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The National Film Board of Canada and the Canadian Discourses of Immigration

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Abstract. In this paper, we examine the articulation of immigration discourse in the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) film productions. We also address the interdiscursivity of "racialized discourse" and "economic discourse" regarding immigration, as articulated in these films. Specifically, we use insights from Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to examine how documentary films by the National Film Board of Canada both construct and hide Canadian exceptionalism. We argue that exceptionalism constituted in NFB media discourse creates an "imaginary" of immigration as an altruistic and ethical practice. At the same time these discourses obscure the fact that Canada's immigration discourse is largely driven by economic motivations. White Canadians are portrayed as good global citizens with virtues such as tolerance, neutrality, openness, inclusiveness, fairness, social justice, etc. On the other hand, only those immigrants who are willing to assimilate/integrate into the Canadian imaginary are included in the imaginary. We take a sample of three documentary films produced by NFB from 1949 to 1998 to have a longitudinal look at the propagation and perpetuation of exceptionalist discourses on immigration and to argue that notwithstanding the benevolence inherent in policy and academic discourses the prime motivation behind acceptance of immigrants has always been economic.

Keywords: Immigration, media discourses, National Film Board of Canada (NFB), Canadian exceptionalism, economic logics.

Introduction

In this study we analyze how media discourses, especially those by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) both construct and hide Canadian exceptionalism (while also themselves being constituted by this exceptionalism). We also analyze how the discursively constituted Canadian exceptionalism constructs an

imaginary of immigration as an altruistic and ethical practice while obscuring the fact that Canada's immigration discourse is largely driven by economic motivations. The NFB films constitute constitutes Canadians as good global citizens who are culturally and ethically on a high moral ground. The exceptionalism bestows on the Canadians and Canada virtues such as tolerance, neutrality, openness, inclusiveness, fairness, social justice, etc. The exceptionalism cleverly conceals that the main motivation behind these virtues remains economic. In this paper, we examine the articulation of immigration discourse in the National Film Board of Canada's documentary film productions. Additionally, we address the interdiscursivity of "racialized discourse" and "economic discourse" regarding immigration, as articulated in these films. In analyzing these films within a critical discourse analysis framework, we aim to reveal how societal power relations are discursively constituted and reinforced through the NFB media productions.

The raison d'état of the NFB was propaganda aimed at Canadian national subjects, and to attract immigrants from Europe and the United States to expand the economic development of the growing country. From its very inception, the Canadian immigration discourse has largely been dominated by the question of the 'economic benefits' of immigration to the recipient country. However, while this is still the case in many respects, the NFB no longer plays the role of state propaganda machine and has instead been a site of struggle over meanings and contested imaginings of the nation, whereby the dominant economic discourse is interrogated and sometimes also challenged. As Phillip Rosen has put it, "the concept of a national cinema is always implicated in a dialectic of nation and anti-nation" (Rosen 1996, 391). This is important to note because it is impossible to speak about the economic discourses that exist in the NFB films about immigration without addressing the fact that "the foundations of Canadian film policy are utilitarian: they do not engage the art of cinema so much as they exploit its communicative function to develop trade and commerce" (Gittings 2002, 80). It has been argued that "discourse does not represent the world; it acts in and upon the world" (Fiske 1994, 5). Accordingly, in the first few decades of the NFB's history, films about immigration do not simply document the role of immigration to Canada in the growth of the national economy – they actively recruit and construct immigrants to build the Canadian economy. Before starting our re-reading and analysis of select NFB films it is important to take a brief look at some of the salient themes in Canada's immigration discourse.

Immigration and Nation-Building

In its nation-building endeavor, Canada exercised its right to regulate and select the would-be Canadian citizens according to its domestic policy criteria (Bhuyan et al. 2017). By these criteria, early immigrants were predominantly White British, French, and Northern European (Bhuyan et al. 2017; Thobani 2018). As race-based immigrant selection agenda gave way to more labor market-oriented policies, the nation's demography changed (Dobrowolsky 2017). Immigrants from all over the world including "the non-preferred" and historically "excluded groups" became part of the nation (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 49). Throughout this nation building trajectory, Canada has never digressed from conserving its 'Whiteness' and economic interests (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 47–62). Canadian pluralism manifested in the institutionalization and constitutionalizing of Multiculturalism, the official state policy of Canada (Dobrowolsky 2017). Multiculturalism can be traced back to Trudeau's 1971 vision of a society where race and ethnic diversity made up the "Canadian mosaic" and cushioned the national unity fragilized then by Quebec separatism (Kirova 2009; Guo 2015).

Although White nationalism and Multicultural ideologies may seem contradictory, according to Thobani (2018), together they constitute the foundational blocks in the building of the nation as Western, white, and superior. According to Bhuyan et al., two discursive instruments have served nation-building: "branding" the Canadian national identity through the power of inclusion and exclusion of 'Others', and at the same time deracializing discourses about "Others" by sanitizing them of "racial or ethnic coding" and replacing race with culture; both maintained Canada's image as a culturally diverse "nation of Immigrants" (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 51, 58). Within these dominant ideologies, the role of immigrants in nation-building is still contested. Some see that "the days of people coming to Canada to help build a great country are over" while others maintain that "immigration is the cornerstone of [Canada's] national lore … a land built by immigrants" (Sakamoto et al. 2013, 15). The issue becomes more contentious as estimations show that Canada's population will grow to include less immigrants of European descent and more visible minority groups (Dobrowolsky 2017).

Policy Dilemmas

Immigration policies have been championed as the guardian of Canada's national security, government systems efficiency, and social cohesion (Huot et al. 2016). Changes and reforms are purported to deter real and potential threats to Canada's national identity and interests (Thobani 2018). and protect the borders against breeders of infections and irresponsible imposters (Alaazi et al. 2020). One of the policy dilemmas before the Canadian decision makers has been how to reconcile the growing diversity and difference while safeguarding the fundamental universal values of a liberal democracy and a cohesive society (Li 2003). This tension was addressed by embracing "a symbolic version of cultural differences" characterised by an ambivalence of approaches (Li 2003, 317; Dawson 2014), a discrepancy between policy and practice (Kirova 2009), and paradoxical ideological frameworks (Li 2003; Guo 2015; Thobani 2018).

