Spanish. The byproduct of this new Hispanic historical fantasy resulted in a decidedly whiter, more palatable interpretation of Latinx culture for the Anglo tourists of Sterling's day who still associated Mexicans with violence, disease, and racial pollution.[4]

With the strategic backing of the city's early twentieth century's Anglo ruling elite, Sterling's plan sought to consolidate ethnic tourism in Olvera Street and the adjoining historic Plaza. Beginning as early as the eighteenth century, the city's historic Plaza, where Olvera Street is situated, served as the focal point of Alta California's future religious and civic life evidenced in the colonial urban infrastructure constructed around the Plaza. By the 1930s, however, Sterling's intervention would resume the re-signification, and therefore, decentering of that former central place into the city's earliest ethnically themed tourist landscapes. Thanks to the influence and funding provided by early real estate investors that included *Los Angeles Times* publisher, Harry Chandler, Olvera Street used the region's-built environment, people, and historical narratives to market Southern California's Hispanic fantasy to the world.

[4] As McWilliams and historians such as Deverell, have suggested the Hispanic Fantasy Heritage not only conflated a whitened, Europeanized image of the multiethnic Spanish settlers who arrived in the Americas, but it also erased northern New Spain's various local and Mesoamerican natives, mestizos and Africans who comprised the majority of the city's eighteenth-century colonizers.

Today Olvera Street includes several museums, historic homes, vendor stalls and restaurants created during the site's earliest days.[5] Significant efforts have been made, however, to reinvent and revitalize this space, among them the founding of a museum. In 2011, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes (LAPCA) joined Olvera's Street's array of cultural attractions, making it the city's first museum dedicated to Mexican American themes and content. Taking its name from the city's historic Plaza and the surrounding landmarks, LAPCA, draws corollary linkages to some of the city's earliest Mexican and Mexican American historic sites in an effort to claim the meanings and cultural memory accumulated in these spaces. That effort occurs in the context of the city's changing demography and increasing Latinx political power. This chapter examines the ways in which the museum tries to leverage the location of the adjoining historic buildings across from Olvera Street into the invention of a new symbolic centrality for current residents.

Amid recent efforts aimed at redeveloping the historic Plaza district, later named El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, the creation of new cultural institutions such LAPCA have also come to play a central role in the reimagination of the city's downtown area. Much like the role that JANM played in Little Tokyo's redevelopment explored in the previous chapter, LAPCA's creation was made possible through a rationale seeking to use the formation of a museum to serve as a cultural lynchpin that would add to revitalization of the city's historic Plaza district. Efforts to bring new investment to the Plaza began in earnest during the 1950s, occurring at the same time as Little Tokyo's earliest revitalization efforts gained momentum. Power struggles would emerge over which entity would oversee the Plaza's management among state, city, and county officials, this political infighting which would delay the Plaza's restoration

[5] What remains of Sterling's project, and the forty-four-acre historic park bounded by Spring, Macy, Alameda and Arcadia Streets, today delimits the Olvera Street site which was and was later designated as El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument by the city in the 70s.

for nearly two decades.[6] However, interest in restoring and expanding the Plaza historic district would continue to gain traction among downtown leaders for nearly thirty years. By 1982, city and state officials would finally put these plans into action, after drafting a contract that would enable a private entity to lease, develop, and operate some of the Plaza's vacant structures, introducing the possibility for new public-private-partnerships (PPP).[7] Although it would take another two decades to bring this plan into fruition, LAPCA's creation was contractually tied to a larger redevelopment project area that sought to reinvent and extend the city's Plaza district through the construction of new architectural projects on previously under-utilized city owned parking lot that adjoined the Plaza. Just as Little Tokyo's redevelopment project area used JANM's creation to derive cultural capital for the project, the Plaza's redevelopment plan also followed a similar urban planning logic that introduced a public-private-partnership between the county and private developers.

This chapter explores the earliest foundations of ethnic tourism in Los Angeles' historic Plaza to examine the social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped LAPCA's formation. As the city's first museum dedicated to Mexican American arts and culture, LAPCA has emerged at a time in Los Angeles when private development projects have intervened to create new jurisdictional zones dictated by law and public policy. The byproduct of these newly formed spaces has been the cultural artifact we today know as of the city's historic Plaza district. Because such ethnically-themed cultural spaces such as LAPCA, and its predecessor, Olvera Street, functioned as generators of urban growth, it is now possible to reconstruct the genealogy

[6] Charles E. Davis, "Dispute over Control Halts Restoration of L.A. Plaza," *Los Angeles Times,* September 9, 1963, A1.

[7] Ray Herbert, "Historic Park: New Funds Spark Life in El Pueblo," *Los Angeles Times.* August 1, 1982, B1.

of the governmental interventions that initiated their recurring cycles of capital accumulation invested in these zones.[8] As I will explore in this chapter, the fostering of ethnic display situated within governmental enclosures privatizes the public commons, while in turn facilitating newer, neoliberal governmentalities. Within the El Pueblo's museums these neoliberal practices are evidenced in the outsourcing of the various forms of intellectual labor and the monetization of public cultural institutions occurring in these cultural spaces, deftly used to create new structural advantages for urban real estate investment. I will also argue that the deployment of these governmentalities in the creation of LAPCA forcefully contributes to the ongoing re-imagination of Mexican American ethnic tourism in downtown Los Angeles that has reemerged at the center of the city's growth machine.[9]

As the Sterling-Chandler relationship reminds us, the recycling of ethnic enclaves for development is nothing new to Los Angeles or dozens of other twenty first century global cities.[10] Urban planners now construct cultural institutions in ethnic enclaves, neighborhoods formerly racialized city leaders and further portrayed in the media as filthy and vermin-infested. However, once large-scale redevelopment projects began agencies such as the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), would gain traction reframing the ethnic, racial and class diversity of the city's downtown ethnic enclaves to attract fresh real estate investments. This economic colonization of ethnic spaces capitalizes on prior decades of economic disinvestment to fuel gentrifications that remove the last vestiges of immigrant and working-class residents

[8] Jan Lin, *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 248.

[9] Lin defines the term ethnic growth machine as the alignment of community, developer, and municipal interests to increase the economic and social value to ethnic spaces.

[10] In the 1980s, sociologist Sharon Zukin tracked this phenomena of the displacement of immigrants through a cycle of gentrification that transformed New York's SoHo district in her book, *Loft Living*.

from areas targeted for development. Unfortunately, there are too many examples, including the spate of commercial art galleries that have recently appeared in Boyle Heights less than a mile away from the Plaza project area, to illustrate how neoliberal gentrification proceeds in practice.[11]

In both the Boyle Heights and in LAPCA's cases, a long history of local governmental interventions preceded and created the conditions for the present-day gentrification of these spaces. LAPCA's debut in 2011 advanced part of the ongoing development of arts and cultural infrastructure in the downtown area encompassed by the city's Central Business District (CBD) underway since the 1980s. The political-legal act of establishing this geographic jurisdiction has allowed the project's planners and supporting city and county leaders to put the tools of governmentality to precise use through the application of the assemblage of laws, policies, administrative and narrative technologies that created the Plaza district's previous iterations. Today, this web of governmentalities exerts direct influence in the regulation of future development there. At the same time the project still expresses development intentions that we may trace back to the laws and economic rationality to Sterling who set the present in motion more than eighty years ago, when she worked to re-signify Olvera Street as a place of Hispanic "romance and picturesqueness" to generate revenue for herself, the Plaza's vendors, and the city of Los Angeles.

LAPCA's exhibition logic, as my close reading of it will argue, was built upon the material and governmental foundations of early twentieth century narratives and ways of

[11] By 2016, tensions increased in Boyle Heights between local residents and gallery owners in the area's newly created, "Gallery Row." While many of the protests mounted by community members were peaceful, a few instances did ignite harsh words and violence between displaced community members, developers, and new residents occupying the warehouses converted into condominiums, artist's lofts, and commercial art galleries.

objectifying the Latinx body. Sterling envisioned Olvera Street as a theater for the city's then Anglo majority to safely experience the romance of the Mexican other. Her vision perfectly meshed with the pro-growth strategy of Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, and its tireless promotion of Southern California's suburbanization. Chandler saw Sterling's approach to theming the Olvera Street landscape as another opportunity to use the automobile to link downtown and its newly built civic center to the suburbs clustered around the region's newly built Fordist manufacturing industries. Today's LAPCA's development logic inherits the Chandler-inspired vision of freeway access for near-in and outlying suburbs, while also attempting to enhance the forces that have slowly increased the downtown area's residential density. LAPCA today attempts to address the increased need for cultural institutions led by and serving the county's nearly five million Latinx residents.[12]

Historicizing Olvera Street: Hispanic Ethnic Tourism and Mythologies of Place in Southern California

When Olvera Street's founder Christine Sterling arrived in Los Angeles in 1920, she reported her shock at finding the city's oldest neighborhood in a state of abject neglect and disrepair. Sterling noted in her recollections of Olvera Street, "Down a dirty alley I discovered an old adobe, dignified even in its decay. Across the front door was nailed a black and white sign, "CONDEMNED."[13] Decades before Sterling's arrival, the neighborhood surrounding the Plaza district had earned a reputation among the city's Anglo residents for racialized filth and vice

[12]As of May 2020, prediction, current US Census reporting estimates that people of Hispanic origin make up over 48% of the LA County's 10 million residents.

[13] Sterling, *Olvera Street*, 9.

dating to the city's mid-nineteenth century image as a dusty, violent cattle town known for its gunfights, lynch parties and tuberculosis-sufferers who flocked to the desert Southwest to convalesce. The arrival of increasing numbers of Anglo transplants from the eastern and midwestern states that occurred in the next decade rapidly turned the city's former Mexican majority into a minority concentrated in and around the Plaza district with its other racial undesirables, Chinese, Indigenous and African American residents, which the local media used to intensify the area's negative reputation. Nineteenth century land use maps generated by local government reinforced those judgements. They identified the district's numerous brothels, gambling halls and distilleries to materially manifest the district's role as a lucrative pleasure district servicing the city's first manufacturing and transportation support industries that sprang up between the Los Angeles River and Alameda Street with the arrival of the Union and Southern Pacific Railroads lines in the 1880s.[14] By the late nineteenth century the Plaza's designation as a red light district noted in tracts such as the *Souvenir Sporting Guide of 1897,* a guidebook to the Plaza district's numerous brothels, saloons and gaming halls. The spatial enclosure mapped in the *Souvenir Sporting Guide* reflected the informal creation of the cordon sanitaire which enacted a spatial quarantine upheld by the laws and social practices that confined prostitution, gambling and alcohol consumption to a section of the city already perceived to embody the filth, disease and moral decline of its inhabitants.

Sterling's plan for Olvera Street was not the first effort to revitalize the city's Plaza district. Charles Fletcher Lummis exercised civic entrepreneurship from the pages of the *Los Angeles Times*, the other magazines he edited, and books he wrote preceded Sterling's by several

[14] Michael D Meyer, Erica S. Gibson, and Julia G. Costello, "City of Angels, City of Sin: Archaeology in the Los Angeles Red-Light District ca. 1900." *Historical Archaeology*, (vol. 39, no. 1, 2005), 122.

decades. Lummis was also chiefly responsible for the script Sterling would later work from. Lummis' original contribution stemmed from the way his own writings shifted the representation of Mexican culture away from its mid-nineteenth century tropes of Manifest Destiny into the Hispanic Fantasy's various commodities. Lummis would portray the Mexicans he encountered in Southern Colorado as lazy, "snide looking, twice as dark" as Indians in the travelogues he dispatched to *Los Angeles Times* publisher General Harrison Gray Otis while walking west from Ohio. "Not even a coyote will touch a dead Greaser," he wrote, "the flesh is so seasoned with the red pepper they ram into their food in howling profusion."[15]

By the time the Lummis arrived in New Mexico, however, his opinion of "greasers" had dramatically changed. Several pages later in his travelogue, Lummis excused himself for his "silly" Anglo-Saxon prejudices against the Mexicans, and he proceeded to depict them instead as a "quaint, kindly people, ignorant of books, but better taught than our own average in all the social virtues."[16] But it was while serving as *Times* city editor that Lummis would change his perceptions of Mexicans, and the southwest. At the home he dubbed *El Alisal* (the Sycamores Stand) Lummis held court for the Arroyo Set, the city's leading artists, intellectuals, publishers, and real estate investors, with dinner parties that featured Mexican cuisine and elevating discussion on the southwestern Hispanic legacy.[17]

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[15] Charles Fletcher Lummis, *Letters from the Southwest*, xxxvi. A pre-Los Angeles-arrived Lummis reinforced the racialization of Mexicans by equating their dark skin color with the coyote's revulsion for chile-tainted flesh. The "red pepper they ram into their food in howling profusion" modeled the means by which Mexicans both ingested and embodied the moral dirtiness that transformed their dark bodies into an offense against nature – white Supremacist code for the sins of racial mixing.

[16] Charles Fletcher Lummis, *Letters from the Southwest, September 20, 1884 to March 14, 1885,* ed. James W. Byrkit (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), xxxvii.

[17] Ibid., xxxvii; Dudley Gordon, *Charles F. Lummis: Crusader in Corduroy* (Los Angeles: Cultural Assets, 1972), 165-168.

Lummis also wrote articles, books, and edited magazines such as *Out West: A Magazine of The Old Pacific and The New,* which promoted health fads, Mexican cuisine, and nostalgia for bygone Spanish days. Lummis intended his publications for people like himself, the Anglo middle and upper classes Harry Chandler's promotional genius was attracting to Los Angeles to turn it into the fastest growing, majority-white early twentieth century city he called his "white spot of America," a spatial reorganization enforced through restrictive housing covenants, racially segregated schools, and vicious policing.[18] Lummis also leveraged his social prestige at the *Times* to join forces with Father St. John O'Sullivan, an Irish Catholic priest, whom he collaborated with to convert Southern California's missions into a network of lucrative tourist destinations. Together Lummis and O' Sullivan's formed the Landmarks Club, an organization that restored missions such as San Juan Capistrano in Orange County to feature lush gardens and reconstructed crumbling adobe structures. By the early twentieth century, mission exteriors and decorative interiors reconstructed by the club served as stages for re-enacting tableaus in which Anglo newcomers could imagine themselves living in a whiter, more financially lucrative version of that past.[19]

The media access Lummis leveraged for The Landmarks Club[20] not only helped finance the preservation of California's Spanish missions, it also provided a narrative for the state, local

[18] Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 38.

[19] *The Landmarks Club Cookbook* of 1903, which Lummis devised with *Times* backing to promote his mission preservation project, also rehabilitated the image of Mexican food that would prove so important to the experiential storytelling Sterling's Olvera Street Mexican restaurants would later perform.

[20] Charles Fletcher Lummis, *Out West*, 1896: 43. Lummis famously evoked The Landmarks Club model in print in an *Out West* editorial where he proclaimed: "The Missions are, *next* to our climate and its consequences, the best capital Southern California has." Charles Fletcher Lummis, "In the Lion's Den," *Land of Sunshine* 4, no. 1 (December 1895), 43.

and private rail and highway and hotel-building projects inviting tourists to their renovated and re-signified missions. Like Lummis, Sterling's appeal to Los Angeles' city leaders in the early 1930s echoed a similar characterization of the region's missions as an ephemeral, though valuable profit-making asset. These sentiments were echoed in articles published in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1930, which in one case lauded the renaming of city street names back to their Spanish origins.[21]

Despite these successes, the Plaza's La Iglesia de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles or La Placita Church would remain a thorn in Lummis' promotion strategy. Urban historian William Estrada makes this point in his cultural history of the Plaza arguing that the greater Mexican community, though displaced from its environs, refused to concede it to the Southern California's emergent Anglo majority.[22] The Lummis-led Landmarks Club therefore felt it necessary to pressure the Los Angeles' City Attorney to render an opinion against the Plaza's use as an open-air marketplace, despite the community's longstanding tradition of visiting it before or after attending La Placita Church to enjoy the Mexican foods sold there. The Club argued in an unsigned article appearing in a January, 1896 edition of the *Time*s that the vendors who sold their produce and tamales to Mexican shoppers in the Plaza facing the church each week represented a "perversion and practical obliteration of the most important landmark in the city."[23] The accusation implied that a Mexican physical public presence did not abide with the white-washed Hispanic Fantasy that club boosters wanted the Plaza to project. They thus urged the city

[21] Basil Heathcote, "The Pendulum Swings Back." *The Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1930, J8.

[22] William Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space* (Austin; University of Texas Press, 2008), 214.

[23] "To Save the Plaza: Landmarks Club Will Oppose Any Perversion of It," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1896, Public Service sec., p. 7; "Afternoon Session: City Attorney's Opinion in the Plaza Public-Market Case," *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 1896, Public Service sec., p. 9.

to deploy its police powers to protect the general (or more specifically, the city's majority Anglo) population from physical and symbolic contagion.[24]

Lummis' policy and media interventions represented one of many examples of the kinds of news management General Otis and Chandler promoted to contain the city's native Mexican and immigrant working class. "In 1894, as federal troops occupied Los Angeles and Otis fretted that the local Pullman strikers might draw out other workers in a general strike, Lummis organized the first Los Angeles Fiesta as a public distraction," Mike Davis wrote in *City of Quartz*. "The next year, with the class war temporarily abated, he orchestrated the Fiesta around a comprehensive 'mission' theme,"[25] borrowing inspiration from the increasingly popular 1884 novel, *Ramona*, Helen Hunt Jackson originally wrote denouncing the exploitation of Southern California's indigenous people.

