Sydney as 'Sinoburbia': Patterns of Diversification across Emerging Chinese Ethnoburbs

Abstract

'Chinese Sydney' has shifted away from its inner-city Chinatown and towards new residential suburban concentrations with varied histories of progressive diversification. In some of these suburbs, where 40% or more of residents report Chinese heritage, older generations of diaspora Chinese intermingle with a substantial recent wave of China-born middle-class professionals – often distinguished as the 'new Chinese'. This paper situates the localised, internal diversities of the modern arrival city within the geo-political conditions, urban development strategies and migration patterns that shape Sydney's Chinese ethnoburbs (or 'Sinoburbs'). Drawing on demographic analysis, site mapping of local infrastructure and site observations, we trace changing demographics and patterns of suburban development within three different case study suburbs. In doing so, we elucidate some emerging lines of inquiry that challenge the extant focus in both enclave and ethnoburb models of urban ethnic concentration and suggest a number of new interventions to future research on emerging Sinoburbia localities both in Australia and elsewhere.

Introduction

Australia is home to more than 1.2 million people of Chinese ancestry (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016a), and has a long history of transnational flows from China. Goldrushes ushered in significant nineteenth century migration of Chinese, mostly from Guangdong and speaking Cantonese or other dialects. While the White Australia Policy restricted Chinese migration for much of the 20th century, migrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and other branches of the Chinese diaspora began to settle in Australia after its dismantling in the 1970s. About eighty percent of this 'first wave' were migrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia, and 20% from China (Burnley, 2002). These flows, especially of skilled and business migrants, increased considerably in the 1980s and 1990s (Inglis, 2011).

Mainland Chinese migration increased rapidly after the turn of the century. Australian residents born in mainland China are now the second largest group of overseas-born residents, after the UK-born (ABS, 2016a). Nearly half of all Australian residents with Chinese ancestry now speak Mandarin, and two in five were born in China. While China-born migrants have dispersed across cities nationwide (Wang et al., 2018), Sydney remains the most popular arrival city, with 44% of residents born in China living in the greater Sydney area (ABS, 2016a).

Often referred to as the 'new Chinese' (Li, 2017), post-2000, mainland China-born migrants to Sydney form part of a 21st century trend of increased emigration from the People's Republic of China (PRC) to all corners of the world. This recent wave of Mandarin-speaking, urban professionals have intensified the ongoing decentralisation of Sydney's Chinese population from Chinatown to suburban settlement, creating suburban localities where China-born residents now make up a high proportion of the population. In this paper, we coin the term 'Sinoburbia' to describe these suburbs. Drawing on demographic analysis, site mapping and preliminary observations in three Sydney Sinoburbs, this paper has two aims. First, we develop the concept of the Sinoburb to reflect the diversification of the migrant geographies of new Chinese arrivals that destabilise homogenous imaginaries of 'Chinese spaces' (as represented by the iconic idea of 'Chinatown'), and to describe how an upwardly mobile middle-class migrant demographic can reconfigure suburban spaces with differing histories and presents of diversification. We position new drivers and processes of suburban settlement within the context of global flows of 'new Chinese' migration and local interactions of gentrification and ethnicization in suburban space, positing that new settlement processes are driven by local infrastructure and amenities (including culture, leisure, education and transport) rather than solely by ethnic social and economic networks. Second, we use this analysis to expand concepts of the 'ethnoburb', which have

been driven by research in North American urban contexts. We reflect on how localised, internal diversities of geopolitical conditions, urban development strategies and migration patterns have shaped new Sinoburbs into increasingly differentiated, porous and multicultural hubs and elucidate some emerging lines of inquiry of significance to future research on emerging Sinoburbia localities both in Australia and elsewhere. Presenting an analysis that foregrounds differentiation and diversity across, as well as within, different Sinoburbs within one city, we contribute to debates on differential inclusion by focusing on the varied dimensions of migrant-driven diversification in three different cases of suburban ethnic settlement in the modern 'arrival city' of Sydney.

While acknowledging that the terms used to typologize migrant identities can be contested, we deploy some terminological distinctions throughout this paper. We use the terms 'mainland Chinese' or 'China-born' for migrants born in mainland China (that, is PRC territory excluding Hong Kong and Macau). Following Li (2017), we use the term 'new Chinese' to describe the cohort of middle-class mainland Chinese migrants who left China after 2000. When we use the broad term 'Chinese', we are referring to a wider and more general category of people of ethnic Chinese heritage (or, as commonly referred to in Australian demographic data, of Chinese ancestry), regardless of place of birth, or period of migration.

