TOWARD A NEW THEORY OF STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY:

INTERNAL COLONIALISM AND THE CASE OF

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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In a time of rising inequality and declining social mobility in the United States, how might planners work toward a more just society? Numerous theoretical constructs have been developed to address these issues of structural inequality, and the notion of *internal colonialism* is among them. As a theory of inequality that identifies patterns of economic domination, and the attendant subordination of certain populations, internal colonialism theory first gained popularity during the Third World liberation movement, then rose to prominence among minority groups in the United States, before fading into relative obscurity.

Does this theory still hold relevance today? This study traces the development of Oakland, California through the lens of internal colonialism theory and traces out the roots of the highly unequal conditions that exist in the city today. A critical reapplication of this theory reveals its ongoing utility as both an explanatory model and a construct for charting a path forward.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEXT: GROWING INEQUALITY ON A GLOBAL AND LOCAL SCALE

The debate surrounding inequality and the distribution of wealth—both within and among societies—is ages-old, but is resurging with renewed vigor today. World leaders bemoan the vast and growing gap between the rich and poor in both emerging economies and in developed nations, and point to dismal developments in wealth and income distribution indicators, particularly in rich societies. While most would agree that some level of inequality in a society is tolerable, and even healthy—after all, people ought be rewarded commensurate with their contributions—when the opportunity and rewards system falls far out of balance, and the talents of those born at the bottom of the heap go forever untapped, there may be cause for concern.

In the United States, inequality seems to be on the rise—without an accompanying rise in social mobility. According to a recent report from the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, between 1979 and 2007, the incomes of the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans have nearly tripled, while the after-tax incomes of the middle class have grown at approximately 1 percent per year since 1979. For the poorest 20 percent of Americans, the income growth picture is even more grim. [1] And given the strong influence of socioeconomic status on educational achievement, and later earnings, there is ample reason to believe that most Americans will have limited opportunity to improve their lot.[2] For a nation that has long professed meritocratic ideals, these are troubling developments.

What are the perils of a highly unequal society, with limited opportunity for mobility? In recalling the recent riots that unexpectedly engulfed London and its satellite cities for four consecutive nights in August 2011, we might rightly wonder whether the firebombing, looting, and general violence were at root an act of protest, an explosive expression of frustration with a calcified society fraught with social and economic inequality.

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[1] Congressional Budget Office. 2011. *Trends in the Distribution of Household Income Between 1979 and 2007*.

[2] For a recent study on intergenerational mobility, see: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

In the United States, signs of discontent and unrest are growing. With the nationwide spread of the *Occupy Wall Street* movement, and the uncomfortable attention it has cast on the gulf between the rich and the rest, Americans are becoming cognizant of their position in a land of increasingly limited opportunity. And in Oakland, California, the place on which this study will ultimately focus, the city's *Occupy* movement has at times escalated to fever pitch. Dramatic scenes of Oakland's City Hall lawn blanketed with a colorful encampment of more than 150 tents, of police in riot gear and violence erupting in the streets, of thousands of protestors effectively shutting down the nation's fifth-busiest port for a day, suggest that urban unrest is perhaps becoming the new norm.

Is there anything that can be done? How do we begin to remedy issues of structural inequality? Perhaps we might begin by examining a theoretical construct that emerged during a similar time of turbulence and rising inequality, and sought to address these very same issues.

STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY AND INTERNAL COLONIALISM THEORY

Only a generation ago, at the fore of academic and popular discussion were the large and steadily increasing economic inequalities at the global scale. As the gap in wealth between 'First World' and 'Third World' countries began to noticeably grow, and as awareness of these international inequalities began to rise among Third World peoples, a flurry theories of structural inequality, development, and underdevelopment emerged, attempting to explain the growth of an entrenched global elite, at the expense of the powerless masses. Of the theories that blossomed during this era, a theory of 'internal colonialism' was notable for its elegant explanatory power, as well as its indigenous origins in the language of the oppressed.

Given the strong parallels with our current context, it seems that internal colonialism theory may be ripe for reexamination. Issues surrounding persistent and increasing inequality in the distribution of wealth that had surfaced a generation ago on a global scale have intensified, and are now presenting on a highly local level. Perhaps reopening an investigation of this theoretical framework, this time on a highly local level, might begin to provide new insights for a path forward.

But before beginning a discussion of this theory, perhaps it is prudent to first clarify what is meant by the word 'colony,' often a charged term in its own right. In continuing to use this term, I take the long view, and consider the meaning of the word over the life of its usage. At its very core, and in its Roman roots, the notion of a colony is bound up with settlement and cultivation of

the land.[3] And over the centuries, from the time of the ancient Greeks, to the days of imperialist European expansion and beyond, colonies have fulfilled a range of purposes—sites to absorb population overflow when growth has outstripped existing resources, sites claimed by imperialist states seeking to extend their empire, sites of great natural wealth bound for trade. Colonial relationships, too, have taken a number of different forms, ranging from distant, loose relations between 'mother country' and colony, to close control. In short, this is a fluid term that has taken on a number of meanings over six centuries of usage, and we ought keep this simple fact in mind as we consider the varied shades of *internal colonialism* that have emerged in much more recent years.

[3] Charles Talbut Onions, R. W. Burchfield, and G. W. S. Friedrichsen, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966).

CHAPTER II

INTERNAL COLONIALISM THEORY: A SURVEY ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

DEPENDENCY THEORY AND INTERNAL COLONIALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Origins of Dependency Theory

The notion of internal colonialism is intricately bound up with the myriad theories of economic development that emerged in the wake of World War II, as growing consciousness of international economic inequalities sparked a global dialogue surrounding the economic stagnation and distorted development of third-world countries. As the small group of highly developed first-world countries prospered and invested capital in further industrialization, a much larger group of primary goods-producing third-world countries remained mired in poverty and stagnation. Here, often amid abundant natural resources, impoverished peoples struggled for survival, still waiting for the promised benefits of capitalist development and international trade to materialize.

And in Latin America, a spirited dialogue emerged, as a new generation of homegrown scholars and economists sparred with their Old World counterparts. These budding scholars, dissatisfied with the prevailing 'diffusionist' theory of development espoused by first-world economists, argued that foreign industrial capital, far from offering deliverance from distorted development, actually lay at the root of uneven growth. The arrival of foreign capital, and the incumbent exploitation of human and natural resources, they argued, had created the conditions for underdevelopment and dependency, and only an independent path could lead to true development.[4]

Perhaps unsurprisingly, mainstream European and American economic theory called for continuation of the status quo. The prevailing diffusionist wisdom surrounding the 'developing' nations was that capitalist penetration would eventually elevate these societies from their impoverished conditions, and provide a pathway to prosperity. Diffusionist elaborations such as modernization theory, particularly of the strand advanced by American economist Walt Rostow, suggested that major structural changes to the Latin American economy were unnecessary; the

[4] Ronald H. Chilcote, *Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*. (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1984), 49-78.

fledgling nations of the Southern hemisphere were simply proceeding through the evolutionary 'stages of growth' that other industrial economies had undergone generations ago.[5] Thus, it was only a matter of time before Latin America would reach its 'takeoff point,' and the march to modernization would be underway.

But modernization theory had now found its counterpoint among Latin American economists, who began to forcefully argue that European metropoles were systematically plundering Latin American resources to fuel their own economic growth. And reformist schools of thought emerged in waves. At the epicenter of the new theoretical discussion on distorted development and global inequality was the Economic Commission for Latin America, created by the United Nations in 1948, and initially led by Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch. Prebisch, with a growing global audience, advanced a new thesis which divided the world into two economic spheres: the 'center,' comprised of industrialized nations, and the 'periphery,' comprised of producers of primary goods for export to the center. To bring prosperity and self-sufficiency to the periphery, Prebisch set forth a program of economic nationalism, calling for import substitution industrialization, to be achieved by restricting the level of foreign imports through protective tariffs, and state support of nascent industries through investment in infrastructure. With Argentina as an economic laboratory, Prebisch's ideas were put into action.[6]

But by the 1960s, it had become clear that Prebisch's strategy had fallen far short of its goals. Economic nationalism could not fully release these 'peripheral' nations from the stranglehold of 'the center.' And as levels of economic inequality continued to widen both within and among nations, a flurry of development theories emerged.[7]

Echoes of an Earlier Debate

To place the theoretical discussion surrounding economic growth in post-World War II Latin America squarely in context, it is useful to first briefly examine a lesser known, but equally weighty predecessor dialogue. Because the economic development debate, while new on the 1960s world stage, was not unfamiliar to the public in Latin America. Just a generation earlier, in a period of overt foreign imperialist domination, rumblings of discontent had found expression in two divergent strands of thought.

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[5] Ian Roxborough, *Theories of Underdevelopment*. (London: Macmillan, 1979),16.

[6] Cristóbal Kay, *Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*. (London: Routledge,1989), 31-41.

[7] *Ibid.*

The subject of debate was, once again, uneven economic development in the face of foreign domination. And the discussion had come to the fore in Peru, where political leader Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre and political activist José Carlos Mariátegui had each undertaken an analysis of the Latin American economy, and produced strikingly different recommendations. Haya de la Torre advocated for the establishment of an anti-imperialist state, but believed that Latin America could achieve economic independence and development within the framework of the existing capitalist system, whereas Mariátegui envisioned the fashioning a new system altogether—a more organic, communitarian society incorporating elements from the structure of pre-conquest Peru. [8]

The sharp ideological differences that emerged in the Haya de la Torre-Mariátegui debate would resurface in future generations—the reformist tendencies that would later become characteristic of the 'diffusionist' position juxtaposed against the revolutionary tendencies emerging in the Marxist-socialist tradition. And the embers of this 'reform vs. revolution' debate would reignite in the internal colonialism dialogue to follow.

Internal Colonialism: Initial Elaboration in Latin America

A new theory of underdevelopment was emerging in Latin America, against the backdrop of the post-World War II decolonization process. Introduced as a theory of 'internal colonialism,' this represented an attempt to explore the continued domination and exploitation of indigenous groups in former colonies—now by local groups instead of foreign imperialist powers—well after political independence had been achieved. This notion of internal colonialism was first elaborated in detail by Mexican sociologist Pablo González Casanova, whose anthropological research focused on the relationship between the dominant *Ladino* (or *mestizo*, mixed) population and the subordinate native groups in Mexico.[9]

In his 1965 article, *Internal colonialism and National Development,* González Casanova demonstrated the capacity of colonialism to morph from a pattern of overt foreign domination to an internal pattern of domination and exploitation. For González Casanova, the term 'colonialism' referred simply to the domination of one group of people over another; this was made manifest through a condition of monopoly in the exploitation of natural resources, labor, trade, and fiscal revenues by the dominant power. Proceeding with this definition, González Casanova

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[8] John Baines, *Revolution in Peru: Mariátegui and the Myth.* (University, Ala: Published for the Latin American Studies Program by the University of Alabama Press, 1972).

[9] Chilcote, *Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*, 35-36.

approached the problem of colonialism from a sociological perspective, and described the dualist social structure that emerges when two civilizations, one technically more advanced than the other, come into contact.[10]

In a classic colonial situation, González Casanova explained, a dominant country monopolizes the natural and human resources of its colony, and seeks to control mass culture and information sources, thus effectively isolating the colony from other nations, and funneling all contact with outside cultures through the dominant power. As such monopolistic practices continue, colonial domination tends to grow progressively stronger. Policies of manipulation and discrimination in the juridical, educational, linguistic, and administrative realms are introduced, which tend to sanction and increase social divisions and unequal relations; these internal divisions and structures would then remain intact long after the colonies had achieved independence. [11]

González Casanova distinguished the structure of internal colonialism from the traditional urban-rural dichotomy, asserting that a colonial situation was characterized by relations of domination and exploitation not only between workers and the owners of the means of production, but also by one total population—with its own distinct class system—over another population, also with its own distinct classes.[12]

And how to dismantle the colonial system? González Casanova offered few answers, but suggested that responsibility for resolving the structural phenomenon of internal colonialism would lie with the national government. In his view, the state held an obligation to conceive of specific economic, political, and educational instruments designed to accelerate the process of decolonization; once set in motion, these would in turn aid the process of development. He appeared to view 'internal colonialism' as a phase in the development trajectory of a newly decolonized nation—and once the contradictions of internal colonialism had been overcome, the nation might proceed to its 'takeoff stage' in a Rostovian-style 'stages of growth' model. And thus, despite coining a loaded term that would later serve as a rallying call for revolutionaries, González Casanova himself appeared to occupy a moderate reformist position.

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[10] Pablo González Casanova, "Internal colonialism and national development". *Studies in Comparative International Development.* 1 (4): 27-37 (1965): 27.

[11] *Ibid.,* 30.

[12] *Ibid.,* 33.

Internal Colonialism Examined and Elaborated Further

Rodolfo Stavenhagen, also a Mexican sociologist and González Casanova's contemporary, explored similar colonial and class relationships between *Ladinos* and natives of Mayan descent in the Chiapas highland region of Mexico and Guatemala. Stavenhagen's analysis added depth and dimension to the outline proposed by González Casanova. Here, Stavenhagen illustrated in detail the coexistence of two separate societies in the wake of imperialist development: a dominant *Ladino* population, and a subordinate native population, readily distinguishable through clothing, dialect, and participation in a separate religious and political structure. By virtue of the societal structure, the natives were excluded from capital accumulation opportunities. Reduced to reliance on subsistence agriculture and marginal commercial agriculture, any meager profits natives might earn from the sale of surplus crops would be quickly spent on current consumption.

With his analysis, Stavenhagen began to examine the complex linkages between colonial relationships, class relationships, and ethnic relationships. The colonial relationship between *Ladinos* and natives, according to Stavenhagen, implied ethnic discrimination, political dependence, social inferiority, residential segregation, and juridical incapacity; these were societal ailments that afflicted the whole of the native population. This was a departure from mainstream Marxism where class relationships were defined only in terms of labor and property relations, and not in ethnic, social, or residential terms.[13]

In examining conditions in Mexico's Chiapas region over time, Stavenhagen found that during Mexico's colonial period and the first decade following political independence, colonial and class relations appeared to be intermixed, with the former taking precedence. But with the development of capitalism on a world scale, and its penetration into Mexico's remoter regions, this configuration was challenged. Class relations responding to capitalist needs increasingly came into conflict with colonial relations, which responded to mercantilist interests. Despite this challenge, internal colonialism, by maintaining ethnic divisions, served to impede the full development of class relations.[14]

Stavenhagen's observations also extended to the interactions between global forces and local conditions. Internal struggles, coupled with a worldwide economic depression in the first

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[13] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Classes, Colonialism, and Acculturation". *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 1 (6), (1965): 55.

[14] Cristóbal Kay, *Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment,* 69.

half of the 19th century, conspired to keep native communities marginal, inward-looking, and isolated from the outside world. And tutelary laws held over from three centuries of colonialism, had served to maintain and fix the social and economic inferiority of the natives. Thus, even after Mexico achieved independence from Spain, the unbalanced relationship between the indigenous and the national society remained firmly in place.[15]

These observations were bolstered by similar empirical research undertaken by Julio Cotler, a Peruvian political economist examining race relations between *Ladinos* and natives in Peru. Cotler's research reinforced the concepts introduced by both Stavenhagen and González Casanova, and offered foreshadowing of *neo*colonialist ideas that were still yet to come. In speaking of the dualistic societal structure in Peru, Cotler remarked that "the privileges of the system of domination are expanded by incorporating *segments of the population* to that system, extending the number of social sectors which directly or indirectly benefit from peasant marginality."[16] Building on this notion, Cotler suggested that when incremental reforms allow for the inclusion of new groups in the dominant economic system, the system of domination actually *expands* as it alienates the upwardly mobile groups from the marginal sectors.[17]

The groundbreaking efforts of these researchers were shortly compiled into a clearer definition of internal colonialism. In a 1969 conference paper, American sociologist Dale Johnson synthesized the work of González Casanova, Stavenhagen, and Cotler, and elaborated a fuller definition of the internal colonialism concept:

> *Economically, internal colonies can be conceptualized as those populations who produce primary commodities for markets in metropolitan centers, who constitute a source of cheap labor for enterprises controlled from the metropolitan centers, and/or who constitute a market for the products and services of the centers. The colonized are excluded from participation or suffer discriminatory participation in the political, cultural, and other institutions of the dominant society. An internal colony constitutes a society within a society based upon racial, linguistic, and/or marked cultural differences as well as differences of social class. It is subject to political and administrative control by the dominant classes and institutions of the metropolis. Defined in this way, internal colonies can exist on a geographical basis or on a racial or cultural basis in ethnically or culturally dual or plural societies. (Not all of these criteria need to apply in order to classify a population as an internal colony.)*[18]

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[15] Stavenhagen, "Classes, Colonialism, and Acculturation," 56.

[16] Julio Cotler, "The Mechanics of Internal Domination and Social Change in Peru". *Studies in Comparative International Development.* 3 (12), (1967): 239.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] James Cockcroft, Andre Gunder Frank, and Dale L. Johnson, *Dependence and Underdevelopment: Latin America's Political Economy*. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1972), 277.

And thus with the basic theoretical outline developed by González Casanova, and the empirical research conducted by Stavenhagen and Cotler, a comprehensive definition of internal colonialism in Latin America emerged.

Internal Colonialism Globalized

This theory was advanced one step further by André Gunder Frank, a U.S.-educated economic historian based in Latin America. Examining internal colonialism now from an economic perspective, Frank sketched a hierarchical system of economic exploitation on a global scale. According to Frank, just as 'core' and 'periphery' could be identified at the global level, so too could they be identified at the national level; and most importantly, at either scale, the consequences for underdevelopment would remain largely the same.

To provide an illustrative example of a typical case of internal colonialism, Frank turned to the American South, considered an underdeveloped region in the years preceding World War II, based upon its lower relative income, its status as an agricultural raw materials producer and exporter, and its heavy dependence on a single crop. For emphasis, Frank reminded readers of the South's colonial roots—as first a British colony, then a de facto Northern colony—with the Northern textile industry essentially built with Southern cotton and Southern slaves. The ever-rising tariffs of the 1820s had served to develop the North and underdevelop the South; with the North's victory in the Civil War, it was able to cement its dominant role, and engage in industrial and territorial expansion. All the while, the South became ever more dependent and underdeveloped.[19]

And as for the South's lauded post-World War II economic development, Frank attacked the prevailing thesis that its problems of underdevelopment have been solved:

> *The measures that achieved the most spectacular changes,' in producing the recent supposed economic development, he says, 'were those that attacked the root problems of Southern agriculture': 'land reform' (in the broad sense used by the UN). This is the land reform that is so universally recommended as the palliative for economic development problems elsewhere in the world by those who, like Goldschmidt, see only relations that are physically in that region to be relevant to its underdevelopment. He tells us that 'the small uneconomic farms are disappearing,' that the number of farms has been halved and their average acreage doubled, and that the number of tenants has declined sharply. What he does not tell us is that this inevitably means very much increased effective concentration of land in the South (as is the trend elsewhere in the U.S. and the capitalist world in general) and forced expulsion of the agricultural workers from the land. What happened to the tenants and small owners? They certainly did not become medium and large landowners whose number halved or more. They are the rural exodus. They, or those they replace at the next migratory stage, are among the 5.5 million Southern migrants between 1940 and 1960 who have gone to the North and West. With their post-migration born children they may account for 10 million Southern 'poor white' and Negro residents of Northern city slums today. The*

[19] Andre Gunder Frank, *On Capitalist Underdevelopment*. (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1975), 74.

> *problem of domestic underdevelopment and exploitation under American capitalism has not, therefore, been resolved... It has only been shifted regionally and sectorally. The Southern bourgeoisie may be participating in American capitalism in a different style than before. The structural underdevelopment that has befallen the Negro since the beginning has not been solved, or he would not 'March on Washington.' Nor will any march on Washington solve this problem of underdevelopment—of internal colonialism. For Washington cannot solve it. It is too close to New York.*[20]

And with this in mind, we might now turn to internal colonialism theory as elaborated in the United States.

[20] *Ibid.*, 75.

INTERNAL COLONIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Internal Colonialism Theory Migrates North

As theories of underdevelopment swirled in Latin America, and the Third World solidarity movement grew, the notion of internal colonialism took root in the United States among an increasingly disaffected black population. First posited in the form of an analogy applied to oppressed American blacks, within the span of a decade, internal colonialism would be formally articulated as a theory of structural subordination, and applied to a wide array of contexts, revealing a new shades of meaning with each new application.

Activists and scholars alike framed discussions in terms of internal colonialism, beginning with marginalized racial and ethnic groups within the United States, and eventually extending to impoverished rural (and predominantly white) populations in Appalachia and the Great Plains. The theory was investigated and tested in great depth by an American scholar who examined the internal colonialism framework through a comprehensive study of Great Britain's domination over 'the Celtic fringe.' And though each application adjusted the definition of the theory—or metaphor, as often was the case—to suit its own unique circumstances, we are still able to derive common lessons and themes.

The Underlying Debates

The value of the internal colonialism theory that emerged in the United States in the 1960s was its capacity to provide both an explanatory model for persistent structural inequalities settling along lines of race and class, and to begin to suggest a 'way out' of structural oppression. And like the Latin American strand of internal colonialism, the theoretical constructs developed in the United States found their roots in long simmering debates, begun more than a generation earlier.

For blacks in the United States, the dialogue surrounding the appropriate means to advancement in free society had been an ongoing debate since the Reconstruction. As early as the late nineteenth century, two distinct schools of thought had emerged among black intellectuals: the first, an accommodationist approach espousing assimilation, industrial education, and skills development to facilitate full participation in the American economy, and the second, a nationalistic, political approach calling for persistent agitation in the pursuit of immediate and full social and political equality. This debate was personified in the sharp intellectual clashes between Booker T. Washington, champion of accommodation, or 'working

within the system,' and W.E.B. Du Bois, critic of 'the system' itself, and its seeming propensity to pit working-class blacks and whites against each other, in spite of their often overlapping economic interests.[21] And as time wore on, the ever-patient accommodationist approach yielded few tangible gains; although a small black bourgeoisie began to emerge, the difficult reality was that blacks still owned only a negligible share of America's wealth, and played an insignificant role in American business.[22] These early and divergent approaches to socioeconomic advancement, taken together with the meager results of the incremental accommodationist approach, would foreshadow later (and louder) debates of the Civil Rights era.

And beyond the racial question, a territorial development dialogue had emerged in parallel. The focus here was not the economic status of a particular racial group, but the status of an entire region—the American West. The West, which had developed as a major raw materials supplier to the East, by the 1930s still lacked regional self-sufficiency, and occupied a clearly subordinate position in its economic relationship with the East. Historian Walter Prescott Webb, writing at that time, sought to alert Westerners to their 'colonial' status. The relationship between East and West, he argued, fit the classical mold of the relation between a colony and mother country, as the region shipped its raw materials out to be processed in the East, which then retained a major portion of the profits derived from their fabrication. Institutional barriers had been erected by Eastern interests to inhibit indigenous economic growth in the West, he argued; most notable were the Eastern control of financial institutions, and the discriminatory freight rates charged by railroads controlled by Eastern financiers.[23]

The notion of the West's colonial status was further popularized by the writings of historian Bernard DeVoto in a series of columns in *Harper's Magazine* during that same era. In describing the West as a 'plundered province,' DeVoto continued to raise consciousness among Westerners of the economic imperial control of the industrial East.[24] But throughout the 1930s, the East-West relationship began to morph, as the federal government supplanted the role of Eastern finance, pouring increasing amounts of capital into the West, largely in the form of New

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[21] W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America; An Essay Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. (Cleveland: World Pub. Co., 1964).