Dobrowolsky's examination of policies and discourses on immigration juxtaposes policies of two successive governments that continue to impact contemporary Canadian approaches to immigration: Stephen Harper's Conservative governments (2006–2015) and Justin Trudeau's Liberal government (2015- present) (Dobrowolsky 2017). Harper's policies were primarily concerned with the economic leverage of Canada within the neoliberal logics of the market. By this logic, selection programs tightened conditions and requirements of admissibility. During this period, policies targeted "economic immigrants" while downsizing categories like family class immigrants and refugees, which were deemed unprofitable (Dobrowolsky 2017, 197). These policies were sustained by anti-immigrant discourses under the pretext of keeping Canada safe and secure from the abusers of the system. They generated class-biased programs that favoured wealthy applicants (Dobrowolsky 2017, 203). Good Canada policies (2015- present), on the other hand have adopted a Canada-reputation restoring mission by revoking bills and legislations deemed conflicting with the principle of civil and just society. These actions were justified on the grounds of diverse and humanistic nationhood.

However, benevolent this shift might seem, Dobrowolsky astutely notes that like its predecessors, the current government has continued to embrace "Big Canada rhetoric and Bad Canada policy" (Dobrowolsky 2017, 211). Instrumentalization and racialization abound in immigration practices and "econocentric" policies continue to impact immigration (Dobrowolsky 2017, 198). At the concrete level, policies have recently produced an "unprecedented" volume of immigration

reforms from 2010 to 2014 (Huot et al. 2016), all of which point to a shift in government strategies and rhetoric in immigration policies towards more rigidity in restrictions and less "generosity" in spending to the point of compromising the values of Multiculturalism.

Typical of the Canadian Multiculturalism policy are loose and illusionary concepts that permeate documents, such as those of the Employment and Immigration Canada (Commission) (Li 2003, 319). On the face of it, policy promotes immigrants' cultural particularities and a reciprocal adjustment of the immigrant and the Canadian society (Li 2003; Guo 2015). Yet, underneath this benevolence lies a complex web of policy documents that seek to constitute a consensus on conformity and compliance with the Canadian cultural and behavioural norms and values as desirable and adherence to ethnic and cultural features as undesirable (Li 2003). For example, the 2012 Bill C-31 "Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act" (PCISA) exemplifies how problematizing refugees reinforces their negative representation, hence their undesirability for the Canadian society and economy (Dawson 2014; Huot et al. 2016). They are depicted as fraudulent claimants and abusers of the system that threaten national security and jeopardize Canadian values (Dawson 2014).

Such discursive constructions of immigrants and refugees in policies institutionalize inequality by racializing ethnic groups like Chinese, South Asian, and Black Canadians, and stigmatize certain diasporas through acts like the Barbaric Cultural Practices Act – connecting Muslims to terrorism (Thobani 2018, 170). Multiculturalism, therefore, "functioned as state recognition of the diversity within the population but did so by recoding racial classification within the politics of cultural diversity" (Thobani 2018, 170). Such policies also institutionalize fear and suspicion about refugees to authorize their categorization into legitimate versus "bogus" claimants that must be "weeded out" (Sakamoto et al. 2013; Olsen et al. 2016). The discursively maintained pre-emptive nature of polices serve to justify hostility towards anti-immigration policies and to optimize public support for surveillance and denial of particular rights (Dawson 2014; Huot et al. 2016). Most importantly, policies garner support for domestic initiatives that seek to monetize the immigration system to secure Canada's competitive position in the global market against its conventional economic rivals (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 57).

"It's the Economy, Stupid[1]"

The successive immigration policies have adopted different immigrant selection criteria. Nevertheless, the economic merit of immigration has been the common thread that has connected Canada's immigration strategies (Guo 2015; Bhuyan et al. 2017). The demand for immigrant workers and the design of their profile have been synchronized with the stipulations of the labour market and the interests of employers (Sakamoto et al. 2013; Bhuyan et al. 2017; Dobrowolsky 2017). Bhuyan et al. explain that despite the recent rise of temporary foreign workers in Canada, "economic immigrants" continue to constitute the bulk of the labour market with a yearly average of 250,000 admissions of permanent residents (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 50).

The economic value of immigrants is determined through increasingly business-led filtering systems like the Express Entry program 2015 and gauged in terms of net cost and net benefit to Canada (Bhuyan et al. 2017; Li 2003, 325), with priority given to low cost, self- sponsoring immigrants (Bhuyan et al. 2017). Dobrowolsky uses Atlantic Immigration Pilot Project (2017) to illustrate the racialized, gendered and class-biased immigrant selection criteria by which single, skilled males with human, financial and linguistic capital and no dependents are presented as the desirable models of immigrants (Dobrowolsky 2017, 213). Immigrants' integration is measured in accordance with their productivity (Li 2003; Guo 2015), which in turn is interpreted in terms of earnings compared to Canadians (Li 2003). Immigrants are expected to meet or exceed the contribution of the native-born Canadians (Li 2003, 324), have to be productively involved in the economy (Li 2003), be healthy and diseases-free (Reitmanova et al. 2015), equipped with the required soft and hard skills and the Canadian workplace culture and norms – best known as the Canadian experience (Guo 2015; Bhuyan et al. 2017). Canadian experience is not a mere set of hard and soft skills. Rather, it is a "brand" that requires the immigrant to "embody traits of Whiteness in a neoliberal era: self-sufficiency, autonomy, flexibility and utility in the marketplace" (Bhuyan et al. 2017, 60).

Academic Constructions of Immigration

Academic literature on immigration (and related topics) relies more on so-called empirical evidence and is largely devoid of theoretical conceptualization of

1 "It's the economy, stupid" is a phrase that was coined by James Carville in 1992 for Bill Clinton's presidential Campaign.

integration (Li 2003). It is also marked by its adherence to the dominant discourse of conformity and assimilation (Li 2003; Kirova 2009), and an obsession with culture (Kirova 2009). According to Li, academic discourse has been preoccupied with benchmarking differences among immigrants and native-born Canadians in terms of social and cultural complaisance and economic rendition (Li 2003). Immigrants' progression towards integration is measured using normative parameters such as language, family, and religion. A comparison of social differences across current and former generations of immigrants and immigrants of European descent is employed to identify persisting and shifting social patterns of immigration that would inform policy. Similarly, in the educational context, academic researchers in different fields endorse the assimilationist approach (Guo 2015). Furthermore, an essentialized view of cultural differences is common in the academic field (Li 2003; Guo 2015; Kirova 2009). According to Kirova, the "culturalist ideology of multicultural education" mirrors the reductionist and essentializing view of culture – rampant in mainstream discourse (Kirova 2009, 117). This view perceives ethnic groups and their cultures as "stable, tradition-bound, [and] timeless" (Kirova 2009, 108), which often results in a superficial and folkloric approach to culture and diversity within the curricula and teaching practices.

