



SPRING 2017

# Our Immigration Saga: Canada@150

In collaboration with Pier 21



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Canadian Issues acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada History Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage for this project.

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## LETTERS

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INTRODUCTION

## IMMIGRANTS' STORIES OF SETBACKS AND RESILIENCE KEEP REWRITING — AND ENRICHING — OUR NATIONAL NARRATIVE

RANDY BOSWELL

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Guest editor Randy Boswell is a journalism professor at Carleton University and a writer specializing in Canadian history. From 2003 to 2013, he was a national reporter with *Postmedia News* covering issues and developments linked to Canada's past.

Let's begin by acknowledging that "Canada 150" — a phrase that's all the rage this year — might well be imagined by this country's Indigenous people as a reference to the 150 *centuries* or so that they've been here. That's right: 15,000 BP isn't a bad estimate for the date when the peopling of North America began, a time when Ice Age hunters from Asia migrated — emigrated, one might say — to the future Canada across the Bering Land Bridge. We should acknowledge that all other immigrants who followed — from Viking seafarers 1,000 years ago to the hardy European farm folk of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the Syrian refugees just months ago — arrived to a place occupied for so long by the continent's initial "migrants" that the words most commonly used to describe them (Aboriginal and Indigenous) convey the notion that they've *always* been here, presumably since the origins of the Earth itself.

But migrants they were, too, scholars have shown. And migrants, in the broadest sense, we all are. People being people, we move to new lands, encounter unsettled spaces or prior inhabitants, clash and blend, struggle and adapt, settle and — sometimes — move on again. Baggage? Yes, of course. Some gets lost or tossed along the way; some is gifted to the new nation; some is still being unpacked as years give way to decades, then to generations.

Canada, more than most countries, is a nation of newcomers. Multiculturalism, diversity, difference: although some strain to say these words with menacing tones, in Canada they are terms that ring with pride. There have been dark episodes in our collective history, no doubt, and in recent decades there have been many expressions of sorrow and shame for past wrongs. Tensions persist and injustices remain. But immigrant communities, so rich a part of our present and so central to the country's

future, continue rediscovering and retelling their stories of setbacks and resilience — and rewriting our national narrative in the process.

This collection of essays by expert observers of the immigration experience — including voices from several of Canada's immigrant communities — explores a wide range of perspectives on the role immigration has played in the creation of the country, in enhancing our collective culture, in strengthening our economy and making Canada a model of multicultural tolerance for the world. This is a timely spark to conversation. Immigration is under fire in many parts of the globe, religious and ethno-cultural conflict continue to disrupt international stability, and Canada faces its own controversies and challenges in balancing the integration and accommodation of its immigrant communities. This is truly an opportune moment to reflect upon the profound influence of immigration in Canadian history, to gauge the present state of public opinion and knowledge with regards to that past, and to begin charting the next 150 years in the country's evolution.

Past surveys have revealed that most Canadians acknowledge the overall positive contribution made by immigrants to the country. Amongst other things, they recognize that immigrants have enriched our culture, have introduced innovation and fresh ideas, have strengthened our economy. They appreciate how immigrants have enhanced our reputation — as well as our opportunities and influence — around the globe.

One in five Canadians was born outside of this country, and another 20 per cent are children of immigrants. Go back a further generation or two

and most Canadians — apart from the country's First Peoples — would find they derive from the settlement era's ancestral immigrant stock. But how knowledgeable are Canadians about the history of immigration to the country? A recent survey — the results of which are included in this issue of *CITC* — revealed that about half of the population believes they have a *good* knowledge of the history of immigration to Canada, but fewer than one in ten of all Canadians say they possess a *strong* knowledge of such history. And some of the results suggest respondents don't know quite as much as they thought they knew about the story of immigration in Canada.

Policy-makers and service-delivery agencies devote considerable energy and time to address the needs of newcomers. In doing so, they contribute to the evolving role that immigration plays in the ever-changing story of the country. But what narratives best capture the migration experience and identify the pivotal events and challenges for immigrants across our history? How is the story of immigration best situated within Canada's broader historical narrative?

This year's celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation extends to us an important opportunity to reflect upon the critical contributions of immigration to our history: the special role of newcomer communities, the unique experiences of individuals, the cumulative impact of centuries of immigration to Canada and the multicultural identity it nurtures.

This collection of essays — its cover graced by a colourful and evocative scene titled *Journey*, by Montréal artist Louise Sultan — was supported with

funds from the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax. And it has also been enriched with contributions from two of the museum's historians: Monica MacDonald and Steve Schwinghamer. MacDonald, the CMI's manager of research and acting chief curator, sets the scene for the articles that follow by surveying the epic sweep of Canadian immigration history — the highs and lows, from the tragic *Komagata Maru* refusal in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1970s' emergence of multicultural diversity as a pillar of Canadian identity. Today, she writes, Canada "stands out in the world for its liberal attitude to immigration and response to those seeking refuge."

Jack Jedwab, president of the Association for Canadian Studies, offers insights drawn from a survey probing Canadians' knowledge about and attitudes towards the country's immigration history. He finds, in short, that the perception Canadians have that their country embraces and celebrates the diverse histories of its peoples actually strengthens the national bond rather than weakening it — as some observers once feared — through the showcasing of sub-national narratives. The great majority of Canadians seem most comfortable wrapping themselves in a patchwork quilt of histories, perhaps recognizing that any community's sense of belonging to a greater whole requires that its own special story — origins, evolution, struggles and triumphs — is woven into the grand national saga.

Morton Weinfeld, Chair in Canadian Ethnic Studies at McGill University, offers an intriguing explanation for why Canada — despite its "very far from perfect" record of welcoming immigrants to the country — has outshone almost every other country in the world in terms of its relative openness

to diversity and success at integrating newcomers. The reason? "In large part, luck," he writes.

Madeline Ziniak, chair of the Canadian Ethnic Media Association, details "the power of reflection" — the validating mirror that multilingual media have afforded Canada's immigrant communities, beginning with a German-language newspaper in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Nova Scotia. "Throughout the generations," she writes, "immigrant communities as well as second and third generations have derived considerable and necessary knowledge about this country from publications, broadcasting programs, and more recently Internet streaming and blogs." Such news sources not only helped inform and bind the newcomer communities they served, they contributed to a broader nation-building process that forged the diverse, tolerant and multicultural country Canada would become.

Montréal educator Linton Garner chronicles the deep-rooted history of Black Canadians in the story of the country's evolution, from the first wave of Black Loyalists during the 18<sup>th</sup>-century U.S. War of Independence and the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century influx of escaped slaves before the U.S. Civil War to the post-Second World War arrival of immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa. "Regardless of our origins, or whether our ancestors came here in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, we all face the same issues today. The issue of racism still plagues our legacy, as it did our forefathers."

Ryerson University professor Myer Siemiatycki, explains how 2,000 years of experience as "outsiders" in many lands prepared Jewish immigrants for life in Canada, a country that was initially very "wary of whether these newcomers belonged" here.

But such attitudes were “not an isolated example of racism and discrimination,” he writes: “Policies towards indigenous peoples as well as other racialized immigrant groups – Chinese, South Asian and Japanese – reflect a Canada that would take some time to outgrow its narrow white, Christian, Anglo/French founding nations, exclusionary self-definition.”

Toronto-based immigration advocate Avvy Go and Dora Nipp of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario chart the diverse contributions of Chinese immigrants to Canada – even as they were repeatedly forced to overcome unfair barriers to entry and then endure other hardships as “perpetual foreigners” in a country they helped create.

University of Ottawa historian Tim Stanley further details the deep impact of Chinese immigration on Canadian society, linking the present-day “panic” over Vancouver house prices to hostile attitudes of generations past. “The Chinese roots of people and things Canadian,” he writes, “are well worth remembering if we wish to maintain Canada as a democratic and multicultural country.”

Meanwhile, Canadian Museum of Immigration historian Steve Schwinghamer delves into the vaults of the country’s immigration archive to shed light on how prejudicial attitudes towards the Amish and other conservative religious groups in the 1950s and ’60s led to more rigorous screening and – far from the first time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the *de facto* identification of an “undesirable” class of migrants as they sought a new life in Canada.

McGill University education professor Ratna Ghosh, a leading authority on South Asian immi-

gration in Canada, notes that this population is now the No. 1 source of newcomers to Canada and the single largest visible minority community in the country. “The contribution and influence of the South Asian community has also grown considerably in recent years,” she writes, highlighting Canada’s current 19 South Asian MPs and four federal cabinet ministers.

UQÀM sociologist Victor Armony examines the experience of Latin American immigrants to Canada – particularly Quebec – and how they provide “unique insights into diasporic citizenship” in a multiethnic, bilingual society. Among other observations, Armony notes that Spanish is one Quebec’s two most-spoken unofficial languages, and that the province’s fast-growing Latino population may play a much more significant role in its future.

And, finally: with a deeply personal recounting of his own immigrant experience, Farid Rohani, chair emeritus of The Laurier Institution, offers glimpses of the journey from stranger in a new land to “taking ownership” of one’s adopted nation. An immigrant from Iran, he recounts learning from his uncle to see Canada as *our* new country. “We must be productive, not be passive; we must plant roots, contribute, go forward.”

# WHY DO WE NEED A MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION?

MONICA MACDONALD

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Monica MacDonald is the Manager of Research at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. She holds a PhD in Communication and Culture from York University. She has taught at the University of Prince Edward Island in the History and Canadian Studies Programs, and is an Adjunct in the History Department at Dalhousie University.

Nothing brought attention to the global migration crisis like the photograph of the body of three year-old Syrian refugee, Alan Kurdi, washed up on a beach in Turkey. The image became a symbol not only of the heartbreaking and dangerous flight forced upon millions of refugees due to war and destruction in Syria and elsewhere, but also of the responses of countries faced with providing them sanctuary. The world seemed ready to open its doors. But it was short-lived, as some nations like the United Kingdom and the United States were shaken by populist movements, fuelled in part by nativist fears and reactions to the crisis.

This crisis cannot be fully understood without knowledge of the historical contexts of immigration and movements of people seeking refuge. The twentieth century alone was marked by large-scale displacements of people. For Canada, it was most notable after the Second World War when

millions arrived after fleeing economic devastation, environmental destruction, and persecution in Europe. History offers no exact parallels to any situation – postwar Europeans found themselves in vastly different circumstances than Syrians do today. Yet history can still inform the present in profound ways.

The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax offers exhibitions and programs on the history of immigration to Canada as well as the contemporary experiences of newcomers. The Museum began life as a centre focussed on the history of Pier 21, an ocean port-of-entry immigration facility through which, between 1928 and 1971, almost one million immigrants passed. The current permanent exhibition on Pier 21 reveals the site as a microcosm of Europe, with hundreds of thousands of Europeans streaming through its doors mostly en route to somewhere else in Canada. With



The Canadian Immigration Hall exhibition, 2016.  
Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 [17374-2]

the advent of accessible air travel, the facility eventually closed its doors.

The European character of Pier 21 contrasts with the more global nature of the exhibition in the Museum's Canadian Immigration Hall. This exhibition takes 1604 as the beginning of permanent European settlement in Canada, with a small group of French who eventually founded Port Royal in Nova Scotia. Over the centuries great waves of people followed, first from Europe and then from all parts of the globe. While the historical contexts changed greatly over time, the reasons pushing people out of their home countries and pulling them toward Canada — the push and pull factors — remain remarkably similar. Some, like the disadvantaged youth known as the Home Children, who were sent alone to Canada from the United Kingdom, had little control over their situation. But for most, war, discrimination, and limited economic

opportunity prompted them to leave their countries of origin. Canada was attractive for a variety of reasons, among them the promise of peace, land, and the chance to live a better life.

Charles Foran, CEO of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, has recently suggested that non-Indigenous Canadians need only look at themselves to see the “generally happy ending of an immigrant saga.”<sup>1</sup> The cumulative success of immigration to Canada is evident, yet history reminds us that the story is not one of unmitigated progress. It must first be qualified by considering the historic and continuing relationships between immigrant communities and Indigenous peoples. A key message in the first section of the Canadian Immigration Hall is that Indigenous peoples have lived in what became Canada thousands of years before the arrival and settlement of Europeans. Indigenous peoples have had to cope with the longstanding negative impacts of colonization on their lands, cultures, languages, and lives. It is not a comfortable history, but it informs present-day circumstances like the legacy of residential schools, the elevated rate of suicide on reserves, and the missing and murdered Indigenous women.

The exhibition in the Canadian Immigration Hall also explores the different treatment of certain groups in their attempts at settlement. Some were encouraged to come to Canada, and supported and assisted in the settlement process, and some were discouraged from coming, actively turned away, or not made welcome once arrived. In 1849 in Saint John, New Brunswick, a nativist response to new-

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1 CHARLES FORAN, “The Canada experiment: Is this the world's first 'postnational' country?” *The Guardian*, 4 January 2017, [www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/04/the-canada-experiment-is-this-the-worlds-first-postnational-country](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/04/the-canada-experiment-is-this-the-worlds-first-postnational-country) (accessed 16 January 2017).

comers was behind a riot that capped a series of violent clashes over the previous decade. Few today would think of Saint John as a hotbed of sectarian strife, yet the principal cause of the conflict was the reaction of Protestant Orangemen to the arrival and settlement in the city of large numbers of Irish Catholics, most fleeing the Great Famine.<sup>2</sup> Many Saint John residents were themselves descendants of refugees — Loyalist supporters of the British Crown forced to leave their homes in the American colonies during and after the Revolution.

After Confederation the Canadian government created a series of laws, regulations, and practices aimed at better controlling immigration, particu-

larly as they pertained to people considered to be desirable, or undesirable, as immigrants. At the turn of the twentieth century, for example, the government launched a massive publicity campaign aimed at drawing European and American agriculturalists to the vast tracts of land in western Canada. These immigrants received free land in return for establishing homesteads. But at the same time, black American farmers, attracted to western Canada for the same reasons, were discouraged from immigrating by bureaucratic obstructionism and thinly-veiled racism.<sup>3</sup> Race was also the basis in 1914 for officials turning away from Vancouver Harbour the mostly Sikh passengers of the *SS Komagata Maru*, and denying them entry to Canada. Prime



Newly-arrived immigrants in Pier 21's assembly hall, 1965. Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 [R2013.1362.469]

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- 2 SCOTT W. SEE, *Riots in New Brunswick: Orange Nativism and Social Violence in the 1840s*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), and SEE, "The Orange Order and Social Violence in Mid-Nineteenth Century Saint John," *Acadiensis*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Autumn 1983.
- 3 STEVE SCHWINGHAMER, "The Colour Bar at the Canadian Border: Black American Farmers," Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, <https://www.pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/the-colour-bar-at-the-canadian-border-black-american-farmers> (accessed 16 January 2017).

Minister Justin Trudeau has recently made a public apology for this act.

