

ROUTLEDGE ADVANCES IN SOCIOLOGY

Immigrant Adaptation in Multi-Ethnic Societies

Canada, Taiwan, and the United States

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10 Diversity of Asian Immigrants and Their Roles in the Making of Multicultural Cities in Canada

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, the number of Asian immigrants in Canada more than doubled, from 1.1 million in 1991 to 2.5 million in 2006. In 1991, Asian immigrants accounted for only 25% of the total immigrants in Canada; by 2006, their share increased to 41%. According to a new population projection by Statistics Canada (2010), by 2031, the number of Chinese in Canada could double again from 1.3 million in 2006 to 2.4 million (by low growth projection) or to 3 million (by high growth projection). Similarly, South Asians¹ could increase from 1.3 million in 2006 to 3.2 million (by low growth projection) or to 4.1 million (by high growth projection).

Despite the challenges they face in their settlement, the Asian immigrants make important contributions to Canada in a variety of ways, and they play significant roles in the making of multicultural cities in Canada. Yet, their contributions and settlement difficulties are not always understood and appreciated, and their presence in Canada has unfortunately caused discomfort among some concerned Canadians.

In its 2010 November issue, the *Maclean's* magazine featured an article with such a provocative title as "Too Asian?"² Following up the widely held concern in the United States that many elite colleges and universities may have moved toward race-based admission policies, and some of them may even be redlining Asian students simply because there are too many of them on their campuses (Miller 2010), the two authors of the *Maclean's* article set out to speak to students, professors, and administrators in a number of Canadian universities to find out whether they feel their campuses are also "too Asian." The article starts with an interview of two (presumably white) students, who told the authors that when some of their high school classmates "were deciding which university to go, they didn't even bother considering the University of Toronto" because "the only people from [their] school who went to University of Toronto were Asian." As to why some white students turn away from the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Waterloo, the article cites some high

school guidance counselors as saying that these top-tier universities enjoy international profiles in such disciplines as math, science, and business, to which Asian students flock and in which they do well; whereas white students are more likely to choose universities and build their school lives around social interaction, athletics, and self-actualization (even including alcohol). When the two lifestyles collide, the result is separation rather than integration (Findlay and Köhler 2010).

Discomfort with the increased presence of Asians in Canada is not limited to university campuses, as is evidenced in a web posting by a deeply concerned Canadian: “I just went to the Superstore, and out of the hundred or so people I saw, most of them were Asian. I only saw a small handful of whites, what’s the deal? Are we destined to be a minority in our country? When was this decided? When did Canadians vote that they wanted their country to become multicultural and to evidently become a minority?”³ Another grumbling Canadian citizen is even more blunt: “[in the past 20 years,] Asian immigrants have moved from a small fraction of Canada’s population to a group that wants to claim power.” He or she continues, “All Canadians should take note of the following: Any country which does not protect its majority population through limitations on immigration invites the contempt of the immigrants who have entered its territory and who have become a majority in a part or whole of its territory” (“CBC Manager of Diversity: Vancouver Is Part of Asia” 2010).

There is no question that immigration has impacts on the receiving society, but the social tension and even animosity expressed in the above nativist sentiments are destructive to building a harmonious multicultural society. This chapter is devoted to a discussion of the Asian immigrants in Canada. We first examine the diversity of Asian immigrants as a valuable source of human capital. We then describe their settlement patterns and their impacts on the makeup of multicultural cities in Canada. The chapter concludes that as the population becomes more diverse and immigrants constitute a large proportion of the total population, the traditional expectation of a “one-way absorption” mode of settlement needs to be abandoned, and a “two-way (or even multi-way) acculturation” is necessary.

The Diversity of Asian Immigrants as a Valuable Source of Human Capital

Historically, Asian immigration to Canada has been closely linked to the economic and geopolitical conditions in the countries of origin, but it has also been attributed to the changes in the immigration policies of the receiving country. On the one hand, the lack of opportunities and freedom, frequent occurrence of natural disasters, and prolonged wars in many Asian countries have led to personal dissatisfaction among many Asians, which motivated them to leave their homelands for a better life elsewhere. On the other hand, the much higher standard of living together with better

economic opportunities (or prospects), and the much appreciated political freedom, have made Canada a “dream land” for many Asian emigrants. In addition, the more open and favorable immigration policies have made Canada a much more attractive destination than Western Europe.

The contemporary Asian immigrants are far from homogenous. They consist of many groups that differ in place of origin, language, culture, religion, and also content of human capital. Table 10.1 shows the major groups of Asian immigrants in Canada. The top ten groups came from Mainland China, India, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Iran, and Lebanon. Together, the immigrants from these ten places of origin account for 81% of all the Asian immigrants in Canada.

Table 10.1 Asian immigrants in Canada by country of birth, 1996 and 2006

	1996		2006		% change 1996–2006
	No.	%	No.	%	
China	227,010	16.3	457,000	18.1	101.3
India	231,905	16.7	436,640	17.3	88.3
Philippines	181,245	13.0	297,240	11.8	64
Hong Kong	238,585	17.2	210,495	8.3	-11.8
Vietnam	136,355	9.8	154,975	6.1	13.7
Pakistan	38,195	2.7	130,540	5.2	241.8
Sri Lanka	66,280	4.8	104,065	4.1	57
South Korea	44,675	3.2	95,965	3.8	114.8
Iran	46,175	3.3	88,885	3.5	92.5
Lebanon	61,395	4.4	72,995	2.9	18.9
Taiwan	48,425	3.5	63,540	2.5	31.2
Afghanistan	n/a	n/a	35,545	1.4	63.2*
Iraq	16,550	1.2	32,540	1.3	96.6
Bangladesh	n/a	n/a	32,180	1.3	49.7*
Malaysia	18,855	1.4	20,865	0.8	10.7
Israel	14,930	1.1	20,240	0.8	35.6
Japan	n/a	n/a	20,155	0.8	n/a
Cambodia	18,575	1.3	19,520	0.8	5.1
Other Asian	n/a	n/a	231,770	9.2	n/a
Total Asian	1,389,155	99.9	2,525,155	100.0	81.8

*percent change between 2001-2006

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 and 2006 census

The surge of contemporary Chinese immigrants to Canada in the 1990s was first prompted by the suppression of the student protest in Beijing's Tian-an-men Square by the Chinese government in 1989. It was later facilitated by the relaxation of the exit policies governing the emigration of the Chinese nationals. The uncertainty of Hong Kong's return from a British colony to the Chinese rule in 1997 served as a strong push factor for the large exodus of Hong Kong citizens in the late 1980s and early 1990s, who viewed Canada as a preferred destination. The Canadian landing data show that 89% of the Hong Kong immigrants who were admitted to Canada in the 26 years from 1980 to 2005 arrived between 1984 (when China and the UK signed the agreement) and 1997 (when Hong Kong was officially returned to China's sovereignty), though its number dwindled after the mid-1990s.

Immigrants from South Asia's India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka also increased substantially. Many Indian immigrants came to Canada to pursue higher education or employment opportunities. In addition, as Singh and Thomas (2004) have noted, "with limited opportunities for permanent residence coupled with political instability and insecurity in the Middle East, many South Asians are immigrating to Canada [from the Middle East]. Canada has become the country of choice . . . [also] because of a shorter immigration-processing period" (2).

