"China Round the Corner": Vancouver's Chinatown and the Chinese Community in a Changing "Multicultural" Society

by

MAYUMI NAKAMURA

B.A., Tsuda College, 2002

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS in THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES (SOCIOLOGY)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2005

© Mayumi Nakamura, 2005
ABSTRACT

This thesis conceptualizes Vancouver's Chinatown as a museum aimed at the white population groups in the context of multicultural Canadian society. The purpose of this research is to suggest that a dichotomization between whites and Chinese resulting from colonialism is reproduced through the policy of multiculturalism. Explicit visualization for the purpose of "preservation" made Chinese culture a subordinate and exploitable object that served as a source of entertainment for whites. The Chinese in Canada, who had greatly suffered from racial discrimination in the past, are now regarded as an important ethnic and cultural group that enriches Canadian society under the policy of multiculturalism. However, it remains to be seen whether they and their culture have truly earned equal status to that of white culture.

The City of Vancouver conducted beautification schemes on Chinatown from the late 1960s to the 1980s. As a result, Chinatown became a cultural site where Chinese culture is represented with a strong emphasis on visual aspects. Preservation of Chinatown as a cultural entity consequently made it an artificial space that does not reflect the reality of the current, diversified Chinese community. Therefore, people of Chinese origin today cannot identify themselves with Chinatown. Chinatown was forced to remain distinctive from the rest of the City, and its distinctiveness was measured in comparison to white culture. This implies an unbridgeable distance between the white and Chinese.

In this research, archives regarding the beautification of Chinatown were examined to study what modifications were added and what aspects of Chinese culture were emphasized to create an imaginary space of Chinese culture for whites. Most of the materials studied for this research were published by the City of Vancouver. They were employed to reflect images of
“authentic” Chinese culture shared by whites. These sources were also useful to reveal how multiculturalism further promoted the dichotomization between whites and Chinese by keeping the Chinese and their culture distinctive.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................... ii

Table of Contents ................................................................................................................................ iv

List of Tables ....................................................................................................................................... vi

List of Figures ...................................................................................................................................... vii

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................................. viii

Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 1

Chapter I  The History of the Chinese in Vancouver: A History of Marginalization ............................ 12

1.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................................ 12

1.2 Phase One: Open Immigration ...................................................................................................... 14

1.3 Phase Two: Restriction and Exclusion ......................................................................................... 19

1.4 Phase Three: Family Reunification ............................................................................................. 23

1.5 Phase Four: Post 1967 Immigrants ............................................................................................. 27

1.6 Conclusion .................................................................................................................................. 29

Chapter II  The Chinese Community in Changing Canadian Society .................................................. 33

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................................ 33

2.2 Traditional Voluntary Organizations .......................................................................................... 34

2.3 The Chinese Community: Diversification and Dispersion .......................................................... 37

2.4 Chinatown's Changing Social Meaning in Multicultural Canadian Society ............................ 43

2.5 Conclusion .................................................................................................................................. 49

Chapter III  Settlement Patterns of New Chinese Immigrants and Reconstruction of the Notion of Racial Relations in Vancouver ................................................................. 53

3.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................................ 53

3.2 New Immigration Policies and New Chinese Immigrants ........................................................... 54

3.3 Distribution of the Chinese Population in Vancouver ................................................................... 60

3.3.1 Vancouver CMA .................................................................................................................... 61

3.3.2 The City of Vancouver .......................................................................................................... 64
3.4 Re-construction of the Notion of Racial Relations in Middle-class European Neighbourhoods of Vancouver ........................................... 71

3.5 Conclusion ........................................................................... 75

Chapter IV Making a “Museum:” Beautification of Vancouver’s Chinatown as a Cultural Attraction .......................................................... 78

4.1 Introduction ........................................................................... 78
4.2 The Museum as a Communication Tool of “Us”/ “Others” Dichotomization ...................................................................... 79
4.3 Tourism and Museum without Walls as the Site of a New Form of Colonialism ................................................................. 85
4.4 Application of Theories to Vancouver’s Chinatown ......................... 90
4.5 Reconstruction of New Images of Vancouver’s Chinatown .................. 94
4.6 Chinatown: The Present and Future .......................................... 102

Conclusion .................................................................................. 105

Bibliography .............................................................................. 115
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: The Most Populated Communities in Vancouver .......................... 66
Table 3.2: The Communities with Largest Chinese Populations in Vancouver ............ 66
Table 3.3: Chinese Population Increase in Selected Communities from 1996 to 2001 ........ 69
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: The Shift of Chinese Immigration Sources to British Columbia .................. 59
Figure 3.2: The Total Population Distribution among the Five Municipal Districts in 2001 ................................................................. 62
Figure 3.3: The Chinese Population Distribution among the Five Municipal Districts in 2001 ................................................................. 62
Figure 3.4: Map of the City of Vancouver ........................................................................ 69
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis could not have been completed without generous help and support from many people. Although all of their names cannot be mentioned here because of the limited space, I would like to send the greatest thanks to Dr. Graham E. Johnson and Dr. Renisa Mawani of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of British Columbia. The suggestions and recommendations from them were of great help for me to approach my academic interest with new perspectives and enthusiasm. I am grateful for all the encouragements I received from them.

I wish to extend thanks to my special friends Dory Chua, Agnes MacDonald, Jason Gunawan, Lara Jones, Geneviève Lapointe, and Kirsten Solli-Nowlan for all the encouragement they gave to me. I am thankful to Clint Coulson for his generous help with correcting so many grammatical mistakes in this thesis. Last, but definitely not least, I would like to thank my parents and my sister Satomi in Japan for their continuous emotional support throughout my time in Vancouver.
Introduction

“Where are you from? Are you Chinese, Korean, or Japanese?” This is the question I was asked repeatedly when I lived in Australia in 1997 as an exchange student at the age of 17. This experience made me realize where I stood in Australian society: I was an outsider and a member of the minority. Being a part of the ethnic minority in society was an eye-opening experience for me. As an individual who was born to Japanese parents and grew up in Japan, I was always a member of the majority group that comprised of a significantly large portion of the national population. Until I lived in Australia I had been completely ignorant about my status among the majority in society because it was a fact I had taken for granted.

The experience of being exposed to multiethnic and multicultural Australian society gave me a new perspective on the structure of a nation-state. A nation-state does not necessarily need to be comprised of a racially or ethnically homogenous group. On the other hand, however, one question occurred in my mind: why did people always ask me where I was from if, as a theory, it was acceptable for multiple groups to coexist in one society? Gradually I came to notice that non-white Australian individuals also had an experience similar to mine. They were constantly questioned about their “origins” despite the fact that many of them were actually born in Australia and had never lived anywhere else.

Becoming aware of the minority status as a person of colour was not the only new perspective that I gained in Australia. I discovered myself being intrigued to find evidence of non-Western cultures in Australian society. For example, Asian cuisine was available almost everywhere; in a shopping mall, there was a store that sold curios imported from African countries; shirts adorned with Japanese characters were in fashion, and some people even had tattoos of Chinese characters on their bodies. These non-Western cultures were all associated
with the activity of consumption. Being Japanese myself, I can only speak for Japanese culture. When I saw people *consume* Japanese culture, I came to wonder if the way I regarded Japanese culture and the way it was perceived by non-Japanese people were the same or at least similar.

Among these cultures, it seemed that Chinese culture was most fascinating in terms of its visual appeal. I must admit that I was probably becoming one of the consumers of Chinese culture. Beautifully decorated Chinatown was a particularly exciting place to go on the weekends where cheap yet savoury Chinese food could be enjoyed. However, one conversation with my Chinese friend changed my perception of Chinatown. After moving to Canada from China for her graduate program, she found Vancouver’s Chinatown very artificial. She said, “Landscapes in China today look nothing like that. Nothing in Chinatown was familiar to me and I was a complete stranger there.” This conversation made me think about what Chinatown means in today’s Vancouver society.

Multiculturalism has been Canada’s official policy for over three decades, and Canada is often regarded as a successful example of a multicultural society in which diverse groups coexist with relatively low levels of tension between them (Kymlicka, 1998, p.2). The policy of multiculturalism made room for minority cultures in society. These cultures have been valued and cherished because they became the very key factors of social diversity. The Chinese seem to fit perfectly in this picture as one of the diverse groups enriching Canada’s ethnic and cultural fabric. Such a view, however, needs to be contested. Canadian society historically organized itself around the strong notion of colonialism (Kymlicka, 1998, p. 56). The colonial social structure permeated the belief of white supremacy, and this became a rationale for racism and discrimination aimed at non-whites. Although it might be true that
the policy of multiculturalism has contributed to the decline of outright discrimination based on one's race, it needs to be pondered whether multiculturalism has truly achieved the mutual and equal relationships among distinctive groups and their cultures in Canadian society and whether multiculturalism has meant the end of racism (Ang, 2001, pp. 14-5; Kymlicka, 1998, pp. 81-2).

Vancouver's Chinese community and Chinatown are set as the subject of this research. Specifically, I argue that multiculturalism as a policy reinforces the dichotomization between whites and non-whites. The Chinese are known as one of the oldest immigrant groups in Canada (Wickberg, 1982, p. 149). As the historical examples of the head taxes and the Chinese Immigration Act in the early 20th century indicate, they had always been an object of racism in the past. Severe discrimination towards the Chinese and wide social and cultural distances between whites and the Chinese resulted in the geographical confinement of the Chinese into the space known as Chinatown.

As Anderson (1991) describes in her work *Vancouver's Chinatown*, Chinatown was regarded as a "ghetto" in the context of early Vancouver. It was a socially constructed space that symbolized the inferiority and backwardness of the Chinese who stood opposite to whites. The images of Chinatown and the Chinese helped solidify the white identity; the projection of the images of Chinatown and the Chinese as what whites were not, by contrast, created the notion of what whites were (Anderson, 1991, p 96). Put in the binary relationship with whites, the Chinese further became an unfamiliar group for white society. Furthermore, the space of the Chinese, Chinatown, existed psychologically outside of white society.

Canadian society's discriminatory attitudes towards the Chinese and other non-white groups gradually began to ease reflecting the changing atmospheres of the international community through and after the war period. Following World War II, Canada began to
receive immigrants and refugees from European countries other than Britain and France, and
the source countries were later expanded to non-European countries when the new
immigration policies were adopted in the 1960s (Hawkins, 1972). These changes added ethnic,
racial, and cultural diversity to Canadian society, and the understanding of the Chinese also
gradually improved as contact between whites and the Chinese, especially those who were
Canadian-born, increased. To adjust to such social transformations, multiculturalism was
multiculturalism as a vehicle that facilitates the integration of immigrant groups into
mainstream Canadian society (p. 8). In contrast, Parekh (2000) states that multiculturalism in
Canada is structured on the basis of bilingualism of English and French, and British and
French cultures serve as reference points in Canadian society to construct social norms and
values. Therefore, the judgment of other cultures is made according to these social norms and
values. In this respect, multiculturalism indeed prevents the equal integration of whites and
non-whites comprising of the majority of recent immigrants by using cultural terms to
differentiate these two groups. Although the subject of her study is Australian society, Ang
(2001) shares a similar view to Parekh. She notes that multiculturalism works to maintain the
boundary between whites and minority groups (p. 16).

It is this view of multiculturalism suggested by Ang and Parekh that I will employ as
the core theoretical argument of this thesis. The policy of multiculturalism functions in favour
of the historically privileged group in society, whites, from two perspectives. First, because
multiculturalism as a theory emphasizes cultural diversity, it requires minority groups to
remain culturally distant from white society to maintain their distinctiveness in society.
Forced to maintain a culturally unique existence in Canadian society, minority groups are
prevented from crossing the line that divides whites and non-whites. Second, this forced
preservation of cultures in fact provides a source of entertainment for whites. The cultural distinctiveness of minority groups is intriguing for many white people. For this reason, multiculturalism can have an exploitive character; it can keep minority groups distant from whites, but it is acceptable for whites to enjoy other cultures at their will. In the interactions between whites and non-whites, their relationships are not equal.

In this research, I approach Vancouver's Chinatown as a museum that represents Chinese culture contextualized in multiculturalism. Vancouver society has historically perceived Chinatown as a distinctive space. In the past, it stood out as a "ghetto" where racially marked Chinese resided in extremely crowded conditions. In this sense, Chinatown had been a space of marginalization. The space was to be purposely avoided by whites. Although Chinatown had started to show signs of becoming a tourist attraction as early as the 1930s (Anderson, 1991, p. 145), a drastic transformation took place from the 1960s to the 1980s. Under initiatives of the City of Vancouver, which reflected the social changes taking place in Canada, Chinatown was made into a historical and cultural space, a place to visit and experience the exotic cultures of the Chinese. In short, Chinatown was reconstructed, again by whites, to become something completely opposite to what it had been in the past. This highly marginalized space of Chinese was incorporated into the wider society by changing its characteristics to be a cultural entity. But is it possible to say that the Chinese community and Chinatown today have earned genuinely equal status as whites in Canadian society?

To discuss multiculturalism as a medium that promotes hierarchal binary relations between whites and the Chinese, I will argue that Chinatown is a museum, or a museum without walls to be more precise, that developed along with the increased interests in tourism in post war Western societies. Historically, museums developed into public spaces in which cultures of "Others" were displayed to be enjoyed by the European "Us." The presentation of
difference was achieved by way of emphasizing the visual aspects of "Other" cultures. This is also relevant in the case of Chinatown. Moreover, the increase of tourism has also strengthened the character of Chinatown as an object of commodification and exploitation. In the belief of multiculturalism, Chinatown plays an important role in adding cultural diversity. However, this diversity is perceived as diversity only when compared to the culture of "Us." In this sense, Chinese culture is rendered to be a consumable entity, which implies the hierarchal relations between whites and the Chinese.

To expand on the discussion of hierarchal relations between whites and the Chinese further reinforced by multiculturalism, I will also unfold the discussion of the monster house incident that took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Hong Kong immigrants to Canada rapidly increased in the 1980s, which was initiated by the picture of the unpredictable political and social feature of Hong Kong resulting from the decision of the British government to return it to China in 1997 (Ley, 1999, p. 3). These new Hong Kong immigrants as a group were relatively affluent and had little in common with those Chinese immigrants who had come to Canada prior to the introduction of the new immigration policies in the 1960s. They started to settle in areas which were historically populated by people of middle-class European backgrounds. In the process of their movement into such areas, the housing was subject to renewal. Smaller, older houses from the 1920s and the 1930s were replaced by newer houses which were larger and had features which did not match with the character of the existing housing (Hiebert, 2000, p. 29). Because new Chinese residents in the areas became the owners of many of these new houses, they were seen to be responsible for large ungainly structures and were also held to cut down trees, pave garden areas and generally interfere with the existing ambience of historic neighbourhoods (Rose, 2001, pp. 476-7). Little attention was given to the fact that the builders of these new houses were not Chinese.
This also caused changes of the demographic structures of residential areas, increasing the percentage of non-white residents. Although the subject of this controversy was the Chinese who were perceived as racially different from the long-term residents, the opposition to the increase of Chinese residents in these areas was expressed in cultural terms, rather than racial terms (Rose, 2001). Multiculturalism decreased overt racial discrimination in Canadian society; however, this monster house incident serves as an example that denial of non-whites from white society was articulated through the use of cultural terms. Therefore, multiculturalism was used as a tool of dichotomization of whites and non-whites.

Another issue is the “fate” of Chinatown and the neighbouring area of Strathcona. These areas had been populated predominantly by people of Chinese origin. Indeed, because of residential restrictions imposed upon the Chinese, these were one of the few areas in which people of Chinese origin were able to live, until the late 1930s when a modest dispersion began. This dispersion continued after family reunification following the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act in 1947. In the wake of further changes in immigration policies in the 1960s, which I will discuss, people of Chinese origins began to settle throughout the Greater Vancouver region. New areas of settlement changed the relationship of the Chinese community to “Chinatown” and its neighbouring area. The Chinese community had been largely associated with the social space of Chinatown. As Chinese immigration grew, the population of the Chinese community became more diverse, changing its character to become associated with other spaces. Chinatown remained – but changed. It is this change that is the major focus of my arguments.

This thesis consists of four chapters. The first two chapters provide a historical and social background to the development of Vancouver’s Chinatown and the Chinese community.
Chapter I summarizes the history of Chinese immigration to British Columbia and discrimination that many Chinese immigrants experienced due to the head tax and other restrictive legislation. The aim of this chapter is to describe the process in which the Chinese were given the status of "Other" in Canadian society and the affirmation of this status through legislation. The examination of law is important because it reflects the social atmospheres of that time. Moreover, because only those with power, who were mostly of British origins, had access to enacting and enforcing legislation and could ensure their status in society, the discussion in this chapter will also point to the way in which the colonialist assumptions were projected in society, and how the Chinese were excluded from society.

In Chapter II, I will talk about the Chinese community and Chinatown in relation to the declining influence of traditional voluntary organizations. The Chinese community in the past was constructed around the social structure of traditional voluntary organizations, as Wickberg (1982) shows in his extensive study. Because traditional voluntary organizations were such a crucial institutional structure in the Chinese community and because they were located in Chinatown, the Chinese community and Chinatown were indeed two social entities significant portions of which overlapped each other. However, such a close tie between the Chinese community and Chinatown broke down, and the members of the Chinese community today feel less associated with Chinatown compared to the past. This is partly because traditional voluntary organizations lost their integral power over the community as they could no longer meet the changing demands of the rapidly diversifying Chinese community. This is not to suggest that voluntary organizations lost their centrality in the Chinese community, however. The older organizations remained but were supplemented by newer vibrant organizations that met new realities and contributed, ultimately, to newer definitions of Chinatown.
Chapter III and IV will look into the contemporary multicultural Canadian society and the Chinese community. Chapter III examines the demographic changes among recent Chinese immigrants and their settlement patterns in Vancouver by using statistical data. Canadian society today is often regarded as less racist and discriminatory after the revisions of immigration policies in 1967 and the introduction of multiculturalism in 1971. In this chapter, my purpose is to provide a counter-argument to such an optimistic view on immigration policies and multiculturalism borrowing from Kim (1999) and Thobani (2000). There still remains discrimination against minority groups; it has only changed the way it is expressed. From this point of view, I will discuss the Chinese residents' geographical movements into historically European suburbs located within and around Vancouver. As mentioned earlier, this phenomenon became a controversy because such geographical movements of the Chinese were perceived by white residents as a distortion of the boundary between them and the non-white population. In agreement with scholars such as Ang and Parekh, I will argue that multiculturalism has restricted the total integration of the Chinese into white society.

Finally, in chapter IV, I will closely examine today's Chinatown in Vancouver as a museum that shows and represents Chinese culture to society. In this chapter, I will provide some theories and concepts concerning the museum and its functions and explain how museums in general can become a medium of communication that conveys the messages of colonialism and dichotomization of “Us” and “Others.” The concepts of “museums without walls” (Malraux, 1953) and museums as educational facilities (Bennett, 1995, 1998) are particularly important to my argument that Vancouver's Chinatown is a museum. Work by Timothy Mitchell (1988), Colonizing Egypt, is useful to discuss the case of Vancouver’s Chinatown as a space in which the notion of colonialism was reconstructed in the process of objectification of non-whites and their cultures. The theoretical connection between the
museum and tourism will also be made in this chapter to illustrate how and why Vancouver’s Chinatown has become such a tourist attraction.

Following these general theoretical remarks, I examine Vancouver’s Chinatown and its development as a museum. I will examine some of the beautification and revitalization schemes in Chinatown from the late 1960s. Despite efforts by the City Planning Department of the City of Vancouver to consult with representatives of Chinatown interests, the representation of Chinese culture in Chinatown was generally created by adding visually appealing features in what was believed (primarily by non-Chinese) to be Chinese. Further, new organizations emerged, including the Chinese Cultural Centre and the Chinese Garden Society which were led by middle-class Chinese (mainly professionals and businessmen), and promoted an elite class version of Chinese culture. This representation of Chinese culture in Chinatown was not necessarily fully appreciated by the older generation of Chinese people who lived, worked and shopped in Chinatown, although non-Chinese visitors who came to the area found it meaningful and entertaining.

Chinatown increasingly had two parts; West and East of Main Street (Chao, 1971, p. 45). West of Main Street was frequented by non-Chinese tourists who were served by Chinese shopkeepers and Chinese employees in souvenir shops, small restaurants, bakeries and, increasingly, stores selling electronic goods (Chao, 1971, pp. 90-1). The second part, East of Main Street, was the commercial heart of Chinatown. Chao (1971) states that East of Main Street preserved its identity as a representation of the lifestyle of the older generation of Chinese in Vancouver and an area “free from foreign culture, free from tourism, and free from outside control” (p. 47). This part of Chinatown was filled with grocery stores selling Chinese foodstuffs, vegetables, meat and poultry, Chinese medicines, ritual goods, and cooking equipment. This part was attractive to visitors in a different way from West of Main Street
because it was full of unfamiliar sights, sounds and smells, which were closer perhaps to the reality of a way of life practiced by the older generation of Chinese people. Ironically, it could also be attractive to new, urbanized Chinese immigrants who were not familiar with such a lifestyle.
Chapter I  The History of the Chinese in Vancouver: A History of Marginalization

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the history of Chinese immigration to Canada and discuss their marginalized status as “Other” in Canadian society. Their distinctiveness in Canadian society has always attracted a great deal of attention, affecting the way they have been treated in society. This chapter will explore how Canada’s political and social attitudes towards the Chinese have been reflected in their immigration, and in the formation of the Chinese community. I will approach discrimination and racism against the Chinese as a consequence of European hegemony and Euro-centrism created through European colonialism.

