

BELONGING

READING PACK 1



Between 1550 and 1700, England went through a period of rapid commercial expansion. European merchants were encouraged to bring their trades to England at the same time as English merchants sought to widen their trade networks abroad, leading to the creation of joint-stock trading companies such as the Virginia Company and the East India Company. The second half of the sixteenth century was also marked by the arrival of Protestant refugees from France and the Low Countries. Wary that foreign merchants and financiers would apply their capital outside England, and fearing the escalation of tensions between English and migrant artisans, Tudor and Stuart authorities developed a series of legal and fiscal instruments to regulate the integration or exclusion of individuals from economic and civic activities. Citizenship and denizenship were two essential instruments that demarcated the legal, political, and civic rights of individuals in early modern England. If the different privileges granted to citizens and denizens reveals the economic implications that shaped early modern notions of belonging, the succession of James VI of Scotland to the English crown posed new questions about the status of the Scottish subjects of the Stuart king living in England. The discussions surrounding this debate in 1608, known as 'Calvin's Case', mobilised long-held English ideas on the rights of locals and foreigners, as well as influencing perceptions of subjecthood, identity and belonging within the British Isles. This set of readings highlights the economic and political significance attached to citizenship and subjecthood as markers of Englishness, and provides an important prism through which to approach the appeals of 'aliens', 'foreigners', and 'strangers' who sought rights in England.

TIDE: Keyword(s): **Citizen, Denizen**

Additional Keywords: **Convert, Merchant, Native, Settler, Subject**

Please read the associated essays at <http://www.tideproject.uk/keywords-home/>

Historical documents:

John Stow, *A survey of London* (1598)

The son of a candle maker, John Stow was born in London in 1525. Over the sixteenth century, London developed into a commercial hub that attracted individuals and communities from Europe and beyond. It was this environment that influenced Stow's best known work, A Survey of London. This work was a detailed account of the history of the city, providing a unique account of its buildings, social conditions and legal and cultural customs. Here, Stow discusses the role of 'citizens' in the social makeup and economic prosperity of London.

Now, out of this, that the estate of London, in the persons of the Citizens, is so friendly interlaced, and knit in league with the rest of the realm, not only at their beginning by birth and blood as I have showed, but also very commonly at their ending by life and conversation (for that Merchants and rich men being satisfied with gain doe for the most part) marry their children into the Country... I do infer that there is not only no danger towards the common quiet thereby, but also great occasion and cause of good love and amity: out of this, that they be generally bent to travel and do fly poverty... I draw hope, that they shall escape the note of many vices, which idle people do fall into. And out of this, that they be a great multitude, and that yet the greatest part of them be neither too rich not too poor, but do live in the mediocrity, I conclude with Aristotle that the Prince needeth not to fear sedition by them, for thus saith he. Large cities are more populous than small ones, and are therefore safer, because they rest upon the basis of a large middle class. I am now to come to the strength and power of this City, which consists partly in the number of the Citizens themselves, whereof I have spoken before, partly in their riches.

***The Argument of Sir Francis Bacon, His Majesty's Solicitor General, in the Case of the Post-Nati of Scotland* (1608)**

In 1608, some of the greatest legal minds in England, including Francis Bacon and Edward Coke, gathered at the Exchequer Chamber in London to deliberate a case, commonly known as 'Calvin's Case', that had initially seemed like a simple matter of property inheritance. The case deliberated whether the three-year-old Robert Calvin (actually called James Colville), who had been born in Scotland to Scottish parents, could inherit property in London under English common law. The decision of the twelve judges, two of whom dissented, would have enormous implications for issues of subjecthood, birthright and allegiance in the English-speaking world for centuries to come. The judges decided that Scottish children, known as the postnati (born after the Scottish King James VI/I inherited the throne of England in 1603), had the legal right under English law to be considered English subjects. In doing so, Calvin's case 'mapped out the precise borders of English refusal' to extend subjecthood to all the king's Scottish subjects by considering the 'status of a particular subset of Scottish subjects' – the postnati.

For more on the background to this, see

<http://www.tideproject.uk/2016/11/28/calvins-case-and-rights-of-the-subject/>

The King may denizen and enable any foreigner for him and his descendants after the charter: though he cannot naturalize, nor enable him to make pedigree from ancestors paramount...

The third person is a denizen, using the word properly, for sometimes is confounded with a natural born subject. This is one that is but 'submitting graft' or 'adoption' and is never by birth, but only by the king's charter, and by no other mean, come he never so young into the realm, or stay he never so long. Mansion

or habitation will not idenize him [make him a denizen], no, nor swearing obedience to the king in a leet, which doth-in-law the subject; but only, as I said, the king's grace and gift. To this person the law giveth an ability and capacity abridged, not in matter, but in time and as there was a time when he was not subject, so the law doth not acknowledge him before that time, For if he purchase freehold after his denization, he may take it; but if he have purchased any before, he shall not hold it: so if he have children after, they shall inherit; but if he have any before, they shall not inherit. So as he is but privileged 'in the future' as schoolmen say and not 'in the past.'

