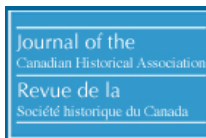


## Journal of the Canadian Historical Association Revue de la Société historique du Canada



# Canada's Invisible Nationality Policy: Creating Ethnicity, Managing Populations, Imagining a Nation

Evgeny Efremkin

Volume 24, numéro 2, 2013

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1025080ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1025080ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

The Canadian Historical Association / La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0847-4478 (imprimé)

1712-6274 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Efremkin, E. (2013). Canada's Invisible Nationality Policy: Creating Ethnicity, Managing Populations, Imagining a Nation. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada*, 24(2), 263–310. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1025080ar>

Résumé de l'article

Le présent article se penche sur le processus de construction de l'identité nationale aux frontières du Canada dans les années 1930. À partir de l'examen des formulaires de déclaration douanière (manifestes) des passagers arrivant d'outre-Atlantique au port de Québec dans la première moitié des années 1930 ainsi que des dossiers de la Gendarmerie royale du Canada (GRC), j'avance que la bureaucratie canadienne, guidée par des vues darwiniennes de race et d'ethnicité, et les craintes des bourgeois anglophones à l'égard de la modernisation attisées par les forces de l'industrialisation et de l'urbanisation ont conduit à un système complexe de catégorisation de la population canadienne selon des critères établis d'ethnicité, de nationalité et de race. En me fondant sur une méthode d'analyse critique du discours, j'affirme que pour « connaître » et contenir sa population croissante, l'État canadien a élaboré une politique de nationalité rigide, bien qu'invisible. Même s'il n'y avait pas de politique officielle sur la nationalité au Canada dans les années 1930, les fonctionnaires, les médias et les agences de sécurité fonctionnaient dans un mode non seulement très sensible aux différences d'origine nationale et ethnoraciale de la société, mais travaillaient en plus à amplifier ces divisions dans le but de maintenir l'ordre social ainsi que le statu quo sur les plans culturel, social et économique. Dans cet article, je prétends que les autorités frontalières étaient directement responsables de l'élaboration de représentations précises des populations ethniques du Canada, tout cela dans le contexte d'un besoin impérieux d'avoir prise sur la population d'une société qui se modernisait rapidement, où les communautés canadiennes devaient être « connaissables », connues et reconnaissables dans le discours officiel.

# Canada's Invisible Nationality Policy: Creating Ethnicity, Managing Populations, Imagining a Nation\*

EVGENY EFREMKIN

## *Abstract*

*This article explores the process of national identity construction at Canadian borders in the 1930s. Based on the examination of customs declaration forms (transatlantic ship manifests) of arriving passengers at the port of Quebec in the first half of the 1930s, as well as Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) files, I suggest that the Canadian bureaucracy, informed by social Darwinist views of race and ethnicity, and the Anglophone bourgeois concern over modernization brought upon by the forces of industrialization and urbanization, developed an elaborate system of categorization of Canada's population according to prescribed criteria of ethnicity, nationality, and race. Utilizing critical discourse analysis, I argue that in efforts to "know" and control its growing population, the Canadian state developed a rigid, albeit an invisible nationality policy. Although there was never an official nationality policy in place in Canada in the 1930s, public officials, the media, and security agencies not only operated with an acute awareness of national and ethno-racial differences in the society, but also worked to reinforce such divisions in attempts to maintain the social order and the cultural, social, and economic status quo. In this work, I imply that border officials were directly responsible for constructing specific representations of Canada's ethnic populations, all within the context of an impending need to control the population of a rapidly modernizing society, where the Canadian community had to be made "knowable," familiar, and recognizable in the official discourse.*

---

\* I would like to thank Alexey Golubev, Rhonda Semple, Emmanuel Hogg, and Jane Freeland for their valuable comments. Special thanks are offered to Roberto Perin for his suggestions, support, and guidance, and to late Varpu Lindstrom, whose unwavering support made this project possible. I am forever in debt to my parents, Anatoly and Inna, and I am thanking Dinara and Alana, my wife and daughter for their inspiration and motivation to create.

## Résumé

*Le présent article se penche sur le processus de construction de l'identité nationale aux frontières du Canada dans les années 1930. À partir de l'examen des formulaires de déclaration douanière (manifestes) des passagers arrivant d'outre-Atlantique au port de Québec dans la première moitié des années 1930 ainsi que des dossiers de la Gendarmerie royale du Canada (GRC), j'avance que la bureaucratie canadienne, guidée par des vues darwiniennes de race et d'ethnicité, et les craintes des bourgeois anglophones à l'égard de la modernisation attisées par les forces de l'industrialisation et de l'urbanisation ont conduit à un système complexe de catégorisation de la population canadienne selon des critères établis d'ethnicité, de nationalité et de race. En me fondant sur une méthode d'analyse critique du discours, j'affirme que pour « connaître » et contenir sa population croissante, l'État canadien a élaboré une politique de nationalité rigide, bien qu'invisible. Même s'il n'y avait pas de politique officielle sur la nationalité au Canada dans les années 1930, les fonctionnaires, les médias et les agences de sécurité fonctionnaient dans un mode non seulement très sensible aux différences d'origine nationale et ethnoraciale de la société, mais travaillaient en plus à amplifier ces divisions dans le but de maintenir l'ordre social ainsi que le statu quo sur les plans culturel, social et économique. Dans cet article, je prétends que les autorités frontalières étaient directement responsables de l'élaboration de représentations précises des populations ethniques du Canada, tout cela dans le contexte d'un besoin impérieux d'avoir prise sur la population d'une société qui se modernisait rapidement, où les communautés canadiennes devaient être « connaissables », connues et reconnaissables dans le discours officiel.*

In the 1920s and 1930s, the political borders of the Canadian state, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, were similar to what they are today — surrounded by the Pacific, Arctic, and Atlantic Oceans, and bordered by the United States to the south. The same, however, cannot be said about Canada's cultural frontiers. In the past two centuries large transatlantic waves of human migration routinely altered the demographic composition of Canada's populations. This impending necessity to study Canadian history in transition makes national borders an ideal place for examining the

process of national identity<sup>1</sup> formation. The following paper adopts critical discourse analysis in examining the ways in which Canadian border officials documented incoming immigrants, returning residents, and visitors to Canada. The strategy reveals an idiosyncratic process of reproduction of social and political domination in text and talk.

This paper examines the way Canadian public officials, border agents, the Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP), and the mainstream media socially constructed the Canadian population. Embodying dominant discourses based on accepted popular and scientific wisdoms about race, gender, and ethnicity, these powerful agencies, with significant financial and political resources at their disposal created labels for different segments of the population, in the process delineating the social, political, and cultural contours of the Canadian national identity. Representations imbedded in these discourses helped the symbolic élites to imagine a Canadian national community through an elaborate and complex system of population classification and management. By defining an exclusive place for certain segments of the population in the national social formation, they also defined what it meant to be Canadian. This sort of ethnic imagination at Canadian entry points, and the corresponding social, political, and ideological control of Canada's diverse populations it facilitated, was in many ways a predecessor of Canada's official multicultural policy, which, in the 1970s, involved an elaborate process of division of the Canadian population into different ethnic categories.

The present argument and analysis is a product of a somewhat accidental development. I was sifting through the Canadian passengers lists at the Library and Archives Canada, looking for North American Finns who were returning to Canada from the Soviet Union throughout the 1930s.<sup>2</sup> For fear of being detained, migrants would rarely disclose they were returning from the Soviet Union. In addition, the fact that the ships on which they came arrived from Great Britain or Germany made it difficult to detect who was actually coming back from Soviet Karelia, and who was returning from a short visit to Finland. I had to read between the lines, and the more manifests I encountered, the more I began to notice specific trends in the way border officials were documenting and classifying passen-

gers into prescribed categories. The categorization and treatment of incoming immigrants, returning residents, and visitors to Canada depended on several interconnecting factors that reflected official constructions of identity that were based on fluid notions of class, ethnicity, gender, family status, nationality, and place of birth.

Based on the examination of the aforementioned transatlantic ship manifests (Canadian passenger lists) and RCMP files, I argue that in the early twentieth century Canadian bureaucracies, reinforced by the media and bourgeois culture, began to enforce strict categorization of its population according to racial, ethnic, and national criteria. The paper examines the process by which national and ethnic identities were created, negotiated, and renegotiated across social contexts and levels of scale. It looks not at the way newcomers were incorporated in Canada, but rather how the Canadian “incorporation regime” was itself culturally produced,<sup>3</sup> and demonstrates how through representation of certain non-charter groups as foreigners and “outsiders,” public officials and the economic and political élite constructed a version of an “insider” whom they envisioned as the ideal member of the national community. The central purpose of the paper is not necessarily to argue that public officials strove to maintain Canada British in the first half of the twentieth century, which they certainly did, but rather to demonstrate the capabilities of the sovereign to redefine and renegotiate the meaning of the ‘friend’ and the ‘stranger’ in the official/public discourse.

Ethnicity is a matter of contrast, and thus inherently relational. To assume an ethnic identity (or to assign one to someone else) is to distinguish ‘us’ from ‘them’ on the basis that ‘we’ share something that ‘they’ do not. Knowledge and reality, in the view of social construction theorists, are produced in order to provide a framework of understanding. With this in mind, I suggest that the Canadian state manufactured ethnic identities at the nation’s entry points. By ‘hailing’ passengers in social interactions, that is through the classification of incoming passengers’ into prescribed national, ethnic, and racial categories, the state and border officials outlined the parameters of ‘foreign’ as opposed to Canadian identities, of citizens as opposed to aliens. This cultivation of ethnic and racial categories denotes a process of subject formation — the articulated categories

were not 'natural,' but rather imaginary and symbolic, constructed to reflect the dominant ideologies shared by the Canadian political, economic, and cultural élite.

Once I prove that national, racial, and ethnic identities were being refashioned and renegotiated on Canadian national borders in the 1930s, in the second half of the paper I move on to suggest that such a process did not occur in a vacuum, but carried with it a practical purpose for the state. Classification of the population into 'knowable' groups served a specific function, making the population, visible, accessible, familiar, and thus manageable. Despite the absence of an official nationality policy, the Canadian state operated with an acute awareness of the ethnic, national, and racial differences within the country. Ethnic management practices came in handy for Canadian officials during periods of heightened, real or imagined, internal, or external security threats to the stability of the social order or national integrity. From the Easter Riots in Québec in 1918 to the repression of socialists and radicals throughout the 1920s and 1930s, to internment of enemy aliens during both world wars, the Canadian state again and again reverted to ethnic management practices to subdue potential arrest, rally public support, or pacify public hysteria.