The Exalted "Canadianness"

The social and cultural construct of the national identity and self-image of Canadians has been perpetually shaped against the image of the "un-Canadian" (Huot et al. 2016). This construction pre-determines - overtly and covertly - the personal, professional, sociocultural traits of the Canadian citizens and stabilizes their image in the Canadian imaginary. "Canadianness" is an entitlement granted by the "charter members" of society and its institutions to the newcomers for their successful assimilation into Canadian ways of thinking and acting (Sakamoto et al. 2013; Li 2003; Guo 2015). Part of what engineers and maintains this "Canadianness" is the Canadian national identity being shaped within the discursive constructions of the West (Thobani 2018). Furthermore, there exits a tacit consensus, latent in discursive practices of society and policies, that the embodiment of a prescribed set of social, cultural, and economic norms and core values "Canadianness" is the highest point of integration. The further immigrants move away from their ethnic and cultural markers the closer they get to "Canadianness" (Li 2003).

"Canadianness" is also the backbone of immigrants' adult education. Guo demonstrates how learners assimilate into either the English or the French culture by learning one of the languages as stipulated by the policies of Bilingualism (Guo 2015). Adult English language classes for example expose immigrants to curricular material that portrays the lifestyle and behavioural patterns (ex: shopping) of middle-class Canadians as universal (Guo, 46). This becomes explicable with reference to Li's argument that the "integration discourse endorses the assimilation of immigrants into British based Canadian norms" (Li 2003; Guo 2015, 46). Similarly, as argued by Alaazi et al., rejection of African immigrants' modes of parenting is legitimately justified by its non-conformity with the Canadian ways (Alaazi et al. 2020). Perceived as rooted in ethnic and cultural traditions, non–Canadian standards of parenting are susceptible to harmful practices, like child abuse and maltreatment.

Canadian Exceptionalism

Closely linked to "Canadianness" is the notion of exceptionalism that portrays Canada's international standing, national identity, systems, programs, and people as inherently superior. The racialization of immigrants served to institutionally conflate race with culture and in other contexts rename race by culture (Thobani 2018; Kirova 2009). In both cases, this helped construct the notion of Canadian exceptionalism. This sense of exceptionalism is constructed in opposition to the "other" who goes by different names: the "agentless", "helpless" "vulnerable" refugees (Dawson 2014; Olsen et al. 2016); the "non- white" "backward", "barbaric", "lawless" "outsider" (Thobani 2018); the "bogus", "dangerous" asylum claimant (Dawson 2014; Huot et al. 2016; Olsen et al. 2016); the "deadly" "disease- breeder" "health fraudsters" (Reitmanova et al. 2015); and the incompetent and irresponsible parent immigrant (Alaazi et al. 2020).

Such articulations of immigrants and migrants have uplifted national pride in Canada's exceptionally "fair systems and generous programs" (Dawson 2014, 842). They maintain the image of Canada as a "compassionate" (Sakamoto et al. 2013), "unimplicated and neutral" international actor and a global leader addressing refugees' issues and crises (Dawson 2014, 841). Its particularity as an inclusive multicultural nation has distinguished it as "raceless" and hence racism-free (Kirova 2009, 109). The fact that Canada is a country where a "racialized former refugee" could become a Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship is used as an example of Canada's exceptionalism in the national and global

imaginary (Dobrowolsky 2017, 209). Canadians are therefore, "hospitable", "peaceful" "saviors of helpless refugees" (Dawson 2014). They are "benevolent" people acting altruistically from ethical and moral grounds driven by a spirit of humanitarianism and inclusion (Olsen et al. 2016).

There might be no better illustration of Canadian exceptionalism than the famous tweet by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on the eve of ban on Muslims from entering the USA in 2017: "To those fleeing persecution, terror and war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength" (Dobrowolsky 2017, 209). The tweet sets Canadian humanitarianism and diversity in a binary opposition to Trump's inhumane dealings with the immigration crisis. However, more significant than the tweet itself was the immense publicity it garnered towards Canada's domestic and global image as "a beacon of hope" (Dobrowolsky 2017, 209). Canada is thus portrayed as the place for the immigrants to be because of its benevolent, tolerant, hospitable, and accommodative nature.

Below we argue/demonstrate that films on immigration produced by the NFB over the years are constituted by the discourses discussed above and in turn feed into these discourses thus ensuring the longevity of these discourses and minimizing the challenges to these from other small-d discourses i.e. emergent discourses that challenge the authority of the dominant discourse or discourses). We take a sample of three documentary films produced by NFB from 1949 to 1998 to have a longitudinal look at the propagation and perpetuation of exceptionalist discourses on immigration and to argue that, notwithstanding the benevolence inherent in policy and academic discourses the prime motivation behind acceptance of immigrants has always been economic. The choice of this timeframe is guided by the understanding that during this period NFB produced a relatively larger number of films dealing with issues related to immigration. From the turn of the millennium, the NFB focus shifted to other social issues such as representations, etc.

Passport to Canada (1949)

The film's title *Passport to Canada* (Roger Blais, 1949)[2] does not refer to official documentation but rather the "thing" that ensures admission to Canada (Blais 1949). This "thing" is labor, or the economic contributions immigrants must make

2 The documentary chronicles the first wave of immigrants to Canada in 1940s, mainly from the mainland Europe. According to the documentary these immigrants felt at home in Canada and used their various skills to start a new life and also contribute to the development of their new homeland. See: https://www.nfb.ca/film/passport_to_canada/. Last accessed 6. 06. 2024.

to benefit from the entitlements of Canadian citizenship. Unlike earlier films that promoted settlement/colonization of the rural West, *Passport to Canada* re-articulates the demand on immigrant labor within the economic language of the day: Industrialism and High Modernism.