International Chinese immigration has a long history that can be traced back centuries. Although the Chinese are one of the oldest immigrant groups in Canada (Wickberg, 1982, p. 149), Chinese immigration to North America is a relatively recent phenomenon. It was not until the 19th century that Chinese immigrants began to arrive in North America. They consisted of only a small portion of overall Chinese immigration, most of which was bound to Southeast Asian countries (Lyman, 1974, pp. 3-4). Many Chinese who immigrated to the countries in Southeast Asia were merchants who established import and/or export businesses serving European colonizers of the region (Wickberg, 1982, p. 5).

In spite of the smaller scale immigration, the Chinese had a significant impact on Canada, evoking tremendous political, social, economic and cultural repercussions in Canadian society. The political and social structures of that time were strongly characterized by the influence of British colonialism. British settlement in what is now Western Canada brought not only people of British origin, but also their political systems, culture, and social
beliefs (Creese & Peterson, 1996, p. 119). Therefore, it was the social norms and values of the British that structured Canada's west coast. Because the population was predominantly British, their social norms and values became the social standards against which everyone else was measured.

This chapter examines Chinese immigration to Canada in four phases: open immigration, restriction and exclusion, family reunification, and post-1967 immigration. In the discussion of the first phase of open immigration, I will describe in detail the early settlement process of the Chinese. This part will look at the time period from the arrival of the first Chinese in what is now British Columbia to the establishment of the Chinese community in Vancouver. The discussion of the first phase sketches out the political and social backgrounds that made the Chinese "Other" in colonial Canadian society. The conceptualization of the Chinese as "Other" in opposition to whites as "Us" is a core concept that runs through this research; hence this section is important in the sense that it sets the theoretical ground for this thesis. The following three phases are characterized by legislation imposed on people of Chinese origin by white society. The established social status of the Chinese as "Other" legitimatized and allowed whites to subject them to continuous regulation and control. To reflect this point, discussions of these three phases will be constructed around immigration legislation that was imposed upon the Chinese.

Because of the great influence of colonialism, whites had been the privileged group in society. Their privileged status allowed them to access power to manipulate the political, social, and economic structures. When it comes to the process of jurisdiction, the beliefs and perspectives of the powerful are most likely to be reflected, creating the hierarchal relations between those with access to the power and those without. Adding to this, Beetham (1991) explains that:
Legitimacy is significant not only for the maintenance of order, but also for the degree of cooperation and quality of performance that the powerful can secure from the subordinate; it is important not only for whether they remain ‘in power’, but for what their power can be used to achieve. (p. 29)

Therefore, looking into the legislation imposed on the Chinese and their immigration to Canada can reveal social perceptions assigned to the Chinese over time.

1.2 Phase One: Open Immigration

It was on April 25, 1858 when the first 30 Chinese arrived from San Francisco to what later became Canada (Chinese Cultural Centre Museum and Archives, 1998, p. 3). These Chinese were gold miners heading to the Fraser River. Following this, systematic recruitment brought a number of workers from China to the gold mines in British Columbia, which resulted in a rapid increase of the Chinese population in the area within a short period of time (Ward, 1978, p. 23; Wickberg, 1982, p. 13-4). For example, the number of Chinese in the Cariboo in northern British Columbia grew from 30 in 1858 to as large as 4,000 by the end of 1863 to form Canada’s first Chinese community in Barkerville (Chinese Cultural Centre Museum and Archives, p. 4).

The rapid increase of the Chinese in British Columbia can be explained by a combination of push and pull factors. Chinese society had been suffering from the explosive population growth that caused severely poor standards of living. As the cultivated lands were expanded, a larger amount of food became available. Because of the availability of food, the death rate dropped and the population quickly increased. The growing population meant demand for larger land to produce more food; however, the population size grew so big that the shortage of food supply became critical. To make matters worse, political instability,
natural disasters, and foreign intervention also took place to create social instability (Lyman, 1974, p. 5; Wickberg, 1982, pp. 6-10). These incidents destroyed the economic structure, leading to the break down of the social and political structures as well (Wickberg, 1982, p. 10). Such situations generated a pool of potential immigrants, arising from the need to support families.

To the Chinese, Canada seemed to be able to offer better chances of success because of the discovery of gold mines on the west coast. Also, cheap labour to construct an infrastructure was in great demand in Canada at this time. The preceding gold rush fever in America had started to decline by the time new gold mines were discovered in British Columbia. This became a strong incentive for gold miners to relocate themselves from America to Canada. Among these miners were a small number of Chinese. However, it was rare for these Chinese gold miners to come across instant wealth. One reason is that economic prosperity and job opportunities around gold mines did not last long for there were limits to the gold found in mines. Furthermore, Chinese miners continued seeking gold flakes after a large portion of gold had already been dug by white miners (Chow, 1996, p. 14, 39). Therefore, the amount of gold Chinese miners could obtain was extremely small, and this can be pointed out as another reason why it was more difficult for them to become wealthy in a short period of time. As the opportunities around gold mines became scarce, the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) became a major source of employment for the Chinese.

Many Chinese workers were involved in the construction of CPR, and employers sometimes even preferred them to white workers (Ward, 1978, p. 36). Chinese males had smaller physiques than white males, and they also had ability to use dynamite and explosive materials. These features of Chinese workers were valued when tunnels had to be dug through the Rocky Mountains. Despite dangerous working conditions and long hours, wages paid for
this work were low. Moreover, wages paid to Chinese workers were even lower than those paid to white workers (Chow, 1996, p. 2; Li, 1998, p. 49; Ward, 1978, p. 17). The Chinese put up with such working conditions and discriminatory treatment. Therefore, Chinese workers appeared to be a more attractive labour force to employers: they were cheap and exploitable. Besides, they were also easily replaceable. One example signifies this point. Because of dangerous work environments, accidents often happened during the CPR construction, killing large numbers of individuals. In such fatal accidents, the Chinese were more likely to become victims than white workers. This implies that the lives of Chinese were perceived less valued than whites, and were thus disposable (Chow, 1996, p. 19; Wickberg, 1982, p. 23). After all, the Chinese were suitable for British Columbia's labour market of this particular time period, and the construction of the CPR, which was the requirement imposed upon British Columbia to join Confederation, might not have been achieved without the contributions and sacrifices of Chinese workers.

The completion of the CPR in 1885 had a great impact not only on the development of Vancouver as a city, but also on the Chinese community. Vancouver was geographically linked to central Canada and grew into a place of political and economic importance. Such changes in Vancouver had significance for the Chinese in British Columbia, too. Li (1998) indicates that, as contract workers, many Chinese individuals were required to find new job opportunities after the completion of the CPR, so that they could continue providing financial support for their families back in China (pp. 51-3). Now that Vancouver had established itself as the centre of economic activities on the west coast, these Chinese expected better chances of finding job opportunities in Vancouver and its neighbouring areas. Vancouver's climate was another attractive feature. The majority of Chinese in British Columbia of that time were originally from the southern part of China where the climate was relatively mild. Therefore,
Vancouver became the major destination of the internal Chinese migration within British Columbia, which eventually resulted in the emergence of the large Chinese community in Vancouver. By the time British Columbia entered Confederation, the Chinese had already formed a community in Vancouver. By the 1890s, more than 1,000 Chinese were residing in Vancouver alone (Chinese Cultural Centre Museum and Archives, 1998, p. 9).

Anti-Chinese feelings existed in other Western colonial societies, too. According to Ward (1978), gold miners from America had already been familiar with the discriminatory attitudes and marginalization of people of Chinese origin prior to their arrival in Canada (p. 24). They developed anti-Chinese feelings through first-hand, direct daily contact with Chinese miners. Ward goes further to point out that anti-Chinese feelings that emerged and spread in Vancouver were a result of internal migration of the Chinese from other areas of British Columbia, rather than the international migration of the Chinese (p. 46). Although the existence of the Chinese among white society was gradually increasing social intensity in Vancouver, it was yet to be of great concern to the rest of the society during the period of the gold rush. This indicates that the congregation of the dispersed Chinese population into a relatively small area created an increased visibility in society, building up uneasy feelings among white society. They were "visible" because they did not fit the description of an ideal white society that British Columbia was so desperate to achieve. This resulted in the development of anti-Chinese feelings into solid, institutionally organized discrimination and racism against the Chinese in Canadian society.

In the process of building a community, a clear line was drawn between whites and the Chinese, which confirmed the social perceptions of these two groups. The Chinese became what whites were not and whites became what the Chinese were not (Anderson, 1991, p. 96).
This perspective was deeply rooted in colonialism. The notion of colonialism involves the takeover of political, social, and economic structures of a colonized society, and European settlement of several centuries led to the establishment of European based political, social, and economic foundations in Canada (Perry, 2000, p. 146). Because European norms had become a reference point of various types of judgments in Canadian society, the pronounced difference of the Chinese in every aspect came to be used as rationale for discriminatory attitudes and practices against them. It needs to be mentioned, however, that difference does not exist or is not recognized unless there are established norms and values to be compared to. Vancouver was the society created around British norms and values, and anything that did not fit into this society became an object of exclusion. A clearly defined boundary of superior “Us” and inferior “Others” on the basis of racial difference became the very reason to justify further discrimination, making the Chinese more subordinate and vulnerable in society.

Although staying close to one another as a group was probably the Chinese’s own strategy to cope with the surrounding hostility (Wickberg, 1982, p. 36), it was these hostile social conditions that forced them to live in a closed area of Vancouver, what has now come to be known as Chinatown. The hostility and discriminatory attitudes towards the Chinese were reflected in law that prevented them from owning property outside of Chinatown. Chinatown stood out as a distinctive area in the British social context. In the minds of politically and socially prominent figures, Vancouver was destined to develop into a British colony for whites (Ward, 1978, p. 31). Therefore, Chinatown became a space both psychologically and geographically separated from white society. Anderson (1991) denotes that Chinatown was a creation that was supported by the notion of European hegemony (p. 9), which supports the point that the Chinese were politically, socially and geographically confined to Chinatown because of growing discrimination and racism aimed at them by white society.
The differences between the Chinese community and Chinatown and the wider Canadian society were interpreted as signs of inferiority; the Chinese did not have cultures similar to European culture, were not willing to assimilate, or were incapable of assimilating to European standards. For these reasons, the Chinese were perceived as being inferior to whites. Such ideas inflamed discrimination and racism against people of Chinese origin in Canada for decades to come. Because the racial and cultural differences of the Chinese and other non-white groups were socially interpreted to stand as signs of their "inferiority," they were projected as obstacles that could deter the development of white society. For this reason, any possible negative impact on white society had to be prevented, and the ability of non-white groups to influence political and social factors had to be reduced through discrimination.

As a result of geographical confinement of the Chinese in Chinatown, "the Chinese community" and "Chinatown" became overlapping entities. Therefore, I will use these two terms interchangeably in what follows. Chinatown became the very geographical space in which the Chinese community existed, and the Chinese community formed an extremely close association with a particular space that existed in the white imagination.

1.3 Phase Two: Restriction and Exclusion

This phase started in the late 19th century and lasted until 1947, the year the Chinese Immigration Act was repealed. Discrimination and racism towards the Chinese and other non-white populations reached unprecedented levels in Canadian society during this phase. British Columbia and its white residents held particular ideals about the future. Having established itself as a member of Confederation, British Columbia was determined to become a society consisting of whites and serving their needs. Therefore, the political and social atmosphere
profoundly favoured white residents, whereas people who could not fit in this picture started to be marginalized and excluded.

In this respect, legislation such as the head taxes and the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 clearly indicated the political and social climate of Canadian society, in which the Chinese were constructed as “Other.” The aim of such legislation was to diminish the Chinese community in Canada. The head taxes effectively reduced the number of new Chinese immigrants and the size of the Chinese population. Although the numbers of Chinese in Canada actually increased immediately after the introduction of the Chinese Immigration Act due to the natural population increase, the prohibition of Chinese immigration through the Chinese Immigration Act, combined with deaths and repatriation of Chinese immigrants, eventually offset this population growth. By 1941, the size of the Chinese community became smaller than it had been prior to the Chinese Immigration Act (Wickberg, 1982, p. 148). Therefore, laws targeting the Chinese in this phase contributed to the decline of their population size to the point the Chinese community was in danger of disappearance.

The fact that the head tax was first introduced as early as 1886, only a year after the completion of the CPR, supports the perception that the Chinese were not welcomed in Canadian society. Although the province of British Columbia and Canada had relied heavily on Chinese workers to build the CPR, once this goal was achieved, the Chinese were no longer necessary and became obstacles to the establishment of white society. Therefore, the government introduced the head taxes with the intention of diminishing the Chinese population. The first head tax of 1886 was 50 dollars per person, which was then increased to 100 dollars, and by 1903, it rose sharply to 500 dollars. Such a harsh restriction successfully reduced the number of new Chinese immigrants coming to Canada because many Chinese who intended to immigrate could simply not afford it.
On the surface, the most important purpose of the head tax legislation was to reduce the number of the Chinese in Canada. The hidden intention, however, was to reduce the number of “unwanted” Chinese immigrants. By “unwanted” Chinese, I mean poor Chinese who could potentially become a cheap labour force in the Canadian labour market. Because of their characteristics both as replaceable and cheap, the existence of the Chinese was regarded as a menace to the status of white workers (Warburton, 1999). Their lower social status which was derived from racial and class difference became a justification for unequal treatment (Warburton, 1999, pp. 111-4). The Chinese became the “enemy” in white society, especially threatening the working-class population. However, not all Chinese immigrants were considered to be enemies to the government of Canada.

Although the Chinese could never be free from racialization in Canadian society, there was a small group of them who were exempt from paying the head taxes. This group included diplomatic and consular representatives, tourists, merchants, and students (Anderson, 1991, p. 58). The government acknowledged the importance of the intake of Chinese merchants especially because they could “contribute capital and trade arrangements to Canada’s development” (Anderson, 1991, p. 58). This implies that the ways in which Canada treated the Chinese were determined on the basis of the benefits they could provide to white society. Moreover, because of their affluent status as merchants, they were less likely to become labourers who would compete against their white counterparts in the same job market. Therefore, the head taxes functioned as a way of screening out the wealthy merchant class from the poor working class (Anderson, 1991, p. 58). The Chinese were allowed into Canada only when they could make an economic contribution to Canadian society and still be “harmless” to white workers.
The head taxes succeeded in reducing the overall size of the Chinese community. However, they could never completely eliminate the influx of “unwanted” Chinese in Canada. Although small in number, there were Chinese individuals who negotiated the categories exempt from paying the head taxes. Chow (1996) gives one example of such cases in her work which explores early Chinese settlements in British Columbia. In an interview with Chow, one Chinese man revealed his experiences in Canada that took place in the few years following his arrival. His father and brother had already resided in Canada and wanted him to join them so that he could help the family business. Because of the prohibition imposed on Chinese labourers coming to Canada, he came on a student visa instead. He was in school for three years just to maintain the valid status of a student, yet he worked each day before going to school and during the lunch break to support the family business (pp. 131-2).

The Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 can be perceived as an extreme form of hostility and hatred aimed at the Chinese by Canadian society. This legislation was introduced following the head taxes and was effective until its repeal in 1947. Under this law all people of Chinese ancestry were denied entry to Canada. Statistical information illustrates a stark difference in the numbers of Chinese allowed in Canada between the two time periods before and after the introduction of the Chinese Immigration Act. According to Simmons (1998), 43,470 Chinese individuals entered Canada as legal immigrants between 1906 and 1924: by contrast, between 1924 and 1946 only seven Chinese immigrants were permitted entry (p. 38). These figures only indicate the number of Chinese immigrants legally allowed in Canada: the number of illegal immigrants is unknown. However, these figures clearly suggest that the legislation was aimed at eliminating the Chinese presence in Canada.

Although white society did not welcome the Chinese in general, the favourable attitude of the Canadian government towards the wealthy Chinese merchant class did not change even
after the enactment of the Chinese Immigration Act. Importantly, the law made an exception for Chinese merchants:

Who devoted [their] undivided attention to mercantile pursuits, who had not less than $2,500 invested in an enterprise importing to Canada or exporting to China goods of Chinese or Canadian origin or manufacture and who had conducted such a business for at least three years. (Hawkins, 1972, p. 90)

Again, they were allowed in Canada because of the perceived financial benefits they could offer. In the case of the Chinese, their value to Canadian society was measured by the economic contributions they could make, but not in terms of political, social or cultural contributions. And such economic contributions were not made by their participation in economic activities competing or cooperating with the white population, but basically by transporting their wealth from China to Canada.

1.4 Phase Three: Family Reunification

The third phase of immigration is from the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act to the revision of immigration policies in 1967. This phase is characterized by the family reunification program that improved severe imbalances of sex ratios and skewed age distributions in Vancouver’s Chinese community (Anderson, 1991, p. 99). In many ways the family reunification plan contributed to the diversification of Vancouver’s Chinese community.

A brief overview of Canadian society during and after the war period is useful here to contextualize the discussion of the influence that the family reunification program had on Chinese immigration and the Chinese community. The Chinese were not officially admitted into the army during World War I. Their status as legitimate Canadian citizens had been denied by white society because their race demarcated them as people who were not eligible to
become Canadian (Anderson, 1991, p. 171). They were not only denied entitlement to the basic rights they deserved to exercise, but they were also prevented from making a contribution to society, by serving in the army, for example. Despite such humiliating treatments, however, the Chinese were still willing to devote themselves to the country they believed they belonged to.

The Canadian-born Chinese were finally included as eligible applicants for the Canadian army during World War II (Anderson, 1991, p. 171; Ng, 1999, p. 43). For one, their willingness to help Canada in the previous war generated appreciation from some parties. The most important reason, however, was the fact that Canada and China now shared a common enemy. Perceiving Japan as the common enemy suddenly changed the social attitudes towards people of Chinese and Japanese origin in Canada. The Japanese were sent to the internment camps in the interior whether they were foreign-born or Canadian-born, and discrimination against them became extremely severe (Ward, 1978, p. 148). On the other hand, Canadian society started to question the rationale for discriminating against the Chinese in Canada because of the international alliance between Canada and China.

It is important to note here that the distinction between the Chinese and the Japanese was blurred until the middle of the 19th century when Japan’s military expansion in Asia and victory against Russia generated attention from Western nations (Ward, 1978, p. 97). Previously white society had found little reason to distinguish between these groups because they were “Others” who did not belong to “Us.” Distinction within the category of “Others” was simply not important to whites. Yet, the boundary between whites and non-whites gained prominence during World War II and fostered the Japanese internment. Because of Japan’s perceived “superior” status to China from the perspective of white society, the immigration restrictions imposed on the Japanese were less severe than those imposed on the Chinese
However, once the war broke out and the treaty between Britain and Japan was repealed, people of Japanese origin suddenly became racial “Other” and enemy aliens. Again, it was racial difference that indicated who could become “Us” and who had to be “Others.”

The contributions that people of Chinese origin made during this time finally gained recognition from white society. For example, the Chinese community in Vancouver bought Canadian Victory Bonds to financially support Canada during the war effort (Chinese Cultural Centre Museum and Archives, 1998, p. 13). This is not to say that the Chinese were granted full rights. Rather, to regain their basic rights in society, the Chinese veterans took initiatives to appeal to the federal government as representatives of the Chinese community (Ng, 1999, p. 44). Changes in the international community after the wars also played a role in convincing the Canadian government to reconsider its blatantly discriminatory treatment of the Chinese. The awareness of human rights significantly increased in the post-war international community, which also became a pressure upon Canadian society (Hawkins, 1972, Chapter 1, p. 128).

Among the rights re-granted to the Chinese, such as the right to vote and the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act, the introduction of the family reunification program had a great impact on the demographic structure of the Chinese community. The early Chinese community was predominantly male oriented. The head taxes and the Chinese Immigration Act geographically separated a number of families. The repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act allowed these families to reunify in Canada.

Although such changes saved the Chinese community from vanishing from Canadian society, the difference of race still prevailed in distinction between “Us” and “Others.” Immediately after World War II, Canada started to receive large volumes of refugees and
displaced persons from European countries (Hawkins, 1972, pp. 15-8). These countries were not British or French; however, they were still countries in Europe whose populations consisted largely of white people. These newcomers added cultural and ethnic diversity, but were more “harmless” in terms of the racial homogeneity of Canadian society. Canada still desperately tried to maintain itself as a white nation.