[22] Edward Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*. (New York: Collier Books,1962), 11.

[23] Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 8.

[24] Bernard De Voto, and Edward K. Muller. 2005. *DeVoto's West: History, Conservation, and the Public Good*. (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 2005), 34-48.

Deal public works projects. The advent of these projects signaled a shift from private capital to public funds in fostering the development of the West, but did little to change the basic colonial nature of the relationship. And this would perhaps become the new development question for the West: how to achieve economic independence from the East, without shifting dependence elsewhere?

As World War II began, DeVoto wrote optimistically of the West's newfound prosperity, thanks to war installations and war industries. Finally, the region had secured its opportunity to break the shackles of Eastern domination and absentee control. But the West must still take caution, he warned, as rapacious exploitation of land and natural resources by Western special interests might undermine its balanced growth just as easily as its Eastern counterparts had.[25] DeVoto's words were perhaps telling—for indeed, as the West produced its own great industrialists, these tended to follow in the path of their Eastern predecessors.

Internal Colonialism and Black Nationalist Rhetoric

The 'colonial' debate lay dormant for some time, before once again resurfacing and finding expression in the language of black nationalists and activists. One of the earliest references to the notion of a domestic black colony appeared in a 1962 essay published by social and cultural critic Harold Cruse. Here, Cruse boldly asserted that "the Negro has a relationship to the dominant culture of the U.S. similar to that of colonies and semi-dependents to their particular foreign overseers: the Negro is the American problem of underdevelopment."[26] And in later works, Cruse elaborated further on this notion, highlighting the commonalities of American blacks and colonized peoples of the third world, and citing their revolutionary potential. Woeful socioeconomic conditions, cultural deprivation, and subjection to rule by members of another race, formed the potential basis for a revolutionary nationalist movement. This movement would present a challenge to the capitalist status quo, in Cruse's words, "not because it is programmatically anti-capitalist, but because full integration of the Negro in all levels of American society *is not possible within the present framework of the American system*."[27]

The notion of the internal black colony was given a more concrete form and locus with the 1965 publication of *Dark Ghetto*, Dr. Kenneth Clark's haunting portrait of ghetto life in Harlem. Here, the problems of the confined black slum were laid bare: in decaying, overcrowded housing,

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[25] De Voto, *DeVoto's West: History, Conservation, and the Public Good*, 85-88.

[26] Harold Cruse, *Rebellion or Revolution?* (New York: Morrow, 1968), 74.

[27] *Ibid.,* 100.

increasingly filled with the ranks of the unemployed, unstable families confronted a new set of problems, from emotional illness, to homicide and suicide, to delinquency and drug addiction. And Clark saw limited opportunity for liberation; with the ghetto's own leaders lacking political savvy and sophistication, possibilities for black elevation would largely be limited to avenues offered through social services, and the church.[28] Clark, with his reformist stance, even with a creative eye, could not lay out a clear vision to elevate the masses from their impoverished condition.

But the nationalist and revolutionary intellectual current remained strong in subsequent works surrounding internal colonialism and black America. The 1967 publication of Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton's *Black Power* provided full elaboration of blacks' colonial status in the United States, and argued that the only feasible path to liberation would be through black political, economic, and social empowerment. Carmichael and Hamilton treated the concept of colonialism as a loose metaphor, asserting that institutional racism had resulted in sustained subordination of blacks, and although certain elements of the 'classic' colonial relationship were absent, the central patterns of domination and subordination were present and highly potent.

The authors grounded the colonial metaphor in a series of illustrative examples of blacks' subordinate status in the political, economic, and social spheres. In the political arena, they argued, blacks were subject to both direct and indirect colonial rule, with the white power structure handing down decisions affecting the lives of blacks, sometimes through intermediary blacks made responsive to white leaders and machine politics. Meanwhile, the manipulation of political boundaries and the devising of restrictive electoral systems was diluting black power at the ballot box, and a process of cooptation of an emerging black elite had begun, serving to further widen the gap between the black elite and the black masses.

In the economic realm, Carmichael asserted that the colony's sole purpose was to enrich the colonizer, with the consequence of maintaining the economic dependency of the colonized. He pointed to exploitative credit systems in the ghetto, higher housing costs and mortgage interest rates for blacks, and the difficulties blacks faced in securing a mortgage. He described the descent of black communities into deepening levels of economic depression, the increasing jobless rate among black males, and the growing earnings gap between blacks and whites. All

[28] Kenneth Clark, *Dark Ghetto; Dilemmas of Social Power.* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

the while, welfare agencies might intervene with 'uplift' services, which in practice constituted a dehumanizing system that only served to perpetuate dependency.[29]

And the colonized status of blacks had real social repercussions. Degraded and dehumanized, blacks were relegated to a subordinated, inferior status in society. They lacked proper housing, basic medical services, and decent education; this had definite psychological consequences. Carmichael also pointed to blacks' participation in 'white man's wars,' often fought to preserve the status quo. This, too, he argued, was a characteristic feature of colonialism.[30]

For Carmichael, the notion of *black power* offered a means to liberation. He called for blacks to redefine themselves, to develop a sense of community, to become aware of their history and cultural heritage. Then, he insisted, they must begin a process of modernization, in which they would question old values and institutions, search for new forms of political structure to solve political and economic problems, and broaden the base of political participation to include more people in the decision-making process.[31] Carmichael tended to equivocate on how these structural changes might be initiated, or what form these new institutions might take, but nevertheless sparked a dialogue that would shape a social movement.

Black Nationalism: An Academic Perspective

This internal colonialism metaphor quickly captured the attention of social scientists focused on race relations in the United States, as it represented a model of structural subordination that took into account issues of both race and class. In a 1969 article entitled *Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt,* sociologist Robert Blauner examined the thesis of white-black relations in the United States as that of 'colonizer' and 'colonized,' and framed contemporary urban riots, cultural nationalism, and ghetto control politics as collective responses to structural oppression. In exploring the internal colonialism concept, Blauner identified four basic components of what he termed 'the colonization complex:'

> *Colonization begins with a forced, involuntary entry. Second, there is an impact on the culture and social organization of the colonized people which is more than just a result of such 'natural' processes as contact and acculturation. The colonizing power carries out a policy which constrains, transforms, or destroys indigenous values, orientations, and ways of life. Third, it involves a relationship by which members of the colonized group tend to be administered by*

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[29] Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power; The Politics of Liberation in America*. (New York: Random House, 1967), 21-23.

[30] *Ibid.,* 23-31.

[31] *Ibid.*, 164-177.

representatives of the dominant power. There is an experience of being managed and manipulated by outsiders in terms of ethnic status. A final fundament of colonization is racism. Racism is a principle of social domination by which a group seen as inferior or different in terms of alleged biological characteristics is exploited, controlled, and oppressed socially and psychically by a superordinate group.[32]

Blauner then placed the black urban uprisings of the late 1960s squarely within the colonial context, asserting that rioters and looters were asserting a claim to territoriality, attempting to gain control over their own community, and rejecting the sacred American notion of private property. The growth of cultural nationalism, too, was portrayed as part of an anti-colonial movement, an attempt to establish group solidarity and reclaim those cultural elements that were once rejected in earlier assimilation efforts. And Blauner pointed to black efforts to establish community control over businesses, social services, schools, and the police as a key component of the anti-colonial movement. In closing, he appealed to the white community to support community liberation movements by removing white instruments of 'direct control,' and instead offering technical assistance to communities when requested. And simultaneously, Blauner exhorted, whites must allow for full black participation in mainstream institutions.

Meanwhile, Robert Allen, a young black scholar, advanced the concept of internal colonialism further, with the 1969 publication of *Black Awakening in Capitalist America.* Here, Allen argued that a program of internal *neo*colonialism was taking hold in the United States, as America's corporate elite shrewdly devised strategies to stamp out the seeds of rebellion or revolution among black nationalists. As the late 1960s ushered in an unprecedented number of urban uprisings among blacks, with riots and looting exploding in central cities throughout the country, resulting in scores of casualties and immense property damage, corporate America had quickly stepped in to quash the growing movement. For instance, the Ford Foundation—philanthropic offshoot of the Ford Motor Company—had now made an entry into the realm of urban pacification, and began selectively funding the activities of borderline-radical groups such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). As Ford Foundation funding flowed into these organizations, the once-militant rhetoric began to soften, and activities were focused more intently on channeling black frustration into more 'constructive' outlets, such as the ballot box.[33]

Allen also pointed to the newly formed alliance between large industry and the federal government—an effort by both to collaborate in solving the 'urban crisis'—as another typical

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[32] Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt". *Social Problems*. 16 (4): (1969), 396.

[33] Robert Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America: An Analytic History*. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), 146.

example of neocolonialism. Here, big business was to find a new and profitable role in the realm of federally funded urban reorganization—opportunities would abound for public works and public service projects, in rebuilding inner cities and developing job training schemes for the 'hard core unemployed' minorities in ghettos across the country.[34] This partnership between big business and the federal government would have implications at the local level as well—as federal funding poured into their coffers, urban local governments would now become the new "mechanism for the realization of national priorities."

And perhaps most critically, Allen expounded the notion that blacks were the 'first surplus product' of America's technologically advancing and increasingly monopolistic economy. As relatively 'new' entrants to the labor force at a time when mechanization was substantially reducing the need for unskilled labor, blacks, who had historically been at the bottom of the labor pool, were increasingly without recourse in a rapidly automating society.

Hispanics as a Colonized People

Blacks were not the only minority group in the United States to investigate the potential of the internal colonialism model. The basic theoretical precepts resonated with many marginalized Latinos in the United States, who also adopted the rhetoric of internal colonialism, and adapted this to their unique circumstances. Beginning in the early 1960s with the first *Venceremos* Brigade—an American student demonstration of solidarity with Latin America's poor and with the Cuban Revolution—graduate students Luis Valdez and Roberto Rubalcava prepared a statement which decried the subordinate status of Mexican Americans in the United States, and asserted that this was the product of the hemisphere's colonial legacy. Their message—that Mexican Americans could only be liberated through a nationalist, anti-colonial revolt—resonated among college students, particularly during the time of a growing *Chicano* movement.[35]

Then, with the 1972 publication of historian Rodolfo Acuña's *Occupied America: The Chicano's Struggle Toward Liberation*, the Chicano internal colonial thesis was given a detailed examination. Offering a revisionist account of the Chicano experience in the American Southwest, Acuña discussed the early settlement of Texas, Arizona, and California, and patterns of Mexican resistance to Anglo takeover, as well as an account of the great migrations from Mexico, and the 1960s Chicano movements, with a focus on the economic motives that had ultimately resulted in the subjugation of the Mexican in the United States. The clash between

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[34] *Ibid.,* 212.

[35] Ramón Gutiérrez, "Internal Colonialism: An American Theory of Race". *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race.* 1 (02): (2004), 288.

Mexicans and Anglos was an *economic* conflict, rather than a cultural conflict, he emphasized. Acuña's groundbreaking work provided valuable insight, but received substantial criticism in academic circles as a one-sided 'angry polemic.'[36] Still, his writings would provide inspiration for other academics, who would advance these ideas further.

Writing in 1979, scholar Mario Barrera would give internal colonialism in the Chicano context perhaps its most complex treatment with his book, *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality.* Here, he would set forth an analysis of the Mexican American experience in the Southwest, in an attempt to explain the origins of the Chicano's subordinate status in American society. To this end, Barrera presented a historical analysis of the Southwest, discussing its conquest in economic, rather than political terms, and the form of colonial labor relations that emerged. Based on this historical analysis, Barrera set forth a theory of racial inequality, outlining a new model of internal colonialism that gave importance to race relations, but simultaneously supported and applied traditional Marxian class division theories. Within the basic class division scheme in a capitalist political economy, Barrera posited, there exist additional subdivisions, or segments. These segments are based on either occupational status, or characteristics of the worker, such as race, ethnicity, or gender. And Chicanos, he argued, based on their initial incorporation into the U.S. political economy as subordinate class segments, had continued to occupy such a subordinate position at all occupational levels.[37]

Barrera's work was well received in both the realms of academia and the popular Chicano movement, but was criticized for at times forcing the application of Marxian theory,[38] as well as portraying Chicanos as objects of history, completely at the mercy of capitalist forces.[39]

Internal Colonialism Theory Applied to the Celtic Fringe

As internal colonialism theory took hold among minority groups in the United States seeking to explain their subordinate status, one American researcher sought to systematically demonstrate the validity of the theory through a detailed examination of a situation of domination

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[36] Victor Dahl and Rodolfo Acuña, "Review of Occupied America: The Chicano's Struggle toward Liberation". *The Western Historical Quarterly*. 4 (3): (1973), 341.

[37] Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 194-219.

[38] Lee Boyer and Mario Barrera, "Review of Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* 450: (1980), 283.

[39] Mario García and Mario Barrera, "Review of Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality". *The Western Historical Quarterly*. 12 (2): 194-196. (1981), 195.

and exploitation overseas. In 1975, Michael Hechter, an American sociologist, analyzed the domination of Britain over 'the Celtic fringe' in terms of internal colonialism, and introduced a rich array of time-series quantitative data to support his claims.

For Hechter, internal colonies, above all else, were societies that had developed primarily in response to exogenous forces. Echoing the ideas of Andre Gunder Frank and Pablo González Casanova, Hechter described the attributes of internal colonialism:

> *These bear many similarities to descriptions of the overseas colonial situation. Commerce and trade among members of the periphery tend to be monopolized by members of the core. Credit is similarly monopolized. When commercial prospects emerge, bankers, managers, and entrepreneurs tend to be recruited from the core. The peripheral economy is forced into complementary development to the core, and thus becomes dependent on external markets. Generally, this economy rests on a single primary export, either agricultural or mineral. The movement of peripheral labor is determined largely by forces exogenous to the periphery. Typically there is great migration and mobility of peripheral workers in response to price fluctuations of exported primary products. Economic dependence is reinforced through juridical, political, and military measures. There is a relative lack of services, lower standard of living and higher level of frustration, measured by such indicators as alcoholism, among members of the peripheral group. There is national discrimination on the basis of language, religion, or other cultural forms. Thus the aggregate economic differences between core and periphery are causally linked to their cultural differences.*[40]

Hechter placed great emphasis on the importance of ethnicity, and argued that once an ethnic group or region had been assigned a subordinate functional role in the national or international division of labor, structural inequalities between the core group or region and the periphery would tend to increase, as the periphery would develop in a dependent mode.

This was the essence of the internal colonial situation—where the dynamic 'core' exercised monopolistic control over production in the periphery, it would also practice discrimination against the culturally distinct people who had been forced onto inferior lands, thereby establishing a cultural division of labor.[41] And Hechter was careful to warn that when social stratification in the periphery was based upon observable cultural differences, there existed the possibility that the disadvantaged group would, in time, reactively assert its own culture as equal or superior to that of the advantaged core, and perhaps ultimately conceive of itself as a separate nation, and seek independence.

While Hechter's work represented a substantial advance in attempts to systematically document the conditions of internal colonialism, it was criticized for perhaps overemphasizing the

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[40] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*, 1536-1966. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 32.

[41] *Ibid.,* 133.

importance of ethnicity, while simultaneously oversimplifying or reducing the importance of the role of imperialist ambitions in creating the conditions associated with internal colonialism.[42]

Domination and Exploitation in Appalachia and the Great Plains

The 1960s and 1970s also saw a geographically based incarnation of internal colonialism, this time applied in loose metaphor format, by scholars of the Appalachian and Great Plains regions. Unlike their contemporaries, this group of theorists did not draw race and ethnicity into the discussion, and argued that internal colonies could exist on a regional and cultural basis. Using a much looser construct, proponents of internal colonialism theory in Appalachia sought to describe the exploitation of the region's raw materials and local workforce by absentee corporate interests.

Beginning with the 1963 publication of *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, native Kentuckian Henry Caudill's vivid portrayal of poverty and underdevelopment in Appalachia, the region began to receive due attention for its impoverished status. In his writings, Caudill attributed the region's deprived condition to the policies of the dominant coal mining industry, arguing that the coal companies had siphoned off the region's resources, for the benefit of corporations located in the Eastern and Midwestern United States, while returning little of value to the region that was the very source of its wealth.

Academic Helen Lewis, in the 1978 publication of *Colonialism in Modern America: The Appalachian Case*, adopted the four-point definition of internal colonialism set forth by Blauner, and modified it to suit the Appalachian context. A fluid colonial metaphor was employed here, with overriding themes of domination by outside interests, export of regional wealth (and reinvestment elsewhere), and cultural superiority of outsiders over 'hillbillies.' The colonial model, as articulated in Lewis' vision, seemed to suggest the need for an anti-colonial movement and a radical restructuring of society. Critiqued by some simply for its tenuous connection to the Blauner model, this Appalachian iteration still offered explanatory power, and would provide a framework for future scholars examining regional patterns of exploitation.[43]

Accordingly, more than a decade later, drawing on the precedent set by Appalachian scholars, geographer Stephen White described a particular area of the Great Plains in similar

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[42] William Sloan and Michael Hechter, "Ethnicity or Imperialism? A Review Article". *Comparative Studies in Society and History.* 21 (1): (1979), 115.

[43] Helen Matthews Lewis, Linda Johnson, and Donald Askins. *Colonialism in Modern America: The Appalachian Case.* (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1978), 16-24.

terms. His area of study, the Ogallala Aquifer, was characterized as a region in which land and mineral ownership—the source of the primary commodities upon which the local economy depended—was becoming increasingly concentrated in the hands of corporations and absentee landlords. As control of the economy settled into fewer hands, and local control lessened, the region became increasingly dependent on federal support for survival. White documented the effects of these structural changes on the population of the region, examining migration patterns, and noting the attendant channelization of in-migration and out-migration, as the region lost its young, educated, and more highly trained residents to other regions.[44] Drawing on the internal colonialism construct set forth in the Appalachian case, White concluded that the theory did indeed retain relevance and provide explanatory power.

[44] Stephen White, "Migration Trends in the Kansas Ogallala Region and the Internal Colonial Dependency Model". *Rural Sociology*. 63 (2): (1998), 257.

CHAPTER III

REVITALIZING INTERNAL COLONIALISM THEORY

A THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT REVISITED

As elaborated extensively in the previous section, internal colonialism theory has seen a number of formulations, reformulations, and iterations; it has variously been applied as a loose metaphor, or as a constricted definition, but at the root of each formulation is a common motif. The notion of a colony as a site that is dominated and controlled by—and for the benefit of—an external entity is a theme that runs throughout time, crosses national borders, and spans the language of both academic literature and radical rhetoric.

Do any of these theoretical iterations remain relevant today? With this paper, I will argue that internal colonialism remains a useful theoretical construct for understanding the roots of structural inequality, and perhaps for charting a path forward. When reduced to its elemental base—that is to say, as a pattern of economic domination above all else—and applied in a way that takes into account the unique development trajectory of a particular place, the theory can bring to light the dynamics of domination, subordination, and inequality as they have developed over time, and suggest ways to move forward.

The essential components of the theory—namely the notion that an 'internal colony' exists in a dependent mode, in an unequal relationship with an external power, and as a consequence remains subject to external domination and control—are just as relevant today as in the turbulent decades of the theory's inception. For these unequal 'colonial' relations result in a cementation of status for an entrenched and ever-accumulating elite, at the expense of the growing and increasingly deprived masses—hardly an efficient or desirable outcome. And in a time of increasing economic inequality within the United States, a reexamination of a theory that deals with these questions might provide useful insights, and point to potential redistributive solutions.

From the theories of internal colonialism posited by my predecessors, I have abstracted one central theme: external economic domination that results in (and then reinforces) the subordination of certain populations. In a colonial situation, political, social, and juridical forces might also intervene, but only to the extent that they are necessary to maintain the existing economic order.

I will attempt to develop and examine this reductionist theoretical construct in the context of Oakland, California, and will demonstrate that this particular place has throughout its history remained behest to exogenous economic forces, which have served to develop this place as a site of extraction and unequal exchange. Drawing on primary and secondary historical resources, I will trace the development of the city through this lens, demonstrating the immense impact—often contrary to the long-range interests of this place and its inhabitants—of these external forces on the city's form, character, and social order.

A FEW CLARIFICATIONS

A colonial theory necessarily begs the question: who are the colonizers? In previous formulations, the 'colonizer' has been defined variously as the 'white-Anglo population' or the 'ruling-class elite,' as a group of extractive absentee corporations, or at times simply left unstated. While I will refrain from using the term 'colonizer' for its obvious implications, I will certainly argue that there are specific groups—most notably large industry and real estate interests—who have directly benefitted from the colonial-style relations in Oakland throughout time. I hesitate to demonize these groups as 'colonizers' per se—after all, these are merely rational actors maximizing their interests within an established structure.

And in adopting a colonial framework, I do not intend to understate the role of local, endogenous forces in the city's development—for ordinary citizens have often displayed a remarkable capacity for agency, collective action, and change—but I wish to be clear that outside interests have consistently held the 'upper hand.' And by placing the focus squarely on the imperialist ambitions that have driven the region's growth, I am able to elaborate more fully on the devastating effects of growth gone unchecked.

Finally, I should clarify that my theoretical reapplication will differ from several previous iterations in one key respect: I will take the position that the internal colonial model is most useful when applied primarily on a geographic or territorial basis. Ethnic or racial difference, while still of paramount importance in describing structural subordination, has now become secondary to the territorial aspect, and remains relevant primarily to the extent that it is a vestige—albeit a very real, visible, and tangible trace—of that initial moment when a given race or culture made its entry into the prevailing economic system. This precept will be readily revealed in Oakland, where economic inequalities seem to persist on a territorial basis, in spite of racial integration.

THE CONTEXT: ADVANCED CAPITALISM AND ECONOMIC CONCENTRATION

An adequate theory of structural subordination must take into account at once the particularities of place, while at the same time recognizing the greater economic context, and the much larger sphere of influence under which that particular place orbits. In past iterations of internal colonialism theory, the dominant economic structure factored prominently in the theoretical discussion, as a means of explaining shifts in societal structure leading to entrenched patterns of domination. In Latin America, much emphasis was placed on the impact of capitalist penetration on pre-industrial societies, patterns of monopolistic domination and exploitation, and the cultural division of labor that emerged. And in the United States, in describing patterns of subordination emphasis was given—sometimes overtly, sometimes embedded 'between the lines'—to an economic system characterized by both rapid technological advance and the growth of large-scale enterprise of an increasingly monopolistic nature, and the implications for new entrants, generally minorities, to the labor force.

If we are to acknowledge the link between the type of monopolistic domination described in the previous applications of internal colonialism theory, and the patterns of exploitation that emerge, then what might we expect from our current economic context? Here, the global economic patterns identified a generation ago have only accelerated. The march toward economic concentration continues, now on a world scale. The large national corporation is now a *multi*national corporation. The notion of 'mobile capital' has morphed into '*hyper*mobile capital.' And we are witnessing the growth of an economic landscape that is prone to producing exceptionally high-skilled jobs and exceptionally low-skilled jobs, with little middle ground.

How can localities respond to these conditions that lie well beyond their control? This is a thorny question, one that internal colonialism theory could cast new light on.

