Immigration, Citizenship and Exclusion:
The Canadian Experience

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In a passage in *After Strange Gods* the Nobel laureate T. S. Eliot wrote that the population in England…

should be homogenous; where two or more cultures exist in the same place they are likely either to be fiercely self-conscious or both to become adulterate. What is still more important is unity of religious background; and reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of free-thinking Jews undesirable.¹

While it is undeniably true that the views Eliot offered his fellow countrymen in England in the 1930’s would be subjected to substantial criticism today, the enlightened age which we, like all of our predecessors did in their time, describe as our own certainly has its blind spots. The difference between Eliot’s views towards minorities — “freethinking Jews” in his case — and those prevailing in Western democracies of the late twentieth century does not lie in a unitarian concept of culture versus a heterogeneous one, nor between monoculturals and multiculturals, but rather who is excluded. The logic of discrimination thus proceeds in relative terms, according to which who is excluded from the community of nationals and citizens is a matter of time and place. As I will attempt to show in this article, the historical burden of citizenship and immigration legislation is that it, since its birth at the time of the French Revolution, has operated to exclude various groups, the purpose of which has been, and to some extent continues to be, to preserve a single cultural character of the nation.² This romantic notion can be seen clearly through an analysis of the historical accounts of citizenship and immigration in Canada.³

Citizenship has, in practice, been closely tied to immigration. Immigration policy regulates people’s movements into the borders of a nation. In order for one to become a member of a nation state, one normally needs to

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² This can also be related to the glue question that nations face. What does it take to hold a nation together? Different nation states adopt different models and place different priorities into what kind of glue is needed. The Canadian example here is just one example of what types of glue has been held as important.

³ Canada was also called British North America (BNA). However, the land was commonly called Canada and the people called Canadians. Therefore I have chosen to use the term Canada throughout the article.
have access to that state. Thus I will explore exclusion through the analysis of both citizenship and immigration policy.

This will be conducted through the examination of foreign ministry documents — speeches, memorandums, reports, council and conference minute and other related policy documents. However in the pre-confederation years, there is less such documentation and I have relied more on secondary sources.

Canada is a country which is currently praised as a model of multiculturalism, toleration and inclusion of many different types of groups. However, as I will illustrate, Canada has in its past and present purposefully excluded groups from membership based on such factors as gender, race, social status, geography, culture and ideology. Which groups have been excluded, and to what degree, have however changed over time.

This paper will provide a historical overview of the exclusionary elements of Canadian citizenship and immigration. It will also explore the rationales for the exclusion of specific groups, as well as their reasons for the inclusion of others. In essence this will be a preliminary inventory of the State’s reasons for who is selected, on what grounds and for what purpose. The cases and arguments presented in this paper are by no means exhaustive. They are meant to be a descriptive sketch suggesting areas in need of further investigation.

Early Nation-Building

The notion of citizenship is a fairly new concept — one which is generally assumed to have arisen out of the French and American Revolutions. It was at this time that subjecthood was replaced and a romantic concept of nation and people were born. Before this, individuals were subjects under a ruler and these rulers managed geographically determined territories. An individual’s birthplace determined to whom he was a subject. These rulers could in turn conquer new territories and gain or loose the subjects associated with the territory. With citizenship came a notion of membership and ethnocultural affinity to a community.

In the early years after the French revolution, in Canada, it is difficult to say what citizenship meant. Citizenship as we understand it today with its association to rights and obligations did not exist. For example, the right to

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4 The case of the natives people exclusion has not yet been integrated into this paper. They have, throughout Canadian history, been a kind of half citizen, at best. They are exempt from many responsibilities associated with citizenship, including paying taxes, and are thereby excluded from the rights that go along with them.
vote was only given to those who owned property and not linked to citizenship. The right to be elected to office was reserved only to Protestants, which excluded Francophones who were catholic. The only “right” Canadians had was the right to reside within the nations borders. In practice, this meant that a citizen could not be deported and had the right to leave and re-enter the nation to which he was a member.5