We first address the context of new Chinese migration globally and the development of the concept of the ethnoburb, before turning to the methods undertaken in our comparison. We then discuss the histories, demographics and urban formation of the three case study suburbs in turn. We conclude with an overall discussion of what the three sites tell us about divergent modes of Sinoburbia in Sydney, including potential interventions for ongoing work.

New Chinese migration and the rise of the ethnoburb

Linked to China's 'opening up' in the 1980s and its rapid expansion as a global power in the following decades (Zhou, 2017; Pieke, 2007; Thunø, 2007), a 'new Chinese migration order' (Pieke, 2007) is scripting new local economies of Chinese ethnicity (Nyíri, 2013) across many cities globally. Scholarship remains, however, largely focused on North America and Europe (Thunø, 2007; Pieke, 2007) and to a lesser degree emerging destinations like Africa (Harrison et al., 2012; Sullivan and Cheng, 2018). Australia remains a specific case because of its existing history of Chinese settlement and geographic position as a White settler nation that has developed close regional links with Asia, especially China, in the past few decades (Ang, 2010). Following from Ang's (2001) theorisation of 'the profound variability, uncertainty and ambivalence of Chinese ethnic identity' across time and space, shaped by 'myriad factors including changing

historical circumstances, geopolitical relationships, and social and political location', in this paper we seek to expand on existing analyses of suburban ethnic concentration by highlighting the growing diversity both between and within suburban Chinese communities in Sydney, and the way these suburbs pose some challenges to existing models of the ethnoburb.

Beginning with Li's (1998) work on Los Angeles in the late 1990s, North American research has drawn on the concept of the ethnoburb to analyse new middle-class Asian migrant communities as part of socio-spatial trends away from urban enclave models of ethnic segregation and towards relatively affluent suburban clusters (Merritt, 2007; Li, 2009). There is a lack of consensus around precise demographic variables and geographic delineations in defining what constitutes an ethnoburb (Wang and Zhong, 2013). However, most scholars distinguish the ethnoburb as a multi-ethnic community 'with one ethnic group showing significant concentration but not necessarily forming a majority' (Xue et al., 2012: 584), and foreground the relative affluence of residents (Wen et al., 2009; Li, 2009). Li's (2005, 2006) key contributions on ethnoburbs in the United States importantly highlight their openness as 'outposts of the global economy' rather than merely localized forms of ethnic community. Following from this, the existing literature on ethnoburbs tends to highlight ethnic business activities and networks and the role of transnational flows of commerce and of people as central to attracting migrant settlers and to the development of suburban

spaces as affluent, ethnic hubs (Gao-Miles, 2017; Wen et al., 2009; Li, 2009; Xue et al., 2012).

Australian and New Zealand scholarship has also drawn on the ethnoburb concept, such as Xue et al.'s (2012) primarily statistical analysis of geographic clustering of Chinese residents in Auckland, or Gao-Miles's (2017) ethnographic study of Melbourne's Box Hill as a 'spatial reconfiguration of ethnic Chinese' (83). Ip (2005), in turn, draws on the concept to contrast the agentic place-making of new middle-class Chinese settlers in Brisbane's suburban Sunnybank with the ethnic symbolism evoked in the city's 'consciously constructed' (63) inner-city Chinatown. However, despite a significant amount of scholarship on the changing nature of Sydney's inner-city Chinatown (Inglis, 2011; Anderson et al., 2019), its Chinese suburbs are yet to undergo comprehensive scholarly analysis. Wang et al. (2018) use the theory of segmented assimilation to analyse the distributed spatial concentration of settlement patterns of China-born migrants in Australia. This refers to how, through ethnic clustering, these migrants are 'being absorbed in different spatial segments of the host society' (450), resulting in a multiplicity of different Chinese ethnoburbs in one metropolitan city such as Sydney, based on differences in socio-economic status. This emphasis on ethnoburb diversity is a critical starting point for this paper (see also Burnley, 2002). But we will go further by developing a qualitative description of this diversity beyond socio-

demographic differences, to include a broader range of spatial, cultural and social characteristics.

We coin the term Sinoburb to describe Sydney's evolving Chinese ethnoburbs because it implies shared, but multiple threads of Chinese cultural heritage, and foregrounds cultural formations that can encompass the apparent hybridity and multiplicity of Chinese identities in the spaces in question. While the conventional framing of Chinatown often symbolised essentialised Western constructs of exotic Otherness (Ang, 2001; Ip, 2005; Anderson, 2017), the Sinoburb signals a potentially more agentic and hybrid spatial and cultural formation that goes beyond White-Other binaries of ethnic difference and urban diversification. Further, we deploy the concept of the Sinoburb to understand forms of Sinicisation in suburban space in relation to the specific local features of these suburbs that simultaneously drive and are driven by new Chinese settlement. Looking beyond ethno-specific networks and businesses, we consider in our analysis how a range of local infrastructures and amenities, both state-funded and commercial, inflect the development of these Sinoburbs. As Li (2005:37) points out, the influx of Chinese migrants in a formerly white-dominated suburb alters the local landscape (including businesses, socio-cultural institutions and political structures), instigating a two-way adjustment and integration process that is locally specific, depending on local actors and circumstances at play. In this regard, the study of Sinoburbs contributes to

