ABSTRACT

The history of Chinese immigration to Canada can be traced back to more than 150 years. Despite different historical contexts, early Chinese immigrants before/during World War II and recent Chinese immigrants after World War II, especially those since 1960s, have both encountered barriers in the process of social integration in the host country. Using the social exclusion theory, this paper challenges the traditional one-way approach to social integration — which focuses on the immigrants’ personal efforts in adapting to a new social environment — and instead, advocates a two-way approach to analyze Chinese immigrants’ social integration into the host country in the early and more recent times. By making comparisons between them in different social contexts, it is found that the difficulties in social integration are attributable to both the individual and structural barriers rather than personal insufficiency alone. Moreover, despite different manifestations at different times, the nature of and reasons for social exclusion remain the same. The underlying reason for domination-subordination relationship between the excluder and the excluded in different times is attributable to the self interests of the excluders.