By the turn of the twentieth century, therefore, Southern California's "Old Spanish Days" cultural economy thrived, thanks to Lummis' Landmarks Club mission boosterism, Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona,* and John Steven McGroarty's *The Mission Play.* All of these texts set romantic morality tales in Southern California's pastoral missions and ranchos. Historian William Deverell explains, in the early twentieth century this narrative trope made the mission's white audiences feel as if they were not only a part of this local history, but that they also

[24] One example of the dangers of contagion appeared in a *Los Angeles Record* article of 1899, titled: "SHE EAT A TAMALE AND NOW LIES AT THE POINT OF DEATH; Miss Maud Hufford Is Suffering From Ptomaine Poisoning: THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF HER RECOVERY." The article revived the dirty Mexican trope to affix new polluting connotations to the community's chile-laced foods when it represented them as the insidious polluters of a white shop girl's undefiled body. Author Unknown. "SHE EAT A TAMALE AND NOW LIES AT THE POINT OF DEATH; Miss Maud Hufford Is Suffering From Ptomaine Poisoning: THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF HER RECOVERY." *Los Angeles Record*, 1899.NP.

[25] Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. (New York: Verso, 1990), 26.

deserved their place at the top of California's racial order.[26] Similarly, historian Douglas Monroy suggests, that the narrative motif of the Hispanic Fantasy recast California's colonial period through a revisionist and romanticizing lens offering a striking parallel with the racial order of the post-reconstruction era South. These tropes and narratives circulated across diverse forms of popular culture, including popular new movies,[27] which would populate Southern California's dusty missions with noble Spanish friars who dutifully protected the formerly "savage" native people who happily worked the land for the church.[28]

Yet the rapid influx of as many as one million refugees into the Southwestern states from Mexico's 1910 Revolution complicated Anglo booster designs for the city by reviving Mexican commercial, cultural, and political life of the downtown area. Additionally, the city government used zoning laws to encourage industrial development in the swath of land between Alameda, east of downtown, and the Los Angeles River, increasing jobs for the growing Mexican population while simultaneously removing available housing stock in that district. In the decade that followed, the downtown area saw a resurgence of Mexican culture and increased patronage of downtown businesses and theaters while the vicinity's remaining housing stock east of the

[26] William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 217.

[27] Chon Noriega. "Birth of the Southwest: Social Protest, Tourism and D.W. Griffith's *Ramona*," in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*, edited by Daniel Bernardi. New Brunswick, N.J.; Rutgers University Press, 1996, p. 206. Griffith's 1910 film, "Ramona," which was based on Helen Hunt Jackson's eponymous novel, re-fashioned her Scottish-Indian protagonist as the "daughter of the noble Spanish house of Moreno," so erasing the novel's Mexican ranchero family that raised Ramona. Casting Mary Pickford as a Spanish Ramona encouraged movie goers to imagine the white actors portraying the film's Mexican and Native American male characters as too weak and emasculated to protect Pickford's alluring character from the irresistible forces of white civilizing progress.

[28] Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in Frontier California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 260.

Alameda became an overcrowded breeding ground for tuberculosis. There was even a bubonic plague outbreak in 1929 that forced the city to quarantine the whole Plaza-downtown area.[29]

Sterling inherited all of this: the growing Mexican presence downtown, and the Plaza's reputation for disease and working-class labor organizing. Yet her taste for California's romanticized Hispanic past drove her to approach Harry Chandler in 1926, to suggest that he set his renovating sights on the Plaza and adjoining remnants of Old Chinatown. Sterling had discovered that the Avila House, one of the district's last surviving Mexican houses, had been scheduled for demolition. Historian George J. Sanchez writes that "Sterling gathered enough support to successfully bring her 'Plaza Beautiful' campaign to fruition. In addition to raising $30,000 for the restoration, a much larger program for the incorporation of the Plaza – involving some of the leading citizens of the city – was set in motion over the next few years."[30]

Olvera Street's renovation and construction concluded in 1930, a period that completed a decade of rapid but uneven growth aimed at widening downtown's streets to increase automobile traffic as well as the construction of City Hall, Times-Mirror Square, Union Station and the United States Post Office Terminal Annex along Alameda.[31] The new construction was part of a larger development plan that would set the stage in the 1950s for the demolition of both the ethnic enclaves situated around the historic Plaza district and the declining boarding houses and

[29] George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*. (Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1993), 83 & 192-199; Rodolfo E. Acuña, *Community Under Siege: A Chronicle of Chicanos East of the Los Angeles River, 1945-1975*, Monograph 11 (Los Angeles: University of California, Chicano Studies Research Center, 1984), 7-10.

[30] Ibid., 225.

[31] Isabela Seong-Leong Quintana, "Segregation and Displacement in Old Chinatown," *Gum Saam Journal,* no. 1 (Nov. 2010), 5.

apartments northwest of the Plaza on Bunker Hill.[32] As a reaction to the rapid modernization of the Los Angeles' city center, Sterling envisioned Olvera Street as a timeless antidote to downtown's changing skyline. At Olvera Street, the costumed musicians and dancers hired to dress in Mexican and Spanish garb performed for tourists against the rustic backdrop of artisan shops and historic buildings. These costumed performers and merchants completed Sterling's vision of a place out of step with modernity, by then a well-worn narrative used to erase the city's Mexican history (Fig. 3.1).[33] Seemingly innocent, Sterling's simulacrum of the Hispanic fantasy mythos reiterated a key trope of Manifest Destiny – the empty land in which Indigenous people and Mexicans were considered extensions of natural wilderness waiting to be civilized by the Anglo city-builders.[34]

Sterling thus proposed to city leaders and business owners that the historic preservation of buildings such as Avila Adobe and the Lugo House would stimulate greater investment in this area in tandem with the construction of the city's new civic center. However, areas such as Old Chinatown, which adjoined the Plaza, would not merit the same improvements until Sterling returned years later with a plan to reconstruct it several blocks away.[35] Meanwhile, the Olvera

[32] The city, in using eminent domain in Chinatown, Chavez Ravine and Little Tokyo redevelopment projects, utilized laws that gave the post-World War II federal urban renewal and state agencies like the CRA the right to condemn or appropriate residential and business districts designated as distressed or economically blighted for removal and redevelopment.

[33] Newsreels such as William Pizor's "Street of Memory" created in 1937, contains imagery characteristic of this narrative schema. Throughout this short film, the viewer invited to visit Olvera Street, portrayed as a place out of step with the times. Smartly dressed Anglo women wearing suits, hats and cloves encounter Mexican vendors dressed in traditional and anachronistic folkloric costumes. The vendors portrayed in the film similarly evoke the gendered tropes of Mexican excess. The film includes shots that also portray a visual juxtaposition of Olvera Street's rustic local against the art deco architecture of the city's newly constructed City Hall building.

[34] Carey McWilliams suggested the purpose of the fantasy heritage's urban civilization versus wilderness dichotomy served to deny Mexicans full enjoyment of their rights of citizenship in the chapter entitled "The Fantasy Heritage," in his 1938 book *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking of the United States*.

[35] Quintana, "Segregation and Displacement in Old Chinatown," 10.

Street project area she envisioned was less than a block west of where funding from the Federal Works Progress Administration would build the Union Station Train Terminal in 1934.[36] Chandler quickly saw how he could use Sterling's proposal to control the federal project's narrative through *Times* news coverage and editorials crafted to market Olvera Street as a tourist destination to its suburban readers. Sterling's plan to rehabilitate Olvera Street would, therefore, not only advance Chandler's downtown real estate development agenda, his appropriation of her vision would also continue to obscure the institutionalized racial segregation that had contributed to the Plaza's neglect.[37]

By the 1950s, the Plaza and Olvera Street sites began a period of economic decline, initiating discussion among the city, state and county leaders over which party should maintain responsibility for the management and oversight of the area. Despite the state's investment of over $1.3 million dollars in 1953, city and county officials demanded greater control of the site as well as greater authority to dictate the use of state redevelopment funds.[38] After considerable negotiation among the state, city and county leaders, El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Monument Commission formed in 1965, comprised of an eleven-member board of directors representing each agency. For less than a decade the commission was tasked with overseeing the management of the monument as well as determining the ongoing preservation and restoration of

[36] Matthew W. Roth, "Union Station, Aliso Viaduct, and the Networks of Transportation in Los Angeles," pp. 59-89, in *Los Angeles Union Station*, ed. Marlyn Musicant, (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2014), 62-63.

[37] Cesar Lopez. *El Descanso: A Comparative History of the Los Angeles Plaza Area and the Shared Racialized Space of the Mexican and Chinese Communities, 1853-1933*., 2002. (Dissertation, Berkeley: University of California, 2002), 13.

[38] Davis, "Dispute over Control Halts Restoration of L.A. Plaza," A1.

the Plaza.[39] The hollowing out process Sterling and Chandler initiated for the city to create Olvera Street in the early 1930s reimagining the Plaza as a new tourism enclosure would in turn make it possible for the intervention of California's Department of Recreation and Parks and the passage SB 74 in 1969. The passage of SB 74 legislation formally allocated another $1,000,000 to establish the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument as an even more ambitious state-regulated tourist enclosure, giving the state greater say in the allocation of state funds for the project.[40]

However, as plans for the Plaza's redevelopment were introduced for the Plaza commission's oversight of the area throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, members of the commission with differing visions for the site continued to disagree dramatically regarding how best to generate revenue for El Pueblo's continued preservation. While some members of the commission welcomed the private development of public land and resources, other commissioners decried the commercialization of public resources.[41] These tensions would come to head, when the commission began talks to secure a 43-year lease with a private corporation that would initiate a public private venture to develop a hotel and restaurant in the Pico-Garnier building. By 1972, the competence of the commission's management was questioned by the State Park's Department, when an audit undertaken by the state revealed gross miss-management of El Pueblo. Under the commission's oversight, state auditors located grave accounting errors,

[39] Eric Malnic, "Rees Sees Agreement on Old Plaza: Compromise Proposal Calls for the Creation of 11-Man Board to Direct Restoration," *Los Angeles Times,* August 11, 1965, A1.

[40] California (State), Legislature, Senate. Bill 74, March 10, 1969.

[41] Ray Herbert, "Dispute Over Lease of Historic Pico-Garnier Site Near Climax: Pico-Garnier Block Dispute Near Climax," *Los Angeles Times.* March 8, 1971, B1.

which included the misallocation of public funds, and the mishandling of historic artifacts and delays in restoration projects among other grievances.

Most importantly in regards to the turn of events that would unfold at LAPCA decades later, the state audit specifically identified the mishandling and loss of adequate inventory records for a number of nineteenth century artifacts attributed to the Avila Adobe as well as the site's other historic buildings.[42] By the mid-1970s, the city would move to take over El Pueblo's management once and for all.[43] Under the city's oversight and management, El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument's boundaries encompassed Olvera Street, the Plaza, La Placita Church and adjoining museums, shops and historical sites, further articulated that a new tourism enclosure that formalized the regulation and resignification of the monument would coordinate with prior iterations of city planning policy, laws, and historical narratives created under its purview. The bundling of the Olvera Street tract of properties, it is worth repeating, inherited Sterling's program of strategically forgetting the complexities of the Plaza's materially and culturally embodied history. The monument's tourism governmentality, by codifying future provisions for the establishment of nonprofit ethnically themed museums, would also expand the size of the enclosure available for future neoliberal real estate development initiatives south of Spring Street.

[42] Ray Herbert, "State Auditors Report Errors: Old Plaza Management Assailed," *Los Angeles Times,* May 15, 1972, D1.

[43] Ray Herbert, "City Moving Rapidly to Take Over Pueblo Park: Council Expected to Act Soon Despite Reports of Serious Drawbacks," *Los Angeles Times,* Jan 28, 1974, B1.

The City as Business: Locating Urban Entrepreneurialism at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes and La Plaza Cultural Village

In 2011, LAPCA debuted, created to "celebrate and cultivate an appreciation for the enduring and evolving influence of Mexican and Mexican American culture in Los Angeles."[44] Located on the corner of Main and Arcadia Streets, LAPCA's campus is in close proximity to La Placita Church, Olvera Street, and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument's complex of museums, historic sites, and businesses. LAPCA's campus constructed across the street from the city's El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument represents the actualization of the Plaza commission's plans to expand the Plaza district's footprint that began at mid-century. However, in order to fit within the historical narratives of the Plaza, LAPCA has used its proximity to the monument and its institutional branding and inherited cultural narratives to enhance its museum exhibitions and programming, interwoven representational practices the Plaza's planning board has used to leverage its real estate development objectives.

LAPCA's formation as a public institution supported chiefly with public funds, and occupying public lands has further redefined the jurisdictional space that surrounds both the museum and La Plaza Cultural Village—the mixed-use complex adjoining the museum. The museum's formation was therefore the direct result of governmentalities that delineated the physical space that the institution came to inhabit. More specifically, La Plaza Cultural Village could not have benefitted from its quasi-privatizing cooperation with LAPCA without the county using its eminent domain powers to create an enclosure for its museum and housing projects.

[44] La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, Museum Mission Statement, 2015.https://web.archive.org/web/20150319233226/http://lapca.org/content/about-us-0

LAPCA's founders and board, which include the institution's founder, Gloria Molina, the politically savvy former Los Angeles County Supervisor, and state Assembly member, deserve the latest credit for engineering and coordinating these governmentalities. In her role overseeing the city's first district on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Molina among other Latinx political leaders such as City Councilmember Richard Alatorre, have played instrumental roles in the creative placemaking which have leveraged the Plaza district's cultural and historic narratives to solidify the neighborhood's redevelopment.

Today, LAPCA's galleries and offices occupy the long vacant Plaza House and Vickrey-Brunswig Building, the site of two nineteenth century buildings once used for light manufacturing, office space and housing, later used for storage by the county since the 1970s.[45] After over a decade of planning and significant fundraising, these structures underwent substantial renovation, completed at a cost of over $54 million dollars, through a combination of public and private funding.[46] LAPCA's utilization of public and private funds proved critical to providing the capital to construct the museum as well as develop the infrastructure needed to create a new institution.[47] As the 990 non-profit tax statements filed by LAPCAs' foundation between 2012 through 2016 suggest, the museum's first four years of operation were fraught with years of bleak attendance, sparse revenue earning and significant organizational turmoil.[48] The story revealed in the 990s, substantiated by press coverage circulated during the museum

[45] "Los Angeles Conservancy." *LA Plaza De Cultura y Artes, Vickrey-Brunswig Building | Los Angeles Conservancy*, www.laconservancy.org/locations/la-plaza-de-cultura-y-artes-vickrey-brunswig-building.

[46] Industry practices have dictated that to remain profitable most museums must bring in roughly 60% of their revenue through grant funding and subsidies, and at least 40% through earned revenue.

[47] Editorial, "La Plaza De Cultura y Artes' Rocky Start," *Los Angeles Times*, October 15, 2011, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/la-xpm-2011-oct-15-la-ed-laplaza-20111015-story.html.

[48] Mike Boehm, "La Plaza Is an Open and Empty Space Downtown," *Los Angeles Times*, October 5, 2011, A1, https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/la-xpm-2011-oct-05-la-et-la-plaza-20111005-story.html.

and cultural center's inaugural year, shows the fledgling institution struggling with challenges in museum leadership and institutional design that the museum's leaders have battled since its inception.[49]

As a public museum, LAPCA is designated as a not-for-profit entity, a status qualifying it both for federal tax exemption and access to government and private grants, which today make up the bulk of La Plaza's operating support. LAPCA has also received grant funding from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, which has directed nearly $2 million from its general fund to projects earmarked for cultural projects in the supervisorial district where LAPCA is sited.[50] LAPCA's physical proximity to the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, together with the county's capital outlays and the succession of enclosures that created the monument and La Plaza, therefore illustrate how these governmentalities have guaranteed the museum's survival despite its funding inadequacies and weak administrative organization (Fig. 3.2). However, the recent debut of the mixed-use developments tied to LAPCA's development have shed light on the role this museum has played establishing a public private partnership between the developers and the museum's founders as a continuation of the model employed by Christine Sterling in the 1930s to rehabilitate the Plaza.

When LAPCA debuted in 2011, this period of redevelopment in the city coincided with the introduction of significant capital outlays to the city's public transportation system, infrastructure investments that made Los Angeles' Plaza district more accessible, and therefore a

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[49] Ibid, A1.

[50] La Plaza Partners LLC's 990 tax forms indicate that in 2016 the institution received $3 million in grant funding from the California Community Foundation. While in 2014, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes received a $1 million grant from the PepsiCo Foundation. In the past two years these external sources of financial support have enabled the creation of new public programming as well as eliminated attendance fees. For the years of 2012-2014, an average of less than $9,000.00 was generated in attendance fees each year.

lucrative zone for rapid real estate investment. This effort to develop vacant parcels of land surrounding Olvera Street incorporated into LAPCA functioned as a contingency of the site's construction. LAPCA's contracts with the City of Los Angeles required the development and subsequent 99-year lease of two parking lots located on Cesar Chavez Avenue west of Olvera Street bearing strong similarity to the CRA's redevelopment of Little Tokyo.[51]

Established through city resolution, LAPCA's economic viability was made possible through a development plan connecting the museum's formation with the development of city owned land parcels, managed with the benefit of county oversight and economic development subsidies. LAPCA would act as the lessee of County owned property, and through the establishment of the museum and mixed use development these properties would contribute nearly $800,000 in annual tax revenue.[52] Following a model resembling Little Tokyo's redevelopment of East First Street, this relationship between LAPCA's foundation, La Plaza Partners LLC, and the City of Los Angeles have together forged a private-for profit real estate venture which will result in the construction of a mixed-use, $140 million dollar project. The development of La Plaza Cultural Village complex, completed in 2019, encompasses a 425,000 square foot hybrid housing, retail space, and cultural amenities managed and owned by La Plaza de Cultura y Artes' foundation, La Plaza Partners LLC and Trammell Crow LLC, a national leader in supply chain and logistics management (Fig. 3.3).

[51] Ira J. Waldman, "La Plaza Cultural Village: A Multiple Public/Private Partnership," *American College of Real-Estate Lawyers Newsletter,* 35, no.1 (February 2017), 19-22.