Moreover, Canada was a colony of Britain, which meant that its population continued to be called British Subjects at the same time that they were called citizens of the British Imperial Empire. In many ways Canadians remained part subjects and part citizens. This is especially true of the Francophone population, often referred to as Canadiens, who had became British subjects by conquest just a few decades earlier and remained so after the American revolution.6

After the conquest of 1760, “assimilation” of the Francophone population was the objective. But, the French would not easily assimilate. Furthermore, they embodied a significant portion of the population. Ethnocultural affinity was vital to the romantic notion of citizenship. Yet the Francophones and Anglophones had little cultural commonality. They did not share a religion, or a language, and were accustomed to two very different types of government. This was difficult for Britain and finally after years of attempts of trying to make the Francophones British, the government admitted defeat.

They recognized that the Canadiens were partly assimilated and that they were members of Canada and they did not want to loose a part of the self. At the same time, they did not want them to influence the English majority either. Therefore the Quebec Act was instated just a few weeks before the outbreak of the American Revolution.7 This allowed Francophones to have an authoritarian local government, the freedom to practice Catholicism and exclusive land rights up to and including the Ohio Valley.8 Historians have argued between two positions in regard to the significance of the Quebec Act. One position asserts that the Act prevented Canada from joining in the American Revolution. The other asserts that it was one of the catalysts of the

5 I would contend that this is probably the lowest common denominator of citizenship.
6 Prior to the conquest of 1760, both Francophones and Anglophones were called Canadians. After the conquest the Francophones were to as the Canadiens, distinguishing them from their Anglophone counterparts. P.W. Bennett & C.J. Jaenen. Emerging Identities: Selected Readings and Interpretations in Canadian History. Scarborough: Prentice Hall. 1986.
revolution. But, regardless of the position, most acknowledge that the intent of the Act was to keep the Francophone population from revolting from the crown and/or demanding changes to the British system of government. At the time, the passage of the Act was not a decision to become multicultural, but a way of keeping the rest of Canada from changing and maintaining the romantic notion of the British self in Canada.

The Indian Act, which reserved land specifically for the use of natives, separated them for the “citizens” as to prevent natives from influencing Canada. Natives were excluded from citizenship, and according to native treaty, were separate nations. But, from the Canadian state's perspective they were not a separate nation, they were not even persons. The hope was that they would eventually become extinct.

Part of the early romantic notion of citizenship entailed the systematic exclusion of certain groups of people from membership. Those who were perceived as possessing undesirable characteristics were excluded. Those who were not deemed as persons — women, slaves and natives — were automatically excluded and by far the most significant when it came to sheer numbers. Moreover, those who were culturally different from the mainstream — Blacks, and Jews were also not permitted citizenship.9 Only Protestants could hold elected positions, despite the fact that the Francophone Canadiens were Catholics. In fact, in the beginning there were more “uncitizens” than citizens.

Those who were citizens of other countries were deemed as aliens. So alien and different were they that they could not to be trusted. In recognition of this, in 1793, the Alien Act was instated which “provided for the registration of aliens, restrictions on their movements within the country and their deportation, if necessary”.10 The concern was that the mere presence of these aliens could “subvert” and change the face and character of the citizens and this type of “subversion” had to be prevented.

Furthermore, the introduction of the law required that all persons born in “enemy” or “enemy-occupied” territory who wished to naturalize would have to have a certificate from the secretary of state attesting that they were “well affected towards the crown”.11 The law was expanded to all those wishing to naturalize, not only those born on enemy territory, thus ensuring

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9 In France, Protestants were not permitted citizenship.
11 Francophone Canadiens never had to show their affection to the crown, as they had been absorbed through conquest and became British subjects in 1760. Even with the rise of
that all new citizens would be assimilated before entering the exclusive circle of citizenship.

To ensure that those who were not fully assimilated would never have a strong power to affect the citizen population, laws were in place to prevent naturalized citizens from having full political rights, for example sitting in parliament or on Privy Council.¹²

Francophones, as they were culturally, linguistically and religiously different from the norm of their British anglophone leaders, were also given only partial political rights. This ensured that the British character of the nation would remain untouched. Although, the Francophones and Anglophones shared the nation, there was a romantic effort to ensure that no Francophone ever held a position of power in the nation as a whole, nor the empire.

