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Becoming Canadian

Making Sense of Recent Changes to Citizenship Rules

Elke Winter

Recent policy changes have made Canada's citizenship regime somewhat more restrictive and convey messages that may be counterproductive to immigrant integration.

Le gouvernement, en apportant des changements d'orientation au régime de citoyenneté du Canada, en a quelque peu resserré les exigences, ce qui risque d'entraver l'intégration des immigrants.



*Diversité, immigration et intégration
Diversity, Immigration and Integration*

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Summary

As two-thirds of Canada's population growth comes through immigration, the law and processes governing naturalization are extremely important. Indeed, Canada is a world leader with respect to naturalization. In 2005-06, 75 percent of foreign-born residents had become Canadian citizens.

Since the early 2000s, many Western governments have made changes to their immigration and integration policies. In Canada, between 2006 and 2013 a new citizenship guide with greater emphasis on Canadian history and the monarchy was issued; initiatives against the fraudulent acquisition of citizenship were adopted; a more demanding citizenship test was introduced; the citizenship ceremony was modified by requiring all candidates to have the face uncovered; and language requirements for citizenship were tightened. According to the government, these changes were intended to enhance the value of Canadian citizenship.

This study by Elke Winter reviews these changes and evaluates them against the backdrop of international debates on naturalization and citizenship. These debates involve the question of whether the changes are to be interpreted as a liberalization of citizenship or as a "renationalization," where nation-specific definitions of citizenship are dominant. According to Winter's analysis, if we accept that these opposing poles are in tension, Canada's naturalization regime seems to be moving toward renationalization.

At a practical level, the naturalization process has become longer and much more cumbersome over the past decade. This has particularly affected the less educated and those whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. Naturalization rates nevertheless remain high by international standards.

At the level of discourse, Winter observes that there has been a potentially troublesome shift in how Canadian citizenship is presented. In her view, depicting prospective citizens as fraudulent and mischievous can fan insecurity and distrust in the population. This holds true for singling out specific religions and cultures as potentially less adaptable than others. She also raises concerns about the increased emphasis — in the citizenship guide and elsewhere — on Canada's military history, British traditions and the monarchy. In her view, this runs counter to the ethos of multiculturalism, which replaced the dominant ideology of conformity to Anglophone norms around 40 years ago. Winter concludes that we should monitor these developments, not least because they convey messages that may be counterproductive to the successful integration of immigrants from diverse backgrounds.

Résumé

Comme l'immigration représente deux tiers de la croissance de la population canadienne, la loi et les processus qui régissent la naturalisation sont d'une extrême importance, d'autant plus que le Canada est un leader mondial en la matière : en 2005-2006, pas moins de 75 p. 100 de ses résidents nés à l'étranger étaient devenus citoyens canadiens.

Depuis le début des années 2000, de nombreux gouvernements occidentaux ont apporté des modifications à leurs politiques d'immigration et d'intégration. C'est ainsi qu'entre 2006 et 2013, le Canada a produit un nouveau guide de la citoyenneté, qui met l'accent sur l'histoire du pays et la monarchie ; il a adopté des mesures contre l'acquisition frauduleuse de la citoyenneté, créé un examen pour la citoyenneté plus difficile, exigé des candidats qu'ils aient le visage découvert pendant la cérémonie de citoyenneté et resserré les exigences linguistiques pour devenir Canadien. Ottawa soutient que ces modifications visent toutes à valoriser la citoyenneté canadienne.

Elke Winter examine ces changements à la lumière du débat international sur la citoyenneté et l'immigration, qui porte essentiellement sur l'interprétation à donner à cette évolution : s'agit-il d'une libéralisation de la citoyenneté ou d'une renationalisation orientée vers une définition essentiellement nationale de la citoyenneté ? Si l'on estime qu'il y a effectivement polarisation de ces deux points de vue, avance-t-elle, le régime de naturalisation canadien évolue bel et bien vers la renationalisation.

La procédure de naturalisation s'est en effet considérablement alourdie et allongée depuis une dizaine d'années, ce qui a particulièrement désavantagé les candidats moins scolarisés et de langue maternelle autre que le français ou l'anglais. Le taux de naturalisation est toutefois resté élevé au regard du niveau international.

Du côté du discours officiel, l'auteure n'en observe pas moins un glissement potentiellement inquiétant dans la façon de présenter la citoyenneté canadienne. Elle croit ainsi qu'on risque d'éveiller un sentiment de méfiance et d'insécurité dans la population en dépeignant d'éventuels citoyens comme de probables fraudeurs et malfaiteurs, de même qu'en laissant entendre que certaines cultures et religions ont une faible capacité d'adaptation. Elle s'inquiète aussi de l'importance accrue accordée à notre histoire militaire, aux traditions britanniques et à la monarchie dans le guide de la citoyenneté et ailleurs. Cela contrevient à l'esprit du multiculturalisme, qui a succédé il y a une quarantaine d'années à l'idéologie dominante de conformité aux valeurs anglophones. Aussi faut-il suivre ces développements de près, conclut Elke Winter, notamment parce qu'ils transmettent un message susceptible d'entraver l'intégration d'immigrants d'origines variées.

Becoming Canadian: Making Sense of Recent Changes to Citizenship Rules

Elke Winter

Since the early 2000s, many Western governments have been implementing changes to their immigration and integration policies, including tightening the requirements for acquiring citizenship. Between 2005 and 2008, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany implemented formal citizenship tests. The United States and Australia revised their citizenship tests in 2008 and 2009, respectively. In France, “accommodation and integration contracts” between individuals and the state were introduced in 2003 and became a mandatory prerequisite for naturalization in 2007. These changes are driven by concerns about national security, social cohesion, immigrants’ economic performance and the presumed failure of some to adhere to basic liberal-democratic values.

Canada is no exception. Under the government of Stephen Harper’s Conservative Party, which was elected in January 2006, Canada has witnessed numerous changes to its citizenship rules. Between 2009 and 2013, five major changes were made to the naturalization process: a new citizenship guide was issued; initiatives against the fraudulent acquisition of citizenship were introduced; a new citizenship test was designed; the citizenship ceremony was modified; and language requirements for Canadian citizenship were tightened. Furthermore, a bill promoting the acceleration of citizenship acquisition for members of the Canadian Forces was introduced in the House of Commons but not adopted. These initiatives reflect a desire to “enhance the value of Canadian citizenship,”¹ and to render the process more “meaningful” and selective. This study strives to answer the following three questions:

- 1) What are the recent changes to the naturalization process in Canada?
- 2) What is the scope of these changes?
- 3) How does Canada compare internationally?

In Canada, only some of the recent policy changes have attracted scholarly attention, notably the amendments to the *Citizenship Act* (Harder 2010; Harder and Zhyznomirska 2012; Nyers 2010; Winter 2014) and the citizenship study guide (Chapnick 2011; Winter and Sauvageau 2012). Many other aspects of the reforms have been ignored (with the exception of Alboim and Cohl 2012a,b). In the international arena, by contrast, political changes to citizenship acquisition have generated much public debate and a huge body of scholarship.