[52] County of Los Angeles, "Terms of Sale for La Plaza Parcel," Los Angeles, 2015, http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2015/15-0165_misc_05-22-2015.pdf

This marriage of private and public interests embodied by the La Plaza Cultural Village, LAPCA, and the Plaza are materially linked by a walkway called the "Paseo La Plaza," a figurative and financial suturing of the museum to the new development within the project enclosure adjoining the Olvera Street monument.[53] As the project's publicity materials claim, La Plaza Cultural Village promises a surge in economic development that would economically reinvigorate the city's historic Plaza district. In a 2016 press release, LAPCAs' CEO John Echeveste boasted, that when completed La Plaza Cultural Village would, "spark a major economic, social and cultural renaissance in the area that will benefit the entire city." [54] Echeveste's superlative description of the cultural and economic impact promised by La Plaza Cultural Village illustrates a familiar correlation urban developers around the world draw between urban development projects and the construction of flagship cultural institutions such as museums.[55]

Although LAPCA operates as a non-profit cultural institution, the museum's founder and CEO have implemented a strategic plan pursuing what Marxist geographer David Harvey calls urban entrepreneurialism,[56] an economic logic global cities use to wed private free market business principles to local government's public mission. In Los Angeles, urban entrepreneurialism gained prominence in the early twentieth century through the partnerships

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[53] Abby Sewell, "Construction is set to begin on $140-Million La Plaza mixed-Use project near Olvera Street," *Los Angeles Times.* Aug. 3, 2016. NP.

[54] Brad Cox, "High Street Residential Breaks Ground on LA Plaza Village in Los Angeles," *Trammel Crow Company,* August 3, 2016. https://www.cbre.com/tcc/projects/high-street-residential-breaks-ground-on-la-plaza-village

[55] Lorenzo Vicario and Edwin Heathcote. "Is the Bilbao Effect Over?" *Apollo*, February 27, 2017. https://www.apollo-magazine.com/is-the-bilbao-effect-over-guggenheim/.

[56] David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso, 2014) 100.

and alliances drawn by Christine Sterling with city leaders and business owners to create Olvera Street in the 1930s. This precursor to neoliberal urban development facilitated growth through the promotion of cultural tourism and privatized city infrastructure.[57] Fleshing out Harvey's theory, anthropologist Arlene Dávila argues that coupling the formation of cultural institutions with urban economic growth promotes a rationale for cultural infrastructure that also exerts a form of cultural discipline over ethnic communities. Dávila suggests that the economic infrastructure provided by business improvement districts operating in some ethnic enclaves and not others, delivers development through uneven economic investment and opportunity that pit different districts against each other.[58]

In Los Angeles, LAPCA's participation in the urban entrepreneurial turn demonstrates an adept use of monetized cultural governmentalities to create enclosures that increase the use value of urban real estate properties. The neoliberal logic of creating structural enclosures to increase property value were then projected into the financialization of LAPCA's cultural programming. The museum opened before designated curatorial staff was hired, and as result LAPCA's directors outsourced the design and curatorship of its permanent exhibit to a private exhibit design contractor, IQ Magic, and in the museum's first years also outsourced its public education outreach to unpaid docents in ways similar to JANM's outsourcing of the intellectual and affective labor of its docents.[59]

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[57] Ibid, 101.

[58] Arlene Dávila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the Neoliberal City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 100.

[59] David Harvey suggests in his book, *The Conditions of Postmodernity,* that the principle of flexible accumulation, has eroded organized labor movements driven by the acceleration of globalized capitalism. Flexible labor practices ranging from part time work, subcontracted and outsourced production, or the reliance of a volunteer workforce

Reviving Colonial Racial Narratives in "L.A. Starts Here"

One of the most telling challenges confronted in LAPCA's development was the mishandling of 118 human remains discovered in 2010 during the site's construction. These remains were buried in the former site of the *campo santo* or parish cemetery of La Placita Church, adjacent to LAPCA's campus. This burial site contained remains belonging to a cross section of La Placita's early mestizo and indigenous parishioners, including a large population of indigenous laborers who migrated to Los Angeles from as far as Arizona.[60] After their discovery in 2010, these human remains would spend eighteen months contained in unlabeled brown paper bags and buckets, practices in clear violation of Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) policies.[61] By March of 2011, a public hearing organized by the California Native American Heritage Commission convened to hear testimonies from all parties involved in the discovery of La Placita's cemetery.

The archeologists leading excavation at LAPCA testified at the California Native American Heritage Commission hearing that improper extraction measures and the failure to properly document human remains were authorized by LAPCA's founder and board member Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina.[62] In her testimony, Molina stated that she required

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decreases labor costs to increase profit margins. No longer required to pay for salaried employees, benefits, or offer contracts ensuring continued employment, an employer can dictate the terms of labor for their benefit.

[60] In press a release issued after the human remains were discovered, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes representatives claimed construction plans were dictated by an Environmental Impact Report conducted by the environmental compliance firm Sapphos Inc. in 2004. However, archeologists working on the site suggest that multiple primary sources note the location of native peoples buried in this area, that the EIR was intentionally misleading.

[61] Steven W. Hackel."Digging Up the Remains of Early Los Angeles: the Plaza Church Cemetery." *Southern California Quarterly*. 94.1 (2012), 6-12.

[62] Prof. Paul Langenwalter, Biola University, Testimony before the Native American Heritage Commission, N.d.n.p. Web, March 28, 2011. https://web.archive.org/web/20151017034735/http://www.cityprojectca.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Monica-Strauss-transcript-conformed-20110401.pdf

the site's construction team to follow recommendations outlined in the environmental impact report.[63] Echoing Molina's claims, the archeologists leading excavation at LAPCA also testified the location of burial site did not overlap with LAPCA's project, citing documentation in archival land use maps. Refuting this claim made the by the project's archeologist, historians have long stated that the location of the parish cemetery or campo santo did in fact include the lots that would become the museum's campus, a location that has been documented in some of the city's oldest colonial maps.[64] Following the California Native American Heritage Commission hearing, Molina issued an official apology for the museum, and in doing this, censured further public comments about the discovery of the Plaza cemetery. Molina's decision to approve the symbolic and figurative burial and removal of the Plaza's Indigenous and mestizo parishioners brought to the foreground the deeply entrenched cultural narratives of Hispanic fantasy heritage that Mexican Americans have also perpetuated about themselves.

Throughout LAPCA's permanent exhibition, "L.A. Starts Here," three schemas organize the exhibit: chronology, taxonomies of racial identity, and the incorporation of wall signage presented in first person voice. Together these visual, spatial, and material components construct the themes articulated in each part of the exhibition. "L.A. Starts Here" follows a timeline, punctuated by historical events given exposition in the corresponding displays located around the gallery. Spatially, this exhibition follows a circular floor plan, allowing a view of each display in sequential order to complete the loop. By promoting a singular mode of experiencing the exhibition, the syntax constructed by the designers and curators of "L.A. Starts Here" constructs

[63] Richard Guzmán. "La Plaza Bones Reburied." *Los Angeles Downtown News*. N.p., 17 Apr. 2012. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.

[64] Robert Garcia, "Rest in Peace: Ancestors Finally Return to El Pueblo." KCET, May, 11, 2012. https://www.kcet.org/history-society/rest-in-peace-ancestors finally-return-to-el-pueblo

a mode of reading and in turn experiencing the exhibition, that poses the earliest point in the chronology as the exhibition's starting point.

To analyze the narratives of Mexican American cultural identity presented throughout "L.A. Starts Here," art historian Henrietta Lidchi's notion of the poetics of exhibition provides a useful analytic framework: she enables us to examine how meaning is constructed through the ordering and organization of the separate but related components of an exhibition.[65] Lidchi's framework serves as a useful tool for thinking through the distinct forms of knowledge that are produced both inside and outside LAPCA, shaped by earlier discourses of race echoing Sterling's construction of the Hispanic fantasy heritage that shaped Olvera Street.[66] Just as Olvera Street functioned as a backdrop for Los Angeles' Anglo audiences to imagine themselves in a fictionalized version of California history, in turn "L.A. Starts Here" has presented a similar appeal to Mexican American visitors to imagine themselves in the city's foundation story.

In the first wing of "L.A. Starts Here," chronology and colonial racial categorization are mapped onto this space, establishing the spatial syntax of the exhibition. Throughout "L.A. Starts Here," the first half of the exhibition features signage denoting taxonomies of Mexico's colonial racial caste or *casta* system. Terms such as "mestizo," "Indio," Gente de Razón*,"* and "inmigrante," are used to alert the visitor to an encompassing racial logic that organizes the sequence of the objects exhibited. As a result, the curator's choice to bracket off each section of the exhibition under the designations of colonial racial categories creates a slippage between the objects and their owners. This mode of spatial and temporal conflation with the racial

[65] Henrietta Lidchi. "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* (London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997), 153-169.

[66] Ibid., 151.

taxonomies presented about the objects is a common practice in exhibitions of non-western peoples since the creation of the earliest ethnographic galleries.[67] In the ethnographic museum, the classification and ordering of specimens functioned to create a microcosm of the known world within the space of the museum.

The visitor's navigation of each gallery within the space of the exhibition, privileges a reading of the sequential presentation of objects and artifacts. The resulting visual and spatial effect draws the visitor to view each historical epoch in a linear sequence suggesting the illusion of progress. This syntax of the individual objects brought together in LAPCA's permanent exhibitions is given greater emphasis when encountered in the museum's location adjoining the city's historic Plaza. In this way, LAPCA's location constructed within the city's historic Plaza district illustrates the museum's ability to conflate space and time, past and present. LAPCA's close proximity to the actual site of the city's historic Plaza district, creates a blurring of the version of history circulated in adjacent historical sites like Olvera Street encoding the museum within the larger metanarratives of Mexican American ethnic identity in Los Angeles.

Throughout each gallery of "L.A. Starts Here," the visitor observes changes in the materials, scale, and exhibition schema associated with each portion of the exhibition. The colonial racial taxonomies organizing the first half of "L.A. Starts Here," function to explain the material differences that are evident to the visitor through imposed racial designation. The presentation of the artifacts belonging to California's landed gentry in "L.A. Starts Here" suggest a fiction that posits contemporary Mexicans Americans as the direct descendants of this reified nobility, a historical narrative with roots in Christine Sterling's ethnic display that has persisted

[67] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, 128.

in the space to the present day. The first gallery of "L.A. Starts Here" begins with display of objects attributed to the Gente de Razón, or the "people of reason," who comprised some of Los Angeles' 44 pobladores or founding settlers (Fig. 3.4).[68]

In colonial New Spain, the term Gente de Razón equated this racial and cultural designation with whiteness, virtue, and reason. The corresponding vitrines located in this gallery contain a low cast-iron canon, a string of rosary carved from olive pits, and a reproduction of a colonial map of New Spain. The adjacent vitrines display wafer irons, processional crosses and a carved wooden cross, an array of items used for Catholic mass. Together these objects and image identify California's conquest, with the military authority and religious belief of Gente de Razón, to portray the story of conquest from the vantage point of the victor. Like the bones of La Placita's parishioners, their histories are elided in "L.A. Starts Here." These objects therefore render California's indigenous people invisible, through the direct omission of the violence exerted under colonial rule. In the Spanish colonies the hierarchy of racial caste understood mixed race people and other non-whites under the designation of Gente sin Razón, or "people without reason," a category designating non-whites as legal minors under colonial law.[69] In paintings such as Miguel Cabrera's eighteenth century casta painting *De Español y Mestizo: Castiza*, images of this type depicted tableaus of racial hybridity personified through the trope of the family which attempted to equate moral rectitude, social standing, and the phenotypic

[68] La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, "Gente de Razón," Gallery installation, Digital Image, IQ Magic, n.d., March 18, 2018, http://iqmagic.net/la-plaza-de-cultura-y-artes.html.

[69] Nasheli Jimenez del Val, "Pinturas de Casta: Mexican Caste Paintings, a Foucauldian Reading." *New Readings* 10 (2011), 2.

evidence of racial mixings that occurred among the major racial and ethnic groups throughout the colony of New Spain. (Fig.3.5).

The correlation between religious faith and militarism is further illustrated by the artifacts and text presented in section of the exhibition devoted to Gente de Razón. In this section of the exhibition the visitor is invited to embody the perspective of a member of the Californio nobility in a wall label which presents a fictionalized oral history:

> Our parents told us about coming from towns down south in Nueva España, the place you now call Mexico. Many died on the journey, and others left soon after arriving here. But some remained and forged civilizations out of this wild land of flooding rivers and earth, out of the *indios* who surround us and don't know Our Lord.
>
> We are Catholic subjects of the Spanish King. We are people of reason.

This wall text invites the visitor to imagine that they are addressed by the speaker in the label, and by extension inhabit the role of participant. The speaker's use of the possessive pronoun *our*, leads the visitor to imagine themselves included in this statement. The convention to write exhibition labels and wall text in third person voice, maintains a position of implied authority through an approximation of the curator's voice. The visitor's path to navigate the exhibition enables him or her to form a linear narrative suturing the meaning of object and text together; as Bal suggests, "The most powerful form of address is narrative. Indeed, the space of the museum presupposes a walking tour, an order in which the exhibits and panels are to be viewed and read."[70] In "L.A. Starts Here," the voice employed in the exhibition signage pivots from third person to first person. The use of "us" and "we" in this text produces the effect of hailing the

[70] Mieke Bal, "Telling, Showing, Showing Off." *Critical Inquiry.* 18.3 (1992), 561.

visitor to imagine a shared ethnic experience while simultaneously asserting authoritative distance denoted by the use of third person voice.[71]

Despite the well-documented racial complexity of the city's pobladores, or founding families, the inclusion of colonial terms of racial and cultural classification that punctuate this exhibition, equate hierarchies of racial and cultural difference paired with the artifacts displayed in this exhibition. Like fantasy of "romance and picturesqueness," that was perpetuated throughout Olvera Street, LAPCA's curators and leadership have taken nineteenth century racial taxonomies and have normalized these historical narratives in their version of the city's Mexican American origin story. The integration of essentializing colonial racial taxonomies throughout "LA. Starts Here" obscures the multiple dimensions of Mexican American racial and ethnic complexity. This is particularly evident in a display dedicated to California's last Mexican Governor, Pio Pico. Pico is memorialized through photographs, personal belongings, and documents such maps and letters attesting to his erudite knowledge and sophistication. However, in the earliest presentation of this exhibition, the museum's curators deftly omitted of Pico's Afro-Mexican heritage to reaffirm the association with race and civility foundational to colonial racial schemas.

Comparatively, at LAPCA the history of native peoples occupies a minor presence within the broader narrative of settlement and discovery. This is both a problem of the archive, and an institutional position that emerged during LAPCA's construction. However, the scarce examples of indigenous material culture within this exhibition is most clearly embodied in an object. In "L.A. Starts Here," the installation features a stone-grinding tool called a metate, displayed as the

[71] Leslie Bedford, *The Art of Museum Exhibitions: How story and imagination create aesthetic experiences* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2014), 160.

sole representative of the region's native peoples. The rich material culture of Los Angeles' indigenous tribes is relegated to a single object that speaks to the cultural erasure and displacement of native peoples.

Instead of material culture, indigenous people appear in "L.A. Starts Here" as the subject of landscape paintings. This is evident in one painting included in this exhibition depicting the *San Gabriel Mission*, painted by Ferdinand Deppe in 1832. In Deppe's *San Gabriel Mission,* a pronounced visual contrast between the white stucco of the mission contrasts with the reddish earth of the California landscape, the dark brown clothing and skin of the indigenous inhabitants (Fig. 3.6).[72] Deppe's inclusion of details of the land, indigenous costume and the tulle reed dome shelter function as a visual catalogue of this place. Deppe's depiction of the Gabrieleño Indians in this work renders native peoples as if they were an extension of the landscape, equating the expansion of western territories with the conquest of native peoples. Deppe's portrayal of California's native peoples is a work of ethnography and national allegory. The inclusion of Deppe's *San Gabriel Mission,* and absence of native material culture further remind the visitor that Los Angeles' settlement was solely the achievement of Mexican Gente de Razón.

Throughout "L.A. Starts Here" the use of facsimiles exhibited in display cases and vitrines are not explicitly listed as such. Instead these props are presented as if they were historical artifacts. The use of facsimile is most evident in the section of "L.A. Starts Here" dedicated to the subject of Mexican American labor movements in Los Angeles. The vitrines display copies of antique field tools that are presented against prominent photomurals of

[72] Ferdinand Deppe, *San Gabriel Mission*, 1832, oil on canvas, 27 x 37 in., Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA.

Mexican laborers from an immigration station located in Texas, sourced from the Library of Congress. Upon closer inspection, the tools arranged in the display are not accompanied by any information about their specific provenance or history, user, maker.

"L.A. Starts Here," the exhibition follows a formulaic presentation of historical photos enlarged to wall size murals, presented with vitrines filled with historic artifacts displayed alongside facsimiles of objects and documents. LAPCA's curatorial aesthetic was largely determined by the exhibition design firm IQ Magic, which has been responsible for the site's overall design. In addition to their work at LAPCA, IQ Magic has designed several exhibitions in many of the museums also located at Olvera Street. The exhibitions that IQ Magic designs share a theatrical visual aesthetic featuring installation tableaux displaying facsimiles and artifacts juxtaposed against large mural-sized reproductions of paintings and photographs. Through the display a facsimile tools presents a missed opportunity to find new ways to historicize the story of working people. The objects that comprise "L.A. Starts Here," locate the Mexican American subject at the intersection of racial, cultural and class privilege. Similarly, the visitor's encounter with real and contrived examples of Mexican American material culture attest to what is legible as a form of material culture that ultimately serve larger political and economic aspirations of LAPCA founder and board.