Immigration policies and practices in Canada eventually became more progressive and inclusive. The Canadian government repealed the *Chinese Exclusion Act* in 1947, removed "race" from immigration criteria in 1962, and in 1967 implemented the "points system" for assessing potential immigrants, which removed other discriminatory factors. In 1971, the introduction of the multiculturalism policy marked the beginning of an era where diversity emerged as an important element of Canadian national identity. More so than in most western democracies, in Canada diversity has become the normal state of affairs. In 2011, Statistics Canada reported that twenty per cent of the Canadian population was foreign-born, and today the federal cabinet includes four foreign-born ministers.<sup>4</sup>

Immigration policies and practices have greatly improved, but recent newcomers face some of the same issues in integration that newcomers have faced throughout the centuries: language barriers, lack of social networks, and cultural stereotyping. Knowledge of these personal experiences comes to us in part through written stories and oral history interviews generously granted to Museum historians. Yukari Yamamoto, originally from Japan, likened not understanding English to wearing ear-plugs, and then her eventual understanding of the language to be like waking up from a dream. Eileen Lao, who arrived from China, related her daughter's initial difficulties with the transition to Canada, as

her daughter sorely missed her friends back home. Janos Maté, who fled Hungary as a young person with his parents after the Hungarian Revolution, described being harassed and called names as a "DP" by other children after he arrived in Canada.

The history of immigration to Canada is comprised of these many histories, marked with success and also some failure. History doesn't repeat itself, but it reveals the nature of our common humanity over time, and informs our current decision making. Canada stands out in the world for its liberal attitude to immigration and open response to those seeking refuge – in 2016 Canada's target for immigrants was 300,000, including more than 55,000 refugees and protected persons.<sup>5</sup> What we do today is the history we will be telling in the future, but before looking forward, we must first look back.

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4 STATISTICS CANADA, "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada," <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.cfm> (accessed 16 January 2017).

5 GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, "Key Highlights 2017 Immigration Levels Plan," [Http://News.gc.ca/Web/Article-En.do?Nid=1145319](http://News.gc.ca/Web/Article-En.do?Nid=1145319) (Accessed 16 January 2017).

# MIGRATION IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF CANADA'S HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

JACK JEDWAB

---

Jack Jedwab is the President of the Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration. Holding a PhD in Canadian History from Concordia University, he taught at Université du Québec à Montréal and McGill University. He has taught courses on the history of immigration in Quebec, on ethnic minorities in Quebec, on official language minorities in Canada and on sport in Canada. He has also authored essays for books, journals and newspapers across the country, in addition to being the author of various publications and government reports on issues of immigration, multiculturalism, human rights and official languages.

With much of Canada's historic growth fueled by multiple waves of migrants, the country is sometimes described as a nation of immigrants. A 2016 ACS-Leger survey reveals that nearly three in four Canadians acknowledge that they "have an ancestor that comes from another country." Some two in three Canadians agree that "with the exception of Canada's aboriginal peoples everyone that settled in Canada is an immigrant." With over 31 million non-Aboriginal Canadians in 2011, that would make for a very substantial number of immigrants (clearly not in line with the official census figure of just below 6.8 million immigrants). The one in five foreign-born Canadians is the second highest share in the world (behind Australia). In Toronto, our largest city, nearly half the population is foreign-born.

One would think in a country where migration has played so central a role that there would be satisfactory knowledge about its immigration history.

Surveys repeatedly reveal that a majority of Canadians think it is important for Canadians to know the country's history. Officials have repeatedly stressed the importance of such knowledge and have supported multiple programs aimed at enhancing it. But it's what specifically we should know about Canada's past that continues to be the object of ongoing debate. Inevitably, educators need to make choices about the content of their history curriculum and decisions are by no means easy.

Amongst other Canadian historians, Jack Granatstein has expressed concern with educators prioritizing social over military and political history (J. L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* 1998). Social histories focus on such things as immigrant and community narratives that presumably risk weakening the shared national narrative and thereby soften individual attachment to Canada. A strong Canadian identity is purportedly

enhanced when there is an emphasis on the political and military aspects of our narrative as opposed to the social history some observers believe is omnipresent in the country's classrooms.

Canadians tend to give themselves reasonably positive assessments when asked about their knowledge of the country's history. As regards knowledge of the country's immigration history, one in two Canadians believe they possess a good knowledge. That said, only about one in ten believe they have a *strong* knowledge of the country's immigration history. It's worth noting that the country's francophone population acknowledges a considerably lower rate of knowledge of immigration history compared to the national average, while allophones' self-assessment exceeds the average.

Despite the generally positive self-assessments of immigration history knowledge, another survey reveals that Canadians report greater awareness of

various subjects other than immigration: the First World War, the Great Depression, Confederation, the history of British, French and indigenous Canadians and the Conquest. It's fair to assume that knowledge about history is horizontal and not zero sum. That is to say that those knowledgeable about Canada's social history are also the most likely to be knowledgeable about its political history.

When Canadians are asked what they find most interesting about Canada's history, their top three responses are the daily lives of Canadians; immigration and the experiences of diverse communities within Canada; and military history. Political history ranks closer to the bottom of the list. (Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, March 2013).

It is worth noting that those Canadians saying they possess a strong knowledge of the country's immigration are the most likely to declare they're very

**TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE THAT ARE VERY ATTACHED TO CANADA, BY MOTHER TONGUE, ON THE OF SELF-ASSESSED KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA, 2016**

Very attached to Canada, by mother tongue	I have a good knowledge of the history of immigration to Canada		
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Total	88.2%	70.0%	60.1%
French	63.6%	35.9%	28.8%
English	92.6%	80.8%	76.6%
Other	86.4%	65.3%	65.5%

SOURCE: LEGER MARKETING FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES, WEEK OF JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016

attached to Canada. As observed in Table 1 some 88% of Canadians who purport to have a strong knowledge of Canada's immigration history say they're very attached to Canada. On the basis of mother tongue, 93% of English Canadians reporting a strong knowledge of Canada's immigration history have a very strong attachment to Canada compared with 64% of francophones and 86% of the country's allophones. Hence, there is no empirical support for the idea that learning about the history of immigration undercuts attachment to Canada. Indeed, the opposite appears to be true. Amongst the country's ethnic minorities, it is those indicating the highest levels of knowledge of immigration history who also describe themselves as the most attached to Canada. That's not counterintuitive; many immigrants and their children likely value the idea that the migration experience is depicted in the national narrative and not excluded on the basis of a flawed view that doing so detracts from

political history.

But the belief that one knows a lot about the history of immigration does not necessarily mean that they have a good handle on it. For example, more than seven in 10 Canadians subscribe to the view that throughout its history Canada has always welcomed immigrants. This incorrect view is held to a fairly similar degree regardless of the perceived degree of knowledge about immigration history on the part of Canadians. The table below provides an illustration of how self-assessed knowledge of immigration history informs this view.

#### IMMIGRATION POLICIES AND PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE OF IMMIGRATION HISTORY

If self-assessed knowledge about the history of immigration doesn't imply a fully informed view about the settlement challenges encountered by

**TABLE 2: EXTENT TO WHICH CANADIANS BELIEVE THAT "THROUGHOUT HISTORY, CANADA HAS ALWAYS WELCOMED IMMIGRANTS" BASED ON SELF-ASSESSED KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA, 2016**

Throughout history Canada has always welcomed immigrants	I have a good knowledge of the history of immigration to Canada			
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
True	74.3%	72.2%	77.0%	66.4%
False	24.3%	24.4%	16.3%	17.4%
I don't know	1.5%	3.4%	6.7%	16.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

SOURCE: LEGER MARKETING FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES, WEEK OF JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016

newcomers, do those claiming greater knowledge at least have more genuine awareness when it comes to immigration policies? Table 3 reveals that Canadians are divided in their understanding of certain key facts underlying the country's immigration and citizenship policies: that Canada very carefully selects those admitted to the country; that knowledge of English or French is a requirement for immigration; that Canada's population growth is highly dependent on immigration; that an appli-

cant for citizenship must have spent at least four years in the country. More Canadians appear to be able to distinguish what is accurate from what it is inaccurate when it comes to immigration and citizenship policies, but on certain issues a large plurality of Canadians simply don't know. On a question about the demographic importance of immigration, most Canadians seem to underestimate the country's dependence on newcomers for population growth.

**TABLE 3: SELECTED STATEMENTS AROUND IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP POLICIES DEEMED TRUE OR FALSE BY CANADIANS, 2016**

	True	False	Don't Know	Total
Canada carefully selects most of its immigrants	46%	32%	22%	100%
You have to speak and/or write English or French to get Canadian citizenship	44%	36%	20%	100%
Immigration will soon be Canada's only source of population growth	38%	44%	18%	100%
You can apply for citizenship within less than a year after immigrating to Canada	16%	38%	46%	100%

SOURCE: LEGER MARKETING FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES, WEEK OF JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016

Are those individuals who describe themselves as more knowledgeable about Canada's immigration history better able to respond correctly to key facets of the country's immigration and citizenship poli-

cies? The 2016 survey results reveal that on some matters, those affirming stronger knowledge are indeed better informed about policies. But on some issues, there is less certainty.

**TABLE 4: SELECTED STATEMENTS AROUND IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP POLICIES DEEMED TRUE BY CANADIANS ON THE BASIS OF SELF-ASSESSED KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION TO CANADA, 2016**

Those describing the statements below as True	I have a good knowledge of the history of immigration to Canada		
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Canada carefully selects most of its immigrants	54%	50%	41%
You have to speak and/or write English or French to get Canadian citizenship	59%	46%	38%
Immigration will soon be Canada's only source of population growth	51%	43%	32%
You can apply for citizenship within less than a year after immigrating to Canada	24%	17%	13%

SOURCE: LEGER MARKETING FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES, WEEK OF JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016

## CONCLUSION

In a country where one in five Canadians are foreign-born and migration has and continues to be vital to its economic, social and cultural development, a basic knowledge about the history of immigration is an essential part of the national narrative. An informed view of the history of immigration does not seem apparent judging by the survey data presented above. And yet with nothing more than

anecdotes, some historians want us to believe that there is already far too much of such history and that it serves to obstruct the promotion of a “unified” historic narrative that strengthens national identity. The contrary appears far more likely. A good knowledge of immigration history — with its failings and successes — will serve to make a large share of the population feel a greater sense of inclusion in an ever evolving national story and ultimately a stronger sense of attachment to the country.

# THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE LUCKY: IMMIGRATION AND THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

MORTON WEINFELD

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Professor Weinfeld holds the Chair in Canadian Ethnic Studies at McGill University, and directs the minor program in Canadian Ethnic Studies. He is the winner of the 2013 Marshall Sklare Prize for outstanding career contributions to the field by the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry.

For the purpose of this brief essay, we note that the immigration referred to here is that other than the initial waves of British and French colonists, and the prior migration of First Nations.

Analyzing the “contributions” of immigration to a new world country like Canada, where 40 per cent of the population are either immigrants or children of immigrants (and even more are grandchildren of immigrants), poses conceptual problems. It is like asking about the contribution of humans in general, or water, or air.

For, in fact, these immigrants have been, and are, the people of Canada. Indeed they are the essence of Canada. Think hockey – names like Gretzky and Mikita and Esposito denote so-called immigrant roots, do they not? And at present, there are about 30 black professionals playing in the NHL, which at roughly five per cent of players, is well above the

black population proportion in Canada of two per cent.

There should be no doubt that the rest of the planet – unlike, say, the majority of Canadian social scientists studying immigration and diversity – think the Canadian record is laudable. Canadian scholars tend to focus, understandably, on shortcomings. Yet I recall meeting some city officials in Moscow in 1990, as non-Russian ethnic minorities were flooding into the city. Inter-group tensions were rising. They thought that somehow Canadian expertise could help them deal with this new phenomenon.

Years ago, I met a member of a delegation of Japanese social scientists who were sent to study multiculturalism in Canada. Why? Because Japan was experiencing an influx of non-Japanese Asians, pushing the country under the 99-per-cent

ethnic Japanese marker, and wanted to be prepared for successful integration. So in the Japanese government's view, what better than to study the Canadian experience? So this is our international brand.

Among actual immigrant masses, perhaps the Canadian myth never seized imaginations the way American symbols did: the Statue of Liberty welcoming poor and tired "huddled masses yearning to breathe free," or the fantasies of streets paved with gold. But if Canada was indeed a destination of second choice, it was still seen as highly desirable. The storehouse of provisions at Auschwitz was given the nickname of "kanada."

As for the actual record? The brutal wartime Japanese internment reflects the worst and best of the immigrant experience. Anti-Japanese racism was intense. On the one hand, the internment took place despite the fact that not one Japanese Canadian was ever charged, let alone convicted, of any act of sabotage or espionage. On the other hand, the internment camps were not prisons and no Japanese Canadian was killed. Decades later, Japanese Canadians enjoy incomes well above the Canadian average and have experienced extremely high intermarriage rates, which reflect the decline of that wartime anti-Japanese sentiment.

As of this writing, in early 2017, it seems that Canada is a kind of world outlier, in the sense of still accepting official multiculturalism, embracing diversity, and having a generous immigration and refugee policy. The xenophobic current, movements, and parties so roundly present in Western Europe and the United States are not (yet?) found in Canada. Or at least they have been muted, save

for so-far unsuccessful efforts in Québec to impose a Charter of Values.

To be sure, the Canadian historical record regarding immigrants and non-white minorities (to say nothing of First Nations) is very far from perfect. And similarly for the present. Visible minority immigrants and their descendants face systemic barriers and discrimination ranging from profiling to micro-aggressions. But still. The lows have arguably not been and are not now as severe as those experienced in the United States and the European continent.

So how to explain this relative historic and persisting openness to immigration and diversity in Canada, and relative success at integration? In large part, luck.

Yes, luck. Consider:

1. The peculiar historical process of dual English and French colonization of the country, and then the dualistic nature of Confederation itself, played an important role. In fact, this early Canadian dualism likely served to create political and socio-cultural space for the legitimation of other immigrant/minority groups. Officially, Canada was never an ethno-culturally unitary state;
2. The accidents of Canadian geography and climate were such to make plantation economies impractical. Hence, no need for a slave economy, followed by Jim Crow, lynchings, urban ghettos, etc. Of course, there were slaves in Canada's past. But their numbers were minimal. The Black population in Can-

ada is largely one of post-war origins. And as late as 1981, the average educational attainment of Black Canadians was above the Canadian average;

3. Canada has been well situated geographically to prevent a large influx of illegal immigrants. The United States in the south, two oceans and the Arctic have been major buffers. Had Canada had a comparable border with Mexico, and a resulting number of millions of undocumented workers, or been relatively close to many refugee-producing countries, the welcome would be far less warm;
4. The roster of immigrants who have come to Canada differs from those in the United States and Western Europe. The vast majority of visible minority immigrants in Canada in recent decades are East Asian and South Asian. This broad group has tended to do relatively well in terms of educational attainment and subsequent economic achievement. The points system tilts towards human capital advantages. The relatively few Latin American immigrants have come from a variety of source countries, almost all via regular immigration processes. The Muslim population in Canada is about three per cent, which is less than in Western Europe. And the Canadian Muslim population, for a variety of reasons, has tended to have relatively higher human capital endowments than Muslim migrants elsewhere in Europe. So the securitization imperative and related Islamophobia have been less pronounced in Canada, the recent tragedy at a Québec City mosque notwithstanding.

Kymlicka (2005) has noted the importance of points 3 and 4 in sustaining support for multiculturalism. Indeed, all four of these points have had an impact. And all four are certainly found in Canada. So, the relatively successful story of immigrants in Canada continues. While some studies note declines in economic returns to recent visible minority migrants relative to native-born citizens, the fact is that achievement levels remain high. Readers of this article who are familiar with the Canadian campus scene and walk through the STEM corridors of their local university, or research institutes, will be struck by the large proportion of immigrant or second-generation students, often of visible minority background. This is similarly true for programs in professions such as accounting, business administration, medicine, nursing — and also for employment in high-tech or research-based private sector enterprises.