Further reading: TIDE: Keyword, foreigner

http://www.tideproject.uk/keywords-home/?keyword_id=63

Literary document:

Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (c. 1599), Act II, scene 3

The Shoemaker's Holiday is an early example of city comedy, a genre that depicts the everyday lives and interactions of London's diverse population. The narrative contains three subplots: a romance between a citizen and an aristocrat; a gentleman's attempted seduction of a shoemaker's wife; and the rise of Simon Eyre, a London shoemaker, to become the Lord Mayor of London. In this scene associated with the first subplot, the aristocrat Rowland Lacy disguises himself as a Dutch shoemaker (predictably named 'Hans'), in order to woo Rose Ostley, daughter of the current Lord Mayor. Lacy passes by Simon Eyre's workshop, singing a Dutch song and affecting a foreign accent. Eyre's apprentice, Firke, asks Eyre to hire him. This brief exchange shows the complex nature of accents and stereotypes around migration and social class, where an English nobleman imitates a Dutch workman, while an English workman piles on stereotypes about the Dutch national character, and bonds across nationalities are formed on the basis of a supposedly shared 'working class' background. Such a performance offers an example of the mix of languages and cultural influences in London communities, even while it invites the audience to laugh at cultural differences.

LACY

Der was een bore van Gelderland, Frolick un byen, he was als dronck he cold nyet stand, upsolce se byen, tapeens de canneken drincke scheve mannekin.

FIRKE

Master, for my life yonder's a brother of the Gentle Craft, if he bear not Saint Hugh's bones, I'll forfeit my bones, he's some uplandish workman, hire him good master, that I may learn some gibble gabble, t'will make us work the faster.

EYRE

Peace Firke, a hard world, let him pass, let him vanish, we have journeymen enough, peace my fine Firke.

WIFE

Nay, nay, you are best follow your man's counsell, you shall see what will come on't: we have not men enough, but we must entertain every butter-box: but let that pass.

HODGE

Dame, before God if my maister follow your counsell, he'll consume little beef, he shall be glad of men and he can catch them.

FIRKE

Aye that he shall.

HODGE

Fore God a proper man, and I warrant a fine workman: maister farewell, dame adew, if such a man as he cannot find work, Hodge is not for you.

[Offers to go]

EYRE

Stay my fine Hodge.

FIRKE

Faith, and your foreman go, dame you must take a journey to seek a new journeyman. If Roger remove, Firke follows, if St. Hugh's bones shall not be set a work, I may prick mine all in the walls, and go play: fare ye well master, goodbye dame.

EYRE

Carry my fine Hodge, my brisk foreman, stay Firke, peace pudding broth, by the lord of Ludgate I love my men as my life, peace you gallimaufry. Hodge, if he want work I'll hire him, one of you to him, stay, he comes to us.

LACY

Eoeden dach meester, ende u uro oak.

FIRKE

Nayis if I should speak after him without drinking, I should choke, and you friend Oake, are you of the Gentle Craft?

LACY

Yaw yaw, Ik bin den skomawker.

FIRKE

Den skomaker quoth a, and heark you skomaker, have you all your tools, a good rubbing pin, a good stopper, a good dresser, your four sorts of awles and your two balls of wax, your paring knife, your hand and thumb-leathers, and good St. Hugh's bones to smooth up your work?

LACY

Yaw yaw be niet vor veard, Ik hab all de dingen, voour mack shoes groot and cleane.

FIRKE

Ha ha! Good maister hire him, he'll make me laugh so that I shall work more in mirth, then I can in earnest.

EYRE

I care ye friend, have ye any skill in the mystery of Cordwainers?

LACY

Ik weet niet wat yow seg ich vestaw you niet.

FIRKE

Why thus man, Ich verste v niet quoth a.

LACY

Yaw, yaw, yaw, ick can dat wel doen.

FIRKE

Yaw, yaw, he speaks yawning like a Jackdaw, that gapes to be fed with cheese curds. O he'll give a villabour pull at a Can of double Beere, but Hodge and I have the vantage, we must drink first, because we are the eldest journeyman.

Beyond text:

Citizen and countryman (1641). This woodcut contrasts clothing between members of different social groups and plays on the status differences between the 'country man', with his walking stick and more 'rustic' attire, and the urban citizen and his access to the realm's finest products and industries.



Printed at London for T. B. 1641.

Illustration from Mrs Charles H Ashdown, *British Costume During the 19 Centuries* (1910)

Further activities can explore notions of citizenship evident in debates today, such as the rights of refugees or stateless persons, or explore the vast national and regional differences that divide ideas of citizenship and belonging. Too often, 'England' is conflated with 'London', or the 'United Kingdom' with 'England'. Who is included in discussions about citizens? Who does the government include? How do debates about citizenship and border-crossing, including stereotypes and hostility towards others, continue to inflect the way we imagine our civil society and notions of national identity?

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