Conclusion

When the project to develop LAPCA emerged in the early 2000s, Los Angeles was well into the throes of a post-Fordist transformation shifting it from a paradigm of mechanized mass industrial

production to a neoliberal global city dedicated to knowledge production.[73] Yet, despite the different economic regime in which this project was undertaken, LAPCA's organizers have not only utilized many of the same municipal zoning laws, policies and poetics of representation that Sterling marshalled to create Olvera Street in the 1920s. Instead, the museum's founders have effectively reformulated the signature governmental technologies created by Sterling and her contemporaries for the neoliberal age. In doing so, LAPCA's founders and curators have taken part in a continuation of the of late twentieth century urban renewal schemes that have attempted to reimagine the city's Plaza.

As was traced in the formation of JANM in Little Tokyo starting in the 1960s, and Old and New Chinatown in the early years of the twenty first century, the city's relationship to the renewal of the city's historic ethnic spaces has required both the investment of developers and the coordinated efforts of ethnic leadership to serve as advocates and community organizers for the formation of new ethnic institutions. Like Little Tokyo, and the city's old and new Chinatowns, the waves of redevelopment and visibility have made these ethnic spaces the generators of economic growth, when they were previously deemed uninhabitable, and in need of external surveillance and control.

In a critique of "L.A. Starts Here," published when the site opened in 2011, journalist Hector Tobar contended that La Plaza's colonial gaze gave LAPCA's Mexican American target audience "a new historical myth to replace the ones they grew up with. Your ancestors were pilgrims too, the exhibits are saying. You are not outsiders in this city. You've always been

[73]Allen J. Scott, "Creative Cities: Conceptual Issues and Policy Questions," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28, no. 1 (2006), 1–17.

here."[74] While Tobar's assessment rings true to some extent, I believe Tobar misses a crucial point concerning the political economic underpinning this development and shaping have the predilection for California's pastoral mythology coalescing in the Plaza historic district since the late nineteenth century. In many ways LAPCA does a convincing task of leveraging of Mexican American cultural capital in the development of La Plaza Cultural Village in a previously unused corner of the historic Plaza district. However, this repackaging of ethnic identity repositioned as a valuable commodity in urban development is nothing new in the Plaza historic district.

Although La Plaza and Olvera Street were each created nearly a century apart, both sites reveal anxieties about Mexican American cultural memory. Articulated from within and outside Los Angeles Mexican American communities, Olvera Street and LAPCA attest to how different groups have sought to impose their own contrived cultural meanings onto urban spaces. As I have traced in this chapter each institution has chosen to re-cast Los Angeles' Mexican Americans in a guise that best serves the aspirations of its founder, board, financial backers, and the aspirations of the museum's Mexican American visitors.

For Sterling, Los Angeles' Mexican American cultural history became part of backdrop against which Anglos could imagine a place for themselves into the city's history. In Sterling's configuration of the space, Mexicans added the ambiance, but the primary roles could be inhabited in the imaginations of white visitors. By contrast, at LAPCA, the revival of colonial racial narratives has functioned to empower Mexican Americans through appealing to their own anxieties over racial hybridity. The willful omission of Los Angeles' indigenous and mestizos'

[74]Hector Tobar, "Mexican American Museum a Valuable New L.A. Asset," *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 2011.

ancestors in “L.A. Starts Here,” serve as a reminder as to how colonial racial hierarchies have been mobilized to serve creation of Mexican American institutions.

Chapter Three: *Implosion/Explosion:* Reterritorializing Chinatown at CAM and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

On December 18, 2003, the Chinese American Museum (CAM) opened in El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument (El Pueblo), becoming Los Angeles' first museum celebrating Chinese American cultural history and visual culture. While many of CAM's early supporters knew of the city's first Chinatown, or Old Chinatown, the neighborhood's memory and material traces had remained buried for decades by El Pueblo's cultural narratives.[751] Since the park's creation in 1952, El Pueblo's museums and interpretive displays have presented a version of the city's history that celebrated the city's eighteenth century Mexican and Spanish colonial origins, and omitted the story of the Plaza district's earliest ethnic neighborhoods and their multiethnic residents. However, decades before the Plaza's district was officially designated as an historic district, socialite Christine Sterling worked closely in the early 1930s with city leadership to create Olvera Street, a Mexican-themed tourist attraction adjoining the Plaza. The success of Sterling's Olvera Street project would benefit from the support of city leadership and the patronage of *Los Angeles Times'* publisher Harry Chandler, who provided financial backing and decades of favorable coverage of Olvera Street in the *Times*.

[1] Cecilia Rasmussen, "Honoring L.A.'s. Black Founders." *Los Angeles Times,* A6. 13, February, 1995. Journalist Cecilia Rasmussen explained in her popular "Then and Now," column in the *Times*, that in the 1950s that the newly formed El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Monument installed a plaque commemorating the city's founding by eleven families of Mexican *pobladores.* This plaque denoted the racial background of each founder, among several of whom were of Afro-Mexican decent. Rasmussen suggest that the plaque's public acknowledgment of city's Afro-Mexican founders displeased the city's Recreation and Parks department, who managed El Pueblo at the time, and the department removed the original plaque. Twenty years later a new plaque was installed that did not include the racial backgrounds of the city's founding families. Beginning the 1980s, El Pueblo began correcting and updating these informational plaques urged on by community groups advocating for greater racial inclusion, the new historical plaques installed in the 1980s would include information such as the Afro-Mexican pobladores, and the location of the Chinese Massacre of 1871

Until the 1980s, El Pueblo's museums and interpretive displays continued to bear the lingering influence of Christine Sterling's Hispanic fantasy vision of the Plaza in which the venue was presented as a singularly Hispanic cultural space. Two entwined events - Sterling's efforts to sanitize the Plaza's multiethnic and multiracial past, coupled with city's razing of Old Chinatown in the late 1930s to make way for Union Station, had accelerated the near complete erasure of that neighborhood's Chinese cultural legacy by midcentury. Today, CAM's appearance in what was once Old Chinatown, but now the El Pueblo park speaks to the museum's mission to recover the cultural memory of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles generally and within the park itself.

CAM's formation in El Pueblo has been shaped by the governmentalities introduced by the state and local governments previously deployed for the exhibition of the Mexican ethnic Other in the Plaza; these governmentalities included the assemblage of laws, policies, administrative and narrative technologies used as tools in the city's management and oversight of the historic Plaza district and its residents where El Pueblo is located. These technologies of government were only recently adapted to reveal CAM's counter-memory of the neighborhood. As a result, the museum's mission of cultural recovery is now used in part to buttress the city's neoliberal narrative of positioning downtown Los Angeles as the cultural hub of a multicultural world city. The deterritorialization and reteritorization of the city's ethnic enclaves, the past and recent interventions related in Chapter One that dissolved the social relations of property in Little Tokyo to make way for other regimes of ownership in the neighborhood, began with Old Chinatown's erasure and the creation of the El Pueblo park precinct where CAM is now housed. These space-making disciplines also mark genealogical moments in a century of downtown urbanization that Henri Lefebvre theorized as a dialectic of implosion/explosion to explain the

destructive and creative processes that had once transformed nineteenth century European mercantile cities into industrial centers of globalized production by the late twentieth century,[2] and which I argue, mirrors the destruction of working class immigrant enclaves such as Old Chinatown, to enable the creation of the city's urban and suburban Chinatowns which have become the sites of transnational investment in recent decades.[3]

The first implosion in the space in which CAM is now located occurred in the late nineteenth century, after the arrival of the first Chinese immigrants from California's gold fields, when federal, state and city governments enacted a series of laws, regulations, policies, and practices used to expel, and then confine these immigrants in what became Old Chinatown's ethnic ghetto. It is therefore fitting that CAM's home in the Garnier building, the only structure to survive Old Chinatown's destruction in the 1930s, now represents the struggle those turn-of-the century Chinese immigrants waged against their expulsion and erasure from the city's cultural memory.[4]

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[2] Neil J. Brenner, "Introduction: Urban Theory Without an Outside," in *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization* (Berlin: Joris, 2014), 17.

[3] Henri Lefebvre, "From the City to Urban Society," in *Implosion/Explosion: Toward a Study of Planetary Urbanization* (Berlin: Jovis, 2014), 36.

[4] I turn here to Michel de Certeau's conception of strategies and tactics as explained in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, in which he describes strategies and tactics of survival. In Old Chinatown these techniques included the myriad of mundane practice and social relations that unfolded in Old Chinatown crucial to the survival of Chinese immigrants and their families in Los Angeles, particularly amid the legal and extra-legal restrictions imposed by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and other related legal ordinances. Immigrants used strategies to maintain forms of cultural continuity and connection to their homeland as well as deployed tactics to work through the challenges or barriers encountered living in the English dominant city through an array of embodied practices which as historians of Old Chinatown suggest, included a range of businesses which included restaurants, food vendors, Chinese cultural organizations, Chinese language schools, fraternal organizations, religious temples, legal services, herbalists and practitioners of Chinese medicine. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life. Vol. 1, Vol. 1*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 29-42.

CAM's location in the Garnier building, a structure erected by the city's first French immigrants has become the vessel for launching the recovery of Chinese American history in El Pueblo, despite Old Chinatown's near complete erasure. More, as Chapter Two relates, the introduction of new governmentalities created to endorse Olvera Street's repertoires of racialized ethnic display of Mexicans, was made possible by the city's use of the policies of eminent domain for redevelopment that would create the spatial and discursive enclosures surrounding El Pueblo park, which would later ensure the Garnier building's material preservation. As we shall see, the circuitous route of intended and unintended consequences of efforts to erase the Chinese immigrant presence, once tethered to the Garnier building and Old Chinatown, help reveal the networks of power that both governed the conduct of Chinese Americans in turn of the twentieth century Los Angeles, and defined the spaces they could inhabit. This chapter will therefore uncover the assemblage of local, state, and federal laws, as well as the visual regimes, racial narratives, and social relations which reinforced how these laws and policies were applied to govern Old Chinatown.

Because Chinatown's redevelopment and reinvention is ongoing, it continues to play a significant role in downtown Los Angeles' transformation from a hub of Fordist manufacturing into an epicenter of "cognitive-cultural capitalism," focused on generating synergies between aesthetic performance and cultural labor.[5] The gentrifying governmentalities and investments that have fostered the emergence of public and private arts institutions, live-work complexes, and other downtown amenities designed to serve the city's growing sector of cognitive and cultural labor, has also supplied the fiscal and symbolic technology CAM has used to organize and

[5] The Community Redevelopment Agency renewed the Chinatown Redevelopment Masterplan in 2000, and the redevelopment work is ongoing into the present day.

finance its exhibition practices. I shall preview this turn to understand how the governmentalities of twenty-first century ethnic display that established the city's first Chinese American museum in downtown, have also introduced neoliberal museum practices, that I will examine in a close reading of CAM's 2014 exhibition, "LA Heat: Taste Changing Condiments" I shall argue that through "L.A. Heat," CAM attempted to bridge the Asian and Latinx cultural traditions, cultivate a younger generation of audiences, while generating revenue for the museum through public programming and an art auction. However, in an effort to reach the broadest audience possible the poetics of this exhibition's content, CAM borrowed from the market-driven aesthetics and practices of downtown real estate development that blurred the already smudged lines once distinguishing commercial art galleries and nonprofit public cultural institutions. As the final museum examined in this study, CAM's "L.A. Heat" presents a glimpse into the tactics used by small ethnic museums as they continue to struggle for institutional survival.

Drawing from the archive of public policy and planning documents generated by the Los Angeles City Council, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), as well as state and federal immigration law, public health, coverage in the city's newspapers, and visual culture, this chapter therefore traces the lineage of the governmentalities and concomitant social practices deployed to portray Chinese people as nonhuman aliens, and Old Chinatown's space as unsafe and unsanitary. Turning to Foucault's articulation of governmentality as the ensemble of formalized practices and relational tactics created to develop a series of knowledges used to regulate the conduct of individuals and a population, this chapter closes with a survey of CAM's

formation, to identify the forms of disciplinary power that have circulated within and are constitutive of this institution.[6]

By disentangling the assemblage of governmentalities used to define the symbolic and material boundaries of Old Chinatown, this schema provides a lens through which we can uncover the administrative practices, policies, and power relations deployed by the state to govern Los Angeles' Chinese immigrant populations. As geographer Stuart Elden has pointed out about Foucault's work on governmentality, this concept can be best understood chiefly as a "spatial strategy," introduced in the governance of a particular territory and its inhabitants.[7] Therefore, by tracing Los Angeles' growth for over two centuries, we will come to some understanding of how the assemblage of governmentalities, including the introduction of accounting, public health, city planning, and cultural policy, were used to make downtown Los Angeles' spaces and ethnic populations knowable, containable, and governable.

Through the formation of this assemblage of governmentalities, new spatial arenas were formed that were held in place through the juridical and political enclosures constructed from laws and property relations.[8] Understanding the relationship between the creation of new spatial enclosures and governmentality brings into focus the ways in which neighborhoods once created for the purposes of ethnic confinement or tourism and ethnic display, have also disrupted the pre-

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[6] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, vol. 3, ed. James D. Faubion and trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Classics, 2020), 220.

[7] Stuart Elden, "Governmentality, calculation, territory," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 3 (June 2007), 565. In Foucault's writings on governmentality, he frequently cited Machiavelli's *The Prince,* to illustrate the how the concept of governmentality was shaped by early modern political theory. In essays such as Foucault's "Governmentality," he suggests that the *Prince* represents a clear articulation of the modes of behavior, thought and deportment that was considered the ideal expression of individual, moral, and political conduct which was by extension required of the prince to in the effective governance or "political economy" of the state. The nuances of Foucault's use of the sixteenth century understanding of "political economy," was a term with chiefly familial connotations, as it referred specifically to the father's rule over the family unit, and the effective management of their actions, patrimony, and territory.

[8] Ibid., 566.

existing social relations of property to clear the slate for new territories of property relations. In the case of California's turn of the century Chinatowns, a discrete set of governmentalities embodied in a series of laws and policies introduced after the arrival of Chinese immigrants in the late nineteenth century, focused on population control to instrumentalize the creation of specific knowledge about the Chinese immigrants who inhabited these spaces. In reaction to this history, the formation of twentieth-century ethnic museums such as CAM have not only preserved the material evidence of ethnic exclusion and counter-memory through the display community artifacts, but have also provided a stage for performing the recuperation and critique of this aspect of Chinese American exclusion and racialization.

Creating Chinatown: Mapping El Pueblo's Ethnic and Racial Borderlands

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California in 1849, dramatically accelerated a period of mass migration to the future state, one that fueled a boom in urbanization, industrialization, agriculture, and exports supporting the state's burgeoning mining industry. California's meteoric rise in both the value and output of agricultural production and manufacture was captured in the federal census of 1860, which ranked the newly formed state's wealth and labor force as seventh out of thirty six states in the nation.[9] Adding to the dramatic growth of the state's agriculture and production sectors, Gold Rush fervor would precipitate a population boom that drew in thousands of domestic migrants and overseas immigrants from Mexico, Chile, Australia, Europe, and Asia. [10] Though the Chinese would occupy one of the

[9] David J. St. Clair, "The Gold Rush and the Beginnings of California Industry," *California History* 77, no. 4 (1998), 190.

[10] Ibid., 191.

smallest fraction of the newcomers seeking fortunes in the state, they would become one of the most overrepresented groups in print media depicting the state's new arrivals. [11]

For the Chinese immigrants who made this journey, California promised economic opportunities unavailable in China, particularly in the decades under British Imperial rule that followed the Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century. China's political and economic instability, which spanned the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries, proved a significant driver of migration to the pacific Rim's west coasts. For many of the Chinese immigrants undertaking this journey, their passage to California was paid through a credit-ticket system of indenture under which Chinese laborers agreed to have the benevolent associations that paid their passage garnish their wages until the debt was repaid, a debt that often took years to settle. Despite the hardship and gross inequities that Chinese laborers faced in California, many laborers emigrated with the intention of returning to China after repaying their debts for passage and saving additional money to send to their wives and relatives back in China.[12] Since their arrival to California in the 1850s, the Chinese would become subjected to outright violence and the introduction of laws targeting foreign workers. Yet, in the face of decades of anti-Chinese legislation and racial violence, some Chinese immigrants living in California found ways to use to the legal system to resist and subvert the state's unequal treatment of the Chinese.[13]

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[11] Strict immigration quotas were introduced in the nineteenth century which established quotas intended to encourage immigration from European countries, and smaller quotas for Asian immigrants intended to discourage their migration to the United States.

[12] Scott Zesch, "Chinese Los Angeles in 1870-1871: The Makings of a Massacre," *Southern California Quarterly* 90, no. 2 (2008), 117.

[13] Sucheng Chan, "A People of Exceptional Character: Ethnic Diversity, Nativism, and Racism in the California Gold Rush," *California History* Vol. 79, No. 2 (2000), 79.

In the 1850s, San Francisco would become state's most populous and prosperous city, due to its proximity to the gold fields of the western Sierras. However, as historian Nyan Shah reminds us, San Francisco's rise as a nineteenth-century boom city, went hand in hand with the state's development of municipal infrastructure and administrative methods used to govern the city's growing population. By the 1850s San Francisco's municipal leaders introduced new forms of accounting and census reporting, which became tools used to assess the health and economic wellbeing of the city's populations that paid special attention to the growing community of Chinese immigrants residing in the city's Chinatown.[14] While Los Angeles grew more slowly in the 1850s than San Francisco, the city's municipal infrastructure would undergo significant reorganization as the city shifted from the hands of Mexican to American control. In 1850, the city's census reported a total of 1,610 residents, two of which were Chinese immigrants. A decade later, the city's population would more than double to 4,385 residents, including a population of twenty-nine Chinese immigrants.[15] As Los Angeles' Chinese population grew in the latter half of the nineteenth century, some of the earliest Chinese-owned business soon cropped up around the Plaza in businesses that included laundries, fish markets,

[14] Nayan Shah. *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*, American crossroads, 7 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 47. In his book Contagious Divides, Shah too uses the framework of Foucault's notion of governmentality to examine how the emergence of concepts such as the "general population," became a crucial conceptual underpinning of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century municipal government. In Shah's work exploring the relationship between the formation of public health policies and the surveillance and policing of San Francisco's Chinatown throughout the mid nineteenth century to early twentieth centuries, the city of San Francisco's intervention to map and articulate the neighborhood's territorial enclosure, and conduct census surveys of the Chinatown's residents would become data used by the city to track the spread of disease, illness and other health related behavior's in the neighborhood. Los Angeles city health officials such as Dr. Walter Lindley would look to the precedents of public health introduced in San Francisco.