In these early years of nation building in Canada, there were tiers of citizenship, with differences between the English, the French and the naturalized citizen. Along with this tier system, in the romantic fashion of the time, the concept of a Canadian who held a certain set of religious, cultural and racial characteristics was born. Anyone who was seen as not holding, and upholding, these were thus systematically excluded from the exclusive club of citizenship.

*Loyalty to the Crown*

After American independence, Americans became the undesired. Canada was a British colony and England was determined that it would stay that way. There was a fear that the United States could invade Canada, or that the American presence might encourage Canadians to seek independence as well. Only those loyal to England were welcome. Since Americans had chosen to be independent, they could not come back to Britain, through Canada. The conflicts between Britain and the United States in the War of 1812 just made these anti-American sentiments stronger. After all, a part of being Canadian meant being loyal to the crown.

Since there was no real way to prevent Americans from wandering into Canada, the government decided to place restrictions on them. All Americans were required to have seven years of residence before owning property in Canada.¹³ The assumption was that if Americans did wander into Canada, after seven years they would repent for their sin of seeking independence, be

¹² This was in effect until the Naturalization Act of 1870.
assimilated and then be worthy of holding property. At the same time, it was encouragement for Americans who were unwilling to repent to wander back over the border, or not to wander in at all. Traitors were not welcome.

With the mass migration from Europe to North America between 1815 to 1850, mostly due to poor agricultural conditions and famine, Britain wanted to insure the loyalty of its colony. In 1832 alone, 66,000 people migrated and by 1850 the population of Upper Canada had reached one million. During this period of mass migration approximately 800,000 British and Irish migrated to Canada and almost 100,000 to the Atlantic region. At the time when continental Europeans were migrating in mass numbers to North America, very few came to Canada. I contend that this was part of a strategy to ensure Canada’s loyalty to Britain. British trade routes were set up primarily to the Atlantic provinces – the most susceptible to joining America. Agents in Britain and Ireland offered migrants both state and charitable allowances for people to move to Canada, but only after they pledged allegiance to the crown. At the same time, British subjects who were well affected to the crown were given land and travel grants. Boats carrying raw materials like timber would carry mostly poor labourers under their decks and the few slightly wealthier in small cabins above the deck. Encouraging the imperial loyalist immigrant, and at the same time excluding all others, ensured a single cultural character of the nation.

During the period of mass European migration to North America, all new citizens had to pledge allegiance to the crown. Loyalty to Britain was an ingredient in the glue that held Canadians together. All those who potentially would not be loyal to Britain were excluded.

Transmission

In 1867, with confederation, Canada became a nation and with it, new rules and legislation. The most significant was the Naturalization Act of 1870 which granted full political rights to naturalized citizens. However, long-term residence restrictions or crown service were required before citizenship was granted in order to ensure assimilation. If the immigrant was considered to be

16 The most common argument has been that Britain was simply trying to get rid of its problems by sending the poor to Canada – a part of the Elizabethan poor laws. See K. McNaught. The History of Canada Toronto: Bellhaven House. 1970.
undesirable or not sufficiently assimilated, the Home Secretary could grant and revoke citizenship as he saw fit.17

The act further adapted the rule of *jus sanguis* to deny citizenship to children born of a naturalized father abroad. Since the father was a naturalized citizen there was a chance he could not fully transmit the values, ideology and culture held by the citizen population to the child, especially while living amongst aliens. There was a risk the child would not hold the characteristics desirable of the citizen and thus citizenship was not granted.

Women were by far, the most affected by this new act. Under the act, women who married foreign citizens lost their citizenship. At the time, women, particularly married women, were not seen as independent individuals but malleable properties of their husbands. It was assumed that a wife would hold the ideologies and views of her husband. Under this kind of patriarchal thinking, a woman married to a foreigner would inevitably be an alien not only in citizenship, but culturally, and thus would not be desired for citizenship.

Moreover, it might also be assumed that the culture and allegiance of the head of the household, the man, would be passed on to the children. Thus the children and wife would be not only the property of the man but also the subject of his allegiances, ideologies and citizenship. The law prevented the inclusion of those who would be different from being a part of the citizen population, even if this meant making women, who were once a part of the self, stateless.