The post 9-11 world is one in which there is a renewed focus on racialization, on profiling, on securitization, and various forms of discrimination. Legal cases which are both intellectually challenging and sensationalized, like those of niqabi women seeking to vote or having to testify, are magnified through mainstream and social media to create an illusion of some new or massive failure of Canadian integration. Not true. Again, visits to our colleges and universities bear this out.

But the point made here is that this generally positive Canadian set of outcomes, with its stream of ups and downs — more ups than downs — owes itself at root to lucky accidents. It is not a result of any innate goodness of Canadian hearts, or Canadian elites and leaders, or altruistic generosity of policy. Indeed, Canadian immigration policy has

tended to favour the best and the brightest — skilled or employable migrants — among the pool of general immigrants, and even among refugees.

Nor is it due to the mantra and policies associated with multiculturalism. While multiculturalism has been dominant in Canadian discourse for about 40 years, the lucky geographic, demographic and historic foundations of the relatively positive Canadian immigrant and minority experience antedate that by generations.

As to the future? Let us hope that Canada's luck will not run out. As of this writing, racist fallout from the Québec City shooting, and issues emerging in the Conservative leadership race, may well pose a challenge...

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# ETHNIC MEDIA IN CANADA: THE POWER OF REFLECTION; A LINK TO NATION BUILDING AND IDENTITY

MADÉLINE ZINIAK

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Madeline Ziniak is the current chair of the Canadian Ethnic Media Association (CEMA). Ziniak has received the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario, the Queen Elizabeth II Golden and Diamond Jubilee medals, as well as numerous community, government and industry-related honours. In addition, she is the current chair of Ontario's Canadian Broadcast Standards Council and former vice-chair of Women in Film and Television - Toronto (WIFT-T). Ziniak is a founding member of the Strategic Alliance of Broadcasters for Aboriginal Reflection (SABAR), co-chair of the International Press Freedom Awards (Canadian Journalists for Free Expression) and board member of the Canadian Journalism Foundation. She is the former co chair of the Task Force For Cultural Diversity on Television and chair of the Jury of the Awards of Excellence, Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

The very existence and evolution of multilingual media in Canada is a rich expression of democracy that envelops so many intrinsic Canadian values and experiences. The role of ethnic media in Canadian nation-building has been significant both in the past and present in an increasingly multicultural, multilingual and diverse society. Throughout the generations, immigrant communities as well as second and third generations have derived considerable and necessary knowledge about this country from publications, broadcasting programs, and more recently Internet streaming and blogs.

The inherent contribution of multilingual media in Canada evolved from a need to have not only information in one's language of comfort, but also relevant editorial perspective reflective of ethnocultural community leadership, ethno-specific and other relevant social issues. The cohesive bond that binds communities is this need for distinct infor-

mation, which provides a context for many Canadians of multicultural backgrounds.

As waves of immigration arrived, the establishment of multilingual media provided a platform for ethnocultural community building, assisted in the process of settlement and contributed to a sense of community stability. It continues to form a bridge to the understanding and acceptance of this country, inclusive of the privileges, rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. Ethnic media were and are a key contributor to the feeling of belonging within a linguistic and or ethnocultural community. They also contribute to the contextualization of oneself to the larger Canadian society and encourage self-esteem. As traditional media diminish access to marginal voices, ethnic media continue to develop an important role in the expression and reflection of diverse communities.

The impact of ethnic media is revealed in the following key streams: For recent and new immigrants, it is a necessary and desired lifeline that is not only a conduit to Canadian life-shaping information, but also a lens for the interpretation of Canadian standards, values and quality of life. Engaging in this very real connection with multilingual communities, using the comfort of mother tongue, significantly increases authenticity and cultural relevance for audiences. For subsequent generations, continuity provided by comprehension of the mother tongue and cultural traditions leads to reaffirmation of ethnic identity.

The evolution of ethnic media in Canada coincided with the very arrival of immigrant communities to this country. A historic perspective reveals that shortly after arriving in Canada, establishing a newspaper was an important and necessary priority. Its' beginnings can be traced even to the first newspaper in Canada. *The Halifax Gazette* began publishing in 1752. The founder, John Bushell, took on a German partner, Anton Heinrich, who introduced Canada's first ethnic newspaper, *Die Welt und die Neuschottlandische*, in German, in 1777. In 1787, Heinrich, a German immigrant, had become publisher, and from the Gazette press began publishing *Die Welt* and *Neuschottlandischer Kalendar*, meaning "The World and Nova Scotian Newsletter." No copies exist today, but the same individual published the German-language "Nova Scotian Almanac" in 1788 and 1789. A copy of the 1788 "Almanac" is preserved at Library and Archives Canada.

Ninety years later, in a Manitoba log cabin, Icelandic settlers published *Framfari* (in translation, "Progress") the first ethnic newspaper in that province. This community had fled famine, volca-

noes and political unrest. Long after *Framfari* disappeared, two papers in Icelandic were started, *Heimskringla* ("The World") in 1886, and *Logberg* ("The Tribune") in 1888. They merged in 1959 as *Logberg-Heimskringla* and was published in English. Today as a twice monthly online publication, it enjoys a North America-wide circulation among Icelandic communities, as well as having the reputation of being Canada's oldest surviving ethnic newspaper.

The emergence and evolution of multicultural media serving marginalized communities in Canada has been a challenged journey fraught with casualties, but also transformed by champions — one illustration being the weekly newspaper *The Provincial Freeman*, first published in Windsor, Ont., on March 24, 1854 by Mary Ann Shadd-Carey, at a time when many fugitive slaves from the United States had settled in Ontario. She herself was the daughter of freed black slaves and was committed to the advancement of self-reliance and independence of black Canadians, with the objective of transforming, in her words, "black refugees into model citizens." Shadd-Carey was the first black female publisher in Canada. The editor was Samuel B. Ward, who was born a slave. In 1856, the newspaper was seized over debts and closed with issue No. 49 on Aug. 22, 1857.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many multilingual publications were to spring up in Western Canada as substantial waves of immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived at the invitation of the Laurier government. By 1905, according to the *Canadian Almanac*, there were 18 foreign-language publications in Canada. In the next decade, with waves of Polish and Ukrainian immigrants, newspapers in both

these languages were being published, and by 1916 records show that there was a proliferation of ethnic newspapers published in the Canadian West.

By 1951, reflecting the wave of post-war immigration from Eastern and Central Europe, close to 70 publications were being printed. Ensuing decades heralded ethnic media growth commensurate with the country's growing diverse demographics. By 1965, there were publications, for example, in Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Byelorussian, German, Slovak, Greek and Maltese. By the 1970s, there was accelerated growth in media serving Chinese and South Asian communities. Ethnic media in Canada underscore the need and value of communication in a language of comfort with relevant content to a specific community not adequately served by traditional media. The value of multilingual media can be exemplified in a speech given by the late NDP leader Jack Layton, a former Toronto city councillor. In an address to the Canadian Ethnic Journalists and Writers' Club in 1992, he described how his elderly mother-in-law, who was of Chinese origin, would diligently read every available Chinese-Canadian publication from cover to cover. He mused as to how often that would occur with traditional English language newspapers.

The value of ethnic media is also demonstrated in the settlement and integration process, and is manifested by the regard which communities attribute to ethnic media as a trusted and welcome source of information. This is further exemplified by the experience that even if similar information is available from other sources, the medium of choice is ethnic media. Furthermore, as individuals age and are living in other than their country of origin, they

tend to revert to their native tongue as the language of comfort.

As a third pillar of communication in Canada, ethnic media are not only a bridge to accessible content, but also serve as a barometer of positive portrayal, acceptance, self-expression and identity.

It can be contended that ethnocultural communities develop and maintain their ethnic identity in concert with the influence of communication options. Access to local ethnocultural communities and exposure to people who speak other languages is a positive factor in nation building. The existence and availability of ethnic media reinforces and enhances citizenry by creating a comfortable environment that facilitates successful integration, as well as contributing to community development and sustainability.

Canadian ethnic media act as a promoter of a just society. By engaging community discourse, they become a vehicle with which to dispel false assumptions regarding cultural and social differences. Ethnocultural communities benefit from community participation and engagement through communication in their language of comfort. It is this open and trusting climate that supports grassroots diversity and thus can be maximized as a tool to manage the risk of social imbalance.

The contribution of Canadian ethnic media not only has value on a local and national scale, but also contributes to the international arena. In instances where homeland countries are under dictatorial governance, it has been demonstrated that the articles and editorials published and/or broadcast in Canada have provided necessary alternative voices

that would otherwise have been suppressed.

Multilingual media in Canada today encompass a diverse range of communication streams inclusive of print, over-the-air broadcasting, digital channels and the Internet. The Canadian Ethnic Media Association recently created a multilingual ethnic media directory that confirmed more than 1,200 multilingual media entries for Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta alone. This will prove to be an important tool to harness and maximize the potential of multilingual communication as well as access to the various communities.

Canadian ethnic journalists, editors, publishers and broadcasters tend to be community leaders, opinion makers and entrepreneurs. This community leadership contributes to the enrichment, sophistication and positive dynamic of Canadian society.

Diversity is a national asset, as is the richness of Canadian ethnic media. Canadians who speak many languages and understand many cultures open international doors. Canadian ethnic media are the key to unlocking doors for Canadians both here and internationally. Canadian multilingual media help ensure that integrated and inclusive citizenship will be every Canadian's inheritance.

# HISTORICAL ISSUES AROUND BLACK IMMIGRATION TO CANADA AND HOW THEY HAVE AFFECTED THE BLACK COMMUNITY

LINTON GARNER

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Community worker and educator Linton Garner is the Montréal-based co-creator (with historian Dr. Dorothy Williams and educator Jennifer Santos-Sinclair) of the *ABC's of Canadian Black History*, an educational resource kit for teachers that includes ideas for Black History Month activities and other learning tools to help students explore the role of Black Canadians in the country's history.

Is the issue of immigration and integration historically different for the Black community as opposed to other immigrant groups? And what issues were confronted in each of the four main phases of Black immigration to Canada beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: the late 1700s influx of people when free Blacks emigrated from the U.S. as part of the wave of Loyalists in response to the American Revolution; the northward movement of runaway slaves during the U.S. Civil War; the arrival of peoples from the French and English Caribbean between the early 1960s and the late 1990s; and the increased immigration of French and English-speaking Africans at the turn of this century?

## THE BLACK LOYALISTS (1783 – 1800)

The first major influx of Blacks to Canada was after the American Revolutionary War. More than 3,000 Blacks immigrated to Canada “under the

Lion's Paw” following the British exit from the 13 colonies beginning around 1783. As the revolution began in the late 1770s, the British were badly outnumbered and in desperation promised freedom to any slave who fought the Americans on their behalf. The response was overwhelming, and over 30,000 slaves joined them. They worked as soldiers, labourers, pilots, cooks and musicians, and they were a major part of the British war effort.

As documented at the Canadian history portal [blackloyalist.com](http://blackloyalist.com):

“In 1775 Lord Dunmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, was in a desperate position. Several hundred armed rebels controlled the streets and fields of Virginia. Dunmore had been forced to flee the capital of Williamsburg for the safety of the naval town of Norfolk. In desperation, Dunmore issued a proclamation calling on all able

bodied men to assist him in the defense of the colony, including the slaves of rebels. These Blacks were promised their freedom in exchange for service in the Army. This was controversial at the time, especially among Loyalist slave holders who had feared a mass slave rebellion. Some thought Dunmore had gone mad. Still, this strategy was extremely successful. Within a month Dunmore had raised 800 soldiers. Lord Dunmore's Proclamation was the first mass emancipation of slaves in American history, and as such it deserves to be remembered as an important moment in history."

The British began to see the value of this policy as economic warfare. Encouraging slaves to flee would weaken the plantation economy that supported the rebels, and southern landowners would be forced to use their men to guard slaves instead of fighting the British. In 1779, Sir Henry Clinton issued the Philipsburg Proclamation, which expanded Dunmore's Proclamation to include any rebel slave who could escape, ready to serve for the British or not, anywhere in the colonies.

Following the end of hostilities, the British were forced to guarantee the protection of the more than 30,000 former slaves and Black freemen who joined their cause. Not being able to do so in any significant manner in the colonies, the Black Loyalists — as they were called — were promised Certificates of Freedom, 40 acres of land and opportunity in Canada amidst a society of like-minded British subjects. As such, the British brought some 3,000 Blacks to Nova Scotia from North Carolina in 1783.

However, upon their arrival, they learned a different reality than what had been promised. Essen-

tially they never received their land. They were so dependent upon British supplies that they worked like slaves as indentured servants to make a living. They were never treated equally and were in many cases cheated out of land and supplies by British land agents, forcing the Black population to become cheap labourers. In the end, most chose to go to the West African country of Sierra Leone, led by people like Boston King, who had convinced them more opportunity was to be found back in Africa.

### **PRE AND POST AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (1790 – 1910)**

Many people believe that Blacks are recent arrivals to Canada, when in reality nothing could be further from the truth. Since the arrival of the first slave ships at Jamestown Virginia in 1619, Blacks have found their way to Canada either as slaves, fugitive run-aways or as free persons seeking opportunity and freedom. By 1900 Black settlement spanned the country from British Columbia through to Nova Scotia, with a preponderance of those settling in Southern Ontario.

In mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Ontario, many found the opportunity they were looking for as a variety of settlements friendly to Blacks flourished there, including the Wilberforce Settlement north of London, the Elgin Settlement at Buxton, the Oro Settlement above Lake Simcoe and the Refugee Home Society near Windsor. These settlements were largely in rural regions as many of the escaped slaves had a desire to own their own farms and had the requisite farming skills to be successful. Still others found employment, opened businesses and established deep community roots in the heart of the city, particularly in the City of Toronto.

At one time, Toronto was home to some 3,000 Blacks residents, which benefitted from waves of immigration after 1833, when the British Empire abolished slavery, and again after 1850, when the U.S. passed the Fugitive Slave Act. This law allowed slave-owners the right to recapture fugitive slaves, even in slave-free states in the North. Blacks also sought their freedom through the Underground Railroad, the network of secret safehouses that led escaping slaves to Canada. Movement along the Underground Railroad began as early as 1790, but really began to flourish under the efforts of abolitionists from about 1830 until the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865.

Clearly, the newly arrived Blacks found conditions more to their liking than the Black Loyalists had during their arrival in the latter part 18<sup>th</sup> century in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Although there was some resistance to their presence, Blacks found they were welcome in many of the aforementioned communities, as well as in Saint Catharines, Ont., where the renowned freedom fighter Harriet Tubman lived while on “America’s Most Wanted List” for 15 years as a leading “Conductor” on the Underground Railroad.

#### **ORDER-IN-COUNCIL P.C. 1911-1324 — THE PROPOSED BAN ON BLACK IMMIGRATION TO CANADA**

Order-in-Council P.C. 1324 was approved on August 12, 1911 by the cabinet of Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The purpose of the order was to ban Black persons from entering Canada for a period of one year because, it read, “the Negro race... is deemed unsuitable to the climate and requirements of Canada.”