Most of these academic debates have been about Old World countries, specifically in Western Europe (e.g., Howard 2009). On the one hand, pointing to the widespread acceptance of citizenship acquisition by birth on the territory (*jus soli*) and the introduction of standardized citizenship tests in several European countries, some scholars argue that the recent changes must be interpreted as an opening and liberalization of citizenship (Joppke and Morawska 2003).² They also maintain that international consensus on human rights and the spread of best practices have produced convergence among European countries toward a more liberal interpretation

of citizenship, which would bring Europe more in line with New World countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada (Joppke 2007).

On the other hand, critics insist that European citizenship policies are actually becoming more restrictive, and that Canada might be following suit (Marwah and Triadafilopoulos 2009). Scholars point to a fusion of immigration control with immigrant integration concerns, which had previously belonged to a separate policy domain (Goodman 2011). They criticize the loyalty requirements, moral aspects and coercive and punitive tone in some of Europe's new citizenship tests (Michalowski 2011), which, they argue, are mostly targeting Muslim immigrants, who are perceived as being disloyal, illiberal and nonintegrating (Zolberg and Woon 1999). They also state that language tests are used to "weed out" the undeserving, because the tests have become so difficult that many citizens born within the country would fail if they had to take them (Mouritsen 2013). Furthermore, naturalization seems to be increasingly viewed by governments as the end point of integration rather than as a stepping stone on the long road to becoming a citizen, not just on paper but also in one's heart and daily practices (Kostakopoulou 2010).

In this study, I will evaluate policy changes to naturalization in Canada against the backdrop of these international debates. First, I provide a brief theoretical perspective on naturalization and some data on the Canadian case. The recent changes, sorted chronologically and divided into seven categories, are the focus of the next section, followed by evaluation of these changes. I identify the most important questions in the international debates on citizenship and apply them to the Canadian case, in order to situate the current naturalization rules within both the Canadian and the global contexts and reveal larger patterns below the surface of an abundance of bureaucratic activity.

What Is at Stake in Naturalization?

Naturalization is generally understood as the "non-automatic acquisition of citizenship by an individual who is not a citizen of that country when he or she was born" (Liebig and Von Haaren 2011, 25).³ Why bother with naturalization? The costs, benefits and potentially life-changing consequences of gaining permanent residency in Canada are arguably much bigger than those related to taking up citizenship. As the legal scholar Peter Spiro has put it, "The real prize is legal residency" (2008, 159). While this may be the case from the perspective of some immigrants, things certainly look different from the perspective of the host society. Naturalization matters because it is the quintessential procedure of turning outsiders into full members of the national community.

A theoretical perspective

In the academic literature, the process of naturalization is sometimes considered even more significant than citizenship by birthright. Naturalization most purely embodies the ideals of a social contract and deliberative choice. In citizenship through naturalization, a consenting adult foreigner affirmatively applies for Canadian citizenship. The state, satisfied that the person has met the necessary qualifications, purposively grants citizenship to that individual, thereby "naturalizing" him or her.

For the French sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad, the importance of naturalization is not principally rooted in *realpolitik*. Rather, naturalization is to be located in the symbolic realm. This is because the integration of newcomers is perceived according to categories that are more strongly ethical than political in nature. This “contamination of politics by morals” (Sayad 1982, 24, my translation) leads to a paradox: “One does not tolerate the foreigner who lives within the nation but does not apply for naturalization, because one suspects a condescending attitude — it must be out of contempt for the quality of [Canadian culture] that one would not want to be Canadian — but one does not tolerate either to grant naturalization to just anyone who requests it but may not deserve it” (25, my translation).

Put differently, for the national *amour-propre* to be satisfied, not only must naturalization be asked for, there must also be the possibility that it can be rejected. In principle, an immigrant’s application for naturalization is a flattering homage to a people and its nation’s moral character, historical grandeur and overall beauty. By contrast, those who take on that country’s citizenship but allegedly without paying homage to its people and their nation pose a threefold challenge: they undermine the nation’s self-esteem and *amour-propre*, they undermine the basis of state sovereignty and democratic governance, and they undermine the government of the day’s claim of being “in control.”

The governance of naturalization is thus a demonstration of the polity’s self-esteem, power and sovereignty. The state’s mandate is to watch over what is perceived to be the national character, the interests of the citizens and the quality of their culture, values and institutions. Obviously, each government in power interprets these tasks differently.

Naturalization in Canada

Canada’s naturalization rate is the highest among all OECD countries. Consider that in 2005-06 the share of foreign-born residents aged 15 and older who had become Canadian citizens was 75 percent (OECD 2012, 134). Equally impressive is the annual number of people who naturalize — in 2011, 181,288 did so (see table 1).

For a country like Canada, which receives 67 percent of its overall annual population growth through immigration (Statistics Canada 2012), naturalization is extremely important. It is the only procedure that guarantees equality between Canada’s “citizens by birth” and its growing number of “citizens by choice.” Hence, it is worth reflecting on the conditions and consequences of naturalization, not just in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality: how do we administer, treat and celebrate those who accept our invitation to join the Canadian nation?

Comparatively speaking, the conditions for taking up Canadian citizenship are fairly straightforward. Immigrants who are permanent residents must have resided in the country for three of the previous four years to be eligible. They must be at least 18 years of age, display an adequate ability in English or French (new documentation or testing has been required since November 1, 2012) and have no criminal convictions in the previous three years. In addition, since 1995, candidates between the ages of 18 and 54 must pass a formal citizenship test; this is intended to ensure they understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and can demonstrate some knowledge of Canadian history, values

Table 1. New Canadian citizens, by country of birth and gender, 2011

Country of birth	Female	Male	Total
India	11,396	10,821	22,217
People's Republic of China	8,946	6,619	15,565
Philippines	9,378	6,775	16,153
Pakistan	5,033	4,898	9,931
United States of America	2,787	2,301	5,088
Iran	2,481	2,458	4,939
England	2,202	2,503	4,705
Colombia	2,163	1,914	4,077
Republic of South Korea	2,187	1,906	4,093
Romania	1,986	1,740	3,726
Total top 10	48,559	41,935	90,494
Other ¹	47,200	43,588	90,794 ¹
Total¹	95,759	85,523	181,288¹

Source: CIC (2013b).
¹ Includes six people whose gender is unknown or unspecified.

and institutions. The test replaced oral interviews with appointed citizenship judges, who remain responsible for final approval of citizenship. Under certain circumstances, judges still interview candidates, such as those who have failed the test or are older than 54. Citizenship candidates are also required to take a citizenship oath, which includes a pledge of allegiance to the Queen.⁴

Taking into account that prospective citizens must have acquired permanent resident status and presumably a reasonable level of language

skills, the costs associated with taking up Canadian citizenship are relatively small. Only immigrants from countries that do not recognize dual citizenship have to renounce home country citizenship. As for the benefits of Canadian citizenship, these include the rights to vote, apply for a passport, be a candidate in elections, enter and leave the country freely, enjoy protection from deportation and be given preference for federal government jobs.