**Race and Religion**

With confederation, the government placed priority in the expansion of the population to cover a larger geographical area. With a less segregated people, the nation and the citizens could be more united. The symbolic construction of the railways, which will be discussed later, is often sighted as one of the most significant in terms of this type of conscious nation building. However, migration and immigration policy also served the interests of the nation.

After strategic planning meetings, it was decided that recruiting agents would be placed in locations that would attract desirable immigrants. British citizens were encouraged to proceed to British Dominion’s like Canada, instead of other foreign countries. Anglo-Saxon commonwealth citizens — those from Britain, Ireland, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa — faced no entry restrictions to Canada. Furthermore, they were openly
encouraged to migrate to Canada, with offers of farmland in the prairies and travel subsidies.\textsuperscript{18} However, it was difficult to get the “desired” people to migrate to the prairies and the few that did settled in Ontario.

Canada expanded its search to non-commonwealth European countries. It attempted to send agents to Norway, but with resistance from the Norwegian authorities, they soon dropped the idea of Scandinavian immigrants. Other countries such as Belgium or France were avoided as not to add any more Francophones, nor Catholics, to the population.\textsuperscript{19}

Canada managed to place recruiting agents in the Netherlands, Iceland and the Ukraine. In 1875 a few Icelandic and Mennonite farmers moved to Manitoba and became prosperous in the wheat boom. But when the boom ended just before world war one, most of the western prairies remained, more or less, empty.

\textit{Human Commodities}

The building of the Trans-Canada railway linking the east and the west sides of the country has been generally assumed to be one of the most ambitious attempts at conscious nation building. With the threat of the expansion of the United States into Canada, the railway would hold the vast land mass together and would potentially bring new towns along its lines. Thus potentially eliminating frontiers that could be easily take over by American migrants.

Building the railway was, however, costly and dangerous, especially through the mountainous west. Finding labourers who were willing handle lethal charges of dynamite was a difficult task.

As a solution the government decided to import “coolie workers” who would be willing accept these condition.\textsuperscript{20} These Chinese and Japanese labourers were considered good workers and as they tended to be smaller, and could creep into small spaces in order to blow out the mountain passages. However, to prevent too many of these workers from migrating, a head tax was placed on the Chinese as early as 1885. At the request of the Canadian government, the Japanese government agreed to self-regulate themselves as not to allow more than a few hundred workers a year to migrate to Canada.

\textsuperscript{20} “Coolie workers” was a derogatory term used to describe Chinese, Japanese and to a limited extent Indian labourers with low skills.
All of the workers had to be strong, healthy men willing to work and go home with their winnings. They were merely meant to be guests.

More significantly, these labourers were considered expendable. Men were asked to volunteer for dangerous tasks with empty promises that their wives and children would be brought to Canada, were they to survive. Hundreds of lives were lost blasting through just the Selkirk Mountains – one of many in the western cordillera – the majority of them Asian workers. Injured coolie workers were for the most part left in remote areas. Some died in the mountains, but others settled in the new railroad towns. Descendants of these guest labourers are today considered to be some of Canada’s oldest immigrants.21

The opening of immigration to Japanese and Chinese workers, was not a change to the previous one-race, one-culture policy. It was simply a matter of economics. These workers were not a part of the nation, they were not meant to be citizens, and moreover they were barely considered persons, but rather expendable commodities.

Self-migration

When the gold rush began — Canada needed labour and for the labourer Canada meant prosperity. Subsidies were granted for Canadians moving west and north looking for gold.22 At the same time, repatriation subsidies were granted for Canadians living in the United States who wished to move back to Canada.

The gold rush was, in fact, perfect timing for the government who enacted the subsidies in an attempt to mobilize its own people to cover a larger portion of Canada. The idea was that Canadians, should live throughout the country – not just along the Saint Lawrence River and definitely not in the United States. During the gold rushed years, a significant amount of Canadians, returned from the States and new communities were established in British Columbia and the Yukon, strengthening the notion of a single nation covering a large land mass.