Relative to the other major groups, immigration from Vietnam has increased very little since the mid-1990s, reflecting the restoration of political stability there and the resultant decrease in the outflow of refugees. In contrast, immigrants from the Middle East (particularly Iran and Iraq) have increased due to the destructive wars in the region.

Many studies of the composition of immigrants use "immigration class"⁴ as an analytical framework. While a useful framework, it does not reveal the whole picture. For example, according to the landing records, only 46% of the 1.15 million economic immigrants who came to Canada from Asia between 1980 and 2005 were principal applicants; the rest were their spouses and dependent children, who accompanied the principal applicants in their immigration application but were not assessed with the Point System. Despite this, many of the spouses were highly educated individuals.

Using a combination of "age," "Canadian official language ability," and "education qualification" as an analytical framework, this study reveals that the Asian immigrants brought with them considerable human capital needed for Canada's economic development. Of the 2.65 million Asian immigrants who landed in Canada between 1980 and 2005, 54% were in their prime working age (23–50), and another 9% were in their later working age (51–65). Both groups were ready to participate in the labor force upon immigration (see Table 10.2). Thirty-three percent of those between 1 and 22 years of age were expected to acquire all or part of their education in Canada, but they would become more productive citizens than the adult immigrants, after they graduate from the Canadian institutions. Indeed, Asian immigrant youths tend to

Table 10.2 Asian Immigrants in Canada by Age Group, Canadian Official Language Ability, and Period of Landing

Age group	Asian immigrants		English		French		Bilingual		None	
	#	%	1980-1995	1996-2005	1980-1995	1996-2005	1980-1995	1996-2005	1980-1995	1996-2005
			(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
0-5 (pre-school age)	177417	6.7	9.9	8.7	1.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	88.7	91.0
6-12 (elementary school age)	271457	10.2	22.7	25.1	1.8	0.4	0.7	0.6	74.8	73.9
13-15 (junior high school age)	118429	4.5	26.7	31.5	1.6	0.4	1.1	0.9	70.7	67.2
16-18 (senior high school age)	120091	4.5	31.6	33.7	1.6	0.4	1.6	1.1	65.2	64.8
19-22 (college/ university age)	196039	7.4	37.0	39.7	1.7	0.6	2.1	1.1	59.2	58.6
23-50 (prime working age)	1433766	54.0	57.4	62.3	1.6	0.4	2.8	1.9	38.3	35.3
51-65 (later working age)	244813	9.2	26.2	29.9	1.1	0.4	1.2	0.9	71.4	68.8
>65 (seniors)	93786	3.5	23.0	25.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.5	75.3	73.0
Total (number)	2655812	100.0	551373	629141	19991	5278	26036	18925	731264	673804

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Landed Immigrant Data System, 1980-2005

be highly motivated and bright. Many of them are high achievers in Canadian schools. In 2007, three Asian immigrant students were among the top high school graduates (i.e., with the highest grade point average) in their respective school boards in the Toronto CMA (Rushowy 2007).⁵ In 2008, six Asian students were ranked the top high school graduates in their respective school boards and were accepted by top universities (Rushowy 2008).⁶ In a landmark survey of 105,000 students from Grades 7 to 12 by the Toronto District School Board in 2006–2007, it was found that Asian students, along with the white students, were ranked among the top groups in reading and writing (Brown 2008), and they outperformed the Canadian-born in general. Those who were not likely to participate in the labor force after immigration were the seniors, but the seniors constituted less than 4% of the total Asian immigrant intake. After all, enabling family reunification has always been a main theme in Canadian immigration policy, and the elderly Asian immigrants, like all other Canadians, are entitled to live with, or close to, their children in Canada (particularly if their only child has immigrated to Canada).

The more recent Asian immigrants possess higher levels of Canadian official language ability than the earlier arrivals. As the landing data show, the proportion of the 1996–2005 arrivals who had knowledge of English is higher than the 1980–1995 arrivals in all age groups except the 0–5 age group (see Table 10.2). In particular, 62% of the 23–50 age group in the cohort of the 1996–2005 arrivals had knowledge of English, compared with 57% of the same age group in the 1980–1995 cohort—a 5% improvement. The 51–65 age group showed an improvement of nearly 4%. Accordingly, the proportions of those with no Canadian official language ability declined across the board. This is not to say that the Asian immigrants who were recorded in the landing data as possessing Canadian official language ability had all achieved high levels of fluency in English or French, as their language ability was not assessed with formal testing until very recently; however, the improvement does mean less need for intensive language training after immigration and before they become productive citizens.

The Asian immigrants also came with considerable education credentials. Specifically, 31% of those in their prime working age possessed a bachelor's degree (see Table 10.3), 9% had a master's degree, and 1.3% had a doctoral degree. Another 22% of the same age group already had other forms of postsecondary education or training (certificate, diploma, or apprenticeship). In addition, the recent arrivals had much higher education qualifications than the earlier arrivals. According to the landing data, 40% of the prime working age group who arrived between 1996 and 2005 had a bachelor's degree, 13% had a master's degree, and 1.7% had a doctoral degree, compared, respectively, with 20%, 4%, and 1% for the cohort of the 1980–1995 arrivals. The 51–65 age group had similar improvement: 20% of the 1996–2005 arrivals came with at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 8.5% for the earlier arrivals.

Table 10.3 Education Qualifications of Asian Immigrants in Canada by Country/Region of Last Permanent Residence, 1980–2005 (in percentage)

Origin	Age Group	No Education	Secondary or Less	Postsecondary Certificate or Diploma (No Degree)	University Degree			Total
					Bachelors	Master's	Doctorate	
Asia	23–50	1.7	34.9	22.2	31.0	8.8	1.3	41.2
	51–65	16.7	58.7	12.0	10.0	2.0	0.6	12.6
China	23–50	0.7	22.1	23.0	37.8	13.7	2.7	54.3
	51–65	7.2	60.9	20.2	10.7	0.8	0.4	11.8
India	23–50	4.6	30.2	13.1	36.0	14.7	1.5	52.2
	51–65	38.1	47.1	4.4	7.4	2.5	0.4	10.3
HK	23–50	0.6	46.0	32.4	17.1	3.5	0.3	21.0
	51–65	11.4	65.3	17.6	4.8	0.7	0.2	5.7
Philippines	23–50	0.8	22.8	29.1	45.4	1.6	0.3	47.3
	51–65	4.7	63.3	13.9	16.9	1.0	0.2	18.0
Pakistan	23–50	2.8	24.4	13.0	40.5	18.5	0.9	59.9
	51–65	19.8	49.1	7.4	16.3	6.8	0.6	23.7
Vietnam	23–50	1.6	83.4	10.7	3.9	0.4	0.2	4.4
	51–65	14.6	80.6	3.4	1.2	0.1	0.1	1.4
Iran	23–50	0.9	36.6	20.9	31.4	7.6	2.6	41.6
	51–65	4.5	51.7	13.0	20.4	7.0	3.4	30.8
Sri Lanka	23–50	1.6	68.3	20.2	8.0	1.4	0.4	9.9
	51–65	3.4	80.5	10.6	4.8	0.5	0.2	5.5
Taiwan	23–50	0.6	26.3	31.9	28.9	10.7	1.6	41.2
	51–65	2.5	51.3	24.0	18.1	3.2	1.0	22.2
Korea	23–50	0.8	25.0	18.7	44.0	9.4	2.0	55.5
	51–65	7.5	51.2	11.1	24.6	4.0	1.5	30.1

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Landed Immigrant Data System, 1980–2005.