This paper draws on the works of Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, and Louis Althusser. I use the Foucauldian concept of governmentality and its emphasis on the population as an object of governance to explain the processes of national identity formation in Canada. The bureaucratization of this fast modernizing society allowed the state to observe, evaluate, document, and classify its populations. The production of knowledge, argued Foucault, and its association with power, formed subjects who embodied dominant discourses through organized practices, such as mentalities, rationalities, and techniques.<sup>4</sup> The dominant discourses, in turn, facilitate the diffusion of ideologies shared by the ruling élite. Gramsci's *Weltanschauung*, the prevailing worldview, is particularly useful here, as it depicts a dominant ideology that perpetuates the social, cultural, and political status quo. His theory of cultural hegemony explains that cultural norms in a society are dictated by symbolic élites, and must not be considered natural or inevitable, but as artificial social

constructs, whose main aim is to manufacture consent and legitimacy of state power.<sup>5</sup>

Althusser's concept of "Ideological State Apparatuses," which among other things include the media and the educational system, in turn provides a convenient framework to decipher the procedure of propagation of received ideas. To outline the process of subject formation, I exploit Althusser's concept of "hailing" or "interpellation."<sup>6</sup> For Althusser, the existence of subjectivity signifies the presence of ideology. Subjectivities are formed through contact of the individual with the society and the state. Althusser explains the process of transformation of an individual into a subject through the example of a policeman calling on a person walking on the street. When the individual turns around and responds to the call, he or she becomes aware of the policeman and of state power. Once the person recognized himself or herself as the subject of that hail, his or her subjectivity takes form.

## **Creating Ethnic Populations**

The 'discovery of population' marks the origins of modern governments. As Bruce Curtis demonstrates, in the process of state formation, the state centralizes authority over knowledge production, and, through capturing "matter of national interest" numerically codifies social relations.<sup>7</sup> By looking at census makers, Curtis argues they configure social relations in keeping with particular political and cultural objectives and interests in order that such relations may be known and governed.<sup>8</sup> In other words, the census seeks to tie people as state subjects and citizens to official identities within a determined territory in order to rule them.

As Foucault has shown, it is through visibility that modern nation-states exercise controlling systems of power and knowledge, or what he called power knowledge.<sup>9</sup> Increased visibility means the state can more easily track or manage its population through their lives. In turn, subjectivities are conditioned by structural forces that "act upon" individuals,<sup>10</sup> in the process classifying them into particular social, political, economic, and cultural categories. Concepts such as majority, minority, immigrant, and native are then socially

constructed. Associated with distinctive minority statuses classified into categories such as ethnicity, race, and gender, immigrants' identities and subjectivities are "made" in the process of cultural production in the public sphere.

The analysis of Canadian passenger manifests<sup>11</sup> reveals a similar process of governing predetermined identities, where definitions of the 'knowable community' fit right into the cultural equations of dominant groups in society. These lists, used by Canada's border officials to screen people entering the country, consisted of several rubrics: name of passenger, age, gender, marital status, previous presence in Canada before (if so, when, where, and for how long), whether intending to permanently reside in Canada, whether able to read and write, birth country, race, nationality, destination, occupation, date of arrival, port of arrival, port of embarkation, ship name, and shipping line. While all these categories can be subjected to analysis, the present work centres on passenger entries in sections of 'country of birth', 'nationality', and 'race.' These forms were filled out on the ships by British pursers and upon docking in Canadian harbours were handed over to Canadian immigration officials.

The sample used for this paper includes more than 5,000 passenger entries recorded at the port of Québec between 1931 and 1937. Detailed assessment of these manifests reveals inconsistencies between passengers' own sense of ethnic and national identity on the one hand, and the state's depiction and representation of its population in the public discourse on the other. Whereas the state mandated categories such as race and nationality for classification purposes, it was left to border officials to fill in the gaps, to make sure that individuals entered the "appropriate" terms in the rubrics. The "corrections" that immigration officials applied to passenger entries in the race and nationality sections reveal the nature of the Canadian national discourse, and the contours of the dominant ideologies.

One of the main revelations is that non-British and non-French Canadian residents, regardless if they were born in Canada or not, were depicted as foreigners, and deemed by border officials to be on the periphery of Canadian national identity. While border officials did not seem to share a consensus on whether concepts such as Canadian nationality or race existed, they for the most part agreed



about what being non-Canadian meant. In the vast majority of cases, when Canadian residents of European descent, whether born in Canada or abroad, entered 'Canadian' under the nationality and race rubrics, border officials crossed out the entry and instead wrote in the person's presupposed race, ethnicity, and nationality, be it Ukrainian, Italian, Finnish, or Polish.<sup>12</sup> Even if the person in question was born and raised in Canada, spoke fluent English, and might have never visited Europe before, he or she was still considered a member of that nationality and race to which his or her ancestors allegedly belonged. More importantly, it meant that he or she was a foreigner — not Canadian. The arbitrariness with which border agents classified Canadian passengers into prescribed ethno-national categories is striking in light of the fact that since 1910 Canadian citizens were defined as those who were born, naturalized, or domiciled in Canada.

For instance, a Romanian national of Jewish heritage had to enter "Hebrew" in the race section of the manifest, although initially he described himself as a Romanian.<sup>13</sup> In a similar case, Dagobert Lisser, born in Germany, identified himself as German by race. However, after a conversation with the immigration official, it turned out that Dagobert's race was Hebrew. Another passenger, born in Canada to Finnish parents, was prevented from self-identifying as Canadian either by nationality or race, despite the fact that technically the *Immigration Act* 1910 and the *Canadian Nationals Act* 1921 allowed him to do so.<sup>14</sup> A Finn, William Koskilainen was born in Canada and entered 'Canadian' under the nationality rubric. It was, however, changed by the officials to 'British' to denote his status as a British subject.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Fuelson, born in Norway, entered 'Scandinavian' in the nationality section; however, the border agent changed the entry to Norway. The imposing classification system was applied even to French Canadians. Joseph Renaud, born in Saint-Rémi Québec, entered Canadian in his nationality and race rubrics, but state officials thought it was more appropriate to label Renaud British by nationality and French by race.<sup>16, 17</sup>

It seems as though immigration officials thought one could be Canadian by race and nationality only if one was of British heritage.<sup>18</sup> More than that, a British descendant had the choice to be

British or Canadian; such a privilege did not extend to any other ethnicity or race in the first half of the 1930s. Even then, there were some ambiguities as to what constituted a Canadian nationality and if there was such a concept as a Canadian race. Arriving at the port of Québec in 1933, aboard the *Duchess of Richmond*, Doris Johnston indicated she was born in Toronto, that her race was British, and her nationality was Canadian. Traveling on the same ship, Sarah Stevenson, and Walter O'Neal, although born in England, similarly entered 'Canadian' in the nationality rubric. Another passenger, Dugald Henderson, born in Scotland, considered himself Canadian both by nationality and race. However, the examining immigration officials were of a different opinion and corrected all the 'Canadian' entries to 'British.' On the other hand, Freda Knox, born in England, traveling with her Canadian born children Valerie and Angus, identified herself and her children as Canadian by both nationality and race, and while the race rubric remained untouched by border agents, the nationality rubric for all three was changed to British.<sup>19</sup>

Out of the 1,062 passengers arriving on the *Duchess of Richmond*, on 122 occasions people entered Canadian in either the race or nationality rubric. Immigration officials corrected five of every six 'Canadian' entries to what they considered to be the correct national and racial identity of these people. As mentioned, there were exceptions, and some border officials did not seem at all concerned with the way some passengers self-identified.<sup>20</sup> For example, Jean Roy, born in Québec, was allowed to leave 'Canadian' under the nationality heading. When George Saloum and Chammas Kevorkian, born in Syria and Turkey respectively, entered 'Canadian' in the nationality sections and 'Syrian' in the race columns, they were not told to change the entries. The fact that not everyone subscribed to the practice suggests that it was a result of personal preference, not a mandatory exercise. The reality that many border agents chose to change passenger entries indicates the prevalence and nature of the ethno-racial public discourse of the early 1930s.<sup>21</sup>

In some cases, border officials seemed increasingly preoccupied with people's race rather than their nationality.<sup>22</sup> Arriving on the *Empress of Britain* at the port of Québec in 1933, American born Morris Epstein, his wife Anne, and their children Herbert and

Norma, entered 'U.S.' in the nationality section and 'English' in the race column.<sup>23</sup> However, based on their perceived appearance, accent, or family names, immigration officials changed their entries in the race section to 'Hebrew.' Similarly, a large group of Canadian-born passengers of British descent, arriving in the port of Québec on the *Laurentic* in 1931,<sup>24</sup> entered 'Canadian' in the race section. Without exception, however, all 'Canadian' entries were changed to 'British,' 'Hebrew,' 'French,' and 'Finnish,' to reflect border officials' apparent knowledge of anthropologic typologies and world geography.

Passengers of English and Scottish descent tended to identify both with Canada and Great Britain. Some, who were born in Canada, still considered their race and nationality to be British, while for others 'Canadian' was becoming the dominant national and racial identity. In the first part of the 1930s the majority still identified with Great Britain and the British race. Things, however, began to change in the second part of the 1930s. Based on an analysis of the passengers' lists, it seems that with the passing of the Statute of Westminster in 1931 and the coming of age of the generation which was in its youth during, and after, the First World War, a particular notion of Canadian-ness was becoming solidified.<sup>25</sup>

In 1936 and 1937 the evidence seems to suggest that increasing numbers of immigration officials were getting used to the idea of Canadian nationality and Canadian race. Moreover, there was also a tendency on the part of the passengers to identify as Canadian both by race and nationality. Britishness, as a form of self-identification it seems was becoming less common by the late 1930s. The trend was changing to such a degree that some border officials began to change passenger entries from 'British' to 'Canadian,' although Canadian citizenship as a status separate from British nationality would not become legal and official until the passing of the *Canadian Citizenship Act* in 1947. For example, in 1937 Canadian-born Charles Frederick Pinder arrived in the port of Québec with his wife, Hilda Mary, and daughter, Joan. He entered 'British' in the nationality rubric; however, it was changed to 'Canadian' by the border official.<sup>26</sup> By 1937 immigration officials were also far less inclined to assign 'foreign nationalities' to Canadian residents of European descent, although ideas about presupposed races still remained intact.<sup>27</sup>

It is difficult to comment further on this new emerging trend because records of passenger manifests are available only until 1935 with some sporadic mentions of records from 1936 and 1937. Other than that, comprehensive records of passengers arriving at Canadian land and seaports from 1936 onwards remain in the custody of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.<sup>28</sup>

Until the late nineteenth century, all passengers who were not of “British birth” were simply designated as “foreign” by immigration officials.<sup>29</sup> By the 1930s, however, the state seems to have refined its methods of population classification. While non-British residents were still assigned a “foreigner” status, there developed an entire system of ethnic and national categorization. For their part, immigration officials played a constitutive role in the formation of passengers’ ethnic, racial, and national subjectivities, in the process assigning them specific — visible — roles in the Canadian social formation. Although Canada did not have a clear-cut nationality policy at the time, the ideological interpellation process outlined above facilitated the assignment and redistribution of particular social identities, which reformulated the subjects’ identities along the lines of political, social, and cultural values of the dominant groups in Canadian society.

