

Area of Study 2

Nation, race and citizen 1888–1914

Timeline

Outside of the timeframe (but relevant)

- 1851: Australian Natives Association is founded
- 1854: The Age is launched
- 1870: Convict transportation ends and British troops leave Australia
- 1880: The Bulletin is Launched
- 1882: Russian fleet moored off the coast of South Australia
- 1884: The Imperial Federation League is established
- 1884: The Victorian Women's Suffrage Society is founded
- 1887: The Women's Christian Temperance Society is founded

Area of Study timeframe

- 1889: Major General Edwards of Britain completes a damning report on Australia's defences, saying that joint colonial action would be required if Australia was attacked
- 1889: Henry Parkes makes his Tenterfield Oration
- 1889: The Australian Women's Suffrage Society is founded
- 1890: Banjo Paterson's "The Man From Snowy River" is published
- 1890: Maritime Workers strike
- 1890: Labour Party formed to support workers
- 1891: Queensland Shearers strike
- 1893: Edmund Barton founds the Australian Federation League
- 1894: Women in South Australia gain the right to at a colonial level
- 1896: Edwin Flack represents Australia at the Athens Olympics (despite Australia not being federated) and wins two gold medals
- 1896: John Norton launches The Truth
- 1899: Women in Western Australia gain the right to vote
- 1 January 1901: The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (UK) comes into force. Australia is a singular, federated nation under a constitutional monarchy
- 17th December 1901: Pacific Island Labourers' Act passed
- 23rd December 1901: Immigration Restriction Act passed
- 1902: Commonwealth Franchise Act is passed, giving women the vote
- 1903: Sugar Bounties Act passed
- 1903: The Naturalisation Act passed
- 1904: Conciliation and Arbitration Act passed
- 1908: Invalid and Old Aged Pension Act passed
- 1906: Customs Tariff Act passed
- 1906: Excise Tariff Act passed
- 1909: Defence Act passed, introducing a national system of compulsory military training
- 1912: Maternity Allowance Act passed

Outside of the timeframe (but relevant)

- 1962: Aborigines gained the right to vote
- 1967: Referendum led to Aborigines being counted in the census, and Commonwealth could make laws about them

Key knowledge

The hopes and fears which helped create the new nation and shaped ideas about citizenship, belonging and responsibilities

Hope for a united nation (nationalism)

- Reasons for the desire for a united nation
 - More and more people were colonial born. They began to associate with a colony (e.g. Victoria) rather than Britain. Feelings of nationalism developed
 - Developments in travel in communication: telephone connections and telegraph
 - Science: information e.g. weather was passed between colonies. It was hoped that such information could improve forecasts
 - Common culture: religion, language, race, social and political institutions
 - Education: schools began to focus on Australian culture in addition to an emphasis on loyalty to Britain
- Sport:
 - Combined Australian cricket team against English sides
 - 1896: Athens Olympic Games – Edwin Flack represented Australia, winning two gold medals
 - 1875: Edward Trickett: world sculling champion
- Literature:
 - Henry Lawson (1867-1922)
 - Many claim he was the first to capture the Australian way of life in written form
 - Focused on hardships of bush life and challenges faced by those in the bush
 - Pride also evident
 - In 1888 “The Bulletin” began publishing his work
 - E.g. “Freedom on the Wallaby”
 - Andrew Barton “Banjo” Paterson (1864-1941):
 - Worked in the city for a magazine but did not like city life
 - Work was lighter in nature when compared to Lawson
 - E.g. “Man from Snowy River”, “Clancy of the Overflow”
- Heidelberg school
 - Artistic movement whose subject matter was Australian bush and people in the late 1880s-1890s
 - Broke away from softer tones used to portray England and instead showed a harsh sunlight, used earthier colours and depicted distinctive vegetation
 - Frederick McCubbin: The Pioneers
 - Tom Roberts: A Break Away
- Organisations
 - Australian Natives Association (ANA) est. 1851 in Melbourne with other branches in Victoria
 - Identified themselves as “avowedly Australian”
 - Did not want just any Federation (i.e. had specifications)
 - Resisted the Imperial Federation movement, argued that decisions for Australia were to be made in Australia, not London
 - Pushed for a closer tie between colonies
 - Invited politicians to attend the Corowa Conference (which led to the 1897 Constitutional Convention of elected delegates and the referendum process)
 - In favour of a constitutional monarchy; they respected Queen Victoria and the Westminster system of government

