

Hailing a Neoliberal Citizen: Language from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

by

Ariel Becherer  
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## Abstract

Canada describes itself as “a nation of immigrants” that has embraced a policy of multiculturalism. The majority of individuals granted citizenship in Canada do so under programs labelled “economic”. In this paper a critical discourse analysis is conducted on an interactive tool, and two documents accessible online from the ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). These objects are, intended for consumption by potential immigrants. The use of economic language to describe different citizenship paths, Canadian citizens, and the nation is examined. The three objects: offer economically labelled and described categories for immigrants to accept; present images of workers; frame the economy and work as central to Canadian identity; and place the responsibility of being a good labourer onto the individual. Drawing from Althusser and Foucault, I argue that the items produced by the IRCC attempt to hail a neoliberal subject for a neoliberal nation.

## Keywords

Immigration, Neoliberalism, Canada, Critical Discourse Analysis, Hailing, Citizenship

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“We asked for workers. We got people instead.”

– Max Frisch, quoted by Nelson and Seager (2005, 125)

## 1. Introduction

“Canada is often referred to as a land of immigrants,” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012, 12), according to the main study guide for Canada’s citizenship test. A different way to say “a nation of immigrants” might be that it is a settler-state occupying stolen lands cleared through genocide and colonial imperialism. Despite the political and colonial baggage applicable to “nation of immigrants,” it is of significance that millions who now bear the stamp “Canadian citizen” did not always do so. In 2016, 7.5 million Canadians were “foreign-born,” that is about 20% of the population (Statistics Canada 2017). Statistics Canada projects that foreign born Canadians could form up to 30% of the population by 2036 (Statistics Canada 2017).

The Canadian government has a sizeable apparatus for processing people, for turning “foreigners” into “foreign-born” citizens. Between 2016 and 2011 the majority of immigrants were admitted through economic programs (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012, 2013 and 2014, Hussen 2017, and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2014 and 2015a). The discourse on immigration in Canada has focused on immigrant’s economic contributions (Ferrer, Picot and Riddell 2014, 846-7 and Flynn 2011, 174-192). In the latest annual report to parliament on immigration, the minister for immigration, refugees and citizenship Canada notes, “Immigration

is not only an important part of our country's history. It will also be integral to our country's future, helping to spur economic growth, job creation and our prosperity." (Hussen 2017, 1) Here the minister of immigration frames the purpose of immigration as a vital aspect of the country's economic success.

In Canada's immigration system there are four overarching "boxes" into which one can self-slot when undergoing immigration: "economic", "family", "protected persons and refugees" and "Humanitarian" (Hussen 2017, 6). Unless one has family in Canada, or has endured some legal and quantifiable form of suffering, the only vehicle through which one can become Canadian, is the "economic class". The majority of those admitted into Canada between 2011 and 2017 did so in the many programs under the "economic class" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012, 2013 and 2014, Hussen 2017, and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2014 and 2015a).

"Immigration" and "immigrant" have many meanings, but hereafter, unless otherwise indicated, immigration and immigrating, refer to the bureaucratic definition, being processed by the government of Canada towards the status of "citizen" or "landed immigrant", and immigrants refer to people being processed, not new citizens or landed immigrants (Flynn 2011, 1 and 10).

In this paper I conduct a critical discourse analysis of three items produced by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (hereafter called IRCC), formerly known as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (hereafter CIC). All three items are accessible from the section of the government website dedicated to IRCC. I examine the economic language of, and logic behind,

those three items. The first is an interactive tool which can be accessed from the mainpage of both the IRCC and CIC, by the link “Come to Canada”(Government of Canada 2017b). It prompts individuals to input personal data, including age, their reason for coming to Canada, nationality, educational level, and language proficiency, and then it provides information about what program(s), if any, one might be able to apply through. It then offers links with additional information about the programs. The second item is a document, also accessible from the IRCC mainpage, titled “Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012). It is the main study guide for the citizenship test. The third item is a workbook titled “Planning to Work in Canada? An Essential workbook for Newcomers” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship 2016b). It is accessible two clicks from the IRCC mainpage. I argue that in those three items produced by the IRCC, the government attempts to hail a neoliberal citizen for a neoliberal nation.

Neoliberalism has numerous definitions (Ferguson 2010). It can refer to everything evil about capitalism, or a particular form of statecraft where social programs are underfunded, and the penal institutions of the state grow (Ferguson 2010, 170-1 and Wacquant 2012). Though the definitions described above may be associated with the definition that I offer, they are not my point of departure. Drawing on Foucault, I consider neoliberalism to be a political perspective which believes in the extension of capitalistic market rationale and the tools for understanding and evaluation from the market, beyond the market (Foucault 2008, 323). In Neoliberalism profit is the most important value, indicator of success, measure by which to judge. Neoliberalism reduces individuals to indices of productivity. According to a neoliberal rationale, individual economic output is the primary way in which humans are evaluated.

The term hailing refers to a particular interaction between power and the subject. I draw from Althusser's notion of hailing, also known as interpellation, and Bassel's interpretation of it to processes of citizenship acquisition. By hailing I mean: the fashioning of particular labels and categories, described to emphasize certain characteristics, by power; the offering of said labels and categories to individuals; and the acceptance of the labels and categories by the individual, which transforms them into subjects (Althusser 2014, 191, and Bassel 2008, 296 and 305).

I can only say that IRCC *attempts* to hail a neoliberal subject for a neoliberal nation, in my three items, because I only have data on the offering of the labels and categories. To say that the individuals are hailed, I would need ethnographic data on immigrants' understandings of themselves as economic contributors to the nation who view their value (or their value to the state) primarily in economic terms, which is outside the scope of this study. One could argue that simply ticking the box saying "economic" immigrant, by accepting to be processed in an economic category, one is hailed as a neoliberal subject. However without ethnographic data on the emic perspective of immigrants, I hesitate to make the claim.

In saying that three items hail neoliberal subjects for a neoliberal nation I do not mean that the Canadian citizen and Canada are framed exclusively in economic terms. Neoliberalism is the *extension* of market tools beyond the market (Foucault 2008, 323), which allows for other discourse and non-economic values.