Taking Stock of the Recent Changes

This section examines changes to Canadian citizenship and naturalization rules between 2006 and 2013, with the emphasis upon naturalization. Naturalization is in federal jurisdiction; citizenship procedures are administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism from October 2008 to July 2013 was Jason Kenney.⁵

Amendments to the *Citizenship Act*

The need to address the issue of citizenship re-emerged in the wake of the 2007 adoption of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative,⁶ which made the possession of a Canadian passport mandatory in order for a Canadian to cross the US border.⁷ Upon applying for their passports, many persons discovered that they were not Canadian citizens. They have become known as the “lost Canadians,” persons who were born in Canada and/or have a Canadian parent, but who lack or have lost citizenship due to provisions of the 1947 *Citizenship Act* that were overhauled in the 1977 *Citizenship Act* but not rectified retroactively.⁸

In 2008, the Harper government introduced amendments to the *Citizenship Act* that came into effect in 2009. The repatriation clause allows citizens born between 1947 and 1977 who lost

their citizenship to retroactively reclaim it, even if that implies that they acquire dual or multiple citizenship.⁹ Persons born outside Canada on or after April 17, 2009, and whose Canadian parents were also born outside Canada are no longer automatically granted Canadian citizenship.¹⁰ This limitation of citizenship transmission to the first generation born abroad represents a new and restrictive interpretation of the *jus sanguinis* (birth to parents who are citizens) dimension of Canadian citizenship (Winter 2014).

Such restrictions are rare but not unique to Canada. Belgium has a similar law (adopted in 1984 and modified in 1995). In the United States, by contrast, citizenship transmission requirements for children born outside the country depend on whether the birth occurs in or out of wedlock and on whether one or both parents are US citizens. If both parents are US citizens and the child is born in wedlock, he or she is entitled to citizenship if at least one parent had been resident in the United States or one of its outlying possessions before the birth of the child. In this case, no specific period of residence time is required for the parent, and there are no retention requirements for the child. In Great Britain, British citizenship for the second and subsequent generations born abroad is not automatic; it can be granted if the claimant possesses “sufficient roots” in the United Kingdom. France grants citizenship to all foreign-born children of French parents; French citizens living abroad can thus pass on citizenship to their offspring indefinitely.¹¹

While the 2008 *Citizenship Act* amendments did not address the issue of naturalization specifically, they nonetheless marked the beginning of a new era in the Canadian government’s interpretation of citizenship and immigration.¹²

A more comprehensive citizenship study guide

In November 2009, Minister Kenney launched a new guide intended for permanent residents preparing for the Canadian citizenship test. Not only is the new guide, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship*, longer than its precursor, but it also contains much more prescriptive and normative language. It insists on the importance of respecting “Canadian values” and denounces “barbaric cultural practices” such as honour killings, female genital mutilation and forced marriage (CIC 2011b). It also places greater emphasis on Canadian history generally, and specifically on military history and the place of the British monarchy in Canada (CIC 2009a).¹³

The guide was generally well received, particularly by editorial writers and columnists in the print media. However, a controversy erupted in March 2010 when it was discovered that Kenney had requested the removal of references to the rights of homosexuals, specifically the legalization of same-sex marriage (Winter and Sauvageau 2012). The House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration adopted a motion recommending that the rights of homosexuals be added to future versions of the new guide. The slightly revised edition of *Discover Canada* published in March 2011 mentions the rights of homosexuals, including the right to same-sex marriage and the prohibition of all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation. Also included are additions regarding Canadian democratic principles, certain historical events (notably the War of 1812) and the prohibition of forced marriage (CIC 2011g). While some commentators warn that the new guide engages in a conservative rebranding of Canada (Iverson 2009; Jones and Perry 2011), others argue that, in essence, the new guide “restored ideas

first expressed by the Liberal governments of William Lyon Mackenzie King and Pierre Elliott Trudeau” (Chapnick 2011, 32).

A more difficult citizenship test

Consistent with the citizenship guide’s new content, the government created a new citizenship test that came into effect on March 15, 2010 (CIC 2010h). Like the previous version, the new exam consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions to be answered within 30 minutes. The score required to pass, however, was raised from 60 to 75 percent (CIC 2011g). According to CIC, “conceptual” questions had been added to the existing fact-based ones (2010h). Indeed, the new test seemed to place more emphasis on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship than had its predecessor.

The media soon reported a marked increase in the failure rate: according to one article, from between 4 and 8 percent for the old test to nearly 30 percent for the March 2010 version (Presse Canadienne 2010a). CIC was obliged to modify the test in order to reduce the failure rate to 20 percent. A revised test was introduced in October 2010.¹⁴

In March and July 2013, the government introduced new and still harder tests, which led to a decrease of the pass rate to 72.6 percent (McKie 2013). According to statistics obtained through the *Access to Information Act*, “individuals with a bachelor’s degree saw their pass rate decrease from 95 per cent to 87 per cent, while individuals with a high school education or less, saw their pass rate descend from 70 per cent to 55 per cent” (McKie 2013). Individuals having the most difficulty in passing the test are said to be accompanying family members, who typically have lower levels of education.

In addition to variations according to level of education, success rates seem to vary drastically by country of origin. In 2011, the success rate for candidates from Western countries was generally over 80 percent, while those from the Dominican Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia had the lowest success rate, at less than 60 percent (“Map” 2012). These comparisons must be made with care, since these data do not take into consideration important differences in the number of candidates from each country (for example, only 14 candidates from Guinea-Bissau wrote the test in 2011, compared with 2,385 from Afghanistan and 3,309 from the United States); but they are indicators for potential injustices that should be carefully monitored, with remedies applied as needed.

Although the Minister announced that candidates could retake the test more quickly than under previous rules — within “weeks” rather than months (CIC 2013b) — the continued steady increase in the citizenship test’s failure rate is consistent with the Conservative government’s desire to raise the “value” of Canadian citizenship. “The goal of [the Citizenship Action Plan] is to encourage Canadians to value, understand and practice their citizenship, thus making citizenship more meaningful” (CIC 2010j). The test assesses “how well applicants understand Canadian values and what it means to be Canadian. The test questions are based on the content in the new study guide, *Discover Canada*, including a broader focus on Canada’s history, identity and values,” according to the CIC spokesperson Whitney Punchak (McKie 2013).

This explanation might appear fairly straightforward, but it should be noted that “Canadian values” are nowhere defined in the new study guide, leaving aside the recurrent, but highly un-specific, references to gender equality, democracy and the rule of law. Furthermore, the emphasis on learning (and memorizing) introduces a class- or education-based bias into the process of becoming a Canadian citizen. Since this bias may also have ethnoracial implications, test results must be closely tracked.

