MEDIA IMAGE OF IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA FROM 1995 TO 2012

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Abstract: Canada's public immigration discourse is usually racialized in using an ideological framework to evaluate, select and make judgements of immigrants on whether they are culturally, socially, or economically desirable to Canada. Some social and economic affairs may present a discursive context for debates over different ethnic immigrant groups and their value to Canada. By analyzing news discussions on immigration in Canada's national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* in four historical phases after 9/11, this study examines how the contents of "desirable immigrants" get changed in history. This study questions whether some social political affairs in a country can change the social boundaries of exclusion for immigrants of certain racial and ethnic backgrounds and allow more direct and exclusionary racial messages to be expressed in the discourse. The findings indicate that during economic recessions, it is more acceptable for the media and the public to express more directly racist messages about non-white immigrants, and some political factors and major social events may also influence how different ethnic groups of immigrants can be socially constructed. While a liberal democratic country like Canada may not accept overt racial discrimination, I argue that a social crisis or economic recession can change the social boundaries of exclusion for immigrants of certain racial and ethnic backgrounds and justify using more blatant racial messages in discussing immigrants.

Key words: media discourse; democratic racism; immigration; discourse analysis

From 1995 to 2012, the Canadian government focused on framing immigration in terms of Canada's benefits and the security of its social and cultural boundaries. There was an ongoing shift in the supply of immigrants from traditional sources such as the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and the United States, compared to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Public concerns about Canadian border security and monitoring of the influx of immigrants aroused a lot of discussions in the news discourse during this phase.

1.1 Historical review and immigration policy in this phase

In the phase from 1995 to 2012, the Liberal Party remained the majority holder of seats in the Parliament until 2006 when Stephen Harper, who represented the right-leaning parties in Canada, became the prime minister. Prime Minister Jean Chretien's government, from 1993 to 2003, improved a healthy Canadian economy, including elimination of the deficit and created a budget surplus for five years. In 2003, Paul Martin became the new prime minister, and the Liberal Party continued to be the majority government for the following three years. In 2003, two political parties, the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservatives merged into the Conservative Party of Canada, which won the 2006 election and ended a 13-year division of the conservative vote (Riendeau, 2007). During Stephen Harper's leadership, Canada and the United States made an agreement to strengthen security along the Canada-United States border. From 2002 to 2011, Canada was involved in the Afghanistan War (ibid).

The major immigration policy changes in this phase included a new Act (the 2001 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act) and new regulations (the 2002 immigration regulations). The 2001 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act clearly distinguishes between regular immigration and refugee protection (Li, 2003: 26). It sets out the general framework and empowers the governor-in-council to make regulations pertaining to immigration and refugee matters. The admissible classes of immigrants in the 2001 Act were the economic class, the family class, and the refugee category. Immigrants to Canada had to fall into at least one of these three classes, and the country would not accept anyone that exhibited security, criminal, health, or financial problems (Kelley and Trebilcock: 425). The focuses of this Act are "to permit Canada to pursue the maximum social, cultural and economic benefits of immigration" and "to enrich and strengthen the social and cultural fabric of Canadian society" (Li, 2003: 26; Statutes of Canada, 2001: c. 27, s. 3.1). There is a strong emphasis in the Act to "frame immigration in terms of Canada's benefits and economic benefits to Canada" (Li, 2003: 26). The amendment of immigration regulations in 2002 provides further classifications within the economic class of immigrants, which include skilled immigrants, business immigrants (including the self-employed, investors, and entrepreneurs) and provincial or territorial nominees. It assigns more weight to educational and occupational factors in the selection of economic immigrants. Specifically, to assess skilled immigrants, 25 points were given to educational background, 24 points to official language fluency, and 21 points to their previous occupational experiences. To assess business immigrants, the same points were given to educational background and knowledge of an official language, with the only difference being that more weight (35 points) was given to the applicant's previous business background (Li, 2003: 39-41). It is clear that the selection of economic immigrants

in this phase stressed human capital, with significant emphasis put on educational and occupational qualifications and official language ability, especially for business immigrants.

On the other hand, each year the government made decisions about immigration levels for the different admissible classes, including levels for refugees sponsored by the government and private groups (Kelley and Trebilcock, 2010: 395). Over the turn of the twentieth century, the focus of Canadian immigration changed from a highly selective policy to one that gave more consideration to humanitarian concerns (Beach, Green & Reitz-Wilson: 2003: 139). According to Kelley and Trebilcock (2010: 379), there was a large influx of refugees from non-traditional source countries since the late 1980s. The annual number of received refugees reached its peak in 1989 at 36,745, making up 19 per cent of total immigrants admitted that year, and declined to 11,801 in 1993, or 4.6 per cent of the total admitted (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000). The inflow of the refugees was designated to come from three sources in 1979: the Indo-Chinese, the Eastern European Self-Exiled Persons, and the Latin American Political Prisoners and Oppressed Persons (Kelley and Trebilcock: 396).

According to Kelley and Trebilcock, many commentators called for a radical change in immigration policy, including "a lowering of annual admission, stricter selection criteria, and a much more restrictive approach to refugee admissions" (2010: 417-418). After tightening up the admission grounds for refugees and immigrants in the 2001 Act (Kelley and Trebilcock, 2010: 425), the government published new immigration regulations to further update the point system in June, 2002 (Canada Gazette, Part II, vol. 136, no. 9, pp. 1-149). The regulations applied more restrictive criteria in order to select skilled workers and economic immigrants with greater emphasis on their human capital.