### **Passenger Manifests, Immigration Acts, and the Border Agent**

The passenger manifests are in fact the most important source of arrival information for immigrants, but also for all passengers, whether immigrant, visitor, or citizen, who passed through Canadian ports prior to the Second World War, largely because the passenger lists were the only medium that officially documented the majority of arriving passengers in Canada. Since 1803, the British law made it mandatory for every ship’s master to keep a record of all passengers, and leave a copy of the list with the government where passengers disembarked. The information contained on the manifests differed considerably, changing every few years to mirror changes in governments’ requirements and policies. Until the late nineteenth century, the vast majority of immigrants to Canada arrived from Great Britain, and as a result there was little need for

documentation. From about the 1860s, however, with the increased migration from continental Europe, the Canadian state began to expand the scope of the manifest, adding new mandatory sections such as occupation and nationality.<sup>30</sup>

By 1909, passengers were required to complete a personal history questionnaire, which was then used in conjunction with the information on the passenger lists. This “Canadian Declaration Form,” was shortened and amended in 1918 to become the “Form 30A.”<sup>31</sup> By 1921, as a result of some amendments to the *Immigration Act*, the form had to be restructured once again as government stipulations required additional information from arriving passengers. Subsequently, the passenger manifests were discontinued in favour of the revised Forms 30A. In 1925, the form was further enlarged and became known as the “Canadian Government Return” (CGR) to be used to document immigrants and incoming passengers until the early 1950s.<sup>32</sup> The passenger manifests, Form 30A, and the CGR were in essence quasi-legal documents that served for the state an administrative purpose, and are the only source to document the massive transatlantic movement from Europe to Canada throughout the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries.

Canada’s *Immigration Acts* of 1906, 1910, and 1919 laid out the framework within which arriving passengers at Canadian borders were to be regulated, screened, and processed. For example, the acts stipulated that transportation companies were to incur large fines if they failed to adhere to these regulations. The ship’s master had to furnish border agents with a comprehensive and descriptive manifest of all passengers on board of the vessel. Transportation companies could also be found liable if some of the passengers were unaccounted for on ships, or if passengers failed to congregate in an area designated by border officials. Individual passengers were also to be punished if they failed to abide by regulations. If one left the designated area without undergoing an inspection, he or she could be fined up to \$100.<sup>33</sup> Border agents had the right to board and inspect the vessel, and none of the passengers was permitted to leave until officers obtained passenger manifest extracts. The 1910 *Immigration Act* was the first document that made it mandatory for every single passenger and immigrant, regardless of citizenship status, to appear

before an immigration officer and answer truthfully all the questions posed by the officer.<sup>34</sup>

Studies of immigration and ethnic history, but also of Canadian history in general, bypass the experience of newcomers, visitors, and citizens at Canada's national borders. Whereas in the United Kingdom and the United States where the historic and contemporary interaction between the state and the subject on national borders is now an integral part of the growing field of Critical Border Studies (CBS), in Canadian historiography no one seems to have picked up on this crucial aspect of Canadian national formation. Bruno Ramirez's *Crossing the 49th Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930* touches upon themes such as "The Rise of the Border," the title of Ramirez's second chapter, and discusses the advent of a "system of controls to prevent the entry of unwanted persons into the U.S. territory," at a time when inspection points were put in place all along the Canadian-American border.<sup>35</sup> Not to take anything away from Ramirez's arguments, first of all because he does not set out to examine the issue, but his work falls short of addressing the "politics of the border," and the way it affected immigrants, travelers, and citizens on the move not only to the United States, but in both directions across the border.

There is only one comprehensive scholarly text on the role of border agents, be they immigration officials or customs officers, in Canadian historiography. David McIntosh's *The Collectors: A History of Canadian Customs and Excise*, published in 1984, is for the most part a celebratory account of the agency, portraying its officers as hard working and dedicated, and their service as an essential contribution to the public treasury. The author does not hide his partiality towards the agency, which he highly venerates:

The Customs officer rifling through soiled vacation clothes and brand new souvenirs at a crowded airport baggage counter or lonely frontier post is not trying to annoy the traveler. Rather as a representative of the oldest department in government, and springing from a long and honorable line of public servants, the officer is dedicated to carrying out the orders of the Parliament of Canada — protecting the revenue — while keeping smile and temper in place.<sup>36</sup>

Following the signing of the *BNA Act* in 1867, customs officials were responsible largely for controlling the flow of goods across the border, such as enforcing tariffs on a variety of items including tobacco and liquor products.<sup>37</sup> In 1879, and again in 1917, the list would expand to a variety of dairy, meat, and fish products, as well as automobiles, gramophones, and watches.<sup>38</sup>

However, by the early twentieth century, the focus began to shift towards regulating the movement of people across the border. With border check points proliferating along Canada's borders, so did the rules governing the conduct of border agents, as well those governing passengers at the border. Section 2(b) of the 1910 *Immigration Act* states that a border agent, or an "officer," is any person appointed under this act, including any officer of customs, immigration inspectors, medical officer, and "every person recognized by the Minister as an immigration agent or officer with reference to anything done ... under this Act."<sup>39</sup> There seems to have been little distinction between immigration officials and border agents when it came to the examination of passengers at the border. The customs officer could, for example, assume all the responsibilities of an immigration officer if one was not present at the post. The Act, in fact, clearly stated that all officers at the border were authorized by the state to act pertaining to passengers crossing the border: "no action taken by any such officer under or for any purpose of this Act shall be deemed to be invalid or unauthorized because it was not taken by the officer specially appointed or detailed for the purpose."<sup>40</sup> All border agents had a common goal — to protect the border, and, specifically, monitor the traffic of people and goods into Canada — and every person appointed under the Act had the authority and power of a special constable to enforce any of the provisions of the Act "relating to the arrest, detention or deportation of immigrants, aliens, or other persons."<sup>41</sup>

Border agents were not a homogenous group. While some were responsible for the control of the cross-border movement of goods, others dealt increasingly with controlling the crossing of the national border by people. Among the latter one could find different types of agents, at times imbued with specific political, social, and ideological missions, often independent of government regulation or influence.

Rebecca Mansuco, in her work on the women's branch of Canadian immigration services, has demonstrated the variety of perspectives embodied in state and quasi-state agencies.<sup>42</sup> She has shown that despite the heavy influence of business and industrial magnates on the government to admit into Canada ethnically or racially "inferior" workers from Southeastern Europe to satisfy the demands for cheap labour, the women's branch actively encouraged largely white migration from the British Isles. Concerned with the moral repercussions of migration from continental Europe, the women's branch played an important role in regulating peoples' movement across the borders, in this case pertaining to the categories of ethnicity, race, and nationality. Aside from the women's branch, however, which was established following the First World War, the vast majority of border agents were men. Immigration and customs officers were also not the only ones involved in facilitating and controlling human movement at the border. One could also find various social, charitable, and religious organizations there. The manifests allowed various religious organizations to sort out and welcome new immigrants of a particular denomination. At Pier 21 in Halifax, for example, there were volunteers from churches and other service organizations as well as staff from various federal agencies.<sup>43</sup>

Agents' personal beliefs and ambitions often intentionally or inadvertently politicized the process of border patrol. McIntosh mentions a "colorful officer" named Billy Beally, who was a collector at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, from 1914 to 1934. Beally was noted to have high standards for discipline: "he wanted all the office desks in the customs house in a precise line, and he lined them up himself every morning. The pens and pencils in a wire rack all had to be pointing the same way."<sup>44</sup> Beally also seems to have held an unfavourable opinion of French Canadians and when he received some forms from Ottawa in the French language, he returned them with a note that there must have been some mistake because the forms were in a foreign language.<sup>45</sup>

In between the arriving passenger on the one hand, and the Canadian state on the other, was the border officer. The way the latter interpreted and applied the stipulations of national immigration acts reveals the border agents' attitudes toward the different groups



of people passing the border, by that exposing the dominant public discourses that the agents came to embody. Jay Dolmage calls this in-between area in which border agents operate a ground for “shadow process and policies.”<sup>46</sup> He argues that the protocols used at Ellis Island, for example, “popularized, if did not invent” categories of old and new immigrants, with the latter group being inferior to the former. Although I doubt there was any sort of sharing of professional practices between American and Canadian authorities on this matter, I nonetheless suspect both operated within a specific national, ethnic, and racial public discourse that favoured one type of immigrants over others.<sup>47</sup> Practically every segment of Canadian society, with the exception of the industrial and business class that searched for sources of cheap labour, was opposed to the arrival of immigrants from “undesirable” or “uncivilized” sources and countries. Like at Ellis Island, similar “shadowy” processes took place at the Canadian border. For example, stipulations for deportation were vague and open to wide interpretation. Border agents received circulars that encouraged them to discriminate carefully when deciding whether immigrants in question were a valuable acquisition or a potential liability to Canada. To facilitate the “proper” selection, agents were instructed through ad-hoc amendments to the *Immigration Act* that such leniency could and should be applied only towards English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, French, Belgian, Scandinavian, Dutch, and the Swiss.<sup>48</sup> The list was not made official and legal, but the majority of agents prescribed to this unwritten, and in many different ways politicized, selection process.

There is no denying that in the first half of the twentieth century, and I do not think officials ever made it a secret, Canadian immigration law aimed to preserve Canada as mainly British in character. What is at stake here, however, is a bit more complex. First, my analysis deals not only with immigrants (“foreigners”), but also with passengers in general, whether they were immigrants, tourists, or citizens. Second, the emphasis here is on the abilities of the state to define concepts of a “friend” and a “stranger” at national borders, rather than on the social and cultural power relationships between the charter groups and the rest of the population. The interaction between the border agent and the passenger at national borders is

inherently political and ideological. As Mark Salter suggests, state policies have little meaning until they are “performed” by state agents: “border agent and state bureaucrats play a critical role in determining where, how, and on whose body a border will be performed.”<sup>49</sup> The process of classification of passengers into prescribed categories of race, ethnicity, and nationality was not a momentous, but a continuous process that reflected the Canadian state’s response to domestic and international affairs.

Power, however, is not value free, and is rarely neutral. While documents such as the *Immigration Act* subdivided Canada’s population into different legal categories — citizens, aliens, immigrants, and tourists, they also separated people along socio-cultural lines — gender, ethnicity, nationality, and race. Such classification of the population not only reflected the dominant discourses within Canada, but also aimed to reproduce social structures within the society. It delineated particular types of subjects against which the “normal” (friend) citizen subject was defined. Although Canadian society in the 1920s and 1930s was dominated by English-Canadian symbols, language, and culture, the power relationship between various socio-cultural groups, however, could and, eventually, would change. What remained constant throughout this period was the power of the sovereign to mould its subjects through this bio-political process, where it left for itself the right to define the guidelines for acceptability and exclusion. The identity/knowledge granted to the passenger by admission at the border was, as Salter notes, “temporary, arbitrary, and [was] subject to be reversed at any moment,” because the state might choose to revisit its friend/stranger dichotomy.<sup>50</sup> Contact and communication between the border officer and the passenger, then, was inherently both political and ideological.

