**Split personality of an immigrant; "MULTICULTURAL VOICES"**

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Despite having a sizable population in major cities now, Korean immigrants to Canada just started moving there formally 50 years ago. South Korean immigration to Canada increased dramatically after the 1966 immigration rules amendment, going from a community of 70 people to approximately 20,000 by the year 1980.

In the decade that followed, there was a further migration, virtually tripling the Korean population in Canada. South Korean immigration to Canada increased throughout the 1990s, a period of high unemployment and subpar wage growth in Canada in comparison to the United States. Because the Canadian dollar is less than the American dollar, South Korean immigrants who bring money to Canada for investments will likely be more wealthy than those moving to the US. Domestic anti-American sentiment and the significant number of Canadian English instructors working in South Korea were further factors contributing to the rise in South Korean immigration to Canada. More than 200,000 Korean immigrants have settled in Canada today, creating one of the nation's most vibrant communities with expansion in all spheres of life: business, culture, history, and the arts. In reality, immigrants and relatively recent newcomers make up the bulk of the Korean community in Canada.

The majority of Koreans in Canada live in Toronto, where they have established a Koreatown filled with eateries, herb shops, acupuncture clinics, and stores selling imported goods from Seoul. However, Vancouver has seen the highest rate of growth in its Korean population, with a 69% increase since 1996. Shoppers can buy whatever they need in Vancouver's Koreatown, including kimchi refrigerators and rice cookers that play music when the rice is done. In the late 1990s, South Korea was the largest source of international students in Canada, which contributed to the spread of contemporary Korean culture throughout the West, including in music, film, and cuisine. Around this time, the hallyu, or Korean Wave, a phenomena known as Korean pop culture, started to develop a following on a global scale.

Like other Canadians, Korean Buddhists observe Buddha's birthday with a grand week-long festival of festivities that include vivid colours and joyful parades. It is a time to commemorate Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, and his birth, enlightenment, and demise. Buddhism is one of the two main faiths of South Korea, along with Christianity. Many temples offer free meals and tea to all visitors on the day of Buddha's birth, which falls on the first full moon day of the sixth month of the Buddhist lunar calendar. Breakfast and lunch are frequently served with sanchae bibimbap. Many of these customs are still practised outside of Korea, and this year, Korean Bhuddists in Canada will observe the holiday from May 15 to 21.

While community gatherings for the pleasure of feasts, music, and dancing are common across the country, official observances at temples remain the main focus of these celebrations. Yonah Martin's election as the first Korean Canadian to a federal position was a historical first. Martin campaigned as the Conservative candidate for New Westminster-Coquitlam in the 2008 federal election after more than 20 years as a teacher and a committed member of the community, however she was unsuccessful in capturing the seat. The Korean-born Vancouverite was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in December of the same year.