In claiming that the three items produced by the immigration bureaucracy hail a neoliberal subject for a neoliberal nation, I mean that they present a series of economically labelled,

described, and computed categories for individuals to accept; they describe the country in economic terms, and the role of the citizen as economic; and they encourage the offloading of responsibility from the state onto the individual.

## **2. Self-Location**

My father and my mother's father were immigrants. As I am Canadian born, I imagine that in analyzing the documents there were things that I took for granted and did not see. Someone with different lenses through which they see the world could perceive elements and nuances on the presence of economic language and logic in my three items which I failed to observe. Growing up, the fact that people should immigrate to Canada would fill out paperwork and be judged based on a certain "discourse of deservingness" (Yarris and Castenada 2015, 64), seemed as obvious as natural as rain. My father, the most recent immigrant in my family was processed in the mid-sixties, and the immigration program has been overhauled numerous times since then (Flynn 2011). The points system was in his infancy (Flynn 2011, 79). I imagine the discourse that hails immigrants has changed considerably since the immigration of my family.

This paper discusses a qualitative analysis of documents, and the argues that they hail a neoliberal citizen for a neoliberal nation. This is not an appraisal or criticism of the process of hailing a neoliberal citizen for a neoliberal nation, of immigration, or of neoliberalism With respect to Canada I am generally for immigration and against neoliberalism, although preferring to judge by particular circumstances. Whether one is indignant about the use of market rationale to operate an immigration system (like me), whether one considers market tools the optimal way for

evaluating the good citizen (and agrees with position described in the IRCC's items), or whether one considers neocolonialism and how neoliberalism veils racism (Bhuyan 2017, 48) a discourse of greater interest or import, one would be able to identify, as I did, that in the three items I analyzed there is the hailing of a neoliberal citizen for a neoliberal nation.

### **3. How to Hail a Neoliberal Subject for a Neoliberal Nation**

#### **3.1 What is Hailing? Subjected to the Ideology**

The following is the story of twenty-two year old Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, and one of her trips to a Canadian immigration center.

The waiting room was that shit-diarrhea yellow of all institutional waiting rooms, filled with folks who looked just like some variation of me. The ones who had finally made it. When my name was called, I went to my Plexiglas cubicle. The lady there looked at my forms, and then looked at me. She handed me a piss-yellow form through the slot. It said "FAMILY CLASS LANDED IMMIGRANT STATUS" on it.

I looked at her. "Um, this is the wrong one. I'm supposed to have a Humanitarian and Compassionate." I had gotten my free counselor in the partner abuse program to fill out all the forms and write a support letter so I wouldn't be bound to my partner and the undertaking for the next decade. I was still looking over my shoulder every time I left the house.

"Dear, I don't see anything about that. What do you mean?"

“Humanitarian and Compassionate. It’s what you get when your sponsor was abusive.”

“Well, dear, I’m not seeing anything about that here. And I have your landed. Do you want it or not? She paused. “Dear. Don’t break up a marriage over something like that.”

What could I do? I had been waiting for this, this piece of paper. The one that would open the door to doctors and jobs, tax returns and bank accounts, ID and health insurance cards, a maybe easier time at the Greyhound border crossing. I nodded.

BAM. Stamp on the passport. Coveted, coveted document stapled into coveted, coveted passport. “Take the elevator downstairs, you can get your SIN number and OHIP application there.”

I was silent. I’d passed through. But what now?

*Piepzna-Samarasinha 2013, 83-4*

Leah first wishes to be placed in the immigration category “humanitarian and compassionate” because of one particular fact, one part of her identity that is emphasized: she was in “family class” but her sponsor abused her. She accepts to be placed in “family class” to gain access to all the papers that she craves, and benefits that come with them.

This is an example of hailing. The term is also known as interpellation. Althusser uses the concept of hailing/interpellation to explain how ideology functions (2014, 181-90). Althusser’s

concept of ideology is based on two theses. First, “Ideology represents individuals’ imaginary relation to their real condition of existence” (Althusser 2014, 181). Second, “Ideology has a material existence”(Althusser 2014, 184). Ideology then ties peoples’ realities with their understandings of their realities. Ideology is material because it is made physically real via practice, via being enacted (Althusser 2014, 181-4). Next, according to Althusser, practice requires ideology and ideology requires subjects (2014, 187), because “all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects”(Althusser 2014, 190).. To explain hailing, Althusser gives the example of a police officer who calls out “hey you” to an individual walking in the street. When the individual turns around, they answer the hail, accept and acknowledge that the label from the authority is form them (2014, 191).

I disagree with Althusser’s understanding of ideology and the state as essentially oppressive (2014, 74). Bassel draws from Althusser’s notion of ideology and hailing to describe the acquisition of citizenship as interpellation (2008, 296). She calls her use of Althusser’s hailing, “an extractive approach” (Bassel 2008, 296), which I intend to, in part, emulate. Bassel notes, and I agree, that “ideology can have many functions, not only the Marxist function of exercising hegemonic power so as to maintain existing capitalist relations of exploitation” (Bassel 2008, 296). If ideology is, to go back to Althusser’s original theses: the relationship that binds peoples’ realities with their understandings of said realities, and we understand humans as possessing agency, then ideology cannot be exclusively a vehicle through which hegemonic capitalistic domination is exercised.

Bassel offers another definition of ideology with respect to states and citizens, which I accept: “ideology is a way in which states attempt to form certain types of subjects, which individuals identify with or against.” (Bassel 2008, 296). States offer up categories and labels, which individuals may contest. Bassel states that, “Through processes of interpellation some identities are prioritized at the expense of others, and one set of priorities and concerns is imposed,” (Bassel 2008, 305). Hailing a neoliberal subject, per this definition, occurs when: IRCC limits the paths of entry into Canada to four five boxes; a box bigger than the other three combined is “economic class”; said class is described in economic terms; the individuals slotted into “economic class” are evaluated by indices of productivity; and identities that indicate productivity are prioritized. The terms “hailing” and “interpellation” are interchangeable. I will use hailing.