As the present research and analysis demonstrates, the process of subject formation took place when the traveler was subjected to questioning and inspection at the border; it was there he or she first recognized and submitted to the power of the Canadian sovereign. Border examinations/processing, then, were a highly politicized matter, and, decidedly, a gendered and racialized process. Roughly since the collapse of the Iron Curtain, borders are no longer looked upon

by academics as static and natural lines dividing states, but rather as mobile, bio-political apparatuses of control: “the attempt to control the mobility of people is a paradigmatic feature of the modern sovereign territorial state and state systems ... at various historical junctures these regimes have been shown to impact on different populations according to perceptions of their nationality, ideology, economic value and so on.”<sup>51</sup> The recent proliferation of, and interest in, critical border studies is in part a reaction to the advent of new surveillance technologies at national borders that classify and code entire populations in the name of national security. This manifestation of power is not a new phenomenon, but rather a more sophisticated and more technologically advanced version of bio-political surveillance techniques, which has transformed the traditional — military apparatus conception of the state — into a modern nation state, the service provider, and manager of citizenry.<sup>52</sup>

## Managing Populations

Passenger lists or “Canadian Declaration Forms” served a specific purpose for the Canadian state. The following section outlines the way several institutions and state agents (such as the RCMP and the civil service) directly or discursively were involved in the process of creating and policing identity within national, as well as imperial, contexts. As Glen Wright indicates, the government was anxious to know as much as possible about the Canadian population, and used these reports to develop settlement policies and advertising campaigns to target potential immigrants.<sup>53</sup> This desire to know the Canadian population, however, carried with it other hidden agendas. The necessity to define and redefine the population in terms familiar to the reigning socio-economic and political élite was practical for the re-imposition of the social order in Canada. The screening process at the border thus not so much institutionalized a continual state of exception, as much as it reconfigured the subjects’ socio-cultural sense of self to fit into the dominant political, social, and cultural structure of society. As much as was made of the deportation of “undesirables” from Canada in the first half of the twentieth century, omitted was, in fact, a much more interesting, or rather a much more

encompassing and comprehensive, tendency to monitor and control the population by classifying the body politic into legal, gender, ethnic, and racial categories. The actual act of physical exclusion at Canadian borders (denial of entry), or from within the state (deportation), was in most cases the exception rather than the rule. The nation state viewed mobility as a source of potential threat, and the border was in place first to measure and then to profile and to manipulate the movement of people both in terms of its quantity and quality. The modern nation state thus does not necessarily attempt to forestall mobility, as much as it strives to control and manage it in the name of national interests.

The rest of the paper looks at some of the practical ways by which agents of the state utilized the invisible nationality policy to manage real or imagined threats and dangers to social order in Canada in the 1920s and 1930s. Classification of the population into visible, knowable, and recognizable categories facilitated the process of governing. If, before the First World War, the state was preoccupied with the type of people that entered the Dominion, in the interwar period it was faced with another task — how to govern the diverse populations of the country. According to Althusser, the line between the functions of ideological state apparatuses (family, church, schools) and repressive state apparatuses (police, military, criminal justice system) is blurry and thin. In modern societies, the education system is a central agency that tends to cultivate and reinforce national imaginaries (although in some instances it is an important agent that critiques these agencies).<sup>54</sup> Ideological control of its curriculum then is crucial for the maintenance of particular representations of the social formation. More than that, this form of social control has to constantly re-impose and re-invent itself. In other words, ideological control of the educational curriculum is imperative to social order and stability, as it promotes a particular construction of ‘progress’ and ‘righteousness.’ In Canada, for example, social and moral reformers of the early twentieth century aimed to promote progress, righteousness, morality, patriotism, unity, security, and the prosperity of Canadian society through the public education system.<sup>55</sup> These reformers were mostly from English Canada, of Protestant and middle class background —

clergy, social workers, politicians, and bureaucrats — who held a particular vision of a white Protestant Canada.<sup>56</sup> In this equation, children were subjected to educational edicts that stressed virtues of ideological uniformity and cultural accommodation.<sup>57</sup> The most extreme example of cultural assimilation could be found in the industrial schools, which isolated Native children from their parents, demeaned native customs, and promoted Christian values.<sup>58</sup>

Whereas the public education system was controlled and administered by the state in the interwar years, various language schools found in the immigrant ethnic communities across Canada were not. Reflecting the interests and ideologies of alternative social formations — i.e., diasporic communities — they posed a potential threat to the uniformity of the dominant national ideology. In the 1930s, the state reached out to observe and document potential ‘deviant’ activities in the ethnic language schools with the help of the RCMP. Concerned with the growth of communism as an alternate force to the democratic and religious foundation of Canada, as well as a threat to its social and economic security, the state needed to cultivate knowledge about any ideological delinquents. The following section reviews surveillance reports of Finnish and Ukrainian-language schools, compiled by the RCMP Intelligence section on the activities of those who were considered threats to Canada’s national security.<sup>59</sup> These reports were circulated within the Cabinet, among senior civil servants, and within the RCMP itself. By looking at the way the RCMP profiled social and political delinquents in the immigrant ethnic communities, I do not try to argue that there was any sort of cooperation between border agents and the security agency to profile specific ethnic groups. However, I do imply that both forces represented the state and that one could detect striking, hidden similarities by the way in which they not only policed/monitored specific groups within society, but also created knowledge, and in a way imagined specific groups into existence that corresponded with the official constructions of Canadian, and the different types of un-Canadian, identities.

Testimonies of RCMP officers reveal that the bureau had an in-depth knowledge of the language schools’ mandates, operations, and curriculum. For example, they knew that the largest Finnish schools

were located in Port Arthur, Fort William, Nipigon, and Intolla each with student populations of more than 200. The RCMP could identify by name all the schools' teachers, and singled out in its reports those students who were particularly intelligent and outspoken.<sup>60</sup> Intelligence also detailed the "nature of teaching," outlining the schools' curriculum, such as the subjects taught, methodologies used, as well as the content of administered examinations. "Did God Create Mankind, or Mankind Create God," an essay by a 13-year-old boy attracted the attention of one of the reporting officers. Prompted to conduct further investigation, the officer added that the boy was a leader amongst the Pioneers, and his brother, also a graduate of the Workmen's Circle School, was a leader in the Young Communist League.<sup>61</sup> Other students' essays mentioned in the report were "Coal: How this dangerous work is very poorly paid," "the Labor Problem," and "Can there be peace between the workman and the Boss."

The RCMP also singled out particular language school teachers who it considered most dangerous. One of them was Ivan Symbay from a Ukrainian community in Edmonton. One report stressed that Symbay "is unusually well educated ... a fluent speaker ... is imbued with revolutionary ideas ... exceedingly well thought of by the Ukrainians generally, and must be regarded as a dangerous man."<sup>62</sup> The report underlined that he refrained from teaching English in his classrooms, spoke poorly of religion and royalty, and propagated socialist values. The RCMP also made note of guest lecturers frequenting language schools. For example, it documented the lecture delivered by Gus Sundqvist, the Secretary of the Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC) to the students of the "Executive Courses" in Sudbury:

He lectured about the building and tasks of revolutionary organizations, and particularly reminded them of the fights which the Finnish Organization has conducted against the menace from the right. These fights must be continued, he said, if the Finnish Organization shall remain a revolutionary organization. Finally Sundqvist said that the Finnish Organization is an educational and cultural organization in the class fight.<sup>63</sup>

Finnish and Ukrainian educational and cultural organizations represented, or one could say dictated, the interests of marginalized social groups in Canadian society — ethnic minorities and workers. The alternative ideologies of these diasporic social formations, expressed in unconventional language, symbols, and meanings, posed a challenge to the established social order, according to the RCMP. The bureau was concerned about the influence of ethnic socialist organizations on foreign farming communities. For example, it noted that a children's orchestra, composed of 26 students, associated with the Ukrainian Labor Temple Association (ULFTA) of Edmonton, accompanied its organizers into neighboring farmer settlements, performing revolutionary songs and marches.<sup>64</sup> In their reports, RCMP agents made it clear that Ukrainian communists relied on music as an avenue of propaganda. They even followed a mandolin orchestra on a tour of the prairies. Trained by the Winnipeg section of the ULFTA, the music troupe, which consisted of 20 young girls, was considered to be potentially dangerous by the RCMP.<sup>65</sup> Officers also mentioned the prevalence of socialist symbols in the Finnish and Ukrainian languages schools, such as photographs of Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders hung on the schools' walls.<sup>66</sup>

The RCMP officers were weighing what border officials judged at the borders; these immigrants' ideals and loyalties, as well as the symbols and the language they used, were not Canadian or western (imperial at that time). As far as the RCMP was concerned, immigration and radicalism were clearly intertwined, where communism was a European disease transferred by European immigrants. One of the reports concluded: "The more immigrants that we put into Canada, the better it will be for the Communist movement and the end of the capitalist class will be nearer and it will help the Communist party to organize farmers against the capitalist class. There will be more soup houses than ever in Canada this year."<sup>67</sup> Immigrants, by virtue of their ethnicity, were represented as a foreign and potentially menacing force that could disrupt Canada's social and economic system, and even threaten the domestic agricultural industry. These sentiments came to the fore during the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, when authorities and the press made the public believe the majority of strike leaders and participants to be revolutionaries and ethnic immigrants.

Strikers were depicted as “aliens” and “anarchists,” and the *New York Times* proclaimed that Bolshevism invaded Canada, all despite the reality that the majority of strikers were Canadians or immigrants of British descent, and their ideas and demands were reformist rather than revolutionary in nature. It is not a surprise that unlike the border agents and Canadian politicians, the RCMP represented a more cut and dry approach to dealing with immigrant populations from continental Europe. The secretive nature of the organization, its para-military nature, and the fact that it embodied the essence of the meaning of the term national security, allowed the RCMP to be much more disparaging than the more publically accountable politicians and border agents.

The RCMP closely monitored the ULFTA and noted in its reports the strategies and the methodologies the radical organization applied in recruiting new members and expanding its organization. In particular, the RCMP was concerned with the type of education the organization promoted, but also with its views on religion, as well as the type of entertainment, leisure activities, and literature it promoted.<sup>68</sup> For example, officers made note of the way the organization was preoccupied with the number of students that attend language schools, the number of picnics and shows organized by the sections, the status of propaganda activities, the number of lectures delivered, the quantity of literature sold, the number of new members recruited into the organizations’ branches, the dropout rate, and if youth were being actively recruited.