Following the end of the U.S. Civil War, many Blacks had already left Canada to return to the United States. As with our American counterparts, Canadians looked to the West to further develop the country, and to do so they recruited farmers to work the land, a settlement movement that dispossessed First Nations of territory they had occupied for millennia. Both the Canadian and U.S. governments promoted mass migration and settlement of the West.

Many of those pushing westward to find suitable land were former slaves, and they were among the pioneers who made the West an agricultural powerhouse. However, many in the U.S. did not find conditions to their liking, as the so-called “Jim Crow” laws, enforcing segregation and other restrictions, were passed to prevent Blacks from gaining access to land, to voting and/or owning property of any kind. However, Blacks gradually became aware that Canada had no such laws in place and began to look northward for opportunity in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As the influx of Blacks began to take hold because of the Canadian government’s offers of cheap land and fast-track immigration for certified farmers, some citizens of Alberta began to become wary of their Black neighbours. In fact, in 1905, some constituents petitioned their member of Parliament, Minister of the Interior Frank Oliver, to bar Blacks from Canada because of “the serious menace to the future welfare of a large portion of western Canada, by reason of the alarming influx of Negro settlers,” as documented by Historica Canada.

The Canadian government encouraged a great wave of western colonization and immigration

during the this era. However, a number of exclusionary immigration policies were in place during this period (such as the Chinese Head Tax), most of which were developed in response to prejudiced public opinion. In addition, the interior ministry (in charge of immigration) prioritized incoming groups by ethnicity, and in descending preference. On top of the list were the British and Americans, followed by northern and central Europeans. Jews, people from Asia, Roma people and Black persons were at the bottom of the list.

Thus the infamous Order-in-Council P.C. 1911-1324 was approved by cabinet but never presented to the House of Commons to be enacted into law. Although the law never passed, the Canadian government applied what one might call “disinformation tactics” that discouraged many Blacks from entering Canada. In fact, officials began to restrict access to immigration information and subjected Blacks to rigged medical exams at the border to discourage them. They sent official agents into Oklahoma to dissuade Blacks from coming by telling them that the racism in Canada was as bad as that in the U.S. and that the cold weather would be harmful to their health.

Despite these racist tactics, many Blacks did come to Alberta and settled in and around Edmonton from approximately 1905 through 1912. One such settlement, Amber Valley, is the subject of a special attention — including a documentary film — because it was the last community resulting from that wave of immigration. In many cases, the dissuasion tactics of the government worked and the normal pattern of waves of immigration from the same populations ceased, but not before there were Black settlements in Junkins, Campsie and Key-

stone in Alberta (now Wildwood, Barrhead and Breton respectively), and two settlements in Saskatchewan: Eldon and Maidstone.

The racist immigration policies and tactics of the Canadian government lasted until the early 1960s and the next great wave of Black immigration to Canada.

### **THE PROMISE OF IMMIGRATION (1950 – 1990)**

Although the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not start off with a bang for Black immigrants — who were still largely barred from entering Canada, even after a new *Immigration Act* was implemented — things got much better in the latter half. In 1960, then-prime minister John Diefenbaker introduced a Bill of Rights that led two years later to a new Immigration Bill being introduced in the House of Commons. The bill largely removed all previous discriminatory elements based on race or ethnic origin. However, European immigrants still enjoyed a wider range of opportunities for family repatriation than non-Europeans.

By 1970, Asians and Blacks accounted for 25 per cent of all immigrants to Canada. Over the next few years, there were many changes to the country’s policies — not the least of which were the Multiculturalism Act of 1972 and the Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program of 1974. These policies made Canada more appealing to newcomers, and the third wave of immigrants from English- and French-speaking Caribbean nations began.

This wave was initiated by the dissolution of the British Empire and the emergence of the idea of the Commonwealth, which encouraged Caribbean

Blacks to emigrate to Canada. Statistics Canada shows that by the mid-1960s, there were 15,000 Blacks of Caribbean heritage living in Toronto. Since then, hundreds of thousands of Blacks have come from that part of the world to Canada; by the year 2000, more than 600,000 blacks lived in this country. Predictably, Black Canadian immigrants have settled in provinces that best match the language of their country of origin; as such, as of 2001, 90 per cent of immigrants of Haitian origin lived in Québec, while 85 per cent of those of Jamaican origin lived in Ontario.

Interestingly enough, about 30 per cent of Black Canadians have Jamaican heritage, and another 32 per cent have roots elsewhere in the Caribbean or Bermuda. Youth is served well, as 60 per cent of all Black Canadians are under the age of 35. Ontario is home to 57 per cent of Black Canadians, while 97 per cent of Black Canadians live in urban areas. Black women in Canada outnumber black men by 32,000. According to the 2011 census, nearly one million Black Canadians – 945,665 people – classified themselves as having African/Caribbean heritage. Clearly, the population has dramatically changed in the last 50 years due to the more inclusive immigration policies of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Black community represents approximately 2.9 per cent of the Canadian population, and amongst them are the diverse representations of the African diaspora – of which there are nearly 300,000 citizens as of 2007. The African-Canadian community is mainly found in British Columbia, Ontario, Québec and Alberta. Those with African roots are the most predominant recent group of Blacks to immigrate to Canada, and mainly come from

Somali, South Africa, Ghana and Ethiopia.

## **THE COMMUNITY TODAY**

Regardless of our origins, or whether our ancestors came here in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, we all face the same issues today. The issue of racism still plagues our legacy as it did our forefathers. Our community still is underrepresented within Canadian institutions, the civil service and among elected officials. We are 50 per cent more likely to be unemployed, particularly amongst those under 35 years of age, and are overrepresented in the social service and penal systems. Statistics indicate that 41 per cent of the children and youth in the care of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto are Black. Yet only 8.2 per cent of Toronto's population under the age of 18 is Black.

The promises of immigration don't always come true – that you will find a better life in another community, or that existing populations will be welcoming to your presence. The challenges seem to be the same whether in 1783 or 2017.

# CANADA 150: THE JEWISH IMPRINT

MYER SIEMIATYCKI

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Myer is the founding past Director of Ryerson's Interdisciplinary MA Program in Immigration and Settlement Studies. His research and publications span the fields of immigration, urban and labour studies. Select achievements include the Distinguished Educator Award, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (1992); Ryerson Popular Professor Citation, Maclean's Guide to Canadian Universities (2003-2006); Ryerson University Faculty Service Award and Research Domain Leader, the Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration & Settlement from 2001 to 2006. In 2012, Siemiatycki was appointed as the first Jack Layton Chair, leading the inaugural Jack Layton Book Club and the Jack Layton School for Youth Leadership.

Imagine, if you can, a Canada without Jews.

No bagels. No Leonard Cohen. No Fannie 'Bobbie' Rosenfeld (Clue: Canada's Female Athlete of the First Half-Century, 1900-1950). No Yiddish words to express just the *bon mot* in either of our official languages (Clues: *chutzpah*, *klutz*, *shlock*, *schmooze*, *tchatschke*).

A diminished Canada it would be. Like every immigrant community in this country, Jews have their highlight reel of luminaries and legacies they have gifted to Canada. But of course, no individuals or peoples are exactly alike.

Perhaps what distinguishes Jews in Canada is what brought them here — and what they brought with them. Above all, Jewish immigrants came to Canada because they were unwanted in their country of birth. The largest waves of Jewish immigration to

Canada occurred from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Their migration was prompted by discrimination, persecution, and at its worst — by mass murder.

Wherever their place of birth before moving here, Jews had been the perennial 'other': different from the dominant national culture by religion, by rituals, by language and by constructed racialization. Jews of course were the iconic people of migration and diaspora. Dispersed into exile two thousand years ago, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were flourishing Jewish communities in dozens of countries around the world.

Without a homeland of their own, Jews became perhaps the world's first transnationals and multiculturalists. They yearned for both belonging in their country of birth, and return to their ancestral homeland. They adapted to the dominant culture of their country of birth, without forsaking ancestral

culture and tradition.

Jews, in short, had the ‘advantage’ of arriving in Canada with two thousand years of experience as outsiders. This would serve them well on arrival in a Canada wary of whether these newcomers belonged in this country. The clichéd but not inaccurate characterization of “the wandering Jews” captures a people’s collective experience, and nurtured among Jews a cultural disposition to both fit into a new society, and preserve the unique markers of their ancestral identity.

The most important contribution Jews made to Canada was precisely their commitment to be both Canadian and Jewish. This would not be an easy path to walk. Ultimately however, the journey would see both Canada and its Jewish community transformed.

Canada’s Jewish population has grown from under 3,000 in 1867 to over 125,000 in 1921, to just over 390,000 in 2011. The major waves of Jewish migration to Canada were occasioned by intensified persecution or insecurity abroad. Yet Jews quickly discovered that anti-semitism could also thrive in the cold environs of the *naivelt* (new world). Indeed, reaching back to French colonial times, non-Catholics were prohibited from settling in New France. Few Jews would arrive during Canada’s century as British North America (1760-1867), or the first 30 years following Confederation. Dire times for Eastern European Jews (pogroms, discriminatory laws, wars and deprivation) prompted mass migration to Canada from the late 1890s to 1914, and again in the 1920s.

The Canada these Jews encountered was not an

entirely different world from the one they fled. Here too politicians railed against Jews as unwanted aliens. Jews were barred or restricted in professional, occupational and educational pursuits. They were effectively excluded from buying homes or using public space in some areas. They could even be set upon by anti-semitic gangs unleashing urban riot (Tulchinsky 2008).

The most dire consequence of Canada’s unwelcoming attitude to Jews, of course, played out during the 1930s as Europe spiralled towards genocide of the Jews. As European Jews frantically sought haven abroad, and Canada’s marginalized Jewish community pleaded with government for a humanitarian response, “None Is Too Many” came the reply. Canada had the worst Jewish refugee admission record of any western country. Prime Minister Mackenzie confided to his diary the fear that there would be riots in the streets of Canada if significant numbers of Jews were admitted. After the Second World War, when 90% of Europe’s Jews had been murdered, Canadian public opinion and public officials remained opposed to admitting European Jewish refugees. Haltingly, the doors inched open in the late 1940s (Abella and Troper 1982).

Canada’s attitude to Jews over the first hundred years of Confederation was certainly not an isolated example of racism and discrimination. Policies towards indigenous peoples as well as other racialized immigrant groups — Chinese, South Asian and Japanese — reflect a Canada that would take some time to outgrow its narrow white, Christian, Anglo/French founding nations, exclusionary self-definition.

Strikingly, Canada’s refusal to be a haven from

Holocaust, would later serve as the country's inspiration to be more responsive to lives endangered abroad. In the late 1970s, as Vietnamese refugees fled their homeland in life-threatening search of new beginnings, Canada's immigration minister Ron Atkey was reading an early version of Irving Abella and Harold Troper's classic book *None Is Too Many*. Atkey resolved from this reading that his government would not repeat the humanitarian catastrophe of the 1930s. Sixty thousand Vietnamese 'boat people' refugees would be admitted to Canada. More recently, the Jewish and Vietnamese refugee experiences were again invoked to rally support for Syrian refugees (Goodspeed 2014).

The Jewish experience has also had a major impact on the place of minority identities within Canadian society. Along with other minorities, Jews fought back against discriminatory practices in employment, education, housing, and other spheres of everyday life. Indeed, James Walker has written of the "Jewish Phase" in the movement for racial equality in Canada (Walker 2002). From the mid-1940s to mid-1970s, Jewish organizations and voices actively challenged anti-semitism and other manifestations of racism. Jews allied with blacks to repeal discriminatory laws, and advance human rights legislation.

Jews were well positioned to be human rights advocates. Their religious tradition rang with prophetic calls for justice. Their lived experience abroad and in Canada was replete with injustice. They had established, in 1919, a national organization - the Canadian Jewish Congress - as a robust institutional voice for community advocacy. And Jews had another significant institutional platform - the Canadian labour movement, with Jews well repre-

sented in both membership and leadership ranks. From 1945 to 1975, Canadian Jews played a significant part in prompting a major turn in Canada's self-image, law and immigration policy. In transforming the Canada of Mackenzie King - British, Christian, wary of identities of religious, ethnic and racialized difference - into the Canada of Pierre Trudeau proclaiming universal human rights and multiculturalism (Troper 2010).

For two thousand years Jews had preserved and transplanted their distinct identity and culture in migration to dozens of different countries. Jews imprinted their identity on Canada as well - especially its urban landscapes. The St. Lawrence-Main neighbourhood of Montréal, the Ward in Toronto and Winnipeg's North End gave proof that Jewish newcomers had a culture they wished to preserve. As Jews moved to more affluent districts their synagogues, day schools, kosher eateries, and cultural centres relocated with them. Jews helped demonstrate that Canada could creatively contain different cultural codes.

Modern Canada has been exceptionally good for and to Jews. Comprising barely 1% of the country's population, Jews have made an over-sized contribution to many dimensions of Canadian life: the arts, sciences, professions, academia, economy, media, social movements, philanthropy and politics. Generally speaking, Jews have "made it" in Canada, and played a part in re-making Canada. They owe much, and have given much to this country.

Canadian Jews now constitute a highly diverse - even fragmented and fractious - community. Outsiders can too easily arrive at a simplified, even stereotyped impression of a minority community.

Canadian Jewry is a reminder there are multiple cultures within a so-called multicultural group. A host of factors differentiate Canadian Jews from each other. Five evident fault-lines are:

1. Religion (observant or secular);
2. Geographic and cultural ancestry (Ashkenazi – East European, or Sephardi – North African, or Mizrahi – Arab state origin);
3. Income (rich or poor);
4. Canadian politics (right-wing, centrist or left-wing); and
5. Israeli politics (hawk or dove).

Few Canadian groups have benefitted more from Canada's turn to inclusion and multiculturalism than Jews. As nativism and racism are on the rise again worldwide, Canadian Jews will be called upon to honour the national anthem's call to "stand on guard" for the country's values they helped to forge.

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## SHADES OF IMMIGRATION PAST: THE EXPERIENCE OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

AVVY GO & DORA NIPP

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The triumph of the Chinese in Canada is not just in overcoming barriers — throughout history — that were put in front of them, but also in the significant contributions they have made, and continue to make, to Canadian society.

Despite having arrived on the West Coast in 1788 to build a trading post, the Chinese are still often viewed by the larger community as a collection of newcomers, and have been treated as “perpetual foreigners” from the country’s inception.

In reality, the Chinese are not a monolithic group. They represent a potpourri of ethnicities and dialects; they encompass divergent social values, political views and creed beliefs; and they reflect virtually every region of the Chinese diaspora.

The one common thread that connects all Chinese in Canada, and indeed all immigrants to this coun-

try — irrespective of when they arrived or where they came from — is the legacy of the colonial history of Canada and its contemporary treatment of immigrants. The Chinese-Canadian community’s history is as long and textured as that of their European counterparts. Thousands of Chinese joined the Cariboo Gold Rush in 1858, not only as miners but as entrepreneurs who operated restaurants and laundries, and who supplied fresh vegetables in and around Quesnel Forks and Barkerville, B.C.

In 1868, the Americans negotiated an immigration treaty with the Qing Dynasty for a pool of labourers to build U.S. rail systems. China, in turn, provided the Canadian Pacific Railway with a ready labour force to complete the western portion of the CPR. “Chinese muscle”, more than 15,000 skilled workers, cut, dug and blasted their way through mountainous terrain from Alberta to B.C.