CHAPTER IV

APPLYING THE THEORY: THE CASE OF OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

FOREWORD

What follows in this section is an analysis of the development of the City of Oakland, as seen through the lens of internal colonialism theory. Primacy is given to the economic forces that have shaped its growth, and the various population groups that have settled its shores. And as the historical record readily reveals, the city's economic development has been largely tied to external forces, driven by a desire to extract and export the wealth of the region. From the first arrival of European settlers on the eastern shores of the San Francisco Bay, a pattern of domination and exploitation by outside interests emerges; this pattern repeats again and again over time, as wave after wave of national and global growth washes over the region.

Why Oakland?

But first, why Oakland as testing ground for a theory of structural inequality? Foremost, the city is emblematic of the uneven development and growing gap between the 'haves' and 'have nots' that have captured the attention of academics, politicians, and mass media alike of late. With a veritable class system embedded into its topography, Oakland's widening chasm between the rich and the poor settles quite clearly along lines of geographic elevation—a striking topographical hierarchy that has placed the city's most affluent residents in comfortable hillside homes with panoramic vistas of the San Francisco Bay, while the poor are concentrated in the flatlands, often amid persistent poverty, crime, and violence. (See Figure 1.)

The city's racial mix, too, makes it an ideal area for investigation. Described today as one of America's most diverse cities, Oakland has hosted population groups from across the globe as they have made their entry into the U.S. labor market. Beginning with the early settlers—the Chinese, the Germans, the Irish, and later the Italians and Portuguese, and continuing through the present-day mix of new arrivals from Latin America and Southeast Asia, the city has been a starting place for upwardly mobile immigrant groups. Oakland has been a key destination for internal migration as well; its once burgeoning black population, arriving first in the early days of the railroad, and then in larger waves throughout the twentieth century, has occupied a significant role in the city's development. And the spatial relationships that have developed and dissolved

over time with respect to ethnicity and race, immigration and migration, are particularly ripe for investigation in the context of internal colonialism theory.

The city-region also forms a convenient spatial unit for analysis. Economic inequality within Oakland is striking in and of itself, but when viewed at a regional scale, Oakland's position within a greater hierarchy emerges. Viewing the city's evolving relationship to the region—from the suburbs just south and east, to its westerly neighbor across the water, San Francisco—in the context of internal colonialism begins to explain the development patterns that have emerged.

And finally, this particular place holds special value for your diligent researcher. As a third-generation Oaklander—one side of the family from the flatlands, the other from the hills—I hoped that I might be able to tell the city's story from both vantage points, adding a dimension that might span the spatial divide.

Figure 1: Geography of Oakland: Hills, Lower Hills, and Flatlands. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000; and ESRI Terrain File. Map prepared by Molly Promes.

METHODOLOGY

A Two-Fold Question and an Iterative Process

My research question was two-fold—first, whether internal colonialism theory in any of its previous iterations indeed held continuing relevance, and second, whether it might be refined or reformulated to address conditions of growing inequality within the United States today. With Oakland, California as a case study, I sought to answer these questions, and in the process uncover new insights regarding the city's development and possible future direction.

The literature had made clear that above all else, internal colonialism was a pattern of economic domination—often monopolistic, and often with imperialist overtones—that resulted in the subordination of a population. Class dynamics were of paramount importance, and as a corollary, ethnicity or race was nearly always drawn into the discussion. And thus from the outset, in order to test this theory, it was clear that a close examination of Oakland's economic development and demographic patterns was in order. But how best to approach these areas, and draw out meaning?

Perhaps the most pertinent methodological approach demonstrated in the literature was that of a place-based historical analysis, namely, the notion of focusing in a particular geographic location and tracing out the origins of economic domination and exploitation, and the implications for subordinated populations. While other empirical approaches, such as direct observation and interaction, had been used to identify situations of internal colonialism, these often proved inferior in teasing out the *roots* of inequality, and identifying patterns over time. Still, to the extent possible, I attempted to incorporate some minimal level of direct observation into my research, if only to provide an additional layer or understanding and depth to the analysis.

A Multidimensional Historical Analysis

My historical analysis began with an initial attempt to trace the development of the City of Oakland, with an attention to the economic interests that had shaped its growth. In doing so, clear patterns of external domination emerged; from the days of early mercantile trade, to U.S. expansionism, to the establishment and dismantling of the wartime apparatus, it became evident that Oakland's growth had been largely directed by forces well beyond the local reach.

And what were the implications of this type of development? Could the highly unequal conditions in Oakland today be directly traced to the manner in which the city had developed?

Answering this question first involved a deeper investigation of inequality in Oakland today, as well as throughout its history. And while 'inequality' can be a nebulous term, I sought to establish certain basic, generally accepted measures that could be compared concretely over a number of years, thus perhaps illuminating either entrenched patterns or changes over time. Household income, employment status, educational attainment, and housing tenure seemed appropriate operational measures, and this data was available in time series from the U.S. Census Bureau, allowing for a comparison of metrics at the census tract level from 1970 forward.

And because structural inequality is so deeply intertwined with issues of race, I sought to examine patterns of racial settlement in Oakland over this same time period. Mapping racial-spatial patterns might suggest a linkage between race and the metrics of inequality, or a disjoint. It might reveal commonalities in the experience of certain groups—for instance, the experience of blacks concentrated in West Oakland at mid-twentieth century, and of Latinos in the Fruitvale district at present—or perhaps key divergences in experience. And naturally, an examination of these spatial patterns would necessitate a deeper review of the historical record, in order to identify chains of causation that might not be discernable from data alone.

To bring the analysis into the current context and affirm its relevance, I sought to focus in more recent history on the various redevelopment efforts that have been underway in the city's flatlands neighborhoods. Viewing these in light of the internal colonial model, I attempted to uncover the role that the modern large corporation played in shaping urban space. By examining a wealth of primary resources made available by Kaiser Industries, I was able to gain a firmer grasp on the close interactions between industry and the federal and local government in determining urban outcomes. And from the perspective of marginalized groups, I hoped to understand how the internal colonialism model might provide fresh insight on how to ensure voice and agency under these circumstances. Two neighborhood-level redevelopment case studies allowed for an examination of these issues.

And finally, throughout the research process, I had the benefit of spending time observing activities in the City of Oakland—in the hills neighborhoods, in the flatlands, in the downtown core. This provided an opportunity to interact with residents, speak to local businesspeople and leaders, to understand problems and issues. It also afforded an opportunity to examine and document the built environment, a telling physical manifestation of capital investment and disinvestment over the years. While these observational techniques were not a cornerstone of my research, they certainly informed my work, helped to flesh out the city's story, and aided in drawing fair and balanced conclusions.

Thus, what follows is a blend—a historical analysis interwoven with quantitative and spatial data—supplemented by photographic observations. Taken together, it is my hope that they might begin to point toward new theoretical directions, and perhaps to practicable solutions.

A POINT OF DEPARTURE

Loosely packed within Oakland's 56 square miles of land area is a vast range of living conditions. The upper-income hills are divided from the lower-income flatlands by the MacArthur Freeway—sometimes referred to as the 'Mason-Dixon line'—which cuts across the city in a roughly east-west direction, one among a ribbon-like system of freeways that runs through the city, defining neighborhood boundaries, and swiftly funneling traffic to destinations farther east, west, north, or south.

Within the bounds of the freeways, one can find a striking range of physical and economic conditions. Inequality is pervasive here, by a number of measures, on multiple scales. For example, while 9.6 percent of residents of the San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area find themselves living in poverty, Oakland bears a disproportionate share of this population, with a poverty rate nearly double that of the region, at 17.5 percent. And within the City of Oakland, substantial variation exists. While poverty is virtually nonexistent in the hills, it is widespread in the flatlands, and finds pockets of concentration in certain neighborhoods, including West Oakland, at 27.4 percent, and the Fruitvale district, at 23.9 percent. And when viewed on a finer grain, within these neighborhoods, micro-scale poverty rates jump as high as 40 percent.[45] (See Figure 2.)

Educational attainment varies markedly with the terrain as well. In several flatlands neighborhoods, it is not uncommon for adults to have less than a 9th grade education (see Figure 2), while in the hills neighborhoods, college degrees are the norm, with a sizeable percentage of adults holding a master's degree or higher. (See Figure 3.) Unemployment figures are also telling. The City of Oakland as a whole had an unemployment rate of 16.9 percent for 2010,[46] well above the national average of 9.6 percent for that same year.[47] But unemployment is not evenly spread throughout the city. Here again, a sharp divide exists between the hills area, where unemployment rates are generally below 3 percent, and the flatlands, where pockets of extremely high unemployment exist, some as high as 45 percent. (See Figure 2.)

Median annual household income follows the same pattern. The median annual household income for the City of Oakland is $49,695, more than 30 percent below the average for

[45] U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey.

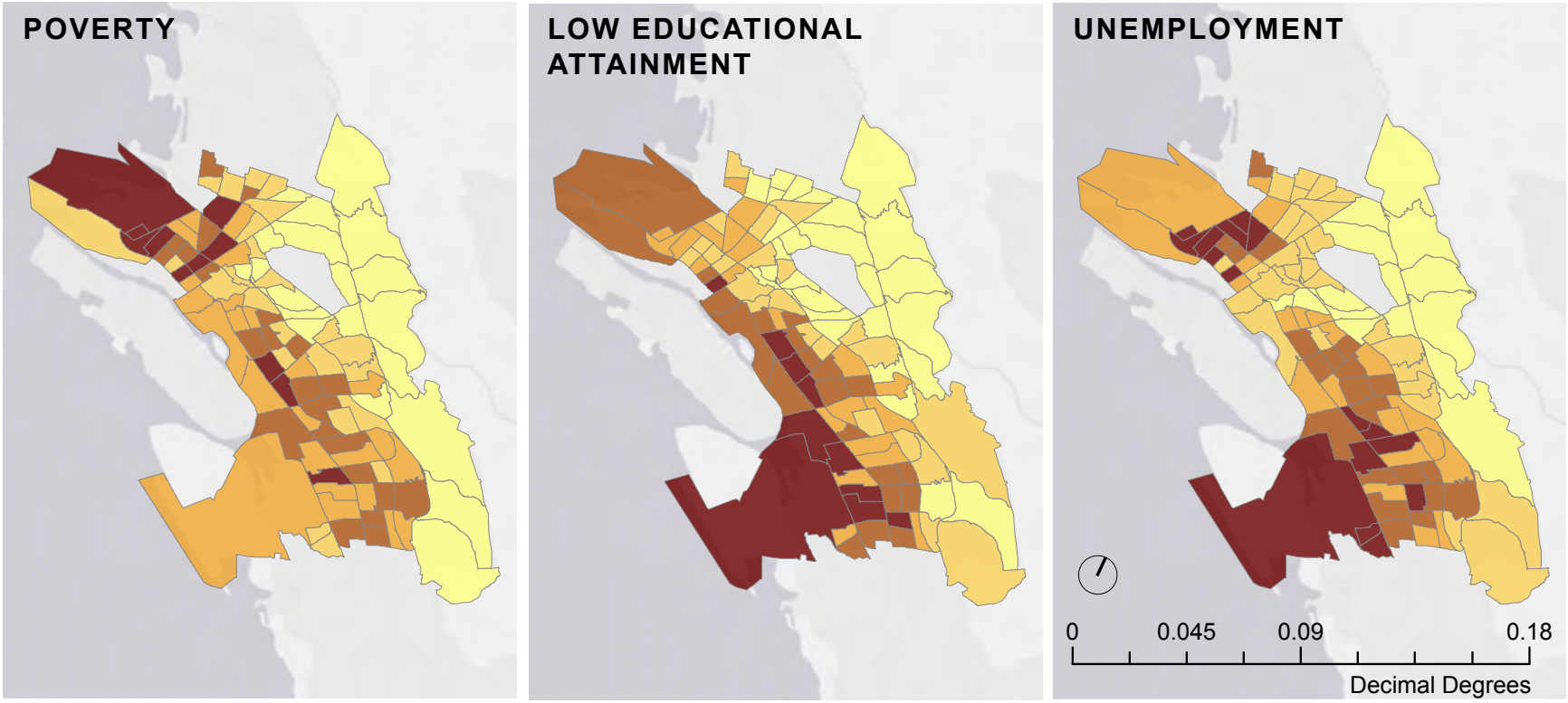
[46] California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division.

[47] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

the San Francisco metropolitan area of $74,876. And again, within the city there is a clear split between the hills and the flatlands. While the median annual household income in the hills neighborhoods is close to $130,000, that of the flatlands is less than a third of this amount, at approximately $41,000. And these household income statistics, when viewed over time, suggest that income inequality is firmly entrenched in Oakland, with a persistent polarization of income between hills residents and flatlands residents. (See Figure 4.) Housing tenure statistics, too, suggest a similar polarization, with consistently high (and possibly increasing) levels of homeownership in the hills, and consistently low homeownership levels in the flatlands. (See Figure 5.)

And finally, the built environment tells a similar story. The hills neighborhoods have a truly suburban feel, showing signs of sustained investment; homes are well maintained, commodious, often graced with manicured landscapes. The flatlands neighborhoods, by contrast, largely comprised of older housing stock, and exhibiting a wider range of land uses, frequently show signs of disinvestment and decay. They also bear the indelible marks of neighborhoods plagued by crime: front yards sealed off from the street by imposing iron fences and gates, bars covering windows and doors for an added layer of protection. (See Figures 6 – 8.)

How did these conditions come to be? To begin to understand the answer to this question, I will attempt to first trace the development of the city, through the lens of internal colonialism theory, from the time of its earliest inhabitants.



Percentage of Households Living Below the 2009 Poverty Threshold

- 0 - 6.8%
- 6.8 - 14.4%
- 14.4 - 21.8%
- 21.8 - 30.1%
- 30.1 - 44.3%

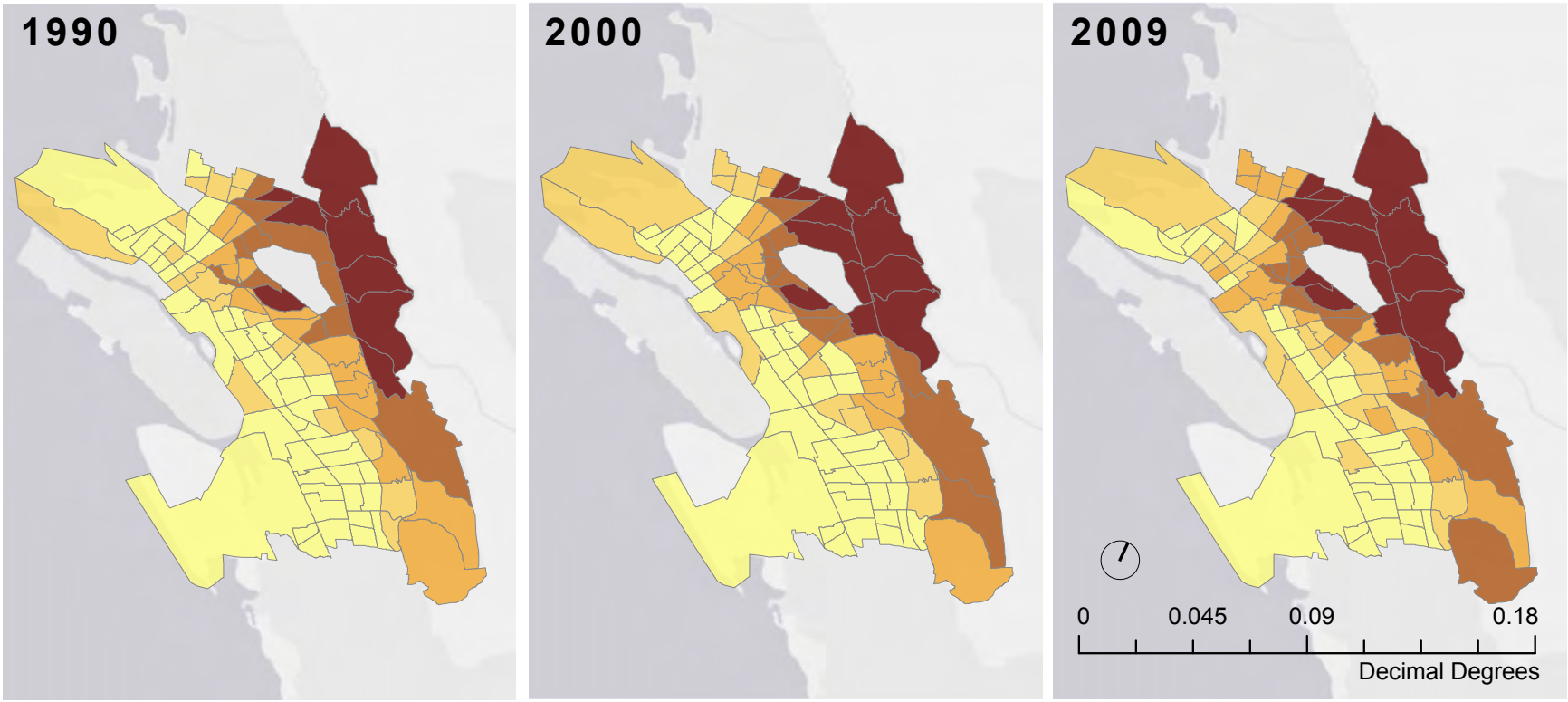
Percentage of Individuals Over 25 with Less than a 9th Grade Education

- 0 - 3.7%
- 3.7 - 9.1%
- 9.1 - 16.9%
- 16.9 - 25.6%
- 25.6 - 39.9%

Percentage of Unemployed Individuals Over the Age of 16

- 0 - 6.9%
- 6.9 - 14.1%
- 14.1 - 20.4%
- 20.4% - 29.2%
- 29.2 - 45.5%

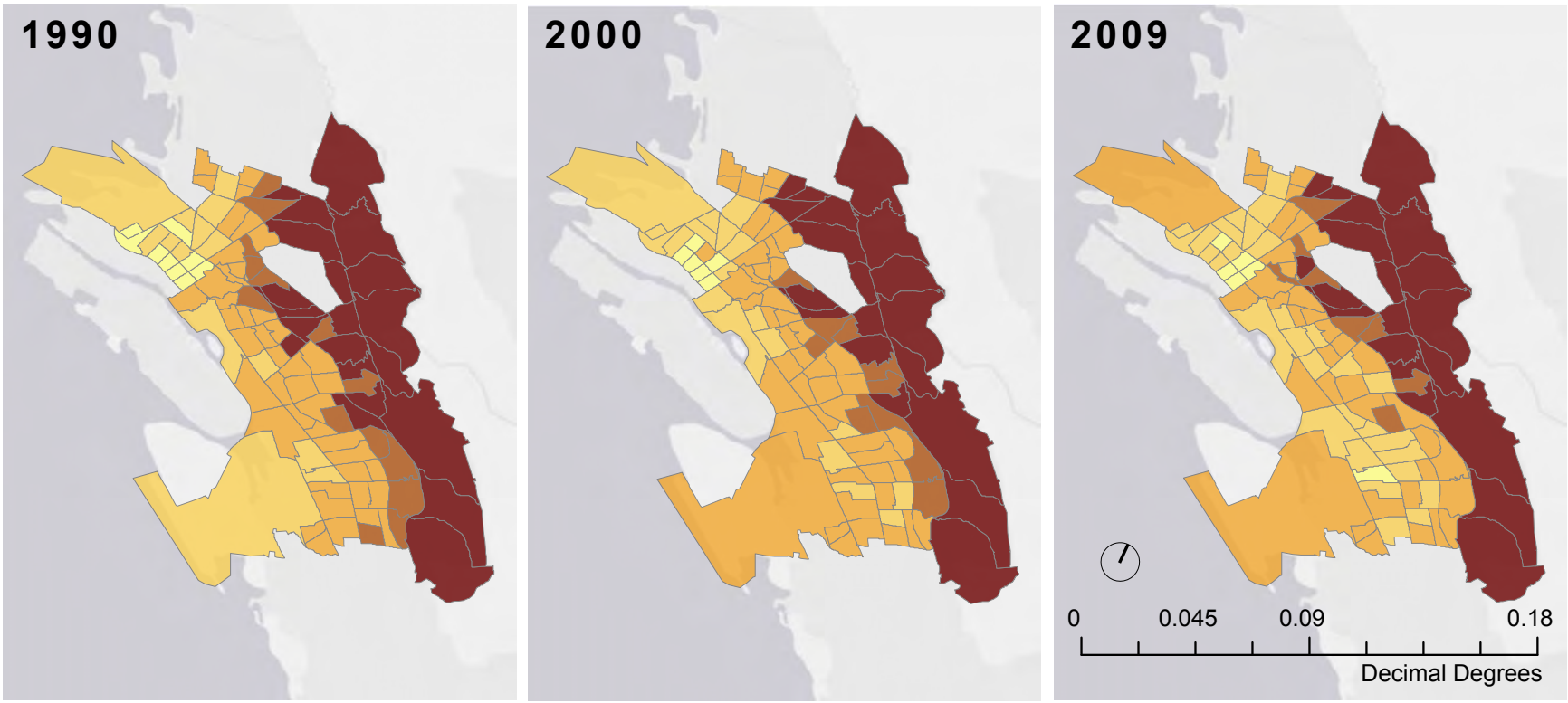
Figure 2: Poverty, Educational Attainment, and Unemployment in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.



Percentage of Individuals Over the Age of 25 with a Master's Degree or Higher.

- Below 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 20%
- 20 - 30%
- Above 30%

Figure 3: Educational Attainment in Oakland: Percentage of Individuals with a Master's Degree or Higher. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.



Median Household Income by Census Tract. 1990 and 2000 data has been adjusted for inflation based on the CPI-U-RS adjustment factors published annually by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Data is compared to the 2009 median income for the metropolitan area.

- Below 30% AMI
- 30 - 50% AMI
- 50 - 80% AMI
- 80 - 100% AMI
- Above 100% AMI

Figure 4: Median Household Income in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.