understanding the transformation of suburbia, traditionally conceived as homogeneous white spaces characterized by cultural conformity (Fava, 1956; Gans, 1967), into culturally diverse spaces in an era of strong new Chinese migration. The Sydney case also expands the discussion of suburban diversification beyond the North American context, where such discussion tends to focus heavily on the impact of 'race' and racialization (e.g. Cheng, 2013; Lung-Amam, 2017). In Australia, by contrast, discourses of 'race' are differently inflected by the highly influential discourse of state multiculturalism, which has nurtured a public culture of negotiating racial and ethnic differences (without, evidently, erasing racism) (Stratton & Ang, 2001).

Methods

In this paper, we draw on the preliminary phase of a four-year project on civic and community life in three Sydney Sinoburbs: Zetland, Eastwood and Hurstville. In-depth qualitative interviews and observations will be conducted during the next phase of the research. The data for this paper consists primarily of analysis from Australian Census data from 2001 to 2016 (the next Census data are due to be available in late 2022). We also draw on secondary sources on suburban development, and a systematic site mapping of local infrastructures and amenities across the three suburbs. The infrastructure

mapping process involved collating and indexing all major community venues, events and facilities, as well as major current and upcoming development projects and any significant patterns of commercial amenities. We used government and community websites, directories and databases and online maps to collate and index this information into spreadsheets. We categorised venues, events and facilitates into five domains (education and learning, culture and leisure, sport and movement, religion and spirituality and care and community services) and tagged by type (e.g. school, leisure centre, museum, mothers group, art class). We also included notations of available information on the services offered (e.g. 'a Catholic church providing weekly services in English and Mandarin and a Bible study group for Mandarin-speaking seniors'). While this approach may not capture all the amenities, such as informal or unlisted groups and venues, it provides an overall mapping of the density and availability of key suburban community infrastructure at each site. We took this broad approach to amenities and infrastructure because, as existing urban studies literature suggests (see for example, Paddison and Sharp, 2007; Milbourne, 2021) a myriad of 'public, private and in-between' (Milbourne, 2021: 2901) spaces play significant and entangled roles in mediating difference and social inclusion.

We also include preliminary observations of streetscapes, local businesses and daily life gleaned from walking tours conducted by the research team in 2020,

and led by researchers or community members familiar with the local area. Observations from the walks serve to supplement the demographic data and systematic site mapping, allowing us to note local business activity, architecture, use of public spaces and the general atmosphere of the neighbourhoods. Following from Truman and Springgay (2019: 527) we position the walking tour as a research method that allows "getting to know a place, including its hidden histories, obscure stories, and state-sanctioned narratives." Walking offered an important complement to the desk-based methods, creating in each suburb "an alternative way to understand and critically engage in urban space through sensory and embodied experiences" (Aoiki and Yoshimizu, 2015: 276). The walks are a precursor to more in-depth qualitative observational research at key sites in each suburb which will take place during the next phases of the project. Descriptions of the suburbs in the following analysis are drawn from the site mapping and walking tours, unless secondary literature is cited.

The case studies discussed in this paper have been purposefully chosen from the top ten suburbs with the highest percentages of China-born and Chinese-ancestry residents in Sydney. We selected the suburbs to represent a range of geographic locations, patterns of residential development and histories of demographic diversity. Hurstville and Eastwood have considerable histories of Chinese settlement through earlier waves of migration from Hong Kong and Taiwan, while Zetland is a much newer suburb whose Chinese population

comes from more recent arrivals. The suburbs are, however, broadly comparable in terms of their ethnic composition as 'Chinese suburbs' - they each have 40% or more of residents reporting Chinese ancestry, and 30% or more born in mainland China. We include three suburbs to enable the development of more differentiated insights that go beyond the uniqueness of a single location, but with more depth around each local site than a 'whole of city' analysis. Methodologically, we expand upon Ip's (2005) approach in tracing the history and demography of suburban Chinese formation. While Ip (2005) contrasts Brisbane's traditional Chinatown with emergent ethnoburbia, we instead analyse and contrast three different ethnoburbs in different regions of Sydney. This is significant because 'Chinese Sydney' is increasingly a city of multiple, dispersed and diverse ethnoburbs.