The changes in the 2001 Act and 2002 regulations reflect some concerns from several national studies and public debates since 1994. A national immigration consultation first launched by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Sergio Marchi, in 1994 laid the grounds for many immigration changes in the 21st century. For example, the 1994 consultation discussed a number of issues that interested the public including concerns over the economic performance of immigrants, immigration integration costs, refugee admission, and border security controls (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1994a). According to the results of consultations, "a greater share of immigrants will be selected on the basis of their ability to contribute to Canada's economic and social development, reducing demand on integration services" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1994b). Subsequently 4 areas of concern were reflected in the immigration policy changes that appeared in the 2001 Act and 2002 regulations.

First of all, the consultations with federal officials reflected a definite support to the business program in the immigration policy in recent years (CIC, 1994a: 65). But the report from the consultations indicated that

"the provinces, the public and department officials all suggested for improvement to the business program that the federal government should better monitor and scrutinize the investments to ensure specific long-term benefits" (ibid). In fact, a tightening of controls over the inflow of economic immigrants can be found as early as the 1993 amendments to Immigration Regulations. These amendments put immigrant investors into the Business Immigration Program separately, and applied strict controls about how investment capital was to be organized (Order-in-Council, 1993-1626, cited in Li, 2003: 28). According to the 1993 amendments, the investor immigrants with a successful business background had to invest a minimum amount ranging from $250,000 to $500,000 in the "active business operations of eligible business", which created or continued employment for Canadian citizens or permanent residents (ibid). Specifically, the business operations had to show a visible economic development and regional prosperity in Canada, and the total assets of the business could not exceed $350,000,000 (ibid, section 6.2.1). In 1999, the federal government made further amendments to the Business Immigration Program that raised the investor's required minimum net worth as well as the amount of investment, which would have to remain locked for five years (Order-in-Council, 1999-525, cited in Li, 2003: 28). Therefore, the 2001 Act tightened up the criteria of admission for the economic class, and it showed a stronger preference for young, highly skilled workers as potential immigrants (Kelley and Trebilcock: 429). The point system was then updated in the 2002 regulations with more emphasis on potential immigrants' "general training and experience, proficiency in English or French, youth, and post-secondary education" (ibid).

In terms of the family class of immigration, the 1994 national immigration consultations showed that family reunification was "essential for the stability" (CIC, 1994a: 27), and some argued "without a family support system, it is more difficult for the immigrant or any of the family members to become economically self-sufficient" (ibid, 29). So the immigration policy continued to provide priority to spouses and dependent children. But many public discussions indicated doubts about whether the economic contributions of family-sponsored immigrants amounted to the same benefit as that of independent immigrants. And there was also a discussion in the immigration consultations about the definition of extended family according to other cultures (CIC, 1994b). It suggested that the traditional definition of family had changed and there was a need to account for such situations as single parent families (ibid, 11). And in some other cultures, closely tied family members might also include extended family members rather than a traditional Canadian family unit, composed of father, mother, and children (ibid). For these reasons, the 2001 Act expanded the range of those who could be sponsored by family members in Canada, but the financial requirements of eligible sponsors were still strict (Kelley and Trebilcock, 2010: 425).

Security concerns were also reflected in the in 2001 Act as it was designed to stop criminals and illegal immigrants from getting into the country (Kelley and Trebilcock, 2010: 425). In the summer of 1999, four ships of Chinese migrants landed on the coast of British Columbia and aroused attentions to illegal entries. According to Kelley and Trebilcock (2010: 458), the public reaction to these unauthorized arrivals illustrated a willingness to further restrict the entry of immigrants in order to enhance Canadian border-security and the public safety. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 reinforced these concerns and led to direct reactions to the unauthorized arrivals of immigrants and the removal of suspected security threats from Canada (ibid).

1.2 Media Discussions on Immigration in this Phase

During this phase, the unemployment rate first dropped from 11.4 per cent in 1993 to 6.8 per cent in 2000. Then the unemployment rate hovered around 6 and 7 per cent until it climbed up again to 8.3 per cent in 2009. In general, the unemployment rate remained at a lower level compared to the previous phase, from 1979 to 1994. Although the lowest unemployment rate of the phase was in 2000, the sample news articles were selected for 1999. One reason is that there were a lot of articles about the ships carrying the illegal immigrants from China in 1999. The other consideration was to include a sample year that also reflected the public's opinions in the 90s. Another sample year selected from this phase was 2009, when the unemployment rate reached its peak before 2012. In total, there were 528 articles selected.

Despite the very different national and international contexts within which immigration in this phase was discussed, the range of problems attributed to immigrants is quite similar. In general, news discourses on immigration during this phase focused on three central topics: economic returns of immigrants, diversity and multiculturalism, and security issues. These topics addressed different aspects of the public's concerns regarding the costs and benefits of immigrants in Canada. The first topic about economic returns of immigrants mainly discussed the economic performance of business immigrants and skilled immigrants that had arrived since the 1980s. Business immigrants were assessed in terms of the specific capital investment they brought and its productivity. Skilled immigrants were evaluated in terms of how successful they applied their skills and knowledge in the labour market.

The second topic about diversity and multiculturalism was stirred up mainly because of the increased numbers of immigrants of visible minority origins in Canada. For example, between 1981 and 1996, the number of visible minorities was more than doubled in three major Canadian cities, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver (Hou and Picot, 2003: 537). Visible minorities also continuously made up the majority of the annual immigrants that arrived after the 90s. According to Kelley and Trebilcock (2010: 418),

In 1990, over 50 per cent of new arrivals came from Asia and the Middle East, and the percentage increased to 58 per cent by 2006, with the largest source countries being China (15 per cent) and India (12 per cent).