Meanwhile in Victoria and Vancouver, Chinese were embedded in every sector of the economy in their own businesses, as tailors, cigar/boot makers, farmers, domestic help, in cafés, restaurants and other food services.

But not all immigrants were treated equally, and there was a marked contrast between the experience of immigrants of European heritage — who were on a “preferred list” — and those of racialized people who had crossed the Pacific Ocean. The distinctions would grow to include immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa and Central and South America.

As soon as the last spike of the CPR was driven into the ground, Canadians demanded to expel the Chinese workers and to introduce a prohibitive tax on new arrivals. The Canadian government complied. *Chinese Immigration Acts* were introduced to curb Chinese immigration and to penalize those who were already here. The better-known restrictions are the so-called “head taxes” that imposed a series of levies on Chinese entering Canada, which rose from \$50 in 1885 to \$100 in 1901 to \$500 in 1903. From the head taxes, some \$23 million dollars filled government coffers. The levies were particularly insidious because the Chinese were the only group to be assessed this type of fee based specifically on race.

When even these measures did not stop the flow of Chinese immigration, the Canadian government enacted a series of Chinese exclusion acts that effectively barred all Chinese from entering Canada between 1923 and 1947. Meanwhile, Chinese in Canada saw many of their civil, economic and political rights either severely restricted or stripped

completely, such as the right to vote, the right to work in certain key industries (most notably mining), and the right to enter various professions, including law.

*The Chinese Immigration Act, 1923*, often referred to as the *Exclusion Act*, was repealed in 1947, but restrictions on Chinese immigration, such as family reunification, continued into the 1950s. For 24 years, under an Order in Council, the only Chinese immigrants who were allowed to enter Canada were the spouse and under-aged, unmarried children of Canadian citizens and permanent residents. In order to circumvent this harsh and racist immigration rule, many Chinese immigrants came to Canada as “paper sons” — that is, men who claimed to be the sons of Canadian citizens or immigrants, either by buying the birth certificate of another person or circulating the same birth certificate among prospective immigrants. In total, about 11,000 Chinese paper sons came in during that era.

The Canadian government expected the community to die a slow death, but instead — even though one-quarter of the Chinese had left Canada — the families that remained flourished during the Exclusion era. Like their parents, the Canadian-born generation was denied the right to vote. Undeterred by being disenfranchised and proud of being Canadian, 500 young Chinese Canadians enlisted during the Second World War. They were soldiers whom Canada didn’t want, yet they fought on behalf of Canada (albeit under British command.) At the end of the day, they won the right to vote. But day-to-day change would come slowly, and as it was for most racialized veterans, not even a uniform ensured service in white-only establishments.

This historical background, and the experiences of other racialized peoples, is necessary to understand the race-based context of Canada's immigration and refugee policies and of how past legislation and practices continue to impact racialized communities today. Despite our envious position as one of the most diverse nations in the world, the reality of Canada's immigration practices is in sharp contrast to how we are perceived externally.

Canada has come a long way since the first wave of Chinese immigration, but racism still plays a key role in framing Canadian immigration policy. Systemic barriers continue to pose significant challenges for Chinese Canadians and other persons of colour. For instance, recent research studies have confirmed the racialized poverty that exists in Ontario today – the destination of over 60 per cent of the country's newcomers. A United Way of Greater Toronto study, *Poverty by Postal Code*, sums up the situation best. Between 1981 and 2000, poverty rates among non-racialized communities in Toronto decreased by 28 per cent; over the same time period, poverty rates among racialized communities increased by 361 per cent. In the City of Toronto, Chinese families are twice as likely to live in poverty, as compared to their white counterparts.

Canada's workforce trends toward the non-recognition of foreign-acquired skills, and invalidated credentials contribute to the double whammy of being racialized and poor. Upon arrival in this country, many Chinese immigrants, like other racialized newcomers, find themselves confined to brown-collared ghettos – forced into low-pay, low-prestige service positions.

Modern restrictions on immigration in-take access points create racial barriers for economic-class immigrants as well as independent applicants. While many Canadians are uncomfortable talking about race, Canada's previous "preferred list" has been subsumed under another strategy based on seemingly innocuous business considerations. On a per capita basis, though, there are far more visa offices in Europe than in Asia, Africa and any other region of the world. Fewer resources mean more processing time in these non-preferred regions, even for those who are qualified. For instance, it would take up to four years for someone to apply as an independent immigrant from Beijing. An applicant with the same qualification could receive an immigration visa several months after he or she submits an application from, say, the Canadian Embassy in Germany. The unequal distribution of resources serves to control, if not quite deter, immigration from the under-served countries.

In 2012, the government moved from the "point system" to targeted sectors to attract immigrants with certain skill sets, notably language skills. In the same year, the federal Skilled Workers Program was eliminated and those who had applied before 2008 were summarily advised that their applications and fees would be returned. Some 280,000 people were affected by the decision. In 2014, the Canadian government eliminated both business-class and entrepreneur-class applications, which had been a boon to wealthy prospective Chinese immigrants.<sup>1</sup>

Without question, the most controversial of the systemic barriers is the one that faces family-class

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p.18

immigrants. The various restrictive *Chinese Immigration Acts* were intended to discourage Chinese families from settling in Canada. Family reunification then, as it is today, remains a category in which race and racialization — *still* — play a significant role in public discourse and policy narratives.

In 1978, “family reunification” was one of the core objectives of immigration legislation. The majority of the immigrants who came to Canada every year entered as family-class immigrants. Since the early 1990s, however, the percentage of family-class immigrants has steadily declined. Increasingly, our immigration selection policy is geared towards the skilled labourers and professionals who come in as independent class immigrants, as well as semi-skilled and unskilled workers who enter with temporary work permits. Since 2010, temporary workers have overtaken permanent residents as the main source of Canada’s labour force.

As well, increasingly restrictive financial eligibility requirements effectively bar many low income Canadians from sponsoring their families from abroad. Conveniently, because members of racialized communities and recent immigrants are more likely to live in poverty, the financial eligibility requirement also has a disproportionately negative impact on these communities. Since immigrants from Asia and other parts of the Global South are most likely to apply through the family-class stream, and are also more likely than immigrants from European background to adopt an extended family structure, the reduction of the family-class quota and the restrictive definition of family-class membership have the added effect — intended or otherwise — of limiting the number of immigrants from these countries. Thus, the Canadian govern-

ment manages to kill three birds with one stone with its redefined family-class immigration policy.

Many Canadians are proud of Canada’s diversity. As a nation of immigrants, Canadians hail from all corners of the globe, reflecting every sector, all ethnicities, abilities, ages, classes, genders and creed beliefs.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2011, Chinese were the second largest “visible minority” group with over 1,324,700 or four per cent of the total population. While earlier generations came primarily from the southern province of Guangdong and later Hong Kong, today Chinese arrive from all parts Asia, the Caribbean, South America and South Africa. Canada may be their second, third or even fourth home.

Regardless of whether one is several generations Canadian or a newcomer, this collection of diverse communities has had a significant impact on Canadian society.

Canadians of Chinese heritage have and continue to play an integral role in shaping Canada and the results of those efforts are omnipresent. The earlier generation forged through and dismantled systemic barriers so that those who followed are now found in every facet of Canadian economic, social, cultural and political life. But this is not entirely a story of triumph, because the harsh reality of institutional inequities has left many racialized people, including those who are Chinese, struggling to survive. According to 2001 figures from Statistics Canada, more than 25 per cent of Canadian Chinese adults had a university degree, but they were also less likely to be employed.

Immigration, in spite of racist policies, has fundamentally changed the Canadian socio-economic and political landscape. Yet contemporary immigration policies are still prohibitive of immigration of racialized people. The irony in this case is that Chinese-Canadian communities have made inestimable contributions to the development of this society. Just think what Canada could have been had its immigration policies not been racist.

# THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS TO CANADIAN SOCIETY

TIMOTHY J. STANLEY

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Canada today exists as a globally connected, multi-cultural country, because of the contributions of Chinese immigrants. Throughout its history, it has been economically connected to China and these ties have built on the connection that immigrants from China bring. Once in Canada, these immigrants, like many other Canadians, fought for the right to participate in Canadian society on equal terms. It is because of these struggles that Canada today is a democratic country in which all of its citizens enjoy equal political rights.<sup>1</sup>

The presence of a Chinese population in Canada is not new; the relatively tiny Canadian-born popu-

lation includes the children of recently arrived immigrants and people whose Chinese ancestors arrived in what is today Canada before the country existed. Indeed, today the second generation of Chinese Canadians is 150 years old (Won Alexander Cumyow, the first Canadian-born Chinese, was born in 1861).

This historical influx of Chinese immigrants includes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Canada. Public life has been shaped by people such as the former governor general, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, and the renowned philanthropist and former Lieuten-

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<sup>1</sup> Key works on the histories of the Chinese in Canada remain, 李东海 or David T.H. Lee (Lee T'ung-hai), *加拿大華僑史* [A History of the Overseas Chinese in Canada] (台北 [Taipei]: 中華大典編印會, 民國56 [1967]); Edgar Wickberg, ed., *From China to Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982); Peter S. Li, *The Chinese in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998). For recent work, see also Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-racism and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011); Alison Marshall, *Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).

ant Governor of British Columbia, the Honourable David See-Chai Lam. Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the federal government exempted merchants from the head tax so as to not to interfere with China trade, Chinese immigrants have had a huge influence of Canada's international trade, bringing billions of dollars into the Canadian economy. The Vancouver merchant Yip Sang, for example, was the chief agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway and its steamship line, enabling the company to operate on both sides of the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> Like those from many other groups, immigrants from China have literally built the country with their blood, their sweat and far too often with their tears. They have transformed the foods Canadians eat, the products we use and our connections to the world.

Connections to China have shaped much of Canadian history. It was China that the people who arrived from Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries were looking for. This misguided quest among European explorers continued well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the ill-fated Franklin expedition shows. China had been the stuff of European dreams for centuries. The semi-mythical Cathay was the subject of the first book published in European vernacular languages, Marco Polo's *Travels*. To the 18<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher, Voltaire, China was

the model for his ideal of enlightened despotism.<sup>3</sup> In the mid-1800s, European navigators were still trying to find the Northwest Passage to China. Because trade with China (and through Canada between China and Europe) was essential to making the CPR economically viable, the federal government was careful not to interfere with the China trade when creating its racist restrictions against the Chinese during the 1880s.<sup>4</sup> Even today, political leaders looking to lessen Canadians' dependence on trade with the United States, invariably end up looking to China as the next important place to be.

After English and French, the languages that Canadians today speak most frequently are Chinese ones.<sup>5</sup> Although Chinese is often viewed as a "foreign language," people have been speaking dialects of Cantonese and Hakka in what is now Canada continuously since the 1858 Fraser River Gold Rush. Indeed Chinese speakers arrived in many parts of British Columbia at the same moment that English speakers arrived — and in some parts before speakers of European languages.

The first Chinese reached B.C. in 1788, when fifty Chinese carpenters and shipwrights from Canton were brought to Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island by the English sea captain and fur trader, John

2 TIMOTHY J. STANLEY, "YIP SANG ((Ye Sheng in Mandarin), also known as Yip Chun Tien (Ye Chuntian) and Yip Lin Sang (Ye Lin," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed January 22, 2017, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/yip\\_sang\\_15E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/yip_sang_15E.html).

3 JONATHAN D. SPENCE, *The Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998).

4 TIMOTHY J. STANLEY, "John A. Macdonald, "the Chinese" and Racist State Formation in Canada," *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry*, 3,1 (2016): 6-34.

5 This is based on the 2011 Household Survey, which is notoriously inaccurate and if anything underreports the population. One arrives at slightly different figures if one considers Chinese as an ethnic or racial origin (visible minority in census terms) or by language. Chinese languages include Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka, Taiwanese, Fujienese and Tibetan languages, as well as "Chinese n.o.s." or "Chinese no other specified." See Tamara Hudon, *Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report – Visible Minority Women* (Statistics Canada, 1916), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14315-eng.htm>. See also, Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada: Topic-based Tabulations*, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/tbt-tt/Index-eng.cfm>.

Meares, on his second voyage to the area. Meares was seeking sea otter pelts, furs that Captain Cook's men had earlier discovered were much valued in China. The triangle trade between England or New England, the Pacific Northwest, and China that Meares and his contemporaries developed is what first brought Europeans to the Pacific Northwest of North America. These Chinese workers built a fur trading post at Nootka Sound and a trading vessel, the sloop *Northwest America*. When the Spanish drove Meares' vessels out of the area the following year, the Chinese workers were stranded in Nootka Sound, becoming the first permanent resettlers (i.e., immigrants) to the northwest coast.<sup>6</sup> However, Meares' trading post established the British claim to Vancouver Island and the Pacific Northwest over that of the Spanish. In effect, Canada has a west coast today because of these Chinese "immigrants."

People who come to Canada from other parts of the world often show that it is possible to do things differently; so, too, immigrants from China showed that it is possible to enter the territories of Indigenous Peoples without colonizing them. Immigrants from China repeatedly showed that it was possible to establish relations with Indigenous Peoples that were respectful and mutually beneficial. During the 1858 Fraser gold rush, the Nlaka'pamux of the Fraser canyon blocked European miners from entering their territory until Governor James Douglas negotiated a treaty. However, they allowed Chinese

miners to pass. The difference was that the Chinese miners asked their permission, rather than assuming that they could just occupy the land. There is significant evidence to suggest that these respectful relations continued in later years. By 1901, one-sixth of the Chinese men who were living in conjugal relationships in Canada had First Nations women as their partners. Many Musqueam, the Indigenous People of Vancouver, have Chinese ancestors.<sup>7</sup> Through much of the 20th century, Indigenous people and Chinese people in British Columbia – both denied the right to vote – worked together to create a draft resistance movement.<sup>8</sup>

By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese immigrants had spread across Canada and into Newfoundland. Every town of any size had its Chinese restaurants or Chinese laundries. Many prairie towns had Chinese-owned grocery stores. At a time when working-class Canadians could not afford much in the way of services, Chinese entrepreneurs were supplying their needs. In some of these communities, the Chinese workers lived lives of quiet desperation and loneliness, in many others they established full links to fellow citizens, building their lives together.<sup>9</sup>

But by far the most important contribution of Chinese immigrants to Canada was their struggle for full democratic rights. People often say that the Chinese get to be Canadian because they built the

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6 GEORGE I. QUIMBY, "Culture Contact on the Northwest Coast, 1785-1795," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 50, 2 (Apr. - Jun., 1948): 247-255

7 JEAN BARMAN, "Beyond Chinatown: Chinese Men and Indigenous Women in Early British Columbia." *BC Studies*, no. 177 (2013): 39-47, 50-64, 225.

8 MAR, *Brokering Belonging*, 126-130.

9 See ESP. MARSHALL, *Cultivating Connections*. See also BAN SENG HOE, *Enduring Hardship: The Chinese Laundry in Canada* (Gatineau, Québec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2003).

railway. In fact, the Chinese workers who toiled on the CPR were professional railway builders who left the country once the project was finished. Very few of the Chinese in Canada can trace their roots back to the railway builders.<sup>10</sup> However, from their inception in Canada, Chinese immigrants fought for their rights to participate fully and equally in Canadian society. This included building self-defence and mutual-aid organizations starting in the 1860s, leading to the Chinese Benevolent Associations and community associations of today. By the 1900s, Chinese immigrants were forming political movements that eventually fed into the Chinese nationalist movement that has remade China as the world's second largest economy and a global player in its own right. Through court cases, boycotts, and eventually through their sacrifices as people who fought for a country that did not give them rights, the Chinese in Canada eventually won the unrestricted right to vote in 1947. The Chinese Canadian struggle for justice continued into the beginnings of this century in the redress movement on the Chinese head tax.

