

**Human Rights and Security Concerns:  
The Canadian Tradition of “Safe Haven” Reconsidered**

By

Marie-Claude Haince

Department of Anthropology  
University of Montreal

Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales

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### **Introduction**

Today, we can observe that population movements are continuing to increase. We are also aware that the effects of globalization are the central contributing factors in the acceleration of this tendency (Massey 1999; Meyers 2000; Sassen 1998, 1999). As migratory phenomena exert a pressure on states, these states seek, in turn, to acquire increasingly sophisticated means to control and manage these movements and flows (Bigo 1998; Richmond 2002)<sup>1</sup>.

Such increases in transnational flows pose serious challenges to states seeking to control these movements (Bigo 1998, 2001, 2002). Today, more than ever, states try to control the movement of peoples and individuals arriving at their gates. At the same time, these states are trying to find new strategic means of control, including “acting remotely” in order to “prevent” the arrival of immigrants. Through a whole series of mechanisms, such as “remote control” as well as delegating part of this “pre-migratory” control to a third party, for instance airline companies and security agencies, all states are looking, in one way or another, to find the means to control migratory flows and restrict the number of immigrants entering their territory (Massey 1999).

This situation has led to the implementation of a plethora of new immigration practices, including: the development of increasingly restrictive immigration policies<sup>2</sup>; the drive to document and identify individuals<sup>3</sup>; the introduction of more severe controls on mobility<sup>4</sup>; and finally, the intensification of immigration securitization<sup>5</sup>. States thus

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<sup>1</sup> See also Brubaker (1991), Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield (1994), Freeman (1992), Guiraudon and Joppke (2001), Massey (1999), and Sassen (1998, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> See Brubaker (1991), Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield (1994), Fassin, Morice and Quiminal (1997), Freeman (1992), Massey (1999), Richmond (2002), and Wihtol de Wenden (1999).

<sup>3</sup> See Browne (2005), Massey (1999), O’Byrne (2001), Richmond (2000), and Salter (2003).

<sup>4</sup> See Bigo (1998, 2001, 2002), Brubaker (1991), Ceyhan (1997), Ceyhan and Tsoukala (1997, 2002), Flynn (2005), Guiraudon (2001), Guiraudon and Joppke (2001), Richmond (2002), and Withol de Wenden (1999).

search for means that privilege a “chosen” immigration rather than an “unwanted” immigration.

This context favours a hardening of repressive devices and legislative measures which complicate and disturb migratory movements, forcing migrants, those “excluded from modernity” (to take Zigmunt Bauman’s evocative term)<sup>6</sup> to elaborate new strategies to emigrate and navigate crossing borders.

Accordingly, I propose to highlight recent tendencies in immigration practices and policies. Initially, I will try to show how these new global practices of security enter into deep contradiction with human rights logic and set into place a securitization of immigration. Secondly, I will seek to see how new restrictive immigration policies have been implemented in Western countries, in particular Canada, while focusing on new control measures for migratory flows established by those states. Moreover, I would like to show that the practices and strategies surrounding the immigrant’s selection in Canada are neither neutral nor objective, but, on the contrary, bring about a dehumanization and a deshistorization of immigration candidates. Based on my ethnographic exploration of the Canadian immigration process, I propose a different way to examine the neoliberal technologies of government regarding immigration.

### **Immigration: Between Security Concerns and Human Rights**

Today, immigration is unquestionably a security issue. Migratory control has proved to be the corner stone of the new political security agenda in Western states. Thus, the implementation of immigration policies by these states has led increasingly to policies controlling migratory flows (Guiraudon and Joppke 2001).

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<sup>5</sup> As Bigo notes it, the “securitization of immigration is the result and not the cause of the development of technologies of control and surveillance. It is linked to computerization, risk profiling, visa policy, the remote control of borders, the creation of international or nonterritorial zones in airports, and so on.” (2002: 73) Moreover, “the securitization of migration is processed through symbolic politics and implies the transformation of the logic of control and the surveillance of people entering and living inside the territory.” (Ceyhan and Tsoukala 2002: 23)

<sup>6</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, 2004, *Wasted Lives. Modernity and its Outcasts*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

However, despite discourses advocating a firmer control of immigration and the “locking up of borders”, international migration continues to increase<sup>7</sup>. Thus, there is a gap between discourse and practice surrounding immigration.