[15] United States Census Bureau, "The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850-California," Decennial Official Publications, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1850/1850a/1850a-47.pdf

and Chinese dry goods shops serving the city's growing Chinese community.[16] That same year, Los Angeles' census reported a total of 234 Chinese immigrants, marking another significant population increase over the previous decade. Beginning with their earliest arrival to the city in 1850, Chinese residents continued to live primarily in or near Old Chinatown, forming a small but growing Chinese enclave concentrated near the Plaza.[17] While the statewide census data would demonstrate that Chinese immigrants occupied one of the smallest fractions (less than 3%) of immigrant groups arriving in California, the representation of the Chinese in the visual and print media would paint a vastly different picture.

Throughout the 1870s anti-Chinese illustrations proliferated in magazines such as San Francisco's *The Wasp,* a satirical current events magazine that frequently published images of Chinese immigrants portrayed with grotesque and exaggerated racialized characteristics. The images of Chinese immigrants published in the *Wasp,* drew from a visual repertoire that evoked images of the Chinese in menacing racial "hordes" or "swarms" of inhuman invaders. Illustration such as "And Still They Come," published in the magazine's December 1880 edition depicted a scene portraying the Canadian and Mexican borders inundated with thousands of faceless Chinese migrants pouring out of two clipper ships, as well crowded in rowboats, hot air balloons, and other vessels unable to contain their multitudes (Fig. 4.1). Clutched in the hand of an eagle-headed Uncle Sam, who is shown crouching in the image's focal point, is a sheet of paper printed with the words "The New Chinese Treaty," an allusion to the introduction of new immigration policies such as the Angell Treaty of 1880, which gave the U.S. new power to regulate immigration from China. Uncle Sam guards a small wooden door that signifies the U.S.

[16] Zesch, "Chinese Los Angeles in 1870-1871," 116.

[17] Joshua S. Yang, "The Anti-Chinese Cubic Air Ordinance," *American Journal of Public Health* 99, no. 3 (2009), 440. Print.

borders, overwhelmed by the Chinese onslaught. *The Wasp's* "And Still They Come," tapped into the deep anxieties the Anglo majority felt about Chinese immigration (both legal and undocumented), as well as the perceived ineffectiveness of immigration policy to curtail their arrivals.

Within California's nineteenth century Chinatowns, federal laws like the Page Act of 1875, attempted to discourage further immigration from Asian countries through the outright prohibition of the emigration of unmarried women from "China, Japan, or any Oriental country," to the United States. [18] The application of the Page Act as immigration policy exacerbated the gender imbalances present in state's early Chinatowns, which were largely composed of male migrants who made up the neighborhood's "bachelor" society. By nineteenth century Anglo standards, Chinatown's predominantly male population of laborers residing in the neighborhood's rooming houses and communal living arrangements were portrayed by white law makers and politicians as deviant, largely because these communities forged social relations that did not resemble heteronormative reproductive family structures. Despite the relatively small populations of Chinese women residing in Chinatowns, the language of the Page Act declared these women as "lewd and immoral," claiming their immigration into the country was intended solely to work as prostitutes and concubines.[19] Once passed as law, the Page Act targeted unmarried Chinese women in the United States who would become vulnerable to police harassment, deportation, or barred from entry into the country. By overtly excluding the emigration of Chinese women into the country, the Page Act therefore functioned as a form of

[18] United States Congress, "1875 Page Act," *Asian American Digital History Archive*, https://aadha.binghamton.edu/items/show/212.

[19] Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*, 79-85.

biopower for the purposes of population control, curtailing the arrival of Chinese women who could increase state's Chinese American population. While this law was imposed under the auspices of protecting the moral sanctity of the nation state through the exclusion of Asian immigrants, the rationale of this law scapegoated immigrants as a threat.[20]

In the years preceding the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, depictions such as "And Still They Come," coupled with the myriad of others *The Wasp* published, would feature inflammatory slogans and racialized imagery evoking "The Chinese Must Go," a sentiment that epitomized the growing economic anxieties and increasing racial animosity against the Chinese. From the 1870s until the turn of the century, anti-Chinese or "anti-coolie" clubs formed in cities across California, from San Francisco to San Bernardino, which organized themselves to persecute local Chinese populations and stoke nativist sympathies popularized by the Workingman's Party, the fiercely anti-Chinese labor group led by Dennis Kearny. The anti-Chinese rhetoric that informed the creation of local and federal laws attempting to end Chinese immigration would directly inform the creation of anti-coolie clubs that became a staging ground for mob violence and economic exclusion that played out within local communities and social networks. Together these institutional and relational interventions are evidence of the way laws created to legally restrict Chinese immigration also generated the knowledge that further naturalized the state's exercise of exclusionary disciplinary power.[21]

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[20] Catherine Lee, "Where The Danger Lies": Race, Gender, and Chinese and Japanese Exclusion in the United States, 1870-1924." Sociological Forum, Vol. 25, No. 2, (June 2010), 249.

[21] Abdullah and Khandaroo, "The Governmentality and Accountability of UK National Museums and Art Galleries," 267.

In Los Angeles, the growing anti-Chinese sentiment would come to a dramatic head in 1871, in perhaps the most violent recorded episode in Old Chinatown's history. Named the "Chinese Massacre," by newspapers of the time, accounts reported an armed conflict sparked by the accidental killing of two white men who were caught in the crossfire of a shootout that erupted between two Chinese men and purported members of rival tongs.[22] In response to the accidental killing of two white men, reports suggest that over 500 Anglo and some Mexicans from other sections of the city mobbed Old Chinatown on the night of October 24, 1871 to seek revenge for their deaths. The vigilante violence that erupted in the small neighborhood would result in the lynching of an estimated nineteen to twenty Chinese men and boys, in addition to the looting and ransacking of homes and businesses in the neighborhood.[23] Los Angeles' "Chinese Massacre" would become national news, receiving coverage in the *New York Times,* which published a lurid account of the conflict of the alleged tongs, and the lynch party that followed.[24] Discursively speaking, the reporting of the "Chinese Massacre" not only exacerbated the rising tide of anti-Chinese sentiments growing in Los Angeles, the trial coverage that followed communicated to readers that they could attack the Chinese with impunity because few

[22] Unlike benevolent organizations which provided a range of services for new migrants that included the arrangement of passage to the U.S. as well as provided legal services, translation among other services, tongs have been described as social networks with distinct ties to illicit underworld economies which included smuggling and prostitution.

[23] In 1871, the *New York Times* reported news of the Chinese Massacre. The article describing the events of this massacre includes extensive description of *Calle de Los Negros* in Old Chinatown, "Negro-alley is a small street connecting with the very business portion of the city. It consists of low, whitewashed, one storied, old-fashioned, windowless adobe buildings, and bears a striking contrast with its neighbor, Los Angeles Street, with its fine two-storied brick warehouses. The denizens are almost cosmopolitan, and consist of the dregs of society, among whom are some of the greatest desperadoes on the Pacific coast. Murderers, horse thieves, highwaymen, burglars, etc. (sic) from all parts of Southern California and Arizona, make this their rendezvous. It is in this place, also, that the Chinese congregate--their brothels monopolizing about two-thirds an entire block." Author Unknown, "THE LOS ANGELES MASSACRE; Particulars of the Wholesale Lynching of Chinamen An Eyewitness' Account," *The New York Times,* Nov. 10, 1871. 8. https://www.nytimes.com/1871/11/10/archives/the-los-angeles-massacre-particulars-of-the-wholesale-lynching-of.html

[24] Ibid., 8.

of the rioters faced prosecution.[25] It also solidified Old Chinatown's association with danger and filth, a reputation that outlasted Old Chinatown's destruction in the 1930s. Passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, marked another attempt by federal government to formally prohibit the continued arrival of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. As the text of the immigration act stipulated, "Whereas in the opinion of the Government of the United States the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof…"[26] The law alleged that the addition of new Chinese immigrants, to the pool of laborers already residing in the U.S., should be prohibited because of their unassimilable racial presence would cause the social erosion and endangerment of the American polity, an assumption that reinforced yellow peril stereotypes that followed the Chinese since their earliest arrival in the 1850s.

In Los Angeles, the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act continued to agitate labor organizations as the Los Angeles Trades Council blamed the Chinese for taking the jobs of whites; the council believed this threat could only be abated by the outright removal of the city's Chinese population.[27] Adding to the growing ensemble of laws designed to target the Chinese, local news outlets such as the *Times* continued to publish articles like 1888's, "'Stinks' What Any Smelling Committee Can Find in the City," which characterized Old Chinatown and the neighboring Mexican enclave Sonoratown, with disease, criminality, and violence. Together both the laws, and the lurid media depictions they stimulated, endorsed narratives intended to

[25] Zesch, "Chinese Los Angeles in 1870-1871," 143.

[26] Chinese Exclusion Act 1882, Federal Law, 1882.

[27] Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 5.

dehumanize the Chinese as unassimilable outsiders. As the *Times' "*Stinks*"* proclaimed, Old Chinatown and Sonoratown possessed a stench so severe, hosting conditions so vile and inhumane as to even revolt a brutish, "Digger Indian," equating both neighborhoods with racialized filth to describe the perceived physical debasement of these communities.[28] The article strove for sensory verisimilitude explaining that,

> The backyards and blind alleys are rotten with open cesspools and garbage that would not be tolerated by even a Texas hog. Dead animals and decaying vegetables send up disease-breeding fumes from a hundred different points; and yet the officers go on their even way, and even seem to think the health of Los Angles is of no account. But Chinatown and even Sonoratown have always been in that condition, and to propose the thorough cleansing that would be taken as a gigantic joke. (Stinks, August 3, 1888).

Times articles such as "Stinks" confirmed the city's ongoing characterization of Old Chinatown as unhealthy, unsafe, and out of step with the city's growing modernization, and therefore deserving destruction. The production of knowledge created about Old Chinatown by the *Times* and the city would reinforce each other to effectively circumscribe the neighborhood as a spatial enclosure so far outside of the city's norms of civilization only strict spatial containment and severe policing could control.

Throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century, Old Chinatown maintained a lingering reputation as a racialized and outlaw space, popular knowledge that would become formally affixed to it through its naming on city maps. While the designation of the Old Chinatown neighborhood was inconsistently recorded on city maps until the 1920s, it consistently retained variations of its Spanish street name, "Calle de los Negros" or "Street of the

[28] Opinion, "Stinks: What Any Smelling Committee Can Find in the City." *Los Angeles Times*, 3, August, 1888. P.2 The author provides a comparison which equates the Chinese and Mexican districts to a derogatory term used for Native Americans, evoking a racial hierarchy where ethnic and racial groups are on the one hand viewed as non-white others, but similarly seen in relative difference to one another.

Dark-Skinned Ones," in the city's official representations of it. Historian Cesar Lopez suggests that under Mexican rule, Calle de Los Negros, derived its name from the dark-skinned mestizo, Afro-Mexicans and Indigenous laborers who had once resided there. Its designation as a racial enclosure recalled the Spanish colonial casta system of racial classification, that found diverse applications throughout all aspects of life in colonial New Spain.[29] Whatever its colonial rationale, the city-maintained Calle de Los Negros on its official maps until the 1920s by translating its Spanish to "Negro Alley" and in some instances labelling it on city maps with the overtly racialized moniker, "Nigger Alley" (Fig. 4.2). The street's naming of Calle de Los Negros revealed the racial formation underpinning Los Angeles, wherein the Chinese would eventually occupy a racial positionality that was both in relationship to Mexicans, African-Americans, and Indians; at the same time, they would occupy their own category which immigration laws and de facto methods of police surveillance upheld withing Old Chinatown's real and symbolic territorial enclosures.[30]

Public health officials in California anticipated, and then reinforced anti-Chinese immigration laws with marginalizing policies couched in scientific discourse. The January of 1879, election of Dr. Walter Lindley as the first public health officer of Los Angeles led to the formation of one of Southern California's first public health departments charged with disciplinary authority over the general population, which included hospitals, orphanages and

[29] The casta in New Spain system used racial classifications that attempted to quantify the racial background of colonial subjects that associated phenotypical characteristics with moral character and social standing. More specifically racial characteristics were associated with the concept of calidad or quality, that possessed connotations of class mobility, intelligence, character, and potential for civility. Therefore, the designation of the Calle de Los Negros, could have been descriptive of multiple characteristics that were perhaps also embedded in the racial-physical description of a group.

[30] Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*, 18.

prisons.[31] Lindley, who had maintained mayoral ambitions, joined the city's influential officials, boosters, and real estate investors who justified the destruction of Old Chinatown as a disease control measure that also happened to facilitate the Plaza's redevelopment. Echoing *Times's* publisher General Gray Otis' proclamation of Los Angeles as the "White Spot of America," Lindley contrasted Old Chinatown as "that rotten spot (that pollutes) the air we breathe and poisons the water we drink,"[32] a characterization that paralleled local media representations of the city's Mexican population. For Lindley, the governmental procedures that designated Old Chinatown as a vector of disease, would later help him introduce new public health ordinances to physically quarantine Old Chinatown in a terrifying enclosure that all but guaranteed the neighborhood's outright destruction.[33] New laws such as a the "Cubic Air Ordinance," which required a 500 foot clearance for each individual residing in a tenement, an impossibility for Chinese laborers crammed into overcrowded tenements and rooming houses, represented one of the department's most severe disciplinary technologies.[34] Lindley's public health initiatives in Old Chinatown, which reflected an amalgamation of racial ideologies that equated health and cleanliness with racial purity, directly informed how racial boundaries were both experienced and enforced through the representation and segregation of ethnic neighborhoods.[35] In doing so,

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[31] Ibid., 26.

[32] Ibid., 27.

[33] Isabella S.L. Quintana, "Making Do, Making Home: Borders and the Worlds of Chinatown and Sonoratown in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles," *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 1 (2015), 48. Quintana describes the historic Plaza area downtown as an urban borderland, where these foreign districts became defacto proxies for nation states, when one entered these spaces, she contends, you left the U.S. in a real and symbolic way.

[34] Los Angeles' "Cubic Air Ordinance," borrowed from a similar law introduced in San Francisco in 1870, which attempted to fine tenement residents who were required to live in cramped overcrowded spaces.

[35] Historians of Los Angeles such as Natalia Molina and William Deverall, have both traced the emergence the intersection of the institutionalization of public health and white supremacist racial ideologies in Los Angeles, that

public health became a powerful and precise tool of biopower used to delineate the spatial enclosure delimiting Old Chinatown as a virtually walled territory outside of exclusion.

As the turn of the twentieth century approached, the shifting fortunes of Chinese immigrants encouraged regional migration out of northern California to the southern and central regions of the state. The end of the gold rush was accelerated in part by changes in mining technology that introduced new methods of capital-intensive mechanized extraction exploited by large-scale commercial mining outfits capable of investing in this new material infrastructure. This shift in mining production would quickly outpace the comparatively modest efforts of independent Chinese miners who continued to work small land claims using older labor-intensive mining techniques. From the 1860s through the 1880s, Chinese laborers continued to migrate across California to find work in railroad construction, tenant farming, and manufacture, labor sectors which capitalized on a workforce of Chinese laborers who often worked for lower wages than their white counterparts. In Los Angeles, many Chinese immigrants found new opportunities in the city working as cooks, domestic servants, and laundry workers. [36] Amidst these changes in California's immigrant labor pool, nativist labor groups such as the Workingman's Party continued to disparage Chinese workers as unskilled "coolie labor," inciting fears of economic competition among white and Chinese workers.

Times reporting too stoked the public's anti-Chinese anxieties over the influx of emigrating Chinese merchants and gold field laborers with narratives of suspicion and fear. As

would later inform a range of policy implications from redlining ordinances, to the creation of housing covenants, and sundown laws.

[36] Eric Fong and William T. Markham, "Anti-Chinese Politics in California in the 1870s: An Inter- County Analysis," *Sociological Perspectives*, 45(2) (Summer, 2002), 189.

late as 1906 the *Times* featured an editorial, "Chink Gold Coming Here: Many Mandarins May Make This Place Home," that drew from the repertoire of mid-nineteenth century yellow peril tropes that evoked images of invasion, to elicit fear and suspicion in the newspaper's white readership. The editorial warned readers of a wave of Chinese migration to Los Angeles that would overwhelm Old Chinatown's capacity and purporting, "Twelve hundred Chinese have come to this city since the earthquake and fire in San Francisco, as many more are on their way, and probably during the new few weeks this city will have to entertain nearly 5,000 who are refugees from the desolated city."[37] The article's alliterative turns of phrase such as "dingey dungeon," and "coolie class," that evoked the sensationalist and racialized reporting the *Times* revived in a narrative of threatening Asiatic hordes popular in the 1870s.

While the *Times* "Chink Gold" elicited a fear of invasion, pieces such as Guy Finney's "Wanted: New Chinatown Site" published in 1920, decried the filthy conditions of the Chinese enclave with the voyeuristic thrills the reporter experienced upon visiting the neighborhood. In Finney's characterization, Old Chinatown, possessed the right ambiance perfect for the "slumming parties," led by pleasure seekers in pursuit of a "brand of tabasco excitement that strongly appeals to the municipality's boisterous spirits and provides the color and movements which students of folly and 'moonbeam' philosophers call 'night life.'"[38] Using the word "tabasco" as a metonym for the kinds of thrilling and sensual experiences available in Old Chinatown, Finney's portrayal promised ribald entertainment for the savvy, adventurous visitor. Historian Mark Wild posited that Old Chinatown occupied a liminal space in the Plaza, an

[37] Times Staff, "Chink Gold Coming Here: Many Mandarins May Make This City Home." *Los Angeles Times,* May 1, 1906. Ill.