The immigrants from Mainland China, India, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Korea had higher than average proportions in the prime-working age group with universities. These are 54%, 52%, 47%, 60%, and 56%, respectively, compared with the average of 41% for all Asian immigrants (see Table 10.3). Those from the Philippines, Pakistan, Iran, Taiwan, and Korea had higher than average proportions in the 51–66 age group with universities degrees. These are 18%, 24%, 31%, 22%, and 30%, respectively, compared with the average of 13%. The immigrants from Vietnam and Sri Lanka had the least higher education credentials because very high proportions of them were admitted to Canada as humanitarian immigrants and for family unification (50% and 49% for the Vietnamese; 49% and 40% for the Sri Lankans). It should be pointed out that 88% of the Vietnam immigrants came in the period of 1980–1995, and their number has declined significantly since the mid-1990s. While 44% of the Sri Lankan immigrants were recent arrivals, they were admitted largely as a Canadian response to the political turmoil and destructive civil war in that country—a commitment that Canada made to the international community.

Likely due to their good education credentials, the Asian immigrants have higher proportions of them working in the fields of professional/technical services and finance/insurance/real estate than do the general immigrant population (Wang and Wang 2012). There is no lack of success stories about Asian immigrants in Canada. For example, among the Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Award winners in 2010, who made significant contributions to Canada and their local communities, 12 were from the Greater Toronto Area; except for Donovan Bailey—the Olympian sprinter originally from Jamaica—all the GTA winners are immigrants from Asia (Keung 2010; Wong 2010).

It should also be noted that the quality of education in many Asian countries has improved considerably in the last two decades due to the “globalization of curricula.” Nowadays, most universities in the Western English-speaking countries (Canada included) admit international students from Asian countries to various degree programs (including graduate programs) based on their education received from the colleges and universities in their home countries. This is a welcome recognition of the improvement in the Asian education systems on the part of the Canadian institutions. Unfortunately, the Asian immigrants in general still face high barriers in the Canadian labor market, and their employment income is much lower than that of the non-immigrant Canadians (Wang and Lo, 2005). According to the 2006 Canadian census, Asian immigrants on average earned \$31,500 from employment, while the non-immigrant Canadians earned an average of \$36,600 (Wang and Wang 2012).

Settlement Patterns and Impacts on the Makeup of Multicultural Cities

Within Canada, the Asian immigrants are heavily concentrated in two provinces: Ontario (55%) and British Columbia (24%). Together, these two

provinces receive nearly 80% of all Asian immigrants in the country. The other two provinces where a relatively large proportion of Asian immigrants have settled are Quebec (9.2%) and Alberta (8.9%). A much smaller number of Asian immigrants chose to live in the Prairies, Atlantic Canada, and the Territories.⁷

Eighty-four percent of the Asian immigrants concentrate in ten Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), as listed in Table 10.4. In addition to the three gateway cities of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, five other CMAs—namely, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Winnipeg—began to attract Asian immigrants in large numbers. The trend of concentration in the top ten CMAs has intensified: only four CMAs—Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Edmonton—have more than 40% of their *total immigrants* coming from Asia, but seven CMAs have more than 40% of their *recent immigrants*⁸ coming from Asia.

Within metropolitan areas, Asian immigrants clearly suburbanized, as exemplified by the Chinese and South Asians in the Toronto CMA (see Table 10.5). In 1996, 60% of the South Asian immigrants lived in the Central City (i.e., the City of Toronto), and only 40% lived in the suburbs. A decade later, in 2006, 55% of the South Asians live in the suburbs. The Chinese also suburbanized, albeit to a lesser extent. Interestingly, the largest two groups of Asian immigrants—the South Asians and the Chinese—exhibit

Table 10.4 Distribution of Asian Immigrants in the Top Ten CMAs in Canada, 2006

CMA	Province	Total Asian Immigrants		Recent Asian Immigrants*	
		No.	% of Total Immigrants	No.	% of Total Recent Immigrants
Toronto	ON	1,048,680	45.5	286,790	64.7
Vancouver	BC	508,760	62.0	109,625	73.8
Montreal	Quebec	179,705	24.4	43,220	26.5
Calgary	Alta	116,345	46.2	33,230	57.9
Ottawa-Hull	ON	66,915	33.3	13,650	39.5
Edmonton	Alta	75,760	40.2	17,510	56.3
Hamilton	ON	32,190	19.4	8,780	43.4
Winnipeg	Man	45,155	37.7	13,270	56.5
Kitchener	ON	22,070	21.6	7,655	46.4
London	ON	16,000	18.5	4,685	36.3

*Recent immigrants are those who immigrated to Canada within the last five years of the most recent census.

Source: Statistics Canada (2006) census.

distinctive settlement patterns in the metropolitan regions where they concentrate. According to the 2006 census, 41% of Toronto CMA's South Asians live in Brampton and Mississauga, and more than 50% of the Chinese live in the area consisting of Markham, Richmond Hill, Northwest Scarborough, and northeast North York. Of the South Asians, the Punjabi Sikhs congregate in Brampton, while the Sri Lankan Tamils concentrate in Scarborough. Similar spatial distinctions can be observed in the Vancouver CMA, where the Chinese concentrate in the municipalities of Richmond, Vancouver, and Burnaby, while the South Asians heavily concentrate in Surrey (Figure 10.1). As Quadeer and Kumar (2003) explain, people of the same ethnic origin concentrate in the same geographic areas as a defense against discrimination, to support each other, to preserve cultural heritage, and to join forces for political actions and lobbying. Often, it is in these areas of concentration where the impacts of immigration are felt the most and social tensions arise.

Asian immigrants contribute to the economic and cultural well-being of Canada and enrich the meanings and contents of the multicultural cities in no small ways. They not only changed the population composition in the receiving cities, but also altered the local economic and cultural structure. Their settlement in the Canadian cities has often resulted in booming local economies. In addition, they began to exert influences on the local political landscape.

Table 10.5 Distribution of South Asian and Chinese Immigrants in the Toronto CMA, 1996 and 2006

	<i>South Asian*</i>				<i>Chinese</i>			
	1996		2006		1996		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Central city (City of Toronto)	104,260	59.8	180,355	44.5	135,110	64.9	181,780	59.7
Suburbs	69,960	40.2	225,000	55.5	73,115	35.1	122,645	40.3
Mississauga	33,960	19.5	84,205	20.8	18,025	8.7	26,525	8.7
Brampton	18,110	10.4	81,455	20.1	1,735	0.8	2,860	0.9
Markham	7,465	4.3	26,235	6.5	30,595	14.7	58,760	19.3
Vaughan	2,975	1.7	11,195	2.8	3,500	1.7	4,180	1.4
Richmond Hill	1,595	0.9	5,050	1.2	15,285	7.3	23,100	7.6
others	5,855	3.4	16,860	4.2	3,975	1.9	7,220	2.4
CMA Total	174,220	100.0	405,355	100.0	208,225	100.0	304,425	100.0

*South Asians include immigrants from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.
Source: Statistics Canada (1996, 2006) census.