### **3.2 What is Neoliberalism? The Market as the Method.**

Neoliberalism has a plethora of definitions. It can refer to a macroeconomic doctrine in which the market is glorified, the state is mistrusted, and deregulation is promoted (Ferguson 2009, 170). It can also be considered “a regime of policies and practices associated with or claiming fealty to the doctrine.” (Ferguson 2009, 170). Ferguson notes that the policy and the doctrine differ (2009, 170). He offers more definitions of neoliberalism, including: an evil root cause (Ferguson 2009, 171). Wacquant describes it as “a political project of state crafting” in which social services are cut, and the penal system grows (Wacquant 2012, 66).

I start from Foucault’s statement, that, “neo-liberalism seeks... to extend the rationality of the market, the schemas of analysis it offers and the decision-making criteria it suggests, to

domains which are not exclusively or not primarily economic: the family and the birth rate, for example” (Foucault 2008, 323).

First “neo-liberalism seeks... to extend the rationality of the market...to domains which are not exclusively or not primarily economic,” (Foucault 2008, 323). The use of market rationality in an immigration system, can then be termed neoliberal. This could include writing policy based on asking questions like “how can the immigration system be of use to the Canadian economy?” “What is the cost of immigration? What are the returns?”

Second, “neo-liberalism seeks... to extend... the schemas of analysis it [the market] offers... to domains that are not exclusively or not primarily economic” (Foucault 2008, 323). The “economic class” operates on a points-based system whereby entry is given based on certain characteristics (youth, education, official language proficiency, work experience in Canada, the “adaptability” of your spouse, if you have family in Canada, and whether or not you have a job offer in Canada (Government of Canada 2017a)) which I call indices of productivity. They answer the question “what does a good worker look like?”

The computation of indices of productivity by the immigration system is an important part of using the schemas of analysis of the market, and can be considered part of something called audit culture. Audit culture refers to the expansion of “new financialized techniques of governance” (Shore and Wright 2015, 421). Shore and Wright assert that tools formerly used for financial accounting are becoming widespread. “The institutionalized processes of measuring and

ranking... and their spread into many domains of organizational social life reveal the emergence of a new type of governmentality based on a financial calculus.” (Shore and Wright 2015, 430). They refer to the spread of computing indicators, classifying, grading, ranking, and reducing things to ranked numbers, as tools that spread from financial accounting into domains such as education and government (Shore and Wright 2015, 421-2). As audit culture refers to the spread of a tool for market analysis into non-market domains I take audit culture to be a part of neoliberalism.

Third, “neoliberalism seeks... to extend... the decision-making criteria it [the market] suggests, to domains which are not exclusively or not primarily economic,” (Foucault 2008, 323). Meaning, the first questions asked are, “is it profitable?” and “what are the costs and benefits?” Using economic logic, one thinks of people as individuals, as individual consumers, individual producers, individual taxpayers, and individual entrepreneurs.

A neoliberal citizen is an individual who belongs to, is a subject of, a state and is evaluated by their capacity to generate profit. A neoliberal nation is one defined by its economy. Neoliberalism is distinct from capitalism, in that capitalism is an economic system, and neoliberalism is the belief that the models for economic success under capitalism should be applied beyond the market.

### **3.3 What is a Subject? An Individual Subjected to an Identity**

Foucault offers two related meanings for the noun *subject*. The first is, “subject [verb] to someone else by control and dependence,” and the second is “tied to his own identity by a

conscience of self-knowledge” (Foucault 1983, 212). To be a subject is to be placed in an inferior position, in a relationship of power, and to be attached through self-awareness to one’s identity. The two definitions are linked by power, because, “power applies itself to everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him” (Foucault 1983, 212). Subjects are individuals who have been given forms of describing, and understanding, who and what they are. Hailing is the offering of labels and categories by power, and the acceptance of the labels and categories by an individual. In accepting the hail, the individual becomes a subject. They accept an identity, and are subjected to their identity by power.

## **4. Anthropologies and Nation-States**

I situated my research in anthropologies of globalization, illegality, the state and migration. I begin with the constructivist anthropological perspective which considers humans as living in worlds of meaning that they have produced (Creswell, 2013:8 & Geertz 1973:5). Since I analyze texts, I draw from linguistic anthropology, and the notions that language and culture are intimately tied, that language can carry prejudice and “political and economic power”( Salzman, Stanlaw and Adachi 2012, 7). Today, access to resources and human rights are strongly correlated with citizenship, some call this a global apartheid (Spener 2011, 158). Understanding the bureaucracies that grant citizenship, and looking at the languages that reflect ideologies is then a project of importance for understanding what it means to be human today. In understanding immigration, it is important to denaturalize it, showing the nation state as peculiar.

Here I use the terms nation, nation-state and state interchangeably, although they can refer to different concepts. The nation-state has been for two hundred years, the dominant writer and enforcer of rules (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 16). I echo Abraham and Van Schendel's assertion that it is important to, "relativize the state as "just" another form of modern political authority..." (Abraham and van Schendel 2005,4), when studying it, as the social sciences emerged in tandem with the modern nation-state and habitually use categories formed by the study to study people, as if those categories were natural (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 4-6). It is only recently that the world has had imaginary lines etched into it forming the, in no way natural, Westphalian system of sovereign states (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 13). Per Sharma and Gupta, "the Weberian notion of the state defined it as: (1) exercising monopoly over violence in a given territory; (2) securing the territorial border and sovereignty; and (3) governing a particular population in a specific territory."( Sharma and Gupta 2006, 22) To this definition I add van Schendel and Abraham's observations that states exercise, or attempt to exercise, "a monopoly over regulated predation and redistribution," (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 7), meaning they are the only organization that can collect taxes by force. States' regulations order everyday life, define what is and what is not part of them, and who is or is not part of them, and they "are always context and bounded by variable thresholds of trust and violence." (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 16).