[38] Guy Finney, 'Wanted New Chinatown Site." *The Los Angeles Times,* February 22, 1920, II1.

extreme form of symbolic enclosure where Angelenos could take part in behavior unsanctioned by church mores and city laws yet permissible within its boundaries. Through their material and symbolic differences from the city's planned neighborhoods outside of the Plaza, historian Isabella S.L. Quintana similarly posits that Old Chinatown and the neighboring Mexican enclave Sonoratown shared a similar role in the city's ethnic and racial borderlands: Both signified the symbolic terminus of the American nation state, and thus where the language and cultural practices of the community existed in contradistinction to white America. The policing and spatial enforcement of Old Chinatown's physical and cultural boundaries of would foreshadow the neighborhood's eventual implosion, required to reterritorialize downtown's burgeoning central business district in new forms of enclosure.[39]

Implosion: Old Chinatown's Destruction and Christine Sterling's Reemergence

At the turn of the twentieth century, Old Chinatown would continue to gradually undergo a period of economic decline, accelerated by the introduction of new zoning laws imposed to prohibit the proximity of fruit vendors and laundry businesses to residential areas. Although all fruit vendors and laundry business in the city were under the legal jurisdiction of the newly created zoning laws, the selective application of the law targeted the Chinese who often lived in cramped quarters in close proximity to their places of business. [40] In addition to city-wide zoning laws, state laws such as the Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited Asian immigrants from

[39] Isabela S.L. Quintana,. "Making Do, Making Home: Borders and the Worlds of Chinatown and Sonoratown in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles." *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 1 (January 2015), 60. https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144214537200.

[40] Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?,* 31.

buying land or long-term lease of residential or agricultural property, constituted a ferocious intervention aimed at denying Asian immigrants the ability to settle or accumulate capital.[41] By the 1920s, the city of Los Angeles, working in tandem with the federal government, would begin intervening with more aggressive injunctions to reclaim Old Chinatown for the construction of Union Station. As the neighborhood constricted, rumors of a bubonic plague outbreak in 1924 would finally drive the city to physically quarantine Old Chinatown in a strict cordon sanitaire, a spatial quarantine which prohibited non-residents ingress or egress from the neighborhood.[42] For the decades that followed, *Times* reporting maintained support for the neighborhood's outright destruction, publishing articles which proclaimed, "Last Vestiges of City's Old Chinatown to Go," in 1948, and "Old Chinatown Prepares to Die," in 1949. Again, these newspaper title evoked such nineteenth century anti-Chinese slogans as, "The Chinese Must Go," while normalizing the actual and imagined images of lynched Chinese the press then circulated.

Coinciding with Old Chinatown's destruction, two 1930s-era real estate development projects attempted to fill the economic and cultural role the neighborhood had once performed for the city's visitors and residents. The New Chinatown Project, the first of these developments, was located along North Broadway Street, less than a mile away from Old Chinatown. It occupied an area that would later survive as the city's present-day Chinatown. Helmed by Peter Soo Hoo, notably the first Chinese American civil engineer employed by the city's Department of Water and Power, New Chinatown received its primary financial support from members of Los Angeles' Chinese American community. Soo Hoo's work in municipal management gave

[41] California (State), Legislature, "California Alien Land Law," May 3, 1913. Although designed to primarily impact Japanese immigrants, this law also impacted Chinese immigrants residing in the state.

[42] Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?,* 28.

him keen knowledge of the governmentalities the city deployed against his community. Soo Hoo used those insights to form the Chinese American Association, an organization which advocated for the construction of a new complex of commercial and residential buildings to promote cultural preservation and encourage economic self-determination within the neighborhood.[43] As community leader and CAM board member Munson Qwok explained, for Soo Hoo New Chinatown embodied modernity and cleanliness, connotating the antithesis of Old Chinatown's associations with filth and danger.[44]

However, simultaneous with the development of the New Chinatown Project, Olvera Street's founder Christine Sterling, drove a competing development called China City, built several blocks from the Plaza district along Ord and Alpine Streets. Claiming that that China City was created under the auspices of cultural preservation for the city's Chinese community, Sterling argued in a 1937 *Los Angeles Times* article that, "The new China City will give these Chinese new opportunities to preserve their racial and cultural integrity by bringing them together in one district."[45] Despite Sterling's claims of cultural preservation, China City capitalized on Old Chinatown's destruction by creating a sanitized and tourist friendly version of the neighborhood. China City promised its visitors a pastiche of orientalist fantasy which included costumed performers, rickshaw rides, cultural pageants, all presented against a backdrop constructed from fragments of discarded movie sets used in Paramount Picture's 1938

[43] Annie Luong, "Introduction to New Chinatown," *Chinatown Remembered Project*, Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. 2008. https://lachinatown.chssc.org/neighborhoods/introduction-to-new-chinatown/

[44] Departures, "Munson A. Kwok: Community Leader and Activist," *KCET*, 17 Feb. 2016, www.kcet.org/shows/departures/munson-a-kwok-community-leader-and-activist.

[45] Times Staff. "Chinatown to Rise Again." *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 1937.

film, *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife,* Metro Goldwyn Mayer's 1937 film, *The Good Earth,* in addition to a model of the Great Wall of China donated by director Cecil B. DeMille.[46] Much like Sterling's penchant for Chinese ethnic performance that was on view at China City, Metro Goldwyn Mayer's production of *The Good Earth,* an adaptation of Pearl S. Buck's novel, was also shot entirely in Southern California, and cast Euro-American actors Paul Muni and Luise Rainer in the leading roles of Chinese farmer Wang Lung and his wife O-Lan. Both actors affected accented speech, donned prosthetic make up, and wore wigs in a grotesque approximation of East Asian characteristics.

Despite the significant differences in function for Los Angeles' Chinese American community who lived and worked in New Chinatown and China City, these two competing spaces used architecture, housing, and commercial spaces to appeal to different publics. Much like Sterling's vision for Olvera Street, China City was also conceived of as an ethnic theme park for an audience of primarily non-Chinese visitors. The complex featured dining, shopping, as well as costumed Chinese American vendors, musicians, rickshaw rides, and cultural parades that drew from the repertoire of ethnic display that emphasized the popular notions of Chinese exoticism (Fig.4.3). New Chinatown, by contrast, fostered the formation of Chinese American cultural organizations and businesses its founder Soo Hoo explained would, "erase once and for all the erroneous idea that a Chinatown is necessarily a part of the underworld."[47] After the debut of both new Chinatown projects, the *Times* continued to feature articles that promoted China

[46] Once China City opened to the public in 1938, Sterling required the site's Chinese American vendors to wear traditional Chinese folkloric costumes while interacting with customers. Historian William Estrada notes in *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space,* on some occasions Sterling would employ the same costumed vendors who worked at Olvera Street to work at China City as well.

[47] Quoted in Edwin R. Bingham, "The Saga of the Los Angeles Chinese," (master's thesis, Occidental College, 1942), 155.

City's authenticity and sensationalized the rivalry between New Chinatown and China City.[48] By 1948, China City closed after a series of fires with mysterious origins finally destroyed the development, leaving New Chinatown as downtown's remaining Chinese enclave.

Explosion: Chinatown's Rebirth in the Twentieth Century

For the reasons described above, Old Chinatown's formation and dissolution, and CAM's later creation on the former site of this enclave represented a significant effort to recuperate some of the city's oldest surviving Chinese American cultural memory spaces. While CAM would debut at least a decade before LAPCA, both museums along the Plaza have served as artifacts of a period of downtown's protracted redevelopment that began in the late 1970s catalyzed by the CRA's new focus on the redevelopment of the city's Central Business District (CBD). The circumstances of CAM's formation in the early 1980s further circumscribed by the Los Angeles City Council's adoption of the Central Business District Plan in 1975, which introduced an assemblage of governmentalities used to secure private investment and increase property value around downtown through large-scale economic and infrastructural redevelopment projects designed to rearticulate the boundaries and forms of property power occurring within these jurisdictional enclosures.[49] As JANM's case study has attempted to demonstrate, the practice of anchoring urban redevelopment with the creation of signature cultural landmarks would effectively reshape Little Tokyo by the early 1980s, and so helped formalize the recipe of

[48] Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza*, 221.

[49] The Central Business District was defined by the CRA to include the following regions: Central City East, Financial Core, Historic Core, South Park.

governmentalities that would reframe the arts and cultural sector as an economic generator leveraging the social and cultural capital of the city's multiculturalism.

Due in part to their shared location adjacent to El Pueblo, both CAM and LAPCA were built inside the spatial jurisdiction of the Central Business District, a kind of meta-enclosure the CRA established for the creation of several cultural institutions, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) on Bunker Hill and later the MOCA's Geffen Contemporary in Little Tokyo. Inclusion within the enclosure of the city's CBD project area would provide the benefit of earmarking additional funds for the retention of existing manufacture-based industries as well as the creation of programs designed to cultivate new business advancing the city's cultural sectors burgeoning in downtown.[50] Under the CRA's project area designation, the Central Business District would become the umbrella enclosure that would contain smaller clusters of downtown's cultural and economic nodes that included Little Tokyo, Pershing Square, Bunker Hill, the Alameda Corridor, Chinatown, and the Wholesale district. Although El Pueblo was not designated as a standalone cultural or economic node, the park's location in the intersection of the Alameda Corridor and Chinatown strategically placed it within the project area's enclosure. Inclusion within the boundaries of the CRA's Central Business District Plan also identified the properties within this target area as the recipient of job creation programs and the site of new construction projects serving the CRA's dual interventions of blight removal and the introduction of a pro-art multicultural redevelopment agenda. In neighboring Bunker Hill, the CRA and the city's joint efforts to renew this section of downtown in the 1970s and 1980s under the Central Business District Plan would introduce the creation of new multimillion dollar arts

[50] Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, "Central City North Community Plan 2000."

and cultural infrastructure that included the Museum of Contemporary Art, California Plaza, and the project area's multi-million-dollar crowning jewel, The Music Center.[51]

Adding to the Central Business District Plan, other city agencies would later introduce new initiatives complementing the CRA's work downtown. One of these targeted efforts included the Downtown Strategic Plan, approved by the Los Angeles City Council in 1994, which set out to build on downtown's financial and cultural assets, and the Central City Community Plan introduced in 2003, which framed downtown Los Angeles' redevelopment as a continuation of the "symbolic, civic, financial, governmental heart of Los Angeles, it is of primary importance and is the subject of various marketing, revitalization, and enhancement policies and strategies."[52] This network of economic and cultural policy interventions attempted to accelerated downtown's transformation from an administrative center of Fordist manufacture, into a twenty-first century "creative city," epitomizing what urbanist Allen J. Scott has defined by modes of post-Fordist, technology intensive production, thriving cultural industries, and the expansion of the specialized labor force or "human capital" supporting these industries. In the creative city, Scott contends, "production, work, leisure, the arts and the physical milieu exist in varying degrees of mutual harmony."[53] To reinvent downtown Los Angeles encapsulated by Scott's "cognitive-cultural capitalism," the primary thrust of downtown's redevelopment rests in policies that encouraged widespread adaptive reuse of historic buildings for the purposes of

[51] William Fulton, *The Reluctant Metropolis: The Politics of Urban Growth in Los Angeles* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 239.

[52] City of Los Angeles, *Los Angeles Central City Community Plan: A Part of the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Dept. of City Planning, 1991), NP. Continually updated resource.

[53] Allen J. Scott, 2014. "Beyond the Creative City: Cognitive-Cultural Capitalism and the New Urbanism." *Regional Studies Cambridge and New York* 48, no. 4 (2014), 569. doi: 10.1080/00343404.2014.891010.

entertainment, the creation of museums, galleries, live/work spaces, and luxury housing complexes. By the turn of the twenty-first century, Los Angeles' city planners believed these redevelopment efforts would ameliorate the twenty years of disinvestment and economic decline in and around downtown Los Angeles.

Returning to Lefevbre's metaphor of planetary implosion and explosion, Old Chinatown's implosion or decline would become accelerated by the pressures of urban redevelopment and market forces driving the neighborhood's physical destruction and community displacement. By the 1970s, when downtown's Chinatown would begin the recursive process of implosion and explosion again, the emergence of new Chinese immigrant enclaves in the San Gabriel Valley and east of downtown serves as a reminder of the creative destructive cycles remaking the city's cultural and economic topography.[54] Though Chinatown grew throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the neighborhood underwent a period of economic decline and disinvestment beginning in the 1970s fueled by the formation of new suburban Chinatowns or ethnoburbs, in the San Gabriel Valley, as well as immigration-related generational and ethnic shifts within the community.[55] Responding to the neighborhood's economic decline, the Los Angeles City Council in 1980 adopted the Chinatown Redevelopment Project, using government grants and tax increment financing to support large scale development and infrastructure projects (Fig.4.4).[56]

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[54] Wei Li, *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in Urban America* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 35.

[55] Diane Seo, "Troubled Times in Chinatown Once a thriving place to dine, browse and socialize, Chinatown is fighting for its economic life," *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1992, 7A.

[56] Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, "Chinatown Redevelopment Plan," 1980.

In 1992, the city renewed the Chinatown Redevelopment Project to support the construction of businesses and housing in the neighborhood. Eight years later, Chinatown's local business owners voted to create the Chinatown Business Improvement District (BID), reflecting a continued effort to make the neighborhood more attractive for tourism through the promotion of cultural events, public safety officers, and incentives for business owners and developers. The formation of Chinatown's BID illustrated the pressure ethnic enclaves like Chinatown faced in response to the broader city-wide turn toward governmentalities benefitting the growing creative economy through reinvestment in tourism, entertainment, and the arts identified in the city's Central City Community Plan.[57] Downtown Los Angeles' ongoing economic recentering has occurred at a moment when the emergence of post-Fordist "cognitive-cultural capitalism," has continued to shift the city's downtown productive spaces away from industry and light manufacturing to knowledge and culture-based economies. While Chinatown previously supported a service economy, by the 1980s the globalization of garment work, for example, had reduced that form of manufacturing centered in Chinatown to a mere vestige. Urban ethnic enclaves like Chinatown have therefore struggled to maintain a sense of community cohesion amidst downtown's cultural and economic transformation, a process that has also resulted in the displacement of many elderly and low-income residents who have found the live/work developments unaffordable.[58] While many aspects of downtown's development have perpetuated ongoing cycles of downtown's creative destruction, these waves of real estate investment have indeed transformed the downtown area into the region's multicultural hub. And Chinatown, one

[57] Jan Lin and Eugene Moy, "The Removal and Renewal of Los Angeles Chinatown From the Exclusion Era to the Global Era." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, 2006.

[58] Kartik Naram, "No Place Like Home: Racial Capitalism, Gentrification, and the Identity of Chinatown," *Asian American Policy Review* 27 (2017), 1.

of downtown's most prominent ethnic enclaves, has likewise undergone a period of bohemianization and gentrification by the early 2000s, ignited by the creation of contemporary art galleries and bars opening in the neighborhood serving the denizens of the city's cognitive-cultural sector.[59]

Street Art, Gentrification, and Neoliberalism: CAM's "L.A. Heat"

It is worth restating here that the El Pueblo historical park's organizational restructuring into an independent municipal agency in 1972 also set the stage for CAM's subsequent formation. After the decades of mismanagement and organizational strife that plagued El Pueblo since its inception, the agency's reorganization would help strengthen its leadership and control over the park's discursive content, including the creation of new museums in El Pueblo. Following the neighborhood's destruction in the late 1930s, Old Chinatown would not return to the popular consciousness until 1987, when LA Metro Rail construction workers unearthed a cache of long-buried artifacts from Old Chinatown.[60] Old Chinatown's material rediscovery by Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority workers helped drive Chinese American activists, such as CAM's founders to reclaim this long-forgotten Chinese cultural space at a moment when the city's origins in El Pueblo became economically beneficial to city

[59] Monica Corcoran. "Boite; In Chinatown, Bohemia," *New York Times,* July 27, 2003.

[60] In the 1970s and 1980s the archeology of overseas Chinese communities in California was a growing field among archeologist specializing in urban archeology. Barbara Voss contends this interest in recuperating the material culture of urban ethnic enclaves was also impacted by the growing interest in multicultural acculturation that emerged at this time. Barbara Voss, "The Archaeology of Overseas Chinese Communities," *World Archaeology* 37, no. 3 (2005), 424–439.

leaders in the years leading to the 1984 Olympic Games.[61] CAM's future formation would benefit from the comprehensive reevaluation of El Pueblo's interpretive plan and the park's preservation efforts undertaken by Jean Bruce Poole, El Pueblo's senior curator.[62] Poole's work to review the accuracy and depth of El Pueblo's historical narratives also coincided with the city's bicentennial celebration in 1981, which commemorated the city's founding in the Plaza in 1781 and brought new attention to El Pueblo.[63] By the mid-1980s, El Pueblo staffer Suellen Cheng would collaborate with Poole on the project. Cheng would play an important role bridging Chinese American community interests into the project to recover the history of Chinese Americans in the Plaza against the city's neglect, Cheng would eventually serve as CAM's founding director.[64]

By October of 1984, CAM's board member Eugene Moy recalled that Poole proposed the idea of creating a Chinese American Museum in El Pueblo to members of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC).[65] Members of the CHSSC joined El Pueblo leadership to form a committee exploring the museum's viability in El Pueblo. After four years of planning and organizing, the Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) incorporated in 1988, becoming the 501c3 nonprofit organization overseeing the museum's fiscal management and organizational operation. Through FCAM, the museum could gain access to government grants as well as solicit private donations needed to financially sustain the new institution. In its first

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[61] Ruth Ryon, "Will El Pueblo Be Restored?: Bicentennial, Olympics Add Impetus," *Los Angeles Times,* November 25, 1979. G2.