Despite these contributions, there are recurring panics in Canada today that the Chinese who come to Canada threaten "Canadian" ways of life (by driving up housing prices in metro Vancouver, for example) or that Chinese immigrants do not share "Canadian values."<sup>11</sup> People express these views

despite the fact that people from China enabled the creation of the very communities such critics claim are threatened.<sup>12</sup> The Chinese roots of people and things Canadian are well worth remembering if we wish to maintain Canada as a democratic and multicultural country.

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10 TIMOTHY J. STANLEY, "Playing with 'Nitro': The racialization of Chinese Canadians in public memory," in Peter Hodgins and Nicole Neatby (Eds.), *Settling and unsettling memories: Essays in Canadian public history*. 215-234 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

11 See, for example, KATHARYNE MITCHELL. "Education for Democratic Citizenship: Transnationalism, Multiculturalism, and the Limits of Liberalism." *Harvard Educational Review* 71, 1 (2001): 51-78.

12 Richmond, BC only exists today because Chinese immigrant workers built the dykes that keep the sea out of the area. Despite this, Chinese immigrants are blamed for destroying the city: see, JOHN LAW and FAN JUN, "The Destruction of Richmond, British Columbia, through Chinese Migration," Council of European Canadians, <http://www.eurocanadian.ca/2015/08/destruction-of-richmond-british-columbia-through-chinese-migration.html> (accessed January 22, 2016).

# “THIS IS TICKLISH BUSINESS”: UNDESIRABLE RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND CANADIAN IMMIGRATION AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR<sup>1</sup>

STEVEN SCHWINGHAMER

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Between the 1870s and the 1960s, Canadian immigration authorities struggled with including or excluding immigrants belonging to conservative Christian religious groups based on perceptions of their desirability or undesirability. Canada's effort to exclude these religious groups had two peaks. The exclusionary efforts targeting the Peace Churches during and after the First World War, including revisions to the *Immigration Act* in 1919, have been the subject of extensive study. The second peak of exclusion falls after the Second World War, and is less well-known. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration embarked on a program to exclude “old order” and other conservative Christian denominations from Canada.

In this paper, the term “conservative religious group” is used to cover a range of Christian denominations. The internal policy discussion of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, including drafting of regulations, correspondence with overseas officers and exchanges between government departments, was often arranged so that matters related to conservative Mennonites, Hutterites, Doukhobors, the Amish and other smaller sects were all grouped together. The conflation is troubling as it risks confounding the very distinct community histories in Canada, as well as obscuring the striking differences in motivations and circumstances for the groups in their migrations to and from Canada. It also elides significant differences within each of these religious groups, such as between Russian,

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1 The title quote is drawn from a marginal note from GR Benoit, Ottawa ON, 2 December 1955, written on Acting Chief, Admissions Division to GR Benoit, Chief Operations Division, Ottawa ON, 1 December 1955, in “Hutterites and Mennonites – General File”, Library and Archives Canada, RG 76 Vol 855 File 554-22 (hereafter File 554-22), Part 2

Swiss and Dutch Mennonites. Despite these problems, following the approach of the immigration officials has value as the department appeared to view the civic and regulatory issues in common between these groups as more significant than their differences of language, geography, politics and theology. The civic issues arose because of the groups' religious practices, which included some or all of: pacifism, communal authority over property, education apart from public schools, reluctance to vote or take on full citizenship, and a rejection of certain technologies, as well as unfamiliar conventions of dress, language, and interaction outside the religious community. While imperfect, the untidy grouping was useful for policy as it offered a category for denominations thought less likely or unlikely to establish themselves successfully in Canada, including integration into mainstream Canadian political and civic society.

The prospect of successful integration was an important regulatory tool for prohibition: the *Immigration Act, 1952*, stipulated that immigrants could be prohibited or limited in admission based on their “probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.”<sup>2</sup> In this context, the practices of some conservative religious groups as described above seemed a barrier to integration within mainstream Canadian society. Pacifism had been an important marker of undesirable difference during

and after the First World War, but social change meant that this was no longer true by the 1950s. Instead, the language of the act, of assimilation and civic integration, became the crux of exclusionary arguments. For instance, in 1962, confronting a possible wave of Amish settlement from the United States, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration seized on reports that the Amish sought to “escape the school laws,” suggesting that members of the community would not accept ordinary structures of Canadian society.<sup>3</sup> The department sought out and disseminated news that supported this impression, such as reports of an Amish man intending to come to Canada from the United States who had been “incarcerated because of his reluctance to comply with municipal and federal tax laws.”<sup>4</sup>

In 1956, Acting Deputy Minister C.E.S. Smith offered another argument against Amish admission as immigrants to Canada. Smith argued that towns and businesses near Amish settlements suffered or even disappeared due to the lack of business from the largely self-sufficient Amish communities.<sup>5</sup> His argument also reflected a bias that was commonly held by Canadian immigration authorities during the 1950s: they viewed the non-observance of school laws and modern sanitation practices as proof of an inability to assimilate. Further, an immigrant could be refused if it seemed they would not “permit the use of machinery or other

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2 Library and Archives Canada, Statutes of Canada, *An Act Respecting Immigration*, 1952, Ottawa: SC 1 Elizabeth II, Chapter 42, Section 61(g)(iv).

3 Acting Director of Immigration to Deputy Minister, Ottawa ON, 4 December 1962, in File 554-22 Part 4.

4 External Affairs to Immigration, Ottawa ON, undated (early December 1962), in File 554-22 Part 4.

5 Smith to JW Pickersgill, Ottawa ON, 17 February 1956, in File 554-22 part 1.

equipment to keep their property up-to-date and progressive.”<sup>6</sup> This emphasis on technological compliance among immigrants was also evident in the immigration report of the 1955 *Canada Year Book*. Written just as Canada admitted its millionth postwar immigrant, the summary of immigrant arrivals in Canada includes meticulous notation regarding technology adoption in households established by postwar newcomers. Apparently, of the 62,160 homes established by postwar immigrants, 32,000 had power washing machines, 52,000 had radios, 26,000 had mechanical refrigerators, and 18,000 had electric vacuum cleaners.<sup>7</sup>

These reservations about integration reflected a deeper antipathy towards the group among immigration authorities. One internal memorandum of 1964 remained in circulation among senior immigration bureaucrats through 1965, and was striking in its language:

...I can only repeat the recommendation that a person who: refuses to swear allegiance to Canada, refuses to defend Canada in time of war, denies his children the opportunity for advanced education, does not exercise his right to vote, having no interest in the development of the community as a whole, does not fit reasonably into the existing social pattern and whose beliefs prevent him from so doing, and lives and wishes to perpetuate an archaic form of life, be regarded as incapable

of successful establishment in Canada within the meaning of the Regulations and refused admission on those grounds.<sup>8</sup>

The reference to education had particular significance for some religious communities. Immigrants from Central and South America were viewed as having less valuable farming experience than those from the United States, and educational attainment for applicants from those regions was also understood to be much lower. Mennonites from Central and South America had a connection to Canada, via emigrations following both world wars, but the education criterion was used to exclude some applicants from this group, including those recommended for admission by field officers.<sup>9</sup>

The Department of Citizenship and Immigration also expected that the children of immigrants would attend public school through Grade 10, which exceeded the contemporary requirements of several provinces at the time. At that time, religious communal farmers often started their children working in agriculture earlier than Grade 10. Elven Shantz of the Mennonite Central Committee suggested to authorities at the Immigration Branch that the educational undertaking be modified to accommodate this by adding, “when this becomes the law of the province.”<sup>10</sup> The department rejected this, with the Assistant Deputy Minister, R.B. Curry, argu-

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6 Paul Malone, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to Ambassador of the United Kingdom in Paraguay, Ottawa ON, 12 January 1956, in File 554-22, part 2.

7 Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *The Canada Year Book 1955* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1955), 166.

8 Assistant Deputy Minister to Deputy Minister, Ottawa ON, 21 June 1965, in File 554-22 part 5.

9 J.K. Abbott, Director, Canadian Service to Director, Special Services, Ottawa ON, 28 February 1966, in File 554-22 Part 4.

10 I.R. Stirling, Regional Director Central Region to J.K. Abbott, Director Canadian Service, Toronto ON, 14 October 1965, in, in File 554-22 Part 5.

ing that the “intention behind the proposal that the Amish agree to allow their children to go to grade 10 through the normal educational system was to provide their children with a better educational level for establishment in the normal community. If the Amish are not prepared to accept their proper responsibilities as Canadian residents, they cannot be considered as suitable immigrants.”<sup>11</sup> As shown by these strict applications of regulation, sentiment against Amish admission was rife in the postwar immigration department. In 1962, Jean Boucher, Director of Citizenship, pointed out that it was “doubtful that...we could reject members of the Amish faith as such,” but that “we would be justified in refusing admission to persons...destined to be only political parasites on the political body.”<sup>12</sup>

In the specific case of conservative Mennonites in Central and South America who wished to come to Canada, some of whom were Canadian emigrants, officials in the immigration department discussed using their discretion to exclude applicants for immigration as well as requests for second-generation citizenship. Director of Immigration C.E.S. Smith, in 1952, instructed Arthur Blanchette, Vice Consul with the Canadian Embassy in Mexico, that “...it was not considered that the privilege of resuming Canadian citizenship should be extended to the Mennonites, now over 22 years of age, who were

born in Mexico.”<sup>13</sup> This followed the advice of Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Laval Fortier to colleagues at External Affairs that “...we cannot overlook the fact that Mennonite migrations arise out of the unwillingness on their part to accept the responsibilities of citizenship. Consequently, this Department does not look with favour on the exercise of this Ministerial discretion.”<sup>14</sup> This negative use of discretion extended outside the ranks of immigration officials. J.E. Duggan, the Registrar of Canadian Citizenship, notes in his correspondence to C.E.S. Smith, the Acting Deputy Minister, that “we have not been inclined to be overly sympathetic towards Canadian Mennonites who went to Mexico for permanent residence. For instance, we have not considered favourably applications for delayed registration of births of children born to these Mennonites since January 1, 1947.”<sup>15</sup> J.W. O’Brien, a passport officer with the Department of External Affairs, elaborated on a similar kind of discretionary exclusion in 1954. He argued that the children of Canadian Mennonites relocated to Mexico should be included on their passports because if the officials refused, they might inadvertently “induce [the parents] to register the births so that the children will become Canadian citizens, something we do not wish.” O’Brien goes on to acknowledge that “this may be somewhat jesuitical and would, perhaps, be very hard to defend.”<sup>16</sup>

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11 RB Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister to Minister, Ottawa ON, 30 December 1965, Canadian Embassy, Mexico City to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mexico, 25 February 1966, in File 554-22 Part 5.

12 Jean Boucher to Acting Director of Immigration, Ottawa ON, 2 August 1962, in File 554-22 Part 3.

13 Smith to Blanchette, Ottawa ON, 6 February 1952, in File 554-22 Part 1.

14 Fortier to Leslie G. Chance, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa ON, 26 Jan 1952, in File 554-22 Part 1.

15 J.E. Duggan to C.E.S. Smith, 21 September 1956, Ottawa ON, in File 554-22 Part 1.

16 J.W. O’Brien to Consular Division, Ottawa ON, 27 April 1954, in Library and Archives Canada, RG 25 Vol 2486 File 102-AUM049, “Activities of Mennonites.”

These negative sentiments towards conservative religious immigrants went beyond the use of discretion and resulted in instruments of policy. As early as the mid-1950s, concerns about conservative religious immigrants taking up the duties and responsibilities of citizenship led the Department of Citizenship and Immigration to devise a form intended to screen immigrants for integration into Canadian society. The IMM 463 form was intended for use by officers in the Americas. It gathered a minimal set of contextual information (name, address, citizenship, religion, ethnicity) and prioritized three questions:

1. Do you intend to apply for Canadian citizenship when eligible?
2. If so, will you exercise the franchise (right to vote) in Canada?
3. Will you send your children to the officially recognized schools in the province in which you will reside?

Any applicant that gave negative or qualified answers to these questions was not to receive a visa and their application was reviewed by the Chief of the Admissions Division.<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, the form was meant to “cull out members of religious sects who are unwilling to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.”<sup>18</sup> The form was also

viewed to be a tool for pressure in the event immigrants were discovered to not be in compliance after their arrival in Canada, as the immigrant could be found to have misrepresented themselves in the immigration process, a ground for possible (albeit unlikely) deportation.<sup>19</sup>

Where the IMM 463 form was completed in a satisfactory fashion — that is, the applicants affirming that they would become citizens, vote, and follow school laws — even such cautious officials as Laval Fortier recommended admission.<sup>20</sup> Fortier elsewhere was careful to argue against broad inquiries into the religion of immigrants, if for no better reason than the criticism the department might face if “charged with discrimination against a religious group.” However, in that context, Fortier continued to argue for a rigorous implementation of the regulations, and in particular the exclusions that were calculated to bar entry based on religious beliefs seen to be incompatible with assimilation and integration into Canadian society.<sup>21</sup> Those exclusions were found in section 4.66 of the *First Immigration Manual*. Section 4.66 affirmed that “membership in any sect of religious organization, as such, is not a bar to admission to Canada,” but also required officers to use group membership to determine admissibility by saying that if an immigrant belonged to “communities whose members are not permitted to hold land other than on a communal basis or a group or community whose members have other

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17 IMM 463 and accompanying instructions, c. 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

18 Smith to Benoit, Ottawa ON, 27 January 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

19 GR Benoit, “Instructions respecting Form IMM 463 to be completed by immigrants in Mexico and South America”, Ottawa ON, 24 January 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

20 Fortier to Minister (Baskerville? 1959), Ottawa ON, 3 November 1959, in File 554-22 Part 3.

21 Fortier to Minister (Baskerville? 1959), Ottawa ON, 5 May 1959, in File 554-22 Part 3.

customs or practices which would militate against their integration...he is not to be visaed, or receive a medical card or letter of pre-examination.”<sup>22</sup>

As seen in the language of section 4.66, the department was anxious to avoid the appearance of practicing an exclusion based on religion. Following this, the IMM 463 form was presented as a tool to use with all prospective immigrants from Mexico and South America, such that “there will be no discrimination between applications.” Despite this, the accompanying instructions made it clear that an immigrant’s ethnic origin and religion would indicate when an officer should screen on the basis of citizenship duties. Finally, the author of the instructions, G.R. Benoit, Chief, Operations Division for the Immigration Branch, noted that agents abroad should be advised not to “present such questionnaire to classes of British subjects and others to whom it might appear a gratuitous insult to their intelligence.”<sup>23</sup> Within a decade, the problematic nature of this discriminatory screening became clear within the department, with the IMM 463 described internally as “offensive without serving any useful purpose.”<sup>24</sup>

The IMM 463 form was criticized and challenged internally, but this did not indicate a change in the position of the department regarding the integration

or desirability of conservative religious immigrants. For example, the Acting Deputy Minister of Immigration, H.M. Jones, argued in 1963 that he had strong reservations about the value of the Amish as immigrants. However, Jones “did not wish to set up restrictions aimed at one religious group,” and so each Amish applicant was to be processed “strictly according to normal selection criteria.”<sup>25</sup> For some applicants, this was a subtle reintroduction of barriers. Until this time, Amish and other conservative religious applicants had been permitted to use fingerprinting in lieu of having a photograph taken for their immigration applications. Personal photography contradicted the religious beliefs of a number of conservative religious groups, including the Amish. Through late 1962 and early 1963, this re-introduction of compulsory photography was confirmed. Further, every Amish application was to be forwarded to Ottawa rather than being resolved locally, as was the norm.<sup>26</sup> In 1966, the department softened the photographic requirement and the values test required of conservative religious immigrants was weakened, as the Assistant Deputy Minister removed the questions regarding applying for citizenship and voting in Canada. However, the department insisted on written undertakings enforcing the Grade 10 educational requirement discussed above, and increased internal monitoring against mass movements of undesirable immi-

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22 Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Immigration Manual Chapter 4 Section 4.66, as excerpted in File 554-22 Part 3.