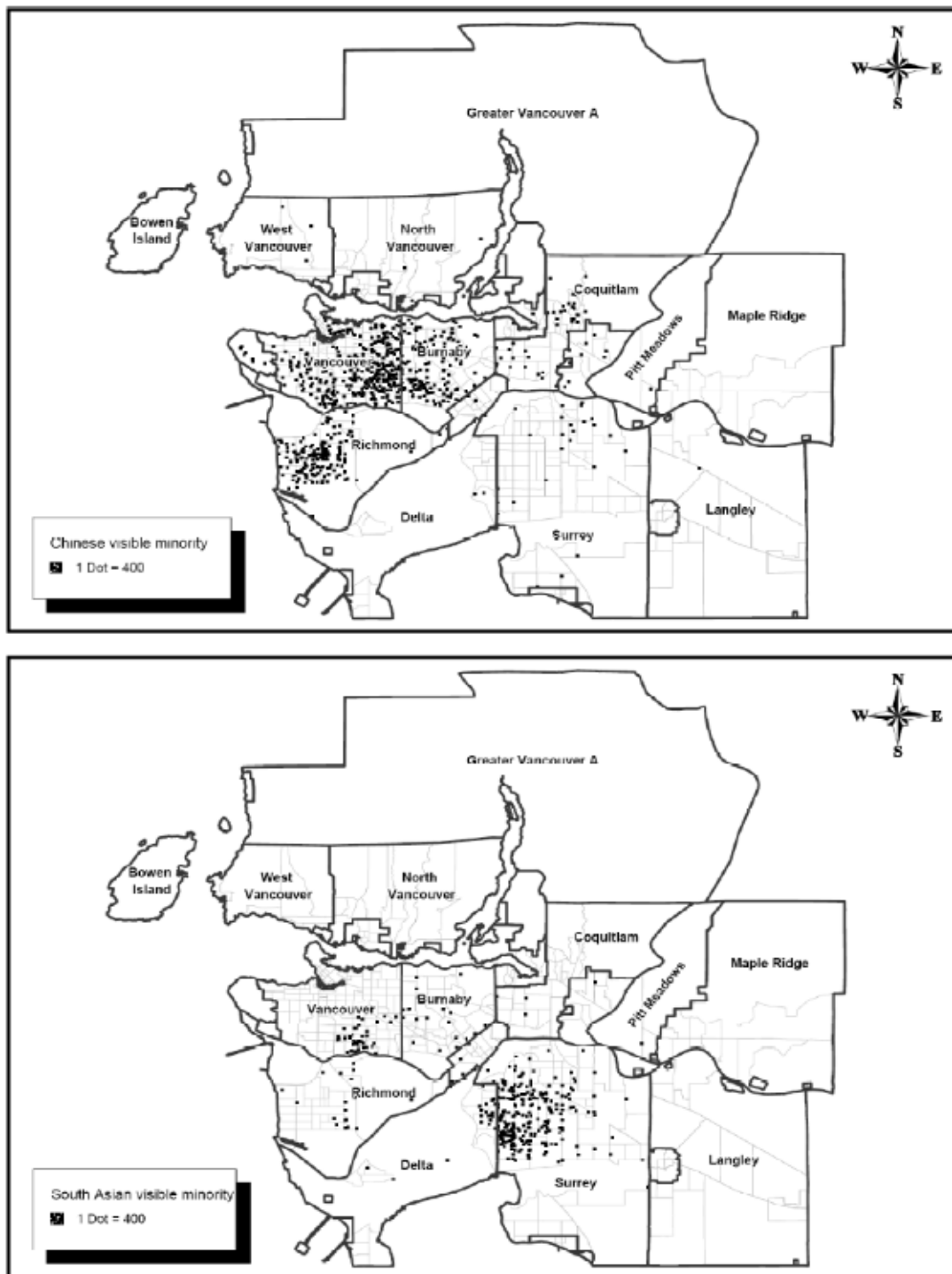


Figure 10.1 Distribution of the Chinese and South Asians in Vancouver CMA.
Source: Statistics Canada (2006) census.

The health of the housing market is often regarded as a barometer for economic vitality, and it has been widely acknowledged that immigrants are a driving force of the housing market (Dupuis, 2009). In a study based on Statistics Canada's Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada⁹ (Hiebert and Mendez 2009), the authors found that home ownership rates of immigrants in the three gateway cities of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal rose rapidly within a few years of landing in Canada, from less than 20% six months after arrival to more than 50% four years after arrival. Further, the same study reveals that the South and Southeast Asian immigrants exhibit "extraordinary degrees of home ownership" (p3). Not only do Asian immigrants have a high propensity to own a home (they often cut consumption in other areas in order to own a home), many of them bring large sums of money to Canada and invest it in a residential property (Starr 2010). The positive impacts of the South Asian immigrants on the booming Canadian housing market is also confirmed by Agrawal and Lovell's (2010) study.

In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the affluent Hong Kong immigrants were "scooping up properties in specific areas" of metropolitan Vancouver, such as Shaughnessy and Richmond (Ley 2009; Ray et al. 1997). More recently, those from Mainland China comprise a major army of real estate buyers in Vancouver, who immigrated to Canada with considerable wealth. Tom Gradecak, a Vancouver realtor, told news reporters that "our office has done 50 sales this year [January 1– May 16, 2011], which is pretty incredible; half of those sales are [made to immigrants] from Mainland China" (Wasserman 2011). According to Cam Good, president of a leading sales and marketing firm in Vancouver, as many as 500 houses have already been bought by Chinese immigrants (and investors) in Toronto and Vancouver in the first two months of 2011 alone (Kaur 2011). The affluent Chinese immigrants reportedly dominate the high end of the housing market (Freeman 2011; Sutherland 2010). More wealthy Chinese immigrants are expected to arrive in the near future. Now that the Chinese government has introduced new regulations to curb real estate speculations and restrict home ownership to two apartments per family, more "surplus money" is expected to be invested in residential properties in Canada.

The increase (and anticipated increase) in Asian immigrants in the major Canadian cities also attracted large sums of investment from investors based in their places of origin. In 1988, the site of Expo 86 in Vancouver was acquired by Concord Pacific Developments with investors led by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-Shing (whose son Victor Li became a Canadian immigrant in 1983) and was subsequently developed into the Concord Pacific Place—Canada's largest master-planned urban community, comprising about 50 buildings with 10,000 homes (Ley 2009; Wasserman 2011). In the City of Toronto, the same developer has been building two new master-planned communities: one is Concord City

Place in downtown Toronto (West of Sky Dome), and the other is Concord Park Place in North York (with 4,000 homes being planned). In addition, Concord Pacific Development is planning to build a similar but smaller community in Calgary.