Postwar immigration policy continued to be racially, ethnically, and ideologically restrictive and largely Anglo-Saxon (favouring British and French immigrants) (Dirks 2021). While the soaring demand for labour put pressure on the Liberal government to increase the influx of immigrants from non-traditional source countries (Troper 1993), Prime Minister Mackenzie King's stance was in line with public opposition to non-European and non-American immigrants. His iconic 1947 speech in the House of Commons laid out a "blueprint" for immigration policy that is worth quoting at length (Green and Green 2004): "The policy of the government is to foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement of immigration. The government will seek by legislation, regulation and vigorous administration, to ensure the careful selection and permanent settlement of such numbers of immigrants as can be advantageously absorbed in our national economy. With regard to the selection of immigrants, much has been said about discrimination. I wish to make it quite clear that Canada is perfectly within her rights in selecting the persons whom we regard as desirable future citizens. There will, I am sure, be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population." (Green and Green 2004, 112.)

While Mackenzie King acknowledges the need to increase Canada's demographic capacity, he states that this must be achieved within the context of a long-term immigration goal that prioritises the preservation of national character while simultaneously achieving economic development compatible with Canada's social goals.

In *Passport to Canada*, the National Film Board breaks away from the wartime propaganda style and resumes its audio-visual "interpretation of Canada to the Canadians" and to the world (Druick 2007, 130). Three building projects are pursued in the film, all of which make good use of the labour stock of Displaced Persons camps in Europe: building the nation along white European lineage; building a thriving economy using the "strong backs" of refugees; and building Canada's humanitarian reputation and international image using "its wartime sacrifices" and its "status as a middle power" (McIntosh and Stacey 2021).

Building the Nation: Preserving Ethnic and Racial Constructions

The documentary employs the compression and suppression of space and time as textual and visual strategy to maintain control over the representation of historical and demographic developments in the process of nation-building and the shaping of its identity. Interpreted as interconnected discursive elements (Fairclough 2003, 151), interpretations of space and time can reveal mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in configuring nationhood. The representation of space and time in *Passport to Canada* serves to establish racial unity in the Canadian imaginary of nationhood.

The metaphorical and literal meaning of the dramatic phrase that opens the documentary, "bridging the Atlantic," diminishes the space between Canada and Europe. The over-lexicalization of the "inside" triggered by terms such as "here," "come," "bring," "arrive," connotes Canada as a homeland where the "new settlers" are "welcomed by relatives" implying kinship ties that bring immigrants and Canadians together in a communal environment of support and compassion. To emphasize the continuity of space, common features are foregrounded. For example, "the earth, the factory, and the important things" are the same. The film also compresses time. The new settlers "are quickly cleared through the ports of entry." Once inside, "they will soon feel at home in Canada." The legitimacy for this quick screening into the inside with no exigencies is the value system and Western cultural constructs that these immigrants, as white Europeans, are supposed to share with Canadians. The virtual and textual fusion of time and space sideline the past to proclaim a rupture with the natives, who are irrelevant to the nation's ambitions, and to deny any non-white contribution to nation-building. The documentary symbolizes this rupture through a close-up of a white immigrant child and a voice-over commenting on the absence of "the Indians and their cabins" – a discursive move that points to the national consensus on a definitive foreclosure of the past. Visually, the cross-Canada footage depicts rural and urban scenes as European-like, while any demographic or geographical features that might indicate the existence of non-preferred races are silenced. Therefore, the present and future are emphasized to show a linear, progressive path to a prosperous, modern nation, just like the fast-moving train. What the scenes of the train intentionally hide from the viewers are the documented facts about the contribution of the Chinese to the construction of the railway system in British Columbia, thus obscuring their role in building modern

Canada. The documentary's narrative discredits the non-preferred races from the nation-building process, while granting the Europeans settlers ownership of the country's present as "they're helping to make Canada a greater nation" and a freehold of its future since "those who worked on the big dam the Swisha and other projects will be able to point to them and say: I helped build that. That was my ticket into Canada."

Inscribing "Canadianness"

Passport to Canada was produced at a time when culture was replaced with race in the analysis and design of human ecology (Druick 2007). The aspiration of Canadians at the time, was to replenish the country's demographic capacity while preserving the "Canadianness" of national identity through an implicit racial preference and an explicit cultural hierarchy. The discursive strategies employed by the documentary successfully supplement the master narrative of nationhood with a discourse of "Canadianness." It textually and visually constructs the notion of "Canadianness" along an orientation towards "bracketing difference" and foregrounding "commonality and solidarity" (Fairclough 2003, 42). The discursive strategies of inclusion tend to foreground "whiteness" as the common ground that defines and symbolizes "Canadianness." The documentary establishes that European ethnicities, though different, are not at odds with "how things are done in this new country." The embedded discourse states that ethnic differences will be superseded by the universal liberal, democratic values of modern Canadian society. After all, as the teacher proclaims, "the important things, deep, basic things that really matter, are the same for all peoples throughout the world." The seemingly innocent question, "Where are the Indians, where are their Cabins," gestures to Western values shared by colonial Europeans about "Red Indian as an impediment to modernity and economic progress" (Thobani 2007, 96). The cultural inclinations and practices of European immigrants ("fine music ... literature and painting") on the other hand make this group attractive to Canadians and part of a common "heritage." It is this "love for culture" that makes white immigrants compatible with Canadians' definition of "Canadianness," thus contributing to national identity rather than challenging or disrupting it. Regardless of their "non-preferred" status among the Canadian public, European immigrants from the DP camp are granted admission because of their "belonging to the same order of humanity" (Thobani 2007, 21), i.e., the white, superior European race.