Empirically, we utilize Wen et al.'s (2009: 434) definition of an ethnoburb as an 'affluent, suburban neighbourhood with a sizable presence of at least one racial/ethnic minority group (25 percent)' where 'median household income is at the 75th percentile or higher among all census tracts nationwide.' Geographically, while we acknowledge that both ethnic clusters and local infrastructures can transcend official boundaries, we focus in our analysis on the suburb as designated by local government zoning. This allows for precision in the demographic analysis (as Census data can be readily analysed at the

suburban level) but also allows for the consideration of how local government facilities and developments shape the contours of suburban life.

[insert Figure 1]

[insert Table 1]

Hurstville: an urbanising hub for Chinese families

Hurstville, in Southern Sydney 16km from the Central Business District, is in the Georges River Local Government Area. Hurstville contains the highest urban Chinese concentration in Australia. It was subdivided from large rural estates to small lot farms in the mid-1800s, and into suburban blocks after the construction of a railway station in 1884, which also led to the establishment of a commercial centre (Artefact Heritage, 2016). Hurstville's population has increased from just over 20,000 in 2001 to almost 30,000 in 2016 and shifted from a largely working-class demographic towards a more affluent one. An influx of middle-class residents after 2001 saw the percentage employed as managers and professionals more than doubling between 2001 (14%) and 2006 (32%). Hurstville remains, however, in a lower middle-class income bracket, with a median weekly household income of $AUD1382, which is lower than greater Sydney's median weekly household income of $AUD1750, but still

within the 75th percentile nationally. The suburb is characterised by a large portion of family households (74%), and the average number of people per household is slightly higher than the Sydney average (3 compared to 2.8). 41% of all private dwellings in Hurstville are separate or semi-detached houses, although flats or apartments increased by 18% between 2011 to 2016.

The China-born population started increasing in Hurstville in the late 1980s. But rapid growth occurred in the 2000s, with 73% of the China-born arriving in Australia after 2000. In 2001, China was already the top country of birth outside of Australia (16%), this figure increased to 28% in 2006, and has since continued to rise, to 37% in 2016. China-born residents now outnumber the Australian-born population, which only accounts for 27.8% of the total population. As Table 1 shows, over 55% of Hurstville residents report Chinese ancestry. Around 18% of residents therefore report Chinese heritage but were either born in Australia or other countries outside of mainland China. In 2001, Cantonese (18%) was more commonly spoken than Mandarin (11%), but by 2016, there were almost double the number of Mandarin speakers (32%) compared to Cantonese (18%). As Table 1 shows, Chinese-heritage residents of Hurstville tended to be more highly educated than the Sydney average (43% had a university degree, compared to only 31% for Sydney), although this did not translate into proportionately greater numbers employed in managerial or professional jobs (40%, compared to 41% for Sydney as a whole). Together

with the relatively low rate of employment of Chinese-heritage residents (50%, compared to 62% for Sydney), this may indicate problems encountered with securing jobs commensurate with migrants' level of education.

Both demographically and in terms of our mapping of local amenities, Hurstville can be considered a family suburb. There are eight schools, ten childcare centres, and 11 public parks and reserves. Georges River Council provides a wide range of community facilities, including a library, museums and a theatre, and runs a series of Lunar New Year Festival events. Hurstville boasts a small 'city centre' around the train station as well as a traditional suburban village high street, with a high concentration of Chinese restaurants and shops. There are two major modern shopping malls as well as older retail plazas. Many of the residential streetscapes retain mid-20th century architectural facades of the Inter-War development era. Yet recent and planned developments look to increase modern high-rise building, including the $AUD128 million Landmark Square Precinct, a 20-storey mixed-use development, and One Hurstville Plaza, a $AUD60 million 14-storey office tower. Given the residential developments currently underway, the suburb's population will likely continue to increase, and its central precinct around the train station will become more 'urban' than 'suburban' in scale and feel. We observed during our walking tour in Hurstville at least two dozen private tutoring centres. Our local guide noted that these

centres attract Chinese families from across Sydney to Hurstville for children to attend tutoring sessions after school and on Saturdays.

[Insert Figure 2]

Eastwood: a transforming 'multicultural village' and education destination

Eastwood lies in Sydney's north-west, 17 km from the CBD, under the LGAs of Ryde and Parramatta. Eastwood's suburban beginnings were marked by the extension of the railway in 1886, following which large rural blocks began to be subdivided into residential land (City of Parramatta, 2016). Rowe Street, due to its proximity to the station, became a focal point for commercial activity and remains the village centre today. Greek and Italian families (many owners of orchards and market gardens) first arrived in the 1920s. 14 Chinese market gardens were also present in the municipality by the end of the decade (City of Parramatta, 2016).