States are not inherent, natural, or fixed, and they are created and maintained through everyday practice (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 24-25). States depend on "routine and repetitive procedures of bureaucracies," (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 12), an example of that being processing immigrants. States have only recently obsessed over controlling the movement of people and

goods over their boundaries, and the ability to actually do so – through fences, surveillance drones, finger print scanners, airport security, armies of border officials, and other technological and bureaucratic apparatuses – is an even more recent phenomenon (van Schendel 2005, 59).

In stressing the recent origins of the state and the newness of the extreme regulation of movement over international borders, I wish to show that nations, and immigration systems are not natural but new constructions maintained through practice. Abraham and van Schendel assert that for some borders and nation states feel so solid, permanent and natural that human mobility is thought of as border crossing, as if nations and borders predate human migrations (Abraham and van Schendel 2005, 11). If one de-naturalizes nation-states, one can then understand citizenship as a regulated form of belonging (Ong 2000, 58). The IRCC is then a body that manages and seeks to “regulate the forms of belonging” (Ong 2000, 58)

## **5. A History of Immigration and Canada: White British Families to High-Skilled Immigrants**

People have moved in great numbers in and out of the land, now called Canada, for millennia. I acknowledge that story. Here, I write the story of an invented nation (Canada), and the process of acquiring an invented identity (Canadian citizenship). I do not intend to make Canada or the process of immigration appear natural, they are products of particular histories and require us to constantly believe that they exist for them to continue to exist. That said, here are some of the changes in how the thing called Canada has granted legitimate entry into its body, starting at confederation in 1867.

I note that Canadian citizenship did not exist until 1947, however the government did regulate the control of movement across its borders (Menzies, Adamoski, and Chunn 2002, 21). Therefore all my references to “immigrants” before 1947 refer to people whom the Canadian state granted permission to settle on Canadian land.

Canada was founded as a white settler state (Flynn 2011, 13). In Canada, immigration was and continues to be tied to the notion of nation building (Flynn 2011, 13). For example “the west” (of Canada) was perceived as needing to be populated (Flynn 2011, 59). In the pre-world war years, immigration policy was structured to encourage the settled of white, British agricultural families. Families were the economic unit (Flynn 2011, 57). Until the depression white settlers remained the target group of immigration policy, with preference for British subjects, then northern and central Europeans, then southern and eastern Europeans. Racialized groups were “explicitly unwelcome” (Flynn 2011, 67).

Flynn places the post-World War II years as the beginning of the divided between “economic” and “family immigration conceptualizations (2011, 73). She ties it with the decline of agriculture, the decline of the family as an economic unit, and the increasing role of resource extraction and manufacturing in the Canadian economy. In addition, the laws were becoming less racist. The first bill of rights passed in 1960. It forbid discrimination by, “race, national origins, colour, religion or sex” (Justice Canada 1960, par1:1). In 1962 the points-based system was born and in the immigration classes, “the distinction between family and independent classes became official” (Flynn 2011, 79). Starting the late 70s the “independent” immigration category was expanded. Economically labelled sub-categories were added (Flynn 2011, 85). In 1978 the

“business class” for entrepreneurs was added. In 1985 the “investor class” was brought in. Flynn notes a change in purpose in the goals of Canadian immigration policy in the late 1980s, from trying to meet specific labour shortages, to a focus on creating productive and self-sufficient innovators (2011, 89). Economic programs grew and the family class was ignored (Flynn 2011, 90). I was unable to find when the “independent” class became the “economic class”, however I can interpolate that the change of titles occurred between 1990 and 2005.

In the 2000 the immigration system was overhauled more than once (Ferrer, Garnett and Riddell 2014, 846-7 and Bhuyan, Jeyapal, Ku, Sakamoto and Chou 2017, 47-49). Numerous new programs were added under the umbrella of the economic immigrant category. The provincial nominees class and the federal skilled trades program were created in 2002 (Ferrer et al, 2014, 847-8). In addition there have been increasing numbers of temporary foreign workers in Canada, and for those in the live-in-caregiver program there are pathways to citizenship (Ferrer 2014, 847-8). In 2008 the Canadian experience class, was added for people who already had work experience in Canada (Bhuyan et al, 2017, 47-49). In 2015 the express entry system was implemented (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2015). Flynn argues that the immigration system in Canada has transferred from viewing the ideal citizen as the white British male head of an agrarian household, to self-sufficient, productive, high-skilled individuals, in other words neoliberal individuals (Flynn 2011, 89-91).

## **6. Critical Discourse Analysis: Read the Power in the Words**

Critical Discourse analyses draw from linguistics and other social sciences. There are numerous ways of doing CDA. All versions begin with the notion that words, “do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but, rather, play an active role in creating and changing them.” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 1). Meaning, words carry weight and meaning, and in doing so shape the world. With respect to critical discourse analysis, particular attention is paid to the relationships between power and speech, and to problematizing this relationship (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000, 449). A discourse is “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world,” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 1). CDAs are qualitative in nature, and entail, “Systematic ways of analysing the political and social import of texts,” (Wodak and Chilton 2005, XI). Of the numerous phenomena followers of CDA are attentive to, I will pay particular attention to discourse as “a means through which (and in which) ideologies are being reproduced”(Blommaert and Bulcean 2000, 450).

Jorgensen and Phillips note five key features of critical discourse analysis (2002, 61-4). First it is acknowledged that texts are discursive, they are produced and consumed, and they do not exist alone, critical discourse analysis extends to analysing images that come with text (2002, 61). Second, discourses reflect and construct the world (2002, 61). Third, CDA notes that discourses are located in social contexts (Jorgensen and Phillip 2002, 62). Fourth, CDA asserts that “discursive practices contribute to the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups,” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 63). This reflects the “critical” aspect of CDA, and ties to it’s fifth feature, that it is critical towards power and inequality, attempts to reveal

power relations to promote change, and situates itself as political work (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, 64).

## **7. Previous Critical Discourse Analysis on Immigration in Canada**

I found nine critical discourse analyses on Canadian immigration through the university library. My honours advisor gave me one dissertation. The critical discourse analyses discussed here were not cherry-picked to support my argument, they were the ones that I found that were written in the last ten years. There may be others. Several focus on race, a few on economics.