By examining more closely these migratory dynamics, it appears that this gap – between discourse and practice surrounding immigration – finds several explanations. One possible explanation is of an economic nature. Western states are faced with the unceasingly growing problem of a fall in birth rates. That causes, among others, an important need for labour and more specifically a “less qualified labour”. To counter the effects of an ageing population, several states have resorted to a “selected immigration” – as is the case in Canada. However, this type of immigration does not fully succeed in filling the shortage in labour because selected immigrants are, more particularly, highly educated and thus over qualified to fill the positions needed. Seasonal workers and temporary immigrants (even clandestine immigrants) become, in this context, one possible solution to this problem, since this “cheap” labour partly fills the needs of Western states. We can then question the will of our leaders to close the borders to this type of immigration, which we need.

Another explanation of this shift between discourse and practice lies in the fact that contemporary immigration policies are set up and implemented in the middle of two diametrically opposed logics: human rights and security. On the one hand, human rights rhetoric, presented as the new universal ethics, occupies an increasingly important place in the discourses of neoliberal democratic governments (Wallerstein 1997). If states adhere to the principles of human rights and do not hesitate (in fact, this happens in the majority of cases) to ratify international treaties guaranteeing these “fundamental human rights”, the enforcement of these same conventions at the national level (i.e. official practices themselves) remains more or less effective (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). In addition, since the events of September 11, 2001, “security discourse” has become

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<sup>7</sup> Indeed, as Brubaker notes: “The adoption of an increasingly restrictive immigration posture by prosperous states does not necessarily mean that flows into such countries will decrease, although they may in some cases.” (1991: 950).

omnipresent. Specifically, there has been an intensification of technologies of control and monitoring, as well as an emergence of a constellation of increasingly sophisticated security devices (generalized biometric technologies, “remote control”, visa systems, etc.). Moreover, immigration securitization involves a criminalisation of immigration, thus allowing the deployment of a panoply of control technologies. Security, in this context, becomes a “political technology”, in a foucauldian sense<sup>8</sup>.

The insertion of immigration policies between these two poles (human rights and security) creates a confusion in immigration practices. For example, if a “security approach” resulted in the immigrant being regarded as a “criminal”, the logic of human rights, on the other hand, would be focused on the “protection” of that same immigrant. How, then, do we reconcile these two contradictory logics and the practices they give rise to? It seems obvious that the new global practices of security, implemented by states, enter into a deep contradiction with human rights logics. Accordingly, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for the state to reconcile the obligations of international law (human rights, right of asylum) with state practices regarding immigration.

I have in mind an example of this kind of confusion in immigration practices which comes from my fieldwork carried out in the offices of Citizenship and Immigration Canada at the Dorval airport in October and November 2002. This particular morning, there was considerable agitation. The employees of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and those of Immigration Quebec had prepared the arrival, at the beginning of afternoon, of a group of Afghan refugees. As I had understood it, some employees of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (certainly visa officers) had gone to Afghanistan, a few months before, to visit refugee camps and “select” the refugees whom Canada wanted to welcome. This delegation of refugees was thus weighted by the Canadian authorities as Quebecois, since they were going to come to be settled in Quebec (both Immigration Quebec Citizenship and Immigration Canada speak about “resettlement”) and that they

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<sup>8</sup> Bigo also goes in this direction when he argues that it “is, thus, a transversal political technology, used as a mode of governmentality by diverse institutions to play with the unease, or to encourage it if it does not yet exist, so as to affirm their role as providers of protection and security to mask some of their failures” (2002: 65). See also Ibrahim (2005) and Inda (2006).

