Canadian History

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***Proposal***

The migration of settlers played a crucial role in the development of Canada as it drew attention to a colony which was previously viewed by European nations as something to frown upon. However, despite the need for immigrants, from time to time Canada evolved with its policies when it comes to migration. From rejecting people based on ethnicity to accepting people of all ethnicity, the country has come a long way. Canada in the very beginning was famous for not wanting immigrants who were not financially strong enough; discrimination based on ethnicity was also seen due to the European roots in the then authority. Ethnic groups had negative stereotypes associated with them, such as being criminals as well as carrying disease. Many Canadian politicians played a role in implementing racist policies which did not allow for a diverse demographic within Canada[[1]](#footnote-1). This was mainly in part because the people in decision-making authority were of European descent. In this paper, I will be discussing the role of Government policies in the immigration history of Canada, as well as shedding light on how far the country has come regardless of the restriction of political factors.

# *Introduction*

The Canadian Immigration Policy goes as back as 1869. It was the time when the very first decree dealing regarding immigration was presented two years post-confederation. From the very start, there were certain judicial limitations, which prohibited the landing of bankrupt, disabled or needy immigrants. It was evident that the immigrants that were welcomed in the Canadian premises were either from Britain or the United States. It all changed late in 1962; there was still some kind of legislative restriction on immigrants from other places other than Europe and the United States[[2]](#footnote-2). The Canadian Immigration Policy, on one hand, promoted the fact that there should be more immigrants but simultaneously regulated all the immigrants coming in. They would prefer the immigrants who had the potential of conforming to the conditions of Canada. One can look at the example of the Homestead Act of 1868 or Free Grants; they were both designed in a manner to stabilize and settle down the West of Canada.

***Discussion***

In the following years, Canada has put in frequent efforts to encourage and motivate agriculturists to immigrate to Canada. There were particularly more efforts and aggressive recruitment directed towards Europe and the United Kingdom .majority of the immigrants who arrived during the first wave of immigration in Canada dating from 1895-1914, were employed in order to deliver unskilled labor for the initial development of the Canadian Industry. Now, when the second wave of immigration is put under consideration, it is represented as an effort to pool in individuals with specialized skills who will put in contribution in the urban industrial growth of the post-war era. In both cases, the criteria of selective recruitment did not exactly thrive or work out for Canada. There was seen a change in the economic activities of the immigrants as soon as they entered the premises of Canada. They would mostly diverge from the path that they were initially recruited for.

Post the Second World War; it was seen that Canadians had a conflicted opinion on what vision they carried for future immigrants. Back in May 1947, then Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King set and renewed the Government's policy on immigration. It was inclusive of the compromise seen between the various and divergent concerns that were highlighted by the people of Canada[[3]](#footnote-3). Prime Minister King called out immigration as a way to aid the higher population growth. While Prime Minister King was well aware of the obligation to humanity and was supportive of the fact that people in distress should be helped, he was also clear of the fact that they will not be taking in a huge chunk of immigrants that might change the character of the Canadian population. Another way immigrants were given a window to migrate to Canada was via Relative Sponsorship. This widened the eligibility criteria. This was a very smart tactic that was brought into the picture; people could not have conflicted views over a relative moving in. This also made sure of the fact that the immigrants were from the preferred sources as opposed to other countries that were still seen from a skeptical point of view.

The 1953 Immigration Act of Canada permitted the Governor in Council to restrict immigrants on the basis of belonging to a particular ethnicity or nationality which was not preferred. It was the time when preference was given to individuals with a British Origin, apart from them people from the United Kingdom and France were also preferred. It was seen that Canadian policies were based on discrimination. A lot of people from various countries and ethnicities wanted to come in the country, but they were denied that right because of the main authority being of European descent, they were restricting the people of different origins to join the country. It was unfortunate to see that there was a class system going in when it came to immigration as well, people were entering based on the origin of their country and how much money did they own. Other people were denied based on the image that their race had; this discrimination was starting to become an issue.

Europe in general always had a class system that they had been following for a very long time, so it was evident that there will be a reflection of their thoughts in the policies that they made. It all finally subsided and changed in 1962. In 1960 the Government of Canada came to the realization of the fact that there is evident discrimination in their policies on the basis of place of origin, which was finally lifted in 1962[[4]](#footnote-4). Finally, in 1967 a points system was introduced, which was used for the selection of independent immigration. The non-discriminatory aspects were reinforced with the help of this system. The new policy outlined the immigration criteria in regards to education, skills, work experience, and other specific qualifications. These were the main aspects under which the selection of the immigration candidates was done.