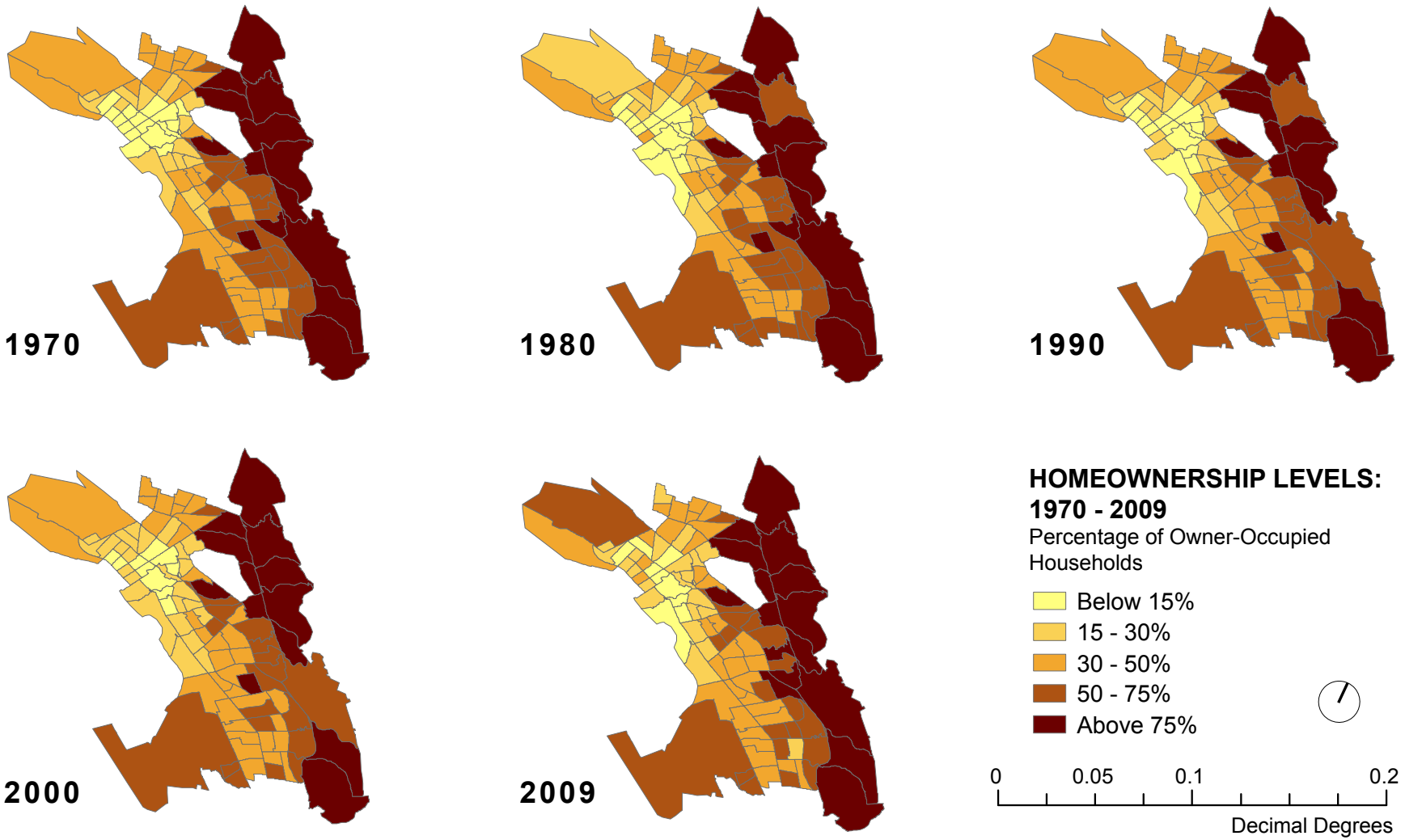


Figure 5: Housing Tenure (Homeownership Levels) in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990, 1980, 1970. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.







Figure 6: Images of the Oakland Hills. Photos taken by Molly Promes.

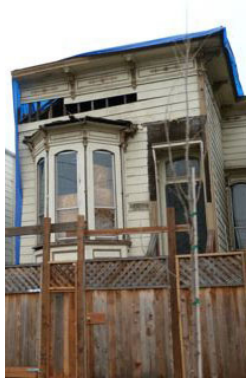
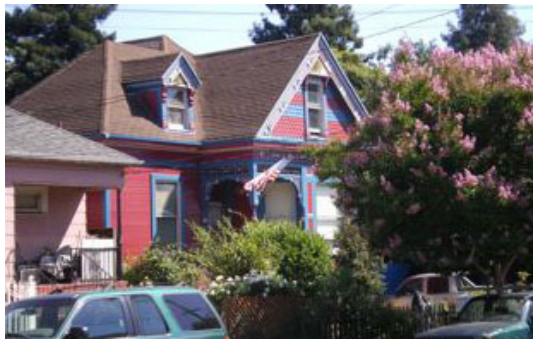


Figure 7: Images of West Oakland. Photos taken by Molly Promes.





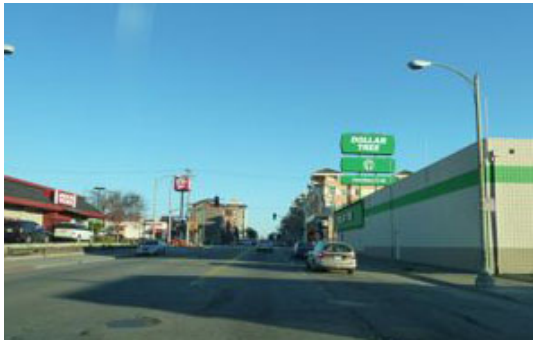



Figure 8: Images of the Fruitvale District. Photos taken by Molly Promes and Candice Promes.

NATURAL CAPITAL

It would be impossible to discuss the development of Oakland apart from the greater region in which it resides. Because even from its earliest days, the growth of this place has been linked to the natural riches of a much larger region, and driven by economic forces often far more remote. The city's position within present-day California, a diverse landscape of rich natural wealth and beauty—of high snow-capped peaks, mineral-rich foothills, and low fertile valleys, of rocky coasts and sandy shores, of forests, of deserts and dunes—has been central to its development. It is precisely this natural wealth and beauty that captured the attention of both European explorers and American prospectors from the East, and would ultimately steer its fate.

San Francisco Bay

At the edge of the continent, where the waters of the great California Central Valley rivers—the San Joaquin and the Sacramento—meet the Pacific, lies a broad delta; as one moves westward, the delta gives way to a series of estuaries and wetlands, and finally to a calm bay. The bay is bounded to the east and west by the hills of the California Coast Ranges, and is long but narrow—more than fifty miles in length, but generally fewer than three miles across. Its waters are shallow and silted; once merely a valley of the California Coast Ranges, the shallow structural depression of the bay has been filled with water since the last Ice Age. A narrow gap in the rocky coastal hillsides forms the mouth of the bay, where fog flows through, shrouding the peninsula in fog, and cooling the interior as it dissipates.

Along the coast, wind-swept, rocky hillsides rise sharply from the sea; moving inland, at moments these hills are crowned with magnificent redwoods, at other moments they lie bare. The seemingly placid bay belies its position in the Pacific Ring of Fire, among the world's most unstable terrain. Here, beneath the San Francisco peninsula, and continuing from northwest to southeast along the length of the continent, is the meeting place of two tectonic plates, marked by earthquake faults and volcanic activity. This, the storied San Andreas fault, extends the length of the state, and has produced devastating earthquakes, including the famed 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and the 1989 Loma Prieta quake.

El Encinal: The Oak Grove

The eastern, interior shore of the bay once offered a calming respite to the craggy, harsh landscape of the Golden Gate. To see this shore today is to see a manufactured, machined landscape, one that bears little resemblance to its appearance even less than two centuries ago. But at the time of the arrival of Spanish explorers, the groves of coastal oak that greeted them

inspired the place name of *El Encinal*, or oak grove.[48]

At that time, a narrow coastal plain of grassy foothills, tidal flats, and wetland marshes met the shore of the bay. Beyond the plains, gentle hills paralleled the coastline, rising more than 1,500 feet above the flats. Covering the hillsides were coastal oaks, bay laurel, and tall grasses; redwood forests defined the crests. Mountain creeks once carved their way down the slopes, spilling into a wide and shallow tidal slough.

The close intermingling of these distinct environments once supported a stunning and abundant array of wildlife. The bay was brimming with perch, rock cod, herring, and sturgeon; a glimpse beneath rocks would reveal abalone, mussels, and clams. Seals, sea lions, and sea otters basked in the rocky coastal waters. The estuary, edged with cattails and tule, was home to great blue heron, warbler, gulls, and terns, and in the winter, to migrating ducks and geese. And in the hills, beneath the blanket of tall grasses and acorn-laden live oak trees, hidden in thickets of brush was an endless variety of small mammals and wildlife, from deer and fox to raccoons, skunks, rabbits and woodrats, to snakes and lizards. Larger animals, too, including antelope, elk, mountain lions, and grizzly bears once roamed the hillsides and canyons.

[48] Beth Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City*. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982).

THE OHLONE: ABUNDANCE AND EXCHANGE

Amidst this abundant wildlife existed one the densest native populations north of present-day Mexico. The Ohlone, who inhabited small villages ringing the shores of the San Francisco Bay, may have numbered as many as 10,000 at the time of the Spanish arrival.[49] They were not a singular people or tribal organization, but rather a number of independent "tribelets" that occupied the region and spoke a variety of languages with a common Penutian root.[50] Along the eastern edge of the Bay, in present-day Oakland, the *Huchiun* Ohlone tribelet lived along the shores of the estuary, and at the mouths of the creeks flowing down from the hillside.

What is known today of the Ohlone peoples has been derived from the diaries of Spanish explorers and journalists, and from the travelogues of ship captains and traders. These accounts have been melded with the work of archaeologists and anthropologists to develop a more complete picture of Ohlone life. Archaeological evidence, primarily based in the large shell mounds found at the shore of the bay just north of present-day Oakland, reveals traces of a centuries-old lineage of relative peace and stability. The Ohlone appear to be direct descendants of a people who lived undisturbed on their land for at least 1,200 years, but perhaps for as many as 4,500 to 5,000 years.[51]

Ohlone Lifestyle

The Ohlone were fused culturally and spiritually to the land. A hunting and gathering 'Stone Age' people, their foraging spanned several ecological zones, and a variety of plant and animal communities. In each, they learned to listen to the rhythms of the land, and to tap its latent potential. They were quite mobile, trekking from harvest to harvest, establishing temporary dwellings, and interacting with neighboring tribelets through trade, intermarriage, and ceremonial events.

Men hunted small and large mammals, and birds; they fished, navigating the Bay in tule boats. Women gathered nuts and seeds, picked flower stalks, forged an intimate relationship with individual plants. Elements from the natural world were fashioned into beautiful and useful objects. They built structures with the materials at hand: willow branches from stream banks

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[49] Lowell John Bean, *The Ohlone Past and Present: Native Americans of the San Francisco Bay Region*. (Menlo Park, CA: Ballena Press, 1994).

[50] Malcolm Margolin, *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area*. (Berkeley, Calif: Heyday Books, 2003).

[51] *Ibid.*

formed the stakes of their dome-shaped dwellings, thatched grasses from the hillsides formed walls and provided protection from moisture, and woven tules from the marshes were used as interior coverings. Fallen logs and swampy earth formed the envelope of their sweathouses, or *temescals*.

Men generally wore no clothing, save in cold weather, when soft fur capes were employed. Women wore aprons made of rushes and tanned deerskin, and adorned themselves with facial tattoos and earrings. Both men and women wore shell necklaces, which conveyed one's social status.

In a land of abundance, the Ohlone centered their diet on the acorn, and supplemented this with foodstuffs from the diverse surrounding ecological zones. The acorn, though labor intensive to process, offered a compact source of protein, oil, carbohydrates, and vitamins. Other plants factored prominently in their diet, from manzanita bush berries, crushed for drink; to mariposa lily bulbs, cooked and eaten; to cattails and tule, eaten as vegetables. Nuts from the bay tree were roasted; pine nuts were harvested by burning pinecones and picking out the seeds; peppergrass and wildflower seeds were harvested and ground into flour in a mortar to create a mush. Fresh clover was harvested from the hills.

Fishing was carried out primarily with nets woven of milkweed fibers, and pulled through the water to secure the catch. Men would venture out into the Bay, paddling in large canoes crafted from bundles of tule rushes tied into bundles. Farther north, where the San Joaquin River meets the bay, salmon could be caught in funnel-shaped basket traps set in fast-running tributary streams.

Hunting was by bow and arrow made from the wood of the yew tree, found in the canyons, and animal sinew. Arrowheads were chiseled from both local chert and imported obsidian. Small game was trapped with twig cages or deadfall traps made from heavy logs or rocks, or by burning the chaparral cover to drive animals out into the open. Wood rats were captured by burning their nests. Ground squirrels were caught by fanning smoke into their holes, and driving animals out into the waiting hands of hunters.

> *The Indians of the Bay Area had a thoroughly intimate knowledge of the animals around them. A hunter knew a great deal about how animals thought and acted. He was skillful at tracking and expert at making animal calls—sucking hard against his outstretched fingers, for example, to make a noise like a cornered rabbit, thereby attracting predators and bringing forth other rabbits who*

would thump the ground angrily. His senses were so keen that he could sometimes smell an animal even before he could see it.[52]

The Ohlone understood and interacted with their environment at the most intimate level, in a way that has not been replicated since.

Rhythms of the Land

Living amidst a rich and fertile environment, although the Ohlone traveled from harvest to harvest, collecting food and materials as they came into season, the distances that they had to cover were relatively small. Still, because they moved around a great deal, they tended not to build permanent structures, and accumulated few personal possessions, as they needed to carry most of their belongings on their backs.

The rhythm of Ohlone movement was wed to the biological rhythms of the oak tree. Time was measured by the oaks. The acorn harvest, the most important Ohlone social event, marked the beginning of the new year; summer and winter were defined by the number of moons before or after the acorn harvest. Feasts, festivals, and religious dances were all tied to the cycles of the oak tree, with celebrations at the time of bud-thickening and leaf-burst, celebrations for the appearance of the pale oak flowers, and naturally, the acorn harvest.[53] At harvest time, which lasted for two to three weeks, entire villages would migrate into the hills, working during the day, and dancing into the evening. Men would beat the acorns off the trees with sticks, while boys would climb into the trees and shake the acorns from the branches. Women and girls would gather the fallen bounty into burden baskets, carrying these on their backs into the village. Ritual dances in the evenings formed an opportunity for tribelet intermingling, and ultimately intermarriage. Men would don headdresses woven of reeds and grasses, and decorated with feathers and shells, and cloaks made of duck and goose feathers. Through each of the seasons, the Ohlone carried out their daily activities with immense awareness and involvement.

Life, Work, and Art

Ohlone social and spiritual life was intertwined with the everyday; hunting and gathering rituals, and even simple object-making were imbued with meaning. For men, congregation in the *temescal* occupied a central practical and spiritual role. Before venturing out for the hunt, men would gather in these streamside pithouses, with their characteristic log- and earth-covered roofs. Crawling inside through a hole in the roof, they would heat rocks by fire, and remain inside until

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[52] *Ibid.,* 26.

[53] *Ibid.,* 46.

they could tolerate the heat no longer, plunging into the cold stream afterward. This physical cleansing made the men's scent undetectable to their prey; but more than a physical cleansing, the *temescal* provided spiritual cleansing. Inside these sacred spaces, laughter was shared, stories were exchanged, boys made the rite of passage to manhood.

For women, acorn grinding occupied an analogous role. At large bedrock outcroppings, Ohlone women would gather to pound acorns with rocks, and grind them with mortars, in a long and labor intensive process that ultimately produced powdery flour, and provided ample opportunity for social exchange in the process. Women would sing and chat as they pounded, and as they sifted the fine flour in baskets, and as they ground the powder again. The fruits of their labor would be used to make acorn gruel, made with hot water from heated stones, or bread, baked in pit ovens dug into the earth. Women would also venture together into the grasslands to harvest seed and insects, burning the grasslands upon completion, in order to encourage future seed production. This, too, formed a social bonding experience.[54]

For the Ohlone, *art* was fused with daily life. Simple objects, such as their everyday baskets, were beautifully crafted, and regularly decorated with feathers and shell beads. Storytelling, too, was an art, with a rich tradition of mythology and narratives describing the ancient spirits—Coyote, Eagle, Hummingbird, Falcon, Lizard, Bear—and the origins of the Ohlone world.

The Ohlone existed in a state of constant tension and balance, with mutual need and mutual hostility at once holding the society together. Their lifestyle was characterized by a balanced, not exploitative, relationship with the environment; an economic system based on sharing, rather than competing; and a social system that emphasized the giving of wealth, rather than accumulation. They were a people in strong command of their relationship with nature, living with a deeply spiritual sense of the world.

[54] Bean, *The Ohlone Past and Present.*

MISSIONS AND MERCANTILISM

The Ohlone political, economic, and social systems were subverted by the turn of the 19th century, with the arrival of the Spanish missionaries. With the contact of these two civilizations, a new 'Old World' vision was imposed upon the region, with the ultimate effect of decimating the Ohlone population, irrevocably altering the landscape and ecosystems, and setting a precedent for more than two centuries of colonial-style relations to follow.

Old World, New World

The chain of missions, military presidios, and civilian settlements along the California coast mark the efforts of the Spanish Crown to protect its newly acquired silver mines in northwestern 'New Spain' from Russian or English advance.[55] Beginning in Baja California, the missionaries worked their way up the coast, arriving in the San Francisco Bay region in 1770. Over the thirty years that would follow, six missions, one military presidio, and one civilian settlement were established in Ohlone territory. The Ohlone, along with numerous other California natives, came voluntarily to the missions at first in hope of profitable trade, quickly filling the institutions to capacity. And thus the native peoples of present-day Oakland's creeks and tidal slough migrated south to Mission San Jose.[56]

Upon arriving at the missions, the Ohlone suddenly became subjects to the grand Utopian vision of the Franciscan fathers, or more remotely, to the Spanish Crown. The *padres* envisioned a new life for the natives; a life weaned away from a life of savagery in a ten-year mission 'apprenticeship,' where they would learn the virtues of prayer and hard work, and such 'practical' skills as farming, weaving, and cattle raising. And ultimately, around the missions would grow placid farms filled with docile natives who would baptize their children in the church, and continue in the Catholic tradition.[57] The vision was never realized, but the Ohlone way of life was still effectively extinguished.

And what the Spanish did not realize was that the seemingly wild and untamed landscape they had inherited had in fact been substantially modified and domesticated by their predecessors, with countless habitats and species dependent upon human intervention for

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[55] Ramón Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi, *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush*. (Berkeley: University of California Press,1998), 113.

[56] Margolin, *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life,* 160.

[57] *Ibid.*

maintenance. The natives were indeed a 'keystone' species in an ecosystem that depended upon them for stability. And thus the 'missionization' of the natives led to a gradual decline in the number, range, and diversity of native species and habitats.[58]

The introduction of cattle grazing and agriculture, in particular, profoundly altered the landscape both of the Ohlone territory and of California as a whole. Introduced weeds took root, flourished, and replaced native grasses. Old World livestock began consuming the grasses, nuts, and roots that the natives had traditionally relied upon; the natives, meanwhile, began consumption of the introduced animals. The native shift in food sources, in turn, meant that game populations traditionally hunted by the natives increased extraordinarily for lack of predators. Grizzly bears filled the chief predator role vacated by the natives, and proliferated by facilely plucking the Old World livestock. Thus, the exceptional quantities of wildlife found at the time of Gold Rush settlement were likely an aberration, a consequence of Spanish settlement and disruption.[59]

Mission Labor

The Spanish Crown expected to establish a literate and tax-paying population in its ever-expanding New World territory at minimal expense. Under the Franciscan missionaries, the natives would be indoctrinated as Catholics, memorizing and reciting the catechism and *doctrina*, participating in morally enriching disciplinary activity that would aid in their conversion from savagery to civilization. Coupled with the regimented religious lessons was a structured work schedule that enlisted the natives in the production of food and material goods—in the Old World style.

> *The women were set to work spinning and weaving cloth—although they had no use for clothing during the summer and during the winter their own rabbit-skin and otter-skin cloaks provided far more warmth than badly made mission cloth. The men were made to till the soil, even though plentiful game, fish, nuts, and seeds were all around them, free for the taking. In addition, the Indians made soap and tallow, prepared hides (for export), cultivated vines, collected olives, learned blacksmithing, and made thousands of adobe bricks for the mission buildings. To make sure that the Indians learned the virtues of hard work, the monks eschewed labor-saving devices and deliberately taught the Indians methods that were difficult and outdated even at that time.*[60]

Native labor was particularly useful to the Spanish for its flexibility. A large labor force could be quickly mobilized to perform seasonal work, such as sowing fields, harvesting crops,

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[58] Gutiérrez, *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush,* 274.

[59] *Ibid.,* 272.

[60] Margolin, *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life,* 162.

shearing sheep, or branding livestock.[61] But under the crowded conditions of the mission, disease spread rapidly, and the natives succumbed to measles, mumps, smallpox, and other diseases for which they had no immunity.

Rise of the Californios

The demise of the Mission came quickly, collapsing at the thrust of distant forces. Following Mexico's victory in an eleven-year war of independence from Spain, the new government in Mexico City issued a decree that would secularize the missions, free the natives from Mission rule, and partition and sell Mission lands. The missions gradually closed as their funds ran dry, and a brief era of decentralization followed, with the *rancho* emerging as the dominant economic and social institution.

The *rancho* agricultural settlements were almost feudalistic in structure; new landowners of Hispanic descent, *Californios*, were able to again create a society based on the work of the natives, who now lived in tule huts on the *ranchos*, and labored in exchange for food and clothing. The landowners, who enjoyed a great cattle surplus, traded hides and tallow with New England merchants and reveled in their newly acquired status. Rather than reinvesting in machinery or equipment to generate further profit and wealth, they instead sought simply to accumulate luxury goods to facilitate a distinctly *Californio* way of life.[62]

Among the *Californios* was Luis Maria Peralta of Sonora, Mexico, who had served in the Spanish military, and was granted a parcel of land in compensation for his service to the Crown. Peralta's land grant, at more than 44,000 acres, encompassed the entire eastern shore of the San Francisco Bay, from the water's edge to the crest of the hills, present-day Oakland, and the former Ohlone territory. But the Ohlone way of life had long since ceased, their culture and synergy with the land silenced. (See Figure 9.)

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[61] Gutiérrez, *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush,* 123.

[62] *Ibid.,* 183.

Figure 9: Luis Maria Peralta House and Adobe Structure, circa 1900. Image courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

MANIFEST DESTINY

Meanwhile, still larger economic and political forces were at work, which would yet again dramatically reshape the settlement of the region. The economic ties that had begun to develop between the California territory under Spanish and Mexican rule and the United States had morphed into political allegiances; these ties were further solidified during the Gold Rush period, and culminated in California's admission to the Union in 1850. A new order of extraction, processing, and exchange would soon supplant the fleeting Mission and *rancho* systems. And as these global and national forces converged upon the newly formed state of California, Oakland's development would take a dramatic turn.

Land Grab

The San Francisco Bay was an active global trade region by the 1830s; merchants arriving by sea traded manufactured goods for cattle hides and tallow produced by the *Californios*, as well as furs trapped by the Russians and English. By the 1840s, the United States was moving westward; emigrants from the East Coast began arriving overland to settle California. Among these early settlers was Oakland's founding trio—three young speculators, one of whom was trained as a lawyer—and together they laid claim to 160 acres of the Peralta land. They promptly hired a surveyor to prepare a street grid, and began selling lots, asserting that the U.S. victory in the Mexican-American war and the subsequent entry of California into U.S. statehood rendered previous Mexican land claims null and void. Peralta brought his case to the newly formed Board of California Land Commissioners, and then to the U.S. District Court.[63] And though the court system, overwhelmed with more than 800 land claims, ultimately confirmed the validity of the Peralta family's claims, by the time the decision was issued, nineteen years had passed and the lands were blanketed with towns and farms in the hands of hundreds of property owners.[64]

Resource Extraction

At that time, a magnificent stand of redwoods crowned the hills above Oakland; for years, these redwoods had served as a landmark for ship captains entering San Francisco Bay. Averaging twelve to twenty feet in diameter, and up to three hundred feet high, these were logged by so-called "squatters" who had set up camp in the vicinity, as export markets developed for redwood. Beginning in the 1830s, lumber was being shipped as far as the Sandwich Islands.

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[63] Part of the San Antonio Land grant [Alameda County, Calif.] : Antonio Peralta, claimant : case no. 98, Northern District, 1852 - 1871.

[64] Beth Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City*. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982), 27.