Such intention was found in the family reunification program, too. The different eligibilities for the family reunification program were employed depending on the racial category of an applicant. For example, people of European backgrounds, i.e. whites, were able to bring their immediate family members to join them as long as they were residents of Canada (Hawkins, 1972, pp. 120-1). In contrast, people of Asian origin had to first meet the requirements of being Canadian citizens. Furthermore, in the case of people of Asian backgrounds, there was an age restriction for unmarried children eligible for the program, which was not applicable to people of European backgrounds. The age restriction of children to be eligible for the family reunification program was 18 years, which was later raised to 21 years (Hawkins, 1972, p. 90).

These restrictions in fact made it difficult for the Chinese to bring their families to Canada under the family reunification program. First, because of the severe hostility aimed at the Chinese in the past and the deprivation of the right of naturalization, it can be assumed that the rates of Chinese immigrants who held Canadian citizenship were not high. Second, the exclusion era of over 20 years aged these Chinese individuals in Canada and their families in China. It is possible that a number of children born to Chinese families before the exclusion era had already grown older than the age restriction. Third, although this is not a direct influence of the family reunification program itself, many Chinese living in Canada lost contact with their families when the invasion of the Japanese army into China occurred during
World War II (Li, 1998, p. 68). Therefore, although the family reunification program brought a much larger number of Chinese immigrants to Canada compared to the time of exclusion, it is also true that the Chinese could not gain as many benefits from this program as could white immigrants. After all, the Chinese population growth was kept to a minimum.

1.5 Phase Four: Post 1967 Immigrants

Even under the restrictions and restraints based on racial difference, the Chinese community internally diversified in terms of its demographic structure mostly because of the gradual emergence of a Canadian-born generation and the reunification of families separated during the exclusion era. The revisions of the new immigration policies in 1967 drastically accelerated these gradual changes which had been occurring within the Chinese community. The character of Chinese immigrants and their places of origin significantly changed following the revision of immigration policies, which made the Chinese community diverse in terms of their socio-economic status in Canada. Such changes were further promoted when the policy of multiculturalism was introduced in 1971. The internal transformation of the Chinese community became relevant when the stereotypical old images of the Chinese came to be replaced by the image of "model minority" (Anderson, 1991, p. 213); nonetheless this term still suggests the status of "Other" assigned to the Chinese. As Chapter III specifically focuses on Chinese immigrants of this phase, the discussion unfolded in this section is kept to be a brief overview of the post 1967 Chinese immigrants to Canada.

The revision of the new immigration policies in 1967 removed racial and ethnic categories from immigration selection; instead, the revised policies introduced new criteria known as the point system. The point system was used to increase the portion of beneficial immigrants to Canadian society. Hawkins (1972) argues an important aspect of changing
immigration policies in Canada were the shifts of the Canadian domestic economy and labour market (pp. 41-53). The focus of Canada's economy moved from the sphere of industry and manufacture, to that of information and technology. These changes demanded that the labour force satisfy the qualifications such as education and occupational skills and knowledge. New immigrants admitted to Canada as potential labour force participants were not exempt from meeting such qualifications. It became clear that intake of only refugees and displaced persons was not enough to fill the needs of a changing Canadian economy. Besides, European countries were recovering relatively quickly from the damages from World War II, and the needs for them to immigrate to other countries were not as strong as in the immediate post-war period. This caused a decline in the number of qualified immigrants from Europe. Therefore, seeking immigrants with satisfactory qualities outside Europe became a strategy to be pursued.

These changes opened the door to Chinese immigration from all over the world. The revisions of the immigration policies in 1967, which removed racial and ethnic categories, increased not only the number of Chinese immigrants but also immigrants from the so-called "third world," such as the Caribbean, Latin America, and Southeast Asia (Hawkins, 1972, p. 206). It is important to point out here that Chinese immigrants of post 1967 no longer shared the same characteristics as the early Chinese immigrants (Anderson, 1991, pp. 214-5; Li, 1998; pp. 7, 96-7; Wickberg, 1982, p. 245). While the major source of Chinese immigrants in the early days was the southern part of China, Hong Kong became the main source of Chinese immigration soon after these new immigration policies were enacted. Mainland China did not regain its position as the major source of Chinese immigrants to Canada until the number of immigrants from Hong Kong significantly dropped after 1997 (Li, 1998, p. 96; Statistics Canada, 2003).
The shift of place of origin also indicated that Chinese immigrants shifted from "immigrants from rural to urban areas" to "immigrants from urban to urban areas." Hong Kong immigrants, the main component of Chinese immigrants after the introduction of the new immigration policies, came to Canada with high education, ability in the English language, and experiences of urban living for a certain period of time (Anderson, 1991, pp. 214-5). In other words, these "new" Chinese immigrants were a group of people who had less in common with the "old" Chinese immigrants. The gap between the "old" and "new" Chinese immigrants became even wider in the 1980s and the 1990s. By the late 1980s, most of Chinese immigrants came from Hong Kong. It changed not only Canadian society's perception on Chinese immigrants as a group of affluent people, but also the power relationships within the Chinese community. These new Chinese immigrants outnumbered the older generation of Chinese immigrants. Compared to the older generation of Chinese immigrants, the new Chinese immigrants had more suitable characteristics (i.e. education, language skill, economic competency, and experience of living in Westernized urban environments) that enabled them to adjust to Canadian society.

1.6 Conclusion

The Chinese community, which was part of Vancouver’s history since its birth as a city, were always influenced strongly by the political structure of Canada. British Columbia began as a British colony characterized by a sizeable white population, Christianity, and loyalty to the Queen of England. It was British oriented social norms and values that structured society. In this respect, there was no room for the Chinese to be accepted as equal participants. Differences based on race, language, culture, religion, and cultural practices
marked them out as a social group that could not fit in the society already established in the British way.

Despite such wide differences between whites and the Chinese, Chinese workers were favoured in some sections of industry that prospered in British Columbia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Chinese contribution to the completion of the CPR is one such example. Their work made a huge contribution to build an infrastructure that later became the basis of British Columbia’s development. However, their culture and existence in society were neither welcomed nor appreciated. In this sense, British Columbia and the rest of Canada made the most of Chinese workers without giving them any credit for their contributions.

The hostile attitudes of white society towards the Chinese are particularly evident in the history of Chinese immigration and immigration law. As Wickberg (1982) states, “the Chinese were the only immigrant group in Canada for which there was a complete structure of special legislation and regulation” (p. 207). It is important to note here that the legalization of racism and discrimination against the Chinese had a significant impact on the way in which the Chinese were treated in Canadian society. Because legislation had the power of legitimizing racist and discriminatory practices, the Chinese were rendered vulnerable to and powerless against such racism and discrimination.

As shown in this chapter, the ways in which the Chinese have been treated by white society are clearly reflected in legislation. For example, anti-Chinese feelings grew to the point that they could be effectively used as an electoral strategy by politicians (Warburton, 1999, p. 106; Ward, 1978, p. 33; Wickberg, 1982, p. 50). And these politicians were indeed in a position in which they could access the authoritarian power in the political structure. Anderson (1991) highlights this point by stating that “the idea of a ‘Chinese’ race was a most
convenient concept for political manipulation...at both provincial and dominion levels, used (not necessarily consciously) to win electoral support and inspire a collective sense of identification among a ‘white’ in-group” (p. 63). Therefore, “in the minds of whites, ‘race’ and ‘nation’ became interchangeable idioms around which socio-political units were built and conquered” (Anderson, 1991, p. 110). When the clear link between “white race” and “Canadian” was created, there was no space for the Chinese to fit in and their status as “Other” was even more firmly established.

The changes in immigration policies in the 1960s and the introduction of a policy of multiculturalism in 1971 eased the restrictions placed upon the Chinese in Canada. Changing immigration policies allowed the numbers of Chinese immigrants to grow. By the early 1970s Chinese constituted the largest category of migrants to Canada which was maintained over a 30 year period (Li, 1998, pp. 95-102). Such migrants came as entire families, unlike earlier periods, and they were more diverse in terms of place of origin, wealth, class and educational backgrounds. They were more likely to adapt to Canadian society easier and faster than the older generation of Chinese immigrants. It was only helped by recognition of the validity of a Chinese cultural expression in the context of a multicultural society.

Clearly, by the 1970s, the position of the Chinese “tile” in Canada’s vertical mosaic had changed dramatically from their situation as portrayed in Porter’s classical account of the Canadian social stratification system (Porter, 1965). The small second generation Chinese on their return from war took initiatives to achieve the extension of basic rights to the Chinese population, and this certainly helped the new immigrants obtain professional status. Some Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong came well equipped with English-language and other skills and experienced substantial upward mobility in Canadian social context, which allowed for spatial dispersion away from Chinatown, as I will indicate in Chapter III. They became a
"model minority" but, it can be suggested, this concept implies a continued objectification as "Other." As Canadian society underwent dramatic changes in the 1970s, the characteristics of the Chinese community also changed, and these will be discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter II  The Chinese Community in Changing Canadian Society

2.1 Introduction

As I sketched out in Chapter I, the Chinese community had always been under the influence of Canadian political agenda and immigration law. The same holds true for the political and social participation of the Chinese in the wider Canadian society. In this chapter, my focus is on the internal transformation of the Chinese community. I will argue that the Chinese community of the past was closely organized around traditional voluntary organizations; however, this structure has undergone changes and now the tie between the Chinese community and traditional voluntary organizations has become loose. By traditional voluntary organizations, I mean the ethnic based organizations established before or during the time of Chinese exclusion, such as the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA). The reason why traditional voluntary organizations are so important is that “the history of Chinese communities is largely the history of the growth and development of voluntary organizations” (Johnson, 1994, p. 129). If Johnson’s statement is valid, the “decline” of these traditional voluntary organizations is also an important component of history of the Chinese community in Vancouver.

Although the decline of traditional voluntary organizations has great significance in terms of the changing Chinese community in Vancouver, this is not to suggest that external factors, such as Canadian politics, did not also affect the internal changes of the Chinese community. In fact, these two factors are inseparable. For example, the external factors with the greatest influence on the Chinese community can be said to be the political and social changes towards multiculturalism. Social “tolerance” towards minority groups, including the Chinese, started to increase as multiculturalism was adopted in Canada. The demographic
diversification and geographical dispersion of the Chinese community, which could be considered as the signs of separation of the Chinese community from Chinatown, also owed much to this policy. However, this policy is not omnipotent just as any other policies are not so. I will argue that multiculturalism is a political and social tool that reinforces the established distinction between whites and non-whites.

2.2 Traditional Voluntary Organizations

Before discussing the decline of traditional voluntary organizations, a brief overview of their general roles and characteristics needs to be provided. Many scholars share the view that the root of traditional voluntary organizations can be found in Chinese society (Crissman, 1967; Li, 1998, pp. 77-80; Ng, 1999, pp. 11-3; Wickberg, 1982, pp. 10-1; 1994). The primary function of traditional voluntary organizations was to offer mutual help to their members and to protect them from unfamiliar social surroundings. Domestic migration from rural to urban areas had always been part of the history of Chinese society. Geographical mobility meant that urban communities were comprised of people from different backgrounds. On encountering distinctive groups of people, migrants faced difficulties deriving from differences of behaviours, social and economic structures, and social norms and values. Traditional voluntary organizations helped them with economic support, scholarship, employment, and so forth in such unfamiliar environments (Wickberg, 1982, pp. 10-1). Early Chinese immigrants brought this type of support system with them as a strategy of survival in Canadian society.

Li (1998) adds his view on the origins of traditional voluntary organizations in Canada. He points out that “the emergence of these ethnic institutions had more to do with institutional racism in Canada than with whatever traditional culture might have been transplanted from
Forming voluntary organizations was the most familiar strategy used by the Chinese to cope with unfamiliar social environments; at the same time, relying on such organizations became the only way for the Chinese to survive in a new and hostile land. For instance, individuals did not need to be part of a particular kin group to become a member of a "clan" association. On the contrary, memberships in clan associations in Canada were often granted for established friendship and/or partnership among the Chinese community (Chow, 1976 cited in Li, 1998, p. 78). This implies that the Chinese community gave priority to the importance of the goal (i.e., establishment of voluntary organizations in order to survive in Canadian society) over the procedures of achieving it.

However, traditional voluntary organizations serving Chinese communities in Canada shared similar functions with those of traditional voluntary organizations in Chinese society. There were three major roles that traditional voluntary organizations played in the context of Canadian society. The first function was the distribution of a wider range of political and social opportunities. Because the Chinese were the group of people who were racially, politically, and socially singled out from the wider Canadian society, traditional voluntary organizations were the only form of institutionalized structure that could provide the Chinese with political and social support. Without traditional voluntary organizations, opportunities to function as part of the political and social system might not have been available to Chinese immigrants. The second function was to support the development of social networks among the Chinese. Traditional voluntary organizations, which were physically and emotionally central to the community, were the loci of leisure, communication, and entertainment for Chinese men who dominated the Chinese community (Ng, 1999, p. 15). The Chinese developed social capital through activities offered by traditional voluntary organizations. The third function was to serve as a political and social link between China and Chinese
communities in Canada. In the time period in which the communication technology was yet to be developed, and when the Chinese still preserved the strong sojourning characteristics hoping to return to China one day, obtaining information about their homeland and their families was a matter of great importance.

Traditional voluntary organizations, however, had a different aspect as well. They served in favour of prominent Chinese merchants who monopolized businesses and merchandise under the claim that they protected the members of the organization by providing them with stable business opportunities (Skinner, 1977, pp. 543, 547-53). The ability to control economic activities was directly interpreted as political power in the Chinese community. In this sense, traditional voluntary organizations had become heavily politicized agencies established on the base of business activities. In fact, the leadership in these traditional voluntary organizations was granted on the basis of one’s wealth and prestige (Crissman, 1967, p. 199). Therefore, traditional voluntary organizations had two-sided characteristics. They became political and social institutions that constrained the Chinese life to a certain extent, in return for providing them with the political and social structures they could identify with amidst a hostile social environment in Canada. These organizations acted as buffers against Canada’s unfavourable social conditions for the Chinese by putting them under the umbrella of their influential power. It is important to note, however, that such a benefit was made available only through the membership of a traditional voluntary organization. In other words, the Chinese had no choice but to be involved in the structure of traditional voluntary organizations if they were to obtain any kind of assistance or support that they needed for survival.

Therefore, internal social stratification created by traditional voluntary organizations resulted in a very stark social hierarchy within the Chinese community. As mentioned earlier,
financial competence was a direct link to the access to power in the political and social realms of the Chinese community. Therefore, becoming a cog of a traditional voluntary organization meant to enter a rigid, strict social hierarchal structure stratified according to one's economic status in the community. The political and economic powers exerted on the members of an organization were accumulated in the hands of a small portion of well-to-do merchants (Wickberg, 1994, pp. 73-5). Hence, to climb up the ladder of social stratification within the Chinese community was extremely difficult for the majority of the Chinese community. The concentration of power in the wealthy merchant class prevented the majority of Chinese from having access to the power that could alter such hierarchal relations and improve their status within the Chinese community. Therefore, hierarchy within the Chinese community was replicated and reinforced by the structure of traditional voluntary organizations. Despite the fact that there was only the slightest chance of upward social mobility, becoming a member of a voluntary organization was a critical condition of survival in Canada. Joining a traditional voluntary organization was the only way for Chinese immigrants to be a part of and function in a cohesive community.

2.3 The Chinese Community: Diversification and Dispersion

Although traditional voluntary organizations had formed the core political and social structure in the Chinese community, their significance gradually began to drop in the middle of the 1930s. The reasons for their decline have much to do with the demographic diversification and the geographical dispersion of the Chinese community in Vancouver. Both the diversification and dispersion of the Chinese community were due in the past to the changes in Canada's domestic politics. The gradual decline of traditional voluntary organizations following the diversification and dispersion of the Chinese community suggests
the limits of their influential power, effective mainly over a relatively homogeneous bachelor society within the geographical space of Chinatown.

The shift towards the internal demographic diversification of the Chinese community accelerated after the introduction of the new immigration policies in 1962 and their revision in 1967. As a result, the level of diversity in the Chinese community gradually increased. Although significant internal diversification of the Chinese community occurred following the influx of Hong Kong immigrants which began in the late 1980s, the Chinese community during this time experienced a polarization between local-born and Chinese-born (Ng, 1999, Chapter 4). A wide range of demands and needs from this diversified group were no longer satisfied by traditional voluntary organizations which had served a more homogeneous group.

The reduction of hostility towards the Chinese in Canadian society was another factor that diminished the influence of traditional voluntary organizations in the Chinese community. Protection of the Chinese from the wider Canadian society was one of the commonly shared goals among traditional voluntary organizations throughout Canada. However, once the level of hostility began to decline, and political and social opportunities gradually came to be within reach of the Chinese, this core function of traditional voluntary organizations became less appealing to the Chinese. The Chinese were now capable of leading their lives outside of Chinatown with little or no reliance on the traditional voluntary organizations that had been so important historically. An increasing number of Chinese began to seek opportunities outside of Chinatown; whereas the nature of traditional voluntary organizations to create a social order within the Chinese community through economic and occupational supports and political and social opportunities did not change accordingly. As a result, these traditional voluntary organizations could no longer meet the demands made by the Chinese community. In other
words, traditional voluntary organizations started to lose their influence over the Chinese, which had been integral to the solidarity of their community.

Diversified components of the Chinese population and changing social conditions in favour of the Chinese worked hand in hand to make the Chinese community even more heterogeneous in terms of individual experiences and social perceptions. Although the term “the Chinese community” tends to yield the image of a homogeneous group, the reality of today’s Chinese community is otherwise. The longer the Chinese live in Canadian society, the more heterogeneous their communal and individual experiences become. Experiences as a community have been mostly under the influence of Canadian politics towards the Chinese and other minority groups, because each community in society tends to be treated as a single unit without much consideration of their internal diversity. However, experiences as an individual are affected by both the political factors in the wider Canadian society and one’s social status within the community he or she is entitled to. It is probably fair to point out that diversified personal experiences of the Chinese are the consequences of the dual social structures: the structure of Canadian society as a whole and the structure of the Chinese community. Canadian politics influences them as members of the community, while their social status in their community, for example their place of birth or origin and socio-economic status, sex, and age, determines where one stands, what he or she experiences within the community, and to what extent he or she gets involved with the Chinese community. Therefore, experiences of individual members can also differ from one another. Personal experiences become important bases on which each individual constructs his or her perceptions. Therefore, different experiences can cause the existence of multiple perceptions coexisting within one community.

Denise Chong, the author of The Concubine’s Children (1994), demonstrates this point in a television interview (broadcasted on 10 July, 2004, New VI). The Concubine’s Children
is a biographical novel of her mother who was born and raised in Canada during the time of Chinese exclusion. Chong, who was born after the exclusion era, reveals the different political and social experiences of her mother and herself. The experiences and opportunities of Chong’s mother outside of Chinatown were severely restricted mostly because of discriminatory political climate in Canada. By contrast, Chong herself successfully participated in Canadian political and social realms, and even worked for the Prime Minister of Canada. This resulted in the moulding of a different perception of the self. Chong told the interviewer that her mother had taught her to see herself as Canadian, but not Chinese. One can assume that her mother’s view derives from her unpleasant experiences in Canada as a person of Chinese ancestry. “Chineseness” was the marker of the exclusion and denial from the wider Canadian society. Therefore, for Chong’s mother, pursuing “Canadianess” seems important to gain better opportunities in society. However, Chong does not necessarily share this view with her mother. She makes it clear that she sees herself as a Canadian of Chinese descent. These attitudes towards being Chinese between two Canadian-born generations serves as one example of the diversified Chinese population based on generational differences.

As a result of these differences, the proportion of the Chinese who were not associated with traditional voluntary organizations increased over time. This also meant that the increased portion of the Chinese population that stood out of reach of traditional voluntary organizations was no longer interwoven in the social hierarchy determined by these organizations. Although it was less so in the past because of the hostility directed at the Chinese, participation in such organizations has always been voluntary, not mandatory. Therefore, it is not surprising to see the drop of membership in recent years as the members could not receive benefits they expected from traditional voluntary organizations.
In her study of Chinese entrepreneurial women from Hong Kong, Chiang (2001) gives a good example of the declining significance of traditional voluntary organizations. She notes, among the few women who joined ethnic associations for their businesses, “none of them were associated with the traditional clan associations or ‘huiguan.’” Rather, they preferred service clubs such as the Lion’s Club, social service associations such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and protestant churches” (p. 335). It is evident from this example in Chiang’s study that these traditional voluntary organizations could not stretch or maintain their influence over such new components of the Chinese community. Moreover, new organizations (i.e., the Lion’s Club, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., and churches) had more specific goals; therefore they are more relevant to the particular needs of the diversified Chinese population. Also, these new organizations were more inclined to involve people of non-Chinese origins, allowing members to cross the boundaries of race and ethnicity. The Chinese now have choices of what type of organizations they want to join depending on types of support and services they need. Therefore, the existence of such big differences within the community surely weakened the power of traditional voluntary organizations, whose main goals were to serve a relatively homogeneous group of people.