It was seen that a lot of people were treated based on the culture or ethnicity that they belonged to when they would be applying for Canadian immigration. Then the policy of multi-culturalism publicized in 1971, this made it necessary that people who are to enter the country are to be treated with an open mind and attitude. The Canadian Policy went under a thorough review in the time period of 1973-1975, which concluded in the Immigration Ac, 1976, which officially came into effect in 1976, this policy is still being followed in the country. There have been amendments, but the main policy still has the same essence. The act specifically confirmed the central goals of Canadian Immigration Laws, which were inclusive of non-discrimination, family reunification, and various worries for the immigrants along with the elevation of Canada’s cultural, demographic and economic development.

The most prominent change that was brought forward by the Immigration Act, 1976, would be the designing of the target level for migrants. This level will be set and determined by the Minister of Immigration[[5]](#footnote-5). The Minister will have to have a consultation with all the provinces which concerned the provincial demographic requirements and consider the labor market thoughts. Changes that were brought in the Immigration Rules in 1978 were also inclusive of various alterations to the point system. In light of the nee new adjustment's importance was given to occupational demand and technical training and a lesser emphasis on the general education was made when selecting immigrants. In the later days, the Canadian philosophy and international obligation paved the way for non-discriminatory immigration policies, stronger family sponsorship so people can call their loved ones and humanitarian concerns. This was the rise of multi-ethnic immigration chain in Canada based on the values that were created. Yet, unfortunately, there are still some people and countries who look at the new immigrants and the created ethnic diversity with hesitation.

There were and always are going to be people who will be on the other side of the pole. The fact that Canada has been under the European influence had initially stopped them from having the development that they could have had after welcoming immigrants from various countries around the world. Canada has immigrants to thank for the improving growth in their population. It is a fact that will require more aid in order to grow their population even more in the future. The country came to the realization of the need to eliminate discrimination in order to progress further sooner than later, and changes are seen in the future as to how the country has progressed and how far it has come. From being selective with the people, they let in the country to becoming one of the few countries who take in the most refugees, especially in the time of need. The example of Syrian refugees can be taken. Reflecting on history, the fact that the main roots were European was bringing in a lot of issues of discrimination where people were frowned upon on the race that they belonged to[[6]](#footnote-6).

***Conclusion***

The country has learned a lot from their past; the immigrants in Canada are selected from a wide range of potential candidates as opposed to before. However, the selection criteria have varied throughout history. In the past the selection of the immigrants was based on the ethical criteria; nowadays, it is more focused on the economic criteria. It should also be added that lately, the people who are arriving in the country are coming via relative sponsorship or family class, making it evident that not all the immigrants are chosen based on the economic class. Subsequently, it is seen that Canada has formed its own immigrant mosaic based on the recent diversity seen amongst the migrants. The politics in the past has had quite the role in the migration of immigrants, but now it has become more versatile and has progressed in accordance with the current century. It was a long journey but was worth the recent results of where Canada stands now.

# End Notes

Ambrose, Emma, and Cas Mudde. "Canadian multiculturalism and the absence of the far right." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 21, no. 2 (2015): 213-236.

El-Lahib, Yahya. "The inadmissible “other”: Discourses of ableism and colonialism in Canadian immigration." *Journal of Progressive Human Services* 26, no. 3 (2015): 209-228.

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Green, David A., and Christopher Worswick. "Canadian economics research on immigration through the lens of theories of justice." *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue canadienne d'économique* 50, no. 5 (2017): 1262-1303.

Hyndman, Jennifer, William Payne, and Shauna Jimenez. "Private refugee sponsorship in Canada." *Forced Migration Review* 54 (2017): 56.

Berry, John W., and Feng Hou. "Acculturation, discrimination and wellbeing among second generation of immigrants in Canada." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 61 (2017): 29-39.

1. Ambrose, Emma, and Cas Mudde. "Canadian multiculturalism and the absence of the far right." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 21, no. 2 (2015): 213-236. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. El-Lahib, Yahya. "The inadmissible “other”: Discourses of ableism and colonialism in Canadian immigration." *Journal of Progressive Human Services* 26, no. 3 (2015): 209-228. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dobrowolsky, Alexandra. "Bad versus Big Canada: state imaginaries of immigration and citizenship." *Studies in Political Economy* 98, no. 2 (2017): 197-222. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Green, David A., and Christopher Worswick. "Canadian economics research on immigration through the lens of theories of justice." *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue canadienne d'économique* 50, no. 5 (2017): 1262-1303. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Hyndman, Jennifer, William Payne, and Shauna Jimenez. "Private refugee sponsorship in Canada." *Forced Migration Review* 54 (2017): 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Berry, John W., and Feng Hou. "Acculturation, discrimination and wellbeing among second generation of immigrants in Canada." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 61 (2017): 29-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)