The Asian immigrants have not only created a large pool of labor that the Canadian employers can utilize, they have also formed a critical mass of consumers, stimulating development of ethnic businesses. In the major immigrant-receiving cities, they are pivotal to the growth of local economies.

Until the mid-1980s, Chinese grocery stores and supermarkets were small in size and concentrated in the inner-city Chinatowns (Wang 1999). Since the mid-1980s, many larger stores have opened in the suburbs. As of April 2010, 53 Chinese supermarkets of various sizes (excluding small, convenience-style grocery stores) exist in the Toronto CMA to serve the half million ethnic Chinese (Figure 10.2). Most of the modern and large-scale supermarkets were newly developed after 2000. Two important characteristics are noted. First, many of the new Chinese supermarkets have opened in succession to mainstream supermarkets or other types of retail outlets (such as junior department stores and hardware stores). This pattern of succession has resulted in some very large Chinese supermarkets. Second, and related to the first, a number of them have taken the position of anchors in mainstream community shopping plazas, serving none-Chinese, as well as Chinese, consumers living in the nearby neighborhoods (Wang et al. 2012).

During the last two decades, more than 60 Chinese shopping centers were also developed in the Toronto CMA. Most of them are located in the areas of Chinese concentration (Figure 10.2). In the Vancouver CMA, more than a dozen large ethnic Chinese shopping centers are in operation. The largest cluster, anchored by Yaohan Centre, Aberdeen Center, and President Plaza, is situated in Richmond. Many of the Chinese malls are condominium shopping centers, where the merchants own their store space.

The commercial activity engaged by the South Asian immigrants is much less significant in both number and scale than that of the Chinese. Still, the South Asians are running fruitful businesses in the Toronto and Vancouver CMAs, and a trend of suburbanization can also be observed. The traditional Punjabi Market established in the central city of Vancouver in the 1970s has witnessed a decline in business, and merchants started moving to Surrey to reach the growing number of South Asian consumers there (Aryal 2011). Similarly, Little India (also known as the India Bazaar) in the City of Toronto is losing customers to suburban competitions (Vukets 2011). In response to the flood of immigrants into Scarborough, Brampton, and Mississauga, South Asian malls are being built or planned (Hertz 2007; Radhika 2008). The first indoor South Asian-oriented shopping mall—the GTA Square—opened in Scarborough in 2008 in a two-story structure

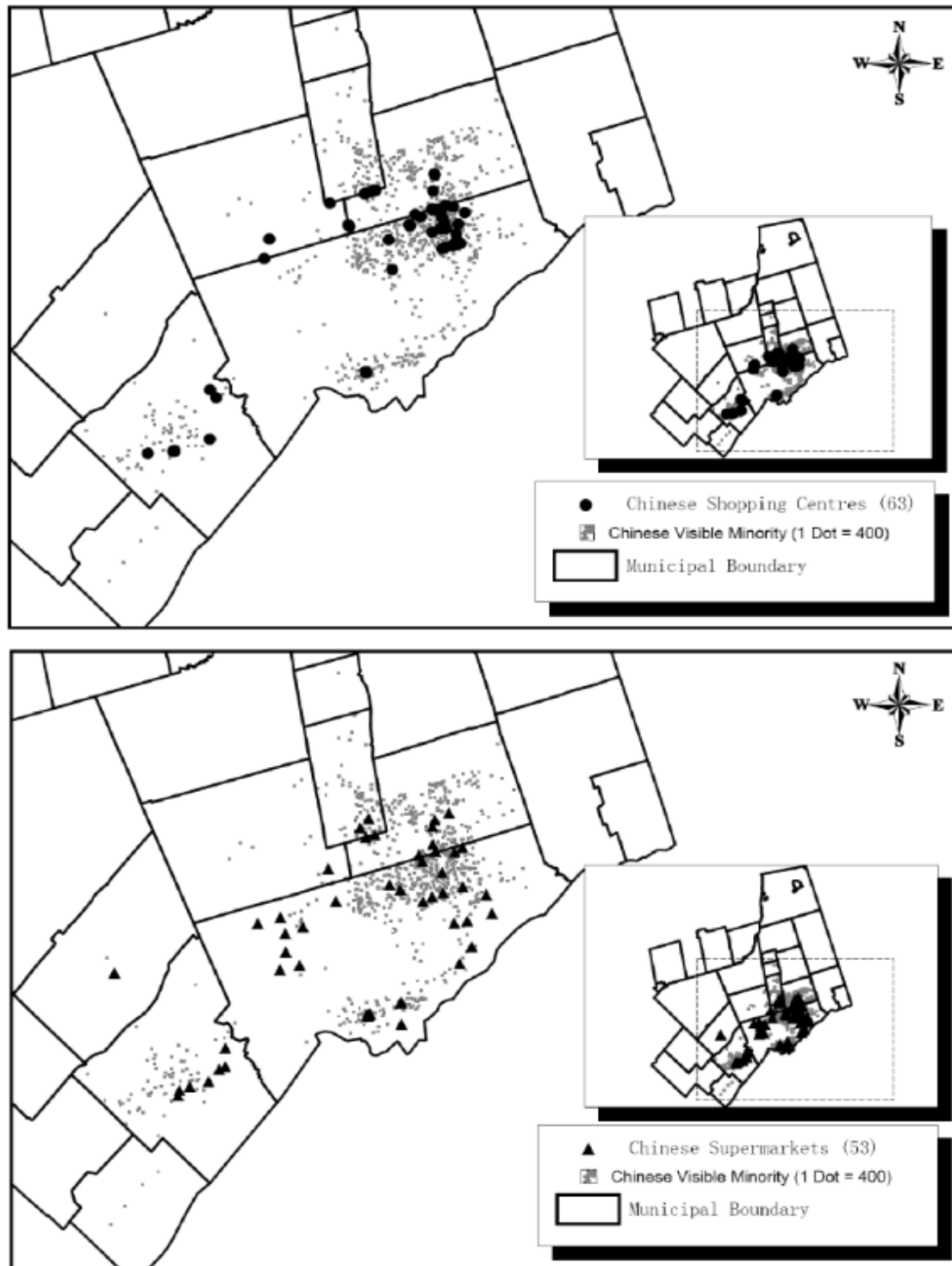


Figure 10.2 Distribution of ethnic Chinese supermarkets and shopping centers in the Toronto CMA.

with 40,000 square feet of floor space. Soon after, two more shopping centers dedicated to a South Asian clientele were opened: Greater Punjab in Mississauga (160,000 square feet) and T. Junction in Scarborough (80,000 square feet). Two much larger ones are planned: Tah Center in Brampton (220,000 square feet) and Sitara in Scarborough (240,000 square feet). These malls/plazas serve (or are planned to serve) as cultural hubs as well as business centers, combining retail, professional services, and, in some cases, religious institutions.

Asian immigrants also contribute to their local communities through generous donations. A recent study reveals that a new high-income class of Indo-Canadians has been created who are giving back significantly to their communities (Agrawal and Lovell 2010). In 2007, a new hospital was developed and opened in the City of Brampton in the Toronto CMA for \$790 million. The hospital aimed to raise \$10 million in donations from private donors. The South Asian community responded enthusiastically and raised \$7 million (Yelaja 2007). For their significant contributions, the new emergency department was named Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism. In return, the community made it clear that they wanted to be involved, ensuring that the new hospital is sensitive to their cultural and religious needs. They recommended that the new hospital offer Indian vegetarian meals, Punjabi and Hindi language translations and signage, large family waiting rooms, as well as expanded treatment areas for cardiac care, nephrology, and diabetes, as these diseases are more prevalent among South Asians.