Canadian Exceptionalism

After the Second World War, the transition from colonial settler state to liberal democratic nation brought with it an international focus on universal humanism, as dictated by the founding of the United Nations. This period also saw a shift in the NFB towards the internationalization of Canada (Druick 2007). Post-war documentaries portrayed Canada as a "mini-United Nations" and its society as "microcosm of the world" (Druick 2007, 74, 85). Textual, auditory, and visual features in *Passport to Canada* establish the exceptionalism of Canada and Canadians by inculcating the notion of compassion, tolerance, and humanitarianism in the collective identity of Canadians. At the national level, Canadians are portrayed as caring. Compelled by their collective moral duty, they help immigrants to facilitate their settlement and "guarantee their upkeep until they get established." Internationally, Canada is depicted as materially advantaged and morally responsible to the international community by providing relief to displaced people "from nowhere: the DP camps." The lexical choice in the film suggests a recontextualization of the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by emphasizing "peace, freedom and a bit of permanence." The use of figurative language through the metaphor "A long night has ended. The morning draws nigh," in reference to the end of war evokes associations with the Christian ethic of hope, peace, compassion and the value of tolerance as a common basis for humanitarian action. In addition to authorizing Canada and Canadians as emblems of hope, discursive strategies of moral legitimation serve to anticipate and appease an unfavourable reception of refugees by a public already hostile to certain ethnicities (especially Eastern Europeans and Slavic settlers), religions (Jewish) and ideologies (Communist) (Troper 1993). The question here is: would Canada have had the same open policy for the non-preferred group if its economy did not need workers? Troper answers with a definitive no: "There can be little doubt that if there had been no labour shortage, few DPs would have been admitted to Canada" (Troper 1993, 261).

The Economic Logic of Immigration

To keep pace with postwar economic growth, the labour-intensive sectors (construction, manufacturing, mining, agriculture) pressured the government to relax immigration barriers. Giving in to this pressure, the government set to "skim off the cream of the labour pool languishing in the Displaced Persons

camp of Europe" (Troper 1993, 261). To prove to a reluctant public the value of non-preferred immigrants, *Passport to Canada* entices the viewer with a fabula in which a sequence of events narrates the immigrants' journey to Canada (Fairclough 2003, 83). Through a mixture of textual and visual dramatic effects and argumentative forms, the film attempts to convince the viewer that the opportunity for economic growth can be lost if there is a shortage of skilled and unskilled labour. This gap between what Canada wants and what is available is illustrated by a contrastive semantic relationship marked by the conjunction "but" ("but strong backs are needed to do the heavy manual labour"). It makes the pursuit of economic growth contingent on Canadians' agreement to slightly alter their nationhood vision. Skilled immigrants are portrayed in a positive image as an asset to their industry. They bring new skills and spread them by training their colleagues ("We brought a new skill to this country and help to establish a new industry," "we train a lot of young Canadian some of them disabled veterans, to work with the staff we brought with us").

To mitigate the expected negative reaction to the arrival of immigrants, the viewers are given the opportunity to see for themselves the "strong backs" from Europe doing "the heavy manual labor." Images confirm the commentary by elaborating details (Leeuwen 2005, 230). Images of sturdy and energetic Europeans doing intense work and large construction projects in progress illustrate the commentary "Canada is busting out of the seams, booming in manufacturing and construction: more houses, more steel, more hospitals and more hydroelectric power, but strong backs are needed to do the heavy manual labor." The discursive strategies justify the recruitment of non-preferred immigrants through moral evaluations. These evaluations invoke values of solidarity ("a couple of thousand Canadians and six to eight hundred immigrants are working together") and sacrifice ("doctors, lawyers, professors, writers, and artists who swing sledgehammers and wield pick and shovel"). What is withheld from the viewer, however, is the fact that immigrants of European descent and native-born Canadians refuse to do menial, intensive, low-status, low- pay work (Troper, 1993). Postwar immigration policy is therefore portrayed as "a good deal" where Canada and the immigrants are winners: The former expands its economy. The latter get a Passport to Canada.

Passport to Canada ascribes immigrant subject positions as "willing laborers" and "strong backs" that are simply "pitching in" to this nation-building process. The narrator speaks of a "bargain" that has been struck, however the terms of the bargain seem to be defined unilaterally, given that immigrants must "work at

whatever is necessary" and "stick to their jobs" in exchange for admission and the much less tangible gift of "hope in the future." Throughout the film, it is clear that despite this rhetoric of a bargain, immigrant subjects are discursively constituted as labor, who are only valued by their willingness to submit themselves to the state's economic interests.

Who Gets In?

Made in the style of advocacy journalism, *Who Gets In?*[3] (Barry Greenwald, 1989) represents a shift from the propagandistic state productions (e.g., *Passport to Canada*) (Greenwald 1989). The documentary *Who Gets In?* was produced during a decade of immigration policy and regulations revision to reflect a more humanitarian approach to the refugee category and non-discriminatory immigration policies (Gélinas-Faucher and Nakache 2018). These changes led to an increased influx of immigrants from non-traditional sources. Between 1983 and 1987, 226,326 Asian immigrants and 24,027 African immigrants came to Canada (Gélinas-Faucher and Nakache 2018, 119). The policy change triggered an unprecedented escalation in the number of refugee claimants, which neither the Canadian system nor the national subjects were prepared to handle/accept (Gélinas-Faucher and Nakache 2018). Immigration and refugee policies were heavily criticized for leniency in managing the increasing flow of refugees and failure to scrutinise fraudulent claims. There were complaints of compromising the immigration system and overwhelming the welfare program. To put an end to outsiders taking advantage of Canadians' humanitarian impulse, a tougher approach to this threat was demanded.

"Tighten the Grip" Policy

Several discursive strategies in the documentary justify tightening measures to ensure national security and social cohesion through an effective immigration system. The questions "why should we do this?" and "why should we do this in this way?" are mainly answered by different legitimation strategies (Leeuwen 2007). Legitimation through rationality is used to portray the policy as the guardian of national security (Leeuwen 2007). Each rejection is presented as

3 Filmed in 1988 across Africa, Canada, and Hong Kong, the documentary provides direct insights into the criteria Canadian immigration officials consider when selecting potential new citizens. It also sheds light on the economic, social, and political factors influencing their decisions.

the right thing to do in dealing with fraudulent claims of self-selected outsiders. Choices are portrayed as rational decisions. Despite disturbing footage and narratives of traumatized refugees, the main protagonist of the film, immigration official Mike Molloy remains rigorously and "rationally" immune to emotional involvement, affirming the belief that "immigration officer can't afford to get emotionally involved in any one case." Revocable decisions are made after careful assessment and screening and consultation with decision-makers (e.g., "we will have to consult with Ottawa") and representatives of international conventions ("Malloy goes to see the UNHCR representative"). Strict bureaucratic and procedural measures (especially in Africa) point to Canada's pre-emptive policy of preventing unwanted migrants and dangerous applicants, referred to as "rascals," from entering the country.