On the other hand, the annual number of European immigrants continued to decline from 25 per cent in 1990 to about 16 per cent in 2007 (ibid).

In this phase, news articles on diversity were often discussed together with multiculturalism. The multiculturalism policy was first introduced by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in the House of Commons on Oct. 8, 1971 (Li, 1999), and the policy was further formalized in the Multiculturalism Act in 1988. The concept of *multiculturalism* has been used descriptively, as a matter of multi-ethnic groups co-existing in the society, and normatively, as an ideology with an emphasis on the social value of many cultures brought together through immigration. According to Li (1999: 149), Canada usually treated the term *multiculturalism* as a concept synonymous with "Canadian pluralism", as opposed to *"assimilationism"*, but both concepts were ambiguous. The term *multiculturalism* is clear when it is used to describe the heterogeneous ethnic compositions in Canada as a result of increased immigration from non-European source countries since the 1970s (ibid). Therefore, the public discourse gradually associated the term *multiculturalism* with a larger proportion of non-European immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and Africa. On the other hand, besides referring to Canada's demographic reality, the term *multiculturalism* can also refer to social changes brought by the diverse ethnic and racial composition of immigrants that is characterized by many different religious traditions and cultural backgrounds that co-existed in Canadian society (ibid). And some critics said these social changes were undesirable: for example, the divisiveness of cultural diversity might influence the national unity. Therefore, many discourses adopted the concept of multiculturalism as a democratic value to promote equality and to combat racial discrimination. In other words, multiculturalism became a normative standard of interpretation to the diversity in Canadian society.

In general, news discussions about diversity tended to put an emphasis on the effect of divisiveness of cultural diversity brought by non-white immigrants to Canadian society. The standards of evaluation were usually based on the European tradition and cultural traits. For example, there was a column in 2009 named "Report on Diversity". Some discussions in the column focus on the undesirable social changes aroused by the diverse population. The column expresses worries about the threat of European cultural loss due to co-existing diverse cultures. The context often implies that the cultural diversity brought in by non-white immigrants was weakening the cultural character and social cohesion of Canada. In this sense, *diversity* usually became a

codified concept in the news discourse to refer to undesirable differences of population as well as changes they brought to the society.

The third topic in the news discourse at this phase was about security concerns from the public. The landing of undocumented immigrants in British Columbia in 1999 prompted many discussions over illegal entries. These unexpected Chinese migrants were described in news articles as smugglers taking advantage of Canada's generous refugee system (*The Globe and Mail*, July 22, 1999). This issue caused some sensational responses from the public. Many articles with this topic implied a weak border control and refugee system in Canada. Then the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) especially aroused serious border and security concerns among the public. Many discussions asked the government to apply stricter policies to carefully monitor the inflow of new arrivals. News discussions on this topic often assumed that security problems were related to ethnic immigrants and refugees. For example, visible minorities, such as Asian and African were usually the main targets for discussions about criminal activities, such as illegal entry, gang activity, or prostitution (*The Globe and Mail*, Jan. 11, 1999; Feb. 10, 1999; July 22, 1999; etc.).

According to Henry et al. (2000), economic, social and political uncertainty, whether real or perceived, often arouse fear of threat within the dominant cultural group. Some scholars name it as "moral panic" (Cohen 1972; Husbands, 1994; Hall et al. 1978). The feeling of such moral panic would make the group members think the moral order was under threat (Hier and Greenberg 2002:140). In fact, according to Hier and Greenberg (2002), mass media were the main force constructing moral panic or "discursive crisis" to problematize certain groups of people. After a moral panic had been created in a society, it was usually more socially acceptable to express direct racial ideas about ethnic groups. For example, refugees were often viewed as less valuable to Canada and as potential security risks (*The Globe and Mail*, May 7, 1999a; ibid, May 7, 1999b). One article describes Kosovo refugees as criminals and the other article concerns the security and health threat they may bring to Canada.

As displaced families from Kosovo started to arrive in Canada this week, Ottawa's approach to newcomers… The Calgary Sun put out the welcome mat for the refugees, but at the same time expressed its displeasure with the federal government for allowing so many criminals to come into Canada as immigrants. (May 7, 1999a)

How's their health? Do they pose a threat to Canadian security? Well, it depends. … It is likely that they will bring violence and ethnic conflict to Canada and, if they choose to stay here, … It's true that many of the refugees have suffered privation, terror, poor nutrition and exposure to unsanitary living conditions, the combination of which could have jeopardized their health. (May 7, 1999b)

Therefore, news media often used some social events to create a sense of insecurity, also as the 1999 summer Chinese "boat people", or the 9/11 event, and problematized some ethnic groups of immigrants, such as those from Kosovo (May 7, 1999) or Pakistan (May 24, 1999), as though they brought a threat to Canada's security.

At this phase, the media discussions showed that when the unemployment rate was high, news articles frequently blamed it on immigrants' poor performance in the labour market. The news discourse tried to conclude that the recent decline of immigrants' labour market performance was "the result of the change in the countries of origin and skills of immigrants as more of them were from Asia, Africa, and Latin America" (Wilson, 2003: 126). Although the cultural features of immigrants from these non-traditional regions were viewed as "diverse" to Canada's society, the tone was usually unpleasant when referring to the social changes brought by cultural diversity. However, although the economic environment was in fact quite good as indicated by the low unemployment rates, non-white immigrants were still viewed as undesirable in many discussions (*The Globe and Mail*, Jan. 1, 1999; May 24, 1999; etc.) One reason is that the political events usually created the moral panic in the public and consequently influenced the media portrayals of certain groups of people.