By the mid-1840s, Americans were arriving and settling in the Oakland hills in numbers, taking advantage of the 'free' natural resources, developing logging roads, and even establishing commercial sawmills. (See Figure 10.) Timber was carried by raft across the Bay to San Francisco, where larger ships could carry it to its final destination.[65]

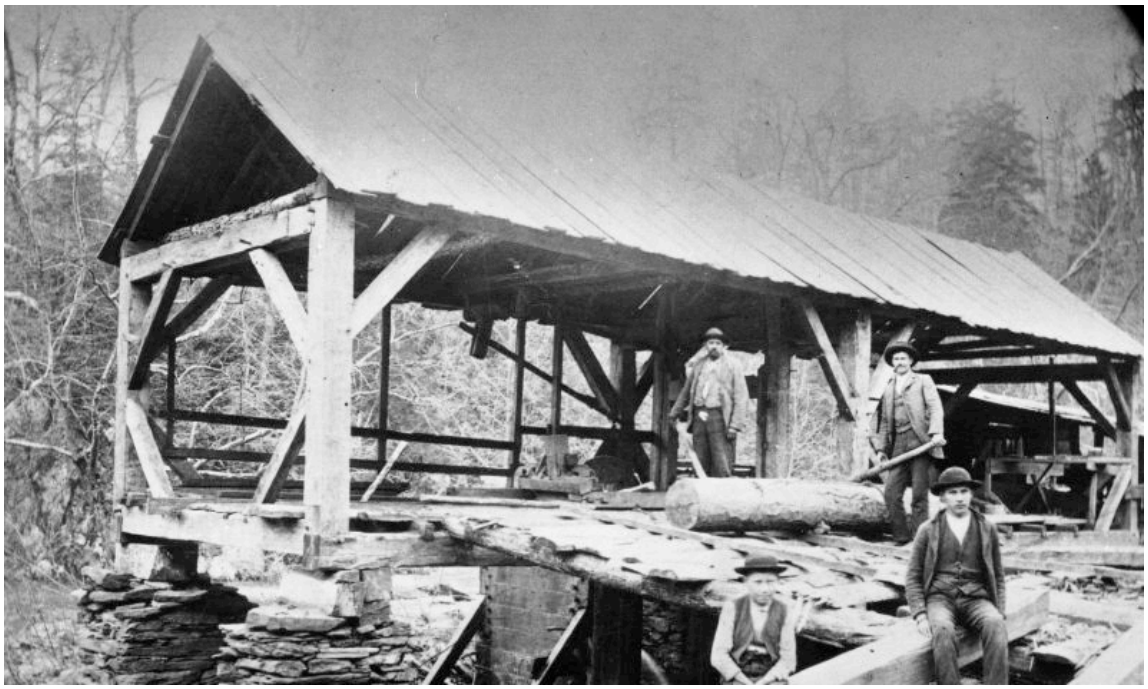

Figure 10: Oakland's First Sawmill. Image Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

At the discovery of gold in the Sierras, loggers abandoned the forests for the goldfields. But they soon returned, as the Gold Rush provided unprecedented demand for lumber. Oakland's redwoods were logged to build the hotels and houses of early San Francisco, and to construct flumes, rockers, and shafts for the gold mines. The price of lumber climbed sharply during this period, from $30 per thousand board feet in 1847 to $350-$600 per thousand board feet in 1849. And local demand for lumber continued to grow; San Francisco was destroyed by fire no fewer than six times in just an eighteen-month period in 1850 and 1851.[66]

[65] Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City,* 16.

[66] *Ibid.,* 18.

With the arrival of the steam sawmill in the early 1850s, Oakland's logging history began to draw to a close. By 1860, the four steam sawmills in operation had processed the bulk of Oakland's hilltop forest, leaving behind a denuded landscape.[67]

Transcontinental Railroad

Meanwhile, the lawyer of the founding trio—Horace Carpentier—had overseen the incorporation of the city, and had been elected as its first mayor. After convincing the town's board of trustees to grant him legal title to the entire city waterfront, he began constructing wharves, piers, and docks, from which he could collect fees. Then, in 1868, Carpentier transferred his control of the harbor to the newly formed Oakland Waterfront Company, of which he was an officer, together with several other prominent investors and political figures, including Leland Stanford, president of the Central Pacific Railroad. Just one day after its incorporation, for merely $5, the Oakland Waterfront Company sold five hundred acres of bay frontage and two strips of land for rights-of-way to the Western Pacific Railroad, an affiliate of Central Pacific. The railroad then chose Oakland as the west coast terminus for its new transcontinental line. The locational advantages were apparent; the city was on the continental side of the Bay, and had existing train and ferry connections to San Francisco already in operation.[68]

For the first two decades of the city's existence, it had remained a quiet hamlet, standing in sharp contrast to raucous, debaucherous Gold-Rush-era San Francisco, which had developed rapidly thanks to its natural deepwater port. But the advent of the railroad upended the existing order. Although Oakland would still remain a bedroom community with respect to its westerly neighbor, its size, composition, entire trajectory would change nearly overnight.

A new era of long-distance rail travel was emerging in the United States, and Oakland was affected dramatically by this development. East Coast passengers bound for San Francisco would first stop in Oakland; new hotels, restaurants, drugstores, and conveniences sprang up at the railroad terminus to accommodate the weary travelers. Freight, too, made a stopping point in Oakland, where it was unloaded, sorted, and reloaded onto other rail and ship lines. The city grew westward, as Central Pacific built its yards and shops, and a long wharf and a passenger ferry mole extended out past the mud flats into deep water in the bay.[69]

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[67] *Ibid.,* 18.

[68] Chris Rhomberg, *No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 26.

[69] Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City,* 58-59.

By 1911, Oakland was the West Coast terminus for three transcontinental rail lines, and as many as sixteen hundred trains a day moved through the city.[70] The city quickly became the transportation hub of the region, and industry began to locate near the rail lines. Mostly factories for the processing of raw goods from the state's hinterlands, these industries formed the base of the city's budding economy. (See Figure 11.) The railroad, and industry, brought along with it an unprecedented demand for labor.

Figure 11: Interior of Albers Brothers Warehouse, Oakland. Image courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[70] *Ibid.*

CAPITAL INFUSION

Oakland's incipient epoch of growth was characterized at first by a hybrid of civic and national capitalism, in which both a local business elite and large national corporations invested capital and controlled resources; the city's land and waters were shaped and reshaped by their investments, as rapacious railroad-fueled growth continued. And the city became a veritable boomtown at the onset of World War II, as the East Bay became one of the nation's leading shipbuilding centers. The demands placed on the city were immense, and the region's ecological metabolism was fundamentally altered in the process.

Reshaping the Landscape

The city's initial growth spurt, spurred by the arrival of the railroad and a new economic order, led to dramatic changes in the natural landscape. To address the growing city's water supply needs, the hillside creeks that once flowed into the estuary were dammed; to accommodate sewer needs, effluent was piped directly into the tidal slough. The flatlands south of the slough were given over to agriculture, with fruit orchards covering once open meadows. And on the waterfront, dredging allowed the harbor to accommodate cargo ships; the estuary channel was deepened; and a series of municipal piers and wharves were built. By the time the Panama Canal opened in 1914, Oakland was prepared to compete with San Francisco as a major port.

While growth was radically altering the city landscape, the City Beautiful movement was gaining momentum, and Oakland's city officials began to plan for grand civic spaces, including a system of parks and open space. The tidal slough had now been dammed and dredged to create a lake in the center of the city—the sewer system had since been rerouted to empty directly into the Bay—and the circumference of the lake was graciously landscaped, ringed with a necklace of lights, and crowned with a pergola at its north end. Over the years, the city acquired a number of additional park sites, and in the process consulted with famed city planners Charles Mulford Robinson, Werner Hegemann, and Frederick Law Olmsted on the preservation of open space. While their recommendations were only partially carried out, because the city lacked sufficient funds to acquire all of the lands set forth in their recommendations, much of the 10,000-acre park system at the crest of the hills suggested by Olmsted was spared from development.[71]

[71] Jerry Kent, "Ours to Keep 75 Years in the Regional Parks: A Brief History of the East Bay Regional Park District." *East Bay Regional Park District*, accessed November 22, 2010. http://www.ebparks.org/75/timeline.

Industrial Garden

The arrival of the Transcontinental Railroad, a clear turning point in the city's development, attracted dozens of manufacturing and food processing industries, which could capitalize on the now far-reaching transportation network, and the city's proximity to the agricultural hinterlands. Canneries packaged and shipped the bounty from fruit farms and orchards. Cotton, wool, and jute mills, filled with steam-powered machinery, wove and spun fibers from California's Central Valley. Planing mills churned out lavish architectural trim and ornament.

An influx of new residents arrived, from across the nation and across the globe, responding to the demand for labor created by the arrival of national industry. (See Figure 12.) A large number of blacks, employed as Pullman porters, settled at the end of the rail line in West Oakland. And many of the Chinese who had worked to build the western end of Transcontinental Railroad, settled near the city's downtown. Among white settlers, thousands of Irish and German immigrants arrived before the turn of the century; this influx was rivaled by Italian and Portuguese immigration in subsequent decades.[72] Americans from the East and Midwest arrived in great numbers, and the city's growth accelerated with the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, which sent refuge-seekers across the bay, many of whom settled permanently.[73]

[72] U.S. Census Bureau, *U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1870 – 1890.*

[73] Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City,* 179.

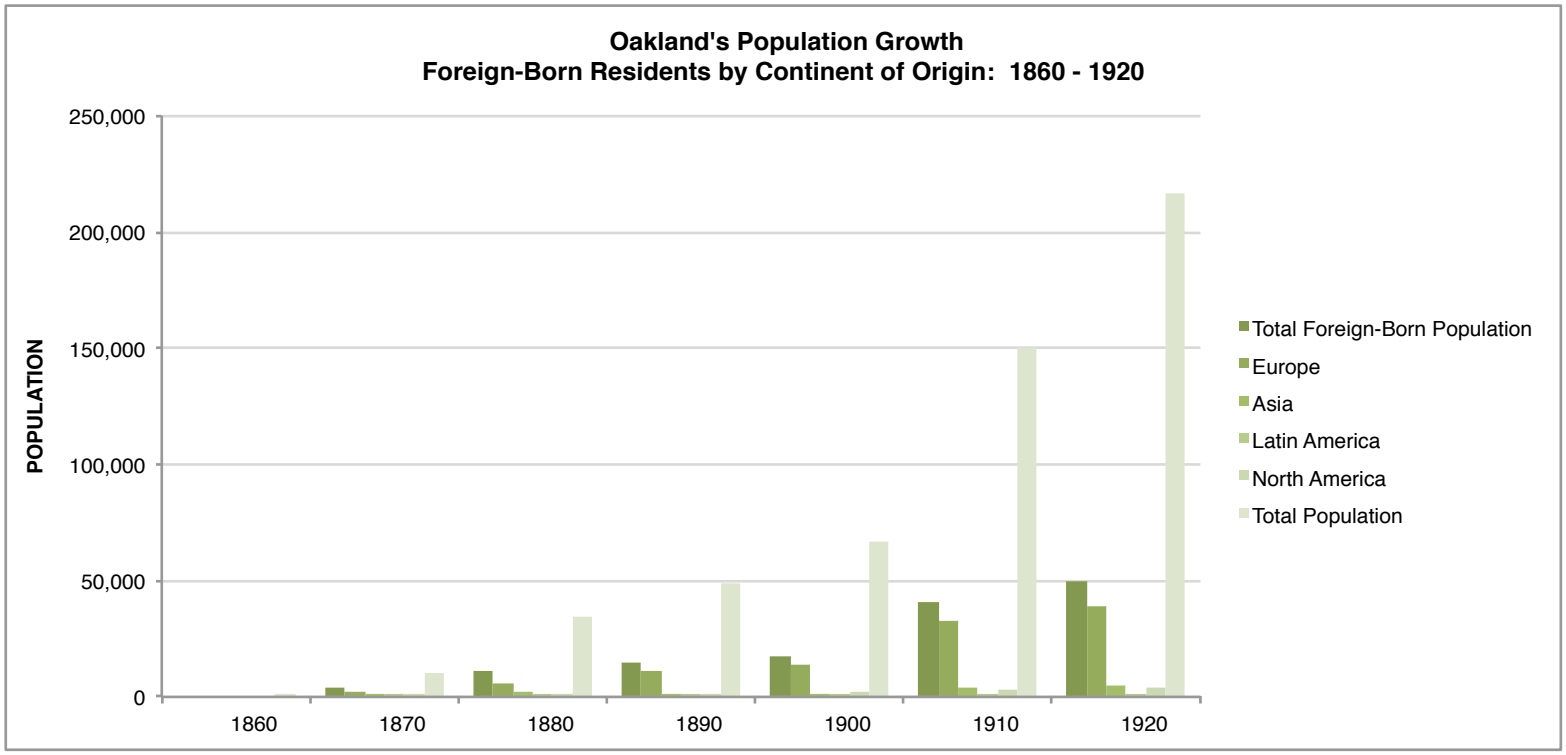

Figure 12: Oakland's Foreign-Born Population Growth, 1860 - 1920. U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing.

Residential development began in earnest. Speculators bid on rights-of-way for electric streetcars, and real estate developers purchased land at the city's fringes. Francis Marion "Borax" Smith, a Southern California entrepreneur who by the turn of the century had established a multinational mining conglomerate, purchased all of the fledgling streetcar companies, and along with a business partner established Oakland's Realty Syndicate. Together, they pursued streetcar line extensions and residential real estate development in tandem, and formed a large holding company with numerous subsidiaries, including local light, power, and water companies, throughout the Bay Area. Aiming for a regional transportation and utilities monopoly, the syndicate would ultimately collapse under its own weight, but not before a complete electric transport network had been established—known as the Key System for its long key-shaped ferry mole extension over the Bay.[74]

And as residential and transit expansion continued under the Realty Syndicate, the city's business leaders carried on with an endless solicitation of capital investment from the East. Oakland's Chamber of Commerce eagerly recruited Eastern firms to 'go west.' Brochures extolled the city's virtues, boasting a 'clean moral atmosphere' and mild climatic conditions that would foster a healthy and productive manufacturing workforce. Leaflets exclaimed of the continued investment that poured into the city, with more than $12 million in downtown business property improvements in just one year, and over a nine-year period a threefold increase in factory output and nearly sevenfold increase in port receipts.[75]

This aggressive pursuit of industry and civic boosterism appeared to yield results, leading to yet another shift in the city's development, as large, national corporations with headquarters located in the Midwest and East began to locate their factories in Oakland. Branch plants for automobile manufacturers proliferated, and with the arrival of assembly plants for Chevrolet, General Motors, Willys, Faegeol, and Caterpillar Tractor, Oakland became known as 'the Detroit of the West.'[76] (See Figure 13.) Other industries arrived as well, including chemical, electrical, and paint products; food processing, too, remained an important industry, with fruit canning factories and bakeries continuing to send product down the assembly line.[77]

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[74] Bagwell, *Oakland, The Story of a City,* 146.

[75] Oakland Chamber of Commerce, "Oakland: California's Favored City for Homes, Factories, and Commerce." (Oakland, Oakland Chamber of Commerce, 1924), 3-4.

[76] Johnson, Marilynn, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 18.

[77] U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Manufactures, Reports for States with Statistics for Principal Cities.*

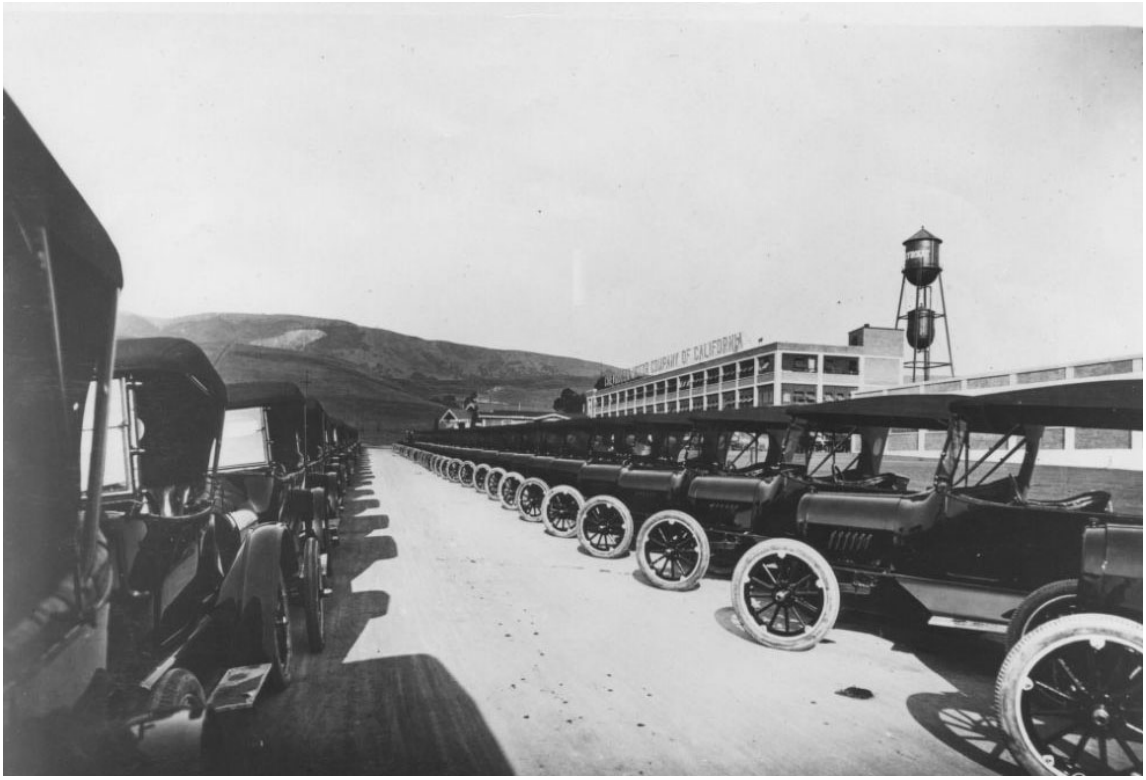

Figure 13: Chevrolet Plant, Oakland. Image Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

And thus grew the low-density, working-class city. But the arrival of new industry and workers had profound political implications. The growing working class exhibited Socialist sympathies, and in the city's 1911 elections, Socialist candidates nearly took control of the City Council; this prompted a series of charter reform measures sponsored by the ruling elite, including the establishment of a nonpartisan commission form of government, and the abolishment of the ward-based election system in favor of citywide elections, in order to dilute the power of ethnic and working-class voters.[78] But infighting still continued among the city's business leaders and ruling elite, even under the new system; and in a further effort to consolidate power, in 1928 banking and business leaders sponsored a new set of reforms to establish a council-manager form of government, giving rise to a political machine that would continue to aggressively pursue industrial expansion. And thus with the consolidation of political power among the corporate elite, we witness another characteristic form of 'colonial'-style

[78] Johnson, Marilynn, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 18.

domination—when the economic climate alone fails to guarantee stability, political instruments are employed to maintain control.

War and Peace

With the advent of the First World War, the federal government began investing heavily in the city and region, growing regional shipbuilding operations with awards to local defense contractors. And thus, like many other factory cities of the West Coast, Oakland's economic dependence would shift from absentee manufacturing concerns to the federal government. Federally fueled wartime growth was phenomenal, as the growth of one Oakland shipbuilding company illustrates. In 1916, Oakland's Moore Shipbuilding Company, together with U.S. Engineering Company, had been awarded federal contracts for several vessels. At that time, the Moore shipyards employed a fledgling crew of 250 in a 15-acre plant with just three building slips. And by the end of the war, the shipyards would cover 40 acres, boasting 10 slips, and supporting a workforce of more than 13,000.[79] And thus once again, in response to national, and ultimately global forces, Oakland experienced another economic boom, with its manufacturing workforce more than tripling in the five years between 1914 and 1919.[80] (See Figure 14.)

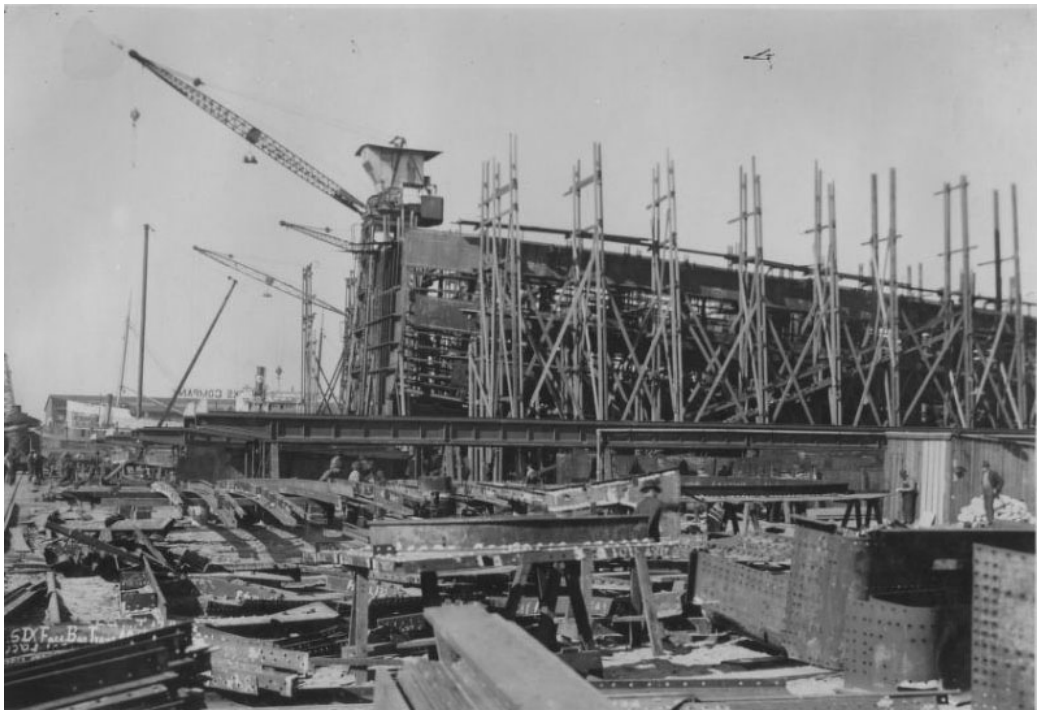

Figure 14: Steel Vessel Under Construction at Union Iron Works, Oakland Inner Harbor.
Image courtesy of Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

[79] Frank Merritt, *History of Alameda County, California*. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1928), 628.

[80] U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Population and Housing, 1920*.

And in the interwar period, as economic conditions stagnated, the federal government stepped in again with funding for major public works projects. By this time, rising industrialist Henry J. Kaiser, who had built a strong reputation with large-scale construction projects—his firm was a member of the 'Six Companies' joint venture selected for construction of the Hoover Dam—was well equipped to tackle the infrastructure projects on offer in the Bay Area, which were modest by comparison. And thus a $3.9 million federal contract to bore a highway tunnel passage through the Oakland hills, opening up traffic to the newly developing suburbs farther east, was awarded to Kaiser and Bechtel Company, a San Francisco engineering firm and another 'Six Companies' partner. Kaiser and Bechtel would join forces to win other lucrative federal contracts during this period as well—but most significant regionally was their successful bid for the $4.5 million award to build the substructure for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, with subcontracts awarded to the Moore Shipyard in Oakland to build the caissons for the bridge piers. Construction of the bridge provided thousands of jobs and millions of dollars for the local economy; in 1935, the Port of Oakland experienced a 62 percent increase in maritime business, due in part to shipments of concrete, structural steel, and cable for the bridge construction.[81] (See Figure 15.)