Tightened rules against fraudulent citizenship claims

Between 2010 and 2012, the Conservative government introduced or attempted to introduce various measures to strengthen laws against attempts to obtain Canadian citizenship through fraudulent means. On June 10, 2010, Minister Kenney presented Bill C-37, the *Strengthening the Value of Canadian Citizenship Act*. The Bill proposed three changes: to simplify the citizenship revocation process, to strengthen the measures against fraudulent consultants and to “protect” Canadian citizenship more generally. Among other things, Bill C-37 proposed to tighten citizenship residence requirements by “specify[ing] in the law that people applying for citizenship would have to be physically present in Canada for three of the previous four years” (CIC 2010i). The proposed Act would have complemented another law specifically concerned with immigration consultants, Bill C-35, the *Cracking Down on Crooked Consultants Act*, introduced in the House the previous day. Bill C-37 did not get past first reading. At the time of writing, no further bills of this type have been proposed.

However, the failure of Bill C-37 did not spell the end of the Conservative government’s efforts to combat citizenship-related fraud. Bill C-35, concerning immigration consultants, came into effect in March 2011. The new law, its title changed from the *Cracking Down on Crooked Consultants Act* to *An Act to Amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, provides for the warning and admonishment of fraudulent immigration consultants during the period preceding an immigration request (and not only after submission, as was previously the case). The law also allows the minister of citizenship, immigration, and multiculturalism to designate an organization to regulate immigration consultants’ activities.

In recent years, the Conservative government has demonstrated concern about “marriages of convenience,” marriages used primarily to facilitate the acquisition of Canadian citizenship. On September 27, 2010, CIC launched an extensive online consultation to “gather input on the magnitude of the problem as well as opinions and ideas on how best to address it” (2010g). The online consultation was followed a month later by two town hall meetings on the same subject, one in Montreal and the other in Vancouver (CIC 2010d,e). In November 2010, the relevant rules were made more stringent. Previously, section 4 of the relevant regulations had required the presence of two elements in order to deem a marriage “in bad faith”: lack of genuineness, and a union whose main objective was the acquisition of Canadian citizenship. While the previous regulations required the presence of both elements to determine that a marriage was “in bad faith,” the new version requires only one or the other (CIC 2010a).

The government’s concern with fighting alleged citizenship fraud also led to the implementation in September 2011 of a tip line, which allows the public to report suspected cases of citi-

zenship fraud, such as claiming to be in Canada to satisfy residence requirements when this is not the case (CIC 2011e). It is important to note that the current law is not entirely clear on the question of a candidate's physical presence on Canadian soil. CIC's operational manual states, "The *Citizenship Act* does not define residence as physical presence and the Federal Court has made various decisions on this issue over the years. It is the responsibility of the citizenship judge to determine if an applicant meets the residence requirement despite absences from Canada" (2009b, 8). Each case of potential fraud is considered individually, and only a citizenship judge possesses the legal authority to rule against individuals attempting to obtain Canadian citizenship without having been physically present in the country. Such rulings, however, can be overturned, as shown by a Federal Court decision in October 2013. In the case at issue, CIC appealed a citizenship judge's decision to grant citizenship to a permanent resident who, due to studies abroad, had spent only 150 days in Canada.¹⁵

In 2011, Kenney, convinced that citizenship fraud was rampant, launched an investigation of cases of potential fraud: "In typical cases, permanent residents will use the services of an unscrupulous immigration consultant to establish evidence of residence in Canada while living abroad most, if not all, of the time. This fraud is perpetrated so that individuals can maintain their permanent residence status and later apply for citizenship" (CIC 2011a).

The fraud investigations continued into 2012.¹⁶ In September, it was reported that close to 11,000 people could be under examination (CIC 2012a). Again, the issue of residence was of particular concern to the Minister, despite the fact that "physical presence" within the country is neither unambiguously defined nor legally required. In early 2013, CIC had to acknowledge that of several thousands of alleged fraudsters, only 286 had actually been given formal notice that their citizenship was at risk; and 90 percent of these individuals intended to appeal a potential citizenship revocation (Canadian Press 2013).

In May 2012, the government added to its campaign against allegedly fraudulent applications by introducing a rigorous "residence questionnaire" for some applicants, to establish proof of presence in Canada (CIC 2012c). "Applicants were told the detailed four-page forms — which must be accompanied by proof such as tax returns, pay stubs, and airline tickets to document even brief absences — would take 15 months to process" (Keung 2013). This time span was later substantially increased. According to one immigration lawyer, Joshua Sohn, requests that once took eight to twelve months from submission to the granting of citizenship would take up to two years or more under the new process (Chu 2012). Applicants are given 45 calendar days to return the filled-in questionnaire. If they do not meet this deadline, they receive a final notice requiring return of the completed questionnaire within 30 calendar days. After 75 calendar days, CIC will abandon the application if the questionnaire is not returned.

The government also turned its attention to yet another form of fraudulent citizenship: "birth tourism." This term refers to women or couples visiting Canada to give birth to children who will automatically become Canadian citizens. The parents, it is thought, also hope that the children will later sponsor their own immigration to Canada and eventual citizenship. The issue was taken up in the media after a CBC interview with Kenney, who stated that he wanted to

modify current *jus soli* regulations in Canada that automatically grant citizenship to children born on Canadian soil (Yelaja 2012). At the time of writing, however, no legislative measures had been introduced.

Modifications to the citizenship ceremony

After passing the citizenship test, candidates for Canadian citizenship must attend a mandatory citizenship ceremony, where they must swear allegiance to Canada and the Queen. This tradition dates back to the first citizenship ceremony in 1947. In 2011 the Conservative government modified some conditions of the ceremony.

On April 15, 2011, CIC employees were asked to ensure the presence of at least one past or present member of the Canadian Forces during every ceremony. It was specified that the citizenship judge or other presiding official must recognize this person while discussing the importance of active citizenship through military service or in times of war. “The CF member or veteran in attendance should also be officially recognized and thanked for their service and dedication to Canada” (CIC 2011e). Several roles that members of the Canadian Forces or veterans may play during the ceremony were suggested. They must always be among the platform guests, as well as entering and exiting with the citizenship judge. They may be seated in a reserved section, may stand when recognized by the judge, may congratulate new citizens as part of the receiving line and may distribute items such as flags or pins. They may also make a short speech. In October 2011, it was announced that members of the Order of Military Merit may preside over citizenship ceremonies (CIC 2011d). These changes confirm the Canadian Forces’ newly established importance in the formal attribution of citizenship.

Shortly thereafter, Minister Kenney said he had heard of ceremonies in which new citizens had sworn allegiance with their faces covered. Although the government did not specify who these citizens were, it is reasonable to assume that they were women who wear the niqab or burqa. As of December 2011, citizenship certificates may be awarded only to those who swear allegiance with their faces uncovered. Kenney claimed that the goal of the policy was to allow citizenship judges to confirm that the person is actually reciting the oath, insisting on the public nature of the act and the necessity that new citizens’ allegiance to their new country be clearly visible and understandable. The Minister insisted that covering one’s face during the oath of allegiance “is contrary to Canada’s commitment to openness and to social cohesion” (Kenney 2011). Critics, however, contend that this requirement may discourage permanent residents, especially women, from certain cultures from pursuing citizenship. It may also create the impression that Canada is not accommodating of cultural differences (Alboim and Cohl 2012b, 43). Not knowing how many applicants actually attended Canadian citizenship ceremonies with their faces covered before the policy was put into place, we may also argue that the Minister was needlessly politicizing ethnoreligious differences.