Therefore, news articles from this phase show that besides economic factors, certain social and political factors could also influence how the media viewed the "desirableness" of immigrants. Another example of such social factors was the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003. Because of the sample years in this phase, there were no articles that talked about this health incident specifically, but some articles mentioned that Canada had to apply careful health checks to prospective immigrants before their arrival (*The Globe and Mail*, July 8, 2009). According to Li (2009), the health concern was triggered by SARS in Canada. It was estimated that "between March and June, more than 1,000 articles were published on SARS in the national newspaper in Canada" (2009: 16). Specifically, the health panic among the public led to some harsh responses toward the Chinese community in Toronto. Many news articles very directly used racialized words to implicate Chinese immigrants during that time (ibid). Therefore, the analysis of news articles also considered the social and political influences upon the media discussion besides the economic factors in this phase.

1.2.1 Media discussions on economic returns

The economic benefits of immigrants were usually hotly debated in the media discourse in Canada, and this phase was the same. News discussions kept focusing on the economic performance of immigrants that had arrived since the 80s and 90s. Since the admission categories of immigration were "premised on bureaucratic decisions based on regulatory admission criteria" (Li, 2003: 40), economic class immigrants were granted admission if they fulfilled the labour market selection criteria. In other words, economic class immigrants were

accepted because they brought certain human capital or investment capital to meet the labour market needs. The expectations contained in the news discourse of this economic class, especially business and skilled immigrants, were such that "they are deemed to bring a greater economic value to Canada than those admitted under family class or the refugee class" (Li, 2003: 43).

The discourse firstly described a slowdown in the direct investment and a decline in human capital growth in general during this phase. Then, some news articles evaluated the economic performance of business immigrants and that of skilled immigrants separately in different economic situations. When the unemployment rate remained low in 1999, news articles viewed business immigrants as if they did not make any significant contributions, and just came to exchange their investment capital for citizenship. When the unemployment rate rose in 2009, some articles especially focused on the labour force productivity, and mentioned that skilled immigrants from non-traditional regions, such as Asia and Africa, usually experienced serious underemployment (*The Globe and Mail*, July 25, 2009; Sept. 11, 2009; Nov. 24, 2009).

1.2.1.1 Business immigrants

News article discussions about business immigrants included self-employed immigrants, investors, and entrepreneurs. The news discourse showed very contradictory opinions toward business immigrants when the economic situation changed in this phase. In 1999, when the unemployment rate remained low, the news discourse generally ignored the contributions made by business immigrants and reiterated that Canada needed immigrants including business immigrants with better human capital.

According to Li (2003: 29), a large proportion of business immigrants to Canada have been from Asia. From the entire period from 1985 to 2000, business immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan accounted for 33 per cent and 15 per cent respectively (ibid). In 1989 a student movement in China triggered a sudden increase in immigrants from mainland China (Wang & Lo, 2004: 5). According to Wang and Lo's working paper on Chinese immigrants and their settlement in Canada (2004), a steady flow of mainland Chinese, mainly professionals and skilled workers, had been arriving in Canada in the 1990s when China tried to be accepted into the WTO and the Chinese government eliminated most of the restrictions on the exit of Chinese citizens. The number of business immigrants from mainland China had also increased in the 1990s. In the news discourse in this phase, the term business immigrants usually referred to Chinese immigrants.

Business immigrants were viewed as desirable in the previous phase because of the expected economic value they were deemed to bring to Canada. However, in the news discourse at this phase, business immigrants became less desirable. They were mainly blamed for two problems. The first was their lack of fluency in official

languages since most of them were from Asian countries. And the second was that they were suspected to use capital to acquire citizenship and were not effective in contributing to Canada's economy.

For example, a Front Page article, entitled "Ottawa wants immigrants with better educations", expressed concerns about the language problems of business immigrants:

Immigrants should be better educated and increasingly flexible when coming to Canada. ... The proposals were introduced by Citizenship and Immigration Minister Lucienne Robillard yesterday. ... And her department plans to modify its system of selecting immigrants by focusing more on education and experience than on occupation. ...

To meet the new requirements of a labour market that changes every day, the qualifications required do not remain the same. ... [There is] a proposal requiring business immigrants and investors to speak English or French. About half of the entrepreneur immigrants and two-thirds of the investor immigrants do not speak one of the official languages, the proposal contends. (Jan. 7, 1999a)

The above quotation argues that Canada needed better-educated immigrants due to the changing labour market. The article suggests that the different economic situation asked for better qualifications of immigrants. And the article especially mentions a proposal that asked for business immigrants having better language skills because most of them did not speak one of the official languages of Canada. Language skill was part of the human capital in the selection criteria applied to other types of immigrants such as skilled immigrants. But business immigrants were mainly admitted based on their previous business background and an investment guarantee so their educational background was usually not included in the criteria for admission. Gradually, the difference in the selective focus applied to business immigrants as opposed to skilled immigrants provided an excuse for changes that suggested business immigrants were usually lacking in certain human capital such as language ability. In this sense, the news discourse focused on business immigrants' lack of certain educational qualifications.

In the same day, The Globe and Mail also published a letter to the editor supporting the idea in the proposal that suggested more selective requirements be applied to the business immigrants. It said:

Entrepreneurs and Investors who enter Canada because of the money they bring sometimes dump the money here and run, getting their Canadian citizenship as a reward. It would be better, as the government has acknowledged, if these would-be arrivals had demonstrated some entrepreneurial ability back home rather than just arriving with bags of dough. (Jan. 7, 1999c)

The quotation from this letter indicates that some members of the public viewed business immigrants as undesirable too. There is a sense that business immigrants just brought capital but did not start any business as expected when Canada admitted them.