Kronick and Rousseau's 2015 article is a CDA of parliamentary debate on the detainment of child asylum seekers and how speech acts "construct a (detained) migrant child." (Kronick and Rousseau 2015, 544). On the depictions of immigrant health in the Canadian press. It was found that racialized migrants were portrayed as "disease breeders" and "Irresponsible health fraudsters" (Reitmanova, Gustafson, and Ahmed 2015, 471). Immigrants upon arrival are healthier than the average Canadian, however their health decreases below the average Canadian over time due to poverty (Reitmanova et al 2015, 475). As healthy people are considered productive, extreme health scans for immigrants can be considered part of neoliberal policies. Gulliver's CDA is on citizenship guides for new immigrants, and argues that racisms of the past and present are downplayed in the documents, even as they imply that newcomers are intolerant towards multiculturalism and gender equality (Gulliver 2018, 68).

One CDA includes “how to become a productive member of society” in the title (Krysa, Mills, and Barragan 2017, 482). Although the title may hint at the neoliberal point of view promoted by IRCC, the paper argues that educational text for immigrants are racialized and the non-white, non-local person is positioned as other and inferior (Krysa et al. 2017, 482). The authors state that this happens because of a neoliberal, capitalist, pro-acculturation environment, (Krysa et al. 2017, 488 and 494). They look at the “Discover Canada” guidebook that I examined, however some of the content may have changed because of updates from the Trudeau government (Krysa et al. 2017, 497). They are particularly interested how “successful” immigrants are portrayed in the guidebooks and note that, “The success of immigrants is understood predominantly in economic terms and serves as the major selection criteria for choosing desirable candidates to immigrate to Canada,” (Krysa et al. 2017, 494). This matches my definition of neoliberalism. They do not spend much time discussing neoliberalism, instead they view it as a vehicle by which, or a context in which, racialization occurs (Krysa et al. 2017, 494). In conducting a more in depth study of neoliberalism in IRCC documents, my research can strengthen their arguments.

Bhuyan et al. (2017)’s CDA is on print media and policy on the new Canadian Experience stream in the immigration system. They identify a deracialized discourse on a discriminatory program. They do use the term neoliberalism to describe Canada and immigration policy, however again, neoliberalism is the context, not the focus of their CDA.

El-Lahib’s (2016) CDA is based on CIC documents and semi-structured interviews with immigrants. The focus is on how disabilities are constructed in the immigration system and how

that influences how people with disabilities experience it, in particular racialized groups (El-Lahib 2016, 758). Despite the absence of the term “neoliberalism”, my argument builds on El-Lahib’s because of the perceived ties between disability productivity. El-Lahib even comments on how the interviewees were hailed, how they value certain identities and present themselves in certain ways to fulfil those offered by CIC, “In order to have a chance to access opportunities through immigration, participants constructed themselves in ways to meet what they believed to be criteria for admissibility. For example, participants who have invisible disabilities talked about constructing themselves as strong and as professional.” (El-Lahib 2016, 768)

Trilokekar and Masri’s (2016) CDA is on a Canadian government international education strategy document. They note that international students are considered “ideal” immigrants, well suited for Canada’s skilled labour force (Trilokekar and Masri 2016, 667). Although they focus on how it is the first ever international education strategy, and a shift in government intent towards wanting to encourage the international students to settle in Canada, and neoliberalism is not mentioned once, they do describe the recruitment of productive citizen, which I interpret as neoliberal hailing.

Guo and Shan’s (2013) CDA is on two government documents on PLAR: prior learning assessment and recognition. That is, on the evaluation of the credentials of immigrants and temporary foreign workers. They state that the PLAR documents “are neoliberal in nature and they serve to reinforce market-driven,” (Guo and Shan 2013, 467), even as they try to appear fair, neutral and efficient. Guo and Shan use neoliberalism only twice, once above, and the second time to state

that the documents are “deeply” neoliberal (2013, 477). Flynn (2011) takes on the Canadian immigration discourse in the media and government. Her findings show that the discourse on immigration is associated with nation building, and is “a major source of tension and uncertainty” (Flynn 2011, iii).

A CDA on Bill-C31 “Protection Canada’s immigration System Act” and associated documents argues that certain groups were “othered” and presented as “threats to the economy, the integrity of the refugee system, and national security” (Huot, Bobadilla, Bailliard and Rudman 2016, 131). The economy comes first. They note, “Neoliberalism places an emphasis upon economic citizenship and the productive capacity of citizens. Those unable to fulfil responsibilities of self-determination may likewise be deemed failed citizens or a drain on the social system.” (Huot et al. 2016, 140). They discuss the perceived threat that asylum seekers and refugees pose to the economy and via the economy, the country, as neoliberal, and assert that the refugee system is now governed by a neoliberal rationale (Huot et al. 2016, 140).

The previous CDAs conducted on immigration in Canada demonstrate that IRCC, and its predecessor CIC, are mechanisms for including and excluding certain people. Then the IRCC / CIC presents a certain image of Canada to the new immigrants. Neoliberalism is the context in which the exclusion and inclusion occurs, and is sometimes used to veil or produce racism. In examining particular documents and their attempts to hail neoliberal subjects for a neoliberal nation, this paper will strengthen CDAs arguing that the immigration policy is neoliberal, and that that policy serves to exclude, other and racialize.

## 8. Come to Canada, Discover Canada, Work in Canada

### 8.1 The Data. Why those documents and that tool?

Three items produced by IRCC were analyzed. The first is an interactive tool which I will refer to as *Come to Canada* (Government of Canada 2017a). Then there are two documents. The first document is the main guide for the citizenship test, titled *Discover Canada: the Rights and Responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship*, henceforth called *Discover Canada*. The second documents, and third item is titled, *Planning to Work in Canada? An Essential Workbook for Newcomers*, henceforth called *the Workbook*.