Figure 15: Construction of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, 1936. Image courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[81] Rhomberg, *No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland*, 77.

And federal funding flowed into the region in other forms as well; New Deal agencies such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Works Progress Administration, and the Public Works Administration provided $3 million in funding for projects conserving surplus watershed lands in the East Bay hills, in preparation for their conversion into a system of regional parks.[82]

World War II would bring another flurry of federal spending. Following the passage of the Merchant Marine Act in 1936, the region received nearly $5 billion in contracts from the Navy and the Maritime Commission. And more than $60 million was contributed to construct military supply and distribution facilities in the East Bay, including Oakland. The activities of the Oakland Army Supply Base and Oakland Naval Supply Depot were expanded, and shipbuilding continued to reign supreme, along with the iron and steel industries. With the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, federal dollars continued to flow into the region, creating a wartime industrial machine, with thousands of jobs for low- and unskilled workers, attracting labor from across the country. By peak employment in 1943, Bay Area shipyards employed nearly 80 percent of those who worked in the region's heavy industry.[83] Now Oakland, once behest to industrial capital of the East, had its growth bound to the largesse of the federal government.

The Bay Area was now the center of military shipbuilding on the West Coast, with Oakland and nearby Richmond at the helm. Both cities were transformed into boomtowns, seemingly overnight. Labor was suddenly in short supply, and employers began working with the federal government to recruit hundreds of thousands of additional workers, including women, youth, the elderly, and the handicapped. Shipyard managers scoured the nation for potential labor, importing workers from across the country; the great majority, though, came from the South and Midwest, a mix of Dust Bowl émigrés and Southern blacks.[84]

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[82] Jerry Kent, "Ours to Keep 75 Years in the Regional Parks: A Brief History of the East Bay Regional Park District." *East Bay Regional Park District*, accessed November 22, 2010. http://www.ebparks.org/75/timeline.

[83] Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush,* 32.

[84] *Ibid.,* 31.

INTERLUDE

The periods immediately following World War I and World War II booms were times of tumult, reassessment, and reorganization in Oakland. Both periods were characterized by struggle—struggle between the working class and the ruling business elite, struggle between blacks and whites—as one group sought to assert itself while the other sought to maintain its status, dominance, and control. Here, in lean economic times, the colonial dependency model takes on a different form—as a subordinated working population presses for concessions beyond the limits of an economic system in crisis, repression and force are used as instruments of control.

A Working Class Mobilizes

As industrialization in the city continued and as Oakland's working class grew, tensions began to mount between an increasingly unionized workforce and defensive, countermobilizing employers. In 1917, during the city's first shipbuilding boom, hundreds of unionized shipyard laborers struck the two largest East Bay shipyards for more than two weeks. Labor militancy spread beyond the shipyards, too; many previously unorganized and unskilled workers unionized during the war, from railroad laborers to cannery workers, and from building janitors to telephone operators. And class struggles only intensified after the war drew to a close. In October 1919, eleven hundred streetcar and ferry operators struck Oakland's Key System for ten days. When armed strikebreakers finally entered the scene, violence erupted, leaving forty wounded, several with gunshot injuries.[85]

As the post-World War I recession set in, organized labor's influence began to wane in the face of rising unemployment. But it would soon rise again, showing its might in both the 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike, where local longshoremen, seamen, and other maritime workers engaged in an 83-day strike led by union militants and Communists, and in Oakland's General Strike of 1946, one of the city's most colorful civic mass demonstrations.

The General Strike occurred against a backdrop of expired wartime price controls, a dramatic rise in the cost of living, and a nationwide resolve by labor unions to take action by reworking existing contracts and extending unionization to unorganized workers. The city's transportation and production industries were already largely unionized, but the retail sector, which was mostly female, was still unorganized and presented an immense opportunity for

[85] Rhomberg, *No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland*, 46.

organized labor to extend its reach. As Oakland's retail clerks unionized, Kahn's and Hastings, two major downtown retailers, refused to bargain with the union, and the clerks struck for twenty-eight days. When Kahn's store representatives announced their intention to break the strike by allowing non-union store deliveries, the AFL declared a general strike, and all activity in the city ground to a halt. Ports, warehouses and machine shops shut down, transportation systems came to a standstill, factory workers simply walked off the job. Oakland's downtown, where local unions were picketing, represented a clash of wills:

> *Within hours, the police arrived and began to cordon off all streets in the adjacent six-block area, using billy clubs to disperse the picketers and tow trucks to haul away their parked cars. By sunrise, some 250 policemen were on duty at the scene, equipped with shotguns and tear gas. Strikers and union leaders were forced to watch from behind police lines while dozens of police squad cars and motorcycles escorted two separate convoys of strikebreaking trucks, allowing them to complete their deliveries to the stores.*[86]

The strike lasted for just one day, as a settlement was quickly brokered by the City Manager. But in that one day, teamsters, boilermakers, machinists, transit workers, sailors, and retail workers gathered together in the streets, men and women, black and white, in a rare display of class solidarity. This broad working-class alliance, while tenuous at best, would resurface again at times, but never with the same force as in 1946.

De Facto Segregation: Race and Space

The class solidarity shown in Oakland's interwar strikes belied the racial tensions that had been building in the city for years. Before the wartime shipbuilding boom, Oakland's black community was concentrated in West Oakland, comprised primarily of Pullman sleeping car porters, who had settled near the rail yards. Black settlement was virtually nonexistent in other parts of the city. (See Figure 16.)

And during the wartime boom, the city witnessed a fivefold increase in its black population. Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, and the Pullman company were employing significantly greater numbers of blacks as cooks, waiters, and porters; like their predecessors, these railroad workers were settling at the end of the rail line. Blacks had also arrived en masse for employment opportunities in the shipyards and other defense industries; and finally, thousands of black soldiers, sailors, and marines were encamped in the area. Many of these recent arrivals were illiterate, and had come only with sufficient funds for their journey, and

[86] *Ibid.,* 105.

nothing beyond.[87] These newcomers were greeted with an acute housing shortage—for many, sleeping in one's car for several nights was a necessity while looking for longer-term arrangements. Housing was in short supply in the city as a whole, but the situation was magnified in the established 'Negro' districts, where overcrowding was common. Moving outside these established areas could be difficult, for although residential segregation was unauthorized by law, housing discrimination was widespread, with restrictive covenants among real estate dealers, and many landlords simply refusing to rent to blacks.[88] The black neighborhoods were literally bursting at the seams, with no place for newcomers to go.

Figure 16: A Cultural Scene Flowers in West Oakland, Despite Housing Shortages. Image of the Veteran's Jazz Club on Seventh Street, West Oakland. Image courtesy of the Oakland Public Library.

Spatial segregation in the residential realm was a mirror of segregation in the employment realm. In the 1940s, black workers were able to find employment as cooks, waiters, Pullman car porters, car cleaners and redcaps; promotion to positions of authority were rare.[89]

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[87] James Kerns, *Study of Social and Economic Conditions Affecting the Local Negro Population*. (Oakland: Council of Social Agencies and Community Chest, 1942).

[88] Kerns, *Study of Social and Economic Conditions Affecting the Local Negro Population.*

[89] Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 51.

Work for blacks during the postwar period continued to pose a challenge; most were limited to work in semiskilled and unskilled jobs, and in the service sector. Sixty percent of black men in 1950 found work as blue-collar laborers, machine operatives, or in back-of-the-house service work.[90] And de facto workplace segregation was the norm, even in the labor shortage war years. In the shipyards, for instance, cultural and occupational stereotypes seemed to justify the placement of certain newcomer groups in specific types of work, resulting in a largely segregated workplace.

And residential and workplace segregation was accompanied by political disenfranchisement at the local level. The at-large electoral system had made political mobilization of the black community a challenge; community power was diluted at the ballot box, and the interests of individual communities would not necessarily be represented at the city council level.

Once the war was over, problems in the black community would intensify. Housing was to remain a pressing problem as thousands of war veterans and southern black and white migrants continued to settle in the city. Racial minority families, still facing discrimination in the private housing market, had begun to rely disproportionately on public housing; indeed, by the end of the war, more than half of the Bay Area's black population was living in temporary war workers' housing projects. And in the years soon to follow, when these housing complexes would be deemed substandard and shut down, powerful real estate interests would mobilize to ensure that these units were not replaced by new public housing. Thus, thousands of families would be forced to find housing elsewhere, fueling the growing racial resentments that would soon ignite in urban riots.

In the Oakland hills, however, the picture was quite different. By the early 1930s, the boom in residential housing construction had filled in most of the affluent neighborhoods in the lower hills, and new property subdivisions were beginning to reach into higher elevations. At the same time, industrial expansion had spread out along the estuary, attracting working-class settlement near the factories and warehouses. This pattern of physical development contributed to the emerging class distinction between the 'hills' and the 'flatlands' that was to become a defining feature of the topography of Oakland.[91]

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[90] Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, 57.

[91] Rhomberg, *No There There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland*, 79.

CAPITAL DIVERSION

The next period in Oakland's development was characterized by a broader dialogue with the region, as surrounding urban and suburban areas expanded, and carried white residents and capital away from the central city. As conditions worsened in Oakland's impoverished black neighborhoods, a radical black power movement gained momentum. This was countered by increased federal investment in social programs, coupled with investments in city infrastructure. But the infrastructure investments only seemed to serve to funnel capital out of the city, and racial tensions continued to mount.

And as the Eastern capital that had helped to build Oakland slowly evaporated, the city continued to pull at the purse strings of the federal government. The new economic dependence model that would emerge—in which big business coordinated with both the federal and local government to advance its agenda—would offer tremendous benefits to some, while having deleterious consequences for much of the city.

End of an Era

The end of World War II brought the cancellation of federal defense contracts in shipbuilding and heavy industry that had been the source of the region's fleeting burst of prosperity. Suddenly, the teems of unskilled and semi-skilled laborers that had flocked to Oakland during the boom years were without employment. And larger structural changes in the economy were taking their toll on Oakland, too—automation was further reducing employment opportunities for low-skilled labor, and at the same time, technological advances in agriculture were sending hundreds of thousands of rural families to urban areas in search of new employment. Oakland's economy simply could not absorb the continued in-migration of low-skilled labor.[92]

Meanwhile, the cities south of Oakland had emerged with their own version of the 'industrial garden' model, and began attracting industry away from Oakland and into their own folds. Lured by lower taxes, access to a rapidly expanding freeway network, and an expanding suburban labor supply, plants began to pass Oakland by.[93] The growth of interstate trucking had rendered railroad access and other central city locational advantages largely outmoded, and

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[92] William L. Nicholls, *Oakland in Transition: A Summary of the 701 Household Survey*. (Berkeley: Survey Research Center: University of California, 1969), 6.

[93] Nicholls, *Oakland in Transition: A Summary of the 701 Household Survey*, 6.

Oakland struggled to participate in regional growth.[94] And thus in the year 1959 alone, although Alameda County enjoyed approximately $45 million in capital investment in new plants and expansions, this was now concentrated in the thriving suburbs outside of Oakland.[95] Large firms such as General Motors and General Electric moved their plants out of Oakland, and into neighboring suburbs. And while the county as a whole gained over 10,000 manufacturing jobs between 1958 and 1966, Oakland proper lost nearly 10,000 jobs and 23,000 residents between 1950 and 1970.[96]

White Flight to the Suburbs

The suburban growth during this period was fueled in large part by massive federal subsidies, subsidies which strongly favored white borrowers. The Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration mortgage underwriting programs had democratized the housing market, and fueled extraordinary postwar housing growth, but the benefits of these programs were largely reserved for white buyers. So, as residential development proceeded at a breakneck pace in the suburbs to the south and east, Oakland's white residents began to leave the city in increasing numbers; the city's white population registered a 17 percent drop between 1950 and 1960 and would steadily increase in the two decades to follow.[97] (See Figure 17.)

Meanwhile, the benefits of the FHA and VA programs were virtually unobtainable to blacks. New Deal lending programs had defined black neighborhoods as 'high-risk,' and federal mortgage guarantee programs were not extended into these areas until well into the 1960s. And discriminatory real estate practices largely prevented blacks from moving beyond their established neighborhoods.

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[94] Oakland City Planning Department, *Oakland's Economy: Background and Projections: A Technical Supplement to the Economic Element.* (Oakland: Oakland City Planning Department, 1976).

[95] Oakland Chamber of Commerce, *General Statement on the Future Growth and Development of the Metropolitan Oakland Area*. (Oakland: Oakland Chamber of Commerce, 1959), 5.

[96] Heather Mac Donald, "Jerry Brown's No-Nonsense New Age for Oakland". *CITY JOURNAL*. 9 (4): (1999), 33.

[97] U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1940 – 1980.

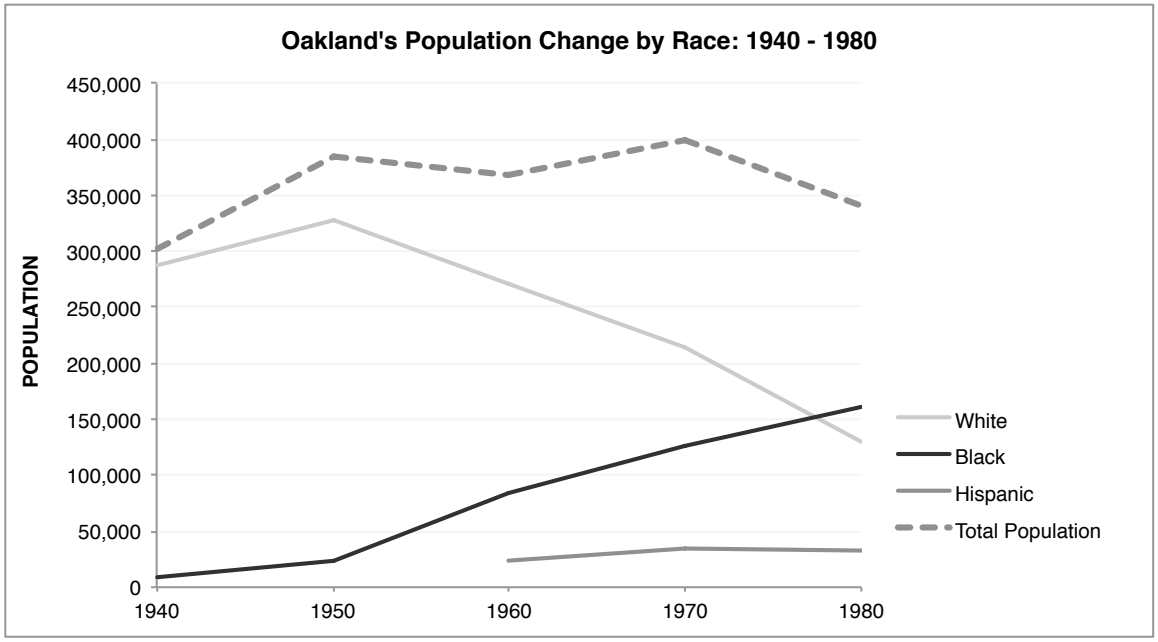

Figure 17: Oakland's Population Change by Race: 1940 – 1980, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

And thus throughout the post-war era, we witness once again Oakland's growth trajectory and spatial patterns taking shape in response to federal policy. Indeed, suburbanization in the East Bay was enabled by forces far beyond the local reach, namely, the postwar federal mortgage guarantee program, new federal interstate highways, and capital mobility.[98] These suburbs would ultimately compete with Oakland, and undermine its position as the industrial center of the region.

Black Power

Meanwhile, by the 1960s, tensions were running high in Oakland's black community. Unemployment levels were rising, and the black population was beginning to grow and expand beyond its historic West Oakland base. Racial group conflict was becoming a problem, particularly in the schools.

In 1964, Lyndon Johnson declared War on Poverty, and as Oakland was widely feared as being ripe for a race riot, it became one of just a few cities to be designated as a depressed area under the federal Area Redevelopment Act. Three of the city's flatland neighborhoods were designated as target areas, including a neighborhood in West Oakland. Oakland thus quickly

[98] Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, 96.

became the recipient of federal anti-poverty money, designed to fund experimental job training and technical education programs.

But the anti-poverty programs failed to achieve the desired results—black poverty was still rampant, unemployment levels were high—and now frustration levels were growing. Meanwhile, police brutality in the black community was becoming a highly visible problem. As it became increasingly clear that working within governmental constructs was not yielding results, black communities began to seek solidarity among their own ranks. And it was against this backdrop that calls for black power and community self-determination emerged.

In October of 1966, two Oakland community college students, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, would found The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, bringing a new lexicon of liberation to blacks. With an agenda calling for black control over community job distribution and municipal levels of power, the Panthers stressed self-determination and the necessity of armed resistance.[99] Their language was one of decolonization, derived from the writings of Mao Zedong and Frantz Fanon, and placed the importance of class solidarity above that of race. In the words of Black Panther chairman, Bobby Seale:

> *[R]ight now we have the problem of a ruling-class system that perpetuates racism and maintains racism as a key to maintain its capitalist exploitation…We, the Black Panther Party, see ourselves as a nation within a nation, but not for any racist reasons. We see it as a necessity for us to progress as human beings and live on the face of this earth along with other people. We do not fight racism with racism. We fight racism with solidarity. We do not fight exploitative capitalism with black capitalism. We fight capitalism with basic socialism. And we do not fight imperialism with more imperialism. We fight imperialism with proletarian internationalism. These principles are very functional for the Party. They're very practical, humanistic, and necessary. They should be understood by the masses of the people.*[100]

The Panthers made headlines around the world when they arrived at the California State Capitol building, armed with rifles, to deliver a statement that they intended to resist the force of the 'power structure' with the use of force. And they certainly did, sending armed patrols to monitor police activity on the streets of Oakland. But perhaps their more inspiring legacy was their initiation of grassroots community programs, including free breakfasts for schoolchildren, free sickle cell anemia testing, and grocery giveaways. The Panthers would ultimately succumb to pressures from both within and without—lumpenism and senseless violence within their own ranks, as well as an aggressive and repressive program of counterorganizing orchestrated by FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover.

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[99] Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, 214.

[100] Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time; the Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton*. (New York: Random House, 1970), 70-71.

But through their work, the Panthers were able to elevate their anticolonial message to the national and global level, and draw attention to structural inequalities inherent in the capitalist system.

> *All of us are laboring-class people, employed or unemployed, and our unity has got to be based on the practical necessities of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, if that means anything to anybody. It's got to be based on the practical things like the survival of people and people's right to self-determination, to iron out the problems that exist. So in essence it is not at all a race struggle. We're rapidly educating people to do this. In our view it is a class struggle between the massive proletarian working class and small, minority ruling class. Working-class people of all colors must unite against the exploitative, oppressive ruling class. So let me emphasize again—we believe our fight is a class struggle and not a race struggle.*[101]

And as the Panthers spoke of struggle and liberation, federal and local forces were converging on Oakland to defuse a potentially explosive situation.

[101] Seale, *Seize the Time; the Story of the Black Panther Party*, 72.

URBAN RENEWAL

Against the backdrop of increasing urban tension, conflict, and violence both locally and nationally, city leaders and downtown property owners sought to 'save' the city from both a potential ghetto uprising and from total economic eclipse. Oakland's business elite mobilized to develop a program of urban redevelopment, designed to attract middle-income residents back to the city, and generate activity for downtown merchants.

And yet again, the city's postwar trajectory would be characterized by continued dependence on federal intervention—now with a tacit partnership between federal and local governments, and large national and multinational corporations.

Infrastructure Investment

Beginning in the late 1950s, the city would make a series of urban design decisions that would ultimately facilitate regional growth at Oakland's expense. By 1958, the Oakland City Council had approved the routing of no fewer than three elevated interstate highways through by now-graying and decaying West Oakland. These decisions were easily justifiable, based on the area's historic role as a transportation nexus, and its already depressed property values. But the construction of the freeway only served to dampen any hopes that the area could be resurrected as a thriving residential and commercial center.

And then the new Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, which would link East Bay suburban cities, downtown Oakland, and San Francisco, also served to facilitate capital flow out of the city upon its opening in the early 1970s. Instead of efficiently moving commuters and shoppers into and out of the downtown cores, the transit system had the effect of funneling growth and development out of Oakland and into San Francisco. And once again, with elevated tracks cutting through West Oakland, it sent the distinct message that the neighborhood was simply a throughway, designed to carry people other places.

The city's other major infrastructure investment during this period, the mechanization of the Port facilities to ensure the city's preeminence in the modern era of international commerce, had the effect of dramatically increasing the Port's revenues, but without any of that income directly benefiting the city. The Port, required by charter to reinvest income in port facilities, was

effectively prohibited from contributing money to the city's operating budget.[102] And thus the theme of externally oriented growth continued.

Redevelopment in West Oakland

The unleashing of federal urban renewal funds in Oakland would add yet another layer of turbulence to this space and place. West Oakland, the city's oldest (and blackest) neighborhood, would undergo a major transformation during these years. Seventh Street, once its vital commercial corridor and entertainment district—where black business had flourished, with pool halls and lounges boasting such major entertainers as Ella Fitzgerald and Ray Charles—would be slated for an elevated track for the new BART regional transit system, as well as an automated distribution facility for the U.S. Postal Service. Freeways would be constructed around and through the neighborhood—one at the northern edge, another along the eastern edge, and yet another, slicing through the center. And to make way for the new transportation infrastructure, as well as new housing, between 1960 and 1966, more than 5,000 of West Oakland's housing units would be demolished, resulting in a net loss of more than one-fifth of the housing supply.[103] And the mechanization of the Port, in which millions of federal dollars had been invested, would include no guarantees of employment for Oakland residents.[104]

West Oakland had been the target of redevelopment efforts since the early 1950s, beginning with the formation of a mayor-appointed redevelopment committee, which would hold weekly breakfast meetings at the Kaiser Industries headquarters to draft a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the city. The comprehensive plan, once complete, was met with city council opposition; this was swiftly overcome with a broad campaign to build both public and governmental support for urban renewal. Council members were given a bus tour of the dilapidated areas of West Oakland; Kaiser and Bechtel chartered an airplane, and whisked the mayor, entire city council, and local newspaper reporter off to several eastern cities where renewal was already underway. The entire escapade was prominently chronicled in the *Oakland Tribune,* bringing into the public eye the need for urban renewal. And thus by 1957, Oakland's General Neighborhood Renewal Plan would be approved and ready for implementation, designating a total of 225 acres in West Oakland for redevelopment.[105]

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[102] Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, 155.

[103] Nicholls, *Oakland in Transition: A Summary of the 701 Household Survey*, 25.

[104] Judith May, "Two Model Cities: Negotiations in Oakland". *Politics & Society*. 2 (1): (1971), 61.

[105] Edward C. Hayes, *Power Structure and Urban Policy: Who Rules in Oakland?* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 115.

One of the first projects to move forward would be a fifty-block area known as 'Acorn,' one of West Oakland's worst slums. The entire area would be razed, and replaced with middle-income housing. Given Acorn's close proximity to Oakland's downtown central business district, it was the hope of city officials and downtown merchants that the insertion of a new demographic would aid in the revitalization of not only West Oakland, but also the struggling downtown.[106] And redevelopment in Oakland would proceed in this manner—focused on the interests of the economic elite, with minimal regard to the low-income residents, mostly black, who would soon be displaced.