“had been selected” by Quebec, because “referred” by the Canadian government. A small group of immigration officers of Canada and Quebec thus took to the road together to await “their” refugees as they get off the plane and while officers tried to coordinate the “welcoming” of those refugees. Initially, it will be the CIC officers who were going to deal with the refugees to regulate the formalities relating to the entry (the “landing” as such). Thereafter, the Quebec officers were going to take the lead for the questions of settlements (information concerning the first steps, like applying for a Quebec health insurance card, opening a bank account and looking for a place to live, etc.). In addition, Immigration Quebec had received, from the Red Cross, winter clothing and some personal effects to give to the refugees in order to facilitate the first days of their settlement. Immigration Quebec had also provided hotel accommodations for these refugees (for a few days only). Lastly, to accompany the refugees in their “first steps getting settled,” Immigration Quebec appoints an “organization of reception”. Thus, the refugees “selected” by the Canadian and Quebecois governments are completely taken charge of by the governmental authorities, which seek to fulfill their international obligations and to maintain their “humanitarian” tradition.

However, if these “selected” refugees are entitled to the best treatment available, I could note that the situation is quite different for those which are “not awaited”. Indeed, a few days later, an Afghan family (parents and their five children) arrived at the Dorval airport and asked for asylum. Not knowing what to do with them and being considerably overflowed (it was a period of great crowds), the CIC officers installed the family in a back corner of the office. There they remained, sitting on ground some hours before an officer asked the “anthropologist in service” to try to speak with them in Arabic. One of the officers, who knew I spoke Arabic, suggested I talk with them, but of course, as explained to him, they did not speak Arabic. The officer who asked me talk with the family wanted initially to know by which flight they had arrived so as to be able to start a file. So, in this case, these people remained several hours without anyone paying attention to them. In other words, treatment is different between “selected” refugees who would not represent a risk for Canada and those Canada does not wish. This is an eloquent example of the limits of this so-called “humanitarian” immigration.

Increasingly, the tension between human rights and security has given way to the latter taking precedence over the former. In other words, immigration is no longer seen solely as an economic issue, nor as a human rights issue, but has become principally a security issue, making it subject to national as well as international security policies (Bigo 2002; Guiraudon and Joppke 2001). As a result, states' capacity to control and manage migratory flows remains quite effective<sup>9</sup> even if the number of immigrants, particularly in host countries, continues to increase (Faist 2000; Guiraudon and Joppke 2001)<sup>10</sup>.

### **New Global Security Practices and the Canadian Immigration System**

By examining the literature on recent immigration phenomena, we can easily note that the immigration policies implemented by receiving countries have tended to become increasingly restrictive.<sup>11</sup> Thus, even in those countries typically considered "open" to massive immigration, such as Canada, United States and Australia, this general tendency toward restriction is readily observable.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, all states (including Canada) seek, in one way or another, to give each other the means to control migratory flows and restrict the number of immigrants which enter their territory. For example, measures aimed at reducing and even "slowing down" the number of immigrants entering Canadian territory have taken several forms.

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<sup>9</sup> As noted by Jonathon W. Moses: "Modern states fiercely defend their traditional right to determine who may (or may not) enter their territory." (2006:31) Border control is a sovereign right, as Giraudon notes: "Controlling who enters, who stays, and who leaves national territory has long been emblematic of national sovereignty and considered a founding prerogative of the modern nation-state [...]." (2001:31) Hammar agrees when he argues that "each sovereign state has the right to regulate the entrance of foreign citizens to its territory." (1990:9)

<sup>10</sup> Mary M. Kritz and Charles B. Keely also continue in this direction when they argue: "While governments have some control over immigration, the increasing volume of all forms of international mobility makes control difficult." (1981: xiv).

<sup>11</sup> In this vein, Massey argues that "receiving countries will employ increasingly strict measures to hinder the entry of immigrants from poorer countries, discourage their long-term settlement, and promote their return." (1999:318)

<sup>12</sup> See Brubaker (1991), Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield (1994), Freeman (1992), and Richmond (2002).