The three items were selected for multiples reasons. First, because they appear to be catered to people at different stages of the immigration process. Then, *Discover Canada*, and *Come to Canada* are accessible from the opening pages of both the CIC mainpage and the IRCC mainpage. They also appear on numerous other pages of the IRCC website, under suggested search bars. *The Workbook* is promoted less, although it is two clicks from the IRCC mainpage. I selected it because of an interest in how the IRCC was framing work in Canada. How work is framed is linked to neoliberalism.

One can access the *Come to Canada* tool from a variety of links, and hyperlinked images, with several different titles. For several webpages that I have skimmed on the IRCC, there is a link to *Come to Canada* at the bottom of the page, with a large photo of four young diverse professionals/ students with headings like “Find out if you are eligible” and “come to Canada”. It

is a device in which one can input personal information, select certain desired outcomes, and the government of Canada suggests immigration pathways, and offers additional links from there.

## **8.2“Come to Canada” interactive tool**

When I conducted my data collection, *Come to Canada* could be accessed from the main page of IRCC, as well as at the bottom of a few other pages on the IRCC website (Government of Canada 2017e). One could either click on the link “do you want to come to Canada?” Or the image below the link, which featured four adults, a deep blue background, and the words “Come to Canada”. It was located at the bottom of the mainpage, one of the three largest images on the page, along with a large help icon, and an image promoting the economic express program.

The interactive tool provided information for people not just looking to immigrated through economic programs, and not just to people looking to immigrate. It provided information for potential students, people intending to immigrate through the family class, tourists, and people in transit. The people shown in the picture under the words “Come to Canada” are curious in that they seem to represent economic and student class immigrants. They were all smiling, three seemed employed in specific industries, and one is a student. All four looked young, under forty I would guess. The first, a male, wore a blue-collared shirt with a tie, one would guess an office employee of some kind. The second person, and only women, had a lab coat on and a stethoscope around her neck, one would guess a doctor. The third person wore a yellow hardhat, and a brown collared shirt, evidently someone whose work required a hard hat. The fourth person appeared younger than the others, he wore a T-shirt, and carried a backpack, one would guess that he was a student. Three were visible minorities, since many of the people in most of the pictures appear to

come from a wide variety of ethnicities, and analyzing the displays of diversity in IRCC documents is beyond the scope of my research, the ethnicities of people in images will not be discussed further.

It is significant that under an interactive tool designed to help people coming to Canada for a variety of reasons, the picture associated with it shows three people visibly identifiable with the labour market, and one student (who one could presume is preparing for the labour market). They all appear productive and useful members of society. I would also note that, from my position, they are not stunning models, or especially good looking, the woman does not have any noticeable eye or lip makeup on. For me, they do not have expensive looking clothes, they wear no jewelry. They seem like average workers. It suggests the message, that in Canada we are not good-looking, but we are happy workers and studiers, “you” (the prospective immigrant) can be a part of this. The use of the imperative in the title “Come to Canada” makes the sentence literally a call, a hail.

Clicking on the picture brings one to the starting page of the interactive tool, with the big bold heading, “Do you want to come to Canada, or extend your stay?” and the subtitle “Find out if you are eligible to apply” (Government of Canada 2017b). The following line, in normal text size for the government of Canada is, “Do you want to work, study, visit, travel through or live permanently in Canada?” (Government of Canada 2017b). Work comes first on the list. It then lists the indices which the user may need to input, for the tool to guide them to the citizenship path most appropriate for them, they are: “nationality, age, language ability, family members, education, work experience, income and/or net worth, details on any job offer.” (Government of

Canada 2017b). Of those eight categories, all but two, family and nationality, can be directly linked towards an individual's capacity to be productive. They can be considered neoliberal indices. Younger people work longer, and are healthier, so contribute to the economy are not a burden on the health system. Higher education is typically linked with a higher paying job, so the individual with a higher education will pay higher taxes, they may also be able to fill a niche in Canada's economy, which lacks people with certain specializations. People who speak the language can be integrated into the workforce more easily. What university student with limited work experiences does not include "good communicator" on their resumé? The later three indices "work experience, income and/or net wealth, and details on any job offer," are overtly economic indicators.

I inputted fictional data, outlined below, into the tool. The first question was, "what would you like to do in Canada?" with the options, "Study", "Visit", "Move There", "Work", "Transit only – less than 48 hours", and "IEC travel and work." (Government of Canada 2017b). For one trial, on the first string of questions I wrote that I was a person from Angola, living in Angola, born in 1940, with no family, looking to move to Canada permanently. I submitted this information, and got a string of new questions. As with other occasions when I selected "move there" as my main intention, the next string of questions offered was about work. I was asked again, "what is your main reason for coming to Canada?" with the options this time being, "Find a Permanent Job in Canada," "Join my family in Canada," "start or invest in a business," "work for myself as a farmer sportsperson or artist," and, "Find a job as a caregiver" (Government of Canada 2017b). Considering that the option "move there" from the very first question leads to options in which one labours in Canada, the very first question "what would you like to do in Canada?" truly gives

the options, “study”, “visit,” “work”, “join my family” “start a business,” “work”, “work”, “work”, “transit only -less than 48 hours,” and “IEC travel and work.”

To finish with my fictional 78-year old Angolan, I selected “Find a permanent job in Canada” and then were told they might be eligible for one of the Categories in the Express Entry program, including, “the Federal Skilled Worker Program”, “the Federal Skilled Trades Program” and “the Canadian Experience class”(Government of Canada 2017b). I hit next, and were asked in which province they wanted to live. I selected British Columbia. Next I was asked if I had written an official language test, with the options being, “none” “IELTS” “CELPIP” and “TEF”. I selected “none” and were informed that I was probably not eligible for express entry. I could still complete the form, but they would need to first, “demonstrate that you meet the minimum criteria for Express Entry.” (Government of Canada 2017b)

In explaining how express entry works, the government states: “You will be given a score to determine your place in the Express Entry pool using a Comprehensive Ranking System. This system includes factors known to contribute to economic success (such as language, education and work experience).” (Government of Canada 2017c) And, “We choose skilled immigrants as permanent residents based on their ability to settle in Canada and take part in our economy. Our system to manage how people with skilled work experience apply to immigrate to Canada is called Express Entry.” (Government of Canada 2018) Evidently these are streams for economic class immigrants, so expected that they claim to recruit economically productive people.