Legitimacy by authorization is used to prove the efficiency of the system. Typical of the NFB's devotion to representative sampling technique inherent in positivist social science research (Druick 2007), the efficiency of the officers is generalized through the omnificent, omniscient, and omnipresent Mike Molloy as a representative of immigration officers. His expert authority, derived from his professional qualifications (officer and policy maker) and his close links with international organizations (UNHCR) legitimizes his recommendations and decisions as the best course of action. Both his experience as a veteran and his personal identity as an English-speaking white citizen from the neighbourhoods of Canada show that he knows a lot because he has seen a lot ("he knows how the young man's problems started"). Not only is he overwhelmingly present in the "here and now" of the selection process, but he digs deep into the refugees' past and follows their future settlement in Canada closely through a network of social connections ("one of my best friends lives there, he works in the immigration department there I'll send him a note and tell him you are coming, OK").

Mike Molloy's question "Is Canada in charge of its borders? Or is any Tom, Dick, and Harry that can buy the plane fare or bus fare going to be in charge of the borders?" encapsulates national discontent that immigration policy has been too lenient in dealing with the uncontrollable influx of refugees who overwhelm the welfare system. His response, "I think we should be in charge" reminds Canadians of the firm nationalist policy of Prime Minister MacKenzie King's in his 1947 famous statement. It also reminds the viewers who is to police the "additions" to the national socio-cultural fabric. Molloy's authoritative statement meets MacKenzie King's belief that however important the immigration/economic agenda is, it should not disrupt the "composition of society" (Troper 1993, 256),

therefore putting Canada's interests to preserve national identity above domestic lobbying, diversity policies, and international humanitarian conventions. Although critical of "the untrammeled business thing," Molloy acknowledges the benefits to the Canadian economy, since "these people create wealth … jobs ... opportunities for other people." Yet he warns of the dangers of the zeal to "get ahead" economically at the expense of the nation's social cohesion and cultural identity. This perspective is in tandem with the NFB 1989–90 annual report which states that "In these days of globalization, interdependent economies are distinguished by a nation's unique cultural characteristics" (Druick 2007, 181).

Protecting "Canadianness"

The recurring threat to social cohesion and unity in Canada perpetuates the institutionalization of racial immigration policies through a rhetoric of fear. The documentary fuels the fear of Canadians through the lexical choice of terms such as "changes," "costs," "at stake," which suggest a looming undesirable consequence that threatens Canadian social values (equality) and "Canada's survival as a nation." The visual/textual representations of refugees and immigrant applicants perpetuate the discourse of the invasion of Canada by lawless outsiders and fierce economic competitors. This institutionalization is achieved through the hypothetical situation in which Molloy puts multiculturalism policies to the test ("if this person moves in next door to my mom"). He speculates on the consequences of the "rascals moving into Canadian neighborhoods," implying insecurity as outcomes. These speculations explain the proactive policies and processes of immigrant selection in Canada. The documentary takes the viewer "over there," to Africa and Asia, in a symbolic outward movement that draws the line between foreign outsiders and real Canadians, defined as "the people who built Canada in the first place." The criteria for selecting "good people" are based on who has the physical characteristics, personal traits, and cultural attributes that can be easily mapped into "Canadianness." The film further reinforces the disconnection between the "west and the rest" by means of negative representations of places and people to reproduce the orthodox image of the developing world in the viewers.

The disconnect between Canada and the rest is further strengthened by several visual connotations that single out Africa out as "non-preferred" for immigrant selection. In an iconic shot of what appears to be young siblings, followed by an extreme close-up of an "African" unclothed baby, the documentary blatantly

proclaims the naked truth that while Africa has a staggering population, "Africans don't seem to have what Canada wants." The racial and cultural differences seem too visible to reconcile. Despite significant changes in film production, NFB documentaries continue to embody "a consistent…focus on the typical and the generalizable" (Druick 2007, 165). Limited samples of refugees and immigrants are used to assess the worth of whole nations, people and their cultures. The city of Nairobi is presented as one typical developing world outpost that has all the earmarks of a troubled developing world. Consequently, it is assumed that what is true of Nairobi is also true of other cities in the developing world. Nairobi and Dar Es Salam are portrayed as backward, violent, and chaotic, and so is the rest of Africa. The characteristics, attitudes, behaviours, and actions of Van Ton Nguyen, Helao, Geoge Tshilumba, and Maurice Adongo are representative of Africans: they are lawless, deceitful, disloyal agitators. Unlike the Europeans in the *Passport to Canada* who were "quickly" screened into Canada, the Africans are quickly screened out. They are deemed either "personally" or "politically" unsuitable.

After externalizing Africa outside Canada's field of vision, the documentary moves on to, every officer's dream, Hong Kong. However, while Hong Kong people are described as "self-motivated" with "proven leadership capability," they are implicitly portrayed as workaholics, compulsive money-makers, and fierce competitors. This image is reminiscent of the perceptions of public and elite in the early 20th century that Asians competed with Canadians for job opportunities and business deals. It also recalls the media's portrayal of Chinese students in the early 1980s "foreign students taking away university openings from qualified Canadians" (Li 1998, 169).

Visually, the documentary uses various types of transition techniques to connect the narratives of the refugees and immigrants with their personal histories and collective identities. The cuts alternate between the people telling their stories and the daily chaotic, violent African neighbourhoods or the hyper-capitalist hustle of the streets of Hong Kong. The effect is the viewer's realization that the individual identity of immigrants and refugees is inextricably linked to their collective identity, i.e., their incompatible racial characteristics and unassimilable cultural traits. The judgement of who is ethnically, racially, and culturally suitable to "live in Canada" is best captured by three successive close-ups of immigrants at an airport accompanied by the narrator's commentary. It reads as follows: "Canada's attitude is this: Immigration affects the way Canadians live" (close-up on an Asian male). "So Canadians will decide who gets into the country" (close-up of a woman with no visible minority features) "and who does

not" (close-up of a black man). The eligibility of these "persons-on-the-move" is thus decided by the normative citizen whose role is "to meter the racial change in Canadian society" in accordance with Canadian national norms of race and culture" (Thobani 2007, 72). "Nation-building initially elevated British and French settlers" and continues to appoint them as administrators of the ongoing design of the nation and society (Thobani 2007, 83).