The large groups of Asian immigrants, particularly the Chinese and South Asians, have achieved high degrees of institutional completeness. Within the Toronto CMA, the South Asians developed 57 Indo temples (Figure 10.3). These temples are not just places of worship for the South Asian immigrants, but are symbols of their new home in Canada (Porter 2007). The Chinese have formed more than 100 associations of various types (Figure 10.4). These modern associations are fundamentally different from the old-day clansmen organizations, and they consist of broad memberships. The largest is Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC) with 26,000 members. Its objectives are defined as:

- to provide opportunities for interaction and networking among Chinese Canadian professionals;
- to help members integrate and contribute to Canadian society;
- to facilitate members' careers and professional development;
- to provide training, employment, settlement, education, cultural, and recreational services to internationally trained professionals and families;
- to be a national voice and representative of the Chinese Canadian community (CPAC, <http://www.chineseprofessionals.ca/mission.php>)

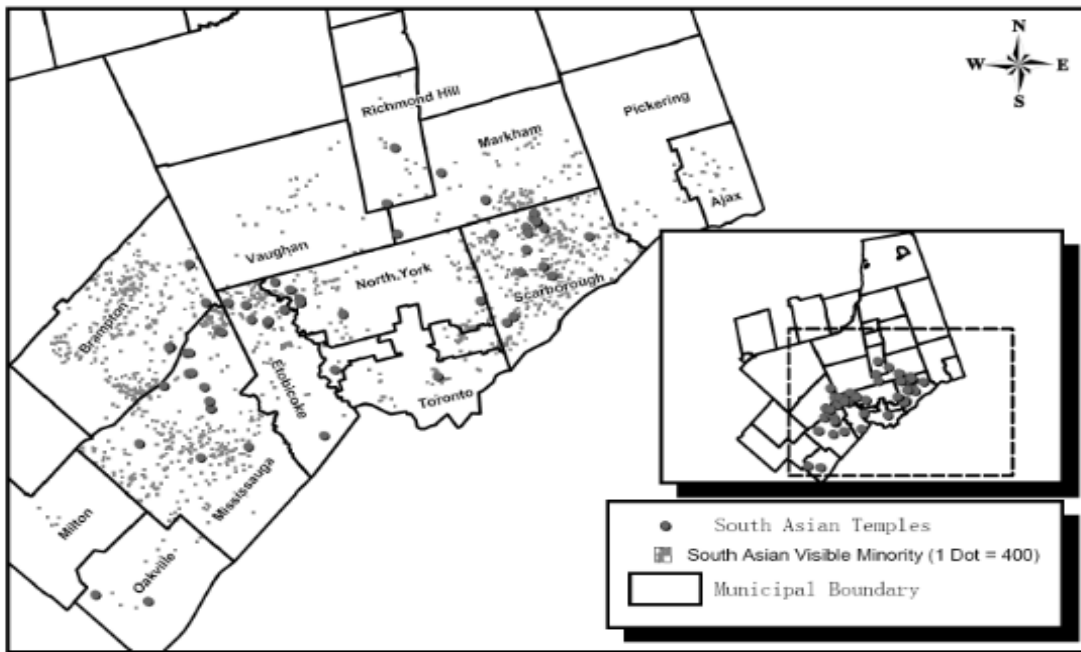


Figure 10.3 South Asian temples in the Toronto CMA.

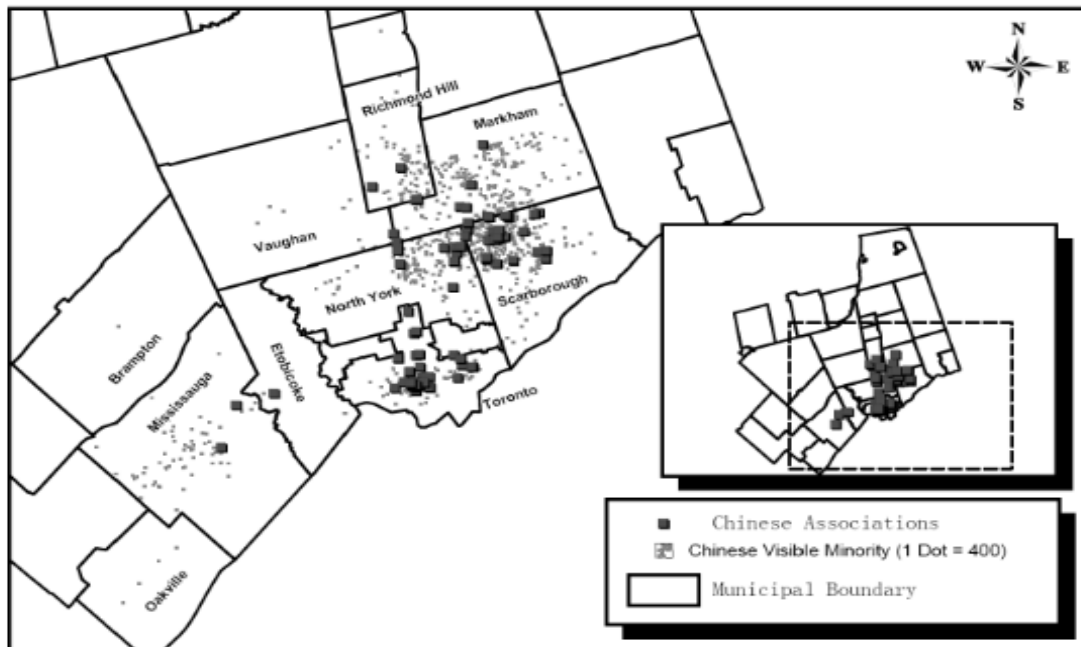


Figure 10.4 Chinese associations in the Toronto CMA.

Increased political participation and representation has also been observed in the cities and areas of Asian concentration, where the usually silent minorities become more vocal and ethnic votes are growing in size. More Asian immigrant candidates are running for elections to change the political landscape. In the 2008 federal election, three South Asians won seats in the Brampton-Mississauga area, and two Chinese ran in the Markham-Richmond Hill-Scarborough ethnoburb, though they both lost. In the 2006 provincial election, Michael Chan (a Chinese immigrant) won in Markham-Unionville, and Amrita Mangat (a South Asian) won in Mississauga-Brampton South. Alex Yuan (a Chinese) ran in Richmond Hill, and Max Wang (also a Chinese) ran in Scarborough-Agincourt, but both lost. In the 2010 municipal elections in the Province of Ontario, nearly 40 ethnic Chinese candidates were running for councilors (*The Chinese Canadian Post* 2010; *Today Daily News* 2010). Politicians now see the areas of Asian concentration as important sources of political capital, and party leaders often take time to attend ethnic festivals to solicit ethnic votes. Shelley Carroll, a Toronto City councilor representing Ward 3, distributes her annual newsletter to her constituents consistently in two languages: English and Chinese. She even gave herself a Chinese name: 高雪莉.