In Canada, many new changes for controlling migratory flows were introduced in the aftermath of the events of 9/11. If some of these measures were thought of, or even already in place, well before September 11, 2001, their full implementation was to be legitimated by these events. I want to examine the measures (laws, policies and practices) in place and introduced after September 11 by the Canadian government that sought to restrict and limit the number of “unwanted” immigrants, as well as improve control mechanisms and reduce the threat of “terrorism”.

The post-September 11 era has engendered important changes on both the Canadian immigrant and refugee determination systems. By focusing on immigration and refugee issues as security concerns, the Canadian government has initiated a series of measures designed to police borders and restrict access to Canada.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the Canadian government has consistently used its authority to develop restrictions on who may and may not enter the country. One of these measures is the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) which came into effect in June 2002.<sup>14</sup> This Act contained reforms aimed at curbing the potential dangers that immigrants and refugees allegedly pose to Canada.

For example, in order to efficiently manage the migratory flows, Canada has set up (for several years already) a set of practices known as “interception measures” to screen individuals outside its borders. These mechanisms are meant to control the arrival of immigrants, by placing an obligation on the airline companies and on immigrants to travel “legally”, i.e. to provide authentic travel documents. The interception generally takes place in strategic points of transit, such as Paris-Roissy and London-Heathrow. The

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<sup>13</sup> See Adelman (2002b) and Bhattacharyya (2002).

<sup>14</sup> The new *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) is one example of this kind of measure already in mind before September 11, 2001. About the IRPA, Anna Pratt has noted: “When this legislation was first contemplated, its exclusionary concerns were animated by the linked threats posed to national security by crime and fraud (“criminal abuse”) in the shape of organized crime. After the tragic events of 11 September 2001, this focus on organized crime was supplemented by the reinvigorated threat of terrorism.” (2005:3)

objective of these practices is to prevent illegal immigrants - but not necessarily illegitimate - from arriving at the Canadian border (Janik 2004:75).<sup>15</sup>

Since the IRPA was enacted in June 2002, other provisions have been added requiring airlines to provide information on passengers before their arrival. These new measures ensure that part of pre-migratory control is delegated, among others, to the airline companies which face the penalty of heavy fines. Thus, we can observe that Canada is devoting more and more resources to intercepting and turning back migrants before they arrive at their borders.

Moreover, among other measures, the new Immigration Act expands the use of detention. While the motives for detention remain the same (flight risk,<sup>16</sup> danger to the public, and identity) the new Act broadens the provisions whereby people can be detained at the port of entry and throughout the determination process. It is also important to note that the IRPA allows Immigration officers to arrest and detain foreign nationals within Canada who cannot satisfactorily identify themselves.

There are also some other controls in place to assess any security risk and restrict access to Canada. These controls include, as several authors note<sup>17</sup>: the imposition of visa requirements (in December 2001, Canada imposed visas on 8 new countries, in order to “harmonize” its policies and practices with the U.S.)<sup>18</sup>; the implementation the *Safe Third Country Agreement* (in effect as of December 2004, and signed by both Canada and United States), which limits the number of refugee arrivals; the use of Advanced Passenger Information (API) lists with full reservation details to facilitate interdiction at airport by “disembarkation teams” to detect and prevent entry of “unwanted” arrivals;

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<sup>15</sup> As Janik has noted: “Depuis 1989, le Canada pratique ce qu’on appelle l’interception des passagers en destination pour le Canada qui ne possèdent pas de documents de voyage valides. [...] Entre 1996 et 2002, environ 40 000 personnes munies de documents frauduleux ont été interceptées.” (2004:75)

<sup>16</sup> The notion of “flight risk” is a legal term which indicates the probability that a person can flee persecution.

<sup>17</sup> See in particular Adelman (2002).

<sup>18</sup> Moreover, as Lynch and Simon note, “Canada has made visas more difficult to obtain for visitors from countries who have a reputation for overstaying the time period for which they were legally admitted.” (2003: 69)

and, the pre-screening of refugee claimants by the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) to ensure that they are not security risks.