On Jan. 23, 1999, an editorial article was published in the newspaper to argue the same issue again. The editor says that,

Investor-class immigrants will be required to have some English proficiency before they arrive. ... The federal government moved to impose the offshore-assets disclosure law to those had offshore business. By 2001, Canadians with more than $100,000 offshore will have to declare those assets, which if you still have most of your money in Asia, will work against you.

In all three examples, the news discourse does not mention the positive contributions made by the business immigrants. Rather, this article agrees with the previous proposal to require business immigrants to speak one of the official languages before they came. The quotation indicates an even stricter policy should apply to their offshore assets. These discourses display a belief that business immigrants would invest only a certain amount of capital to get their citizenship while keeping most of their business in Asia. Therefore, the news descriptions did not see business immigrants as desirable, but took the view that they spoke the official languages poorly and did not demonstrate their true business abilities in Canada.

However, when the unemployment rate rose, the news discourse changed its attitude and started to claim that investment from business immigrants could create more employment opportunities. For example, one article in the Jan. 13, 2009 edition, mentions an economic recession in Canada, but it also reports that Chinese immigrants had the highest investment income. The article says,

Chinese Canadians have a higher rate of investment income than the general population, and more immigrants have investment income than have non-immigrants, new census figures reveal. The findings ... underscore that most immigrants do well over time in Canada, and that Chinese Canadians do exceptionally well. Canada's South Asian and Chinese populations are similar in size and have similar total earnings, but Chinese have 2.5 times more in investment income. "The nature of Canada's mosaic has shifted, and now the Chinese community is moving to the top of the triangle, by virtue of their investment income and mobility amongst the second generation," said Jack Jedwab, executive director of the Association for Canadian Studies. "More Chinese came to Canada with funds during the past couple of decades." ... Other visible minority groups fall below the national average. ... Chinese Canadians are also enthusiastic investors. On average, 4.3 per cent of the total income of all Canadians is investment income -- defined as interest from bonds, deposits in banks and

trust companies, dividends from stocks and mutual funds, and rents from real estate. However, 6 per cent of the total earnings of Chinese Canadians ($26 billion) is investment income, while for South Asians it is 2.7 per cent.

This article is a report regarding the 2006 census date. It confirms that Chinese immigrants brought capital investment in the recent decades and that they were successful investors. The data show that immigrants had higher investment income than non-immigrants, and Chinese immigrants especially had much higher investment income than other visible minority groups. The context also suggests that under the same conditions, Chinese immigrants were more willing to make investment. In this regard, Canada welcomed Chinese immigrants because they were making significant economic contributions to Canada. Since Canada also experienced a global economic recession at this phase, Chinese immigrants did not received blame at least in terms of their economic contributions to Canada. However, this does not mean Canada removed all racist ideas about the Chinese. This will be further discussed in the section regarding diversity. The generous news descriptions of Chinese investors only prove that media discourse in Canada defined the value of desirableness of immigrants solely based on how Canada could benefit from their presence.

1.2.1.2 Skilled immigrants

Due to the policy of selecting immigrants with abundant human capital since the 1960s there was an accumulation of skilled immigrants with good human capital in the labour market since then. Discussions of skilled immigrants in this phase especially addressed the issue of skilled immigrants' underemployment. Some articles claimed that Canada did not make full use of the human capital of skilled immigrants. And there were many other articles indicating that the immigrants' previous experience and educational qualification were usually not recognized in Canada after their arrival. Moreover, the term *skilled immigrants* was frequently used in the media discourse at this phase in such a way that the context created an image of non-white immigrants that were usually without decent jobs or employment after arrival, as the quotation below shows. Although they were originally admitted because of their human capital qualifications, the discourse implied that Canada did not actually benefit from their skills or human capital as expected.

For example, on May 24, 1999, one article entitled "Given us your highly educated: but there's no guarantee of a job in their field" was highlighted on the front page and went on report in the business section. It says,

Canada, a nation worried about its "brain drain," is letting his brain go to waste. A veterinarian in his native India, Mr. Gupta says he came to Canada two years ago because he was led to believe he'd be able to do the same work here. Instead, he's working as a telemarketer, watching as his two university-age children pile up

student loans. ... Mr. Gupta says he can't afford, on his present salary, the cost of the exam that will allow him to work as a veterinarian here. "Immigrants coming to this country are all highly qualified people," he said. "So many engineers are forced to do factory work. So many qualified doctors distribute pizza. This is a loss of talent." His story is not unique. Canada, a nation of immigrants, is no longer integrating the 200,000 yearly arrivals into the job market as well as it once did, even though they are better educated than ever. ... The education level of these immigrants flies in the face of conventional wisdom that education is the key to advancement in North America: 36 per cent of the recent male immigrants had a university degree in 1996, as did 31 per cent of the immigrant women. A decade before, 31 per cent of immigrant men and a quarter of women had university degrees. Bob Bray, employment unit manager at the International Center in Winnipeg, said much of the drop in employment levels can be blamed on the recession of the early 1990s. ... The numbers also show that higher education levels haven't helped immigrants move up any quicker into more stable employment. "In many ways, Canada's economic environment is getting less friendly," Mr. Bray said. "The more education they have, the harder it is to find a job." Recent immigrants are actually better educated than Canadian-born workers.