In the City of Vancouver, the Chinese and South Asian Canadians have become a political force for the city's mayor. It is reported that former Mayor Sam Sullivan learned to speak Cantonese and Panjabi in order to develop a close relationship with the large ethnic communities in the city; he later was picking up Tagalog—the language of most Filipinos—in preparation to run for re-election in 2001. As Charlie Smith, one of Vancouver's most respected political commentators, predicted, any "Neighborhood. People. Accountability" (NPA)¹⁰ candidate who runs for the 2011 election probably has to win a huge share of the first-generation Chinese Canadian votes in order to become mayor (Smith 2008).

Along with their various forms of contribution and participation were the impacts on the receiving communities. On the one hand, Asian immigrants are hailed for driving the housing market growth in Canadian cities (Lebour 2011; Wong 2007); on the other hand, they are blamed for driving up the housing prices beyond what native-born Canadians can afford. In the early 1990s in Vancouver, many homes were bought by immigrants from Hong Kong in middle-class neighborhoods. The homes were torn down, sometimes along with large trees, and replaced with homes that were much larger than the others in the immediate neighborhood, called "monster homes" by the locals. As one Letter to the Editor of *The Richmond Review* reads, "We cannot allow this way of life to disappear for the short term benefit of sudden money from Hong Kong" (*The Richmond Review* 1991). As well, the contention was frequently raised in local Richmond newspapers that Chinese settlement has promoted "white flight," accompanied with stories of long-time residents "[fleeing] to deep suburbia" (Ray et al. 1997, 94).

Similar conflicts happened in the Toronto CMA. When the first suburban concentration of commercial activity began to form in Scarborough's Agincourt community in 1984, hundreds of non-Chinese residents and business owners in the surrounding area lodged complaints and protests. At a residents' meeting, when a suggestion was made that street signs in both English and Chinese be put up, the nearly all-white audience shouted: "never," "let'em learn English" (*The Scarborough Mirror*, May 30, 1984). In the mid-1990s, when many ethnic Chinese shopping centers were built in suburban municipalities, the deputy mayor of Markham remarked, at a regional council retreat in July 1995, that a growing concentration of ethnics is causing conflict in some communities in Markham, and large Asian commercial developments that are being exclusively marketed to the Chinese community with signs written in Chinese are only chasing residents of other races away from the city (Wang 1999). Many Chinese were offended by the deputy mayor's remark and accused her of racism.

Because the new development of ethnic businesses has posed challenges to the long-established municipal planning systems, some cities responded with changes to their municipal zoning bylaws. For example, Richmond Hill in the Toronto CMA made changes to its existing bylaws, which imposed a maximum size on restaurants in the city (with the effect of disallowing large Chinese restaurants from being built), introduced a cap on the number of stores in one mall and a minimum size for stores (to reduce the number of stores and increase store size), and required a larger number of parking spaces against the square footage used for stores (encouraging vertical intensification) (Preston and Lo 2000; Wang 1999). In the City of Vancouver, after a series of emotional hearings in 1993 about the "monster houses," a compromise was reached. In exchange for permission to build large houses, the city's planning authority insisted that builders of new homes take into consideration the style of the surrounding dwellings (Ley 2009).

CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS

Canada needs to accept 250,000 or more immigrants each year to maintain its population growth and sustain its economic development due to the country's low birth rate and low fertility rate.¹¹ At the core of Canada's immigration program is the Points System, designed to screen applicants with the most potential to make positive contributions to Canada. The landing data show that in the past two decades, Canada has been getting better and better immigrants in terms of human capital through the Points System.

The large in-flow of Asian immigrants is largely the result of the Points System, which has been followed to select immigrants on the basis of merits and been applied to all immigrants on an equal basis. It also reflects the fact that China and India have the largest pools of potential immigrants to select from. It is legitimate to debate how many immigrants Canada should

accept and can accommodate each year, but it is prejudicial and discriminatory to suggest limiting Asian immigration to Canada. If Asians were to be disproportionately reduced, who should be admitted to make up the gaps in the immigration quota? Canada cannot go back to its old “ethnocentric” immigration policy. Even if it did, the immigrants from the traditional source countries (namely, Western Europe, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand) could not meet Canada’s population and labor needs. Therefore, the concern about too many Asians in Canada is unnecessary and unrealistic. After all, the Asian immigrants make significant contributions to Canada, as this chapter demonstrates.

Central to the societal concern about immigration in Canada is, “Whose values will prevail: those of the longer standing citizens, or those of the newcomers?” As the population becomes more diverse and immigrants constitute a large proportion of the total population, the traditional expectation of the “one-way absorption” mode of settlement must be abandoned, and a “two-way (or even multi-way) acculturation” is necessary, meaning that the “majority” of the receiving society needs to learn and adapt to the cultural values and business practices transplanted to Canada by the ethnic minorities (Figure 10.5). Knox and Pinch (2000) advocate the same process of acculturation with a new form of assimilation: assimilation is not simply the process of one culture being absorbed into another; instead, both mainstream and minority cultures are changed by assimilation through the

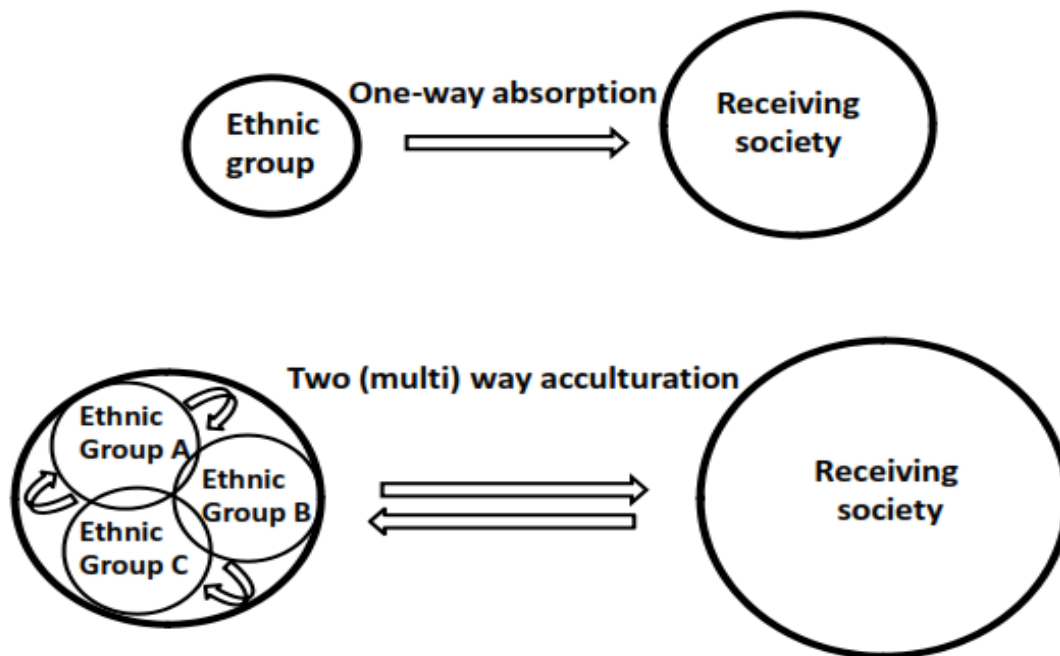


Figure 10.5 Changing interactions between the receiving society and ethnic groups.

creation of new hybrid forms of identity. In this course of transition in attitude toward immigrants, the use of such terms as “mainstream,” “host society,” and “visible minority” has been questioned for their appropriateness and political correctness (Canwest News Services 2007). Building social harmony calls for equal partnerships, and the “us-vs.-them” and “majority-vs.-minority” references are discouraged. Both public institutions and private organizations in Canada should mirror the country’s population composition. More efforts are needed to increase the representation of the various ethnic groups at the leadership levels (Ryerson University 2011).