Eastwood's population has grown steadily since the turn of the century, increasing from over 14,000 in 2001 to 18,000 in 2016. The proportion of professionals in Eastwood increased dramatically between 2001 (18%) and 2006 (33%). 75% of all households in Eastwood are family households, and over half are couple families with children, and the average household contains 2.9

people. Eastwood spatially represents a classic model of low-density 'house and garden' Australian suburbia - 75% of all private dwellings in Eastwood are separate houses and semi-detached houses. The median weekly household income of residents in Eastwood is $AUD1648, which is only slightly lower than the median weekly household income of greater Sydney.

Eastwood had a largely White population until the influx of migrants from East and South Asia in the 1990s. 72% of the China-born population arrived in Australia after 2000. In 2001, China was already the top country of birth outside Australia, but only constituted 7% of the population, this increased to 25% of the population by 2016. A significantly larger percentage (45%) of residents report Chinese ancestry. In 2001, more than half (56%) of Eastwood residents spoke only English at home. By 2016, this had fallen to 32%. In 2001, Cantonese (13%) was more commonly spoken than Mandarin (6%), but this had reversed by 2011, and in 2016, 25% of residents spoke Mandarin, compared to only 15% speaking Cantonese. As in our other Sinoburbs, Chinese-heritage Eastwood residents were more highly educated than the Sydney average (49% had a university degree), and those employed were more likely to be in professional jobs (50%). However, the overall employment rate was lower for Chinese-heritage residents (52%), as shown in Table 1.

From the infrastructure mapping, Eastwood's school catchment includes several top performing public schools. Five Chinese language schools also run

during the weekends, and Eastwood station is less than five kilometres from one of the state's largest public universities. The site mapping also revealed a wide range of community facilities and activities. Annual festivals, such as Lunar New Year Festival, Moon Festival, South Asian Film, Arts and Literature Festival and Granny Smith Festival attract both residents and visitors. There are 16 churches in the suburb of various denominations, many have Mandarin-speaking congregations and services.

As we observed walking through Eastwood, the residential streetscapes feature predominantly freestanding houses, both older Federation and Craftsman style and post-World War II housing stock. The commercial centre is a well-known 'Asian' precinct, with many independent Chinese or Korean owned speciality stores, supermarkets and restaurants. We noted on our walking tour several *daigou* shopfronts which are recent additions to the neighbourhood. They sell popular Australian products (such as vitamins, health supplements and baby formula) and provide shipping services for local Chinese 'agents' who source and resell these products to buyers in China through social media networks (Zhao, 2021). We also observed the open-air street market of mostly Asian food vendors and a Night Market on the Rowe Street pedestrian mall. Alongside the mainstream grocery chain Woolworths, the Eastwood Village Square mall features open, Asian market-style produce, meat and fish vendors.

[Insert Figure 3]

Zetland: a post-industrial Sinoburb of young professionals

Zetland is a small inner-city suburb about 4km from Sydney's Central Business District, within the Green Square and City South village area in the City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA). The site of a racecourse in the early 1900s, automobile manufacturing post-War and a Naval Supply Depot from the 1970s, Zetland was first subdivided in 1999. Zetland has since transformed from a rustbelt industrial area to a high-density residential neighbourhood, driven by major development projects, including the East Village commercial and apartment complex, completed in 2015, and, more recently, the master-planned Green Square neighbourhood, one of Sydney's largest urban regeneration projects. Apartments make up the vast majority (91%) of housing in the suburb (see Table 1).

While over half of all households in Zetland are family households (53%), the suburb has a relatively large proportion of single and group households, accounting for 25% and 22% of all households respectively, and the average household size is quite small (2.2 people, compared to 2.8 for Greater Sydney). 61% of the families in Zetland have no children, and the majority of residents (62%) are renters rather than home-owners – 62%.

Zetland does not have a 20th century history of Chinese settlement. In 2001, 63% of residents were Australian-born and 71% spoke only English at home. By 2016, however, only 37% of residents spoke only English at home. In 2001, less than 1% of Zetland residents were born in China. By 2016, this had increased to 31%, with slightly more Zetland residents born in China than in Australia (29%). Further, 41%, regardless of birthplace, claimed a Chinese ancestry, and nearly 30% of the residents spoke Mandarin at home, as shown in Table 1. Zetland is a suburb of recent arrivals; in 2016, 95% of China-born residents had arrived after 2000. And as Table 1 shows, Chinese-heritage Zetland residents tended to be more highly educated and employed in managerial or professional jobs compared to Sydney residents overall. More than half (58%) of Zetland's Chinese-heritage residents were students, reflecting the suburb's easy access to Sydney's central universities.