Under the comprehensive ranking system, my fictional Angolan is over 45, so receives zero points for his age (Government of Canada 2017a). The maximum for the age is 100 points, for individuals between 20 and 29 (Government of Canada 2017a). The fictional Angolan graduated high school, and receives 35 points out of a maximum of 150 points, for people with PhDs. Without a “high skilled” spouse immigrating with him, a language test, work experience in Canada, or a pre-arranged employment position in Canada, he can receive no more points (Government of Canada 2017a). So he gets 35 out of 1,200 points. Without family in Canada, my fictional 78 year old Angolan is prompted by the interactive tool towards economic programs which are guaranteed to reject him.

The interactive tool “Come to Canada” hails a neoliberal subject in that: (1) in theory it is for people coming to Canada for a diversity of reasons, however the photo that advertises it shows young individuals that can be understood as people who will contribute to the economy, seemingly young and employed or in higher education; (2) the pathways it offers to move to Canada, unless one has family in the country, are through the labour market; and (3) it then offers categories in which the individual's potential of contributing to the economy of the country is evaluated.

### **8.3 “Discover Canada”**

“Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship” is the only official study guide for the citizenship knowledge test. An applicant is instructed to study from this guide to prepare for the citizenship test. If an applicant uses any other material to prepare for the citizenship test, they do so at their own risk.” (Government of Canada 2017d).

The citizenship guidebook includes sections describing the country's history, symbols, provinces, and economy, sections defining what Canadians are, how elections work, how the government works, and some study questions and additional links (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 2). I expected it to closely mirror to my high school social studies 11 classes, for which we had to write a provincial exam on Canada's history, prime ministers, and how government worked. Now I think that the people who wrote my high school textbook, and the members of the CIC under the Harper government who initially wrote the document, and the members of the IRCC under the Trudeau government who updated it, had different visions of Canada. Or, perhaps highschool students in British Columbia and future Canadian citizens are presented with different visions of what being Canadian is. The presence of the economy, the extent of the descriptions of work and the industries in Canada surprised me.

The economy is not the only discourse present in this document, nor would I argue is it the most important, however I was surprised at the degree to which work, enterprise, and trade were present in nearly every section of the document, particularly the descriptions of the provinces, and in the section describing the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. For example, on the list of citizenship responsibilities, directly beneath "obey the law", was "get a job". It read, "Taking responsibility for oneself and one's family – Getting a job, taking care of one's family and working hard in keeping with one's abilities are important Canadian values. Work contributes to personal dignity and self-respect and to Canada's prosperity" (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 9). The second responsibility of being Canadian, before voting, jury duty, looking after one's community, or protecting the environment (also listed), was to seek employment. In this section I expected the legal obligations of citizenship (i.e. obey the law, and participate in the

democratic process), but to present working as the second responsibility of citizenship, is to present a vision of Canada in which being a citizen is equated with being an economically productive subject.

Also on that page, the final sentence which describes volunteering/ helping others in the community as the sixth responsibility of citizenship, is, “volunteering is an excellent way to gain useful skills and develop friends and contact” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 9). Service to others for free, then has its own economic reward, it pays back in the form of skills training and networking. Volunteering is then not about community building, but about enhancing one’s ability to earn money, a neoliberal, as opposed to say a humanitarian, rationale.

In the section titled “Who we Are”, the economy features. The final sentence of the first paragraph begins, “A belief in ordered liberty, enterprise, hard work and fair play has enabled Canadians to build a prosperous society in a rugged environment...”(Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 10). This reads, through the worship of enterprise and labour, among other beliefs, Canadians have achieved wealth. This is not a neoliberal understanding of work. It is not work for the pursuit of profit, and all ought to be governed by the market, however I argue that the extensive description of Canada as a place where one works, and the description of being a citizen as being a worker, is one part of hailing a neoliberal subject. It promotes the identity of self-sufficient individual labourer, one among millions striving for material wealth.

In the history of Canada section, Europeans and Indigenous people are described as having, “formed strong economic, religious and military bonds... which laid the foundations of Canada.”

(Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 14). The foundations of the first companies, the first stock exchanges, and the first financial institutions are described (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 16). The history of the economy, in the years until the end of the second World War, is described, including the fur trade, industrialization, however most of the section addresses military history (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 14-23).

In the history section titled “Modern Canada”, the first subsection is titled “trade and economic growth” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 24). The first sentences are, “Postwar Canada enjoyed record prosperity and material progress. The world’s restrictive trading policies in the Depression era were opened up by such treaties as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), now the World Trade Organization (WTO). The discovery of oil in Alberta in 1947 began Canada’s modern energy industry” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship 2012, 24). This suggests that what makes Canada modern is the economy and trade. At the bottom of the first paragraph hard work and trade are credited as the reason for Canadians’ high standards of living, as opposed to social programs or a welfare state. It suggests that it is the hard work of individual Canadians, that they achieve a certain lifestyle. The positioning of Canada as based on economy and trade filled with labourers is neoliberal. Canada’s participation in more recent wars, the Quebec sovereignty movement and Canadian literature and sports get attention in the “Modern Canada” section, before ending with the section, “Great Canadian Discoveries and Inventions” including the telephone, snowmobile and pacemaker, and at the bottom of the page it asks “How will you make your contribution to Canada?” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 27). What is more inline with market rationale than enterprise? Demanding that new

Citizens contribute to the nation on a page that valorizes innovation is calling out for a new citizen to accept a neoliberal identity.

The next sections deal with the mechanism of the Canadian political and legal systems including how government, elections and the justice system function, and it is what I expected the majority of the document to be like (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 28-37). It is followed by a section on symbols and public holidays, (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 38-41).

There is the two pages under the heading “Canada’s economy” that begins with “Canada has always been a trading nation and commerce remains the engine of economic growth” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 42). It also boasts that Canada has one of the largest economies in the world, and then describes the main industries that provide employment for Canadians (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship 2012, 42-3).

