

Title: Amerige Heights: Examining Shopping Centers as an Intersection of Capital Driven, Culture Clash

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Different cultural groups operate with different capitalistic desires. The American shopping center embodies the intersection of culture and economy. Fullerton, California is a hotspot of various cultures chasing economic prosperity with every group wanting a piece of the action. Newer groups instigate change, but is this change only superficial? This paper examines one specific location, Amerige Heights, presents an example of these socioeconomic interactions. Specifically, the paper investigates the unanticipated influx of Korean businesses in an historically non-Korean center. In 2015, California Tofu Grill replaced the center's Hallmark store. The new restaurant has walls lined with engraved glass art, black and gold partitions between each table, yet never a single non-Korean customer. Perhaps this is due to the fact they specialize in vegetarian options, or the building is located on the outskirts of the center, or more likely, the culture running the operation feels they have no reason to push marketing outwards and step into American marketing circles. Philip Gleason, Author of *The Melting Pot: Symbol of Fusion or Confusion* would suspect my framing of these questions are themselves a result of my unconscious bias that "[i]mmigrants should actively will his own assimilation." When this local small business replaced a national franchise, it seemed out of place between Target and Islands. What cultural conditions led to this business decision? By looking closely at California Tofu Grill, this paper teases apart questions about the intersections of culture that are taking place in Fullerton's Amerige Heights shopping center.

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