- Australian Federation League (AFL) est. 1893 and led by Edmund Barton
 - “An organization of citizens owing no class distinction or party influences”
 - Its sole purpose was to achieve Federation
 - Efforts led to another “People’s Convention” in Bathurst, 1896
 - Concerned about the dangers of parochialism (pride in one’s colony)
 - Encouraged the formation of branch leagues in every town that they deemed important
- The Bulletin, launched 1880
 - “The Bulletin favours: Republican form of government. Payment for members. One man, one vote. A united Australia and protection against the world”
 - “The Bulletin denounces: Religious interference in politics. Foreign titles (e.g. Dukes, Earls). The Chinese. Imperial Federation”
 - Advertising campaign, 1890
- The Age, launched 1854
 - “A journal of politics, commerce and philanthropy, dedicated to the record of great movements, the advocacy of free institutions, the diffusion of truth and the advancement of men.”
 - Editorial
 - Strong radical views
 - Editor David Syme was a passionate protectionist who advocated a favourable vote in the 1898 referendum
- Workers
 - Took a common stance against Federation
 - Tended to favour political separation of small colonies
 - However, shearers, miners and stevedores (dock workers) saw advantages in inter-colonial trade unions (strength in numbers)
 - Some of the working class had radical visions, having lost confidence in the Westminster system. They viewed radical republicanism as a realistic option
 - William Lane, editor of The Worker and The Boomerang was an influential republican, determined to establish a socialist society
- The Imperial Federation League, est. 1884
 - Members were people of power and influence within the colonies
 - E.g. Wealthy businessmen
 - Pro-Federation body, indicating the existence of some nationalistic sentiment
 - Supported the British Empire and desired a parliament in London
- The Truth, launched 1896 by John Norton (Sydney version)
 - Abused many authoritative figures
 - Republican: Queen Victoria was “flabby, fat and flatulent”
 - Argued for social reform
 - Xenophobic

Hope for a stronger defence/Fear of military invasion

- Late 1800s: many held a fear of military invasion because of:
 - European imperialism
 - Distance from the British army and navy
 - Presence of large, unfamiliar Asian civilizations to the north
 - Size of the continent
 - Rich resources
 - Paranoia
 - European colonization of parts of Africa, South-East Asia, Asia and the Pacific led to a feeling that Australia could be annexed by a non-British power
 - Military strength of Japan becoming evident due to their wars with Russia and China
- 1853: French colonized New Caledonia and New Hebrides
- 1870: Convict transportation ended and British troops left Australia
- 1882: Russian fleet moored off the coast of South Australia
- 1884: Germany declared the North East corner of New Guinea a German protectorate
- 1889: Major General Edwards of Britain completed a damning report on Australia's defences, saying that joint colonial action would be required if Australia was attacked
- NSW Premier Henry Parkes pushed for Federation for defence reasons in his Tenterfield Oration (1889)
- Fear reflected in 19th Century "literature", portraying fictional accounts of Asian invasion
- Cartoons such as "A Plain Case" (1885) depicted the colonies aboard a ship, disunited in the face of a Russian attack
- Historiography
 - Lewis: "Defence was rarely stressed as a reason for Federating"
 - Windschuttle: invasion literature was not widely read
 - Blainey: Australians "rightly feared" Germany's annexation and Russian invasion