By the mid-1960s, a 'second-generation' urban renewal instrument had emerged, designed to coordinate funding for health, education, employment, welfare, and housing programs for revitalizing urban areas, and to address the failings of the nascent years of urban renewal. And thus with the passage of the federal Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, Oakland would be designated as a 'Model City,' and eligible for funding for an array of programs, designed to stem the tide rising tide of urban violence, and reduce the concentration of poverty in central cities.

And in examining more carefully the events that transpired during West Oakland's mid-1960s redevelopment, a clearer picture emerges of the close interaction between large industry, and federal and local government in shaping the policy that would ultimately re-make this neighborhood. In Oakland, it seemed that the Demonstration Cities Act offered more benefits to the large corporations that were operating on a national level than it would for Oakland's most impoverished residents. And perhaps this is a consequence of the context in which this legislation arose.

Big Business and Urban Renewal

The roots of the federal Model Cities legislation could actually be traced in part to the activities of one of Oakland's own. Kaiser Industries, by this time a multinational conglomerate with nearly 100 plants worldwide, and now headquartered in Oakland, had occupied a key role in developing the legislation and rallying support among large industry leaders. Now led by Edgar F. Kaiser—son of the famed Henry J. Kaiser of the New Deal public works years—the company had recently landed its corporation in Oakland, and completed construction of a $46 million, 28-

[106] Hayes, *Power Structure and Urban Policy,* 108.

story aluminum and glass office building, set apart from the downtown central business district, overlooking Lake Merritt.[107]

Edgar Kaiser, well-connected in Washington, had served as a member of the Urban Affairs Task Force responsible for developing the 'Demonstration Cities' program within the newly formed federal cabinet-level Housing and Urban Development department. And as a member of the elite Business Council, comprised of top executives of America's leading industries, Kaiser was able to gather support from more than 20 influential national business leaders, and in turn congressional representatives, as the legislation came up for vote.[108]

The Demonstration Cities legislation was designed in part to advance the interests of large industry during a time of waning postwar prosperity. And the program was quite attractive: it would offer potential markets of large-scale construction activity in housing and community facilities, as well as opportunities for product spin-offs, new product pioneering, immense public relations value, and naturally, profit opportunity. Moreover, the program was promoted to the Business Council as providing industry participants with early experience in what promised to become a dramatically growing national industry—the rebuilding of America's cities.[109]

Kaiser had followed the precedent established by Alcoa and U.S. Gypsum, both major building products suppliers, and immense beneficiaries of federally funded housing rehabilitation programs in the early 1960s.[110] At the time, with Kaiser's emerging plastics division, it envisioned participation in a large-scale building program which would allow it to demonstrate how new plastic products and processes could be used in the rehabilitation and construction of low-cost housing, beginning with designated target areas in Oakland.

Kaiser maintained a close relationship with Oakland's Redevelopment Director, and was able to ensure that its innovative plastics ideas were incorporated into the Redevelopment Agency's Model Cities proposal. By this time, it had been agreed that the West Oakland

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[107] Oakland Chamber of Commerce, *General Statement on the Future Growth and Development of the Metropolitan Oakland Area,* 2.

[108] "Who'll Head Business Council?" *Chicago Daily News,* Dec. 7, 1966.

[109] Robert C. Wood, Under Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, 1968 Staff paper addressed to the Business Council Liaison Committee, March 2, 1968. Edgar F. Kaiser papers, BANC MSS 85/61 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. (Carton 53, Folder 25).

[110] Mike Claxton, Kaiser Industries Inter-Office Memorandum to Norm Nicholson, Jan. 5, 1966, Edgar F. Kaiser papers, BANC MSS 85/61 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. (Carton 53, Folder 14).

neighborhood now slated for renewal, known as Oak Center, would be approached largely as a rehabilitative project. And there would be ample room to showcase new Kaiser building products. For instance, an Oak Center Victorian home might be renovated with all plastic products—drain spouts and gutters, siding, flooring, roofing, insulation, complete kitchen and bathroom units, piping and wiring—and could serve as an example to be held out in the home renovation industry. Further, this new products would result in the pioneering of new building techniques, which perhaps could be carried out by a new low-skilled labor force comprised of inner-city minority residents.[111] The possibilities seemed limitless.

With the example of Kaiser's role in the Model Cities program, we begin to see more clearly the new face of 'colonial'-style domination, as large corporations helped to steer the direction of federal policy, to be implemented at the local level.

Urban Decay

In spite of all the ambitious federal programs, economic conditions continued to grow ever more dismal for many flatlands residents. The city continued to transition from a manufacturing to a service-oriented economy, shedding 37,000 manufacturing jobs in the decade of the 1980s alone. Many Oaklanders found themselves pushed out of highly-capitalized blue collar manufacturing into low-wage menial labor jobs, or into unemployment. Meanwhile, during this same period approximately 32,000 service jobs were created, and primarily filled by suburban commuters, or residents of the affluent communities in the Oakland hills.[112]

The effects of these structural changes have been palpable in Oakland. Amid unemployment and poverty in Oakland's flatlands, the crack cocaine epidemic struck, with drug lord Felix Mitchell creating the nation's first large-scale, gang-controlled drug operation. Violence spiked in the streets of Oakland during his reign in the 1970s. And with his arrest in the mid-1980s, narcotics abuse and violence continued to increase. Gangs operating in the East Oakland housing projects where Mitchell once reigned have contributed to a murder rate over twice that of San Francisco or New York.[113]

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[111] John Williams, City of Oakland Redevelopment Director, Draft Model Cities Program Implementation and Goals, December 7, 1966, 1-4. Edgar F. Kaiser papers, BANC MSS 85/61 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. (Carton 53, Folder 13).

[112] Oakland City Manager, *Empowerment Zone Application*, (Oakland: City of Oakland, 1994), 3.

[113] Mac Donald, "Jerry Brown's No-Nonsense New Age for Oakland," 36.

And ironically, as time went on and racial housing barriers loosened, minorities began to lose the level of local control they had once exercised in their communities. The more affluent and successful minority members of flatland communities tended to move up into the Oakland hills or southern suburbs, leaving those who could not keep pace with structural changes in the economy stranded in inner-city communities now bereft of natural leadership. Functions which were formerly handled by community members themselves were increasingly transferred to inefficient and underfunded public institutions. And thus as Oakland began to experience greater levels of racial integration, this was accompanied by increasing levels of *economic segregation*.[114] Figures 18 – 21 illustrate this basic principle quite clearly, as the residential patterns of blacks, whites, and Hispanics are mapped over time, and viewed in conjunction with time-series economic indicators.

[114] Oakland City Manager, *Empowerment Zone Application,* 4.

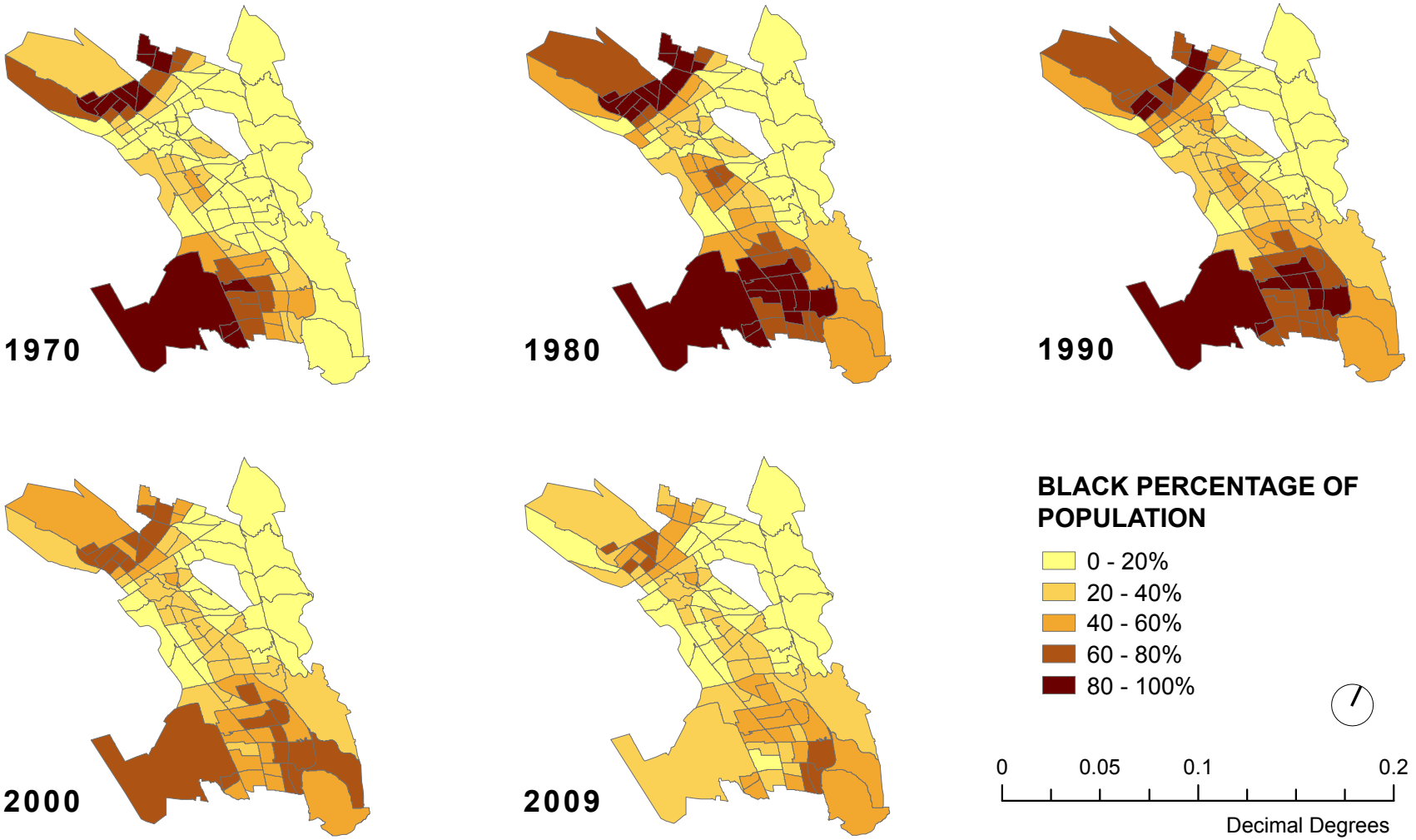


Figure 18: Black Population Change in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990, 1980, 1970. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.

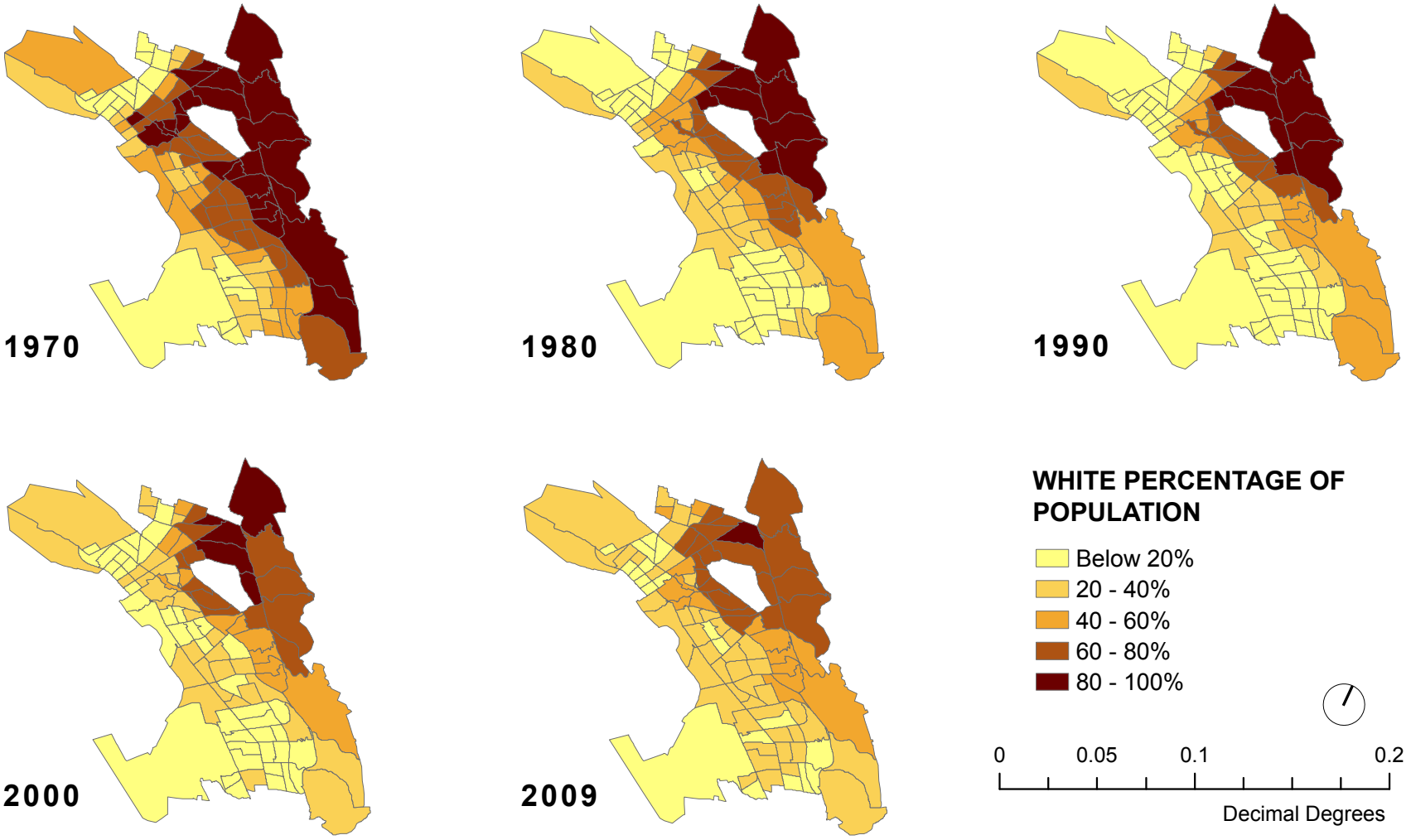


Figure 19: White Population Change in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990, 1980, 1970. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.

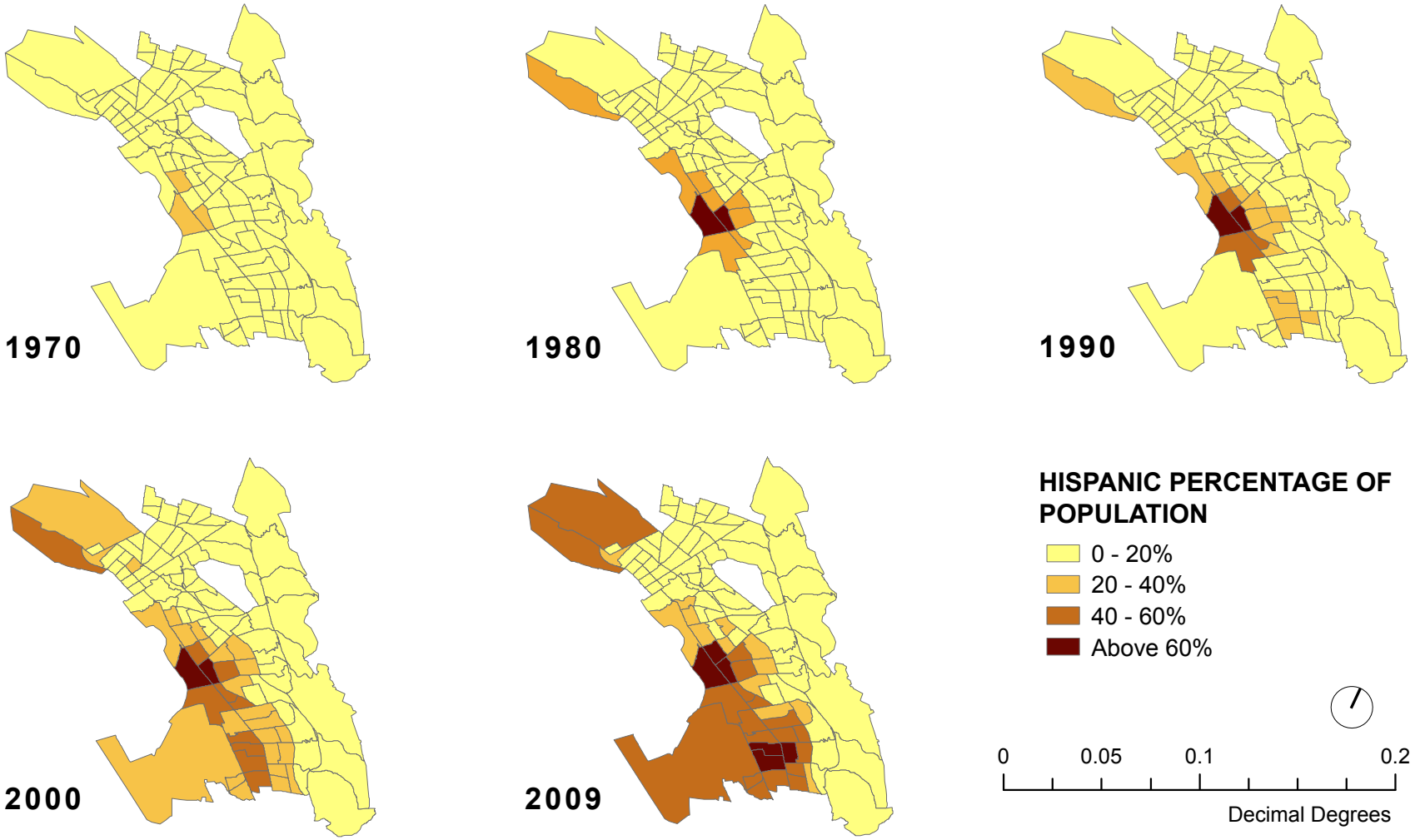
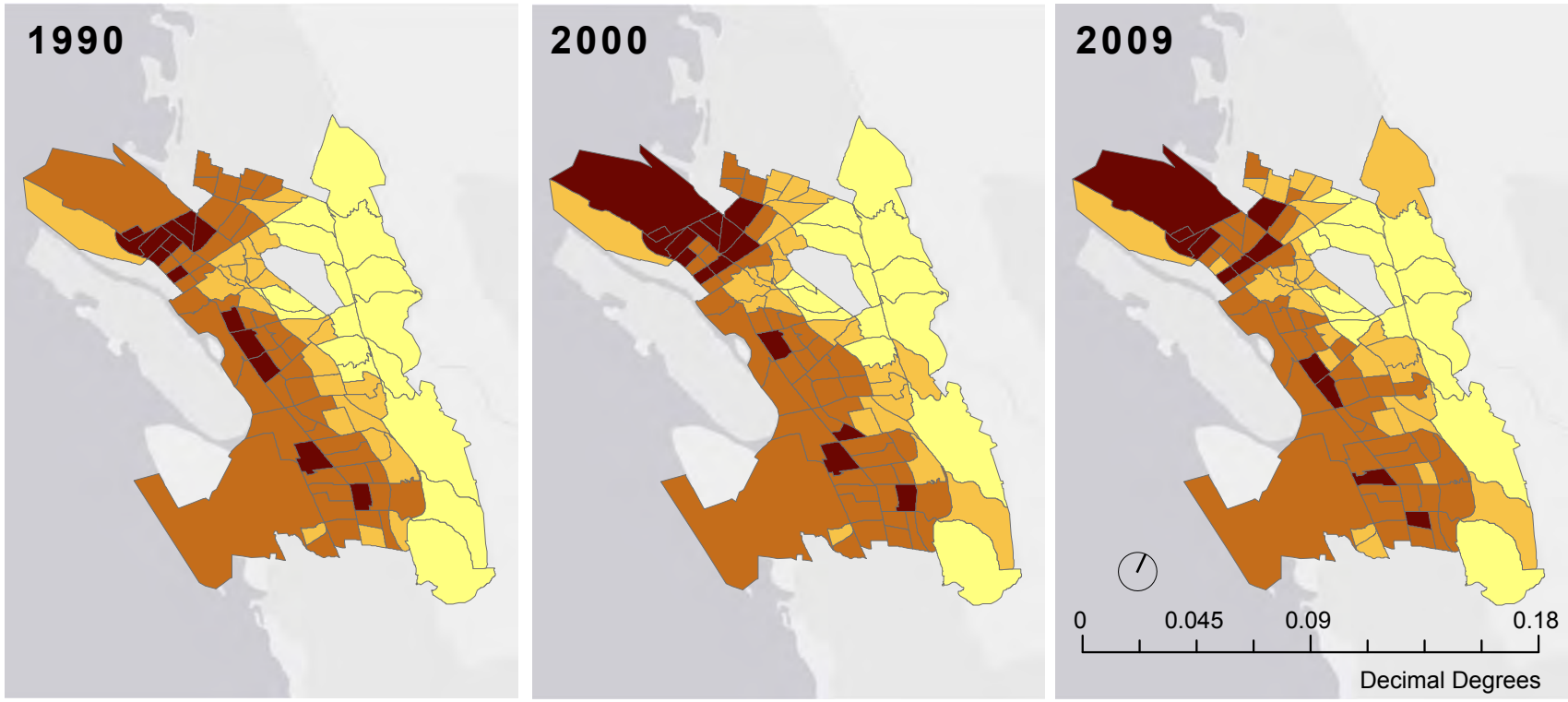


Figure 20: Hispanic Population Change in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990, 1980, 1970. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.



Percentage of Households Living in Poverty by Census Tract.

- Below 5%
- 5 - 15%
- 15 - 30%
- Above 30%

Figure 21: Percentage of Households in Poverty in Oakland. Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, Decennial Census 2000, 1990. Census 2000 TIGER/Line Files [machine-readable data files]/prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau-Washington, DC; 2000. Maps prepared by Molly Promes.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS OF THE THEORY: REINVESTMENT AND RESISTANCE

In viewing the development of Oakland through the lens of the internal colonialism construct, we are left with the question: how are communities to respond to external domination and control? Can meaningful change be effected on the local level by working through existing constructs, or is deeper systemic change required? It is a familiar debate, one that has transcended both time and space. And in Oakland itself, we witness many powerful attempts to establish community-level control among the city's flatland residents. If we are to examine the processes and outcomes of these typical urban battles of 'exchange value' versus 'neighborhood use value,' perhaps we might derive lessons that might point us toward the answer.

FRUITVALE: NEGOTIATING FOR COMMUNITY CONTROL

For a recent example of community residents exerting their strength in opposition to external forces, we might look to Oakland's Fruitvale district, a working-class, now predominantly Latino neighborhood in the flatlands, just east of the downtown central business district. Here, when faced with the prospect of external economic interests infringing upon neighborhood daily use values, residents, drawing on cultural capital, engaged in concerted action in an effort to protect their interests.

Fruitvale: Development and Demography

Before beginning a discussion of the recent events that have transpired in the Fruitvale district, we should first briefly trace the development of this dynamic neighborhood. Named for the fruit orchards that once marched in neat rows across its fertile soils, Fruitvale was first inhabited by the Ohlone natives, then later settled by German immigrants arriving during the Gold Rush years, who established small farms, ranches, and orchards in the area. As the city of Oakland grew with the arrival of the transcontinental railroad, canneries, factories dairies and mills began to spring up along the neighborhood's southwestern edge, and soon this once-hamlet was attracting newcomers from across the country and around the globe.