Another social factor that affected the decline of traditional voluntary organizations was the geographical dispersion of the Chinese population throughout the Vancouver region. The Chinese, who lived close to one another in the confined areas of Chinatown and Strathcona, began to seek residential spaces beyond these areas after the late 1960s (Johnson, 1994, p. 125). Hiebert (1998) agrees with Johnson, saying that “the Chinese community has moved beyond the old Chinatown in the city of Vancouver to different areas and its neighbouring cities. They are no longer confined to the Strathcona areas next to Chinatown” (quoted in Chiang, 2001, p. 8). Today, the Chinese residents can be found almost everywhere
in the region of Vancouver. As exemplified in the case of Richmond, they have established a new Chinese centre away from old Chinatown. For instance, one sixth of the population of Richmond identified themselves as being of Chinese ethnic origin in 1991, and the Chinese population in the areas of Oakridge, Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy has doubled in recent years (Hiebert, 1998, p. 10).

The decline of traditional voluntary organizations and the weakening association between the Chinese population and such organizations created a situation in which the Chinese no longer needed to live close to these organizations. This also means that they could now live away from Chinatown. A certain type of Chinese population, however, had no choice other than to stay close to Chinatown and traditional voluntary organizations because of their heavy reliance on them. For example, Chinese immigrants who had come to Canada before the exclusion period developed strong connections with traditional voluntary organizations and formed their lives around such support systems. For this reason, geographical dispersion of the Chinese population has occurred in uneven ways to reflect their socio-economic status and place of origin. Anderson (1991) points out that new Chinese immigrants and Chinese residing in Vancouver for a long period of time have different residential patterns (p. 214). While earlier Chinese arrivals with low income and low English proficiency remained in Chinatown and the Strathcona area, the new Chinese immigrants, especially those from Hong Kong, with high levels of education, good command of the English language, and of high socio-economic status, were more likely to reside in the areas outside of Chinatown, such as Richmond. The characteristics of each Chinese group became spatial identities of the geographical areas they chose. And eventually, the characteristics of each geographical space served as clues to attract new residents from similar backgrounds.
The Chinese community fragmented in terms of geography and demography. I will discuss in more detail the settlement patterns of new Chinese immigrants in the next chapter.

2.4 Chinatown's Changing Social Meaning in Multicultural Canadian Society

The decline of traditional voluntary organizations occurred along with the demographic diversification and the geographical dispersion of the Chinese community. Such transformation also changed the social meaning of the Chinese community and of Chinatown. Chinatown, which served as the political, social, cultural, economic and geographical locus of the Chinese community, began its transformation into an arena of commercial and tourist activities in the middle of the 1930s. As Anderson (1991) argues, “Chinatown was becoming a European commodity” (p. 157). Although the Chinese community as a whole was still suffering from severe racism and discrimination under the effects of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, it was also a time in which mainstream society developed a more increased awareness of the Chinese. Gradual understandings of the Chinese were achieved through direct interactions between whites and the Chinese (especially the Canadian-born generation) in public spaces such as schools and churches. Chow (1996) gives an example from northern British Columbia. Because of an extremely small number of children in the Chinese community, Chinese children could not find a large enough peer group of a similar cultural and ethnic background with which to socialize. For this reason, they were more likely to establish meaningful relationships with non-Chinese children, mostly those of European backgrounds (p. 149).

Changes in the social perceptions of Chinatown, now a unique space full of exotic and mysterious flavours, was supported and structured by the changing social norms in Canada, including multiculturalism. The changes in social norms and values partly resulted from the
reconstruction of Canadian society after World War II. Canada needed immigration to build the nation. Furthermore, the devastating war had caused a large number of refugees and displaced persons in European countries, and Canada started to accept them based on humanitarian grounds (Hawkins, 1972, p. 61). Hence, people from various backgrounds arrived in Canadian society, although they were mostly of European background and non-European people were yet to be welcomed. The preference for European individuals over non-Europeans is clearly stated in the 1947 Statement on Immigration Policy declared by the Mackenzie King Cabinet (Hawkins, 1972, pp. 91-3). The selection of immigrants and refugees based on their racial categories might not have led to the visibility of racial diversity immediately after the war; however, it is not to say that Canadian society did not face increasing heterogeneity. Canada's demographic structure, especially in the urban areas, began to change drastically during this time period because of the influx of immigrants and refugees from Europe. These immigrants and refugees formed a number of ethnic communities that were required to coexist in one space. The increased encounters between people of different backgrounds began to occur at the level of everyday life, which made the public more aware of the existence of cultural differences within Canadian society.

Canada introduced multiculturalism in a framework of bilingualism as a national policy in 1971. Multiculturalism was introduced in a manner of reflecting the demands from various minority groups for equal recognition in Canadian society. Canada had acknowledged the British and French as distinctive foundation groups of the nation; however, Canadian society was rapidly changing in terms of the demographic make-up, and it was obvious by then that the differences between the British and French were not the only differences found in Canadian society. In this sense, multiculturalism was introduced to Canada in haste so that the official policy of the nation and the social situation within the territory of the nation-state
corresponded with each other. The real meaning of multiculturalism and consequences of it were not deeply deliberated (Kymlicka, 1998, p. 40).

The introduction of multiculturalism changed Canadian society’s attitudes towards minority groups and their cultures to some extent. Prior to multiculturalism, minority groups were expected to assimilate into the way of living established by the British and French groups in terms of social norms and values, behaviours, and culture; whereas multiculturalism encourages minority groups to preserve and express their distinctive cultural features. Distinctiveness came to be regarded as something to be celebrated and cherished, rather than something to be condemned.

Kymlicka’s (1998) opinion, however, suggests that the pressure on minority groups to conform to the established social structure is still persistent in Canadian society. According to Kymlicka, the policy of multiculturalism was introduced to accommodate the integration of immigrant groups (1998, p. 8). He claims that there are two different types of minority groups: “national minority” and “immigrant groups” (Kymlicka, 1998, p. 2). National minority is “a historical society, with its own language and institutions, whose territory has been incorporated (often involuntary, as is the case with Quebec) into a larger country” (Kymlicka, 1998, p. 2), and because of the involuntary nature of their incorporation into the larger society, they should be entitled to claim that their linguistic and institutional rights to be fully recognized and protected (pp. 31-2). However, in Kymlicka’s view, this same claim does not quite apply to the case of immigrant groups. He claims that immigrant groups’ decision to leave their place of origin is voluntary; therefore they move to a new society with an expectation of integration into the existing social structures and culture (p. 35).

Kymlicka (1998) defines the “integration of ethnic groups” as:
the extent to which immigrants and their descendants integrate into an existing social
culture and come to view their life-chances as tied up with participation in the range of
social institutions, based on a common language, which defines societal culture. (p. 28)

This definition of integration suggests the existence of a presupposed distinction between
“core” group(s) of society and “marginalized” groups. This also implies one-way interactions
between these core and marginalized groups; it is marginalized groups that modify their
cultural views to those of core groups, but not the other way around. Therefore, as far as
Canadian multiculturalism is concerned, it is a notion that is constructed around the already
existing, well established social order by the white population, namely those of British and
French origins.

Now let us focus on what kind of “difference” multiculturalism incorporates. As
suggested in the term of “multi-culturalism,” it is cultural distinctiveness that serves as a scale
of distinctiveness and diversity in society. The holocaust during World War II raised
important questions about racial difference. The Jews in Europe, who belonged to the
Caucasoid race, were the object of extremely severe “racism” by the Aryans, claiming their
superiority to the Jews. Black Movements in the 1960s also stirred the discourse around
racism and raised increasing opposition against discrimination based on racial categories.
Following such historical trends, distinctions made in the social contexts started to shift
towards those more based on ethnicity and culture than race (Ang, 2001, pp. 104-5; Kymlicka,

The fact that distinctions based on race were gradually decreasing in official discourse
did not mean the disappearance of racialization. Ang (2001) states that “the white/‘other’
divide is a historically and systemically imposed structure which cannot yet, if ever, be
superseded” (p. 186). Kymlicka (1998) also suggests that Canadian society is yet to be free
from racial division. What has changed is the way of looking at the racial division from “white/black” to “white/non-white” as a result of the emergence of groups that do not fit in either white or black, such as Latinos, Asians, and Arabs (pp. 81-2). These non-white groups have been able to gain more recognition by their cultural and ethnic distinctiveness within the category of non-white, but they are still perceived and positioned in relation to whiteness. The boundary between whites and non-whites persists: “whiteness is the unmarked norm against which all ‘others’ have to be specified in order to be represented” (Ang, 2001, p. 186).

Canada as a multicultural society seemingly changed the age-long persistent image of the country as a white nation; the reality, however, may be otherwise. The strong foundation of Canada’s whiteness is reflected in the policy of multiculturalism, too. This is evident from the fact that:

Multiculturalism is not about minorities, for that implies that the majority culture is uncritically accepted and used to judge the claims and define the rights of minorities. Multiculturalism is about the proper terms of relationship between different cultural communities. (Parekh, 2000, p. 13)

Minority groups’ cultures have been “tolerated” and “acknowledged” within the established social framework. The strong British and French cultures always serve as a reference to judge to what degree cultures of minority groups are distinct. It is important to point out here that the judgments of each culture in relation to British and French cultures become a useful tool from the perspective of minority groups, too. Members of minority groups have better chances to gain recognition in society and claim more rights by interpreting their difference from the point of the established social values and norms.

Multiculturalism is the concept and policy that holds legitimacy only when there is a premise that the society under discussion is diverse and heterogeneous in terms of its cultural
constitution. In other words, differences must exist before the concept of multiculturalism can exist. Canclini (2000) states that “diversity and heterogeneity are terms that serve to establish catalogues of differences, but they do not account for interactions and mixing between cultures (emphasis in original)” (quoted in Ang, 2001, p. 87). This implies a confirmation of boundaries lying between different groups as a result of multiculturalism. On the one hand multiculturalism enhanced Canada’s unique character as a nation consisting of diverse population groups; on the other hand, the introduction of multiculturalism confirmed distinction between the Charter Groups and other minority groups. Ang (2001) states: “Multiculturalism is understood to maintain the boundaries between the diverse cultures it encompasses, on the one hand, and the overall boundary circumscribing the nation-state as a whole, on the other” (p. 16). The “encouragement” to preserve one’s culture and to express it in an explicit way can indeed divide Canadian society into smaller segments, in other words. Because of the pressure on minority groups to remain unique, it can also be interpreted as a denial to fully become “Canadian,” the image of this nation constructed upon British and French heritage.

So far, I have sketched out that the ways in which “Otherness” has shifted from racial differences to ethnic and/or cultural differences. However, as I have stated above, racial difference is still a strong reference point of differentiation. I will now discuss how the introduction of multiculturalism affected the Chinese community. In the past, differences of the Chinese from the mainstream society were the very reason that they needed to be excluded from society and denied their full rights. These differences include those of race, ethnicity, social norms and values, and culture. The rising opposition against discrimination based on one’s physical appearance helped with the decrease of explicit discrimination against the Chinese in the public space. As far as Chinese culture is concerned, it comes to be interpreted
in a whole different way in today’s Canadian society. Distinctiveness suddenly becomes something “celebrated” and “cherished” in the belief that it is part of what makes Canadian society unique and rich. Chinese culture, along with other minority cultures, is valued because it is “different.” Putting an emphasis on difference is equal to drawing a line to divide society into groups.

It is important to point out that Canada’s long-standing social structure, built on the basis of British colonialism, still has an influence on the way in which the perceptions of non-whites are constructed. For this reason, Chinatown has become an object that can communicate a message of the distinctiveness of the Chinese to the wider Canadian society, and such distinctiveness comes to be perceived with more favourable attitudes from Canadian society. It may be true that the way in which the Chinese are perceived in society has drastically changed for better; however, it also needs to be noted that it is another form of creating boundaries.

2.5 Conclusion

Traditional voluntary organizations had played extremely important roles in the history of the Chinese community. They were located in the heart of Chinatown, which meant that they were the very core part of the Chinese community. However, just like the regulations and restrictions on the Chinese population depended on the domestic politics of Canada, the rise and fall of traditional voluntary organizations had always been under influence of Canadian politics. After all, the existence of these traditional voluntary organizations, too, was the consequence of changing attitudes of the wider Canadian society towards the Chinese and a succession of domestic political shifts within Canada.
The physical separation of the Chinese community from the geographical space of Chinatown brought about internal fragmentation within the Chinese community. The Chinese, once physically bound to Chinatown and the Strathcona area, have come to identify less with such areas. The changing demographic structure of the Chinese weakened the connection to the geographical space. I will quote from Chiang (2001) at length to introduce one example of the internal fragmentation:

An artificial boundary was drawn between the ‘old’ Chinese immigrants who were assimilated to the Canadian culture, fluent in English, and had achieved success through ‘struggle and hard work’ and the unassimilated ‘new’ immigrants who did not speak proper English and did not understand the Canadian culture, and who came to Canada with enviable wealth. This dichotomy was manufactured by the ‘old’ immigrants who had become assimilated to the dominant culture, from which they had adopted the biased view against their co-ethnic recent arrivals. (p. 362)

Such dichotomy is partly a consequence of the rapid diversification of the Chinese population under the introduction of new immigration policies and the emergence of Canadian-born generations. Traditional voluntary organizations, originally established for relatively homogeneous groups of people, could not serve well enough to such a diversified community.

The changes that the Chinese community underwent had close links to the political and social changes of the wider Canadian society. The increasing heterogeneity of the national population led Canada to the introduction of multiculturalism in the early 1970s. On the one hand multiculturalism has been helpful in relaxing discrimination and racism against minority groups in Canada; on the other hand, it has also drawn a clear boundary between the Charter Groups and minority groups by emphasizing the distinctiveness minority groups have. It is this distinctiveness compared to the British and French norms rather than distinctiveness
among minority groups that matters the most. In this way, multiculturalism can be regarded as another form of creating “Others,” only in a more subtle way than in the past.

The subtleties can be raised with respect to the continued prominence of voluntary organizations within the Chinese community. The arguments may appear at first glance to contradict what I have argued regarding the decline of “traditional” voluntary organizations. Until the changes in immigration policies in the 1960s, the Chinese community was closely associated with Chinatown. It contained the organizations and their headquarters that were the key in maintaining links to China and providing solidarity within the community. They became less relevant from the 1970s on; there was, however, the growth of new organizations which met new needs.

An early organization was S.U.C.C.E.S.S., which was founded in 1973 as an organization to deal with the trauma of immigration. It grew and prospered and was staffed by professionals from Hong Kong. The goal of this organization was to serve as a “bridge” between newcomers and Canadian society, and it provided language training and skill upgrading (Ng, 1999, p. 123). S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is also involved with issues of accommodation for the elderly. It began in Chinatown and has remained an important presence there but it has significantly expanded into other newer areas of Chinese settlement, a key topic in the next chapter.

Another key organization was the Chinese Cultural Centre, which was also founded in 1973. It was formed by a group of Chinese professionals, from the post exclusion era generation, to challenge the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA) (Ng, 1999, p. 111). It was a significant symbolic shift. The Chinese Cultural Centre offered courses in Mandarin Chinese (as well as Cantonese) for both Chinese and non-Chinese. It offered painting and calligraphy classes and gave access to a version of Chinese culture that was at once
“multicultural” but also different from the cultural needs of the earlier version of the Chinese community. The Sun Yat-sen Garden, which was built in the architectural style from the Ming Dynasty era, is another example of “elite’ Chinese culture, distant from the culture of the older generation of Chinese immigrants. It is evident from these examples that the Chinese Cultural Centre has been trying to reach out not only to new Chinese immigrants but also non-Chinese populations by reinforcing “orientalist” concepts of Chinese culture.

Significantly, the Chinese Cultural Centre, like S.U.C.C.E.S.S., has a branch in Richmond, the densest Chinese settlement in the Greater Vancouver area (The Chinese Cultural Centre, p. 1993). The better restaurants began to be located in the suburbs and Chinatown ceased to be the centre of the Chinese culinary experience. The community, as the next chapter will indicate, has become spatially much more diverse.
Chapter III Settlement Patterns of New Chinese Immigrants and Reconstruction of the Notion of Racial Relations in Vancouver

3.1 Introduction

The introduction of new immigration policies in 1962 and their revision in 1967 significantly changed the characteristics of Canadian immigration in terms of its racial and ethnic make-up, socio-economic status, and cultural background, such as language and religion. The result was the rapid and steady increase of a non-white population in Canada. Such changes were realized through the shift of immigration source countries. In the past, Britain and France were the dominant sources of immigration to Canada (Hawkins, 1972, p. 34). Immigration sending countries expanded in the post-war period to include other European nations such as Italy, Netherlands, Hungary, Portugal, and Greece (Hawkins, 1972, pp. 3-15). In addition to these gradually diversified immigrants from Europe, the immigration policies in the 1960s opened the door to non-European immigrants, resulting in a larger number of non-white immigrants compared to white immigrants.

The growth of Chinese immigrants to Canada was already becoming significant by the end of the 1960s, and in the late 1980s, Canada started to accept a large number of Chinese immigrants with higher qualifications. A significant portion of them had business/entrepreneur backgrounds and came mainly from Hong Kong. These new immigrants do not necessarily share similarities to Chinese immigrants who came in earlier periods. For example, they have different settlement patterns to those of the older generation of Chinese immigrants who came to Canada before the new immigration regulations. Research has shown that ethnic minorities in Canada tend to live close to other members of their own ethnic group creating enclaves, in order to preserve their culture and accommodate
ethnic businesses (Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003; Balakrishnan & Hou, 1999; Ley, 1998, pp. 6-10). The Chinese are not an exception. While it is true that Chinese residents are dispersed throughout Vancouver, it seems that their dispersion has been occurring in an uneven way. For example, Richmond has attracted a great amount of attention as a "new" Chinese centre in the region of Vancouver (Chiang, 2001, pp. 206-7).

This chapter consists of three parts. The first part describes the changing characteristics of recent Chinese immigrants. My discussion will also include how the immigration policies in the 1960s and the policy of multiculturalism have actually reinforced the boundary between whites and non-whites with reference to work done by scholars such as Kim (1999) and Thobani (2000). The second part will provide findings from statistical data regarding the Chinese population dispersion in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (Vancouver CMA) and the municipal district of the City of Vancouver. I will suggest that the Chinese still have a strong tendency to concentrate in particular areas and I will analyze this phenomenon in this section. In the third part of this chapter, I will specifically focus on the movement of Chinese into Vancouver's suburbs and the controversies that stem from such geographical changes. The concept of suburbanization will be used to project the ideal lifestyle pursued by middle-class European residents and to suggest that this idealized lifestyle structured on the basis of class and ethnicity has played a role in maintaining spatial identities. The controversies evoked by new Chinese residents as a consequence of their perceived racial difference, which is translated and encoded as cultural difference, will be also discussed.

3.2 New Immigration Policies and New Chinese Immigrants

Although Vancouver comprises only 6% of the national population, research shows that 18 to 20% of new Canadian immigrants in the middle of the 1990s chose Vancouver as
their home destination (Ley, 1998, p. 332; 1999, p. 4). This tendency is more apparent in the case of Asian immigrants, including a large portion of Chinese immigrants. The geographical proximity to the Asia Pacific region and the existence of long standing ethnic communities attract many Asian immigrants to Vancouver. Also, Hutton (1998) points out the importance of Vancouver as a gate city bridging Canada and the Asia Pacific region in the field of international business activities. As a result, the Asian population in Vancouver has been steadily growing since the late 1960s, rapidly changing the demographic structure of the region. As Hawkins (1972) points out, immigrants from non-traditional sources, such as Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, doubled in number following the revision of the immigration policies in 1967 (p. 206). The Chinese were part of this significant increase of immigrants from non-traditional source areas, and the 1980s was the decade in which Canada started to experience the impact of the greatest increase of people from China.

The removal of the racial category from the immigration policies in 1967 and the introduction of multiculturalism in 1971 give an impression that Canada has left discriminatory attitudes against non-white groups in the past and has become a discrimination-free society. Multiculturalism, as a national policy, encourages fuller participation of minority groups in mainstream Canadian society and more active interactions between different social groups (Ang, 2001, p. 14; Kymlicka, 1998, p. 8, 40, 48). This picture of multiculturalism seems to be too idealistic, however. As an official and legitimate policy, multiculturalism has been exerting the power that prevents the practice of overt discrimination and outright prejudice to a certain extent. However, it does not necessarily mean that discrimination and racism no longer exist in Canadian society, nor does it mean boundaries between whites and non-whites and between each distinctive group have disappeared, as shown in the previous chapter.
Not only multiculturalism, but also the 1967 immigration policies allow discrimination towards immigrants of colour (Thobani, 2000). According to Thobani, the access to citizenship right in the historical context was an important part of nation building that let the British and French transform themselves into “Canadian,” creating the sense of belonging to a single nation (2000, p. 284). In this sense, Canadian citizenship has been historically conceptualized to mainly serve people of British and French origins. Therefore, Canada is often conceptualized as a white nation. Liberalizing immigration policies by accepting a growing number of people of colour means that Canada has given these immigrants access to citizenship rights, too. However, conditions apply as immigrants require three years of residency in Canada before being eligible to claim citizenship (Thobani, 2000, p. 298).