Hope for a white Australia / fear of immigration

- Fear of “invasion” in the late 1800s
- Fear grew significantly in the 1850s with an increase in Chinese during gold rushes
- Differences in culture, language and religion led to distrust
- Fear that they would take white jobs, working for lower wages in poorer conditions and not joining unions
- However there was evidence existing of migrants engaging in industrial action due to poor working conditions
 - September 1885: 300 Chinese people went on strike against their Chinese bosses in the furniture industry, demanding higher wages
 - 1899: Afghan camel drivers went on strike for higher wages, but were jailed
- There is a lot of evidence of Chinese contributing positively to the Australian economy: market gardeners, business men
- 60,000 Kanakas (Pacific Island workers) came to Australia between 1860 and 1900
 - Worked on sugar plantations
 - Either recruited or kidnapped
 - Low wages: £12 per year (Europeans earned £52 per year)
 - Some argue that the success of the sugar industry depended on them
- Perceived solution to the immigration “problem”: Federation, leading to a Commonwealth parliament, would result in uniform immigration laws. The system of colonies having different laws was ineffective
- Racial hierarchy
 - “Social Darwinism” hierarchy:
 - European (highest)
 - Japanese
 - Chinese
 - Indian
 - Aborigine (lowest)
 - Not envisaged that Aborigines would be part of the new nation
- Cartoon: “The Mongolian Octopus” (1886)
- Historiography
 - Johnson: the people believed in Social Darwinism and that non-European infiltration would “decay and taint” white British society
 - Walker: there was a belief in Japanese superiority and that they were “a more courtly and ritualized society”. Therefore Federation was more due to military threat, not racial threat
 - Windschuttle: “Most politicians supported the bill for economic and political reasons, not because they were racists”

Hope / desire for women's suffrage

- 1880s-1920s: mobilization of the women's suffrage movement in Australia, New Zealand, USA and Britain
- 1860s: Henrietta Dugdale's letter to the "Argus" argued that political rights for women would alleviate social problems
- Instrumental organizations:
 - 1884: The Victorian Women's Suffrage Society
 - 1887: The Women's Christian Temperance Society
 - Sought social reform, including equal moral standards for men and women
 - 1889: The Australian Women's Suffrage Society
 - Hoped to gain same rights for females as for males
 - Equal justice
 - Privileges in marriage and divorce
 - Property rights
 - Custody rights upon divorce
- 1891: Victorian Parliament was presented with a petition with 30,000 signatures. Signatories had come from different Christian, political and class groups
- More significant developments
 - 1894: Women in South Australia gain the right to vote at a colonial level
 - 1899: Women in Western Australia gain the right to vote
- Key individuals
 - Louisa Lawson ("The Dawn" editor)
 - Vida Goldstein: first woman to nominate for Commonwealth Parliament, unsuccessfully running for the Senate in 1902
 - Mary Lee (SA)
 - Maybanke Anderson (NSW)
- Anti-suffrage movement:
 - Defects in intelligence and temperament
 - Media portrayals focused on women's obsession with trivial matters
 - Lacked broader political vision
 - Better suited to domestic (private) sphere
- Cartoons:
 - "How to be a Popular Lady Mayor": shows preoccupation with trivial issues
 - "Voters and the Voteless" (1900): show how women were well qualified when compared to some other male groups
- Historiography:
 - Mirams et al: "Many had supported the movement for Federation in the belief that suffrage would be their reward"

Hope for better working conditions and benefits

- Hopes possessed: secure jobs, fewer hours of work, better working conditions, better pay
- Increase in those joining trade unions (mainly in male dominated industries such as stevedores, miners, shearers)
- 1890s: economic trouble
 - Fall in the price of raw materials
 - End of the building boom
 - Number of banks declined
 - Withdrawal of British investment money
 - High unemployment rates
- 1890:
 - Mass demonstrations of the unemployed
 - 7,000 people marched from Queen's Wharf to Flinders Party
 - Maritime worker's strike re. employment of non-union labour
- 1891: Queensland Shearers strike re. attempt to cut wages, non union labour, introduction of shearing machines
- Further demonstrations occurred because governments did not initiate public works programs
- Strikes crippled the colonies' organized labour forces
- Colonial governments were able to break the strikes using troops and guns
- The strikes failed. Trade unions and workers were bitter that the governments had sided with employers. Angst was fuelled when many unionists were arrested and jailed
- Trade union membership fell due to unemployment and depression
- Unionists altered their approach:
 - Focused on winning seats in parliaments
 - Hoped that better conditions could be won using this methods
- 1890: Labour Party formed to support workers
- Unionist William Spence and "new unionism": hoped that Australia would lead the world in implementing social reform