The railroad and its accompanying development brought a wave of prosperity that lasted through the late 1920s. A streetcar line was laid along the neighborhood's primary axis, East 14th Street, and commercial development followed along the streetcar route; this development culminated with the arrival of Montgomery Ward in 1923, and became the largest commercial

center outside of the city's downtown. During the city's wartime boom years, Fruitvale was abuzz. But in the postwar years, like much of Oakland, Fruitvale began a period of noticeable decline, as industry began to move to the suburbs, along with many of the neighborhood's stable working-class families. East 14th Street, the once vibrant commercial corridor, devolved into a veritable 'ghost town.' In more recent years, though, the neighborhood's fortunes have improved; with the arrival of a new wave of immigrants, Fruitvale is now the city's densest district—and although residential overcrowding is common, poverty is pervasive, and crime remains a nagging problem—the neighborhood exudes a vitality that had been lost in recent decades past.

Over the course of its development, the Fruitvale district has undergone several significant racial shifts. Initially a primarily German, Portuguese, Irish, and Italian settlement, by the 1960s the area was home to growing numbers of immigrants hailing from Mexico. As the Hispanic population slowly grew, an influx of black residents shifted the neighborhood composition again in the period from 1970 to 1980; this was followed by a period of outmigration of blacks during the 1990s, and of continued growth in the Hispanic population.[115] With each population shift, we see the ripple effects of global economic forces: the influx of relocating blacks following the dismantling of the wartime apparatus and initiation of urban renewal, the exodus of whites to the suburban periphery as capital flowed outside the central city, the arrival of Latino immigrants in response to current service sector demands.

Redevelopment in the Fruitvale District

In recent years, the Fruitvale district has been the object of various City of Oakland revitalization efforts, and is today included in the city's largest redevelopment area.[116] As the spatial contest has unfolded—with the City seeking to intensify land uses, and residents simultaneously seeking to improve or maintain their quality of life—Fruitvale residents have achieved measured success in preserving certain neighborhood use values. In a recent development saga, in which a proposal for a multistory, 500-car parking garage for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) district eventually morphed into a new residential and commercial 'transit village,' we might attribute the project outcomes and the community's partial victories in holding ground against external forces to the presence of strong ethnic ties and immigrant cultural capital.

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[115] Maly, M. T., *Beyond segregation: Multiracial and multiethnic neighborhoods in the United States.* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005).

[116] City of Oakland Redevelopment Agency, *Redevelopment Plan for the Central City East Redevelopment Project.* (Oakland: City of Oakland Redevelopment Agency, 2003).

Fruitvale Village Today: An Overview

Before outlining the process by which the Fruitvale community engaged in shaping project outcomes, it is perhaps useful to first examine the basic project outputs. In terms of visual appearance, the *New York Times*, in a laudatory article captured the project's essence:

> *Fruitvale Village may startle some visitors who see it for the first time from the platform of the BART train station. From that vantage, the festive 'village' looks very much like an upscale suburban shopping center, set incongruously amid the brick buildings and dilapidated wooden houses of a once-fearsome neighborhood.*[117]

And indeed, the Fruitvale Transit Village is an exuberant, colorful urban expression alongside the elevated BART train tracks, a refreshing sight for viewers who have become accustomed to staring into the dull grey of Oakland's most economically depressed areas. The Fruitvale Village project seems to announce to the world that after years of fitful slumber, the neighborhood has finally 'arrived.'

At three and four stories high, the 257,000 square-foot mixed-use development has been broken down into smaller massing elements to provide a human-scaled presence. BART train passengers disembarking at the Fruitvale Station are greeted by a pedestrian plaza lined with small shops; in traveling the length of the plaza, pedestrians are led to the Fruitvale District's long-established retail corridor on former East 14th Street, since renamed International Boulevard. And in the plaza itself, a fountain anchors the center, and palm trees stretch upward, linked together with strings of tiny white lights; public art and seating are sprinkled along the length of the plaza. Although the 40,000 square feet of ground-level retail space experienced significant growing pains and high vacancy rates during the project's early years as entrepreneurs and leasing agents struggled to understand the consumer demographics, today these spaces are largely occupied, with a diverse retail mix ranging from both local and chain national eateries, to a mobile phone retailer, to a market, to a tattoo and piercing parlor.[118]

Also at ground level, just beyond the plaza, are several social services functions. These, together with second-floor office space, account for nearly half of the project's square footage, and include *La Clinica de la Raza*, a healthcare services provider geared toward the Latino community; the *De Colores* Child Development Center, a Head Start program serving nearly 250

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[117] Morris Newman, " COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE; A Neglected Neighborhood Builds Itself a Village." *New York Times*, (2004), 1.

[118] Retail mix as of August 2011 is recorded here, based upon researcher's site visits.

children per week; the Fruitvale Senior Center, operated by the Unity Council; and the Cesar Chavez Library, a new branch of the Oakland Public Library. [119]

Crowning the development are 47 rental housing units. These boast high-end finishes, including granite countertops; nearly all are 'loft-style' units with one or two bedrooms overlooking a double-height living spaces. Ten of the units have been designated as 'affordable' based upon the metropolitan area median income, and are rented at $1,100 to $1,700 per month, depending on the unit size and orientation. The housing units are fully occupied, and have been a success since the project opened.[120]

Project Origins: A Community Reacts

The project's roots trace back to 1991, when the University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum, a collaboration between U.C. Berkeley's City and Regional Planning Department and the City of Oakland, conducted a study of Fruitvale's primary (albeit decaying) commercial corridor, East 14th Street, in an effort to develop a revitalization plan for adoption by the City Council. The final plan set forth a number of streetscape improvement ideas, but one of the primary goals was to develop a 'safe and attractive pedestrian-oriented commercial area with convenient public transportation access and linkages.' Specific objectives in support of this goal included the creation of a pedestrian link between the Fruitvale BART station and businesses on East 14th Street. The Fruitvale BART station was to be used as a potential anchor point for businesses along the existing commercial corridor.[121]

But shortly after completion of this study, BART unveiled plans to construct a multistory, 500-car parking garage adjacent to the Fruitvale station; the construction of the garage was intended to increase transit ridership levels at the Fruitvale Station by facilitating station access for hills residents who were far beyond walking distance of the station. And the proposed placement of this garage, which had been determined without Fruitvale residents' input, would have the effect of severing pedestrian access to the East 14th Street business district. Upon learning of the BART plans, neighborhood residents, led by the Spanish Speaking Unity Council, voiced strong opposition, citing concerns that the garage would act as a barrier to pedestrian

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[119] The Unity Council, "Fruitvale Village Project Overview," accessed March 1, 2010, http://www.unitycouncil.org/fruitvale/overview1.htm.

[120] Blanca Torres, "Fruitvale Development Ripens," *San Francisco Business Times*, (San Francisco, CA), February 21, 2010.

[121] University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum, *Fruitvale: A Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Plan*. Berkeley, Calif: University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum, 1991.

retail access, and that the addition of 500 parking spaces would exacerbate existing traffic and air quality problems.

This strong neighborhood outcry prompted a larger community conversation about the possible opportunities for leveraging mass transit development as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. The following year, in 1992, Oakland Mayor Elihu Harris awarded the Unity Council $185,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds so that the organization could interface with the community and develop an alternative proposal for the BART site. Community engagement workshops commenced, and following on its initial successes, the Unity Council was awarded an additional $470,000 from the Federal Transit Authority to continue and expand the planning process.[122] Then, in 1994, the Unity Council, the City of Oakland, and BART signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which established the Fruitvale Policy Committee; this formalized the relationship between the three primary actors for purposes of the Fruitvale BART project, and enabled continued collaborative planning for the area around the station, including negotiating land assemblage for development and funding sources.

By 1995, community design symposia had led to a conceptual plan for development; this plan included many of the principal elements of the actual final project, including its location on existing BART surface parking lots, the mix of housing, offices, and ground-level retail and restaurants, and the pedestrian plaza linking the station to the existing commercial district. As the project continued to move forward, the Unity Council formed the Fruitvale Development Corporation (FDC), an 'arm's-length' corporation to handle development activities. BART, due to the special nature of the project, agreed to break from its standard practices and awarded FDC an exclusive negotiating agreement for the project. BART and the Unity Council then proceeded with a land swap, with BART granting fee simple title to FDC for one parcel of land with existing surface parking, and a 95-year lease for another parcel, in exchange for giving BART a parcel behind the station owned by the Unity Council. Funding for the project was obtained initially in the form of planning grants, and then later in the form of grants and loans for construction. After basic sources of equity and other contributions had been committed, Citibank sponsored tax-exempt bonds for the balance.

Crucial to understanding the dynamics of the Fruitvale Village development are the actions and interests of the main stakeholders, who helped to shape and reshape the project over the course of the decade-long planning process. During this time, we see the Unity Council and

[122] The Unity Council, "Fruitvale Village Project Overview," accessed March 1, 2010, http://www.unitycouncil.org/fruitvale/overview1.htm.

La Clinica de la Raza emerge as strong, dynamic Latino community leaders with a wide base of local support, as well as political connections at higher levels of government. We also witness the ascendance of local Latino politician Ignacio De La Fuente, whose presence in the City Council chambers ensured that the Fruitvale Village project remained at the fore of city discussions, and that community concerns were adequately addressed. An overriding theme throughout is the notion of working within established institutions, and leveraging cultural capital to exact concessions.

Cultural Capital and Community Control

In the case of the Fruitvale Transit Village, cultural capital occupied a key role in defending neighborhood use values. To begin to illustrate this principle, we might first look to the community organization that led Fruitvale residents' opposition to BART's development proposal—the Unity Council. Established in 1964 as the Mexican-American Unity Council, the organization traces its roots to the civil-rights era anti-poverty movement. Formed as a local Latino response to a state measure that threatened to rescind the state's Fair Housing Act, the group's activities quickly shifted from political action to social services provision. In its early days, the organization was primarily concerned with ensuring that the Latino population of Fruitvale received its fair share of the federal anti-poverty funding that was flowing into the City of Oakland; as the Latino population in the Fruitvale district continued to grow, the organization's mission expanded to include information and referral services, English as a Second Language Courses, job readiness training, and economic development. The organization changed its name to the Spanish Speaking Unity Council to reflect the increasing diversity of roots of its constituents, and in an effort to broaden its support base, later changed its name simply to the Unity Council.[123]

The Unity Council's first director, Arabella Martinez, played a significant role in the success of the Fruitvale Village project. After leading the Unity Council from 1969 to 1974, Martinez advanced in her social services career, moving on to Washington, where she would eventually become the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare under the Carter Administration. She returned to the Unity Council in 1989, to rescue the organization from financial turmoil and substantial decline. Aided by strong ties to funding organizations and community members, Martinez restructured the Unity Council's assets, reorganized its operations, and embarked upon a substantial fundraising campaign. Her

[123] *Ibid.*

experience in and contacts from Washington made her an invaluable asset to the project, particularly in matters of securing project funding.[124]

The advancement of Latino interests in city-level politics also contributed to the success of the project, and serves as another example of cultural capital. The election of Ignacio de la Fuente, a Mexican-American Fruitvale resident, to the Oakland City Council in 1992, and his subsequent ascendancy on the local political scene contributed substantially to the advancement of the Fruitvale Village cause, particularly in the early planning phases when initial block grant funding was issued. De La Fuente's influence in City Hall has only increased since that time; he has served as a councilmember continuously since 1992, and during his tenure has chaired the Council's Economic and Community Development Committee, and served as President of the Oakland City Council. As such, he was able to shepherd the Fruitvale Transit Village through the bureaucracy, and ensure that his community needs remained a City priority.

Finally, the role of the University of California at Berkeley in fostering Latino community organizing and community planning efforts, while certainly not central to the success of the Fruitvale Village project, still warrants mention as a supporting force. The engagement of progressive university students with local community-based organizations, as well as in the initial planning stages for the transit village project, occupied an ancillary role in advancing community interests.

The Institution and the Grassroots

The cultural capital and strength of the Latino community in the Fruitvale district led what might otherwise have been a typical redevelopment project down a highly unusual path. BART found itself engaged in negotiations with the Fruitvale community, and examining methods of development that could at once enhance use values for the community, while still increasing ridership and revenues for the transit district. Jeff Ordway, a member of BART's real estate development staff, became a strong supporter of the Fruitvale Village project, advocating for the mutual benefits of mixed-use development at its stations, in terms of perceived safety, enlivened surroundings, and the convenience of shopping facilities for commuters.

In its dealings with the City of Oakland, too, the Latino community was able to exercise considerable sway. Due in large part to the support of Ignacio De La Fuente, the City provided project oversight, cooperated in realigning and abandoning streets, participated in land swaps to

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[124] *Ibid.*

help assemble the site, and agreed to occupy a substantial portion of the project with its tenant agencies, the Senior Center and Cesar Chavez Public Library.[125] Thus, we begin to see the methods with which an engaged community, replete with cultural capital, might begin to influence the typically externally-originated and externally-oriented development and redevelopment processes.

[125] *Ibid.*

WEST OAKLAND: A NEW STRUCTURE FOR COMMUNITY CONTROL

To understand another approach to asserting community control in the face of dominant external interests, we might turn back once more to the tumultuous decade of the 1960s. Here, in West Oakland, in the context of the Model Cities initiative, residents radically embraced an opening in the political framework, and articulated a broad new vision for the City's economic development. And though their efforts would produce mixed results, and the far-reaching neighborhood alliance they forged would prove fleeting, their manner of engagement and sweeping vision still provide invaluable lessons to carry forward.

Origins of a Move for Community Control

West Oakland residents had suffered dearly with the slowing of the postwar economy. Between high levels of unemployment, housing shortages exacerbated by urban renewal programs, and the routing of new major transportation thoroughfares through their neighborhood, West Oaklanders had seen their neighborhood use values decimated. All too often, they had been treated as collateral damage in the City of Oakland's efforts to make itself attractive to private investment.

And at the time, local-level political representation for West Oakland was slim. City council members were chosen in 'at-large' elections, which meant diluted neighborhood power—the result was a city council that was largely representative of majority interests, while the issues and needs of the city's poorest residents went unheard and unaddressed.[126] And unfortunately, the advent of federal anti-poverty programs brought little relief. Despite the attendant requirement for 'maximum feasible participation' from community members, these programs seemed as if they still represented top-down paternalistic control, simply in another guise. One West Oakland resident captured the prevailing neighborhood sentiment quite clearly, stating that "They [residents] feel the heads of agencies are determining the needs and then will go to the people and say: 'We have this. What do you think?'"[127] And her words rang true: despite the involvement of community members in the War on Poverty programs—who tended to be black professionals, rather than the black poor—the fleeting engagement of West Oakland residents in federal-local participatory politics, had provided neither genuine control over processes, nor an ability to shape positive outcomes.

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[126] May, "Two Model Cities: Negotiations in Oakland," 63.

[127] Bill Martin, "Model City Inside City Projected," *Oakland Tribune,* February 20, 1967.

Thus, when the federal Model Cities program was launched in Oakland, calling now for 'widespread citizen participation,' and a specific plan from the City as to how this would be achieved, a unique window for political participation was revealed, and West Oaklanders seized on the opportunity to not only make their voices heard, but also exercise substantial control over political processes and outcomes.[128] Vowing not to repeat the mistakes of the first generation of poverty programs, residents now aimed to usher in a new era of community control.

And it was in this context that the West Oakland Planning Committee emerged. Though literature on the committee is scant—they were perhaps overshadowed by the more headline-grabbing activity of the Black Panthers—much of their initial activity is well documented by Judith May, a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley, who was involved in the Oakland Project, a sustained partnership between the University and the City during these years.

Emergence of the West Oakland Planning Committee

Conceived of by community leaders as a 'parallel government' for West Oakland—a symbolic 'city within a city'—the West Oakland Planning Committee (WOPC) spoke the language of anticolonialism, and did so on a territorial basis. Seeking to form a broad community coalition that would cut across factional divisions, and across lines of race and class in the name of redistributive justice and local-level control, WOPC created a structure that would allow for the inclusion of representatives of the widest possible range of groups and opinions. And thus the WOPC was organized as a delegate assembly, with membership open to any organization operating fully or partially within West Oakland. Member organizations—which ranged from political to religious to social and professional organizations—were allowed two elected representatives each on the WOPC. The open nature of the membership policy—which allowed any type of organization to join, so long as it had at least ten members in its fold—encouraged new levels of political entrepreneurship in the community. The impact of this policy was evident: less than a year after WOPC's founding, it boasted 165 member organizations.[129] And with its broad cross-section of interests, as well as the emphasis that it placed on presenting a united neighborhood front, WOPC was able to act as a true 'spokesperson' for the community.

The organization's leaders espoused an ideology of community control, but still stressed that the future of West Oakland could not be considered separately from that of the city as a whole. And leaders strongly believed that unity across boundaries of race and class was

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[128] May, "Two Model Cities: Negotiations in Oakland," 64.

[129] *Ibid.,* 70.

critical—because ultimately, all races and classes in the neighborhood and city would share a common fate. With this in mind, WOPC adopted an organizational philosophy of 'functional unity'—the notion of fostering a permissive attitude toward conflict within the organization, but adopting a united front when confronted with the opposition—which remained essential to group solidarity. Accepting that conflict within the group would be inevitable, with so many interests represented, members sought to create an environment where conflict could be resolved within the community, instead of relying on outside assistance. In this informal, 'anything-goes'-type setting, many different political styles could flourish, as members could voice their views and participate in negotiations in the manner and style in which they felt most comfortable.[130]

Making Demands

Once the committee was formed, they aggressively set out to determine the extent of their authority. Approaching the City with a series of high-level demands, WOPC sought a distinct break from the diluted powers given to community residents under earlier anti-poverty programs. This broad, eclectic group was now audaciously asking for the right to exercise control over the appointment of Oakland's Model Cities director; to obtain direct access to the Oakland City Council; and to channel all Model Cities funding from the City Council to WOPC, which could then act as a 'neighborhood planning council' for West Oakland. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the organization sought veto power over all Model Cities programs within city bounds.[131]

By presenting a united front for the whole of West Oakland, WOPC was able to exercise substantial bargaining power with City Hall. And though their requests were not granted in full, they were given a substantial role in the political process. The City, rather than granting WOPC power to appoint the Model Cities director, instituted a selection process in which the City Manager would make the final appointment—but from a list of nominees submitted by a six-person panel, three of whose members would be appointed by WOPC. And rather than granting WOPC status as a 'neighborhood planning council' with full access to Model Cities funds, the City instead initiated an independent 'Model Cities Policy Committee,' of which WOPC would have 51 percent of the votes. Further, new 'study committees' would be created in the areas of health, housing, education, employment, economic development, and police-community relations, and WOPC would be given 51 percent representation on each committee. As for the question of veto

[130] May, "Two Model Cities: Negotiations in Oakland," 72.

[131] Hayes, *Power Structure and Urban Policy,* 124.

powers, both the City Manager and WOPC were given authority to veto Model Cities proposals for block grants originating within the City.[132]

WOPC aimed to take this veto power to new levels, as it would provide it with substantial negotiating power in two Model Cities proposals slated for the Port and for the downtown central business district, as well as a proposal designed to funnel millions of dollars to the Oakland police force. These were important to West Oaklanders for a variety of reasons, not least of which was the desire to ensure that local job creation would be 'part of the package' for the Port and City Center projects. But it was unclear whether WOPC's veto powers would extend to projects that fell outside the West Oakland jurisdiction—so to obtain clarification, WOPC appealed directly to federal officials. And when the federal government appeared to be amenable to WOPC retaining these broader veto powers, the City took swift action to eliminate any threat of WOPC intervention by simply removing the two projects from the Model Cities program area. All was not lost for the WOPC, however—its leaders then took the opportunity to begin direct negotiations with the Port Authority and other agencies involved in these development areas.[133]

Articulating a New Vision

With its newly established role, WOPC was able to articulate its vision for Oakland, a vision which at moments collided with, and at moments coincided with the vision of City Hall. Both WOPC and City Hall had goals of economic growth—but they differed in visions of how the rewards of that growth would be distributed. The prevailing view among local officials was that with time, the benefits of private capital investment would 'trickle down' to the city's poorest residents. WOPC, by contrast, believed that the City should be actively engaged in redistribution, and working to improve the economic status of its poor. [134]

More specifically, WOPC was generally amenable to attracting private capital to the city as an engine of economic growth, but only if this would also entail job creation for West Oakland residents. And WOPC expressed an interest in not only having its residents working for these new industries, but also having some *ownership* stake in the new enterprises. Clashes with city officials, then, would typically occur upon City abandonment of WOPC goals when these goals acted as a deterrent to new private industry. And WOPC, adamantly opposed to maintaining the

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[132] *Ibid.*

[133] Hayes, *Power Structure and Urban Policy,* 125.

[134] May, "Two Model Cities: Negotiations in Oakland," 87.

status quo, now had veto power in relatively critical local development matters, and thus real leverage in its negotiations with the City.[135]

A Broad West Oakland Alliance Fades

The West Oakland Planning Committee, and the community control that it embodied, did not have staying power. The federal programs that had given the committee its power and voice had evaporated—highlighting the very irony of an agenda for local-level control that is ultimately reliant on federal programs and federal funding—and, moreover, internal divisions that had emerged within WOPC had precluded any sort of lasting community collaboration. But despite the WOPC's ultimate fate, perhaps certain elements of the model retain an enduring value.

[135] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In concluding this discussion, we are once again left with the question: how to move forward? Perhaps in carefully considering the two community control case studies set forth in the previous section, we might find clues that will point us toward an answer.

In the example of the Fruitvale district, we witness community members banding together in a show of ethnic and cultural solidarity to preserve neighborhood use values. In this scenario, we also see a reliance on established institutions—as well as the engagement of a small coterie of community members who have ascended the ranks of society—to influence outcomes. The process is one of negotiation, and of working within established constructs. The outcome is a development that, by nearly all accounts, is superior to the original transit district proposal.

And in the case of West Oakland, we see another approach to community control, which relies less on race- and class-based solidarity, and more on territorial unity. The approach to interactions with existing institutions is aggressive, and at times hostile. The internal organizational context is open and fertile with exchange of ideas and cross-cultural interaction. The outcome was a fleeting burst of power, followed by factionalism, and a slow fade into obscurity.

BREAKING THE TIES

While these examples might at first glimpse seem as perfect foils, they are in reality much more complex. In looking at both critically through the lens of internal colonialism theory, we see remnants of 'colonial'-style relations in both. In the case of the Fruitvale, for instance, we must recognize that regardless of community organizing power, the transit district was ultimately responsible for setting the agenda, and making development decisions; Fruitvale residents were certainly able to influence the outcomes, they occupied a 'reactive' rather than 'proactive' position. And in the case of West Oakland Planning Committee, we must remember that the very source of local-level power was, ironically, through a program supported and funded by the federal government. If we look even deeper still, we will undoubtedly see that these examples are replete with contradiction.

Is there a way in which the Fruitvale framework and West Oakland Planning Committee framework could be melded together to produce a superior outcome? Or is a distinct break in approaches required?

TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM

With this study, it is my hope that I have both sketched out a loose framework and provided concrete grounding, to demonstrate the ongoing utility of the internal colonialism model. Indeed, the patterns of external domination and exploitation are just as prevalent today as they were a generation ago, and have taken on increasingly varied and complex forms. It is certainly useful to employ a simple framework to aid in our understanding of these patterns.

And within this framework, as history suggests, there are a range of possibilities for moving forward, tending to follow in two divergent traditions. Which path will be chosen, remains to be seen.

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