Although this change makes Canada look more open and welcoming to people of colour, Thobani argues that Canada’s immigration regulations are still discriminatory. Canada, being a welfare state, requires its residents, whether they are citizens or temporary residents, to fulfill obligations, such as paying taxes. At the same time, however, non-citizens cannot be entitled to the same privilege enjoyed by citizens. Thobani (2000) puts it in this way:

The denial of access to social entitlements, or the provision of unequal access to certain sectors of the population would further the bordering of ‘outsiders,’ whose welfare was being constructed as separate from that of the national community: unequal access to social entitlements would actualize in very material terms the status of ‘not belonging’ to the social body. (p. 290)

Therefore, it is non-white immigrant groups that have been most affected by such situations because they now comprise the majority of immigrants coming to Canada. The 1967 immigration policies were introduced to allow these non-white racial groups in; however, the consequence is that they ended up becoming the major “victims” of inequality constructed
around the citizenship rights initially possessed by the British and French. It is these non-white immigrants who had to remain vulnerable at least until they acquired Canadian citizenship. For example, because of their visa status, they had to face certain occupational restrictions and even when they were employed, there was no guarantee that their visa would be renewed; on the other hand, they still had to fulfil their tax payment obligation.

Despite such conditions, the great increase of Chinese immigration to Canada occurred in the 1980s. In 1984, China and Britain first started to negotiate Hong Kong’s position as a British colony. The Chinese government demanded that Hong Kong be returned to China, and both parties reached an agreement (Ley, 1999, p. 3). This political negotiation, however, created enormous feelings of anxiety among Hong Kong residents, because of the unpredictable future of their society. Hong Kong, which had developed into a capitalist society under a strong influence of British rule, could not foresee its economic and business prospects after its control was handed over to the Chinese communist government in 1997. Thus, people living in Hong Kong who had large sums of capital started to search for places outside Hong Kong that could give them the financial security they desired (Ley, 1999, p. 3). As part of their search for a secure place to settle and to transport their wealth, many Hong Kong residents began the process of obtaining passports issued by capitalist, Western countries, namely the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand (Hutton, 1998, p. 301). In this sense, immigration from Hong Kong was initiated by a desire for safe shelter where people of Chinese ancestry could pursue better opportunities. In addition, many desired a lifestyle that they had already established under the capitalist system.

Changes in Hong Kong’s political climate were not the only incentive driving people from Hong Kong to Canada. Hiebert (2000) points out that Canada’s immigration policies were modified in the late 1980s to accept a larger number of immigrants (p. 26). And it was
done “with a definite eye toward Hong Kong” (Ley, 1999, p.3). Receiving wealthy Hong Kong immigrants was an allegedly effective and quick way to increase the volume of Canada’s domestic capital after the economic recession. New Chinese immigrants were perceived as providers of economic resources to Canada. The personal wealth brought by these Chinese immigrants was almost 3 billion dollars in 1996 alone (Ley, 1998, p. 333). The increase of Chinese immigrants to Canada in the past few decades is striking. For example, as many as 80% of immigrants to British Columbia in the 1990s were Asian, of which the majority came from Hong Kong and Taiwan (Ley, 1999, p. 3). According to the 2001 Census, 17% of the population in Vancouver CMA are of Chinese ethnic origin (Statistics Canada, 2003).

Although the unpredictable future pushed Hong Kong to become the largest Chinese immigration source by the early 1990s (Simmons, 1998, pp. 36-7), findings from BC Statistics (2000, 2001, 2002) indicate that the origins of Chinese immigration have recently shifted from Hong Kong to Mainland China. In 1999, the total number of immigrants coming from Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong was 11,919 comprising 33.1% of the total number of immigrants to British Columbia (BC Statistics, 2000). The figures for 2000 and 2001 are 11,614 (31.3%) and 11,837 (30.9%) respectively (BC Statistics, 2001, 2002). The data illustrate the steady stream of Chinese immigration to British Columbia. However, when we explore the distribution of place of origin among these Chinese immigrants, there is an obvious change. By 1999, Mainland China became the source country of more than 60% of Chinese immigrants to British Columbia; whereas less than 10% came from Hong Kong (BC Statistics, 2000). This trend continued in 2001, when Mainland China increased its share to almost 80%; whereas the share of Hong Kong immigrants dropped as low as about 5% (BC Statistics, 2002). As evident from this statistical data, Mainland China is by far the largest
source of today's Chinese immigrants to British Columbia. As a result, Vancouver's Chinese community has become more heterogeneous and diverse. It is worth noting that differences in Chinese immigrants are found not only between those who came to Canada before and after the new immigration policies, but also between those arriving in the last few decades.

Despite the increasing diversity among Chinese migrants, more attention tends to be paid to the commonalities between Chinese immigrants. These similarities include a high level of education and economic affluence, to name but two. Such features of new Chinese immigrants have contributed to the creation of a new stereotype of "model minority" and their internal distinctiveness is often overlooked. The concept of model minority suggests that the Chinese, along with other minority groups, are still the subject of racialization and ethnicization: it has only changed the way these groups are differentiated from whites. Kim (1999) notes that "talk of cultural differences inevitably activates deeply entrenched views of racial differences….Culture has become code for the unspeakable in the contemporary era" (p. 117). Thobani (2000) shares a similar view with Kim, borrowing the thoughts of Gilroy (1992) and Barker (1981):
In the post-Second World War period, the ‘new’ racism organizes racialization through the discourse of cultural difference — and not of racial inferiority — signifying membership in the national/racial community in cultural terms. ‘Cultural’ difference encodes and stands in for racial difference. (p. 295)

The use of the term “model” can let one escape from using explicit racist or discriminatory language. However, as Kim (1999) claims, emphasizing the internal characters of a group including the ethics of hard-work and respect for elders and authorities, suggests that the group is not culturally assimilated into white society, but is instead racially different from it (pp. 117-8, 121).

3.3 Distribution of the Chinese Population in Vancouver

The Chinese population, once being confined to Chinatown, has dispersed beyond these geographical boundaries. As pointed out in previous chapters, Chinatown had always been regarded as a space that existed outside of the realm of white society. In other words, the geographical definition of Chinatown served as the boundary between whites and the Chinese. In this sense, by moving beyond the boundary of Chinatown, Chinese immigrants attempted to cross this line that separated whites and non-whites.

This part of the chapter is divided into two sections: Vancouver CMA and the City of Vancouver. By looking at Vancouver CMA in the first section, I will engage in a general discussion of the suburbanization of Chinese residential patterns. Vancouver suburbs have been typically populated by middle-class European groups in the past; therefore the increase of Chinese residents in the area raises questions about whether the dispersion of the Chinese indicates that they have successfully crossed the boundaries between whites and non-whites. The second section will specifically focus on the municipal district of the City of Vancouver.
The City of Vancouver is the host of the largest Chinese enclave, and the largest total population in Vancouver CMA. Through a close examination of the Chinese population dispersion within the City of Vancouver, I will try to show which areas of the City of Vancouver have experienced a significant concentration of a Chinese population, and what can explain such demographic structure changes.

### 3.3.1 Vancouver CMA

The data suggest that the total population, the visible minority population, and the Chinese population in Vancouver CMA show uneven demographic distribution patterns (Statistics Canada, 2003). The five municipal districts with the largest population sizes are also the municipal districts that have the largest population of visible minorities including Chinese residents. These five municipal districts are: Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby, and Coquitlam. Vancouver is the centre of the region in terms of political, economic, cultural, and social activities, and such characteristics of Vancouver as the regional core attract a larger portion of the population than any other district. All the other four municipal districts with large shares of the population are the neighbouring districts of Vancouver. These five municipal districts alone contain 76.6% of the total population of Vancouver CMA in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2003).

According to the report, 619,155 visible minorities of Vancouver CMA out of 697,755, and 311,935 Chinese out of 334,040 live in these five municipal districts listed above (Statistics Canada, 2003). In other words, 88.7% of the visible minority population and 93.4% of the Chinese population live in these five municipal districts. These figures indicate that, in these five districts, 45.4% of the population is visible minority and 22.9% is Chinese. The shares of the visible minority and Chinese populations in the overall Vancouver CMA
populations are 39.2% and 18.7%, respectively. Therefore, it is worth noting that both visible minority and Chinese show a stronger tendency to gravitate toward these five municipal districts.

The high portion of Chinese residents in these five municipal districts raises important sociological questions. Vancouver is no exception to North American cities that developed surrounding suburban areas. These suburban areas emerged to host people of middle-class and European backgrounds. The images attached to such suburbs are "a landscape of home ownership marked by a peripheral location, low density development, and relatively easy access to ownership for young families with children" (Jackson, 1985, cited in Ray, Halseth, & Johnson, 1997, p. 78); the suburb is "a stable family oriented setting" (Ray, Halseth, & Johnson, 1997, p. 78). It seems on the surface that the Chinese have been successfully accepted in such environments characterized by middle-class European populations, or they
successfully fit themselves into such environments. However, it is not necessarily the case when we look at the portion of Chinese in relation to each district’s total population.

The five municipal districts that have the largest Chinese populations are the following: Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby, Coquitlam, and Surrey. The shares of each municipal district’s Chinese population are 48.2%, 19.2%, 15.0%, 6.0%, and 4.9%, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2003). These data indicate that nearly 70% of the Chinese in Vancouver CMA can be found in Vancouver and Richmond alone; and when the share of Burnaby is combined to these two districts, the share of the Chinese population of these three districts comprises over 80%. When it is compared to the distribution of the total population of Vancouver CMA, the concentration of the Chinese seems more apparent; Vancouver (30.6%), Richmond (9.2%), Burnaby (10.9%), Coquitlam (6.3%), and Surrey (19.5%) (Statistics Canada, 2003).

Concentration, in particular, needs to be looked at in relation to the size of the total population of each municipal district. Both Vancouver and Richmond have Chinese populations that greatly exceed their shares of the total population of Vancouver CMA. The Chinese population in Richmond extends its share of the total population by 10%, and in the case of Vancouver, the percentage almost exceeds by 20%. The portion of the Chinese population in Burnaby also exceeds its share of the Vancouver CMA population, although to a lesser extent than Vancouver and Richmond. On the other hand, both Surrey and Coquitlam have a fair share of the Chinese population when compared with their total population size.

Although Richmond comes fourth in terms of the population size in Vancouver CMA, it is the municipal district that has the highest portion of the visible minority and Chinese populations. In Richmond, 58.6% of the population described themselves as visible minorities, and 66.7% of these as Chinese (Statistics Canada, 2003). Therefore, in 2001 nearly 40% of
the total population in Richmond identified as Chinese. I will provide the information of Vancouver here in comparison with the case of Richmond. Vancouver is second only to Richmond in terms of the percentage of the Chinese population in the total population of the district. In Vancouver, 48.5% of the population is a visible minority, out of which, 60.9% is Chinese. Hence, about 30% of the population in Vancouver define themselves as Chinese. These findings imply that the existence of the Chinese in Richmond is likely to be more visible than in Vancouver because of the higher percentage of the Chinese population, although the actual number of the Chinese in Vancouver exceeds that in Richmond.

What these figures suggest is that the Chinese still congregate in particular areas, although they may no longer do so in Chinatown, as was the case historically. Multiculturalism might have helped the decline of explicit racism and discrimination against the Chinese and other minority groups, and increased opportunities for the Chinese to some extent. However, the concentration of the Chinese in suburban areas implies that the social distance between whites and the Chinese is still significant. For example, research shows that European groups are less likely to congregate geographically as are the Chinese and other visible minority groups (Balakrishnan & Gyimah, 2003).

3.3.2 The City of Vancouver

Now I will shift the focus of inquiry to the distribution patterns of the Chinese population within the City of Vancouver, the municipal district in Vancouver CMA with the largest Chinese population. The City of Vancouver has historically been the home of the Chinese. Chinatown now occupies only a small section of the city, in and around which the Chinese congregated in the past. Examination of the Chinese population distribution within the City of Vancouver will reveal whether such a pattern of Chinese congregation around
Chinatown has changed over time. This is the point that can be overlooked when the focus of the inquiry is only on Vancouver CMA, because it does not look into the Chinese settlement patterns in each municipal district.

For this part of the inquiry, the data from *Local Area Statistics* (2004) issued by the City of Vancouver are employed. *Local Areas Statistics* provide information on the demographic structure of each community in 1996 and 2001 including population size, income, duration in the community, age, and so on. To indicate the size of the Chinese population in each community, I have used the data that show the size of the total population and the percentage of the population whose mother tongue is Chinese. It must be mentioned that there is a possibility of eliminating the ethnic Chinese population whose mother tongue is not Chinese by looking at statistical groups sorted by language differences. However, when we consider that Chinese immigration to Canada drastically increased in the 1980s and 1990s and that most of these immigrants were from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, where Chinese is the official language, whether be it Cantonese or Mandarin, it is most likely that they claim Chinese as their mother tongue. For the purpose of convenience, I use the term “the Chinese population” here to refer to this group.

The distribution of the City of Vancouver’s total population is much more dispersed than that of the Chinese population. Renfrew-Collingwood and Kensington-Cedar Cottage (8.2%, respectively) are the most heavily populated communities in the City of Vancouver, followed by West End (7.7%), Kitsilano (6.1%), Hastings-Sunrise (6.1%), and Sunset (6.1%), consisting of 42.4% of the total population in the City (The City of Vancouver, 2004). The five communities with the heaviest concentration of Chinese speaking people are as follows: Renfrew-Collingwood (13.5%), Kensington-Cedar Cottage (11.5%), Hastings-Sunrise (9.4%), Victoria-Fraserview (9.2%), and Killarney (6.5%) (The City of Vancouver, 2004). When
combined, these five communities share as much as 50.2% of the Chinese population in the City of Vancouver. Anderson's (1991) account explains the relatively large size of the Chinese population in these communities — they are the communities to which the Chinese moved when they started to explore residential areas outside of Chinatown in the 1930s as there were no restrictive covenants in place (p. 147).

Table 3.1: The Most Populated Communities in Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Renfrew-Collingwood</td>
<td>44,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kensington-Cedar Cottage</td>
<td>44,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. West End</td>
<td>42,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kitsilano</td>
<td>39,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Hastings-Sunrise</td>
<td>33,425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The City of Vancouver, 2004

Table 3.2: The Communities with Largest Chinese Populations in Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Renfrew-Collingwood</td>
<td>19,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kensington-Cedar Cottage</td>
<td>16,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hastings-Sunrise</td>
<td>13,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Victoria-Fairview</td>
<td>13,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Killarney</td>
<td>9,437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The City of Vancouver, 2004
As evident from the figures presented above, the concentration of the Chinese population does not necessarily share the same pattern as the City of Vancouver’s population. The degree of concentration is clearly higher for the Chinese population than the City of Vancouver population. In 2001, 26.4% of the population of the City of Vancouver claimed Chinese as their mother tongue, and in the same year 13 communities, out of 22, had the Chinese populations that exceeded 26.4%. Among these communities, nine of them have a Chinese population higher than 30%, and five communities have populations over 40%. Surprisingly enough, in one community, Oakridge, more than 50% of the population identified Chinese as their mother tongue (The City of Vancouver, 2004). These figures clearly indicate that they are concentrated in some areas as opposed to others.

Another interesting difference in the distribution patterns between the overall population of the City of Vancouver and the Chinese population is the geographical allocation of those most populated communities. All five communities with the heaviest concentration of Chinese are found at the east end of the city, and along the border of the City of Vancouver and Burnaby. Moreover, they are literally neighbouring one another, shaping a fairly large geographical section of the City. Consequently, there is a high visibility of Chinese in these areas. In the case of the total population, the communities with larger populations are more geographically dispersed.

While the areas with relatively high proportions of the Chinese population are collectively located in the east end of the City of Vancouver, these communities do not necessarily coincide with communities that have been experiencing a rapid growth of the Chinese population in recent years. Kerrisdale, Marpole, Oakridge, Killarney, and Victoria-Fraserview are the communities that experienced the greatest increase of Chinese between 1996 and 2001. In the past, these areas’ main population groups were those of European
backgrounds (Hiebert, 1998, p. 10). In these communities, the Chinese population increased between 1996 and 2001 by 6.4%, 5.5%, 5.5%, 5.2%, and 4.4%, respectively (The City of Vancouver, 2004). These figures illustrate the significance of the increase of the Chinese when compared to the fact that the overall Chinese population of the City of Vancouver increased by only 1.9% during the same time period. Interestingly, all of these five communities are located to the south of 41st Avenue, geographically close to Richmond. This shows similar patterns of concentration of the Chinese population mentioned above; that is, there are several communities with a relatively high percentage of people of Chinese ancestry in close geographical proximity.

In comparison with the Chinese population, I will now provide the same statistical information about the total population of the City of Vancouver. The communities that had experienced the most significant population increase from 1996 to 2001 were: Downtown (including Gastown and Chinatown) (60.8%), Kitsilano (8.3%), Renfrew-Collingwood (7.6%), Fairview (Granville Island) (6.7%), and Sunset (6.7%) (The City of Vancouver, 2004). The outstanding population increase in the Downtown area is possibly ascribed to the number of high rises and condominiums constructed in recent years, which can utilize the limited spaces thereby maximizing the resident capacity. Despite this surprising growth of the total population in the Downtown area, the Chinese population in this area increased by only 2.4% in the same time period.
Table 3.3: Chinese Population Increase in Selected Communities from 1996 to 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerrisdale</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marpole</td>
<td>5.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakridge</td>
<td>5.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killarney</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria-Fraserview</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The City of Vancouver, 2004

Figure 3.4: Map of the City of Vancouver

Source: The City of Vancouver, 2004

The data provided above is helpful when observing recent Chinese immigrants’ settlement patterns. It is possible to assume that a fairly large portion of new Chinese residents moving into the five communities (i.e., Kerrisdale, Marpole, Oakridge, Killarney,
and Victoria-Fraserview) is comprised of recent Chinese immigrants. Unlike the older generation of Chinese immigrants, these new immigrants are more likely to have qualifications that help them cope with the social structure and lifestyle in Vancouver with less difficulty. Although they are now moving into areas originally populated by people of European origin, it is clear that they are moving close to the “new” Chinatown, or Chinese centre, of Richmond. Hence, this illustrates that racial segregation of even the most recent Chinese immigrants is still apparent in the context of Vancouver society; the only change is where they now concentrate.

The data that look only at Chinatown’s population changes are not available. *Local Areas Statistics*, however, provide data for Strathcona, the community right next to Chinatown that historically had the highest concentration of Chinese immigrants. According to statistical data, whereas the total population of Strathcona decreased by 0.6% from 1996 to 2001, the decline of the Chinese population in this same area was much greater. Strathcona experienced a 2.7% drop in the Chinese population between 1996 and 2001, making it the community with the largest Chinese population decrease in the City of Vancouver over this time period (The City of Vancouver, 2004). The statistical data employed here, however, do not point to the cause of this decline. Although it is impossible to specify whether geographical movement of the residents beyond the community boundaries or the deaths of the aging Chinese population played a role, the figures in the statistics indicate that the Chinese population size in Strathcona has been clearly shrinking.
3.4 Re-construction of the Notion of Racial Relations in Middle-class European Neighbourhoods of Vancouver

As described in the previous section of this chapter, the increase of the Chinese population in areas originally populated by European groups, such as Richmond, Kerrisdale, and Oakridge, is a phenomenon that has been occurring in recent years following the significant increase of the Chinese population. In addition to the areas just mentioned, Shaughnessy also serves as an example of this phenomenon. Shaughnessy has been known for being an extremely expensive residential area that has primarily hosted residents of British background. Although the total population of this community slightly declined in the late 1990s, the portion of Chinese in the area increased by 1.0%, comprising of 27.8% of the total population of the community in 2001 (The City of Vancouver, 2004). In this respect, Shaughnessy seems to be following the same path that Richmond, Kerrisdale, and Oakridge have taken: it is no longer a community that is exclusively white. In this section, I will explore the underlying concept of racial relations with a focus on Vancouver’s neighbourhoods with suburban characteristics.