The processes of inclusion and exclusion which formed a nation of Australian citizens up to 1914

Immigration

- Pacific Island Labourers' Act 1901 (Passed 17th December 1901)
 - Prevented further recruitment of labourers from the Pacific Islands and ordered the deportation of Pacific Island workers based in Australia by 1906.
 - Those who were not born in Australia or had not been in Australia for a lengthy period were to be deported. Around 7,000 people were in this category
 - Some held protests about impending deportation
 - The Sugar Bounties Act (1903) complemented the Pacific Island Labourers Act, providing for a £2 rebate for each tonne of sugar produced by white labourers
- Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (Passed 23rd December 1901)
 - Migrants wishing to come to Australia faced a dictation test of 50 words in any European language
 - The law stated that a person could be denied entry into Australia if that person "when asked by a customs officer, fails to write out a dictation and sign it in the presence of the officer, a passage of 50 words in length in a European language directed by the officer"
 - Intended to significantly restrict the entry of non-whites
 - Others restricted
 - Those who had committed an offence in the last three years and had spent one year in prison
 - Anyone likely to rely on public or private charity
 - An idiot or insane person
 - Someone under a contract of manual labour
 - Those of "loathsome character"
 - Those suffering from contagious disease
 - Mirams, Davidson & Gordon: "The Bill was not openly racist... But its intention was racist"
 - The Naturalisation Act 1903 complemented this Act, expressly outlining that "blacks and Asiatics were not to naturalise"
- Alfred Deakin:
 - "Unity of race is an absolute essential... to the unity of Australia"
 - "No motive operated more powerfully regarding Federation than the desire that we should be... and remain one people without the admixture of other races"

Aborigines

Before Federation

- In colonial times, Aborigines had become British Subjects, but there was no equality, as they could not give testimony in court
- Colonies had their own policies on Aborigines. There was a belief that Aborigines would die out, which led to segregation policies to protect them in their "final days"
- Had the right to vote in four colonies
- South Australia was the main colony in which Aborigines voted. They also voted for 1897 Federal Convention delegates. Additionally, South Australia was the only colony that tried to secure Commonwealth voting rights for Aborigines after Federation
- Aborigines in the Commonwealth Constitution
 - S.127: Aborigines were not to be counted in the census
 - S.51: Commonwealth could not make laws on Aborigines; legislative power would be left to the states
 - S.41: Those with the vote at colonial elections would have the vote at federal level
- Impacts of these sections
 - Could not vote (colonial rights were stripped away)
 - Could not apply for a passport
 - Could not receive Commonwealth benefits
- 1962: Aborigines gained the right to vote
- 1967: Referendum led to Aborigines being counted in the census, and Commonwealth could make laws about them

After Federation

- No Aboriginal people were invited to participate in the 01/01/1901 Sydney Procession
- Later that week, a group was brought from QLD for a re-enactment of Cook's 1770 landing and a Coroborree dance
- Kalgoorlie: There was a plan to include Aborigines with weapons and paint in their march. However, an annual Aboriginal picnic was rescheduled to coincide with the march, which prevented them from participating
- Brisbane was the only city to include Aborigines in the Federation celebrations
- 1902: The Commonwealth Franchise Act excluded Aborigines who were not on the ballot at colonial level before 1901 from voting (i.e. the only Aborigines who had the vote were those who had politically participated before Federation)

Women's suffrage

- Inclusion of women into the political nation was accepted by most at the time of Federation
- Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902: gave all white women (female Australian citizens) the vote at Commonwealth level.
- Australia was one of the first countries in the world to give women the vote and the right to stand for parliament. In comparison, British women gained the vote in 1918, and US women in 1920
- However, the Franchise Act did not grant a state right
- Norman Ewing, WA Senator (Free Trade Party): "I assert that our political conditions are wrapped up in the life of every woman in the community, that the laws which control the men control the women, and in as much as every man in this country is given the right to take a part in the making of laws that control him, so, in my humble opinion, a similar right should be extended to women..."