However the area between British Columbia and Ontario was still empty. Again, the government offered subsidies for Canadians to move to the prairies. But, few Canadians were willing to relocate. Instead, in 1911, the

21 In 1999, the Canadian government released a series of commissioned TV commercials to advertise Canada’s history as part of its multicultural nation building project. One such commercial, shows a Chinese worker being bribed to enter a canyon with a bottle of liquid explosive. The canyon explodes and the foreman sigh and says, “there goes another one”. A few seconds later the man emerges from the canyon alive. A text says: our heritage, a part of our history
government reaffirmed its position to encourage “British Imperial Citizens” to move to the Dominion. This time, they targeted entrepreneurs with offers of cheap timber, mineral and mining rights.23

Anglo-Saxon

During this time, when the government was actively recruiting immigrants from the commonwealth, there were strong restrictions of entry from citizens of non-Anglo-Saxon commonwealth countries such as India and Malta. Both lobbied to become “full citizens of the Empire” which would mean the removal of immigration restrictions.24 Even with the need for people, Canada upheld Canada a vision of a white Anglo-Saxon nation.

Finally, after over 20 years of lobbying, a very limited number of East Indians were permitted to immigrate to Canada. As a requirement these immigrants would have to prove that they were “loyal British subjects and of good moral character.”25 This ensured that these new immigrants would be culturally, religiously and as close to the British identity as possible. Furthermore, these immigrants would not be permitted to sponsor their families to join them. The admission of these Indians was not really a change in the one race policy as the numbers were too small to be significant. But rather they were a gesture to India that they were a part of the Empire and not of a lower priority than the Asian coolie workers.

Throughout the First World War, and during the inter-war years, almost all immigration from everywhere but the Anglo-Saxon commonwealth was stopped.26 In fact, between 1936 and 1939 there was not even a single external affairs immigration document — no negotiation of treaties and no memos on the subject what so ever.27

Enemies, customs, race

After the First World War, Canadian nationalism was strong. Canada placed a formal ban of all immigration of enemies based on “race or

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nationality” in 1919. No German, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian or Turkish immigrants were permitted entry, irrespective of the country they applied for entry from, during the inter-war years. Those carrying the cultural or physical traits of the enemy were undesirable and excluded.

Furthermore a few months later, Doukhobors, Hutterites and Mennonites were also banned from landing, but not because they were enemies. By an order in council, they were “deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living and methods of holding property and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after entry”.

They were excluded for cultural differences. At the turn of the century, Canada had allowed a few hundred immigrants per year into Canada – most were coolie workers and a handful of merchants. In the beginning the restriction was described as economic. “it was not the question of race, but of maintaining a certain economic standard of our industrial population.” Those who did not meet the economic standard – young, healthy, strong men willing to work for low wages - were rejected and sent home. As the railway expansion slowed down, and the war broke out, Asian immigration was practically halted.

Nevertheless, the visibility of these Asian’s increased and by the mid-1920’s “The people of British Columbia...demanded that we should absolutely prohibit Japanese immigration, not withstanding that the numbers admitted each year are small.” Asian families tended to have larger families than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts and there was a sentiment, especially in

British Columbia, that Asians were overpopulating. Restrictions of Japanese immigrants successively increased throughout the 1920’s as a conscious matter of race. The number of Japanese was restricted to less than 100 per year, and in some years, no Japanese were permitted. Chinese immigration was halted altogether in 1924. These policies were an effort on the part of the government to preserve a single racial character of Canada.

**Radical Ideology**

During the inter-war years, there was a rise in the labour movement; government officials attempted to prevent the entry of prominent labour organizers. However, there was one loophole, Citizens of the British Empire could not be denied entry into Canada. In 1919, Immigration law was amended to allow deportation of foreign-born person, whether naturalized-Canadians or not who “by word or act” threatened or challenged the constituted authority of Canada. This amendment of the immigration act was enacted primarily to allow the deportation of the organizers of the great Winnipeg strike but remained in affect for over 15 years. This was a conscious decision to prevent those with a different ideology, an unwanted one from the government’s perspective, to influence Canadian society. They were excluded from citizenship, through forced removal of citizenship, for ideological reasons.