The geographical movement of recent Chinese immigrants into the suburban areas historically populated by middle-class European residents has evoked some controversies surrounding the Chinese in Vancouver. Long-term residents of these neighbourhoods blame the increasing numbers of Chinese for the radical transformation of neighbourhood landscapes. Feelings of uneasiness and anxiety about such changes eventually developed into the so-called “monster house” incident. The monster house incident was initiated by the rapid house price increases and construction of monster houses changing the established landscapes (Ley, 1998, pp. 336-9; Rose, 2001, p. 476). The typical description of monster houses is:
Houses that extended to the edges of the lot... Characteristic design elements of the houses included a lack of surrounding surface vegetation, a square or rectangular box-shape, and an eclectic mix of architectural styles and traditions, often incorporating Greek columns, neo-Georgian and modernist designs, large windows, spiral staircases and towering entrance-ways, and the use of bright colours and a variety of building materials. (Mitchell, 1993; Li, 1994; Majury 1994; Ley, 1995; Ray et al., 1997; Ley, 1998, cited in Rose, 2001, pp. 476-7)

In the process of the developments, suburban neighbourhoods have constructed particular geographical identities. These identities include images such as spacious properties and safe environments to raise families. Such characteristics of suburban neighbourhoods, however, also set the boundary determining who can and who can not legitimately reside there. For example, owning a property with a spacious yard requires one to hold a certain amount of finances. Moreover, the geographical distance from the city core, where most business activities take place, demands individuals in the suburban areas to have a means of transportation or to be able to afford to commute frequently to the city core. Such requirements indicate that one must be part of a certain economic status group to live in these suburbs.

Furthermore, Canadian society is no exception in terms of Western societies in which social class stratification crosscuts differences of race. In Canadian society, the distinction of classes greatly overlaps the distinction of different ethnic and racial groups. In other words, ethnic and racial difference can be a crucial factor in determining one's social strata in society. The notion of class distinction based on race and ethnicity still persists in Canadian society; in this sense, multiculturalism has not achieved the goal of the real coexistence of various groups without conflict, or multiculturalism has done little to equalize income inequalities. As
mentioned earlier, the distinction of different racial groups often comes to be expressed as a
binary dichotomy between whites and non-whites, and such distinction is discussed and
expressed in the language of cultural difference, but not of racial difference. In most
situations whites are perceived as "superior" to non-whites; therefore whites can enjoy a great
deal of prestige in the political, social, and economical spheres. As a result, the social status
of whites in society became even more firmly fixed and stable. On the other hand, non-white
population groups were always submerged under whites because of attributed differences
based on race and ethnicity.

The bipolar distinction between whites and non-whites is relevant to the case of the
development of Vancouver suburbs. As Adams (1984) and Doucet and Weaver (1991)
suggest, strong class, ethnic and racial homogeneity of existing groups in the neighbourhood
characterise each suburb (cited in Ray, Halseth & Johnson, 1997, p. 78). Suburbs of Western
societies are often characterised by native-born white middle-class residents (Ray, Halseth &
Johnson, 1997, p. 78), and Vancouver's suburbs are no exception. For example, in 1971
Richmond's population was mainly Europeans (87%) (Hiebert, 1998, pp. 10-11), and
"Richmond has throughout its history been a steadfastly European space within greater
Vancouver" (Ray, Halseth & Johnson, 1997, p. 88). Also, "the KOS area [Kerrisdale,
Oakridge, and Shaughnessy] retained the character of a middle or upper-income suburb, with
large properties, a population mainly comprised of traditional nuclear families, and a distinctly
'English' landscape and cultural sensibility" (Hiebert, 1998, p. 10). As evident in these
examples, the factors that give geographical areas identities are the social class and racial
background of the residents. Such identities in turn become markers to determine who can
and can not fit into the neighbourhood without evoking controversies.
Because geographical identities are determined by residents’ class and race, the Chinese do not fit the category of “ideal” residents in these areas. The growth in the visibility of the Chinese contradicts the picture of the neighbourhood held by long-term white residents. Although the financial competence of recent Chinese immigrants can push them into the middle and upper classes, they are neither white nor native-born. Why does the influx of Chinese immigrants in various residential areas become so problematic and evoke controversies within these neighbourhoods? Goldberg’s (1993) work is useful here: “Racisms become institutionally normalized in and through spatial configuration, just as social space is made to seem natural, a given, by being conceived and defined in racial terms” (quoted in Ray, Halseth & Johnson, 1997, p. 81). Society sees geographical spaces not only in terms of class difference but also in terms of ethnic and racial distinction. In this sense, the growing presence of the Chinese in traditional European middle-class neighbourhoods is “invading” the boundary between whites and non-whites.

What makes this monster house controversy a contemporary form of racism as opposed to that of the past is the way in which it is conceptualized. In the contemporary context, racial difference is articulated through cultural difference. The subject to be blamed for the changes of landscapes in the neighbourhoods is new Chinese residents; however, the languages used in the discussion of this issue hardly suggest that racial difference itself is what matters to the long term residents. It is “cultural” difference, such as an architectural style, which has caused this controversy. Ray, Halseth and Johnson (1997) point out the nature of this controversy by stating, “in the case of Richmond, housing has more often been used as a medium and metaphor for the expression of concern about neighbourhood level ethnic change” (p. 83). In other words, a clear association was made in the minds of the public between “the Chinese” and “monster houses.” While multiculturalism and the non-
discriminatory policies might prevent such overt discriminatory attitudes towards the Chinese; this example shows that racialization and ethnicization is still evident in Canadian society.

In the discussion of the monster house incident, cultural difference is often used against new Chinese residents; however, research finds that the ways in which new Chinese residents live does not always differ from that of the neighbourhoods under discussion here. Ray, Halseth and Johnson (1997) discovered in their study that the Chinese are actually the ones who live up to "the normative behaviour commonly associated with suburbanization," that is, the ownership of single-detached housing (p. 93). They found that the portion of the Chinese owning single-detached housing is larger than that of the British/French population in Richmond; however, this fact is easily ignored in the discussion around the Chinese and their monster houses. In this sense, the Chinese do not violate the established way of living in the suburbs. On the contrary, they are re-producing the so-called preferable lifestyle of the suburb. This can serve as evidence that contemporary forms of racism are only coated with claims of cultural difference. Cultural diversity is one thing that is celebrated and promoted by the policy of multiculturalism. However, the instance of the monster house controversy implies that cultural differences can also be used to maintain the boundary between whites and non-whites and enable the reinforcement of the distinction without appearing explicitly racist.

3.5 Conclusion

The introduction of new immigration policies in the 1960s changed the face of Canadian immigrants in terms of not only personal qualifications, such as language skills, professional skills, and socio-economic status, but also racial and ethnic background. The change of racial and ethnic make-up of immigrants is due to the shift of immigration source countries from Europe to Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean. In addition the Chinese
came to shape a great proportion of these recent immigrant arrivals, especially since the middle of the 1980s. These new types of Chinese immigrants are characterized by their professional skills and occupation, wealth, knowledge in the English language, and a fairly long experience of living in urban social environments prior to their arrival to Canada. Because of globalization, these urbanized areas share some features of Western societies like Canada, including capitalist values. For this reason, these new Chinese immigrants are already familiar with the Western way of living.

When the influx of Chinese immigration in Canada reached its peak in the 1980s, Hong Kong was the largest immigration sending country. This was the consequence of the uncertain, unpredictable future of Hong Kong after the Chinese government took over the control of Hong Kong from Britain in 1997. This situation created a large number of potential immigrants to the West in search of financial security and a stable life. However, after 1997, the picture of Chinese immigration sources started changing, pushing Mainland China to become the biggest sending country of Chinese immigrants, followed by Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Such changes in the characteristics of Chinese immigrants made the existing Chinese community of Vancouver diversified and complex. The Chinese community began to be divided into segments along the lines of the time of arrival to Canada, language proficiency in Chinese and English, socio-economic status, and place of origin. This is partially due to the new immigration regulations and the policy of multiculturalism, which led to the dispersion of people of Chinese ancestry throughout the region of Vancouver. In spite of this dispersion compared to that of the past, there are still strong patterns in their choice of residential areas. The Chinese are now found in every district of Vancouver CMA, and this phenomenon is especially pronounced in Richmond. The district today is often referred to as the “new”
Chinatown. Within the City of Vancouver, it seems that there are two geographical areas that are populated by different types of Chinese. The area consisting of several communities along the border of Vancouver and Burnaby is characterized by the older generation of Chinese immigrant; whereas the area made up by communities located to the south of 41st Avenue is populated by the more recent, and new type of Chinese immigrants. The latter area is geographically close to Richmond, which suggests that this Chinese settlement is occurring around a new Chinese centre of Vancouver.

The new immigration policies and the introduction of multiculturalism appear to be changing the discriminatory attitudes of Canadians towards non-white minority groups. However, the reality is that only the articulation of such discrimination has changed. The apparent discrimination based on racial difference has now been expressed through cultural difference. The controversy over new Chinese residents changing landscapes of areas traditionally populated by European groups is a good example of how racism has been transformed. It is their “cultural” difference, but not “racial” difference, that has been presented as an issue to be discussed in the controversy. By shifting the focus of differentiation from race to culture, one can get away from appearing racist, especially in a society where cultural difference and diversity are celebrated. In this sense, the boundary between whites and non-whites persistently exists in Canadian society behind the guise of multiculturalism. To be more precise, it can be said that multiculturalism actually reinforced these boundaries in Canadian society.
Chapter IV  Making a “Museum:” Beautification of Vancouver’s Chinatown as a Cultural Attraction

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on Vancouver’s Chinatown as a social entity transformed into a tourist attraction that functions as a museum of Chinese culture. Chinatown, which had always been psychologically distant from the wider Vancouver society, developed artificial and imaginary features as a result of the beautification schemes conducted by the City of Vancouver from the 1960s onwards. Chinatown changed its appearance to become a museum of “Chineseness” targeted to attract white society, and the result was a psychological disconnection of the Chinese community from Chinatown. Terms such as “white society,” “the wider Canadian society,” “whites,” and “Europeans” will be used interchangeably in this chapter for the people of European backgrounds were still the dominant group in almost every aspect of Vancouver society during the time period under discussion. The goal of this chapter is to suggest that the beautification of Chinatown and its reconstruction as a tourist attraction were achieved on the premise of non-Europeans as “Others,” which was embedded in the colonialist thoughts of Western societies. Furthermore, I intend to reveal that such hierarchal relations between Europeans and non-Europeans were in fact reinforced by giving Chinatown a culturally significant meaning under the notion of multiculturalism. The discussion of Chinatown as a museum is useful to reveal these points. Although my discussion will only concern the case of Vancouver’s Chinatown, it can also apply to many other ethnic minority groups and their cultures in Canada.

Theoretical arguments structure the first half of this chapter. First, I will introduce the development of modern museums in Western societies, and the social context in which
museums came to take the role of educational institutions. The construction and reinforcement of ideologies enabled by the functions of museums will be the centre of discussion. Following this, I will make the theoretical connection between the museum and tourism in the context of post World War II Western societies. The latter half of this chapter will examine Vancouver’s Chinatown as a tourist attraction and museum that crystallized the boundary between whites and the Chinese, creating a “colonized” oriental space within the City of Vancouver.

This discussion will be constructed around the theories and concepts presented in the first half of the chapter and my own analysis of official documents concerning the beautification of Chinatown. Most of the documents were obtained from the City of Vancouver Archives and the UBC Library Special Collections. These primary sources include, official documents published by special committees for the beautification of Chinatown authorized by the City of Vancouver, an official report submitted to the City government, and pamphlets and brochures that highlight Chinatown as a tourist and cultural attraction. They were chosen as the primary sources for this research to better reflect the perspective of the white society on Chinatown. In order to include the responses of the Chinese community to the beautification schemes, archival documents compiled by Chinese organizations are also examined, such as the Chinese community’s claim to the City of Vancouver.

4.2 The Museum as a Communication Tool of “Us”/ “Other” Dichotomization

To “show” appealing objects is the most important task socially assigned to museums of modern days, and people expect to “see” interesting things on their visit to museums (Baxandall, 1991, pp. 33-4). The concept of modern museums is a creation of Western societies, and in the process of its development, museums assumed the role of mass education
(Bennett, 1995, p. 71, 109; 1998, p. 28). In this section, I will try to reveal how the ideological education through museums successfully achieved the distinction between “Us” and “Other” in Western societies.

Tony Bennett discusses the birth of modern museums from the late 18th to early 19th centuries in British society (1995, Chapter 1). According to Bennett, new social norms and values emerging from the Industrial Revolution and the introduction of capitalism became the driving forces of the social reform of British society, and museums, along with library and public lectures, served as useful communication tools for such norms and values (1998, p. 18). The changes in the mode of production that accompanied the social changes resulted in a significant decline in the value of specialized knowledge and skills; whereas the standardized knowledge and skills became of greater value due to their adaptability to a wider range of occupations (Eriksen, 2002, pp. 100-4). At the same time, the bipolarization of economic classes caused the creation of a deprived and exploited poor working class population, consisting of the majority of society. These rapid changes had a great impact on the way society was organized not only at the macro level, but also at the micro level. Interpersonal relationships, which once were organized around a kinship-based group and localized group became weaker. This is because individuals were pulled away, both psychologically and physically, from such a tightly knit community in order to adapt to the rapidly changing social structure (Eriksen, 2002, pp. 106-8). Society became fragmented, and the need to reintegrate people emerged to avoid the further fragmentation that can cause a serious collapse of the society.

As traditional social ties formed around kinship and local groups weakened, people began to lose a point of reference around which they could construct their identity and a sense of belonging. Society was in need of reconstructing identity to keep itself integrated, and
museums seemed to be a useful strategy to foster feelings that could be commonly held by people in society. This is where the character of the museum as a public space becomes of great importance. In the past, the significance of museum collections and exhibition was determined according to the worthiness of the donor (Macdonald, 1998, p. 8). Museums were perceived as a much more private realm that was under a strong influence of prominent individuals in society. However, social changes also led to changes in the place of museums in society. Museums had to be opened up to educate the public to help them develop an identity and a sense of belonging (Macdonald, 1998, p. 9, 11). In this way, the social meaning of the museum drastically changed. Greenwood claims that, as early as in 1888, the museum became "as necessary for the mental and moral health of the citizens as good sanitary arrangements, water supply, and street lighting are for their physical health and comfort" (cited in Bennett, 1995, p. 18). Museums acquired a new role of speaking to and educating the public.

Now let us look at how the museum could achieve its status as a communicator of commonly shared feelings in society. The way in which people created their identity in the past was mostly based on blood ties and face-to-face relationships as mentioned earlier. In other words, their identity relied on something "tangible." This was no longer the case in modern, capitalist Western societies. Katriel's (1993) work on a heritage museum in Israel exemplifies this point. She claims that the presentation of individual experiences in the form of a museum exhibition generates a sense of "common" history, and this history is interpreted as "common" culture. Personal experiences of an individual can be shared by visitors to the exhibition as theirs when they have a similar experience themselves. Therefore, they make a connection between their own experience and someone else's experience of an exhibition, which develop into the sense of sharing the common history and culture. Therefore, the
function of the museum to "show and tell" is effective to make such abstract, hence "intangible" notions comprehensive through visualization.

But how is it possible? The ability of the museum to communicate ideological and abstract notions to society must be described here in accordance with Benedict Anderson's (1983) discussions of print capitalism and its contribution to the development of nationalism. In his theory, what made print capitalism successful was people's exposure to identical information through circulation of printed materials. Exposed to the same information in printed materials, people came to accept ideologies in the contents as theirs and began to realize the existence of an "imagined community." Such ability of printed materials to communicate specific information to the public can be similarly found in museum exhibitions (Anderson, 1983, Chapter 10). "Common" history and culture in the form of a museum exhibition fosters the sense of sharing something common among visitors. The fact that the museum exhibition is confined in the museum complex and that people are required to make an effort to visit museums become obstacles to communicate to a wide audience as was the case with printed materials. Yet, the museum still has the power to communicate consistent information by providing the public with a "single" set of displayed objects. Once the exhibition is arranged in a certain form, it remains the same for the duration of the exhibition. Therefore, visitors to the exhibition are exposed to exactly the same materials regardless of the time of their visits.

Alongside the exhibition of "common" history and own culture, what has become popular in terms of the museum exhibition is the display of "different" and "distinctive" cultures from that of one's own (Alpers, 1991, pp. 31-2; Macdonald, 1998, p. 9). European expansionism and imperialism led to the successive establishment of European colonies in non-European countries and societies. One outcome of colonialism is an increase in
encounters between European and non-European peoples. The experience of encountering non-Europeans made Europeans aware of differences between these two groups, and one consequence of this was the dichotomization between Europeans as “Us” and non-Europeans as “Others.”

Mitchell (1988) claims that perceiving non-Europeans as “Others” is in fact how Europeans made their own identities. The lengthy quote from his work *Colonizing Egypt* is useful here:

What Orientalism offered was ... a series of absolute differences according to which the Oriental could be understood as the negative of the European. These differences were not the differences within a self, which would be understood as an always-divided identity; they were the differences between a self and its opposite, the opposite that makes possible such an imaginary, undivided self....the domination of the West over the non-Western world depended on this manner of creating a ‘West’, a singular Western self-identity....what is outside is paradoxically what makes the West what it is, the excluded yet integral part of its identity and power. (p. 166)

The point here is that the creation of “Others” as a distinctive category, i.e., non-Europeans or Orientals, occurred in a manner to reflect “Us.” The notion of “Us” becomes clear only when the images of what we are not are visualized and captured. This creates an imaginary, artificial, and yet profound boundary determining who belongs to “Us” and who does not. And anyone who does not satisfy the criteria to be included in the group of “Us” falls into the category of “Others.”

Reinforcing the idea of non-Europeans as inferior and primitive people was the way Western societies understood “culture.” Culture in the middle of 19th century Europe meant “a single evolutionary process ... [which] was widely believed to be the natural outcome of a
long development, a process that ... was assumed to be the basic, progressive movement of humanity" (Clifford, 1988, p. 92). Macdonald’s (1998) account on the scientific exhibitions that were dedicated to visualization of the concept of progress indeed supports this point (pp. 9-13). Macdonald argues that scientific exhibitions communicated various kinds of messages to the public that ranged from “the progress of humankind and of scientific knowledge” to a “personal journey towards greater knowledge and mastery” (1998, p. 12). Hence, culture in the Western social context was defined as a linear development of humankind towards a single goal. Therefore, the judgments of cultures of “Others” were based on how far behind they stood from European culture.

Clifford (1988), however, suggests that “culture” in Western societies came to change its meaning by the turn of the 20th century to be aware of distinctiveness and plurality (p. 93). However, this change in the way in which Western societies perceived culture does not necessarily mean that cultures of “Others” came to be treated equally. The different attitudes to these cultures are exemplified in the very act of physically moving non-European cultures to museums as displayed objects to be enjoyed by European audiences, for example. Drawing from Mary Louise Pratt, Clifford uses the term “contact zone” to mean “the space of colonial encounters, the space in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, racial inequality, and interactive conflict” (Pratt, 1992, quoted in Clifford, 1997, p. 192). This statement holds true when we look at museum exhibitions of non-European cultures. Although non-European cultures are not part of “our” Western societies, it is acceptable for Europeans to move “their” cultures from their original settings. As described earlier, the cultures of “Others” were by no means regarded as part of “our” European culture. Or, the possibility of such cultures becoming part of “our” culture was absent. This is because
there was a strong notion of dichotomization, denying the erasure of the boundary between these two opposite groups: Europeans and non-Europeans were the groups that are never supposed to mix together. For this reason, the concept of Europeans came to be understood by being assured of what they were not, when compared to non-Europeans. In this sense, reflecting the image of own became an inevitable process of identity construction in the West.

Hence, showing what belongs to “Others” involves unequal power relations between who is seeing and who is being seen. As Foucault (1977) describes in Discipline and Punish, the continuous observation can link the observer directly to the power that can be exerted on the object of the observation. In the context of museum exhibition of non-European cultures in Western societies, it is Europeans looking at displayed cultures of non-Europeans. Through such activities, “Westerners had for centuries studied and spoken for the rest of the world; the reverse had not been the case” (Clifford, 1988, p. 256). The repetition of this seeing/being-seen relation between Europeans and non-Europeans indeed further reinforced the power relationships established through the history of colonialism.

### 4.3 Tourism and Museums without Walls as the Site of a New Form of Colonialism

The assumption that European culture and non-European cultures are mutually exclusive made the realm of “Others” appear “extraordinary” and “exotic” to Western societies. As Mitchell (1988) points out, citing Edward Said’s Orientalism, the growth of the importance of Orientals, or non-Europeans, has been parallel to the growth of commercial and colonial interest that Europe had towards Orientals (p. 139). The trend of exhibiting non-European cultures indeed strengthens the notion of colonialism or the unequal power relationship between Europeans and non-Europeans even in the present context. In this light, Clifford (1997) provides examples of four museums on the west coast of Canada, all of which
feature local First Nation groups and representations of their cultures (Chapter 5). He critically interprets the exhibitions of First Nations saying that representations of their histories are also a representation of the history of Europeans in which colonization and exploitation played a large part in creating the social order and inequality that still exist in today’s world (p. 137). This can apply to many other examples of non-European cultural exhibitions. The representation of subordinate non-European history and culture cannot be possible without the representation of European colonialism, because the experience of being colonized is an influential and important part of what comprises their history and culture.