Our infrastructure mapping reveals that many community facilities in Zetland are still under development. A new school with a capacity for 600 students is planned. New community facilities, such as the Joynton Avenue Creative Centre and the Green Square public library, were opened in 2018. Also, a new aquatic and recreation centre was opened in February 2021. Inner-city Sydney, which includes the Zetland-Waterloo area, has the highest concentration of artists and creative workers in Sydney and 15 art galleries are located in the Zetland-Waterloo area.

As we observed during our walking tour, Zetland's commercial centre and streetscapes do not reflect the typical look and feel of older Australian 'migrant suburbs', which are often characterised by a high street of small, independent ethnic businesses where older two-storey commercial terrace shopfronts dominate architecturally – originally shops with upstairs residences attached for owners. East Village, the commercial heart of the suburb, is a contemporary multi-storey indoor shopping mall, circled by alfresco restaurants and cafés that are mostly popular chains or franchises. There is a large Cantonese-style yum cha restaurant on the mall's top floor, and a small pan-Asian grocery market alongside the mainstream produce market and major chain supermarket on the main shopping floor. This floor also features an 'artisan' butcher, a sourdough bakery, a juice bar and a health food store. Elsewhere in the suburb, many recently built apartment buildings have small, casual Chinese restaurants on the bottom floor, often offering regional dishes. Many of these restaurants are offshoots of venues in other established Chinese suburbs.

[Insert Figure 4]

Problematizing ethnic concentration and ethnic diversity

In this paper, we shed light on how various Chinese migrant groups are differently included in everyday life in Sydney and engender new spaces of

urban diversification. Our demographic analysis (Table 1) demonstrates that despite similar statistical ethnic concentration, there is significant internal differentiation, both in terms of differentiation within a single suburb and between different suburban sites. This challenges the somewhat static notion of the 'majority ethnic group' or 'ethnic concentration' that grounds the theorization of the ethnoburb. In 2016, Hurstville had the highest proportion of China-born residents (37%), followed by Zetland (31%) and then Eastwood (25%). However, Eastwood has a higher proportion claiming Chinese ancestry (45%) compared to Zetland (41%). Together with the higher proportion of Cantonese speakers in Eastwood (15%) compared to Zetland (5%), this suggests that Eastwood has the most diverse range of Chinese-heritage residents. Hurstville, however, has the overall highest proportions of Chinese-ancestry residents (55%), as well as of China-born (37%) and both Mandarin (32%) and Cantonese speakers (18%), and is overall the least English-speaking suburb of the three. Such demographic configurations challenge the boundaries of the ethnoburb concept, which pivot on an ethnic group forming a significant (25%) but not majority proportion of the population. Sydney's Sinoburbs raise the question of how such concentrations are measured, as measures of birthplace versus ancestry provide different pictures of the 'Chineseness' of a particular space. Measures of Chinese heritage or ancestry push suburbs like Hurstville (55%) and Eastwood (45%) towards a majority Chinese spatial

configuration and therefore beyond the demographic limits of the ethnoburb. While this demographic dominance of Chinese residents suggests cultural homogenization, it obscures the internal diversity (particularly linguistic, diasporic and generational differences) within this category. While ethnoburbs are commonly considered 'ports of entry' (Li, 2009) in the arrival city, they are also significantly shaped, in cities like Sydney, by second and third-generation residents and established and diverse branches and generations of the diaspora. As Wong and Ang (2018) have noted in the context of Chinatown, the place-making practices and consumption patterns of these varied groups may shape local spaces in different ways. The notion of the Sinoburb, therefore, calls for attention to how ethnic concentration can be constructed by complex layers of evolving diversification both within and between the demographic categories that constitute ethnicity. While there is little recent research on Sinoburb residents' attitudes towards their neighbourhoods, media reports suggest that Chinese-Australians have mixed attitudes towards living in Chinese-majority neighbourhoods (Han, 2017). In Chinatown, older generations of Chinese feel a loss of sense of community in the wake of the arrival of the 'new Chinese' (Wong and Ang, 2018). Further research on Sinoburbs with attention to the internal diversities of the Chinese community is needed to shed more light on how these issues shape suburban settlement and place.

Emerging demographic variables of diversification: age and sexuality

Race and ethnicity are clearly not the only axes of migrant difference that shape both settlement processes and urban space (Ye and Yeoh, this issue). Ethnoburb models are based on two social variables – ethnicity and middle-classness. These remain highly significant to the formation of Sydney's Sinoburbs. Yet, we suggest here two other demographic factors that intersect with class and ethnicity in their formation – age profiles and sexual identities. Zetland has a much younger population (median age 28 in 2016), compared to Eastwood (36) and Hurstville (32), and all three have a lower median age compared to the NSW and national average (both 38). These age profiles reflect the consequences of the skilled migration points system in Australia, which favours migrants in the 25-39 age category.