The Economic Immigrant

In response to the question of whether to pursue short-term economic or long-term social goals in regulating immigration (Ferrer et al. 2014; Green and Green 2004), Canadian policymakers shifted the inflow of immigrants to a utilitarian economic approach centred on human capital that is fully consistent with the global market configuration (Ferrer et al. 2014). Among five categories of immigrants (Independent, Humanitarian, Family, Assisted Relatives, and Economic), the last mentioned was prominent in the policy agenda of the 1980s (Dirks 2021). The Business Migrant and Entrepreneur and Investor Immigration program attests to this change in policy.

In *Who Gets In?*, the number of immigration officers in Africa (one) as opposed to Hong Kong (many) suggests that the economic immigrant is a state policy priority. The number of positive decisions also testifies to the desirability of the economic immigrant. The utilitarian discourse that underpins the economic policy of immigration is evident in the documentary's classification of categories that best serve the Canadian economy. At the bottom of the list are migrants from "troubled" developing countries. Refugees and family class come next. To prove the unproductivity of the family class, the documentary portrays this category negatively by showing a seemingly uneducated elderly woman who needs help and translation. The assumption is that she would overwhelm health and social programs due to her lack of human and linguistic capital. The independent class, on the other hand, are desirable for their manageability. Accordingly, the Filipina applicant was rejected because of the improbability of her immediate contribution to the system. On the contrary, she would be exhausting resources by studying rather than working. Anita Cortez, on the other hand, is "successful" because she belongs to the "ideal group of migrants"– the Filipino community – who are willing to do low-paid work that "many Canadians no longer have the time or inclination to do themselves" for extended hours (Root 2014, 5).

The transposition of the business discourse onto immigration policy is a discursive strategy the film employs to normalize the economic migrant. It intertwines the practice of business and policy domain as natural constituents. The "colonization" of the context of policy by the business discourse is achieved visually (the scene at the stock exchange) and linguistically (money has been flowing, net worth, liquid assets, megabucks – $2 and 1/2 billion, $1,000,000) (Fairclough 2003, 33).

The entrepreneur/investor immigrants are lauded for their low-cost/high-benefit profile. They are portrayed as "good [and] desirable" through evaluative adjectives (e.g., self-motivated, proven leadership capabilities, tremendous input of cash and capital) (Fairclough 2003, 172), statements with deontic modalities ("this couple can come to a city like Toronto, buy a house in an upscale neighbourhood, and start paying taxes tomorrow"), and value assumptions ("an immigration officers dream ... People who can play by those rules and win, these people create wealth… jobs…. opportunities…").

While *Who Gets In?* differs from *Passport to Canada* in its style, content, and purpose, there is nevertheless a clear similarity regarding how immigration is framed and valued in economic terms. The demand for manual labor may have declined, and the priorities shifted to different sectors of the economy, yet for the Canadian policy makers, immigration is understood as part of economic policy (Fleras 2015). However, *Who Get's In?* reverses the gaze, and thus also opens space within the NFB for contestation and contradiction.

The Third Heaven

Viewing NFB productions as a genre chain,[4] *The Third Heaven* (Georges Payrastre, 1998)[5] can be seen as a continuation of *Who Gets In?* – a follow up on the outcomes of the Business Migrant and Entrepreneur and Investor Immigration Program of the 1980s (Payrastre 1998). Canadians are called upon to evaluate this economic category through a journey into the lives and consciousness of the Lam family, a Chinese family from Hong Kong that moved to Vancouver in 1992. In this documentary, the NFB continues to interpellate social and policy change and its impact on national identity and citizenship.

4 A sequence of genres arranged in a specific chronological order, where one genre frequently serves as a prerequisite for the next. These progressions can serve as a useful planning tool for communities well-versed in the conventions of each genre (Fairclough 2003).

5 See: *https://www.nfb.ca/film/third_heaven/*. Last accessed 6. 06. 2024.

Economic Migrant and Neoliberalism

The economic discourse that underpinned Canadian immigration policy in the 1990s was characterised by an intensifying global competition for investment and human capital. In addition to a heightened neoliberal order and a decaying Keynesian welfare state (Bhuyan et al. 2017; Thobani 2007), the decade witnessed increasing labour mobility in united Europe and reunited Germany. Intra-European mobility reduced the economic prospects for non-European countries (including Canada) due to a decline in the supply of skilled labour (Akbari and MacDonald 2014). Concurrently, competition for foreign direct investment among OECD countries intensified, pushing government policies to improve the quality of human capital and infrastructure to improve their economic competitiveness (Oman 2000). Against the backdrop of an emerging "global bidding war" for foreign direct investment (Oman 2000), *The Third Heaven* presents the 1997 British withdrawal from Hong Kong as an opportunity that will bring Canada great economic benefits. In this context, the recruitment of investor/business/entrepreneur immigrants is Canada's strategy to secure its share of the global market. Thanks to his transnational, transcultural, and financial capital, Michael Lam, the wealthy Hong Kong protagonist in *The Third Heaven* plays a crucial role in bridging the economies of Canada and Hong Kong. The high benefits and low costs of wealthy immigrants are further exemplified by the Lam family's lifestyle (Dobrowolsky 2017); a testament to the self-sufficiency and self-management of this category, which does not seek government funding upon settlement.

To establish the validity of the business immigrant argument, the film uses explanatory and scientific rationalization as theoretical legitimation of this immigrant category. The author and strategic business advisor Jhon Kao explains the Chinese business mentality as a "general attribute" of this category and uses psychology based scientific evidence to trace the roots of the business impulse (Leeuwen 2007, 104). He concludes with a Cantonese proverb (The Shrewd rabbit has three holes) to connote the innate wisdom that underpins the Chinese business mentality and its relevance to the current global economy. The documentary traces Lam's economic contribution over a span of eight years. Typified as a 'deterritorialized' businessman in a hyper-globalized economy, Lam is constantly on the move pursuing deals and making profits. The various sequences of Lam flying back and forth from Hong Kong connote flowing financial capital into Canada in the form of real estate investment and new built properties contributing to urban development. Here, multiculturalism complements Canada's economic

agenda by promoting a cosmopolitan image that enhances Canada's attractiveness in the global marketplace and international relations (see Root 2014).