No change has been made to the oath of allegiance to the Queen, although there is growing opposition to retaining it as a condition for Canadian citizenship. The Conservative government maintains that the oath is an important symbol of the country’s heritage. Three permanent residents argued in court that the pledge to the Queen is discriminatory and violates their

constitutional rights, but their complaints were struck down by the Ontario Superior Court in September 2013. Justice Edward Morgan concluded that requiring would-be Canadians to take an oath to the Queen as a condition of citizenship is constitutional, even if it does violate free-speech rights (Young 2013).

Revisions to the language requirements

The *Citizenship Act* states that adequate knowledge of one of Canada's official languages is required to obtain Canadian citizenship. Until recently, potential citizens' language skills were verified implicitly by the citizenship exam and through their conversations with CIC representatives during registration for the exam. In October 2012, however, Kenney announced his intention to amend section 3 of the *Citizenship Act* to require candidates to submit an objective measure of English or French competency (CIC 2011f). This change came into effect on November 1, 2012. Since then candidates must attain level 4 of the Canadian Language Benchmark in oral comprehension and expression. The types of documents accepted as proof of competency include "the results of a CIC-approved third-party test; or the evidence of completion of secondary or post-secondary education in English or French; or the evidence of achieving the appropriate language level in certain government-funded language training programs" (CIC 2012b).

This proof now constitutes a requirement for the acceptance and evaluation of all citizenship requests, reducing the chances for less well-educated individuals to acquire citizenship. Applicants with insufficient language skills no longer have access to a hearing with a citizenship judge. They may remain permanent residents for a much longer time.

The Canadian government does offer language classes to help permanent residents acquire basic skills in English or French, through the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program (Service Canada 2012). These classes are free of charge. However, the number of newcomers who participate in LINC is not as high as one might expect,¹⁷ even though the government has more than tripled its funding since 2006 (CIC 2011f).¹⁸

"Honouring" of the Canadian Forces through citizenship acceleration or revocation

On May 30, 2012, Conservative MP Devinder Shory introduced Bill C-425, *An Act to Amend the Citizenship Act (Honouring the Canadian Armed Forces)*. According to Shory, his private member's bill expressed "the deep respect the people of Calgary Northeast hold for Canadian citizenship and for the brave men and women of our Canadian armed forces" (House of Commons 2012). The first part of the Bill proposed to reduce the citizenship residence requirement by one year for permanent residents of Canada who were members of the Canadian Forces, signed a minimum three-year contract and completed the basic training. The second part proposed to amend section 9 of the *Citizenship Act* to provide that persons who engaged in an act of war against the Canadian Forces would be considered to have renounced their Canadian citizenship or, if they were permanent residents, to have withdrawn their application for citizenship.

The Bill gained new traction in early February 2013, when, in the wake of reports that Canadian citizens were involved in bomb attacks in Bulgaria and Algeria, Minister Kenney announced

that the government was considering “stripping dual citizens of their Canadian citizenship if they commit acts of terror abroad” (Cohen and Hill 2013). On February 27, the bill received near-unanimous support for second reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

At the committee’s meeting on March 21, Kenney spoke in favour of Bill C-425, which he viewed as aiming “to protect the value of Canadian citizenship, as it would enhance our ability to take it away from those who undermine our national security and who threaten the fundamental values on which Canadian citizenship is grounded” (House of Commons 2013). He asked the committee to amend the Bill “so that only those with dual citizenship would be deemed to have renounced their Canadian citizenship under the provisions proposed in this bill,” in order to abide by the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. According to Kenney, the proposal treated all people with multiple nationalities alike, whether they were naturalized citizens or born in Canada.

The Minister also suggested that the committee amend the Bill by replacing the term “act of war” against Canada or the Canadian Forces with other terms that are more clearly defined in law. He insisted that the proposed provisions would not impact many individuals, but “their passage would deliver a strong message that Canadian citizenship is not a flag of convenience to be waved whenever it serves people’s interest, particularly when they’re committing some of the most terrible crimes conceivable” (House of Commons 2013).

Bill C-245 died when Parliament was prorogued in August 2013. Otherwise, according to commentators, it would likely have become law: the Conservatives had a majority in both houses and had “vowed to support it” (T. Cohen 2013a). It remains to be seen whether such a measure will be proposed again.

Evaluating the Recent Changes

International scholarship proposes a number of frameworks for examining changing citizenship regimes. This section applies some of the most important questions raised in this research to the changes introduced in Canada since 2006.

What are the tightened naturalization procedures supposed to achieve?

What policy goals are the Canadian government’s changes to naturalization and citizenship supposed to achieve? Four potential policy goals that are also central to the international debates on naturalization regimes (see, for example, Bauböck and Joppke 2010) may be relevant.

Citizenship tests and study guides can serve to control immigration

In the Canadian context, this policy goal does not seem to be predominant. In contrast to many European countries, Canada has a well-defined immigration policy, which is able to take care of immigration control. Furthermore, the new study guide and test are not likely meant to decrease the overall number of permanent residents who will eventually have access to Canadian citizenship. The adjustment of the test questions to achieve a passing rate of about 80 percent (Presse Canadienne 2010b) and the availability of options for retaking the test (CIC 2013a) sup-

port this interpretation. Nevertheless, other selection mechanisms may be at play that are not visible in citizenship failure rates, such as rejections or long delays of citizenship applications that might lead candidates to withdraw applications “voluntarily.”

Processing times for citizenship applications have been getting longer. In 2012, a record number of 317,440 citizenship applications were received (as opposed to 242,400 in 2008, for example), but the number of new citizens admitted in 2012 was the lowest in four years, 113,142 (as opposed to 176,572 new citizens in 2008) (CIC 2013d).

The drop in naturalizations is likely due to the longer processing times. Thus, in July 2013, it took 25 months to process routine Canadian citizenship applications and 35 months for nonroutine applications, such as those where applicants were asked to fill in a residence questionnaire (CIC 2013c). Delays of up to two years can be caused by the handling of the new residence questionnaires (Chu 2012); applicants wait longer to write the citizenship exam and to take part in a citizenship ceremony. Thus, even if lowering the overall number of permanent residents who become citizens is not a *purpose* of the new policy measures, slowing down access to Canadian citizenship is a de facto outcome. This raises the question of how much these long delays contribute to frustration, political apathy (people get into the habit of not voting) and alienation.

The government seems to have noticed this flaw. It announced, in June 2013, an investment of \$44 million over two years in improving citizenship processing (CIC 2013a). Three months later, CIC announced that the backlog of 349,249 citizenship applications would be reduced by slashing the inventory of “dormant” applications. In other words, the files of individuals who apply for citizenship but then, for whatever reason, fail to meet some of the requirements within a stipulated time (for example, they fail to obtain and submit additionally requested information, or they miss a citizenship exam or the ceremony) would be abandoned (T. Cohen 2013b).