The above quotation indicates that the labour market in Canada did not recognize skilled immigrants' educational qualifications if they were earned in their source countries. And the higher education levels of immigrants did little to help them find stable employment or to be promoted any faster. This part of the article does not provide specific reasons for these phenomena, but describes many stories about skilled immigrants after their arrival. The article continues in the following pages where it mentions that visible minorities were usually hard-pressed to find a job:

And language likely isn't the problem. ... In 1993, the federal government tightened immigration regulations so as to put more emphasis on education and language skills. They also made it harder for landed immigrants to bring family members into the county. This policy ... favours professionals who worked as doctors, dentists or engineers in their native countries. A PhD, for instance, gives the prospective immigrant 16 of the 70 points necessary to qualify as an independent immigrant. ... Often, their degrees aren't transferable, or they are prevented from practicing their professions by the provincial regulatory bodies. ... It's tough for an immigrant to come into a country and find a job when their qualifications aren't recognized. And there's a perhaps more troubling statistic in the census figures. Immigrants who are visible minorities earn roughly two-thirds of the salary earned by white immigrants. Men who identified themselves in the 1996 census as both recent immigrants and visible minorities earned an average of $22,600 in the preceding year. Women who fell into the same categories earned an average of $16,300. Both those numbers were down from the 1986 census. ...

The 1996 census revealed that for the first time, less than half of Canada's immigrant population -- which includes anyone born outside the country -- is of European birth. There are nearly two-and-a-half times as many people living in Canada now that were born in Asia as were born in the British Isles. ... Worst off are visible minorities, particularly those from West Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Vietnam. "They are overrepresented among the poor," concluded the report, which was based on data from the 1991 census. "The poverty they experience in Canada is close to what they have had in their home countries."

This part of the article illustrates how non-white skilled immigrants experienced underemployed at this phase. The article argues that language was not the reason for their underemployment. The quotation also points out that skilled immigrants were selected by strict education and language standards, but non-white skilled immigrants' educational qualifications were usually not recognized or transferable in the labour market. So they could only work as general labourers in Canada, which led to lower income. Based on the 1996 census, the article roughly compares the immigrants' earnings and shows that visible minorities received over 30 per cent less income than white immigrants. By implication, the context suggests that the ethnic background of immigrants had some negative effects on their economic returns in Canada.

Moreover, the article mentions that the existing population of non-European immigrants had exceeded those of British and European origins according to the 1996 census. And the numbers of Asians in the immigrant population had outnumbered those with British origins. The article also indicates that non-white immigrants experienced similar poverty in Canada as they did in their source countries. Based on the article, the data in the 1991 census showed that visible immigrants from West Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Vietnam were overrepresented among the poor people in Canada. The discourse argues that Canada's immigration point system awarded points for skills that wouldn't be recognized on non-white immigrants' arrival. Thus, the subtext implies that visible minorities brought in poverty instead of valuable skills that Canada needed. In this way, although more non-white immigrants came as skilled immigrants at this phase, the discourse rather attributes an image of poverty to them. Consequently, the term *skilled immigrants* indeed referred to non-white skilled immigrants in the discourse.

1.2.2 Media discussions on "diversity"

Canada became demographically more diverse as a result of large numbers of immigrants with different cultural and racial backgrounds since the late 1960s (Li, 2003: 124). Media discussions about diversity were basically concerned with social changes aroused by the increased number of non-white immigrants in the

society. There were several ways to describe the diversity of Canada in the news discourse. The first one was to measure Canada's diversity in relationship to the two charter groups: the British and the French. This way of explanation was usually adopted to discuss the diverse composition of Canada's population. The second way was to enlist the concept of diversity when it discussed the multiculturalism in Canada. The term is usually used as a trichotomy to characterize a multicultural Canada other than bilingualism and biculturalism. The third way was to discuss Canada's diversity in terms of "cultural diversity" (Li, 2003: 125-128). It mainly referred to the different values and cultural habits that non-European immigrants are believed to have brought to Canada.

Major topics in the news discussions were about the cultural security and social cohesion due to the challenge from increased diversity in Canada. According to news media, "increased diversity" meant the increasing numbers of non-white immigrants. Thus typical examples include non-white immigrants' congregation in large cities such as Vancouver and Toronto, the tendency of visible minorities to congregate in the same ethnic neighbourhoods, heavy demands on the school systems due to large numbers of immigrant children not speaking one of the official languages, and other ethnic activities that were believed to undermine Canada's traditional values and heritage. In this way, diversity became a coded concept in the discourse to imply the social changes brought by non-white immigrants. But some of the changes happened at a rapid rate and had changed the face of Canada that then became uncomfortable to many long time residents.

1.2.3 Media discussions on security issues

According to Li (2003: 180), Canada designed a system "to select the best-qualified immigrants and to keep out the pauperized mass of asylum seekers." The unequal economic and social values were usually placed on immigrants depending on whether they were seen as "selected" or "self-selected" (Li, 2003: 40). For example, those admitted under the family class or the refugee class were granted admission on the grounds of close family ties or humanitarian considerations. Therefore, they were viewed as not having met the labour market selection criteria applied to economic immigrants that they must have either human capital or investment capital to help Canada's economy. In this regard, family-class immigrants and refugees were less desirable for they were unsolicited and had limited human capital to be able to contribute to the economic value of Canada.

However, an advanced capitalist country like Canada could not refuse to admit those "less valued" immigrants for humanitarian reasons and only drain the highly trained immigrants from other regions of the world. According to Li (2003: 6), as of 1995, 23 million refugees were estimated to have arrived in Canada, and the number increased to 25 million in 1998 and that was 14 per cent of total inflow of immigrants that year (ibid). And there was a noticeable decline in the admission of family-class immigrants in the late 1990s (Li, 2003: 40). Whether driven by political factors, economic forces, or family reunion purposes, people seek entry to

highly developed countries that can offer better economic opportunities and life conditions (Li, 2003:6-7). When more refugees or undocumented immigrants arrived, the news articles focused a lot on the security issue especially at this phase.