[62] Eugene Moy, Chinese American Museum History, email to author, March 23, 2019.

[63] Ryon, "Will El Pueblo Be Restored?," G2.

[64] Occidental College, Chinese American Museum of Los Angeles, and Chinese Historical Society of Southern California. *The Chinatown Oral History project, Spring 2006*. (Los Angeles: Occidental College), 36.

[65] Chinese American Museum, "Fact Sheet," The Museum, last modified 2003, http://camla.org/fact-sheet/.

years FCAM would generate over $570,000 in grants and fundraising, which included $170,000 from the El Pueblo Commission, $82,000 in CHSSC's fundraising efforts, and $61,000 in a State Preservation Grant allocated for the preservation of 2,500 square feet of gallery space in the historic Garnier Building. A decade later, the city Recreation and Parks Commission allocated $500,000 in government funding to cover the museum's seismic stabilization and accessibility.[66]

The close relationship CAM's founders struck with El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument and CHSSC reflected the dual cultivation of municipal authority and community support which helped bring CAM into fruition. Unlike JANM, CAM's creation was not the direct result of dedicated public policy. Instead, CAM's institutional origins were in part the byproduct of the CRA's thirty-year project to reimagine downtown as the city's heart of cultural and economic institutional infrastructure. By 2000 the CRA would create a new project area map to rearticulate Chinatown's spatial enclosure (Fig.4.5). Since the museum's debut in 2003, CAM has maintained an archival collection that includes more than 4,500 artifacts and 3,000 photographs acquired through community donation, in addition to the archeological objects excavated from the original site of Old Chinatown. CAM has been in operation for twenty-years; over this tenure the museum has presented an array of exhibitions and public programs dedicated to examining complexity of Chinese American history and experience in Los Angeles. Over the course of its twenty-year history, the museum has presented exhibitions examining the history of Los Angeles' early Chinese American community, Chinese American World War II Veterans, and exhibitions of community artifacts, along with monographic exhibitions featuring the works of long-overlooked Chinese American artists Tyrus Wong, and John Kwok.

[66] Ibid, 1.

In 2014, CAM presented the exhibition, "L.A. Heat: Taste Changing Condiments," a group exhibition of works created by thirty Los Angeles-based contemporary artists, designers, and illustrators. This exhibition presented a distinct stylistic departure from the historically focused and monographic exhibitions examined in CAM's previous exhibitions, in that "L.A. Heat" focused on the work of young emerging artists, many of whom drew on the aesthetic lexicon of graffiti and street art (Fig.4.6). Featuring works created by primarily Latinx and Asian American artists, "L.A. Heat's" premise examined how the ubiquitous ethnic food staples characterized by the hot sauces Tapatio and Sriracha, could serve as metaphors of Los Angeles' increasing sociocultural plurality and ethnic hybridity.[67] As "L.A. Heat's" catalog text elaborated, the significance of Tapatio and Sriracha in Los Angeles, have become indicative of the growing economic potential that ethnic cultural foodways have made on American culinary tastes. Recalling, Guy Finney's metonymic description of Old Chinatown's "tabasco" pursuits in the 1920s, "L.A. Heat's" focus drew a correlation with Chinatown's role as the city's borderlands, or cultural contact zone, that have proliferated in Chinatown's ethnic food tourism and curio shops for over a century.

The content and presentation format of "L.A. Heat" also appeared to differ significantly from CAM's permanent collection "Journeys," "Origins: The Birth and Rise of Chinese American Communities in Los Angles," and "Sun Wing Wo General Store and Herb Shop," which consist of interpretive historical exhibits focused on the cultural history of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles, on view there since 2003. Like the other historic sites in El Pueblo that include the Sepulveda House, CAM's permanent exhibitions are also designed by IQ Magic,

[67] Elizabeth Fenner and Kimberly Zarate, eds., *L.A. Heat: Taste Changing Condiments* (Los Angeles: Chinese American Museum, 2014), 3.

the firm responsible for the LAPCA's permanent collection, "L.A. Starts Here." Created to provide historically focused interpretive content, CAM's permanent collections cover more than a century of early Chinese American life in Los Angeles through the display of didactic signage, tactile displays, and a mixture of artifacts and facsimiles of antique Chinese medicine jars, cannisters of tea, and tinctures presented in the museum's "Sun Wing Wo General Store and Herb Shop," display.

By contrast, "L.A. Heat's" presentation in CAM's second floor galleries was more closely akin to the stark white cube, an exhibition practice institutionalized by mainstream art museums, and commercial art galleries intended to remove visual distraction from the works on view. Rather than reconstruct a diorama or period room that contextualized the material cultural artifacts of CAM's collection, the white cube eliminates extraneous cultural referents beyond the works of art on view.

Works featured in "L.A. Heat" included video artist Yoshi Sakai's 2014-piece, *Hot Side Story,* which proposed an intertextual engagement with CAM's physical site in Old Chinatown and the condiments featured in the exhibition (Fig. 4.7). In *Hot Side Story*, Sakai addressed the neighborhood's history as the locus of both conflict and cultural tourism through short vignettes consisting of choreographed dance scenes referencing the musical *West Side Story,* a musical Sakai noted that she had selected for its stylized choreography and score evoking the conflict erupting between warring street gangs.[68] Sakai, who portrayed each of the central characters in the piece, dressed in costumes personifying Tapatio, Sriracha, ketchup and mustard. Using backdrops of stock photographs that included the interior of a diner, a hot dog stand, the interior

[68] Charlie Xie, "LA-artist Yoshie Sakai's "Scenic Tour" of Life," Art Zealous, December 14, 2016. https://artzealous.com/la-artist-yoshie-sakais-scenic-tour-of-life/

of a supermarket, the Plaza, and the façade of the Chinese American Museum, Sakai's performance humorously embodied the dominance of Sriracha and Tapatio over other American staples portrayed in diverse "American" settings. Other works such as graffiti artist, Slick's 2014, *Pepper Spray,* which consisted of a trio of spray cans painted to resemble bottles of the Vietnamese hot sauce Sriracha, took a more direct approach at drawing more obvious parallels with ethnic foodways and subcultural practices like graffiti art (Fig.4.8).

Throughout the exhibition's run, "L.A. Heat" featured a slate of public programs that included themed food tours exploring ethnic eateries across greater Los Angeles, cooking classes, public lectures addressing Asian and Latinx foodways, and an online auction of the works presented in the exhibition. "L.A. Heat's" programming capitalized on the growing popularity in food writing that proliferated in 2000s, made accessible by the late Pulitzer prize winning food critic Jonathan Gold, who put many of downtown's Asian and Latinx eateries on the gastronomic consciousness of broader audiences, and made Sriracha and Tapatio staples among savvy diners following his recommendations.[69] In both subject matter and reach, "L.A. Heat" was a success for CAM in many regards, as this exhibition brought attention from mainstream media outlets which included a review in *Artforum*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *National Public Radio*. This coverage would make an impact on the museum's outreach efforts aimed at cultivating new audiences and generating revenue for the museum.

"L.A. Heat's" appeal for many visitors and reviewers promoted a celebration of Los Angeles' tradition of Asian American and Latinx foodways, and would also provide the participating artists an opportunity to claim ethnic foods as signifiers of an American ethnic

[69] Gold was the first food critic to receive Pulitzer prizes for his food writing in the *L.A. Weekly* in 2007.

experience typically absent from visibility in mainstream art institutions. Mixed-media paintings such as Patrick Martinez's 2014, *Los Angeles Grocery*, depicts a delicately rendered still life featuring an array of pan-Asian and Latinx ingredients ranging from tortillas, Vietnamese spring roll wrappers, dried chili powders, soy sauce, chips, dried fruit, and a glass bottle of imported Mexican Coca Cola (Fig.4.9). Martinez's painting draws parallels to the vivid colors and tight cropping of the advertisement circulars distributed by ethnic super markets across the city. Resembling the grocery store circulars, in *Los Angeles Grocery*, Martinez has arranged the composition to ensure that the labels of each item are featured prominently and legibly. The inclusion of a red neon sign embedded within the painting itself, creates the illusion of peering through a shop window to view these items on the store shelves. While the focus of the works and programming supporting "L.A. Heat" also modeled a type of urbane self-styling evoked through CAM's use of corporate sponsorships from the products featured in the exhibition, a marketing strategy that would also rely heavily on an audience comfortable with taking part in the type of conspicuous cultural consumption popular on social media platforms. CAM's inclusion of corporate branding through the content of the works featured in "L.A. Heat," reveals the diverse ways that neoliberal economic practices have pervaded public institutions such museums which struggle to locate diverse sources of funding.

Nearly all of the works presented in "L.A. Heat" drew from the visual and stylistic lexicon of contemporary graffiti and street art, as seen in pieces such as street artist Shark Toof's 2014 mixed-media piece, *Tablecloth,* consisting of a curtain created from paper placemats stenciled with the artist's signature shark logo (Fig.4.10). At the time of "L.A. Heat's" debut, Shark Toof's work, and others like it included in the exhibition, coincided with a moment when street art and graffiti would become ubiquitous on the streets of downtown's gentrifying

bohemian districts such as Little Tokyo, Chinatown, and nearby Boyle Heights, decorating the interior lobbies of luxury apartment complexes cropping up in these neighborhoods. However, the popularity of street art would become heightened by MOCA's 2011 exhibition *"Art in the Streets"* curated by New York art dealer Jeffrey Deitch, a blockbuster exhibition that attracted over 200,000 visitors during the show's four-month run (Fig. 4.11).[70] At the time both "L.A. Heat" and "Art in the Streets" debuted, street art and graffiti became effective marketing tools used by developers, corporations and tastemakers taking part in "viral marketing" campaigns found throughout the city as stenciled images on sidewalks and wheat pasted posters on walls and scaffolding advertising movies, music, and fashion that added to the cultural milieu in a quickly gentrifying downtown Los Angeles.[71] By 2011, when downtown's graffiti and street art aesthetics would become a critical element in MOCA's strategy to market the contemporary aesthetics of the downtown Los Angeles as twenty-first century global city. MOCA's marketing for "Art in the Streets" would result in the commissioning of large-scale public works of street art on walls and buildings surrounding the museum, still visible in the neighborhood. Exhibitions like "Art in the Streets," and later "L.A. Heat," used the artistic and expressive forms of street art and graffiti previously deemed outlaw, anti-art, to market downtown's gentrified ethnic enclaves and the bohemian lifestyles these spaces signified. [72] However, this strategy drew on the ubiquity and commercial palatability of the genre to mask a larger set of pro-development business

[70] Maxwell Williams, "Inside and Out: Jeffrey DEITCH'S Life in the Art World," *KCET*, June 12, 2019, www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/inside-and-out-jeffrey-deitchs-life-in-the-art-world.

[71] The connection between the rise of street art and gentrification has emerged in the past decade with studies examining the role street art has played in the Gentrification of Baltimore, the Wynwood district in Miami, San Francisco, and other cities internationally. I would suggest, this is a reimagination of the Bilbao effect, however suited to contemporary tastes.

[72] Christopher Knight, "MOCA's 'Art in the Streets' Gets the Big Picture Wrong," *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 2011.

policies used to attract financial investment into the city. Just as the CRA incorporated the creation of cultural institutions and museums as an economic anchor and tool for placemaking in downtown's redevelopment of the 1980s, institutions such as MOCA and CAM have introduced street art into their exhibitions to reflect the tastes of Los Angeles, as it reimagines itself as a twenty first century global city.[7673]

Coupled with "L.A. Heat's" fusion of pro-urban growth street art aesthetics, and public programming that courted the city's culinary tastemakers, the exhibition featured an online auction of the works presented in the exhibition. The sale of works featured in "L.A. Heat" would function as a profit generator for CAM, and similarly introduce an art market rationale of online art auctions proliferated by virtual auction platforms such as Paddle 8, Artsy, Artuner and historic auction houses like Sotheby's, Christies, and Phillip's into public museums.[74] While CAM's auction of "L.A. Heat's" works was not the first example of an institution using the sales practices of commercial art galleries to financially bolster a flagging public museum, it is certainly an unusual and still relatively new practice in public art museums. As the commercial art market has become increasingly globalized in recent decades, art auctions have also become tools used by art speculators around the world to artificially increase the demand and value of the

[73] Allison Fraser, "Urban Prophets: Creating Graffiti as a Means of Negotiating the Constructs of Urban Public Spaces," *Stream: Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication* 7, no. 2 (2015), 32–42. Along these lines, museum studies scholars Rina Kundu and Nadine M. Kalin have characterized the introduction of neoliberal museum practices which include as the introduction of market-based ideologies of increased competition, the reliance on corporate sponsorship, and in the introduction museum education practices that Kundu and Kalin describe as "edutainment" that have privileged the museum as a space of passive cultural consumption. Rina Kundu, and Nadine M. Kalin. "Participating in the Neoliberal Art Museum." *Studies in Art Education* 57, no. 1 (2015), 40.

[74] American Alliance of Museums, "Questions and Answers about Selling Objects from the Collection." *American Alliance of Museums*, 20 April 2020, www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/questions-and-answers-about-selling-objects-from-the-collection/.

work of artists.[75] In some instances, art speculators have artificially inflated the value of works created by artists with little exhibition history or critical reception, disrupting the norms of the commercial art market.[76] More recently auctions have also become a tool for museums, both mainstream and ethnically specific, to deaccession works removed from the museum's collection in effort to seek an infusion of cash which can sustain failing museums in the short term. The practice of deaccessioning of works for the purpose of auction remains a thorny issue for public museums holding nonprofit status, as the institution benefit from a nonprofit tax designation specifically awarded to public institutions created for the stewardship of art and cultural artifacts serving the public trust.[77]

In 2014 when "L.A. Heat" debuted, professional organizations such as the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) grappled with the ethical implications of these auctions, and published best practice guides for museums as response to the increase in deaccession auctions. While CAM's financial health has operated under a thin profit margin as indicated in the museum's 990 tax filings, across the country financially strapped museums such as the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, have sought to auction deaccessioned works to keep their museums financially viable. Critics of deaccession auctions have contended that the mission of museums is primarily for the stewardship of art collections in service of the public trust, and that this trend has the potential to

[75] Paddy Johnson, "The Truth About the Murky Online Art Market," *Artnet News*, April 14, 2015, news.artnet.com/market/the-truth-about-the-murky-online-art-market-53811.

[76] Kimberly Bradley, "Thoughts on Stefan Simchowitz from Berlin," *Hyperallergic*, January 9, 2015, hyperallergic.com/173125/thoughts-on-stefan-simchowitz-from-berlin/.

[77] American Alliance of Museums, "Questions and Answers about Selling Objects from the Collection. *American Alliance of Museums*, 16 Apr. 2020, www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional practices/questions-and-answers-about-selling-objects-from-the-collection/.

undermine the stewardship that is implicit in the role of the public museum to leverage the knowledge producing role of the museum space as a privatized commercial enterprise. Complicating the matter further, deaccession auctions have also revealed loopholes in nonprofit tax law that bring to light the fact that monetary value of works of art in a museum's collection are not reported on the institution's 990 Federal Tax Form. Under current tax law, objects in a museum's collection are designated as capital outside of the parameters of a museum's gross assets and therefore not reported on the institution's 990-tax form, which primarily reports the accrual of expenses.[78] The consensus among professional organizations such as AAM and AAMD have asserted that the proceeds gained from deaccession auctions must be used to either refine the focus of a collection, and should not be used to support institutional operating costs. "L.A. Heat's" auction in 2014, presented a neoliberal work around to traditional museum financial governance practices, presenting a strategy that blurs the boundaries of the function of the public museum. Just as the participation in the exhibition increased the visibility and value of the works on display, the subsequent auction of the contents of this exhibition reaffirms a form of cultural consumption that has been in practice in Chinatown for a century.

Conclusion

The arrival of Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles at the end of the nineteenth century initiated a set of social relations and ethnic performance which shaped how Chinese people, spaces and objects were viewed and consumed by non-Chinese outsiders. While Chinatowns would emerge as community spaces where Chinese immigrants benefitted from mutual aid,

[78] Ibid, 1.

comradery, and protection, the governmentalities imposed by the state to define the spatial enclosure of this neighborhood were supported by an array of laws and policies introduced to constrain the opportunities available to Chinese immigrants. As this chapter has traced, the critical practice of proposing genealogies of governmentality enables us to dissect the networks of power that are encapsulated within institutions, created through the overlapping spheres of power and capital. In my study of CAM, I have sought to both name and examine the specific governmental techniques that have shaped the disciplinary technologies facilitating the creation of ethnically specific museums like CAM within the larger framework of Los Angeles' cultural political economy. The introduction of immigration laws, zoning laws, public health policies, and community redevelopment plans targeting the Chinese were undergirded by a repertoire of social relations informed by tropes of ethnic performance and cultural display that defined how Chinese people, spaces and objects were seen, consumed and policed. In doing so, this chapter has also endeavored to unearth both how disparate and enduring the methods of control used by city, state, and federal government to discipline the bodies and spaces of the state's Chinese immigrant populations. Turning to the present day, the representational practices circulated within CAM, demonstrate an effort by its curators and administrators to navigate the inherited legacies of cultural display and ethnic erasure and commodification deeply embedded within the museum's Old Chinatown location within the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. Hopefully, the effort to unearth that buried stratigraphy may position the museum's curators and supporters to critically address the racial and ethnic complexity of the U.S. Chinese diaspora in ways that directly engages Old Chinatown's racialized history of Old Chinatown. However, the introduction of neoliberal museum practices at CAM also reflects the instability of arts

institutions at a time when these cultural institutions have become the generator for new forms of intellectual and cultural labor in downtown.