Asian immigrants, like all others, tend to concentrate in the urban areas with good job opportunities and already established co-ethnic communities, especially the Toronto and Vancouver CMAs, where most social tensions are reported. One way to encourage dispersion of immigrants, to the benefit of both the immigrants themselves and the country’s regional development, is to create job opportunities in other cities. Canadian employers are strongly encouraged to capitalize on the talents of the highly educated Asian immigrants and their multilingual and multicultural children, and follow the Canadian universities to recognize their foreign education credentials.

On the part of immigrants, they need to consciously develop intercultural skills. Asian immigrants should avoid making such provocative claims as “Vancouver is part of Asia.”¹² Such claims may invoke a feeling of Canada being “colonized,” among the longer-standing Canadians who already resentfully call Vancouver “Hongcouver” (de Beer 1994). Immigrant entrepreneurs should consciously learn the broad knowledge of the Canadian business environment that entails a balance between economic development and community life, and they should be sensitive to the different needs of communities composed of ethnically diverse people. Asian candidates running for public offices should not promote themselves as the “best candidate” to represent their co-ethnics. Such promotions may give an impression to the other constituents that such a candidate would only represent the members of his or her own ethnic group.

On a Sunday in May 2009, a protest by thousands of members of Toronto’s Tamil community, including women and children, blocked and shut down the Gardiner Expressway in downtown Toronto for more than five hours, demanding that the federal government of Canada impose sanctions on Sri Lanka until the Sri Lankan government signs a ceasefire with Tamil rebels.¹³ This prompted Toronto Mayor David Miller to issue a statement saying that while he understood the protesters’ deep concern over what is happening in Sri Lanka, “endangering public safety by occupying the Gardiner or other public highways is not the right way to make that statement.” Similarly, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty criticized the protesters’ tactics, saying the bloodshed in Sri Lanka does not justify blocking streets in Toronto and Canada (CBC News 2009). Indeed, there are other and better ways to express their demand. As Premier McGuinty offered, “the demonstrators were welcome to protest on the front lawn of the legislature or Parliament Hill”

Neither is it conducive for the newcomers, who are frustrated for not being able to find suitable jobs, to complain that they are “cheated” (by the Canadian government). Although Canada welcomes immigrants, application for immigrating to Canada is a voluntary process and a personal choice. Newcomers need patience in finding jobs that match their professional backgrounds. When one moves within his or her home country from one city to another, he or she would still encounter challenges and barriers, not to mention the difficulties one has to face when moving to a different country.

Investor and business immigrants should focus on creating jobs in Canada to fulfill their immigration obligations. The “astronauts” who need to spend extended time out of Canada to attend their overseas businesses need to abide by the Canadian tax laws and the overseas assets declaration law. Ethnic businesses operated within Canada are encouraged to widen their business scope, reaching out to serve beyond their co-ethnics and cater to different communities. T&T Supermarket, Canada’s largest Chinese supermarket chain recently purchased by Loblaw Cos Ltd., has been moving in this direction. Within the Toronto CMA, T&T locates most of its stores in shopping malls and plazas, where they mix with non-ethnic Chinese businesses (Wang et al. 2011).

Canada is proud of its multicultural policy. As former Multiculturalism Minister Sheila Finestone told a news conference in 1995, multiculturalism is a policy that “the whole world is looking at to solve social and cultural frictions,” and “Canada proved to the world that people of different credos, races, and cultures can live together in peace and harmony” (Persichilli 2010). For an immigrant-dependent country like Canada, “when newcomers thrive, we all do” (Fiorito 2010).

NOTES

1. South Asians consist of immigrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka
2. The article was condemned by various groups of concerned citizens, students, and university faculty members after its publication. In response to the reactions, *Maclean’s* later changed the title of the web edition of the article to “The Enrolment Controversy.”
3. See this web page: <http://ca.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080126181309AA5bzXM>
4. Immigration class is one of many variables in the Canadian Landed Immigrant Data System (LIDS). This variable distinguishes immigrants as independents (i.e., skilled workers/professionals), investors, entrepreneurs, family members, refugees, etc.
5. These were: Sophie Chen of Pickering graduating from Pine Ridge SS with 97.6% average (immigrated from China in 2001); Amy Wang of Toronto graduating from Northern SS with 99.7% (immigrated from China in 2002); Manan Arya of Brampton graduating from Turner Fenton SS with 99.7% (immigrated from India in 2003) (Rushowy, 2007).
6. In 2008, Jaymin Kim of Burlington graduated from Robert Bateman SS with 99% average (accepted by Harvard University); Anna Yue Shen of Mississauga

- graduated from Glenforest SS with 100% average (accepted by the University of Waterloo); Keith Ng of Mississauga graduated from St. Francis Catholic SS with 98.8% average (accepted by the University of Toronto); Griselda Lam of Thornhill graduated from St. Robert Catholic SS with 99.1% average (accepted by McMaster University); Jennifer Chung of Pickering graduated from St. Mary Catholic SS with 95.8% average (accepted by McMaster University) (Rushowy 2008).
7. The Prairies refer to Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Atlantic Canada consists of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. The Territories refer to Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.
 8. Recent immigrants are those who immigrated to Canada within the last five years of the most recent census. In the 2006 census, recent immigrants refer to those who arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2005.
 9. The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada was taken with three waves of questionnaires approximately 6, 24, and 48 months after landing in Canada. It covered the period from 2001 to 2005.
 10. NPA is a political organization in Vancouver.
 11. The fertility rate in Canada declined significantly between 1971 and 2001, dropping from slightly over 2.1 in 1971 to approximately 1.5 in 2000. In fact, 1971 was the last year when Canada's fertility rate exceeded the replacement level.
 12. Alden E. Habacon, Manager of Diversity Initiatives at CBC Television and Director of Intercultural Understanding Strategy Development at the University of British Columbia, posted a commentary on Blogra on February 13, 2010, titled, "Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games: Whitest Opening Ceremony Ever?" In that piece, Habacon complained about the lack of diversity in the Canadian delegation at the opening ceremony; he also referred to Vancouver "as a city that is considered by many (including myself) as part of Asia." <http://www.straight.com/article-289674/vancouver/vancouver-2010-olympic-winter-games-whitest-opening-ceremonies-ever?page=1>
 13. In 2006, Canada added the Tamil Tigers to its official list of terrorist organizations.

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