23 The emphasis is in the original, which is: GR Benoit, “Instructions respecting Form IMM 463 to be completed by immigrants in Mexico and South America”, Ottawa ON, 24 January 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

24 Marginalia, Jean Boucher to Acting Director of Immigration, Ottawa ON, 2 August 1962, in File 554-22 Part 3.

25 H.M. Jones to the Minister, Ottawa ON, 1 May 1963, in File 554-22 Part 4.

26 Acting Chief Admissions, Circular to Admissions Staff, Ottawa ON, 27 February 1963, in File 554-22 Part 4; Acting Chief Admissions to Acting Chief Operations, Ottawa ON, 7 March 1963, in File 554-22 Part 4.

grants, as well as affirming an examining officer's authority to refuse undesirable members of religious groups or sects.<sup>27</sup>

These policies met with some internal resistance, as some immigration officials did find Amish settlers to be successful farmers, albeit using lower-technology methods. Further, some immigration officers did not agree with the appraisal of their superiors regarding Mennonite integration. In one instance in 1964, the immigration Officer-in-Charge at Niagara Falls made a strong argument in favour of the integration of Mennonites in reference to applications of three families from Paraguay. He pointed out that while the original immigrants did stay with farming, the subsequent generation were well educated and participated in many professional fields, as well as in politics, boards of trade, and education. He was satisfied that they were desirable immigrants. The officer took the unusual rhetorical step of asking an administrator directly, after offering two pages of contrary evidence, “In view of the foregoing, do you consider that these people are members of a religious sect referred to in 4.66 of the Manual?”<sup>28</sup>

Immigration officials were circumspect in discussing these religious exclusions. Laval Fortier captured the attitude of the department when he requested in 1959 that “instructions be issued to

our staff officers to be on the lookout to prevent the admission of people of this sect.” However, Fortier had veered too far into plain language, and the Director of Immigration, W.R. Baskerville, inserted a marginal note that he discussed the instruction with Fortier, and that Fortier “does not mean members of this sect should be refused entry, but that we try to prevent undesirable members of the sect...”<sup>29</sup> The department had successfully defined undesirability to include elements of religious observance for “old order” and conservative religious immigrants, such as seeking their own schools and not voting if that would implicate them in military power, so this statement mainly had value in maintaining ambiguity in the documented policy. Canadian immigration authorities used a lack of written policy to refute complaints about refusals and exclusions, and so often treated even discussions of this exclusion with colleagues as *sub rosa*. For instance, Paul Malone (writing on behalf of Lester Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs) told the British Ambassador to Paraguay, “I should be grateful if you would treat my explanation of the reason for the use of Form IMM 463 as confidential insofar as the general public is concerned.”<sup>30</sup> However, the department was aware of the risk of attempting to conceal their reasons for refusal, as G.R. Benoit warned in discussing the use of the IMM 463 form, “[t]he more we attempt to hide such matters the more vulnerable we are to Star Chamber charges.”<sup>31</sup>

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27 B.A. Gorman, Director, Special Services, circular memo, Ottawa ON, 12 April 1966, in File 554-22 Part 6; Director of Policy and Planning to Acting Director, Support Services, Ottawa ON, 7 June 1966, in File 554-22 Part 6.

28 W.C. Fischer to Zimmer, Central Region Administrator, 9 December 1964, in File 554-22 Part 5.

29 Fortier to Baskerville, Ottawa ON, 22 April 1959, in File 554-22 Part 3.

30 Paul Malone, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to Ambassador of the United Kingdom in Paraguay, Ottawa ON, 12 January 1956, in File 554-22, part 2.

31 G.R. Benoit, “Instructions respecting Form IMM 463 to be completed by immigrants in Mexico and South America”, Ottawa ON, 24 January 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

It is also worth noting in this connection that many of the memoranda that argue the department would not discriminate against a specific religious group are titled with the name of a denomination, defining the policy by group membership even if other language was used in the regulations themselves.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, Canadian immigration officials viewed conservative religious groups, and in particular the Amish, as undesirable immi-

grants. These immigrants were singled out for more rigorous screening, and likely refusal, based on religious prejudice. This was in spite of declarations of the department that membership in a religious sect was not a barrier to entry. The Acting Deputy Minister, C.E.S. Smith summarized the underlying assumptions of the department about conservative religious immigrants, saying of the Amish that they were “neither suitable, adaptable or desirable and cannot satisfy the provisions of the Immigration Act.”<sup>32</sup>



Assembly Hall, Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia, July 1965. Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Ken Elliott Collection [R2013.1362.31]

32 C.E.S. Smith to J.W. Pickersgill, 17 February 1956, in File 554-22 Part 2.

DEPARTMENT OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION - IMMIGRATION BRANCH  
CANADIAN IMMIGRATION QUESTIONNAIRE  
To be completed in detail by applicants for admission to Canada

Surname	Given Names (in full)	Married	Single
		Widowed	Divorced
		Separated	

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Citizenship	Religion	Ethnic Origin
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Do you intend to apply for Canadian Citizenship when eligible Yes  No

If so, will you exercise the franchise (right to vote) in Canada Yes  No

Will you send your children to the officially recognized schools in the province in which you will reside?  
Yes  No

Assets (describe whether real property, business, cash in bank, etc.)

Description	Value

Proposed mode of travel \_\_\_\_\_

If your application is approved, at what port do you propose to enter Canada?  
\_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

IMM. 463 Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

# SOUTH ASIAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

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As a nation, Canada is a relatively new immigrant country, first occupied by French and British settlers although the Aboriginal populations have a long history. The country was built by immigrants who have come during different periods from all continents. Racist immigration policies kept non-white immigrants out during the large immigration movements at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and especially discriminated against Chinese and Indian immigrants, even though the latter were part of the British Empire. Ironically, people from South Asia are now the largest source of immigrants to Canada. According to the 2011 census data, out of a total population of 33,476,688, nearly five per cent (1,615,145) of Canadians are of South Asian origin, making them the largest visible minority group in Canada (Statistics Canada 2011).

With the growth in their population, the contribution and influence of the South Asian community

has also grown considerably in recent years. Presently, 19 South Asian Canadians represent different constituents in the Parliament of Canada, and four are cabinet ministers in the Justin Trudeau government. The South Asian community has been active both in federal and provincial politics. They have made their mark as writers and artists, scientists, university professors and teachers, law enforcement professionals, lawyers, engineers and doctors, as well as social workers, philanthropists and community organizers. They have won distinctions in a broad range of fields, including the arts (e.g. Booker Award), sciences (e.g. Killam Award) and business (several CEOs), as well as recognition of outstanding achievement with the country’s highest civilian honour, the Order of Canada.

The term South Asian denotes a geographical identity rather than a homogenous group. Originating in the sub-continent of India, they include people from

India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Nepal. They are very heterogeneous in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, religion, and caste and class differences. They have settled largely in the provinces of Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, but are concentrated in metropolitan Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Montréal and Edmonton.

## IMMIGRATION

Attracting immigrants to Canada was a priority of the government after Confederation in 1867, and although the policy was technically “open,” the preferred category of people was of European origin. Non-white people were not explicitly barred from entering Canada, but several measures were used to keep them away, an important one being the excuse that people from warmer climes were “unsuitable for Canada’s climate.”

Although there is not much information on the early history of South Asians in Canada, it is known that a handful of Sikhs first came to Vancouver in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1907 and 1908, about 5,000 South Asians entered Canada (Jain 1971), and most of these immigrants found jobs in railway construction, the lumber industry and on farms (Ramcharan, 1982). During this era several Canadian provinces had laws restricting the civil rights of Indians, preventing them from voting or holding public office. They were given jobs that were socially and culturally lower than whites in status and prestige. Since then, the immigration pattern of South Asians has shown major variation according to changes in immigration policies.

Anti-Asiatic feelings in the white population and racist immigration policies at the federal level

impeded the entry of South Asians to Canada, so that only 760 migrated between 1920 and 1943, and there were only 6,111 people from the sub-continent in 1942 (Jain, 1971).

The earliest attempt by the government to restrict immigration of people from India was the Continuous Journey regulation in 1908. Not allowing ships to stop between the country of origin and Canada was an indirect way to prevent Indians from arriving here as the Canadian government could not explicitly have a law preventing immigration of persons who came from elsewhere in the British Empire.

Notwithstanding the “continuous journey” requirement, in May 1814 some Indians hired a Japanese vessel called the *Komagata Maru* and arrived in Vancouver harbour from Hong Kong without stopping en route. The 376 passengers (Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims) were not allowed to land on shore. After several of them had died on the ship due to lack of food and unsanitary conditions, it returned to India, where 20 more people died in a clash with the colonial police. These exclusionary policies were aimed at Asians at a time of massive immigration from Europe.

Discriminatory feeling towards people of colour failed to see their complexity and heterogeneity, and despite their diversity, they were all lumped together under the umbrella of “Hindu race” — although the majority of early South Asians belonged to the Sikh religion. More recently referred to as South Asians, they are given a geographical identity and defined as belonging to a “visible minority” by the federal government. The “visibility” of South Asians references their darker skin colour, although the range

of skin colour may vary from very light to very dark, and racial classifications include Caucasoid and Mongoloid categories.

With the end of British rule in India in 1947 and the birth of East (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan, South Asians were eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship, given the right to vote and the right to hold government office. In the post-1945 era, immigration was considered an important means of economic growth. Economic incentives guided the removal of discriminatory clauses in immigration regulations progressively in 1952, 1962 and 1967, at which time the Immigration Act ended racial criteria for the selection of immigrants. It introduced the point system focusing on personal, social and occupational characteristics such as health, education and professional skills qualifications, with an emphasis on well-educated and highly skilled immigrants. Highly skilled South Asians benefited from the point system, and some brought over their parents and other family members under the family unification clause. Over 100,000 South Asian immigrants, mostly professionals, entered Canada between 1967 and 1975. However, during the 1970s, many people of South Asian origin also came to Canada from countries such as Uganda, the Caribbean islands and Fiji. In the 1980s, the South Asian population started coming in larger numbers directly from the sub-continent. Tamils from Sri Lanka made up the fifth largest group of immigrants to Canada in that decade, making Canada home to the largest Tamil population (140,000) in the Western world. A number of people of South Asian origin sought refuge under the refugee class, especially after refugee reforms in 2010.

Traditionally, immigrants from South Asia are

closer to the Anglophone rather than the Francophone community due to their British colonial experience and knowledge of English. While there were pockets of French colonial settlements in India, most South Asians do not know French, although they tend to be multilingual because they speak several South Asian languages. Learning a new language as adults is simply adding an extra struggle to their already difficult experience of uprooting themselves from a country of origin to a Western culture rather different from their own. It is not surprising that they tended to go to English-speaking provinces where they did not feel the need to learn French, as they could get by with knowledge of English.

## QUÉBEC

In Québec, the assertion of nationalism and majority status of the Francophone community in the 1960s had a significant impact on South Asians. Several policy measures were adopted, such as language legislation that made French the official language and mandatory for education and employment; Québec's role in the selection of "independent immigrants," which gives preference to French speakers; Québec's intercultural policy, which allowed diversity within a Francophone framework while Canada's Multiculturalism Act aims at providing equal opportunity to all Canadians (although *de facto* English is the norm). Additionally, Québec's focus on secularism has affected social attitudes towards South Asians of different faiths.

## SOUTH ASIANS TODAY

Generally, in Canada, despite the fact that some South Asians occupy positions of prestige in vari-

ous walks of life, as visible minorities South Asians face problems in employment. The population has higher levels of education, but lower levels of employment than majority white groups. South Asian women in particular face greater problems than men and are often underemployed even with high levels of education.

Immigrants from South Asia today can no longer be classified along ethnic and cultural lines. Their complexities cross-cut and overlap several characteristics. For example, Hindus could be from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or Nepal; Muslims are mostly from India, Pakistan or Bangladesh; Catholics are mainly from India or Sri Lanka; Sikhs originate in India, although they may have come to Québec via East Africa and other areas.

Globalization and technology make the experiences of today's immigrants very different from that of early immigrants. The multi-directional movement of various types of peoples (e.g. migrants, refugees, asylum seekers); the rapid flows of technology (e.g. Skype and social media); easy access to information through the digital world (e.g. e-magazines, newspapers); financial transactions in the globalized market (Ghosh, McAndrew & Babei, in review) make today's diasporic communities exist in a world of 'in-betweenness' (Srinivasan and Pyati 2007: 1735) that enables them to negotiate cultural forms and identities. Most South Asian immigrants are highly dependent on technology, not only to keep in touch with their families but also to participate in the cultural life and social networks of their countries of origin so that traditional hierarchies of ethnicity and class are now possible to maintain in Canada.

Once barred from coming to Canada, South Asians find that its openness to people of all cultures, its compassion in taking in refugees and its strong democratic values make Canada perhaps the most attractive country for them to immigrate to in today's chaotic world.

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# SETTLING NORTH OF THE U.S. BORDER: CANADA'S LATINOS AND THE PARTICULAR CASE OF QUÉBEC<sup>1</sup>

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The case of Latin American Canadians offers an exceptional opportunity to examine and compare how minorities are constructed and transformed in different host societies. Minorities are shaped differently by their societal context, and Canada is especially relevant in that regard because of the existence of two main dominant cultural environments — grounded on political and territorial configurations — within the same country: an English-language Canadian majority at the national level and a French-language Québécois majority in its second most-populated province. Indeed, Canada's Latin Americans can provide unique insights into diasporic citizenship, as this rapidly growing population settles and grows as part and parcel of

a multiethnic immigrant society, one with a highly decentralized state and a constitutionally-enshrined bilingual character, and marked by the presence of a large number of Aboriginal communities whose self-determination claims are recognized on the basis of their own distinctive culture. Not surprisingly, compared to most other countries, Canada projects a weaker core identity and its collective life is framed, to a large extent, by “nations within a nation” phenomena. Furthermore, given the increased linkages across the Americas, Canada holds a very particular and often overlooked position as a major country that is not contained in the United States-Latin America oppositional system that underlies how the hemispheric reality is

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1 The survey results cited in this article were obtained through a research project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Standard Research Grant 410-2010-2120, held by the author in 2010-2013). The focus group data was collected in collaboration with Sébastien Arcand (HEC Montréal), with support from the Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Québec through a grant from the Québec Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity.

commonly understood. That is why Canadian Latin Americans can help us think about the Latino diaspora formation in ways that are not necessarily tied to a strong, single nation-state or subject to a sole hegemonic cultural framework.