**Enemy Race**

With the Second World War, came a clear indication of who was a member of the exclusive circle of citizenship and who was not. All people of Japanese ancestry were revoked their Canadian citizenship as potential spies. They were given a choice, either to be interned or return to Japan. But Japan would only repatriate those who had been born in Japan. Some first generation immigrants returned to Japan where they were ostracized. However, the vast majority of the Japanese-Canadians had been born in

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Canada, having never set foot in Japan. They spoke English, went to church, paid taxes and had considered themselves to be Canadian. Most could not even speak Japanese beyond a few words. They were interned with meager communal housing, little food and forced to work on farms for no pay. All of their property and belongings were sold at bargain prices and their social rights were suspended. They were excluded from citizenship solely on their racial characteristics.

At the end of the war, not one Japanese-Canadian was found guilty, or even strongly suspected, of spying. Their citizenship, both in terms of social and political rights, were returned to them, but not their property, belongs or their romantic sense of belong to the nation. For the Japanese-Canadians there was no question that when the crunch happened, that membership was not based on culture, birth, language or religion. For them, it was obviously based on race.

Race

In 1947, when Canada, due to a labour shortage, finally reopened its doors to immigration, Prime Minister Mackenzie King announced,

The people of Canada do not wish to make a fundamental alteration in the character of their population through mass immigration. [...] It is of utmost importance to relate immigration to its absorptive capacity.

This sentiment had, in fact, been a guiding principle of immigration policy to ensure that those who were racially, religiously and culturally different to the greatest extent possible were systematically excluded from citizenship.

In early post-war Canada, there were severe restrictions on immigrants and preference was given to “applicants that had proven in the past best able to assimilate into the existing Canadian society”. This meant that despite the numbers in Displaced Persons (DP) camps, who were predominately Jews and Slavs, they were not admitted. Instead, priority was given again to British, American and Northern European migrants. Low air and ship rates were

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39 Japanese-Canadians received Redress in 1988. Living victims received a compensation package and a lump sum was given to various organization within the Japanese-Canadian community.


granted from Britain and a bilateral treaty with the Netherlands brought Dutch farmers. When it was clear that Canada needed the labour and had no choice but to include those in DP camps, those from the Baltics were favored. Only when they could not meet the number demanded were the skilled Jews and Slavs, who had until then been consciously excluded, allowed entry. They were even, reluctantly, eventually granted the right to bring family left in the camps. However, the “hard-core” refugees would never be admitted.

Asian immigration, especially Japanese, was restricted. African and South American immigration was excluded to the extent that it was not even discussed. Non-whites were generally bared access to the family reunification provisions of the immigration act. Furthermore, an individual could be rejected based on their inability “to become assimilated” as the Mennonites had experienced. Those living in more equatorial climates could be rejected on their perceived inability to adapt to winter climates. Peoples were systematically excluded based on race, culture, and geography.

With the growing strength of post-war Europe, immigration from the region curtailed. This combined with public pressure opened a tiny symbolic window of immigrants from the Asian commonwealth: India, Pakistan and Ceylon. The numbers were small and showed that the move was again more of a renewed gesture than an actual change in exclusionary policy. In order to get the numbers desired an office was also opened in Northern Italy, hoping to attract Germanic Italians not the ethnic Italians of the south.

During this time, exclusion on the basis of religion had become less of an issue. In was more important to preserve a single racial characteristic of Canada. Race became the single most discussed exclusionary factor and despite the increase in immigration of non-whites, there was a conscious effort on the part of the government to prevent them from gaining full citizenship rights, or becoming a visible force in the country.

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Ideology

The danger of allowing non-Germanic Italians stemmed not only from an ethnic and racial perspective but, as was the case with T. S. Eliot, from an ideological one. Eliot was afraid of the impact of liberalism; the Canadian state of Communism. Those who could prove that they did not have subversive communist ideas were admitted. Ironically Canada allowed a significant number of Nazi sympathizers to be admitted. After all, they could show clearly that they were not communists.