Conclusion

> The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights. [1] (Harvey)

In this study I have catalogued the assemblage of governmental technologies used in the creation of three of downtown Los Angeles' ethnic museums--the Japanese American National Museum, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, and the Chinese American Museum--to provide a critical genealogy that reconstructed the histories, political rationalities, and implementation of new models of financialization that converged to form these institutions. My project's focus on the formation and impact of downtown's ethnic museums has sought to uncover the various roles these institutions have played in the creative destruction of downtown Los Angeles' historic ethnic enclaves in the latter half of the twentieth century. The case studies collected in this project are my contribution to the growing body of literature exploring the theories and methodologies of Foucauldian genealogy created by scholars engaged in the fields of museum studies, ethnic studies, studies of cultural political economy, and the L.A. school of urban studies.

The study of governmentality can reveal the methods through which groups are governed, either by law, institutions, or administrative practices. Of governmentality, Foucault

[1] David Harvey, "The Right to the City." *New Left Review* 53 (2008), 23.

has stated, "since these things have been made, they can be unmade, as long as we know how it was that they were made."[2] In this project I have undertaken a genealogical critique to uncover the networks of governmentalities that proved crucial in the formation of these ethnic institutions. A historical lens allows us to uncover the confluence of chances and encounters that have shaped the circumstances of the present. Indeed I have argued that the processes of institution-making began with the redevelopment of downtown's ethnic enclaves beginning in the 1950s. These changes occurred as a relation between the dialectical forces of "property-power" wielded by real estate developers and investors, and the "knowledge-power" exercised by the arts and cultural workers and administrators tasked with shaping the city's narratives of place.

In my effort to model how the dual poles of "property-power," and "knowledge-power" were put into action in downtown's redevelopment, my project has illustrated how the creation of the ethnic museums examined in this study would be driven by the interests of local and international investors wielding "property-power." The renewal of these neighborhoods would generate significant surplus value for both investors and city coffers, made possible by redevelopment programs aimed at stimulating the economic renewal and the territorial expansion of the city's historic ethnic neighborhoods. City planners and investors would in turn require the input of curators, historians, and arts and cultural administrators welding the "knowledge power" responsible for the disciplinary oversight of the cultural institutions created in downtown's historic ethnic neighborhoods. The lasting impact of this "knowledge power" remains visible in the role these experts would play constructing the historical narratives perpetuated within these

[2] Michel Foucault, "Critical Theory/Intellectual History," in *Michel Foucault: politics, philosophy, culture*, ed. L. Kritzman (London: Routledge, 1988), 36–37.

museum spaces. Hence I examine the narratives museum educators, docents, and planners tell in the creative placemaking used to market the neighborhoods that surround these institutions.

By the 1980s multiculturalism would become one of enduring narratives that drove downtown's redevelopment. My project has therefore offered a new framework through which we can consider the lasting influence of the introduction of multiculturalist narratives in planning schemes that would reframe Los Angeles' multi-ethnic and multi-racial communities as an asset, rather than as a liability. These narratives served to recast downtown's ethnic neighborhoods as important cultural destinations that affirmed the city's new role as financially lucrative, "world class city," replacing the late twentieth century urban blight narrative which had preceded it. In addition to the city leaders and developers who took part in downtown's reimaging, the cause of multiculturalism was similarly embraced by educators, city leaders, arts and cultural administrators wielding the "knowledge-power." Together they helped operationalize arts and cultural policy and organize exhibitions and performances striving for greater cultural equity, repositioning downtown Los Angeles as the city's multi-racial and multi-ethnic cultural epicenter.

However, the advent of multiculturalism alone did not reshape downtown's cultural topography. The parallel development of multicultural arts and cultural policy that would intersect with the promotion of pro-development narratives published for decades in the *Los Angeles Times* would have a critical role in propelling the creation of the museums examined in this study. At city hall and in Sacramento, the introduction of new public policies which made downtown's rebirth possible would come to play a driving force in the implementation of neoliberal placemaking that used downtown's ethnic enclaves as the testing ground for new experiments in governmental technologies such as tax increment financing, public-private-

partnerships, and flexible labor market practices, all of which encouraged the formation of mutually beneficial relationships between the city and county of Los Angeles with real estate developers and private corporations. Together, as I have traced in this project, the introduction of neoliberal economic rationalities would come to thoroughly inform the formation of institutions created in downtown's newly designated ethnic cultural hubs.

Each chapter in this project has outlined the governmental recipe that facilitated the processes enabling the creative destruction of Little Tokyo, the historic Plaza and Old Chinatown. As I have argued, the gradual implosion of each neighborhood began first with the efforts to marginalize and isolate the racialized ethnic communities residing in these areas as early as the late nineteenth century. These efforts to create and enforce the spatial and economic *cordons sanitaires* that isolated these neighborhoods was upheld by governmentalities introduced by city and state agencies that would discipline and eventually deconstruct Little Tokyo, Old Chinatown, and the historic Plaza during the twentieth century. Working in tandem with the processes to hollow out these neighborhoods, aggressive social, legal, and economic interventions were later introduced to displace the neighborhood's prior inhabitants. These displacements were engineered by the aggressive redevelopment campaigns introduced by federal, state, city agencies, and funded by private investment.

By the late twentieth century efforts to reterritorialize downtown's ethnic enclaves would come to work in concert with the new cultural political economic apparatuses created to not only market the goods and services produced in and about Los Angeles, but to also generate new narratives and images of the city which repositioned it as the epicenter of the postmodern "cognitive cultural capital." As Allen J. Scott has articulated, the city's new role as a twenty-first century "creative city," would come to rely on modes of post-Fordist, technology and social

relations of production, thriving cultural industries, and the expansion of the specialized labor force or "human capital" in which vast, though mostly disorganized, aggregations of minimum wage and no-benefit service workers whose labor would maintain the productivity of the region's higher paid knowledge workers. In the creative city, Scott contends, "production, work, leisure, the arts and the physical milieu exist in varying degrees of mutual harmony."[3]

Across downtown Los Angeles, the city's transformation into a twenty-first century "creative city" would draw together the input of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), Los Angeles City Council, County Board of Supervisors, along with foreign and domestic investors like the Chandler family, who maintained a lasting influence on media representations depicting downtown's redevelopment published in the *Times*. By the 1970s, when Little Tokyo's redevelopment gained momentum, the involvement of the CRA and the investors backing this project would increase the financial viability of the neighborhood's refashioning to become a space of commercial ethnic place-making that impacted redevelopment schemes in the decades that followed. Little Tokyo's redevelopment anchored the creation of hotels and retails spaces in concert with the development of flagship cultural institutions such as JANM and the JACCC, providing a useful roadmap for the subsequent redevelopment projects that reshaped the Central Business District (CBD), a model later replicated in the neighboring El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historic Monument, and Chinatown.

However, as I have articulated throughout this project, the redevelopment schemes of the late twentieth century aimed at marketing and redefining the territorial boundaries of downtown's ethnic neighborhoods would also inherit the tropes of racialized ethnic performance

[3] Allen J. Scott, 2014. "Beyond the Creative City: Cognitive–Cultural Capitalism and the New Urbanism," *Regional Studies*, 48:4, 569, DOI: 10.1080/00343404.2014.891010

that inspired some of the city's earliest sites of ethnic tourism, evidenced in the city's early twentieth century hybrid cultural-commercial districts such as Olvera Street and China City. Olvera Street's creation in the 1930s and continued operation into the present, has demonstrated the profitability of this cultural and financial model supporting one of the city's oldest themed ethnic tourist spaces. While La Plaza de Cultura y Arts and the Chinese American Museum would emerge at least a decade after the Japanese American National Museum, the creation of these institutions were similarly shaped by the tools used by city planners and real estate investors to finance and integrate redevelopment of the ethnic cultural landmarks emulating Olvera Street's business model. The result of this strategic redevelopment wove in the discourses and practices of ethnic exhibition into planning and policy rationales implemented to reimagine the city's cultural and material landscape by utilizing the administrative, political, and market technologies to facilitate the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of downtown Los Angeles' ethnic enclaves to remake spaces of former Fordist production into neoliberal public-private enclosures.

Looking both inside and outside the ethnic museum, I reiterate Stuart Elden's articulation that governmentality is also a chiefly spatial strategy used to govern a population, within a specific location.[4] Throughout this project I have used city planning documents and project area maps, and the representation of ethnic neighborhoods presented in print media to trace how the boundaries delineating downtown Los Angeles' ethnic enclaves have seen their borders drawn and redrawn through the processes of redevelopment. Henri Lefebvre has likened this process to the dynamic principles of planetary explosion and implosion. In this project I have focused on

[4] Stuart Elden, "Governmentality, calculation, territory," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 3 (June 2007), 565.

the tight sphere of influence radiating out from the city's CBD to draw the clearest possible correlations between the most evident landscapes of power that mark Los Angeles' cultural topography, and to plot where the institutions created by and for the city's racial and ethnic populations reside in this nexus of governmentalities.

From the stories provided about the creation of the institutions at the center of this project, we can learn valuable lessons about what is at stake when ethnic and racial communities strive for the symbolic and material ownership of the cultural institutions that serve the needs and interests of their communities. The close readings presented in this study provides further evidence of the ways through which governmentalities are metabolized by institutions, and thus perpetuate the hegemonic structures which underlie them. At the Japanese American National Museum this was made evident in the museum's early exhibitions celebrating the military service of Japanese American soldiers during WWII to reinforce model minority stereotypes that equated military service with cultural citizenship. While at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, the institution's quiet mishandling of the remains of La Iglesia de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles' nineteenth-century Indigenous parishioners discovered during the museum's construction revealed a broader integration of essentializing colonial racial taxonomies that inflected other aspects of the museum's exhibitionary logic. And, in the Chinese American Museum's exhibition, "L.A. Heat," we saw how this exhibition's introduction of market-driven aesthetics and practices blurred the lines between commercial art gallery and nonprofit public cultural institution. By unraveling the discourses of ethnic place-making, racial identity, and neoliberal museum practices marshalled within each of these museums, I have endeavored to uncover how the disciplinary practices used by ethnic cultural institution may govern the

representation of cultural experiences and dictate the choices of curators and museum administrators.

Los Angeles' ethnic museums are well suited to challenge the narratives of ethnic display traced in this study, if they can find new ways to examine the everyday intersectionality and hybridity of Asian, Latinx, and African American lived culture in the city. Recently, these aims have been successfully achieved in La Plaza de Cultura y Artes' 2020 exhibition, "Afro Latinidad: Mi Casa, My City," which explores the history and experiences of Afro Latinos in Los Angeles and demonstrates how ethnic museums can play a dynamic role in redefining the narratives of race and ethnicity. "Afro Latinidad," also represents a crucial step in challenging the essentialist norms of racial and ethnic identity perpetuated within this museum's permanent collection. In turn, the Chinese American Museum's 2017 exhibition, "Roots: Asian American Movements in Los Angeles 1968-80s," presents a visual history of Los Angeles' Asian American civil rights activist movements of the 1960s through the 1980s. "Roots," drew attention to the influence that Black and Chicano activism would have on Asian American activism of the 1960s, a gesture that presaged the solidarity movements advocated by groups such as Asians for Black Lives Matter, and the Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance which have coalesced in recent decades.

I urge the leadership of ethnic museums to take on a stronger voice in challenging the governmentalities of privatization that have created these institutions, and to pursue frank narratives about the role ethnic museums continue to play in the gentrification of urban ethnic enclaves. I point to the interventions made by Asian American activist groups like the Chinatown Art Brigade and the artist collective Godzilla, which have recently demanded that New York's Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) reject $35 million in "community give-back" funding

generated by the creation of a multi-million-dollar jail slated for New York's Chinatown.[5] As these activists have claimed, the museum's acceptance of this funding would put the institution in complicity with a carceral system that benefits from the disproportionate incarceration of Black and brown people, and undocumented immigrants. Critics of MOCA's expansion have noted this project will displace vulnerable businesses in Chinatown that struggle for survival amidst the rapid gentrification of the neighborhood. The efforts of the Chinatown Art Brigade represent one approach to ensuring that ethnic institutions to maintain transparency and accountability to their constituents. It is crucial that ethnic museum find ways to empower community members to become stakeholders and decision-makers guiding the direction of the museum's curatorial and strategic missions to ensure these institutions are equipped to serve the needs of their constituents. In California this remains a vital concern, as the state's ethnic and racial communities no longer represent minority populations and are quickly becoming the majority of the state's population.

I have intended this catalogue of governmentalities to serve as a lens through which others can also disentangle the web of disciplinary practices that govern the creation and oversight of ethnically and culturally specific arts and cultural institutions. My project's intervention comes at a moment when ethnic museums have gained greater economic viability, political visibility, and cultural necessity as the country's immigrant populations continue to increase. As mainstream institutions come under greater scrutiny by artists, activists, scholars, and community leaders for role these institutions have made in the perpetuation of collecting and exhibition practices rooted in colonialism and imperialism, in addition to these institution's

[5] Valentina Di Liscia, "Museum of Chinese in America Should Reject 'Jail Money,' Says Artist-Activist Group." *Hyperallergic*, October 1, 2020. https://hyperallergic.com/591414/museum-of-chinese-in-america-chinatown-art-brigade/

reliance on neoliberal models of flexible volunteer and part-time labor, and the influence of museum trustees and corporate sponsors that have gained financial profit from the structural inequality of Black and brown communities. Among artists, activists, scholars, and community leaders advocating for the reexamination of museum practices, the emerging consensus on re-imaging museums through the lens of social justice may allow museums to institutionalize new policies that revise existing governmentalities, or adopting new governmentalities which could formalize professional disciplinary practices. The creation of new labor and hiring policies, collecting and curation mandates, and board requirements for museum board members and trustees have the potential to advocate for change across city-and state-wide policy and legislative discussions. The legislature's recent approval of new ethnic studies undergraduate requirements within the University of California and California State University systems suggests the scope of the policy initiatives available to these museums if they are prepared to make the effort to challenge the status quo. In closing, I turn to invoke David Harvey's urging that the right to the city represents the vital claim that working class communities and communities of color must hold in determining the processes through which their cities, and by extension public institutions, are reimagined to better serve the city's residents.

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APPENDIX I: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

AAM	American Alliance of Museums
AAMD	Association of Art Museum Directors
BID	Business Improvement District
CAAM	California African American Museum
CAM	Chinese American Museum
CBD	Central Business District
CHSSC	Chinese Historic Society of Southern California
CRA	Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles
FCAM	Friends of the Chinese American Museum
El Pueblo	El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument
JACCC	Japanese American Community Cultural Center
JANM	Japanese American National Museum
LAPCA	La Plaza de Cultura y Artes
LPP	La Plaza Partners
LTCDAC	Little Tokyo Community Development Advisory Committee
LTRA	Little Tokyo Redevelopment Association
MOCA	Museum of Chinese in America
MOCA	Museum of Contemporary Art
NMAI	National Museum of the American Indian
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
RFP	Request for Proposals

APPENDIX II: IMAGES

Fig. 1.1. City of Los Angeles. *El Pueblo State Historic Monument Map and Legend.* Date Unknown. El Pueblo Photo Collection. Los Angeles Public Library. https://calisphere.org/item/eb8ecc35a2a4fac6a0446075e81ba89e/

Fig. 1.2. Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles. *Little Tokyo Map.* Adopted February 24, 1970. http://www.crala.org/internet-site/Projects/Little_Tokyo/little_tokyo_map.cfm

Fig. 1.3. Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles. *Central Business District Map.* Adopted July 18, 1975. http://www.crala.org/internet-site/Projects/CBD/cbd_map.cfm

Fig. 2.1. Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles. *Little Tokyo Redevelopment Study Area Model.* 1963. Los Angeles Herald Examiner Photo Collection Archive, Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles. https://calisphere.org/item/c7b1d2fc259cd1b5502d0dabb2201817/

Fig. 2.2. Photographer Unknown. *A Daughter of Japanese Immigrants Holds her Country's Flag,* 1918. Photograph, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Taketaro Azeka. Japanese American National Museum Souvenir Magnet. https://janmstore.com/products/common-ground-exhibition-magnet

Fig. 2.3 Leonard, Gary. *Japanese American National Museum Opening.* 1992. Los Angeles Photographers Collection, Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection Archive, Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles.
https://tessa.lapl.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/photos/id/118848/rec/1

Fig. 3.1 Owens, Charles H., "A Mexican Street of Yesterday in a City of Today," *Olvera Street: Its History and Restoration,"* Christine Sterling. (Los Angeles: Old Mission Print Shop, 1933), 3. Photogravure.

Fig. 3.2 John Kaliski Architects. *La Plaza Cultural Village Masterplan.* 2015. This image outlines the enclosure of the historic district and the blue dotted line denotes how the new construction is sutured Olvera Street. https://archinect.com/J.K.A./project/la-plaza-de-cultura-y-artes

Fig. 3.3. Johnson Fain Architects. *La Plaza Cultural Village Street View Rendering.* 2016. http://johnsonfain.com/projects/architecture/residential/la-plaza-village/

Fig. 3.4. La Plaza de Cultura y Artes. *Gente de Razón.* Gallery installation. 2011. IQ Magic. http://iqmagic.net/la-plaza-de-cultura-y-artes.html

Fig. 3.5 Cabrera, Miguel. *De Español y Mestiza: Castiza.* 1763. Oil on canvas. Museo de las Americas, Madrid.

Fig. 3.6. Deppe, Ferdinand. *San Gabriel Mission.* 1832. Oil on canvas. Laguna Art Museum, Laguna.

Fig. 4.1. Artist Unknown. “And Still They Come!” *The Wasp.* v. 5, Aug. - Dec. 1880. Retrieved UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library.
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Fig. 4.2. Ruxton, AG. *Map of the old portion of the city surrounding the plaza, showing the old plaza church, public square, the first gas plant and adobe buildings, Los Angeles City, March 12th 1873.* Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/item/awhbib000022/

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