The post World War II era underwent tremendous changes that increased the mobility of goods and people. The development of communication and transportation technologies contributed to a much greater level of associations beyond national boundaries. Following these changes, the form of museums also experienced some kind of transformation with the help of flourishing tourism. Despite such transformation, however, museums were still able to spread the ideas and ideals of colonialism.

Bennett (1995) explains that a museum in the late 18th and early 19th centuries served as an arena where the public learned socially acceptable and appropriate behaviours. His discussion is based upon Foucault’s theory about knowledge and power relations generated in the structure of prison. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault describes how the activities of observation, which are facilitated by the panoptical structure of prison, can create absolute power relations between the prisoners and guards. According to Bennett, the awareness of other visitors’ existence in the confined space of a museum is effective enough to make a museum’s disciplinary function work (1995, Chapter 2). The visitors come to a museum to see the displayed objects, but at the same time, it is possible that they are seen by others in the
given space alongside the displayed objects. The museum visitors, therefore, take on the roles of both the observer and the observed. Hence, the activity of visiting museums involves a similar power relationship as the prison structure suggested by Foucault, because it is this repetition of observing and being observed that creates the power relations which can regulate the behaviours of the observed (Bennett, 1995, pp. 63-9). For this reason the public voluntarily learn how to behave in the public sphere in the context of museum settings by becoming aware of other visitors in their presence.

Bennett points out another disciplinary function of museums. He suggests that the architecture of museums can also regulate people's behaviours in a more physical way. The confined space created by the museum structure limits visitors' capacity for moving freely. Bennett notes that the arrangement of exhibitions within the museum structure, such as the way of organizing exhibitions has a coercive force to direct people's behaviours in a certain manner (1995, Chapter 2). Visitors are expected to follow the paths inside the museum complex from the entrance to the exit and keep their hands away from displayed objects. Whether it is a conscious or unconscious act, people learn expected behaviours in the given environment of the museum.

The museum's disciplinary function is, however, declining as the concept of "museums without walls" (Malraux, 1953) gradually comes into existence. Malraux claims that sites that contain artifacts and cultural objects can be attractive enough for people to visit there in the same way that they visit museums. In the case of museums without walls, displayed objects are presented in their original setting, which is a great advantage because they do not have to damage the images of authenticity or distort the meanings these objects have (Macdonald, 1998, p. 14). Furthermore, the crucial difference between ordinal museums and museums without walls is that the latter can offer the sense of infinity to the visitors.
deriving from the fact that there are no walls creating a closed space (Malraux, 1953, p. 16). Because of the absence of physical boundaries preventing the visitors from certain movements, museums without walls can not exert the same type of power on people as that of ordinary museums or even prisons (Hetherington, 1996, p. 160). The coercive power exerted on the physical movements of human bodies is not effective in the context of museums without walls.

As Hetherington suggests, the concept of museums without walls diminished the coercive force that the architectural structure could exert on human bodies. The diminished coercive power gave the visitors more freedom to enjoy the objects in their own ways. Instead of the decline of such physical restriction, however, I suggest that museums without walls brought a new dimension to power relations between the observer and the observed. And it was further confirmed as tourism came to be connected to the concept of museums without walls. Utilization of a space with artifacts or cultural objects can increase the authenticity of a display and help maintain the real meanings of these artifacts and cultural objects by not removing them from their original site. Keeping artifacts and cultural objects in their original settings, and yet presenting them as an exhibition requires the observer to travel considerable distances. This can be viewed as a new phenomenon that was involved in the process of the development of museums without walls. In this respect, the emergence of museums without walls and the rise of tourism are correlated. Visiting sites with artifacts and cultural objects worth seeing has become a major tourist activity. However, what is perceived worth seeing and who decides it?

The concept of tourism, like the concept of museums, is a creation of Western societies. Tourism developed particularly after World War II in Western societies influenced by globalization (Urry, 2002, pp. 45-50). Tourism is established by geographical movements, i.e. getting away from ordinary life. However, what remains the same even after the development
of museums without walls and tourism is the placement non-European “exotic” and
“extraordinary” cultures as objects to be seen and experienced by those who visit the sites.
Such cultures of “Others” are still out there as a target of commodification and exploitation to
be enjoyed by the European: it became only a matter of how far one must travel to enjoy and
consume the cultures of “Others,” and distance is becoming a smaller issue thanks to the
development of transportation technology and the trend of globalization. Urry (2002) defines
tourism as follows:

[Tourism] is about consuming goods and services which are in some sense unnecessary.
They are consumed because they supposedly generate pleasurable experiences which
are different from those typically encountered in everyday life. And yet at least a part
of that experience is to gaze upon or view a set of different scenes, of landscapes or
townscapes which are out of their ordinary. (p. 1)

For Europeans who take part in tourist activities, to visit “exotic” places to explore something
“extraordinary” is a pleasant and intriguing experience. However, for the locals of such a
place, the environment consumed by tourists is still a place of everyday life. Therefore, in
some sense, their space is “colonized” by the Europeans in the name of tourism (Greenwood,

The utilization and maximization of the “exotic” and “extraordinary” atmospheres are
the very core features of both tourism and museums. Culture is presented to those who do not
belong to it to be enjoyed and consumed. The presentations of non-European cultures are
made with an overt emphasis on visual aspects to make them look more distinctive and eye­
catching to a European audience. Museums need to “show” interesting objects; hence
choosing visually attractive objects to make the exhibition more appealing is an inevitable
process. Such modification of cultural representation is aimed not at the holders of the culture, but to the outsiders who consume it.

To add some emphasis on specific aspects of culture, however, can cause the loss of the culture's authenticity to those who belong to it because:

Culture in its very essence is something that people believe in implicitly. By making it part of the tourism package, it is turned into an explicit and paid performance and no longer can be believed in the way it was before. Thus, commoditization of culture in effect robs people of the very meanings by which they organize their lives [italics original]. (Greenwood, 1989, p. 179)

I would argue here that the birth of museums without walls as part of the rise of tourism has further promoted the notion of colonialism and reinforced unequal relations between Europeans and non-Europeans. The local cultures are modified, consumed, and exploited in the way that suits the European tastes without the consent of the locals. Museums without walls surely give more freedom to visitors to move at their will. This means, at the same time, that they have a greater ability to explore the private realm of the local people and their culture, and the more local cultures are turned into cultural exhibitions. This can result in strengthening the view of non-European cultures as consumable objects and the people behind these cultures as subordinate.

4.4 Application of Theories to Vancouver's Chinatown

In this section, Vancouver’s Chinatown will be analyzed as a museum without walls that has been reconstructed through the perspectives of white society. I intend to show what aspects of “Chineseness” come to be emphasized in this particular geographical space of Chinatown through the process of beautification, changing Chinatown from a place to be
avoided, into a place to visit. The beautification schemes made Chinatown into a space of historical and cultural flavours where one could see Chinese culture. In this respect, Chinatown became a museum without walls, where one can experience “extraordinary” and “exotic” atmospheres. The transformation of Chinatown indeed changed its social meaning and image in Vancouver society. However, it has only changed the way in which Chinatown signifies the status of “Other.” The redevelopment of Chinatown was achieved by putting a significant amount of emphasis on the visualization of “Chineseness.” As previously mentioned, museums and tourism are concepts created in Western societies. It is the European view of Chinese culture that played a determinative role in deciding what should be presented in what way, because it is for Europeans that the visualization of cultures are commodified through tourism and museum exhibitions. This visualization, based upon the European images of “authentic” Chinese culture, was also a useful strategy to erase derogatory and unfavourable images of Chinatown that had persisted for decades. Changing Chinatown’s images for more positive ones indeed promoted a favourable image of the City of Vancouver as a developed metropolitan city in which distinctive social groups can coexist in harmony. And such harmonious coexistence of distinctive groups is exactly what Canada’s multiculturalism ideally pursued. In other words, the commodification of Chinatown created the ideal picture of what multiculturalism was supposed to achieve. On the other hand, however, the visualization of culture in Chinatown caused the space to become a highly artificial social entity making its status of “Other” an even more concrete one.

The status of “Other” historically imposed on the Chinese allowed white society to restrict the life of Chinese in Vancouver to a great extent, depriving them of their rights and opportunities. Such deprivations further confirmed their “Otherness” in society because of the
lack of access to and contact with white society. And this reinforced their status as “Other,” while giving white society a legitimate reason to discriminate against the Chinese: it became a vicious cycle. The Chinese were rapidly becoming an object to be controlled and regulated in society where social norms and values were determined by whites. Because of Chinatown’s “Otherness,” it became a place that physically existed in the boundaries of the City, but psychologically existed out of it (Okihiro, 2002, p. 294). Because of the extreme social and, to some extent, residential segregation of the Chinese, the contact between whites and the Chinese was scarce, and the Chinese existed completely outside of the whites’ ordinary life context. The Chinese and anything related to them stood in opposition to white society, and having a look at Chinese spaces was becoming “enjoyable” for many whites in some senses because of the perceived differences between them (Anderson, 1991, Chapter 5). The views of Chinatown and the Chinese living there could confirm the belief that whites and the Chinese did not belong together. Moreover, the much lower standards of living found in Chinatown even strengthened the notion of European superiority, despite the fact that such living conditions were partly due to the way that the wider Canadian society treated the Chinese.

Despite increasing white interest in Chinatown, there still remained persistent stigmas that kept many people away from Chinatown. The process of transforming Chinatown from a ghetto to a place that could be safely visited changed it into a museum without walls. It also affected the mode of Chinatown’s economy, integrating it into and making it dependent on the structure of European tourism. For example, Anderson (1991) indicates that the City of Vancouver acknowledged the industrial value of Chinatown in as early as 1924 (p. 141). The discriminatory policy of the government in the past did not leave the Chinese community and Chinatown many options other than participating in a tourism economy to secure a means of
gaining currency. The long lasting racism and discrimination against the Chinese did not allow them to construct meaningful ties with the wider Canadian society that could foster better political and economic opportunities. As a result, the Chinese community and Chinatown had to take advantage of the “different” and “distinctive” characteristics given to them by white society. Ironically enough, Chinatown’s character as “different” and “distinctive” became the very reason it could flourish in a tourist economy. Because of its “ability” to become an object of an exhibition of “Otherness,” Chinatown survived in Vancouver society.

Chao (1971) remarks about the increase of tourism in Chinatown drawing from examples in the United States:

Many travel agencies in San Francisco and New York City have guided tours of their Chinatowns. For $3.50, a person gets a 2 ½ - hour guided trip through the streets in Chinatown, including a Chinese meal. This type of arrangement has attracted many white tourists to such a degree that guided tours of Chinatowns occur almost everyday. (p. 91)

This quite precisely illustrates Chinatown’s status as a tourist destination by revealing that the visits to Chinatowns were activities arranged by travel agencies. Chinatown, became a place to visit, a place psychologically outside of the everyday context, has become a site that belonged to “Other.”

Although Chinatown’s dependency on the tourist economy is largely due to external political factors, by the late 1960s, the Chinese community accepted tourism as part of Chinatown’s character. This character was even put forward by the Chinese themselves to protest against the plan to build a freeway cutting through Chinatown. The City of Vancouver planned the redevelopment of the City in the 1960s, and the construction of the freeway was
part of it. The plan to build the freeway was proposed to foster a smooth flow of traffic into the City of Vancouver and an increased accessibility to the downtown area (Anderson, 1991, p. 200). Although the City of Vancouver might not have planned to tear down Chinatown as a whole, the Chinese community in Vancouver feared the destruction of Chinatown, nonetheless (Anderson, 1991, pp. 200-9). To avoid such a situation, the merchant organization made a claim to the City government to protect Chinatown from being destroyed. They argued:

Chinatown is a tradition, a landmark and a major tourist attraction of the City of Vancouver and has been such almost since the birth of the City. Today, the Tourist business is the second largest business in British Columbia in terms of dollars and cents. Thousands of dollars are spent annually promoting the tourist business in Vancouver and in promoting the city as a Convention City. Chinatown has always been on the Agenda of visiting delegates. (Chinese Benevolent Association, 1967)

Tourism had grown to a degree that could jeopardize the Chinese community and Chinatown if it was taken away from them (Anderson, 1991, p. 204). The persistent protests against the construction of the freeway ended in favour of the Chinese community. However, the path Chinatown followed after this incident resulted in the destruction of the close ties between the Chinese community and Chinatown. What is significant and yet ironic is the fact that to promote tourism, Chinese themselves exploited racist images to protect their social space.

4.5 Reconstruction of New Images of Vancouver’s Chinatown

Rendering Chinese culture and space as commodities to be consumed in the setting of tourism partially affected the ways in which Vancouver’s Chinese community perceived and interacted with Chinatown. This is indicated by examining how Chinatown’s social images were reconstructed with the visualization of Chinese culture initiated by the City of Vancouver.
Such transformation moulded Chinatown into a social entity that did not culturally belong to either whites or the Chinese. Chinatown had not necessarily been favourably perceived by the wider Canadian society throughout history. The commonly held images of Chinatown for decades include: a menace to society; filthiness; opium den and addicts; low standards of living conditions such as extremely crowded accommodations; prostitution; and gambling. It is noticeable that these images placed upon Chinatown have an extremely close connection with the stereotyped and stigmatized activities of the Chinese residents in the area. A great deal of overlap can be found between the images of the Chinese community and of Chinatown. Because of their significantly close ties, the images of the Chinese were reflected in those of Chinatown, showing that Chinatown in the past had belonged to the Chinese.

Now that Chinatown has established its place in society as a tourist attraction, the focus has shifted to its appearance that speaks to white society. The images of Chinatown that had been held in society before the beautification schemes were the creations of white society: Chinese culture and customs were perceived and interpreted according to the social norms and values of whites. In spite of this fact, these images became the very object of re-creation, again as a result of white initiatives. And the way in which the city government intended to beautify Chinatown was mainly through a visualization of “Chineseness,” or putting a visualized emphasis on what seemed more like Chinese culture to them. Okihiro’s (2002) work on Chinatowns in America is directly relevant here. He states that Chinatowns in the present American society are “virtual communities” which are the textual and imaginary communities created through tourism activities (p. 291). Because of the role of Chinatown as a tourist site that shows Chinese culture, “orientalizing of Chinatown worked for its creators” (Okihiro, 2002, p. 300).
Mitchell (1988) shares a similar view with Okihiro on "oriental" places. He sees such sites as spaces where the search for the structure that is "raised in the imagination" takes place (p. 21). He goes on to say that European visitors "come expecting to find a world where a structure or meaning exists somehow apart, as in an exhibition, from the ‘reality’ of things-in-themselves" (Mitchell, 1988, p. 21). Mitchell’s account on oriental spaces constructed in the imagination of Europeans becomes legitimate when we look into the way Chinatown was reconstructed to suit European tastes. As shown earlier in this chapter, Western societies have a long history of representing cultures of “Others” in the form of exhibition. The emergence of museums without walls and tourism has changed the way that visitors interact with the displayed objects. For example, visitors can touch or experience the “objects.” Yet, both museums without walls and tourism still place the activity of seeing in the centre. This explains the direct link to the focus on the visual aspect when a museum without walls and a tourist attraction is created.

The City of Vancouver’s intention to put a strong emphasis on the visual aspects of Chinese culture is clearly expressed in Chinatown, Vancouver, B.C.: Design Proposal For Improvement, published in 1964 by the City Planning Department. According to the proposal, the improvement schemes involved the following four stages: 1) re-routing of heavy traffic; 2) provision of off-street parking; 3) redevelopment of the land defined by Pender Street, Columbia Street, and Pender and Keefer Division; and 4) construction of pedestrian malls on East Pender Street (p. 8).

It should be noted that the first two stages of the schemes were very influential on the visual impression of Chinatown. For this reason, I will focus on these points here. The heavy traffic and cars parked on the streets conflicted with the images of how Chinatown should
appear to white society. This exemplifies the points made by both Okihiro and Mitchell. Heavy traffic and existence of cars on the streets are characterized by industrialization and the invention of mass production started in Western societies. Because Chinatown is perceived as a realm of non-Europeans in the minds of Europeans, Chinatown is not supposed to share the same or even similar features as Western societies. Although excluded and marginalized, Chinatown is part of Vancouver society at least in terms of its geographical location. Therefore, in some way it has also taken part in the development of the society. However, because of its character as "Other" in society, Chinatown was denied the chance to appear like other areas of the City.

Keeping the visibility of traffic and cars low is not the only example. Among all the features of Chinatown, the most aesthetic and eye-catching is the abundant use of the colour red and the existence of a number of signs filled with Chinese characters. These features contribute to the creation of a peculiar atmosphere in Chinatown that has a strong appeal to whites. Kalman (1973) compiled a report on the conditions of buildings in Chinatown, which was submitted to the City Planning Department. Kalman, who was a professor of the Department of Architecture at the University of British Columbia at that time, based his report on an examination of buildings and architectural structures in Chinatown. He categorized these buildings according to the different architectural styles and suggested what kinds of renovations and restoration should be done if there was any need for such treatments. This report reveals an extremely interesting fact: most of the buildings in Chinatown were indeed designed by European architects and were built in non-Chinese architectural styles, although it also suggests that a modification of the use of recessed balconies above the ground floor was added to the styles to increase the Chinese look (Kalman, 1973, pp, 7, 28-9). Moreover, Kalman indicates the absence of buildings designed by Chinese architects in Chinatown by
saying that "the work of the only Chinese architect of record, W. H. Chow, have suffered so badly from demolition and alternation that we know little about his style" (p. 7). Therefore, what is presented to whites as "Chinese" is not genuinely Chinese, but a mixture of European and Chinese cultures. This raises an important question. If what is presented to society as "Chinese" is not completely Chinese, why do people still perceive it as Chinese?

Explicit visualization of what Western societies perceived as "Chinese" became a useful solution. In this sense, the use of the colour red in Chinatown is highly intentional. In his report, Kalman clearly states that the use of red tiles to build detached rooflets is employed in order to make them look Oriental, in an artificial way (1973, p. 38). The replacement of old street lighting with new lighting on red poles is another example of the use of red with an intention to enhance the Chinese atmosphere. This replacement was suggested following the case of San Francisco's Chinatown because it has proven that the colour red can create "a distinct oriental character" (City Planning Department, 1964, p. 16) and therefore, the City thought that it would work well in Vancouver's Chinatown. The definition of a distinct oriental character or an oriental look remains vague in both proposal and Kalman's report, however. It can be assumed that the fact that Orientals stood in opposite to whites became so obvious in the long history of colonialism that such a notion probably did not appear as something to be specified or explained.

Chinatown Historic Area Streetscape Improvement Project (The City of Vancouver) published in February 1979 is an excellent source that reveals how much effort was put in to make Chinatown even more "Chinese" by paying a significant amount of attention to the visual aspects. This memorandum summarizes the conflict between the City Planning Department and the Engineering Department over the brightness and the cost of two different types of suggested lighting on Pender Street. The Engineering Department considered safety
and cost efficiency as the most important factors in choosing one of the two suggested lighting options, and the one they thought should be chosen was brighter and cheaper to maintain. On the other hand, the City Planning Department insisted that the lighting choice must maximize the appearance of Chinatown. The City Planning Department over-ruled the Engineering Department and lighting in Chinatown was changed to reflect the opinion of the City Planning Department. As suggested in the design proposal of 1964, lighting poles were painted red and this played a significant role in making the environment more “Chinese.” Firstly, the colour sets the area apart from the rest of the City, where lighting poles are painted green. Secondly, the shared knowledge in white society that the colour red is often used on occasions of celebration in Chinese culture directly links one’s imagination to the “Chineseness.”

Along with the street lighting, the effective use of signage in Chinatown was another strategy that the City Planning Department employed to increase the “Chinese” appearance in the area. The City Planning Department imposed a set of regulations that specifically applied only to Chinatown. Through these regulations, the business and store owners of the area were required to endure these double standards despite the expensive maintenance costs. This can serve as evidence of unequal relations between whites and the Chinese as Okihiro (2002) points out (p. 298). Chinatown: Sign Guidelines (City Planning Department, 1974) reads:

Vancouver’s Chinatown presently has a unique ethnic and visual character. These guidelines are intended to ensure the preservation and encouragement of some of the environmental aspects which contributed to its present attractiveness and distinctiveness. While this area is characterized by a mixture of older, historically significant structures and buildings more recently constructed, many of them do, however, have a strong characteristic Chinese motif, including some of the signs (except many of those of recent years which conform to more universal signing
methods). Much of the character of Chinatown, in fact, is directly attributable to the multitude of complex, decorative signs. Signing policies in this area should, therefore, be more tolerant of the number, size and placement of all signs (except in the case of those structures deemed of the highest historic/aesthetic significance). All new signing in this area should, however, incorporate Chinese motifs, symbols and forms rather than stereotyped sign types which dominate other commercial areas. (p. 2)

By suggesting that Chinese characters and motifs be used in signs and that signs in Chinatown not follow the common types of signs outside of Chinatown, this regulation indeed forced Chinatown to live up to the stereotyped images produced by whites.