RCMP officers were also perturbed by the un-Christian funeral processions held in the Finnish and Ukrainian communities. In one of the communiqués, the officer called the funeral processor a Communist ‘priest,’ stating:

Bolsheviks and Communists are trying to separate their members from the Church and religion forever. The members of the Ukrainian Labor Farmer Temple Association are particularly prohibited to attend any Church service. Many of them live together only on a marriage license, and none of them baptize their children. Now they start a new form of funeral, exactly the same as the Communists in Russia.<sup>69</sup>



The report mentioned the three main ideological state apparatuses (school, family, and the church), which according to Althusser are required to channel the dominant ideologies and form compliant subjects. The fact that diasporic organizations were involved in the fortification of communities with alternative ideological institutions alarmed public officials. Un-Christian funeral processions were seen as foreign, and un-Canadian. The following report is worth quoting in its entirety:

Three young Pioneer boys and girls dressed in white blouses and red scarves with two red banners bearing the hammer and sickle and numerous wreaths of roses formed the most conspicuous part of the funeral. The ceremonial program consisted of funeral marches played by the Ukrainian Labor Farmer Temple Association band, reading of telegrams and letters expressing deep condolences and regrets from distant organizations, and addresses delivered by delegates representing local organizations. The addresses were of propaganda text expressing deep sorrow, and urging the workers to join and fill in a thousand fold the vacancy left by the comrade whom cruel fate had torn out of the ranks of the revolutionary movement.<sup>70</sup>

This clash over the “properness” of rituals that mark a rite of passage was ideological, reflected on the ethnic differences in the society, but more importantly highlighted the stark class divisions and the conflict between the state and the rising labour movement. In the case above, the state singled out and deemed suspect the ethnic and political markers of the ritual. However, the case is representative of a broader phenomenon of the secularization of Canadian society. Historians such as Callum Brown and Hugh McLeod have demonstrated that the process of alienation from religion within early twentieth century societies, at least in the Anglophone world, occurred in the context of class differences and class antagonism.<sup>71</sup> The increasing gap between the rich and the poor with the advent of industrialization and urbanization, they argue, segregated the working classes within an urban setting, and coupled with the proliferation of unions and socialist organizations

as alternative forms of social, cultural, and spiritual representation, facilitated the secularization of the lower classes. Although people stopped going to the church, they nonetheless continued the celebration of various life rituals, which they often expressed in non-religious ways. The fact that the RCMP placed so much emphasis in its reports on the ways immigrant communities celebrated these rituals, demonstrates that the state was extremely wary of alternative forms of public representations of Canadian identity.

Also closely monitored were Finnish socialist halls and the Finnish socialist press. The RCMP kept close watch over Sundqvist and other notable Finnish socialists. The bureau it seemed had agents within the Finnish communities who helped officers in the field to interpret lectures delivered by radical socialists in the Finnish labour temples. A.T. Hill, for example, was reported addressing a mass meeting of Finnish workers in the hall of the Finnish Organization of Montreal, where he spoke of his experiences in the Kingston Penitentiary, and rallied workers to unite in the defense of the Soviet Union, in the struggle against fascism and the establishment of a Soviet Canada.<sup>72</sup> The agency highlighted that the majority of attendees at socialist and communist mass meetings were of “foreign extraction,” and that some of them had to be turned away because the halls that held the meetings were often filled to capacity.<sup>73</sup> The left-wing Finnish press was also closely monitored, in particular the *Vapaus*.<sup>74</sup> The newspaper, for example, often publicized the names of prominent socialist leaders in the Finnish communities, which made the RCMP surveillance job much easier. The processes of monitoring, policing, and creating ethnic identities were much more complex and intertwined than one might suspect. The RCMP did not simply generate knowledge and produce reports for the government. The process was far from impartial, as the agency gathered and interpreted information within a particular ideological and political context and with a preconceived attitude towards various segments of the population, where from the start it assumed ethnic immigrant organizations to be deviant in either social, cultural, political, or ideological forms.

Ethnicity, race, and ideology were closely linked in the public discourse, and European immigrants were conventionally seen by

security agencies as bearers of foreign ideologies. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, notions such as ethnicity and race provided state officials with the analytical tools to monitor and manage Canada's populations. Ideological "loyalty" was a prerequisite for full participation in Canadian society. However, ideological uniformity was difficult to achieve as a result of the disparity in the economic and political power positions of different groups in the Canadian imagined community.<sup>75</sup> Division of the population into prescribed ethnic and racial groups outlined in the previous section of this paper further reinforced the economic and political imbalance in the national community and urged some to question the existing social order.<sup>76</sup> The state, to preserve the social formation intact, had to ensure that alternative ideological formations would not challenge the dominant cultural, social, and political framework of Canadian society. One's ethnicity or race either facilitated or erected barriers for full social, economic, and cultural membership in this social formation, and the perpetuation of such hierarchies was fundamental to the stability and survival of the social order.

### **Ethnic Management and National Security**

Another practical way in which the Canadian state utilized ethnic population management throughout the twentieth century was in matters of national security. With the adoption of the 1906 *Immigration Act* by Frank Oliver, whose purpose was "to enable the Department of Immigration to deal with undesirable immigrants,"<sup>77</sup> the Canadian state was endowed with the means to control Canada's immigrant populations. The category of "prohibited" immigrants was expanded and the government was given authority to deport immigrants within two, later three, and five years of landing. It was this act that the federal government employed during the First World War, when it closely monitored and then interned Germans and nationalities from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, such as Ukrainians.<sup>78</sup> Following the Bolshevik revolution, national security services began to pay close attention to Russian ethnics and nationalists. In 1918 orders-in-council declared illegal labour and anarchist groups, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, and banned

publications in languages of potential fifth columns within the Dominion, such as Finnish, Russian, Hungarian, and German. During the first red scare in 1918 and 1919, the RCMP arrested a score of individuals for attending meetings where the Russian language was used, and for having in their possession papers in the Russian language.<sup>79</sup>

Amendments to the *Immigration Act* in 1919 prohibited immigration of specific ethnicities and races because of their “peculiar habits, modes of life and methods of holding property.”<sup>80</sup> Although these guidelines seem too amorphous, the writers of these laws knew exactly who targeted and why. In fact, one could argue they were being explicitly made to be vague, and open to wide interpretations. The power of the official discourses were all encompassing to the degree that state agents, when exercising their authority upon contact with the state’s subjects operated within an ideological universe that was permeated with Anglo-identity markers and the analogous representations of Canadian-ness.

An amendment to the *Naturalization Act* stated that citizenship could be taken away if a person was found “disloyal.”<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, during the Second World War it was the turn of Italians, Germans, and Japanese to play the fifth column role.<sup>82</sup> To diffuse political and social tensions in the society, the state interned and persecuted groups of people based at the time only on their perceived or real ethnicity, race, and nationality. Throughout the Cold War the fifth column was thought to be composed mainly of eastern European nationals and Canadians of eastern European ancestry. Changes in international developments, coupled with the evolving pseudo-scientific western understandings of concepts such as ethnicity, race, and nationality, prescribed to various populations particular social and cultural roles, but at the same time generated perceived internal and external threats to Canadian national identity. Canadianness it seems was always under siege, and the notion of Canadian identity could be more easily explained by what it did not represent, than by what it actually stood for.

Historians such as Jack Granatstein trumpet the First World War as the defining moment for Canada and for Canadian identity. In some respects they are correct, because the state was learning how

to manage its population and suppress internal unrest. The treatment of ethnic and political minorities during the Great War and following it (Easter Riots in 1918, the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919) demonstrated the ability of the Canadian state to develop and sustain the exclusive ability to define the geographical, political, social, and cultural borders of the body politic. However, the greatness of the Canadian state was not made on the battlefields of Europe, but in the public offices across the nation, where the bureaucracy matured in its internal state management practices. From Red River rebellions to Easter Riots, to the Winnipeg General Strike, to internments in both world wars, to Cold War persecution of communists and eastern Europeans, to the FLQ crisis, the Canadian state demonstrated a consistent method by which unrest could be handled.

All the aforementioned 'critical' events were managed quite differently by the state, and occurred in different political, social, and economic contexts. However, one of the constants that helped the state to successfully pacify unrest and social, real or imagined, resistance to the dominant order was what I call ethnic management practices. The ability of the state to create and classify ethnic identities, as I try to argue throughout this paper, either through generating/fostering specific knowledge about particular ethnic and racial groups within the Canadian society, or through the hailing process at Canadian entry points where state agents in a way imposed on passengers hegemonic representations of ethnic and national identities, is inherently connected to the ability and the desire of the state to manage/control/govern its populations according to prescribed markers of difference. In times of social unrest, the modern nation state unequivocally employs the "othering" process, where it juxtaposes 'us' against those who are either in reality, or merely potentially, can be against the 'us.' And given that ethnicity and nationality are arguably two of the most potent forms of identification in the twentieth century, us versus them is often delineated and popularized along the lines of ethnicity and nationality. It is important to underline that the nation state holds the exclusive ability to define the representations of national and ethnic identity in the public sphere (despite the subaltern resistance), but also, as I try to demonstrate in this paper, it has the ability and the resources to imagine, classify, and

control, in the official discourse, the representations of alternative forms of national and ethnic identities. It is this process that allowed the Canadian state to govern its populations throughout the twentieth century through a lens of ethnicity and national identity.

In July of 1931, Liberal Senator Pierre Casgrain introduced a bill in the senate entitled "An act to provide for Alien Identification Cards."<sup>83</sup> It required that "every alien of more than sixteen years of age, upon entering Canada by vessel with the intention of residing in Canada, shall before leaving such vessel complete on oath before and obtain from a peace officer a card of identification."<sup>84</sup> Any alien, "a person who is not a British subject," convicted of an offence against this Act, would be convicted of a criminal offence within the meaning of the *Immigration Act*, with a penalty of imprisonment of up to seven years. In addition to an address and a photograph, the identification card would indicate the place and date of birth, as well as the nationality of the subject. In Casgrain's words, the bill would have provided "a check on the communist agitators acting under the direct instructions from Moscow who are taking advantage of the depression in an attempt to undermine the present social order in Canada."<sup>85</sup> The proposed bill was a byproduct of the tendency by the state to categorize and classify the population of a modernizing society. In practice, it would have allowed Canada's "peace officers"<sup>86</sup> to detect and deport foreign-born workers engaged in any strike or other activity considered revolutionary. The bill failed to pass. However, it demonstrated first that the line between the dominant Anglo-centric discourse, as well as hidden governmental agendas that discriminated against particular constructed identities, on the one hand, and the potential of such amorphous representations of desirable and undesirable forms of identity to take on legal/political definitions of formal citizenship on the other, was extremely thin in interwar Canada. The institutionalization and the legalization of difference along the lines of ethnicity and nationality was not as far-fetched an idea at the time as many might think today. In fact, the passing of Casgrain's proposed bill would have made Canada's invisible nationality policy visible.

The bill was popular in influential circles across Canada. Mayors and police chiefs embraced the idea of registering aliens. The

mayor of Winnipeg, for example, stated that “95 percent of the Canadian people support the proposed legislation to register all aliens. All hope there will be no delay.”<sup>87</sup> The Montreal Police Department director expressed a similar opinion in a telegraph to the Senate, indicating he was “strongly in favor of identification cards, especially in Montreal, in order to control the foreign element.”<sup>88</sup> Thus, ideas about population control along the lines of ethnicity, race, and nationality, especially in areas with large concentration of “aliens” were not simply expressed on a theoretical level, but pursued in practice by powerful political actors on municipal, provincial, and federal levels. Again, the processes outlined in the first part of this paper, namely the way immigration officials negotiated formal and informal identities at Canada’s entry points, reflect the prevalent Anglo-centric dominant discourses in the society. The propensity of various individuals and organizations to institutionalize and de/legalize ethnic identities is merely a radical manifestation of the contemporary dominant societal beliefs, and thus does not diametrically juxtapose the roles of immigration officials to the aforementioned mayors and the chief of police in creating, monitoring, and policing ethnic identity in Canada.