The benefits and responsibilities extended to those who belonged to the new nation, including work, education and welfare legislation, women and motherhood, national defence and conscription

Benefits

- Mirams et al.
 - “Now it turned its attention to the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship”
 - “There was an expectation that Federation would bring a better way of life through government measures to ensure that employers and workers, mothers and children, as well as the vulnerable and old were supported”
- Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904
 - Established a special court, which would compulsorily involve parties in industrial disputes (workers and employers) to conciliate their differences. If conciliation failed, arbitration would occur
 - Lord Hopetoun spoke to assembled MPs on 10th May 1901 and stated that conciliation and arbitration would be part of the government’s legislative program
 - The passage of the bill would be lengthy, wrecking many governments
 - Lewis: “While all agreed in principle... There was great dispute over who would be covered by it”
 - Kingston wanted the law to apply to “seamen on British ships, and all crew of British and foreign ships engaged in coastal trade”
 - Watson’s Labor Government resigned when agricultural and domestic workers were excluded
 - Deakin: Act should only cover industrial disputes extending beyond one state. However, he did believe that “such legislation multiplies the opportunities of the masses for obtaining those reasonable concessions which hitherto often required to be wrung from reluctant hands under the pressure of storm and stress and devastation”
- Invalid and Old Aged Pension Act 1908
 - Introduced due to the increasing number of people over 65
 - Attitudes towards pensions changed
 - Pensions: £26 per year or 10/- (shillings) per week were paid to persons over 65 or those permanently incapacitated and unable to work
 - Lewis:
 - “A gift from the state to those who aided the development of the resources of the country”
 - “Aliens, Asiatics and Aborigines were excluded from the scheme”
- New Protection Legislation
 - In 1905, Deakin wanted to increase the tariff rate on imported goods
 - In order to gain Labor’s support, Deakin tied the policy of higher protection to the working man to his legislation
 - Customs Tariff Act 1906: Imposed a duty of £12 on imported stripper-harvesters
 - Excise Tariff Act 1906: Imposed a duty of £6 on locally produced stripper-harvesters, which could be dropped if the manufacturer could show that he was paying his workers a “fair and reasonable wage”
 - The Harvester Judgement
 - A landmark case in the Conciliation and Arbitration Court which established a “fair and reasonable wage”
 - George McKay of the Sunshine Harvester Company applied for exemption from the tariff. He paid his workers 6/- per day
 - Justice Higgins ruled 7/- per day for a 6 day week was fair (£2, 2/- per week)

- Maternity Allowance Act 1912
 - Aim: to increase mother-child survival rates during birth by improved medical care
 - Provided a £5 payment to mother after birth of the child (a Baby Bonus)
 - Mirams et al: "Maternal Citizenship and the maternity allowance were reserved for the white woman. The Act specifically excluded women who were 'Asiatic or Aboriginal natives of Australia, Papua or islands of the Pacific'"

Responsibility: National Defence

- "Boy Conscription"
- Fear of military invasion continued to exist at the start of the 20th Century
- Causes:
 - Nearby Chinese Millions
 - Japanese victory in Russo-Japanese War in 1905
 - Invasion literature
- Initially led to the "Defence Act 1903": citizen army of men between 18-60 during war time, which gave the government the power to conscript, but according to many this was inadequate
- MP Billy Hughes and the "National Defence League" campaigned for more extensive conscription from 1904
- Hughes wanted Australia's youth to be trained, claiming that it was a citizen's responsibility to be able to defend the nation
 - Hughes in "The Bulletin": "The whole population ought to be trained to arms, every male citizen between 18 and 21 undergoing three months of training every year. By 21, he should be a fair soldier and a reasonable shot"
 - Hughes in Commonwealth Parliament debates, 1901: "I lay it down... that it is the duty of every citizen in an emergency to assist in the defence of the Commonwealth"
- Subsequently, the "Defence Act 1909" was passed. This introduced a national system of compulsory military training
- The emphasis was on military training for home defence: overseas service would rely on volunteers
- Requirements of the Act
 - Males aged 12-26 were to undergo training
 - 12-14: 90 hours per year in cadet units
 - 14-18: 64 hours per year in junior cadets
 - 18-20: compulsory military training
 - 20-26: reserve force, only to be trained during war time
 - Conscientious objector: still trained, but in a non-military nature. For example, they trained in cooking or medicine
- Aborigines and those not substantially of European background were excluded (although the latter could be involved in clerical work)
- Opposition to this existed:
 - Maurice Blackburn was a long term opponent
 - MP HB Higgins believed that conscription equated to militarism
 - The Peace Society of NSW argued that the move could be viewed as an act of aggression
 - The Quakers had formed the "Australian Freedom League": argued that "young people should receive a positive education of peace and brotherhood, not an education for war and violence against other people"
 - Socialists and some Labor supporters argued that the law discriminated against working-class youth
- Failure to comply led to prosecution, fines, jail