Such culturally visualized images of Chinatown are clear indicators of difference between whites and the Chinese. As discussed earlier in this chapter, a museum is a place where differences are articulated and realized in a visual way, and in most cases, the differences refer to those between Europeans and non-Europeans. The beautification of Chinatown in Vancouver that took place from the late 1960s clearly exemplifies this. The development of Chinatown was to follow the picture of authentic Chinese culture created by white society with a great emphasis on the visual aspects. Chinatown had to be preserved without blending into the landscape of the rest of the City. Distance between whites and the Chinese became even more pronounced by presenting it to the society in a visualized way.

The beautification of Chinatown focuses on the external appearance. Kalman's statement is a good example. He remarks that the exterior of buildings, which is directly exposed to the public, had to follow specific regulations, whereas the interior was not the subject of such regulations unless a building was used for public purposes (1973, p. 74). The exterior of buildings and signage gained greater attention than anything else in Chinatown, and this was the focus for enhancing the exotic atmosphere of Chinatown. This example indicates
that the visualization of "Chineseness" matters only when it is exposed to the eyes of white society, serving as evidence that the visualization is indeed done for the pleasure and enjoyment of whites.

In the process of beautification, it seems that Chinatown was detached from the characteristics of people who belonged there. It is fair to say that the beautification of Chinatown was accomplished in a way that reflects European tastes in exoticism and authenticity; i.e., authenticity produced in their own imagination. However, it did not reflect the changes of the Chinese community that took place alongside the transformation of Chinatown. Chao (1971) indicates that dress, food, and customs of the Chinese in Canada began to show the influence of Western culture by the 1930s and 1940s (pp. 73-4). The beautification of Chinatown, however, does not incorporate such changes.

It is important to note that the development and preservation of Chinatown conflict with each other. By erasing unpleasant images of Chinatown of the past and giving it a more cultural character, Chinatown rapidly became a historic space in Vancouver society. Despite the fact that Chinatown was perceived as a ghetto in the past, this was now an important area of the City because of its "historical" and "cultural" characteristics that now enriched society. The beautification of Chinatown was carried out based on the belief that Chinatown had to be "preserved" in a way that could give a sense of retrospective and history to white society. This conflicts with the notion of the future-oriented progress of society, on which Western societies had developed. The development of Chinatown had to be achieved without losing the "traditional Chinese" atmosphere. And "traditional Chinese" suggests wide, unbridgeable differences between whites and the Chinese. The new images of Chinatown became less associated with those of the contemporary Chinese in Vancouver as a result of the
beautification schemes. Chinatown was taken away from the Chinese by white society without their consent and moulded into what whites wanted to believe was “Chinese.”

What is the outcome of beautification of Chinatown, then? As discussed in the previous chapter, Canadian society started to express cultural differences supported by the official policy of multiculturalism. The attempt to make Chinatown culturally distinctive is, after all, confirming the status of Chinatown as “Other” in society. The words used to describe Chinatown today have less negative connotations compared to the past because of multiculturalism and society’s changing consciousness about differences between groups in society. However, Chinatown is still an object that is presented as an expression of diversity within society, and diversity can exist only when there are boundaries that demarcate each group. Mitchell (1988) points out that possession of a space of “Others” and keeping it a space of “Others” help to create a stable identity of a modern city because it can serve as a point of reference to project what its identity is by comparing to what it is not (p. 165). Vancouver’s Chinatown indeed fulfills this function of producing a concrete identity of Vancouver by presenting itself as a symbol of diversity. Keeping Chinatown as a distinctive space in the city full of exotic atmosphere is a reflection of Vancouver’s own statement of what it is not.

4.6 Chinatown: The Present and Future

In closing this chapter, I will indicate that Chinatown’s status as a museum has been embraced by the Chinese community. I will specifically focus on the involvement of the Chinese Cultural Centre to bring up this point. The Chinese Cultural Centre was founded in 1973 with the financial support from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and its goals were to promote and communicate Chinese culture, and to increase understanding of
the Chinese community in Canada (Chinese Cultural Centre, 1993). The Chinese Cultural Centre today consists of five main parts, and among which, I will discuss two of them here as the examples of the Chinese cultural representation by the Chinese community for whites.

The first example is the complex of the Museum and Archives, which opened to the public in 1998. The building of the Museum and Archives “is reminiscent of the architecture of the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644) with its tiled and curving roof” (Museum and Archives Chinese Cultural Centre, n.d.). It needs to be mentioned that the architectural style flourished in the period of the Ming Dynasty has no relevance to any members of today’s Chinese community in Vancouver. Therefore, it does not reflect their culture or experience.

The second example is the Sun Yat-sen Garden whose construction was announced in 1983. This garden also followed the style that developed in the Ming Dynasty era. Not only the garden was built in the style that members of today’s Chinese community could not identify with, but also the materials used for the construction of the garden were fabricated in China and then brought to Vancouver to increase its “authenticity” (Chinese Cultural Centre, 1993).

It seems clear that the Chinese Cultural Centre in fact promotes Chinatown as a place to visit where one can see and experience “exotic” and “authentic” Chinese culture. It should be mentioned, though, that the governments’ involvement as sponsors might have had an influence on the decisions made by the Chinese Cultural Centre to some extent. However, whatever political pressures may exist, the Chinese Cultural Centre functions as a major promter of Chinese culture to the wider Vancouver society today.

As Chinatown strengthened its character as a museum, the departure of the Chinese community from it became more obvious. To the current Chinese community, the indifference of the younger generation to Chinatown is a serious concern for its future. The
less young people of Chinese ancestry become interested in Chinatown, the wider the emotional distance grows between them and Chinatown. Such concern is reflected in an attempt to bring young Chinese back to the community and to Chinatown. For example, the former Chinese Cultural Centre Chairman S. Wah Leung announced in 1983 that he would make a donation to award scholarships to outstanding young Chinese Cultural Centre volunteers in the hope of attracting more young Chinese to the Chinese Cultural Centre and to Chinatown (Chinese Cultural Centre, 1983, p. 17). Another example is the creation of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) Youth Network in 2003. The VCRC was formed in 2001 with the goal of bringing together groups in Chinatown, and the Youth Network was set up to increase the involvement of the youth in this project (The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee Youth Network, 2003). These examples indicate that the separation of the Chinese community and Chinatown has come to the point that efforts to reconnect the Chinese to Chinatown need to be made.
Conclusion

The Chinese have existed in Canada for more than a century, and it seems that the flow of Chinese immigrants to this country will not be stemmed in the near future. In spite of a relatively long history of immigration, the Chinese have never been able to escape from the status of “Other” in Canadian society. However, the way in which the Chinese are objectified has changed over time. Explicit discussions of racial difference are now avoided; whereas cultural differences are employed more often now than ever before to express Canada’s social diversity. It is important to note, however, that the Chinese remain an object of differentiation in contrast to whites because of their cultural distinctiveness imposed by the policy of multiculturalism. In conclusion, I hope to draw attention to the ways in which multiculturalism reinforces distinctions between “Us” and “Others.”

Chinese immigration to Canada can be divided into several phases. What characterize each phase are Canada’s political and social attitudes towards Chinese immigration, which has been reflected in the form of legislation. From the first Chinese settlement to the introduction of the head taxes, the Chinese were allowed into Canada with relatively little difficulty. There was demand for Chinese workers as cheap labour to help build the infrastructure in Canadian society. For example, a number of Chinese workers were recruited to construct the CPR in the late 19th century.

However, the phase of restriction and exclusion, characterized by successive head taxes and the Chinese Immigration Act, followed after the completion of the CPR in 1885. During this time period, the Chinese predominantly existed in British Columbia (Wickberg, 1982, p. 79). Now that the CPR was completed, to satisfy the requirement for British
Columbia to join Confederation, the Chinese became unwanted people in society. In British Columbia, the goal was to create a British colony dominated by whites and, there was simply no room for the Chinese. As contract workers, the Chinese faced the needs of finding new job opportunities after the completion of the CPR. To fill such a need, the Chinese began to show signs of occupational and geographical mobility causing increased contact with white society (Li, 1998, pp. 51-3). Therefore, the fear and uneasy feelings towards the Chinese were inflamed as the Chinese gradually encroached on the realm of whites. The Chinese became a threatening population that needed to be strictly controlled.

The Chinese Immigration Act can be regarded as an extreme form of hostility aimed at not only the Chinese who could potentially immigrate to Canada, but also the Chinese already living in Canada. Canadian society embraced strong characteristics of European colonialism; it was whites who were entitled to rule the society. Because of the strong influences of colonialism, Canadian society was constructed around the European social norms and values. Canadian society was created for whites to allow them the power and to ensure their status as the privileged. On the other hand, differences based on racial difference, non-whites as a whole were polarized by whites as a group that could not access the same privileges. The visual difference of races became a label that distinguished non-whites from whites.

The Chinese were perceived as an obstacle to achieving the status of a British colony, so the ban imposed on Chinese immigration was implemented in the hope of eradicating the Chinese population from Canada. Besides racial difference, differences of culture between whites and the Chinese were also interpreted to reinforce the perception of Chinese as “Other” in society. In the minds of white society, cultural differences of the Chinese were projected as backwardness, implying their incapability of achieving the standards of European social norms and values, hence their lack of ability to assimilate into Canadian society. For this reason, the
existence of the Chinese in Canada was regarded as a danger that might hinder the
development of society.

The Chinese Immigration Act severely damaged the Chinese community by
diminishing its population size. Early Chinese immigrants were predominately males,
reflecting the gendered characteristics of jobs that were available. Moreover, these Chinese
workers intended to return to China once they accumulated enough wealth — they did not
plan to settle in Canada and raise a family, which explains the male dominance of the Chinese
community. Also, the immigration regulations imposed on the Chinese and hostile social
attitudes aimed at them made it difficult for them to bring their families from China. For this
reason, the families of these early Chinese immigrants were often geographically separated
between Canada and China, creating significantly imbalanced sex ratios in the Chinese
149). To ban Chinese immigration meant not only to stop new Chinese immigrants from
coming to Canada, but also to assail the natural population growth of Canada’s Chinese
community.

Canada’s Chinese community experienced serious gender imbalances until the 1960s.
The family reunification program helped improve the imbalanced sex ratios (Anderson, 1991,
p. 99), by adding a number of females and youth to the Chinese community, who could
contribute to the growth of the Canadian-born Chinese. Although there were some restrictions,
such as the age restriction of unmarried children eligible for the family reunification program
(Hawkins, 1972, p. 90), geographically separated family members of early Chinese
immigrants were finally united in Canada. The Chinese community then began to experience
internal diversification in terms of its demographic structure.
This diversification in fact changed the way the Chinese community had been constructed since the early 20th century. The political and social structures that had been integrating the Chinese community were based on traditional voluntary organizations (Wickberg, 1982). They provided assistance for their members, offered job opportunities, and became the link between the Chinese community in Canada and China. For the Chinese, who were institutionally and systemically excluded from Canadian society, traditional voluntary organizations were the only political and social structures that they could turn to. They were the needle around which the community was thread. On the one hand these organizations filled the role of a much needed support system; on the other hand they also imposed a social hierarchy based on one’s economic affluence (Crissman, 1967, p. 199; Skinner, 1977, pp. 543, 547-53; Wickberg, 1994, pp. 73-5). The consequence generated by such a situation was the dual structure of social stratification that the majority of the Chinese community had to endure: as “Other” in the wider Canadian society, and as poor within the Chinese community.

The influential status of traditional voluntary organizations eventually declined as the Chinese community began to grow diverse and heterogeneous. These traditional voluntary organizations were historically developed to serve a relatively homogeneous group that shared relatively similar experiences. However, as the Chinese community grew more diverse inside, the demands and needs also became more complex. Satisfying one group of the Chinese community was not enough to fill other groups’ needs; the appeal of traditional voluntary organizations for the Chinese community was thus eroded.

The diversification of the Chinese community and the decline of traditional voluntary organizations further accelerated in the last phase of Chinese immigration, which was characterized by the new immigration policies and their revisions in the 1960s, and the
introduction of multiculturalism in the early 1970s. It is probably fair to say that this last phase determined the direction of the Chinese community’s development.

New political and immigration changes meant that the Canadian government allowed the Chinese to legally enter Canada as independent immigrants without sponsors. The criteria that these new Chinese immigrants had to meet became the very characteristics that differentiated them from Chinese immigrants in the past. Many post 1967 Chinese immigrants had a high level of education, qualifications for skilled occupations, and the experience of living in urbanized — and to some extent Westernized — environments prior to immigration: They had little in common with the Chinese immigrants of the past. Moreover, what set these two types of Chinese immigrants apart was their places of origin. The southern region of China used to be the major source of Chinese immigration before the exclusion era; therefore, the Chinese who came to Canada as part of the family reunification program were mostly from this area, too (Li, 1998, pp. 95-6). Hong Kong, however, quickly took over the position of the largest Chinese immigration source when the British and Chinese governments started negotiation on the authority over Hong Kong in the middle of the 1980s. This picture was in turn changed by the end of the 20th century, elevating the northern part of Mainland China to the status of largest Chinese immigration source.

The diversification of the Chinese community becomes even more relevant when we look at the recent geographical dispersion of the Chinese in Vancouver. The Chinese, who used to be collectively confined to the areas of Chinatown and Strathcona, can be found in almost every residential area in and around Vancouver today. That is not to say that such a geographical dispersion of the Chinese population has occurred evenly, however. The older generation of Chinese immigrants tended to remain close to Chinatown; whereas the new
generation of Chinese immigrants seems to have a strong preference for choosing residential areas away from Chinatown and in the suburbs (Chiang, 2001, pp. 137, 206-7; Hiebert, 2000, 1998; Ley, 1998). As a result, new Chinese centres have been created, such as Richmond, and more Chinese residents are beginning to relocate themselves closer to these areas.

This suggests that the Chinese still have a strong tendency to concentrate in particular areas to create ethnic enclaves. The finding from research by Balakrishnan and Hou (1999) indicates that in general visible minority groups are more likely to show residential concentration than white population groups, and this implies that the racial difference remains as a boundary between whites and non-whites. The difference between the Chinese settlement patterns of the past and present is that the residential areas that recent Chinese immigrants have been choosing are suburban neighbourhoods which historically hosted residents of middle-class European backgrounds. These neighbourhoods were historically identified based on both social class and racial meanings. The question of Chinese residents' in these areas was perceived by white residents as a sign that non-whites were trying to cross the boundary between the two groups.

This became a root of heated controversy known as the "monster house" incident in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Rose, 2001). The claims made by the long-term residents in the areas, most of whom were of European origins, were framed in a discussion of cultural differences. These new Chinese residents were accused of building their houses in a way that did not match the landscape of the neighbourhood, hence causing the destruction of already established images of the neighbourhood and lifestyles associated to the area (Ley, 1998, pp. 336-9; Rose, 2001, p. 476). In short, the Chinese have still been central to social conflicts. Interestingly, the point emphasized throughout this controversy was the "cultural" differences these new Chinese residents brought with them to these established neighbourhoods. The
growing opposition against racism in society discourages one to discuss and express social
issues in racial terms (Thobani, 2000, p. 295), as the monster house incident exemplifies.
However, the fact that multiculturalism is an official policy of Canada allows room for using
cultural terms instead of racial terms to claim that the long-term residents, too, have legitimate
rights to protect their culture that they have nurtured in their neighbourhoods. In this way,
cultural difference can become a useful tool to draw boundaries between whites and non-
whites.

In other words, multiculturalism can function as a strategy to maintain differences
between “Us” and “Others.” In addition, the maintained boundary between whites and non-
whites allows the cultures of non-whites to be an object of consumption and exploitation. This
can be exemplified in the case of the beautification of Vancouver’s Chinatown. Chinatown in
the past was a space that was marked and stigmatized by the racial difference of the Chinese;
now it is a culturally significant space. The beautification of Chinatown was perceived as an
ideal plan to preserve “distinctive” Chinese culture in society, which otherwise might have
disappeared because of the strong influence of British and French cultures. This view alone
suggests the unequal status of Chinese culture: Chinese culture was something that needed to
be protected. The beautification of Chinatown started in the late 1960s through initiatives
made by the City of Vancouver. Replacing Chinatown’s unpleasant images of a ghetto —
which were indeed the creation of discriminatory treatment of the Chinese by whites — with
pleasant, exotic, and intriguing images putting a strong emphasis on visually attractive features
of Chinese culture, and in fact served white society in two different ways. First, the view of
Chinatown in Vancouver became the sign of Canadian society’s accepting attitude towards the
Chinese and their culture. Second, beautified Chinatown offered whites an orientalized space
where they could entertain themselves by experiencing something extraordinary without travelling vast distances (Okihiro, 2002).

In this thesis, I approached Chinatown by looking at it as a museum of Chinese culture aimed at white consumption. To explain this point, I drew upon theory of the museum as a public arena in which cultures of “Others” are represented to “Us.” The history of museum exhibition is the history of the objectification of “Others” in Western societies (Baxandall, 1991, p. 39; Macdonald, 1998, p. 11). In Vancouver, this was made possible because the realms of “Chinesness” appeared extraordinary, exotic, and interesting to whites. What they found in the setting of the museum was something they could not encounter or experience in their everyday life context. Seeking excitement outside of their ordinary lives led to the rise of tourism, especially in post war Western societies. In the growth of tourism, people started to travel to places where they could now experience such excitement rather than bringing objects to their realm in order to display them (Urry, 2002, p. 2). Such trends also modified the concept of the museum from a confined space to a more open space with no physical boundaries as the term “museums without walls” suggests (Malraux, 1953).

Vancouver’s Chinatown became a “museum without walls” as a result of the City’s beautification initiative. Through multiculturalism, cultural differences became of great importance in Canadian society. In order to express such cultural differences between whites and the Chinese, beautification was promoted by adding visually distinctive features of Chinese culture to Chinatown. And the features of Chinese culture that were highlighted were decided by the City to suit Euro-Canadian tastes. As I mentioned in the last chapter of this thesis, some parts of Chinatown are not genuinely the production of Chinese culture alone, but the creation of both Western and Chinese cultures. Because of strong emphasis on the visual
aspects, however, Chinatown is still "Chinese" to whites. The beautification of Chinatown was not for the Chinese, but for whites who would enjoy consuming cultural differences.

Such manipulation of culture was possible because of the persistent dichotomization of "Us" and "Others" created through the history of colonialism. Because these two groups are not supposed to mix together, "Others" became a mysterious, exotic entity from the perspective of "Us." Because of unequal power distribution, "Others" and their cultures became something that could be used to satisfy white curiosity in the concepts of museums and tourism, leading to cultural exploitation. The concept of "museums without walls" and the promotion of tourism allowed the cultural exploitation of "Others" in their own setting; although displayed objects stay on the site, their meanings can be changed or distorted when some modifications are added to the objects in order to appear more attractive to the eyes of consumers. Changing culture involves taking it away from the people who it belongs to (Greenwood, 1989, p. 179), and this is exactly what happened in Vancouver’s Chinatown. As a space of "Other,” Chinatown does not belong to whites in a real sense; at the same time, it no longer belongs to the Chinese, either, because the space was reconstructed by whites from their own perspectives and for their own purposes.

Who is responsible for Chinatown’s future if it does not belong to anyone?

Chinatowns all over the world are called “Chinatowns” because they are located outside of China. And it is impossible for them to be completely free from the influences of the societies in which they exist. Vancouver’s Chinatown is no exception. Although the Chinese are an old group in the history of immigration to Canada, they built their community in a social space that had already been structured by whites. From this perspective, it is natural for Chinatown to differ from what whites imagined as being Chinese. However, Vancouver society has desperately pursued “authentic” and “traditional” atmospheres in Chinatown based on their
own imagination (The City of Vancouver, 1964). This implies that Vancouver can not accept Chinatown as a space that was influenced by cultures of both Euro-Canadians and Chinese. Because Chinese culture is culture that belongs to “Other,” Chinatown as a form of cultural representation has to explicitly express what makes it different from European culture. This is evidence of Chinatown’s denied status as a part of Vancouver society.
Bibliography

*Exhibiting cultures: The poetics and politics of museum display* (pp. 25-32). 

origin and spread of nationalism* (pp. 163-185). London: Verso.

Anderson, K. J. (1991). *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial discourse in Canada, 1875- 


residential patterns of immigrant groups in Canada. *Population Research and 

ethnic groups: Significance and policy implications. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 
35(1):* 113-134.

culturally purposeful objects. In Karp & S. D. Lavine (Eds.), *Exhibiting cultures: The 
poetics and politics of museum display* (pp. 33-41). Washington and London: 
Smithsonian Institution Press.

BC Statistics. (2000). *B.C. immigration by area of last permanent residence: January to 
December, 1999.* Retrieved on August 15, 2004 from 


The Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee Youth Network. (2003). *Choosing*