The Third Heaven documents Canada as a multicultural utopia. The sequence with the three ladies doing yoga in complete harmony confirms the white student's comment that "Canadian society is everybody, you know. It's everybody doing, like, their dragon festivals and all these things. That's what Canadian society is." Ethnic and cultural traits and practices that used to be the basis for exclusion are presented as a source of pride for Chinese immigrants, who are officially encouraged to maintain their linguistic and cultural distinctiveness. The Lam family speaks Cantonese and maintains typical Chinese values and beliefs, spiritual and cultural symbols and icons, and social practices.

The Nation Has Already Been Established

If we consider that the liberal democratic process of nationhood involves "a range of policies to promote a common language and a common sense of national identity and membership" as Kymlicka & Patten note (Kymlicka and Patten 2003), it becomes clear that the national lineage has long been definitively established as English/French bilingual and bicultural (Thobani 2007). In line with the state's policy, the documentary treats multiculturalism as an apparatus that "allow[s] the nation to be imagined as homogeneous in relation to the difference of cultural strangers" while keeping these strangers "fetishized as the origin of the difference" (Thobani 2007, 145).

Discursively, this management of difference is achieved through a binary classificatory construction of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants and Canadians into two identifiable groups: national subjects/immigrant Other, old-timers/newcomers, insiders/outsiders, permanent national subjects/transient immigrants. The first group is represented by the Lam family. The second by the white English-speaking teacher and the white French-speaking Canadian elite. The viewer recognizes the second group by the substantive definitions provided by the economic and history research scholars. Besides, the viewer identifies this groups by their distinctive linguistic, ethnic, socioeconomic, and spiritual cultural characteristics, as well as by their self-definitions as "overseas Chinese" and "Canadian Chinese." Visually, they are defined in terms of spatiality. Most cuts from Canada to China and vice versa are made through a shot of the sea or sky to mark them as overseas Canadians, outsiders, and foreigners.

The old-timers need no definition. They are known to the public as the nation's builders and the keepers of Canada's core values. These attributes naturally entitle them to speak on behalf of Canadians: "our society," "we decided in Canada," "if I see my society change... I will resist," and to assess the value of Chinese business immigrants against normative Canadian values. The consultation-like dinner in the film is reminiscent of the public consultation on immigration policy in the mid-1990s (Immigration Policy Review and Social Security Review). This call for national subjects to "make determinations about the right of Others," as Thobani describes it (Thobani 2007, 180), "exalts" white English/French-speaking Canadians and further otherizes immigrants.

The "Hongcouver" Threat

The newspaper headline "Immigrants tolerated for their wealth" reflects the public sentiment of 1990s anti-multiculturalism, which saw Asian immigrants as a threat to Canadian society and culture. The evaluative adjective "tolerated" implies that immigrants are a threat, and that Canadians are exceptionally forbearing. The documentary fleshes out this stereotypical image both visually and textually. Visually, the viewer is engulfed by details of Chinese culture through proverbs, music, graphics, symbols, and language (e.g., close-ups and long shots of dragons, busy Chinatown streets, banners...). Transition cuts between Vancouver and Hong Kong challenge the viewer's ability to differentiate the two cities. It metaphorically creates the effect of Vancouver being swamped by the Chinese, a threat Lam confirms in his commentary on Li Ka-Shing's purchase of the Expo site: "when this happened, I was in Hong Kong and I thought, 'Wow!' ... Will Vancouver become a new Hong Kong? That's what everybody thought in Hong Kong." The threat of invasion is an integral part of the discourse in the mass media in the late 1990s, when Vancouver was referred to as "Hongcouver."[6] There is also a linguistic invasion ("everything is in Chinese," "you hear them all speak Chinese"), the effect of which is described by students as "overpowering," leading them to "feel left out." This sense of invasion, along with the Lam family's excessive access to material and social capital, is at the root of the "identity crisis" of the 1990s, when "disempowered" white Canadians felt they were losing their historical privileges (Mackey 1999, 154). The sequence showing Lam being approached by his relatives to recruit the unemployed youths for his business makes the connection to Jhon

6 See: Chinese Vancouver: A Decade of Change, *The Vancouver Sun*, June 30, 2007. *https://designkultur.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/a-decade-of-change.pdf*. Last accessed 6. 06. 2024.

Kao's argument about seeking security in family business, community, and clans. This is an allusion to the fact that the contribution of Chinese business migrants is limited to the "network of members" benefit of their families and create jobs for family members while creating avenues for the inflow of unskilled immigrants. What the film leaves out about the emergence of the family business mentality in the pre-World War II era are the conditions that produced this mentality, namely anti-Orientalism, social marginalisation and isolation, and economic exclusion (Li 1998, 52.). "Common lineage and clanship ties, in the absence of other resources, provided a pool of potential partners with whom business relationships could be formed" (Li 1998, 54).

Conclusion

This paper has only covered a few aspects of Canadian discourses on immigration in a limited number of films about immigration produced by the NFB. These films were purposively chosen to see the progression of immigration discourses in NFB documentaries during different time periods. This analysis could easily be extended to include many other films. For instance, analyzing films such as *Hanging On* (Chedly Belkhodja, 2006) and *24 Days in Brooks* (Dana Inkster, 2007) would expand the conversation about economics to include a discussion on how racial discrimination and the undervaluing of foreign credentials puts many who have immigrated to Canada in significantly precarious economic conditions, regardless of the skills and human capital they bring with them. Other films such as *A Time to Rise* (Anand Patwardhan & Jim Monro, 1982) and *El Contrato* (Min Sook Lee, 2003), also work to subvert the dominant economic discourse within the overarching immigration discourse by exposing the economic exploitation and dehumanization of migrant workers in Canada (something that is often overlooked in the immigration debate). Not including these works is an obvious limitation to our analysis, however it should also be noted that not all NFB films about immigration are dominated by economic logics, and the field in question is itself "fractured, shifting, discontinuous and variegated" (Gittings 2002, 1). While there are some NFB films that tend to focus mostly (but not entirely) on cultural heritage, differences, racialization of immigrants and community, rather than overtly dealing with economic issues (perhaps simply remaining latent), a detailed analysis of these films is outside the scope of present discussion. Hence, our analysis has attempted to capture how the dominance of economic and development discourses frame the immigration narrative in the analyzed NFB

films. This/these narrative(s) form an essential part of the Canadian discourse on immigration. These films constitute Canadian discourses of exceptionalism, altruism, and humanitarianism and in turn are constituted by them. However, these films also create a space where the façade of exceptionalism and altruism can be questioned and contested.

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