Exam questions: short and long answer (VCAA 2007)

Example:

a. Identify and briefly explain two issues that needed to be addressed before federation was achieved in 1901 (4 marks)

Sample answer:

Chosen issues:

- Franchise
- Defence

The issue of who could politically participate in the new nation (franchise) needed to be addressed prior to 1901, but was only somewhat addressed as there were inconsistencies between colonies. Aboriginal men technically had the right to vote, as Aborigines were British Subjects and most colonial laws extended the right to vote to all men above 21. Despite this legal right, they were not encouraged to vote, with South Australia being the main colony in which there was evident political participation of Aborigines. This was partially due to the vision of a white Australia, coming about due to many citizens' acceptance of the Social Darwinism theory, which placed Aborigines at an inferior level to whites. Additionally, many women campaigned for the right to vote prior to 1901, with the emergence of groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Society and the Australian Women's Suffrage Society. Cartoons such as "Voters and the Voteless" (1900) showed that white women believed it was unjust that Aboriginal men had the vote where women did not. Indeed, women soon gained the vote in South Australia (1894) and Western Australia (1899). However, the fact that voting laws were not uniform across the colonies showed that there was not a consensus on suffrage prior to Federation.

Secondly, issues circulated due to a fear of invasion and the perceived need for defence. Distance from the British armed forces and paranoia and uncertainty about Asian nations to the north led many Australian colonists to feel vulnerable. Indeed, this was heightened by events such as the presence of a Russian ship moored off the coast of South Australia and a fear of European imperialism, as was evident in Germany's attempts to claim parts of New Guinea. Many saw Federation as the solution to this issue, as evident in Henry Parkes' Tenterfield Oration and Major General Edwards' report of 1889, criticizing Australia's disunited defences

b. To what extent was legislation passed between 1888 and 1914 intended to exclude some groups from participating in the Australian nation? (6 marks)

- Need to discuss both exclusive and inclusive legislation to receive full marks i.e. address the question "to what extent"
- Exclusive legislation:
 - Pacific Island Labourers Act: excluded Pacific Islanders
 - Immigration Restriction Act: excluded mostly non-European immigrants
 - Commonwealth Franchise Act: excluded Aborigines
- Inclusive legislation:
 - Commonwealth Franchise Act: included women
 - New protection legislation: included and supported local workers
 - Invalid and Old Age Pension Act: included white pensioners, giving them a "gift" for years of work
 - Maternity Allowance Act: supported women and children

c. Evaluate the extent to which the new nation had established a sense of national identity by 1914 (10 marks)

- Again, this is a question including the term “extent”, which requires you to agree and disagree with the statement – to have a contention
- Had established a sense of national identity
 - The Bulletin
 - Sport: Edwin Flack
 - Writers: Banjo Paterson, Henry Lawson
 - Painters: Heidelberg School
 - Whiteness: Social Darwinism, Aboriginal exclusion, exclusion of immigrants
- Had *not* established a sense of national identity
 - Disagreement: loyalty to Britain
 - Parochialism: loyalty to one’s colony rather than Britain
 - Australian Natives Association
 - Australian Federation League
 - The Imperial Federation League