Media discussion on the topic of security during this phase frequently focused on crime-related issues involving recent immigrants, for example, illegal entry, human smuggling of some ethnic groups of immigrants, previous criminal records of refugees, and faked documents used for immigration applications. Moreover, the news media often interwove immigrants' race and ethnicity into stories of activities that seemed to have potential security risks to the society.

For example, one article entitled "Ottawa Wants Better-Educated Immigrants", mentions that Canada was faced with illegitimate refugee applications. It says,

To meet the new requirements of a labour market that changes every day, the qualifications required do not remain the same....The government also plans to make it tougher for illegitimate refugee claimants to apply. For example, claimants who are rejected and then return to the country to make another claim in front of the Immigration and Refugee Board would be barred from doing so. The government also plans to make it easier to deport an individual who has committed a serious crime by removing a level of appeal. (*The Globe and Mail*, Jan. 7, 1999b)

An editorial article published in the section of opinion and editorial on the same day discusses the same issue. The editor says,

There also are a series of measures -- most of them defensible -- to try to stop criminals and other undesirables from entering Canada and, if they do get there, to get them out of the country. This may be easier said than done, since the Supreme Court has ruled that even a convicted drug dealer can apply for refugee status. Especially notorious are the smuggling rings and the clearly fraudulent refugees whose documentation mysteriously disappears once they have boarded an airplane. (The Globe and Mail, Jan. 7, 1999c)

The first quotation emphasizes that Canada had to pay more attention to the illegitimate refugee claimants. It implies a more strict policy, and suggests that any individual would be deported if convicted of criminal activities. It also indicates new government efforts to limit illegal immigration. And such initiatives were also to ensure no undesirable outcomes would affect Canada's economic and societal balance. The second article reiterates this idea, and further connects criminal-related terms like *drug dealer*, *smuggling ring*, and *fraudulent refugees* with newcomers. With such descriptions, the context implies that refugees were highly undesirable because they might cause security problems after arrival.

After the 9/11 event, security became the top concern in Canada. News reports frequently connected potential security risks with immigrants. For example, one article entitled "Flight blocked from U.S. airspace for carrying terror suspect" in the June 27, 2009, reports that a terrorism suspect was an immigrant from Morocco. It says,

U.S. authorities ordered a flight carrying a man accused of ties to terrorism from Fredericton to Montreal to turn around mid-air earlier this month. Adil Charkaoui who spent two years in jail despite not being convicted of any crime under Canada's security certificate program, was flying back to Montreal on June 3 when U.S. authorities refused to clear his Air Canada flight through American airspace. The flight turned around, and Mr. Charkaoui was asked to get off. Mr. Charkaoui, a landed immigrant from Morocco, was arrested in 2003. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service alleges he is an al-Qaeda sympathizer. He is no longer in jail, but faces strict conditions and monitoring.

Based on the above quotation, Mr. Charkaoui was a terrorist suspect. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service alleged this landed immigrant from Morocco was an al-Qaeda sympathizer. Since the term *al-Qaeda* became very sensitive when referring to terrorists after the 9/11 event, such a description would arouse great concerns from the public on the border-security issue. And Mr. Charkaoui was also refused permission to cross the border and fly through American airspace. So the context implies that Canada's border policy may have been too lenient, and Canada might have been made use of as a "gateway" for more illegal immigrants to the U.S. Moreover, because the article also mentions the ethnic origin of this immigrant, it helped the public to draw a quick connection that people from this region might bring security risks to Canada. This type of discourse uses some *trigger terms* such as *al-Qaeda* to arouse attention from the public about illegal immigrants and other criminal issues.

1.2.3.1 Refugees

Many articles also discussed refugee claimants, and argued that many illegal or undocumented immigrants came by refugee policy. Many discussions viewed political refugees, conventional refugees, and refugees from religious persecution as another security risk to Canada. The news discussions made them seem eager to enter into a highly developed country like Canada because of an expectation of a secured economic life. However, there were articles discussing the economic and employment status of refugees and arguing that most of the refugee immigrants had difficulty finding jobs or even regaining the same economic status as they had in their countries of origin. For example, one article published on May 24, 1999, talks about a refugee family suffering religious persecution:

The jubilation Anwar and Mubashira Khawaja felt when they came to Canada five years ago has gradually turned to despair. The pair, doctors in their native Pakistan, were elated when they and their three sons were accepted as refugees from the religious persecution they faced as members of the Ahmadiyah sect of Islam. Today, they're contemplating returning to Pakistan. Although they might face persecution there, at least they would be able to practice medicine. ...

"We think again and again that we should move back to our country." Mr. Khawaja said, "If I move back now, I have a full-fledged hospital and patients. Here I have nothing." He and his family have been living off welfare and the small income he's earned as an occasional security guard and telemarketer. It's quite a culture shock for a family that lived in a government house with servants and a chauffeured car in Pakistan.

The fact that both of these Pakistani doctors could not find jobs in a related area in Canada illustrates that it was very difficult for such refugees to realize their economic expectations in the destination country. By implication, it also shows that this type of immigrant had little value to Canada. Since Canada considered immigrants as desirable when they had economic value and would not add social and financial burden to the society, refugees clearly did not belong the desirable category of immigrants for Canada.