There was also a significant opposition to the legislation both on a grassroots level and within various levels of government. The Jewish community in Winnipeg, for example, laboriously lobbied against the bill, arguing it would diminish immigrants’ achievements and belittle their efforts to become model citizens in Canada. It is worth noting that it was not only immigrant communities that spoke out against the bill. Many rejected alien registration because they feared it would set a dangerous precedent, which would be unpredictable in the way it could potentially be applied to the rest of the population.<sup>89</sup> After a prolonged debate, the bill was defeated 20 to 12. Causes for rejection included interference with civil rights of the people, and the high costs associated with such an undertaking. The fact that it was not only the ethnic groups that spoke against the bill, and that many from within and outside the government rejected the idea of registration of aliens, demonstrates that the aforementioned mayors and chief of police did not represent the interests of the Anglo-society, but rather some of its segments.

The planned bill was proposed in tandem with the tendency of state officials to equate certain ethnicities and races with various sources of local, regional, or national danger. This was the result of their professional position and their identity as representatives of the state, and of them being brought up in a certain way, immersed within particular discourses, rather than a result of any form of specific training. For example, an analysis of Canadian passenger lists reveals that residents or visitors of British descent were almost never detained at the border. Similarly, immigrants entering Canada for the first time, who had undergone rigorous inspection prior to receiving entry documents, were also seldom detained. However, returning Canadian residents of non-British ethnic background, as well as non-British visitors were much more likely to be apprehended at the border. The rate of detentions clearly depended on one's ethnicity and/or nationality. For example, residents, visitors, or merchants of Russian descent were detained at a higher rate than 'foreigners' from other countries.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, the fact that prior to 1947 Canada issued two types of passports, a blue coloured document to British subjects by birth, and a red colored passport to the naturalized British subjects, made profiling by border officials much easier.<sup>91</sup>

The demographic concentration of ethnic groups in certain geographic areas also fostered increased suspicion towards foreign-born individuals. For example, in September 1931, following a demonstration broken up by police in Kirkland, Ontario, the courts sentenced six Finns to prison terms, while one Ukrainian and one Englishman were released with a warning.<sup>92</sup> The author of the report that covered the incident and the trial was particularly satisfied with the "reds" taking a hit in Kirkland, where according to him they seemed to have been very active. The growing Finnish population of Kirkland, according to the author was one of the reasons for the growing red menace in the city. The fact that Finns were arriving to Ontario in large numbers in the 1920s and 1930s is a fact.<sup>93</sup> However, the correlation between their influx to the city and the apparent growing social discontent in Kirkland is at best contentious.

With the advent of the Great Depression, ethnic management allowed the state to maintain the ideological and political status quo,



as well as foster and maintain a unified vision of Canada. In the early 1930s, the national unemployment level reached 600,000 or 32 percent of the population, and 'outsiders' were identified for especially hard treatment during this difficult time.<sup>94</sup> For example, Finnish immigrants who arrived on the eve of the Great Depression were often the first to get laid off and the last to get rehired. Among the 2,000 Canadian Finns who left for Soviet Karelia in search of work between 1931 and 1933, more than 30 percent were unemployed.<sup>95</sup> In the context of xenophobia, socio-economic prejudice, and political exclusion — a response to the economic crisis — many Finns were subjected to increased state persecution. In 1931, when the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) was banned and its leaders were arrested, the RCMP intensified the surveillance of Finns who represented large percentages of the party's membership. Singled out for observation, many Finnish workers were blacklisted, and eventually deported.<sup>96</sup>

Young men without work and relief during the depression became potential dangers to social stability, and deportation came to play a role in managing the ethnic/undesirable population. During the 1920s and 1930s, deportation of undesirables was a way to manage labour supply and maintain social order, as deportation helped to alleviate employers, municipalities, and the state of the problems of unemployment and political unrest.<sup>97</sup> As Barbara Roberts argues, for many public officials deportation in the immigration policy became as necessary as sewage in the urban setting.<sup>98</sup> In turn, the public largely approved of the policy of ridding the country of the poor, unemployed, and the politically undesirable.<sup>99</sup>

The economic depression and the hostile attitudes towards immigrants put a dent in the demographic structures of the Finnish population in Canada. Its male population, for example, declined from 25,257 in 1931 to 22,752 in 1941.<sup>100</sup> The Canadian government deported mainly men (86 percent) as opposed to women (14 percent). Fearing public unrest emanating from the unemployed, who were on the move across the country in search of work, the government aimed to rid the state of 'dangerous foreign' men. Canadian society at the time was dominated by patriarchal discourses, which saw the non-British immigrant male as a potential menace to the

internal security of the state. Although not a rule, in most cases women were targeted when thought to be accomplices. Only when women entered male spheres, such as places of work and public protest, were they targeted by the state.

Between 1930 and 1934, 16,765 immigrants were deported, six times the number of deportees in the previous five years.<sup>101</sup> Some Canadian leaders, such as the mayor of Winnipeg, the same Ralph Webb who fully supported the introduction of alien registration cards, campaigned to deport all ‘undesirables.’ Similarly, the mayor of Sudbury, a city with a large concentration of Finns, went as far as to demand the Dominion government “deport all undesirables and Communists.”<sup>102</sup> In 1934, 94 percent of applications for naturalization were refused, many on the grounds of political, or labour radicalism, as well as general ‘bad character.’<sup>103</sup> Between 1931 and 1933, 2.3 percent of the entire Finnish population of Canada was deported. Most of the Finnish deportees were suspected of “dangerous radicalism,” but officially were charged with vagrancy, mental illness, or being “an expense to the government.”<sup>104</sup> For instance, in 1932, Arvi Tielinen, Thomas Pollari, Viljo Piispa, and Jaako Makynen were convicted on “public charge grounds” for taking part in an unlawful assembly after they had marched in a parade in Timmins, Ontario. In less than a year they were deported. Prominent individuals in Finnish-Canadian communities, such as Martin Parker (Pohjansalo), an associate editor of the *Vapaus*, were often rounded up and deported.<sup>105</sup> In another case, in 1931 *Vapaus*’ editor Arvo Vaara was arrested for participating in a May Day demonstration, labeled a “particularly clever individual ... and particularly dangerous,” and deported.<sup>106</sup> “He is a menace to the existing economic and governmental structure of this country,” read the charge.<sup>107</sup> The way the state handled the economic crisis, partially by attempting to alleviate unemployment levels by targeting for deportation specific segments of the population, reflects on the tendency by the Canadian state to abandon the delicate balance between policy, public attitudes, and identities, and undertake more concrete measures aimed at restoring social order.

During the Great Depression, the Bennett government’s rhetoric and actions were permeated with explicit references to eth-

nicity and ideology as markers of foreignness, difference, and danger. Fear of the fifth column seemed to be a matter of daily life and political decision-making throughout the 1930s. Angelo Principe, writing about Italian internment in Canada during the Second World War, argues that by the late 1930s the fifth column hysteria engulfed Canada from coast to coast.<sup>108</sup> The RCMP actively recruited Italian-Canadian informants, and Canadians in general voluntarily provided the RCMP with documents about alleged spies, saboteurs, and enemy agents. Thus, one could detect a multiplicity of sites and methods by which identity was being renegotiated. In other words, just as passengers were negotiating identity at border entry points, those who agreed to spy on their diasporic brethren were likewise involved in the renegotiation of diasporic identities vis-à-vis the state. As with Finnish and Ukrainian schools in the early 1930s, the RCMP now paid close attention to the content of the curriculum taught in Italian language schools.<sup>109</sup> Despite the growing hatred of right-wing ethnic organizations with the advent of the Second World War, left-wing ethnic organizations were not spared scrutiny. In fact, in the late 1930s charges against communists in Canada were as ridiculous, and often as fictitious, as ever. RCMP methods used to fabricate charges against communists were strikingly similar to the way local NKVD authorities in Karelia conducted arrests in 1937 and 1938. Given that actual hard evidence was difficult to come by, charges of conspiracy were based on reports that X knew Z who knew Y. Norman Robertson, a senior official in the department of External Affairs even described himself humorously as a one man Cheka or Gestapo.

### **Producing Truth for the Sovereign**

Now that I have established the ways by which border officials redefined passengers' national and ethno-racial identities, the rationale for border agents' behavior, and the usefulness of the classification process for population management practices, something needs to be said about the motives of some of the passengers to self-identify in a specific manner at the border. As Salter indicates, during contact with an officer at the border, there is pressure on the passenger to

produce truth for the representative of the sovereign.<sup>110</sup> This truth, which only the border agent can authorize, is fundamental to the construction of the border.<sup>111</sup> As Foucault argues, there is pressure on the subject to appear normal, and ensure that his or her normalization is verified by the agents of power — a reward for docility and obedience. Sovereignty is then dialectic, a relationship, although an unequal one, between the agents of power and the passenger.

The ports of entry affect the behavior and responses of the passengers.<sup>112</sup> Passports as we know them today were still in their primitive form in the early twentieth century. In Canada, as in Europe there was no real need for passports. The first modern passports proliferated in North America, Europe, and the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s with the expansion of the railway that allowed people to travel fast and *en masse*. Several international conferences were held in the 1920s and 1930s that attempted to universalize the use of passports around the world. In the Soviet Union, for example, the passport listed the person's nationality/ethnicity, legalizing nationality in the process. Nonetheless, in the absence of the universal use of passports during this time, it was easy for passengers to identify themselves in ways that suited them at that particular moment. In essence, the coming into contact with border officials at Canadian frontiers initiated a process of negotiation of passengers' identities. In conversation with the officer concerned, passengers produced different versions of truth, often in efforts to avoid confrontation or conflict.

Population movements across state boundaries are an inherently political matter — it threatens to sever the alignment of territory, political institutions, and society that states try to create and in which nationals so fervently believe.<sup>113</sup> This explains why Finns returning from Soviet Karelia in the mid-1930s did not indicate on their declaration forms (although specifically asked to do so) that they had spent a prolonged amount of time in the Soviet Union. Loyalty to more than one state, let alone one such as the Soviet Union, was bound to generate negative reaction from Canadian authorities, as transnational actions in general usually generate perceptions of disloyalty. The imagined national community constantly redefines but also protects itself. The modern state needs to manage

its population at both internal and external levels in order to monitor and “protect” the membership of the national collectivity.<sup>114</sup>

It is obvious that most returning Finns were hesitant to disclose that they had spent a considerable amount of time in the Soviet Union. Very few mentioned they had done so, despite a mandatory section in the passenger manifest to disclose the last place of residence. There was a good reason why the returnees did not reveal the truth about their escapades, because when they did, they were often detained, denied entry, and deported.<sup>115</sup> Out of 296 returning Canadian Finns, 15 were detained, of whom five were deported. Only seven, or a mere 3 percent, of the returnees specified they were coming back from the Soviet Union. Five of the seven were detained, held for questioning, or deported.<sup>116</sup> Some of the returnees seem to have changed their names when crossing North American borders once again. For example, Oscar Heino, returning to Sault-Saint-Marie in August of 1933 with his wife, Aimo, and children, Veikko and Sylvia, changed his last name to Heine and his first name to Paavo.<sup>117</sup> The 1919 *Immigration Act* stipulated that a Canadian citizen, who has been naturalized or domiciled in Canada, could lose his or her domicile status when “a person voluntarily residing out of Canada not for a mere special or temporary purpose but with the present intention of making his permanent home out of Canada.”<sup>118</sup> In all likelihood, border authorities cited this clause as the justification to deport some of the Canadian Finns returning from the Soviet Union.