Just as earlier race had begun to trump religion as an exclusionary factor, ideology began to trump race in the 60’s. Canada assisted a large number of refugees from anti-Communist uprisings, in Hungary, Czech and British Uganda. However they were not so quick to help refugees of anti-capitalist uprisings. Only a small number of Chileans, the educated and skilled, were granted entry to Canada. Communists and other ideological radicals were excluded.

With the fall of the Berlin wall, much of the ideological concern dissipated. However, remnants remain. Canada is still not setting up immigration offices in Cuba and considering the number of Russian refugees, Canada has focused on immigration from Eastern European countries rather than Russia.

In 1962, race was finally officially removed as an exclusionary factor in immigration and in 1967, non-whites were allowed to sponsor families. Unfortunately, despite the removal of race as an explicit factor, in practice, the remnants of racial exclusion remains. In the 1990’s, there are more immigration offices in Eastern Europe than all of Africa and South America combined. However, this has much to do with economics.

Class, Sexuality, Age

Just as religion and race were trumped, ideology has begun to be trumped by economics and class. With the current adoption of the points system of immigration, Canada continues to exclude all those who do not have capital, whether it be monetary, cultural or social. One gains points for education, language skills, occupation, and the ability to culturally “adapt” into Canadian society – the more points, the more likely you are to be

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permitted entry. This system attracts educated and culturally similar immigrants while working class or third world nationals are excluded.

Homosexuals are also excluded. Sexual orientation is not acknowledged as a reason to seek refuge, notwithstanding that in some parts of the world homosexuals are persecuted and homosexuality illegal. Within its borders, however, most provincial charters in Canada have made it illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation in Canada. Nevertheless, one can not sponsor a same-sex partner as a spouse. This is because charter law applies only to citizens, not potential citizens and members of other states.

The same goes for age, which can not legally be used as a discriminatory factor in Canada. Yet, children over the age of 18, and potentially 21 if the new citizenship act is passed, can not be sponsored by parents. Those in the latter years of their working life are rarely admitted as individuals. Priority is given to younger applicants.

Canada now favors those who are well educated at the expense of another nation-state and arrive in Canada ready to enter into the work force, pay taxes and contribute for decades to a society which has, more or less, never invested in the capital of the immigrant. It favors the “elite” immigrant, not the average applicant. In essence, the point system drains brains from other countries and brings them into to Canada – to Canada’s economic advantage.

Despite the praise of Canada as a multicultural country, it has excluded for a long period of time based on religion, race and ideology. Today, race, religion, and ideology have all been trumped by the exclusion based on class, age, sexual orientation and capital — cultural, social and monetary — or the lack of it. However, the remnants of past exclusionary policy remain. All new citizens must show they belong to the exclusive circle of citizenship — they must still pledge allegiance to the queen, speak one of the official languages, know its history, culture and ideology — although they no longer need to adhere to it.

Conclusion

Since the birth of citizenship after the French revolution the concept and characteristics of citizen and citizenship has evolved and changed. Along side, who has been permitted membership has also changed. In this article, I have...
given a brief historical account of citizenship and immigration, reviewed through the lens of exclusion — that is who has been excluded from membership and for what purpose.

Exclusion and discrimination based on gender, religion, culture, race, ideology, sexual orientation and ideology have occurred and still does occur. Who and to what degree groups have been excluded has, however, changed over time and place. What was once an undesirable group, has reluctantly become the tolerated. This toleration has grown into inclusion and today Canada is praised for its thriving multiculturalism. But, this does not change the historically predominant desire to preserve a single racial, religious and cultural character of the nation, which even today accounts for the continued exclusions of some peoples. Perhaps just as we criticize Eliot for his anti-Semitism someone will criticize us for our classism and heterosexism.

By tracing policy historically, I have mapped out how specific groups have been excluded at different points of time. In doing so, I have argued that the historical burden of citizenship and immigration legislation is that it, has operated to exclude various groups, the purpose of which has been, and to some extent continues to be, to preserve a single racial, religious and/or cultural character of the nation.

What was once an undesirable group, has reluctantly become the tolerated, the tolerated has slowly become the included. The logic of discrimination thus proceeds in relative terms, according to which who is excluded from the community of nationals and citizens is a matter of time and place.