The discourse in articles that discussed conventional refugees also did not show optimistic expectations. For example, one article, published on July 18, 2009, describes conventional refugees from Bhutan:

Seven Western countries agreed to accept the Bhutanese after years of talks between Bhutan and Nepal ended in stalemate. ... In Canada, the Bhutanese are to be settled in nearly 30 communities from Newfoundland to B.C. Eventually, about 900 refugees will move to Coquitlam, just outside Vancouver. ... The Nepalese and Bhutanese community in Canada is tiny. Coquitlam Mayor Richard Stewart compared the Bhutanese refugees to Wild West pioneers, landing in a strange country with little English, few job skills and even fewer relatives and friends. Many of the younger refugees were born and raised in a camp. ... They face a raft of challenges. Most of the adults come from farming backgrounds and have only a high-school education. Some have spent their entire adult lives in a refugee camp and have no work experience. ... The biggest shock is sure to be cultural. The Bhutanese are moving from a near-primitive rural setting to a fast-paced modern city. Light switches, flush toilets, refrigerators - even chilled food and drinks - are as foreign as cellphones and computers.

According to this article, the conventional refugees were usually from backward places such as developing regions in the world. For example, the refugees from Bhutan in this article were from an agricultural society, so they lacked higher education and also had no idea of the developed industrial world. Based on the quotation, people from there had little knowledge of English, no relatives and friends in Canada, and few job

skills or education because many of them were raised in a camp. So Canada had to provide a lot of supportive services to help them to settle before they could really contribute to society.

If the above examples do not say directly that Canada considered refugees as undesirable, the following examples use more blatant language to describe that they had little value to Canada, and added extra tensions to society. It seemed that the rising expectations from the less-developed regions in the world to seek better material conditions in developed countries could only lead to intensified border controls to keep out those considered to be undesirables. The term *refugee* also became a coded concept in the news discourse to refer to people from less developed regions that brought a lot of social burdens to the receiving society.

There was a column named "Refugees and Immigration" in the section of news in 2009. One article from this column on Nov. 4, 2009, argues that Canada should apply a more selective policy to refugee claimants due to increasing illegitimate claims. It says,

Canada's increasing selectivity with regard to refugee claimants, revealed in a recent report of the government to Parliament, should be seen in conjunction with other aspects of Canada's immigrant and refugee system. Canada is still an open and welcoming country, and the government is showing concern for refugees who are in the greatest danger. ... There are greater problems with immigrant and refugee adjudication and settlement. ... The refugee process continues to encourage illegitimate claims and interminable appeals. ... Canada rightly embraces immigrants who can make an economic contribution. ... Canada's intentions on immigrants and refugees, by and large, resonate with Canadian values. The difficult work of making the processes work for genuine claimants, and for Canadians as a whole, must continue.

Based on the above quotation, the article claims that the refugee program indeed encouraged a lot of illegitimate claims. So it argues that Canada should apply a more strict policy to select refugees. The article also emphasizes that Canada really wanted immigrants who could help the economy. By implication, refugees were not desirable immigrants for Canada since they couldn't bring any significant economic value to the country. The program also brought a lot of illegal immigrants to Canada.

According to Henry et al. (2000), a discourse about security issues is to emphasize and single out the primary source of danger. The news discourse usually constructed some groups of immigrants or refugees as "target groups" that would imperil national security (Broda, 2005). Gradually, by identifying and isolating the threat from certain groups of immigrants or refugees on the basis of source countries, the dominant society could construct a social boundary to those undesirable immigrants.

1.3 Conclusion

News articles in this phase indicated that the news discourse still viewed immigrants as desirable according to their cost and benefit to the society. Desirable immigrants were those who could bring human capital and other benefits to Canada, and undesirable immigrants were those who only brought problems to the society. First of all, their racial and ethnic backgrounds largely determined their desirableness to Canada. For example, although non-white business immigrants and skilled immigrants had brought investment capital and human capital into Canada, the discourse did not view them as desirable. There is substantial evidence to indicate that the value of immigrants was discounted or distorted in the immigration debates simply because of their ethnic origins. Moreover, the discourse attributed various social problems to the influx of recent immigrants based on the different cultural and racial backgrounds they brought into Canada's European tradition. Specifically, the news discourse at this phase especially questioned the growing cultural and racial diversity as though they would affect the social cohesion of Canada. In this regard, diversity was seen as "an undesirable social feature that recent non-white immigrants bring to Canada" (Li, 2003:140). Therefore, non-white immigrants were still unwanted since many of them were unable to find jobs and their cultural differences brought social changes to urban Canada that were unwanted.

Of course, the economic situation also influenced how the news discourse evaluated the exact cost and benefit of different racial groups coming as business or skilled immigrants. However, social and political factors had great impact on the evaluation of the desirableness of immigrants in terms of their cost and benefits to Canada when some discursive crisis happened in a society. For example, the economic influence was not significant in the discussions on security issues, particularly immigration's security risks, which aroused moral panic among the public. On the one hand, the label of *desirable immigrants to Canada* meant they were educated labourers or had capital investment to contribute to the country's economic development. On the other hand, Canada also had to ensure border control to keep out those who posed security threats to the country. So the immigration debates usually identified target groups as the undesirable immigrants that were perceived as dangerous and were subject to strict policies to monitor their access into the country (Kephart, 2005; Edwards, Jr. 2005; Broda, 2005). In this regard, the basic value standard in Canada's immigration was utilitarianism. And the standard for deciding which immigrants belonged to target groups who were perceived as either valueless or dangerous to Canada was always associated with the issue of race using the term *diversity* to represent it.

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