The government now blames the long wait times on those who “don’t bother showing up to their citizenship test, interview, or who don’t respond to a residence questionnaire” (T. Cohen 2013b). Given the short and unpredictable notice provided to applicants for attending the citizenship test (roughly four weeks) and the ceremony (roughly two weeks) after years of waiting, this argument is hard to believe. Add to this the very short time span — 45 days, plus a maximum grace period of another 30 days — allowed for compiling the extensive documentation required for the residence questionnaire. Blaming unresponsive individuals for “not tak[ing] Canadian citizenship seriously” (Andrea Khanjin, a spokeswoman for Immigration Minister Chris Alexander, cited in T. Cohen 2013b) amounts to scapegoating and ignores the devastating social and economic consequences for those whose applications are delayed or even abandoned. The resulting disappointment and alienation may never be remedied, even for those who ultimately become Canadian citizens.

Overall, it seems the government intends to make it more difficult or even impossible for *some* potential new citizens to become Canadians, namely those who are deemed suspicious or less desirable for political, religious or economic reasons. After all, the new bureaucratic requirements aimed at verifying candidates’ physical presence on Canadian soil not only make it much harder for prospective new Canadians to prove their compliance with the rules, they also repre-

sent newcomers as typically mischievous and fraudulent. There is a risk that scapegoating may turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy: individuals who are repeatedly suspected of (bad) things they have not done may ultimately behave this way, because they feel that it no longer matters what they do — they will always be blamed for something.

Tightened naturalization requirements are intended to increase social cohesion

Assessing this policy goal depends on how we define social cohesion. Some commentators define it as ethnocultural homogeneity. For them, it refers to the erasure of stark cultural differences as well as “bad” ethnocultural and religious values. Other commentators oppose the idea that shared culture is necessary for social cohesion. Rather, they insist on individuals’ adherence to basic liberal-democratic values. For yet others, social cohesion depends primarily on socio-economic equality. All three definitions of social cohesion seem to be present in the recent policy changes.

For example, the ban on facial coverings (read “veils”) during the citizenship ceremony implies that some cultures are intolerant and “barbaric,” as stated in the citizenship guide, and therefore threatening to social cohesion. However, the guide also emphasizes the democratic process and liberal-democratic values. Furthermore, it seems fair to say that the tightened language requirements are designed to foster new citizens’ economic integration. Hence, all three definitions of social cohesion are present and used interchangeably. This is problematic.

While socio-economic equality and adherence to a shared political project, democracy, and the rule of law are undoubtedly essential ingredients for social cohesion, the notion that all citizens need to share the same “values” is highly ambiguous. Maybe this is why “Canadian values” are not defined in the study guide itself. Even more complicated is the guide’s strategy of heralding formal gender equality — stating that Canadian women and men are “equal under the law” — by opposing it to cultural practices allegedly committed by immigrants, such as “‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation, forced marriage” (CIC 2011b, 10). This opposition presents a double standard, since the dominant group is defined by some of its most laudable principles and laws, while members of minority groups are framed by the contested practices of some of their members.

Stricter naturalization criteria aim to increase national security

While this policy goal applies to Canada’s immigration policy (Aiken 2009), it does not seem to be predominant in guiding Canadian policy on citizenship and naturalization. Here, the government seems to be more concerned about potential fraud than about terrorism. The new measures, such as the new residence questionnaire, are not well suited to reinforcing national security. This was not even the case for Bill C-425. The Bill might have prevented certain criminals from striking twice against the Canadian military, but it could not have pre-empted their bad intentions. It therefore fell under the realm of symbolic politics: the goal was punishment or, at the least, deterrence.

New naturalization criteria can help improve new citizens’ economic and social integration

This policy goal is definitely present in the Canadian context, and here most notably with respect to the tightened language criteria. Analytically, we can differentiate between social,

economic and cultural motivations behind the introduction of tightened language criteria for would-be citizens. In other words, are the new policy measures primarily concerned with new citizens' full participation in society? Do they merely aim at the economic proficiency of newcomers? Or are language criteria to be interpreted as a reinstatement of linguistic nationalism and cultural homogeneity? In practice, skills in either or both official languages operate at all three levels. For the Canadian context, it has been shown that language proficiency is essential to helping newcomers find work (Boyd and Cao 2009; Alexander and McKenna 2009) and enabling them to participate fully in their new society (Derwing and Waugh 2012).

Language proficiency is thus one of the biggest determinants of successful immigrant integration. The tightening of language criteria for both immigration and naturalization applications and a language voucher pilot project introduced in the fall of 2009 to promote the LINC program thus respond to the policy goal of fostering the economic and social integration of new citizens. However, "raising language requirements at the [immigrant] selection stage will not in itself guarantee the integration of newcomers" (Derwing and Waugh 2012, 26). Rather, "sustained opportunities for learners to interact with speakers of an official language" (26) are necessary even for immigrants with high test scores in an official language in order to acquire the soft skills and culturally based linguistic "pragmatics" that will allow them to fit in.

In sum, naturalization should be interpreted as part of the integration process rather than its end point. This interpretation has three consequences. First, if free language training for newcomers remains a cornerstone for successful economic and social integration, then courses should also be accessible for new citizens after their naturalization.

Second, a question that should be investigated is whether the new language tests are indeed helpful in fostering language acquisition. They may actually delay citizenship acquisition and thereby reduce everyday linguistic integration; in effect, the delay in citizenship may discourage newcomers from investing in language as a long-term strategy of social and economic integration. The tightened language requirements appear to be mostly an instrument of state control aimed at "disciplining" future citizens. Like all kinds of tests, language exams test not only for content (language skills) but also for form: they identify whether persons submit to given rules and act in line with how the state expects its (future) citizens to behave.

The third consequence is that the stricter language requirements must be monitored to see whether they ultimately hinder naturalization applications. To what extent do they add unnecessary costs (in time and money) to the naturalization process? Will they delay or prevent applications from some potential citizenship candidates who cannot cover these costs, are afraid of further testing or simply do not have the time to overcome yet another hurdle in the application process? Who would these candidates predominantly be: women or men, of which age groups and from which countries of origin? Will accompanying family members of primary applicants in the skilled worker category be left behind because of the language requirements, as they seem to be because of the citizenship test (McKie 2013)?

Who are the targeted populations?

While it is easy to assume that the new measures are merely targeting permanent residents and citizenship candidates, we should not underestimate the importance of a second target group: the Canadian-born population.

Indeed, the recent measures and the way they were announced publicly speak to the concerns of a conservative constituency. The new citizenship study guide, for example, was a political response to a debate on the allegedly diminishing value of Canadian citizenship. Some public figures wanted the government to respond to the apparent disloyalty of citizens of convenience and to address a seemingly growing “culture of amnesia and ignorance” concerning Canadian history, the monarchy and military interventions (A. Cohen 2007; Granatstein 1998, 2007; Griffiths 2009; Kent 2008; Valpy 2009). The first citizenship study guide, *A Look at Canada*, was implemented almost silently in the 1990s, but *Discover Canada* has been made available to schools, school boards and libraries. CIC is encouraging its use among teachers and students and has dedicated a special section of its website to teachers and students (House of Commons 2010).