Latin Americans in Canada have settled over several decades, not gradually but rather through several waves. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, most immigrants from Latin America came to Canada for political reasons (i.e. fleeing military dictatorships in South America and civil wars in Central America). However, since the 1990s, and even more clearly during the following decades, most Latin Americans in Canada have been admitted under the “economic category”: 70% in 2012. This means, in general terms, that they have been granted permanent residency on account of their prospective “employability” as “skilled workers” in Canada, a condition evaluated on the basis of their level of education, demonstrable work experience in “eligible occupations”, and sufficient knowledge of official languages, among other factors. However, Latino Canadians’ more middle-class origin does not necessarily translate into a higher socioeconomic status once they settle in the host society: Latin Americans show a higher prevalence of low income than other immigrant groups (except Black and Arab Canadians) and, interestingly, this gap is much wider in Québec. As a minority group, Canadian Latinos show one of the lowest average employment incomes: \$ 26,241 (Canadian dollars, 2006), compared to \$ 28,231 among Black Canadians, \$ 29, 441 among Arab Canadians, and \$ 31,102 among South Asian Canadians. However, unemployment rates are lower among Latin Americans (9%) than among Blacks (10.6%) and Arabs (13%), a fact that seems to confirm qualita-

tive evidence suggesting that Latin Americans in Canada may be more prone to accept lower wage (and sometimes undeclared) jobs. This pattern also appears among highly educated Latin Americans (with university diploma): their average income is \$ 42,636 (\$ 32,836 in Québec), while the average income for all minority workers with university diploma is \$ 47,113 (\$ 39,582 in Québec).

If we take the narrowest definition possible and consider a “Latin American” any person born in a Latin American country (that is, first generation immigrants), we see that this group represents just about 6% of all immigrants in Canada. However, its growth rate is roughly three times higher than that of the overall immigrant population (32 vs. 10% between 1996 and 2001; 47 vs. 12.7% between 2001 and 2006; 49 vs. 12.9% between 2006 and 2011), due to the increasing share of Latin American newcomers, most of them having arrived from Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and El Salvador during the last decade and a half. Interestingly, Latin Americans represent almost 11% of all immigrants in Québec, proportionally twice the size of this community at the national level. Given such inflow, the Latino population in Canada with respect to national origins reflect a much wider diversity than what we see in the United States, where 63% of Hispanics declare a Mexican origin, 9.3% a Puerto Rican origin, and 3.5% a Cuban origin. In Canada, the three main nationalities — Mexican, Colombian, and Salvadorian — only represent, respectively, 17.8, 14.2, and 11.9% of the total Latino population. Let us also consider that seven out of ten Colombians (the predominant origin among first generation Latino Canadians) immigrated after 2001, making it a markedly “young” community. In a larger timeframe, the growth rate of the Latino popula-

tion in Canada is even more striking: for example, between 1971 and 2011, the number of individuals with Spanish as their mother tongue swelled more than ten times both in Toronto (7,155 and 75,305 respectively) and in Montréal (8,210 and 82,935). In brief, Latino Canadians are a relatively newly settled, still coalescing group, very diverse in terms of national origins, and rapidly growing, even more so in the French-speaking province of Québec.

Data from the 2006 census shows that two-thirds of individuals who indicated a Latin American ethnic origin (in a question about ancestry) also identified themselves as members of the Latin American community (in a question about so-called “visible minorities”, i.e. non-white). The other third was distributed as follows (under categories defined by Statistics Canada): 29% “not a visible minority”, 2% “Black”, 1% “Aboriginal”, and 2% “multiple visible minority”. But these proportions vary quite widely when national origins are taken into account. Immigrants who declared a Central American national origin (Salvadorians, Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Hondurans) are more prone to see themselves as members of the Latin American minority (80% or more), and those from the Southern Cone (Paraguayans, Brazilians, Argentinians, Uruguayans) generally do not identify themselves as such (43% or less). Venezuelans and Mexican are somewhat in the middle (51% to 53%). Another difference emerges from the comparison between first-generation Latin Americans (foreign-born) and their offspring (the so-called second generation): while 83% of Latin American immigrants declare themselves minority members, only 56% of second generation Latin Americans identify as such. It goes without saying that these results are impossible to compare to data from the United States. The concepts and

social representation (of “race”, “Latino”, etc.) are extremely different, as are the policy and methodological approaches to ethnic diversity deployed by government agencies in either country. But the contrast may still be useful as a way of exploring the diverging forms of “Latino-ness” developing in the North American context. On the other hand, it is also possible to speculate that the Latino reality in the United States is so massively important – and becoming more so in the near future – that Canadian Latinos will eventually gravitate towards the U.S. model of pan-ethnicity. If Anglo-American multiculturalism and even the racial-relations perspective gains ground in English-speaking Canada, what will happen with Québec’s Latinos? Will they follow the continental trend, will they assimilate into the *Québécois* society, or will they create a different mode of diasporic identity? Could language proximity play a role in those cultural and political affinities?

Survey data on Latin Americans in Canada shows that the relative weight of those who declare Spanish as their mother tongue is affected by the place of residence: almost a third (32.1%) of Canadians who have Spanish as their “first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual” (as defined by Statistics Canada) live in Québec, but the proportion of immigrants born in Latin America in that province is 28.5% (if we exclude Portuguese-speaking Brazilians). The 5-percentage point gap could be evidence of a higher rate of first language retention of Spanish among Latin Americans in Québec. The French-speaking *Québécois* show, on their part, a predilection for Spanish when they chose to learn a second language. On the other hand, an intriguing phenomenon transpires when we take into account the self-percep-

tion of Latin Americans in Québec as members of a “visible minority”: immigrants who were born in a Latin American country and live in Québec represent 27.8% of the total Latin American immigrant population nation-wide, but they account for 30.8% of all first-generation “ethnic” Latin Americans in the country, as measured by Statistics Canada. This 3-percentage point difference may point to a stronger sense of belonging to a “minority” within the French-language province. In other words, the sense of community is affected by the way in which the host society conceives in-group and out-group relations. Cultural and language proximity does not necessarily translate into an erasure of inter-group boundaries.

Data drawn from focus groups shows that Latin American immigrants in Québec are generally aware of the idea of a “cultural affinity” between them and the Francophone society. Sometimes they see it as real (e.g. language proximity, Catholic background, etc.), and sometimes they discard it as a myth (the *Québécois* would be as “cold”, “superficial”, “materialistic”, and “individualistic” as other North Americans, as opposed to Latin Americans). Ironically, when Québec is considered as culturally and politically close to Latin America, some Latin American immigrants express a preference for the “Anglo” world, because of its more dynamic economy, broader individual freedoms, and pragmatic outlook (while Québec would be more like Latin America: corrupt, bureaucracy-laden, ideologically-driven, etc.). In their view, “Anglos” would be more open to “Others” than “Francos”, and would offer more opportunities to minorities and immigrants. Latin Americans are also keen on noticing that community “ghettos” — i.e. too much “multiculturalism” — are not socially acceptable in Québec,

and integration (including language learning) is considered a civic duty. The reality of trilingualism (Spanish as mother tongue, plus English and French as both necessary for employment) is sometimes seen as a burden, but many consider it an advantage, particularly for their children. But, even if they criticize Québec’s shortcomings, Latin Americans still see value in their cultural affinity with Quebeckers: the French-language population usually holds “positive stereotypes” about Latinos, whom they recognize as reliable, hard-working, law-abiding citizens (especially when compared to other groups, less favorably perceived).

In conclusion, if a North American perspective needs to take into account a two-country reality (U.S. / Canada), it can be argued that, in fact, there are actually three host societies to consider. Canada has a national multicultural policy in effect since the 1970s, while Québec has established an official “intercultural” policy (closer to assimilationist/secularist European models), linked to a more collectivist, state-centered public culture. Canada has a federal immigration policy based on a points system open to all applicants with an emphasis on economic factors, while Québec handles the selection of its own “skilled workers” (70% of all immigrants) with a similar system but with different weighing given to language skills (giving preference to the French language) and other priorities (such as the provincial labour market needs). Overall in Canada, the top country sources of immigration in 2012 were China, the Philippines, India, Pakistan and the United States, while in Québec the top sources were China, France, Haiti, Algeria, and Morocco. Naturally, given these national origins, the largest minorities in English Canada are South Asian and Chinese, whereas in Québec the largest are Black,

Arab, and... Latin American. The most spoken non-official languages in English Canada are Cantonese, Punjabi, and Mandarin, while in Québec the most spoken non-official languages are Arabic and... Spanish. In short, on the basis of current immigration trends, even putting aside language and institutional differences, Québec's very social fabric sets this province apart from all others, and Latinos may well play a significant role in its future evolution.

## LEAVING A LAND WITH LIMITS AND TAKING OWNERSHIP OF AN ADOPTED NATION

FARID ROHANI

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We can have all the statistics, all the data, and all the numbers to capture the state of multiculturalism in this country – and perhaps hope the information will sway us one way or another when it comes to the many issues swirling around immigrants and immigration policy in Canada. Yet at the end of the day, what must not be missed when summing up the character of our country are the stories of those immigrants and how they've contributed to our society. It's all about how they take ownership of the nation that adopted them, how they grew to serve and continue to grow as Canadians.

To leave a place that had limits and to venture across the globe – travel the oceans to the place that is not limited – that is my story in Canada. I share it in memory of all those who helped me be part of Canada.

My father told me he did not see a future for us in

Iran; he had a feeling that things were not safe for us as members of the Baha'i faith, and felt a wave of change was brewing. So he shipped me off at the age of 11 to Victoria, B.C. to live with my uncle's loving and welcoming family. They had just moved from Montréal (because my uncle felt the weather was too cold) to Victoria, where he hoped to settle in what he imagined was Canada's California.

As a young boy, arriving in a strange place is never easy – no knowledge of the games your new peers play, what TV shows are popular, what music made you cool. It took a while to settle in. Neighbourhood children would watch across the hedges and think of us immigrant kids as headhunters (TV shows like *Gilligan's Island* didn't help). We were looking back, wondering why they were staring at us. It didn't take long for Mrs. Reilly to come over and introduce herself and her kids, and the friendships we developed with that family last to this day. Every

memory is a great treasure.

What was firmly etched in my mind at the time were the stories of the sacrifices made by the generation that came before. They taught me, when I first arrived in Canada, about how they had fought in a war to prove that no race is superior to another, and that hard work and perseverance would define you in your new country. This was my first lesson in what is a primary Canadian value: that no race or religion is above another, and any prejudice we hold is a betrayal of the sacrifices made to build this country.

It didn't take long to fit in, to make friends and glide through high school, to find a girlfriend and to learn that you were part of the community. Those early days were all great memories of friends and of high school adventures.

What my late uncle entrenched in us was that this is *our* new country. We must be productive, not be passive; we must plant roots, contribute, go forward. And his most valuable lesson was to take ownership of this country as our own, to care for it as our home and be part of its growth, even in a small way, to speak up if we saw injustice and to not to stand still.

After high school I travelled throughout the United States for two years. I learned many valuable lessons that only traveling teaches, and saw many differences between the U.S. and Canada. In South Dakota, I saw the First Nations in a different light, completely different from my perceptions derived from cowboy movies. In Texas, Nebraska and California, I saw the kindness Americans are known for, but never felt the same as I did in Canada.

Everyone questioned where I was from; in Canada, I had not had that happen for a long time.

When the Iranian Revolution forced my parents to move to Canada, I had to come back to this country.

My father arrived with an envelope in his pocket that contained the warrant for his arrest and execution – number 31 in a list of 50, the very first order by a revolutionary court that listed the Pahlavi regime's most wanted. My father and the others were wanted for no other reason than their relationship with the previous regime. He told me that half of those on the list had, in fact, been executed, that one or two of his friends on the list were assassinated in Paris, and that he felt safe only in Canada. He said there was no time to waste, that we must plant roots and get out in the community.

He started right away and worked hard. He always said productive people are always productive, no matter where they are, adding that we had come from a great culture and that we must prove it by setting a great example and adding something special to this country that has welcomed us. Slowly he settled in, my sisters married and life moved forward. First-generation Rohanis married other Persians. My grandmother's wish was that we would marry a Canadian with blue eyes. It didn't take long for Saied, my cousin, to marry Gretchen Edwards, the daughter of a Canadian admiral, and make her wish come true. They have beautiful kids.

I met my wife at a memorial for her uncles, who had been killed by the Iranian regime. These three family members had been given the option of recanting their Baha'i faith, and were even given a chance to go back to their roots by becoming Jew-

ish. They had refused.

Her family chose Canada over Europe, and all of them moved here. I was the first Gentile to marry into their family. That was 32 years ago, and it was from my perspective an intermarriage — different cultures forced into exile accepting the fundamental inclusive nature of our new country, that we are all Canadians.

Circumstances play an important role in one's life — in personal interactions, social life and business. Our life in Canada was no different.

I was lucky to be introduced to a great Canadian, the late Milton Wong, and we talked at length about the contributions of immigrants to the formation and evolution of this country. From trade, to cultivating the farms in the Prairies, to the development of the railroad that finally united east and west and defined Canada's landscape.

His passion for the First Nations was contagious; it didn't take long for me to see them as a great treasure that we in Canada were lucky to have access to. Their philosophy and welcoming culture is what John Ralston Saul was to later define as the roots of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the third pillar of the history of Canada alongside the English and French cultures.

I set a goal for myself to always appreciate the contributions of the First Nations to a country that welcomed me and my family, that permitted us to prosper, and to never forget their sacrifices — resolving to remain true to their history as the first people of Canada.

Our family portrait has changed dramatically over the many years that I have been married. My brother married a Japanese-Canadian girl, my mother an Italian man, my son a Dutch girl. My daughter is dating a German Canadian, my nieces and nephews have all intermarried, and we have come to live what I value — to have realized that diverse ethnicity is part of the Canadian identity, and what keeps us together is the love we all have for each other and for the country that brought all of us together.

Being an immigrant has allowed me to succeed in many ways. The very basic thing that immigrants share is the experience of taking a chance, of seeing opportunities where others may not — to transplant yourself, to face odds that are stacked against you, and to overcome them and not give up. These are what immigrants do best, and that risk-taking is what creates innovation.

The value placed on education and giving back to the community, on getting ahead by hard work, of keeping your head down and proving your worth with results are also what immigrants can relate to.

I never had that sense of entitlement that some Canadians of European descent hold and is evident now more than ever. I never complained about being treated like a foreigner. I never felt any racism: I didn't allow for it. I knew this was my country as much as it was the country of those who were here before me.

I spoke and wrote about things not politically correct, I worked to remove barriers, to challenge taboos, to go to the heart of finding the common bond between us, to go a mosque or a synagogue, to

attend a temple or a shrine — all as a Canadian with no hyphens, to find and embrace our differences, and to find the unity in our diversity.

Canada's economy is small, its population is small and its land is vast. This fragile balance between accommodating the social change and the need to invite more people to maintain our population, grow our economy and care for an aging population must be dealt with by tapping the wisdom that maintains the bridges that were entrusted to us by previous generations. That harmony is something we must pass on to those who follow us.