With a population skewed towards young professionals without children in Zetland, and young families with school-aged children in Hurstville and Eastwood, these suburbs therefore form not just around the ethnic clustering of migrants but also around how their life-stage intersects with their socio-economic and professional status, and the concomitant lifestyle desires. For example, in Zetland young professionals without children are attracted to a suburb close to the inner city, with higher density housing and more rental options, whereas Eastwood and Hurstville show the significance of larger dwellings and perceived high quality school catchments to family households.

While these trends hold in middle-class urban demographics regardless of ethnicity, they influence the way these suburbs come into being as ethnic spaces.

As the 'youngest' Sinoburb, observations in Zetland showed perhaps a more globally influenced set of middle-class consumption patterns – featuring no traditional markets and lacking the village high street of small ethnic businesses that is associated with the classic Australian ethnic suburb of the late 20th century (which we see retained, at least for now, in Eastwood). Zetland's newly built residential areas are more reminiscent in their form of middle-class suburbs in Asian metropolises like Singapore and Hong Kong and attract younger, urban and professional migrants with a range of consumption options.

In Eastwood and Hurstville, both public and private education options are critical to the Sinoburb clustering of Chinese families with school-aged children. Education holds particular significance for contemporary East Asian migrants to the West, who are 'hyper-selected' via migration systems as skilled, education-focused and aspirational (Lee and Zhou, 2015, Ho, 2020). In Australia Chinese families often locate to suburbs with desirable local schools, skewing the demographics of these areas and of school communities (Ip, 2005; Watkins, 2017). Such clustering further embeds gentrification as school catchments impact property values. Eastwood's property prices, for example, nearly doubled between 2010 and 2016, a surge attributed in part to the 'good schools' and proximity to Macquarie University (Farrelly, 2016). The high

number of private tutoring centres we observed on our walking tour in Hurstville (and to a lesser extent Eastwood) also suggests significant links between state-funded education institutions and the private educational service providers driven by the new Chinese market of affluent young families (Ho, 2020). Zetland is potentially a more transient space, with residents renting over shorter-terms prior to growing their families. At the same time, the completion of Green Square community facilities and the new school is likely to make Zetland more attractive to families in the longer-term, and potentially lead to demographic transition. These modes in which Chinese migrants' educational aspirations pattern urban diversification and urban transformation resonate with previous work by Collins (2010) on international students as 'urban agents' in Auckland, which similarly shows how education-led diversification impacts urban change.

A second notable demographic difference is the emerging queer population in Zetland. Of all couple households in the suburb, 6.6% are same-sex couples (ABS, 2016b). 2016 Census data likely under-reports the LGBTQI population, only accounting for same-sex couple households and not individuals' sexual or gender identities. Despite this, the same-sex couples figure for Zetland is significantly higher than both Australia (0.9%) and NSW (1.0%), and is a stark contrast to Eastwood (0.3%) and Hurstville (0.7%). This is potentially linked to the younger demographic in Zetland and the larger presence of more recent

arrivals, who may be more likely to identify as LGBTQI than older generations of migrants. Further research is needed to account, though, for the potential role of queer spaces and businesses in shaping Sinoburbs in Sydney. Australia is increasingly identified as a popular destination for queer migration from China (Yue, 2016; Kam, 2020) and geographically, Zetland sits adjacent to Sydney's 'rainbow ribbon', an inner-city curve of suburbs with high numbers of LGBTQI residents. Studying emerging Sinoburbs thus requires attention to the intersections of sexuality and ethnicity and their role in shaping local place, given both the established 'interlinkages between gendered and sexual identities, practices and spatial organization in many cities in the global North' (Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2014: 767) and increasing queer mobilities from China to Australia.

Community and commercial infrastructure and suburban development

Our preliminary analysis of three of Sydney's Sinoburbs suggests specific attention is also required to the impact of publicly funded infrastructures and amenities, and how they take shape alongside commercial business ventures and networks. Small-scale, sole-proprietor migrant entrepreneurialism has long been considered key to the ethnic suburb in Australia (see, for example, Collins et al., 1995). Yet, as international research suggests (Xue et al., 2012; Zhuang

and Chen, 2017) models of ethnic business are clearly shifting in Sydney's suburbs of new Chinese settlement. For example, Zetland features predominantly both Western and Asian owned chains and conglomerates, as well as expansions of family ethnic business from other suburbs. Hurstville and Eastwood retain a stronger presence of visibly ethnic businesses targeted towards Chinese consumers. For example, we observed that retail signage is more often in Chinese in Hurstville and Eastwood, while Zetland features mostly English or a mix of both languages. Chinese businesses in all three suburbs, however, vary considerably in scale. For example, Sharetea bubble tea, a beverage franchise originating in Taiwan with more than 70 outlets across Australia, has tea shops in each of the three suburbs. Breadtop, a bakery franchise founded in Melbourne by a Hong Kong migrant family (Cai, 2012), has outlets in both Eastwood and Hurstville. Eastwood and Hurstville also both feature emerging forms of small-scale transnational Chinese entrepreneurialism like *daigou*, driven by the social networks of recent arrivals.