Furthermore, it is hardly accidental that the Minister’s announcement to prohibit citizenship candidates from having their faces covered during the oath of allegiance was made in Montreal (Kenney 2011). The debate in Quebec in 2007 and 2008 about religious minorities making seemingly “unreasonable” demands for accommodation continues to resonate there.

The new citizenship tests and tightened naturalization criteria represent a governmental reaction to popular and nationalist, sometimes xenophobic sentiments that require the state to “do something” about the perceived failure of newcomers to “integrate” (Wright 2008). But requiring the Canadian-born population to learn about Canada too could also help to put old and new citizens on an equal footing. Having all Canadian-born residents take a citizenship test and swear an oath of allegiance when they turn 18 would be the logical consequence of this reasoning.

It is remarkable that the government’s response to a rather right-leaning constituency has apparently become mainstream in the Canadian context. For example, the 2008 amendments to the *Citizenship Act* were adopted unanimously in Parliament; all major parties voted overwhelmingly in favour of second reading of Bill C-425; and even some of the francophone media in Quebec praised the new citizenship guide (Winter and Sauvageau 2012).

For the primary target group, permanent residents and citizenship candidates, the tightened procedures reinforce the impression that naturalization is an institutionalized rite of passage (Fassin and Mazouz 2007). This rite reveals much about how the nation sees itself and wants to be seen (Sayad 1982). What is at stake in naturalization is thus not merely how Canada welcomes new citizens, but also how it reinforces dominant cultural narratives and nation building.

However, this rite of passage is also a demonstration of state power. The state is controlling and disciplining the citizenship candidate with the purpose of producing uniform, obedient citizens

(Löwenheim and Gazit 2009). The state imposes its vision of the nation upon newcomers. In Canada, the requirement to prove language skills—even for native English speakers from the United States (Keung 2010)—the implementation of a citizenship fraud tip line and the requirement to prove physical residence here (CIC 2012c) speak to this demonstration of state sovereignty and control.

Do the new procedures liberalize or renationalize naturalization?

There is an ongoing international debate over whether recent policy changes in several countries are to be interpreted as a liberalization of citizenship (Joppke 2007) or whether, on the contrary, they reinforce cultural or nationalist criteria of membership (van Oers, Ersbøll and Kostakopoulou 2010; Michalowski 2011).

One strand of the literature identifies a “civic turn” in integration and citizenship policies (Mouritsen and Jørgensen 2008), which is said to promote the incorporation of immigrants into the political culture of liberal states without unduly reinforcing cultural or nationalist criteria.¹⁹ In Canada, policy elements supporting this interpretation are the stressing of *jus soli* over *jus sanguinis* (as in the first-generation limitation) and the emphasis on liberal-democratic procedures and the rule of law (as in the citizenship study guide).

A second group of scholars insist that the current trend is best described as a “renationalization” of citizenship, where nation-specific definitions of citizenship remain dominant (Jacobs and Rea 2007) and where cultural and, increasingly, religious criteria of belonging are emphasized (Triadafilopoulos 2011). In Canada, examples of this interpretation include the focus on Canadian history and the monarchy (in the citizenship study guide) as well as military traditions (stressed in the study guide, at citizenship ceremonies and in parliamentary debates about Bill C-425). Among prospective new citizens, Muslims seem the cultural/religious group that is viewed as being most urgently in need of cultural compliance, as demonstrated by the reference to honour killings and female genital mutilation in the citizenship study guide, and by the requirement to take the citizenship oath without a face covering (although the word *veil* is never used).

In other words, liberalization and renationalization tendencies in citizenship policies are not mutually exclusive, and the current changes to procedural requirements are not extensive enough to be interpreted as an abandonment of the liberal-democratic foundations of Canada’s citizenship and naturalization. There are, however, two other developments relating to Canadian citizenship that must not go unnoticed.

The Canadian government is actively engaged in a process of historicizing, culturalizing and “thickening” (Etzioni 2007) Canadian citizenship. The focus on Canadian history in *Discover Canada* is one example. Others include the emphasis on portraits of the Queen in government buildings and embassies and the restoration of the word *royal* in the names of Canada’s navy and air force in 2011. Symbolic politics emphasizing the importance of Canada’s British cultural roots are problematic, as they remind us of the period before the introduction of the federal multiculturalism policy—one that was characterized by conformity to anglophone norms and “speak white” ideology (Winter 2012).

In addition, the tone of how citizenship is being framed has changed. While it is not unreasonable to “expect citizens to have an ongoing commitment, connection and loyalty to Canada” (CIC 2010i), it is troublesome to represent future compatriots as being typically fraudulent and mischievous (CIC 2011a).²⁰ This framing of those who will eventually become “us” does not seem a good way of generating social trust and cohesion. In fact, the central message being sent to Canadians is that their citizenship and its value are under threat by ostensibly ill-intentioned permanent residents, dual citizens, non-Canadian fiancés, pregnant tourists and the like — a scary scenario. It is thus not surprising that the citizenship fraud tip line has been buzzing with denunciations from concerned citizens (more than 22,000 calls between September 2011 and February 2013). However, few of these tips brought actionable information: they resulted in only 132 referrals for investigations (Canadian Press 2013).

How does Canada compare internationally?

How do the recent changes to the Canadian naturalization regime compare with what is going on elsewhere? Is there an increasing cross-country convergence with respect to citizenship policies in Western immigrant-receiving countries (Joppke 2007)? Or, on the contrary, are policy changes reinforcing national traditions (Jacobs and Rea 2007)?

We can tentatively conclude on a positive note: in an international comparison, Canada still does very well (Peucker 2008; Michalowski 2011). Canada has fairly high naturalization rates, and naturalization is clearly not a mechanism for immigration control, as it is in several countries in Europe. On the contrary, the Migrant Integration Policy Index (2013) says Canada’s “new citizenship test and guide is the most professional of all countries.” However, we should not forget that, in Canada, selection takes place predominantly in the policy realm of immigration, and there is a growing emphasis on two-step migration (Goldring and Landolt 2013; Banting 2012).

It also seems fair to say that, even with the need for proof of competency in either English or French, the language test has not become an insurmountable hurdle for many prospective citizens. The Canadian citizenship test is also not probing for faith-related attitudes, as some European tests are said to do (van Oers 2010). With a success rate of roughly 80 percent, the Canadian citizenship test remains within the realm of a fair challenge for most candidates.

However, the growth of a distrustful, accusatory and punitive tone in citizenship discourse is unfortunate. Furthermore, even in Canada, we now regularly see questions of citizenship and integration being associated with gender equality and national security. Linking the revocation of citizenship to alleged terrorism and inviting new citizens to join the military “as a noble way to contribute to Canada” (CIC 2011b, 10) exemplify the new security subtext of Canadian naturalization rules. The pairing of concerns about (some) immigrants’ and ethnoreligious minorities’ disrespect of human rights with worries about national security also shows that Islam and Muslims have become central to Canada’s citizenship discourse, even if this is not openly acknowledged.