Here are some of the examples of interaction between border officials and the returning Canadian Finns from the Soviet Union. Hannes Maki, his wife, Ida, and their seven-year-old Canadian-born daughter, Taimi, were detained for a week when they arrived at the port of Québec in April of 1933.<sup>119</sup> Hannes and his family were returning a mere four months after their departure from Canada, and were on their way to Nanaimo, B.C. A 32-year-old lumberjack, Charles Palo, and his wife, Anna, were on their way to Tionaga, Ontario, when they were detained, although released the same day, at the port of Québec in October of 1933.<sup>120</sup> The Palo's were among the few who indicated in the passenger manifests their Soviet residence. Ale Simonson, a 32-year-old farmer, his wife, Hilja, and a

two-year-old daughter, Evelyn, from Dendsmore, Saskatchewan, were arrested and held in detention for 18 days before being released in March 1933 at the port of Halifax. What is also striking about this family is that all three members held different citizenships. Ale was American, Hilja was Finnish, and Evelyn was Canadian. In a similar fashion the Ylikarhula family of three, including a nine-year old American citizen, Toivo, were detained, but then also deported. They had left for Karelia in August 1932 and it was upon their return a year later that they were denied entry to Canada. The head of the family indicated he was coming back from the Soviet Union. These examples demonstrate that those who were honest and revealed the true purpose of their overseas trip were more often than not detained at the border. Such tendency in most likelihood prevented other returnees from disclosing the true nature of their trip, and instead encouraged the procurement of alternative truths, those fitting the dominant political and ideological discourses, and those that would facilitate acceptance rather than rejection.

Socialist Finns departing to the Soviet Union in the first part of the 1930s became the subject for criticism and scorn by the RCMP. In its reports about the exodus the agency remarked: "The departure of these men from Canada will leave nothing to be regretted as they are all avowed communists. It is quite possible that many of them will want to return to Canada."<sup>121</sup> The fact that there was nothing 'regrettable' about their departure shows that socialist Finns did not fit into the contours of the Canadian national discourse. The RCMP imagined a future<sup>122</sup> with no place for Finnish communists in the Canadian national imaginary. Given that *Vapaus* published scores of names of people who went to Karelia, returned from Karelia, or were associated in one way or another with Karelia and the Soviet Union, the RCMP was well aware of the exodus. Moreover, it seemed to be informed of the harsh living conditions in the Soviet Union as well, as it suggested that many of the Finns would return to Canada. Nonetheless, the RCMP and the Canadian government remained idle about the situation at best. Given that the Karelian fever occurred in the midst of an economic depression and mass deportations, departure of these 'foreigners' to Karelia was most likely welcomed, or at the very least, it was not discouraged.

## Conclusion

Ethnic identities are generated not only at grass root levels and by diasporic leaders, but also in a dialectical relationship with national bureaucracies. The search for an ever-elusive Canadian national identity should begin in the first part of the twentieth century. The Canadian bureaucracy, informed by social Darwinist views on race and ethnicity, coupled with the Anglophone bourgeois concern over modernization brought on by the forces of industrialization and urbanization, both consciously and subconsciously developed an elaborate system of categorization of Canada's population according to prescribed criteria of ethnicity, nationality, and race. The way immigrants were represented and treated in the public discourse speaks volumes about the nature and process of construction and renegotiation of the Canadian national identity. Border officials, in many ways similar to Canadian census makers, imagined Canada's ever-changing population. In interwar Canada, state agents operated with an invisible nationality policy. The RCMP, as well as officials on Canadian borders and in public offices, created Canada's ethnic populations by making them recognizable in the dominant discourses. In addition to classifying Canada's population according to gender, region, and class, they delineated strict categories of ethnicity and race, making the Canadian community 'knowable' for the government and the public. And once the community became recognizable, it facilitated, and made more complex and comprehensive, the process of monitoring and policing populations.

Whereas in the nineteenth century the Canadian state and public were concerned with the type of people that were entering the country, by the twentieth century the concern shifted to managing and controlling the existing populations. RCMP records reveal that the Canadian state was concerned not merely with 'foreigners' but with different categories of 'foreigners' as well as citizens. Immigrants and foreigners were not all the same. In light of their ethnicity, race, and nationality, coupled with one's class and ideological affiliations, all immigrants carried differing, albeit potential social, economic, political dangers to the existing social formation.

The reproduction of ethnic, national, and racial identities in

the public discourse served a practical purpose for the state. For example, the categorization process made it possible for authorities to detect, monitor, and, then, “handle” radical socialists throughout the country. The terms radical and immigrant were closely intertwined in the public discourse of the interwar period. Although the official Cold War would not commence until after the end of the Second World War, the interwar period in Canada was already ideologically charged, as evidenced by the red scare that accompanied the Bolshevik Revolution and the massive crack down on socialists and communists with the advent of an economic depression in the early 1930s.

Left-wing immigrant communities presented authorities with one of the greatest dangers to the established order, because they represented the only viable, complex, and sophisticated alternative to the existing dominant ideology in Canada. What perturbed authorities was not their ability to gather mass support through propaganda, although it was also a matter of concern. Rather, it was the immigrant communities’ ability to create and sustain institutions (language schools, labour temples, unlicensed marriages) dissimilar and independent/detached from mainstream ideological state apparatuses. Even though Canada had no official “nationality policy,” it nonetheless legislated and operated with an acute awareness of ethnic and racial distinctions in the society. By reproducing perceived ethnic and national identities in the national censuses and at Canadian borders, the state made the population visible. This in turn allowed the state to track individuals, to survey, to supervise, and to apply/enforce acceptable social and political conduct through ideological state apparatuses.

One of the repercussions of the process outlined above is that immigrants’ stories throughout the first part of the twentieth century remained in contemporary discourses just what they were back then — immigrants’ stories. They were not incorporated into the national discourse and historical narratives, but were left on the periphery of the national conversation, marked as parts of “foreign,” “immigrant,” “new Canadian,” or, as it holds today, “multicultural” history. This very fact indicates that they are also on the margins of what we consider today the dominant national identity in Canada. The real-



ity that today a fairly educated undergraduate student thinks of Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in multicultural terms attests to the power of the current dominant discourse on multiculturalism, stemming from Pierre Elliott Trudeau's attempts in the early 1970s to consolidate the nation, which at that point required more than a national vision dominated by British cultural texts and symbols.

The process of ethnic identity construction and population management outlined above was only the beginning, or rather a part, albeit an important one, in the construction of a Canadian imagined community in the twentieth century. Official multiculturalism in contemporary Canada is an ideal that involves an elaborate process of classification of the Canadian population into different ethnic categories. I suggest that this policy has its origins in the classification of non-British immigrants and residents during the interwar years. Multicultural policy was a logical outgrowth of the process of ethnic imagination and control of Canada's diverse populations. This is not to argue that grass root level identity construction did not exist in twentieth century Canada, but to suggest that ethnic categorization in census and border registries (two of the main agencies distributing ethnic, national, and racial identities in the first part of the twentieth centuries), were bound to produce a population, who eventually would have to be managed *officially*, now through the policy of multiculturalism. In other words, Canada's invisible nationality policy was the precursor of official multiculturalism in Canada.

\*\*\*

**EVGENY EFREMKIN** is a PhD Candidate, Department of History (York University); Sessional Lecturer (Ryerson University, Trent University). Areas of specialization: Canadian History, Transnational History, Modern European History.

**EVGENY EFREMKIN** est doctorant au département d'histoire de l'Université York et chargé de cours à l'Université Ryerson et à l'Université Trent. Ses domaines de spécialisation sont l'histoire du Canada, l'histoire transnationale et l'histoire de l'Europe moderne.

**Endnotes:**

- 1 I treat national identity as a sense of belonging to one nation, regardless of one's citizenship status. Officially, prior to the adoption of the *Canadian Citizenship Act 1947*, which conferred Canadian citizenship as a status separate from British nationality, Canadian nationality denoted those British subjects who were born, naturalized, or domiciled in Canada, as per *Immigration Act 1910* and *Canadian Nationals Act 1921*. What made Canada's nationality laws more confusing was that the status of 'British subject,' regulated by the *British Nationality and Status Act 1914* and adopted in Canada by the *Naturalization Act 1914* was still considered the main form of identification, at least as far as public officials were concerned.
- 2 The present paper is based on a chapter of my dissertation in progress, which deals with North American labour migration to Soviet Karelia in the 1930s. For further reading on the subject, see R. Harpelle, V. Lindstrom, and A. Pogorelskin, eds., *Karelian Exodus: Finnish Communities in North America and Soviet Karelia During the Depression Era* (Toronto: Aspasia Books, 2004); Irina Takala and Ilya Solomeshch, eds., *North American Finns in Soviet Karelia* (Petrozavodsk State University Press, 2008); Alexey Golubev and Irina Takala, *Search of Socialist El Dorado: Finnish Immigration from the United States and Canada to Soviet Karelia in the 1930s*, unpublished manuscript.
- 3 Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- 4 See Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Translated by Gordon L. Marshall, J. Mepham, and K. Sober (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).
- 5 See Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).
- 6 See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in L. Althusser, ed., *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).
- 7 Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population: State Formation, Statistics, and the Census of Canada, 1840-1875* (University of Toronto Press, 2001).
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*.
- 10 Andrea Flynn, "Constructing Categories, Imagining a Nation: A Critical Qualitative Analysis of Canadian Immigration Discourse."
- 11 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications T-479 to T-520, T-4689 to T-4874, T-14700 to T-14939, C-4511 to C-4542. Library and Archives Canada, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Passenger lists comprised the official immigration records of Canada between the years covered in this collection, although the forms used and information recorded varied. Lists from later years usually contain more details depending on the form.
- 12 Ibid.