Large public infrastructure projects (like Green Square Town Centre in Zetland) as well as the presence of smaller existing local community infrastructures (such as local libraries, sports venues and cultural organisations and festivals) also play a potentially significant role in the nature of community life in these suburbs and the lifestyle attraction for new Chinese migrants, requiring research to consider the role of local planning strategies and state and

community funded infrastructure. While new Chinese migrants are, like previous generations of migrants, likely to be attracted to these suburbs because of the presence of co-ethnic networks, they are also potentially attracted by the same 'lifestyle' factors that drive other middle-class families – good schools, green space, leisure options, cultural venues and good transport links.

Conclusion

Juxtaposing three different Sinoburbs within one global city reveals the local complexities and differences that are obscured by the singular notion of an ethnoburb. A closer look at the socio-demographic specificities within this category - not only in terms of class, but also age, educational and professional status, sexuality and recency of arrival - highlights differentiations in identity that transcend uniform definitions of 'Chineseness' and have potential consequences for local practices of diversification and inclusion. Moreover, the localised embedding of these populations within these suburban areas inevitably inserts them into urban ecologies shaped by local facilities, transport structures, and community networks that impact on their lifestyles, senses of identity and belonging, and social orientations. Local infrastructures and amenities both drive migrant settlement to particular areas, yet also reconfigure in response to the desires of new populations. In these processes, commercial and state

infrastructures often intertwine, such as the relationship between the presence of good public schools (which motivate the settlement of middle-class Chinese families) and the rise of commercial tutoring businesses in Hurstville and Eastwood (which intensifies alongside this settlement). The notion of the Sinoburb attempts to build a more relational approach to the ethnic suburb, considering not only the ethnicity and class dimensions of settlement demographics and their role in shaping suburban space, but how other demographic variables can be productively layered into examinations of ethnic concentration.

We also suggest that despite their relative affluence, Sinoburbs are perhaps more fragile and more transient than the working-class Australian ethnic neighbourhoods that formed in the 20th century. Their growth has depended heavily on new settlers, transnational flows and state infrastructure investment. The global pandemic and its subsequent economic impacts may shift their growth trajectories with consequences for urban diversity and differential inclusion. Inner-city Sydney suburbs have already suffered significant economic losses due to the reduction in Chinese international student residents (Hurley, 2020). Increasing geo-political tensions between Australia and China also potentially create frictions within Sinoburbs, as Chinese-Australians become subject to new forms of racialized anxiety (Tsolidis, 2018). Recent reports (Doery et al., 2020; Zhou, 2020) show that the pandemic has exacerbated anti-

Asian racism in Australia, and Sinoburbs often at the centre of xenophobic panic about the virus. Ethnic tensions in Sinoburbia may also encompass intra-ethnic tensions between mainland Chinese migrants and other Chinese diasporic communities, as has been documented in other contexts like Singapore (Ang, 2018). New Australian Census data, due to be published in mid 2022 will provide more data on the most recent demographic changes to Sydney's Sinoburbs, and thus a clearer picture of their potential futures.

As a long-standing arrival city, Sydney is shaped by varied forms of migrant-led diversification, patterned by a 20th century history of diversity as well as by contemporary 21st century arrivals. Sydney's Chinese suburbs reflect this layering of diversification, and present rich case studies of how contemporary ethnic suburban clustering comes into being in different ways. We have used the heuristic notion of the 'Sinoburb' to stretch beyond both enclave and ethnoburb framings. In particular, we problematised the boundaries of ethnic concentration by illustrating the demographic heterogeneity of Chineseness both within and across three Sinoburbs; considered how ethnicity intersects other under-researched demographic variables in the shaping of suburban space; and suggested that, beyond specifically ethnic networks and businesses, both commercial and state-infrastructures also reflect and inflect these more layered and intersectional patterns of diversification. The next phase of this research involves surveys and household interviews with residents and

observations at a range of civic and community sites within each suburb. Along with the pending 2022 Census release, this primary quantitative and qualitative data collection will unveil the lived, daily practices and experiences of Sinicisation and inclusion that make up life in these Sinoburbs. The result will be a comprehensive picture of the complex diversity of these areas, which will contribute to a nuanced and differentiated understanding of the local urban impacts of new Chinese migration and related processes of differential inclusion in the global city.

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