Then come the descriptions of the different provinces, which all, with the exception of Nunavut, mention the main industries and economies of the provinces, and on average form one-half to one-third of the total description of the provinces (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2012, 44-51). For example, the description starts with an introduction to the Atlantic provinces: “Atlantic Canada’s coasts and natural resources, including fishing, farming, forestry and mining, have made these provinces an important part of Canada’s history and development.” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship 2012, 46). It is understandable that the economy of the provinces should be described, however for the main industries to be described far more regularly

that the heroes, myths, landscapes, histories, foods, cities, or anything else, seems odd. The economy is perhaps excessively present.

The extensive, but not exclusive, description of Canada in terms of its economy and industry, past and present, frames a vision of Canada for immigrants, as a country in which the economy is an overriding concern. The placement of work as a responsibility of citizenship, presents the identity of “labourer” as an important part of being Canadian, to the subject. This offering of an identity and description of a place is hailing a neoliberal subject for a neoliberal nation.

#### **8.4 The Workbook**

Two clicks from the mainpage of the IRCC, “Planning to Work in Canada? An Essential Workbook for Newcomers,” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b) is promoted on the website less than the other two materials. The style of the workbook is neoliberal in that it repeats that there are no guarantees of employment in Canada, and encourages the reader to seek out additional information. In other words, it presumes a neoliberal subject, a subject keen to orient her/his life around the dollar. The state accepts no responsibility, and places it all on the individual. The document prepares the reader for an unstable work environment, and encourages them to develop their own skills and enhance their own knowledge, preparing them for the labour market.

The workbook begins with the disclaimer:

This workbook was created for internationally trained individuals who are considering moving to Canada or who have recently arrived. Please note that being accepted to come to Canada does not guarantee you employment in Canada in your preferred job or any other job. This workbook is not tied to any immigration or visa application process for coming to Canada. However, using this workbook will allow you to obtain the greatest benefit from your experience and education.

(Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 3\_

In other words, there are no guarantees of employment should you come to Canada. It is on you to find your job, this book can help you help yourself. This disclaimer is repeated later in the document. The first line of the introduction states, “The more you learn about Canada, the faster you will be able to adapt to the Canadian work environment.” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 4). It is again, the individuals responsibility to mold themselves.

There is a section on services to help immigrants, but that that is well after they have read that there are no guarantees of employment for immigrants to Canada, and the individual is encouraged to learn as much as possible to adapt. In addition, they must find the immigration service centers, not the other way round. (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 3-7) The first sentence of the housing section, under the subtitle “Temporary Housing”, is, “Make sure you arrange for a place to stay before you leave for Canada” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 10). The individual, not the state, must care for themselves upon arrival.

There is a page on elementary and secondary school. The prospective immigrants are informed that it is their responsibility to register their child (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 14). There is the warning “By law, children must attend school starting at the age of 5 or 6 until they reach an age between 16 and 18, depending on the province or territory.” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 13). The page on banking encourages them to get informed, and make a rational decision to meet their needs (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 20). There is a section on credentials, including how to retrain, it encourages individuals to be flexible subjects and responsive to the demands of the market and the country (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016b, 51-59). The entire document emphasizes the lack of guarantees by the state, and the shouldering of responsibility by the individual.

## **9. Conclusion**

As a budding anthropologist, what I find most lacking in my paper are real humans. It is of import to note that items IRCC produces for immigrants attempt to hail a neoliberal subject for a neoliberal nation, but the argument would be strengthened even further with ethnographic research with the bureaucratized and the bureaucrats. What are the intentions of the writers of policy? Do they want a nation of productive individuals? How do they understand the human capital model? How do the people being processed by the IRCC understand the process? Do they resist, resent, cherish, or forget about the categories imposed upon them?

If neoliberalism is the rationality from which we make decisions one must understand the impact that it has on people, the stories that it produces about what it means to be human. Neoliberalism is extension of market logic beyond the market (Foucault 2008, 323) then profit is the value and tool to judge, and other factors are excluded. Respecting human rights, or reducing human suffering is not necessarily profitable. One must study what happens when humans are valued solely by their capacity to contribute to the economy.

If anthropologists wish to understand globalization, the world we live in, one with so much movement, with identities and rights stamped onto people in the form of citizenship, immigration and the discourses around it are vital. If the nation state is particular to our time, the relationships that people have with it, and how belonging to it is formed, must be studied. If nation-states participate in granting some extreme wealth, and building walls to “keep the world’s poorest out” (van Houtum 2010, 964), they must be studied. If immigration bureaucracies and border systems are of strengths and scales unimaginable fifty years ago, and submit people to their paperwork, then they must be studied.

My essay has attempted to play a small part in this. Canadian born, with recent immigrants on both sides, pro-immigrant, and anti-neoliberal, I expect that these positions permitted me to see certain elements of Canada’s immigration system and not others. In part, I wished to look at the underlying logic of the immigration system because of a smugness I observed among friends and family following the racist anti-immigrant rhetoric of the recent American and French Elections, and the Brexit vote. There was a sense that the Canadian immigration system was more humane,

and thus were better. From this project I would say that it may be more humane, Canada is a nation favouring immigration, but it may be primarily because it is profitable to do so.

Drawing from linguistic and economic anthropology, French philosophers Althusser and Foucault, social scientists doing critical discourse analysis, and statistics Canada, I conducted a critical discourse analysis of three items produced by the ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The argument was that the interactive tool “come to Canada”, and the guidebooks “Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship ” and “Planning to work in Canada? An essential workbook for newcomers,” offer up a visions of Canada, and Canadian identity defined by economic terms, and offer pathways to being Canadian that are categorized, labeled and described in the language of the market, where the capacity to be productive and generate profit are valued and computed. This is an attempt to hail a neoliberal citizen for a neoliberal nation. It is an attempt, because per Bassel’s (2008, 296) interpretation of Althusser’s hailing subjects may contest the categories imposed on them and valorized in them by governments.

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