- 13 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14785 Vol 7, 187. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 T14784 *Duchess of Bedford*, from Liverpool, Aug 1933. *Passenger Lists, Halifax and Québec Ports, 1865-1935*, North York Central Library: Canadiana Department.
- 16 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14785 Vol 7, 185. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 17 These sorts of questions, relating to identity within the empire, were being negotiated widely throughout the British colonies and dominions. On concepts of race and identity within the imperial context, see James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, The Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). For particularly insightful works on the intersections of race, nationality, identity, and citizenship, see Laura Tabili, "The Construction of Racial Difference in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order, 1925," *Journal of British Studies*, 33 (1) (1994), 54-98; Kent Fedorowich, "The British Empire on the Move, 1760-1914," in Sarah E. Stockwell, ed., *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008). For French imperial practices and philosophy shaping attitudes towards race, see Yael Simpson Fletcher, "Capital of the Colonies": Real and Imagined Boundaries Between Metropole and Empire in 1920s Marseilles," in Felix Driver and David Gilbert, eds., *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*. (New York: Manchester University Press, 1999); Tyler Stovall, "The Color Line Behind the Lines: Racial Violence in France During the First World War," *American Historical Review* 103 (3) (1998), 737-69.
- 18 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications T-479 to T-520, T-4689 to T-4874, T-14700 to T-14939, C-4511 to C-4542. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C.
- 19 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14785 Vol 7, 181. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 In this article I am dealing for the most with the experiences of European migrants to Canada, and leave aside the experience of Canadians of Chinese descent, who were even further (and more effectively) written out of the national dialogue (until the 1960s). The treatment of Asians, or those perceived to be Asians was more onerous than the slights suffered by south, central, and eastern Europeans.
- 22 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14903 Vol 21, 32-45. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 23 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14785 Vol 10, 61.

- LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 24 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14773 Vol 8, 95-101. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 25 A particularly useful work on the articulations of interwar Canadian identity, see Jonathan F. Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997). Also see chapters 2 and 3 in Ian Mackay and Jamie Swift, *Warrior Nation: Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2012).
- 26 *Passenger Lists, 1965-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14859 Vol 1, 19. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 27 *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14790 Vol 2, 3-10. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 28 <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/022/022-908.007-e.html>, <viewed 15 February 2014 >.
- 29 Ancestry.com. Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010. Original Documents, *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications T-479 to T-520, T-4689 to T-4874, T-14700 to T-14939, C-4511 to C-4542. LAC, n.d. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 30 Glenn Wright, "Travel Documents," Library and Archives Canada, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ /02 immigrants 1017-1400-e.html>, <viewed 15 February 2014>.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 *Immigration Act, 1906* [http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration\\_e.html#1906](http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration_e.html#1906), <viewed 15 February 2014>.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Bruno Ramirez. *Crossing the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- 36 David McIntosh, *The Collectors: A History of Canadian Customs and Excise*, (NC Press in association with Revenue Canada, Customs and Excise and the Canadian Govt. Pub. Centre Supply and Services Canada, 1984), p. 231.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 *Immigration Act, 1910*, [http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration\\_e.html#1906](http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration_e.html#1906), <viewed 15 February 2014>.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Rebecca Mansuco, "Work 'Only a Woman Can Do': The Women's Division of the Canadian Department of Immigration and Colonization, 1920-1937," *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 35 (4) (2005).
- 43 "Pier 21: The First 75." 2013. <http://www.pier21.ca/research/pier21/the-first-seventy-five-years>, <viewed 20 February 2013>.
- 44 David McIntosh, *The Collectors*, 342.

- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Jay Dolmage. Ch. 5 "Grounds for Exclusion: Canada's Pier 21 and Its Shadow Archive," unpublished, [https://www.academia.edu/5008466/Grounds\\_For\\_Exclusion\\_Canadas\\_Pier\\_21\\_and\\_its\\_Shadow\\_Archive](https://www.academia.edu/5008466/Grounds_For_Exclusion_Canadas_Pier_21_and_its_Shadow_Archive), <viewed 15 February 2014>.
- 47 For more on the subject, see Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Dirk Hoerder, Donna Gabaccia, and James Oliver Horton, *People on the Move: Migration, Acculturation and Ethnic Interaction in Europe and North America*. (Providence, RI: Berg Publishers, 1993); Alan Simmons, "Immigration Policy: Imagined Futures," in *Immigrant Canada: Demographic, Economic and Social Challenges*, ed. Shiva Halli and Leo Driedger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Donald Avery, *Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Immigrant Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979); Reginald Whitaker, *Canadian Immigration Policy since Confederation* (Canadian Historical Association, 1991); Ninette Kelly and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Mark Salter, "When the Exception Become the Rule: Borders, Sovereignty, and Citizenship," *Citizenship Studies* 12 (4) (2008), 365-80.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Victoria M. Basham and Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Gender, Race and Border Security Practices: A Profane Reading of 'Muscular Liberalism'," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 15 (4) (2012).
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Glenn Wright, "Travel Documents."
- 54 On the history and role of the public education system in Canadian society, see Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).
- 55 Ibid., 34.
- 56 For more on the subject, see Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
- 57 Paul Axelrod, *The Promise of Schooling*, 35.
- 58 See John S. Miloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and Residential School System, 1879-1986*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999).
- 59 *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*, edited by Gregory Kealey and Reg Whitaker. (St. John's, NF: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1994).
- 60 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 9 September 1926. Secret. No. 334, Weekly summary. Notes Regarding revolutionary Organizations and Agitators in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.

- 61 Ibid.
- 62 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 5 August 1926. Secret. No. 330. Weekly Summary. Notes Regarding Revolutionary Organizations and Agitators in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 63 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 20 October 1933. NO. 677 Secret Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 64 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 5 August 1926. Secret No. 330 Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 65 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 17 July 1926. Secret No. 327 Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 19 August 1926. Secret. No. 332. Weekly Summary. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 68 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 17 July 1926. Secret No. 327 Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 20 October 1933. No. 677. Secret. Weekly Summary. Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitators in Canada. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, 1933-1934*, edited by Gregory Kealey and Reg Whitaker (St. John's, NF: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1993).
- 71 For more information on the subject, see Callum G. Brown and Michael Snape, eds., *Secularization in the Christian World: Essays in Honor of Hugh McLeod* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2010).
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 28 December 1934. Secret No. 711 Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, 1933-1934*.
- 74 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 20 October 1933. No. 677. Secret. Weekly Summary. Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitators in Canada. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, 1933-1934*.
- 75 For more information on the topic, see John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).
- 76 For radicalism in immigrant communities in Canada, see Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression," in R. Harpelle, V. Lindstrom, and A. Pogorelskin, eds., *Karelian Exodus: Finnish Communities in North America and Soviet Karelia During the Depression Era* (Toronto: Aspasia Books, 2004); Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers*

- and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); *Re-Imagining Ukrainian-Canadians: History, Politics and Identity*, edited Rhonda L. Hinther and Jim Mochoruk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
- 77 Quoted in Ninette Kelly and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 138.
- 78 See F. Swyripa and J.H. Thompson, eds., *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada during the Great War*, (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1983).
- 79 RCMP headquarters, Ottawa, 17 July 1926. Secret. No. 327 Weekly Report on Revolutionary Organizations and Agitator in Canada Report. Quoted in *R.C.M.P. Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929*.
- 80 Quoted in Ninette Kelly and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 138.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 See, Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe, eds., *Enemies Within: Italians and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Ann Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1981).
- 83 LAC, *Journals of the Senate of Canada: Second Session of the Seventeenth Parliament* 21-22 George V. A.D. 1931, Volume LXIX (Ottawa: Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1931), 260-261 [http://www.archive.org/details/JSCe69\\_1931\\_uoft](http://www.archive.org/details/JSCe69_1931_uoft), <viewed 7 July 2013>.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 LAC, Group 28 IV, 4, reel M-7384, 14 E 0556. 'On the Canadian Defense Front' an article in the *Labor Defender*.
- 86 According to the proposed Bill, a "peace officer" was a customs officer, officer of the army, navy, militia, RCMP, and any police officer, police constable, bailiff, constable, or other person employed for the preservation and maintenance of the public peace or enforcing the laws of Canada.
- 87 JTA Archive, "Municipality of Winnipeg Protests against Alien Registration in Canada," 4 August 1931, <http://www.jta.org/1931/08/04/archive/municipality-of-winnipeg-protests-against-alien-registration-in-canada>, <viewed 10 February 2014 >
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 *The Winnipeg Tribune*, "Bill for Alien Identification Cards Opposed," 15 July 15 1931.
- 90 A 57-year-old Jack Hannah from Russia detained (then released) was visiting a son-in-law, who is a doctor. LAC, *Passenger Lists, 1865-1935*. Microfilm Publications, Roll T-14784 Vol 6, 103. RG 76-C. Department of Employment and Immigration fonds.
- 91 T-1024-05. @006 FC 1053. Taylor vs. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and

- Immigration), "9.Passport Issued in Canada prior to 1947," (1 September 2006), <http://decisions.fct-cf.gc.ca/fc-cf/decisions/en/item/52881/index.do>, <viewed 21 February 2014>.
- 92 Vapaus (18 September 1931).
- 93 See Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression"; Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario*.
- 94 Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression," 16.
- 95 On the causes of North American immigration to Soviet Karelia, see Evgeny Efremkin, "Эмиграция Канадских Финнов в Советскую Карелию во времена Великой Депрессии" ("Opportunists: Emigration of Canadian Finns to Soviet Karelia in the early 1930s"), Ученые записки Петрозаводского государственного университета", (Academic Papers of Petrozavodsk State University). No. 3 (95) (October 2008), 42-52.
- 96 On the discussion see Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came from Canada 1900-1935* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1988); Varpu Lindstrom "The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression."
- 97 Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came*.
- 98 Ibid.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression," in R. Harpelle, V. Lindstrom, and A. Pogorelskin, eds., *Karelian Exodus: Finnish Communities in North America and Soviet Karelia During the Depression Era* (Toronto: Aspasia Books, 2004), 17.
- 101 Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came*, 144.
- 102 Alosius Balawyder, *Canadian – Soviet Relations between the World Wars* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 181.
- 103 Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came*, 145.
- 104 Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities during the Decade of the Depression," 21.
- 105 Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came*, 143.
- 106 Varpu Lindstrom, "The Finnish Canadian Communities during the Decade of the Depression," 23.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 Roberto Perin, *Enemies Within*, 17.
- 109 Luigi Bruti Liberati, "The Internment of Italian Canadians," in *Enemies Within*.
- 110 Mark Salter, "When the Exception Become the Rule: Borders, Sovereignty, and Citizenship."
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Thomas Klug, "The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Making of a Border-Crossing Culture on the US–Canada Border, 1891–1941," *American Review of Canadian Studies* (40) 3 (2010), 395-415.
- 113 Roger Waldinger, "Foreigners Transformed: International Migration and the



Remaking of a Divided People,” in Richard Alba and Victor Nee, eds., *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

114 Ibid.

115 Passenger Lists, Halifax and Québec Ports, 1865-1935, North York Central Library: Canadiana Department.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 *Immigration Act*, 1919, [http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration\\_e.html#1906](http://www.canadiana.ca/citm/specifique/immigration_e.html#1906), <viewed 20 February 2014>.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 Varpu Lindstrom, “The Finnish Canadian Communities During the Decade of the Depression,” 17.

122 A useful expansion of Benedict Anderson’s notion of an imagined community is Alan Simmons’ idea of imagined futures. The social construction of the Canadian nation, according to Simmons, encompasses an ever-present dominant visualization of the nation’s future, and it is this imagined future around which nation-building efforts are concentrated. See, Alan Simmons, “Immigration Policy: Imagined Futures” in *Immigrant Canada: Demographic, Economic and Social Challenges*, by Shiva Halli and Leo Driedger, eds., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 21-50.