Conclusion

The analysis in this study points to three main conclusions. First, Canada remains a world leader with respect to naturalization. The criteria for becoming a Canadian citizen have been tightened, but not to the extent that they would amount to a restrictive, illiberal framework. The Canadian government is not controlling the number of migrants who are allowed to stay permanently in Canada through the testing of language skills or knowledge about the country; nor does it aim to maintain immigrants at the permanent resident level forever by denying them citizenship. The Canadian citizenship regime has always been an integrative framework, working hand in hand with Canada's policy of multiculturalism. "Language tests, citizenship ceremonies and citizenship oaths are all well-established features of Canadian citizenship procedures" (Kymlicka 2003, 196), and even the emphasis on "shared values" is not entirely new (see Chapnick 2011). In sum, there is no pronounced "restrictive turn," at least not if we define this in terms of *realpolitik* and objective material changes such as laws adopted, the number of rejected citizenship applications and policy directions that durably hinder candidates' access to naturalization.

Still, Canadians must not be complacent. The politics of naturalization are to a large extent a moral affair; many of the recent changes remain in the soft zone of discourse and symbolic politics. But there are developments to keep our eyes on, one of which is outright troubling. If we accept that liberalization and renationalization of citizenship describe two opposing poles, which are in constant tension, then the Canadian naturalization regime seems to be moving toward the latter; this is my second conclusion. I do not want to suggest that Canada is on a slippery slope to ethnic nationalism in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, the current emphasis on Canada's military history and British traditions such as the monarchy must not undermine the Canadian ethos of multiculturalism, which replaced the dominant ideology of conformity to anglophone norms only 40 years ago. Furthermore, and specifically within the context of renationalization, depicting prospective citizens as fraudulent and mischievous is counterproductive and dangerous since it promotes insecurity and distrust. This practice is even more to be rejected if a more or less recognizable ethnic/religious group is targeted, even implicitly.

The third conclusion of this study speaks to the place of naturalization within the immigrant integration process and within the Canadian tradition of multiculturalism. In contrast to other countries, Canada has been known for defining the citizenship test and ceremony as two steps among many on the long road to full participation and integration (Paquet 2010). Naturalization was never viewed as the "first prize" at the end of a competitive race among immigrants. Rather, it was flanked by multiculturalism policy, which has had a positive role in creating feelings of belonging among new Canadians. Multiculturalism not only provided immigrants with an incentive to take up citizenship but also "foster[ed] a sense of obligation to participate and give back" (Bloemraad 2006, 153). The symbiosis among Canada's immigration policy, multiculturalism and citizenship needs to be retained. Naturalization provides new citizens with a safe place to live their lives, develop their professional careers and businesses, create roots and, over time, integrate further. In a liberal democracy, there does not seem to be a better way to turn others into us.

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Notes

- 1 In 2009-10, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) introduced the Citizenship Action Plan, a set of integrated initiatives that were designed "to strengthen the integrity of the Citizenship Program." The action plan was also to "enhance the value and meaning of Canadian citizenship by strengthening civic memory, civic participation and sense of belonging to Canada" (CIC 2010b).
- 2 Several recent measures in Germany can be interpreted this way: the addition of citizenship based on *jus soli* (birth on a country's soil) to that based on *jus sanguinis* (birth to parents who are citizens of the country) in 2000; the first ever immigration law in 2005; and the introduction of naturalization procedures involving a standardized citizenship test (rather than a civil servant's discretion) in 2009 (Winter and John 2009). There are, however, several flaws in this interpretation (Winter, forthcoming).
- 3 Defined in a more narrow way, "naturalization does not refer to cases in which an individual receives another citizenship by declaration or automatic acquisition (e.g. through marriage, birth, or upon becoming an adult)" (Liebig and Von Haaren 2011, 25). In Canada, citizenship acquisition by birth (either on Canadian soil or to Canadian parents) is automatic and therefore not considered in this study. By contrast, citizenship acquisition through marriage falls under the category of naturalization.
- 4 The pledge of allegiance to the Queen was reviewed during Jean Chrétien's Liberal government in the mid-1990s but no changes were made (Whyld 2013).
- 5 Conservative ministers overseeing the department before Jason Kenney were Monte Solberg (2006-07) and Diane Finley (2007-08). Chris Alexander was appointed Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in July 2013.
- 6 These amendments end an almost 20-year gap in Canadian citizenship legislation, which was partly due to the wave of multinational conflict that characterized Canada for much of the 1990s (Winter 2013; see also Garcea 2006).
- 7 For land crossings, other travel documents have since been instituted, such as the NEXUS card.
- 8 For specific provisions and exceptions, see Becklumb (2008, 1-5).
- 9 See Macklin and Crépeau (2010) on dual citizenship in the Canadian context.
- 10 For a more detailed analysis, see Harder (2010), Harder and Zhyznomirska (2012) and Winter (2013, 2014).
- 11 For details on these countries' policies, see Bauböck et al. (2006) and United States (2000).
- 12 For an overview, see Alboim and Cohl (2012b).
- 13 For a longer examination, see Winter (2013).
- 14 On monitoring the test's difficulty, see the testimony of CIC Deputy Minister Neil Yeates (House of Commons 2010).
- 15 *Canada (Citizenship and Immigration) v. Naveen*, 2013 FC 972 (October 18). Accessed November 13, 2013. <http://decisions.fct-cf.gc.ca/site/fc-cf/decisions/en/item/63502/index.do?r=AAAAAQAGbmF2ZWVuAAAAAAQ>
- 16 Most notably, in September 2012, CIC's investigations were said to have led to the revocation of the citizenship of 300 individuals all claiming to live at the same address, Palestine House in Mississauga, a suburb of Toronto (Rosella 2012). Furthermore, nearly 5,000 cases of permanent residents living outside the country were apparently brought to the department's attention during the same month (Chu 2012). According to CIC, these individuals will be targeted if they enter the country or attempt to obtain Canadian citizenship (Chu 2012).
- 17 According to a report published in 2009 by CIC, the majority of refugees and family class immigrants attend classes for beginners, while skilled workers are more likely to attend the higher-level classes (Dempsey, Xue and Kustec 2009). The same report states that one in three immigrants enrolled in LINC training completes the course. "Completion rates also vary by immigration category with skilled workers noting the highest completion rates (in the 40 percent range) and lower rates recorded for family class immigrants and refugees (in the 30 percent range)" (4).
- 18 Furthermore, in June 2010, standardized language tests — the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Test d'évaluation de français (TEF) — were made mandatory for all immigrants applying under the Federal Skilled Worker Program (CIC 2010c). These requirements also apply to native English and French speakers (Keung 2010). CIC employees were instructed not to process applications without language test results, starting June 26 (CIC 2010f).
- 19 This argument has most convincingly been made by Joppke (2007); see also Joppke and Morawska (2003).
- 20 To provide but a few examples of this discourse, recent government statements portray new citizens and would-be citizens as "undermining" national security and as "threatening" the fundamental values of Canadian citizenship, according to Minister Kenney (House of Commons 2013). Apparently, Canadians need to be protected from "those who would abuse our country's generosity or violate our fair rules" (Kenney 2012a) and "violate Canada's laws and treat marriage like some cynical commercial transaction, just to bring people into Canada" (Kenney 2012b).

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