Aside from the introduction of these new measures, we can observe, for a few years already, the emergence of a constellation of government agencies with the mandate to “safeguard” national security. Two prominent examples include the creation of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA), a new authority set up in December 2001 to oversee security at Canadian airports and the National Risk Assessment Centre (NRAC) set up in January 2004.

The Canada Border Services Agency, in operation since December 2003, is certainly the most important agency. Thus, with the creation of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), refugees – as well as immigrants – are now faced with “security” agents, whose first mandate does not include ensuring the protection of the fundamental rights of populations threatened, nor to implement “the humanitarian obligation” of Canada. The goal of this agency is to preserve the physical security of Canada. The agents in place are “guards of national sovereignty”, they are the “gendarmes” of the borders to some extent<sup>19</sup>.

But, if the Canadian government is struggling to control the movement of individuals arriving at its gates, it is, at the same time, seeking and developing strategic means “to act remotely”. Over the last few years many changes have been introduced in Canada that seek to curb the number of “unwanted” immigrants. This has resulted in the reinforcement of legislative measures and administrative procedures that complicate and disturb migratory movements. Accordingly, the Canadian government has not only initiated a series of measures designed to police the borders and restrict access to Canada, but, more significantly, the control of migrants is increasingly carried out in countries of origin through embassies and consulates. These bureaucratic techniques of immigration employees are implemented in Canadian embassies in order to “prevent” the entry of the “unwanted” in Canada by closing the back door. These kind of strategies and practices

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<sup>19</sup> See Fuglerud (2004).

reflect a global logic called the “externalization” of migratory control (Guiraudon and Joppke 2001).

It is clear to me that the IRPA, the Safe Third Country Agreement, the control measures and the creation of new agencies are, in a sense, means to boost national security. At this point, the central focus on national security compromises the rights of immigrants and refugees. Given these new measures implemented by Canada, it seems difficult to strike a balance between security concerns and human rights. Unfortunately, the over-zealous focus on the security of Canadian space risks, in the long term, to endanger the tradition of Canada as a “safe haven”.

In this context, where security considerations encroach upon the universal principles of human rights, how does Canada select the immigrants it “needs”? Based on my ethnographic exploration of this “zone of passage”, namely, the Canadian immigration process, I propose to examine how Canada selects the “perfect” immigrant.

### **The Selection of Immigrants: Neutral and Objective?**

The Canadian immigration system is often perceived as being the “safe haven” *par excellence*. In particular, starting in the 1970’s, the Canadian immigration system passed from an explicitly restrictive principle to a non-discriminatory principle, i.e. Canada chose its immigrants according to a point system, initially supporting “independent immigrants” and “Family Class”. This point system was set up to favour immigrant’s assimilation to the host society and to close the door to “inassimilable” individuals (Lynch and Simon 2003: 222). This point system was considered, on the one hand, a more “neutral” and “objective” mechanism for the selection of immigrants, and therefore non-discriminatory and less restrictive. On the other hand, this system was also a privileged means to manage migratory flows.

However, although Canada favours the immigration of certain categories of immigrants, during the last years restrictive measures were increasingly introduced. In this context, do immigration practices and procedures remain neutral and objective?

In the framework of my research, carried out with employees of various immigration institutions (Canadian and Quebecois) in Montreal, Paris and Rabat, as well as with immigration candidates (mainly from Arab and Muslim origin), I observed throughout the immigration process (i.e. from the files evaluation until the arrival in Canada) that the immigration officer had a discretionary power, as well as a decisive role in the immigrants selection regarding their access to Canadian territory. Indeed, the immigration officer that handles the file of the immigration candidate is the only one to make a decision as far as the exit of the candidature of the immigrant. The immigration officer has a discretionary power with regard to the future of the immigration candidate. What arises from the interviews carried out with immigration candidates is the fact that the decisions of the immigration officer have many implications on the future life of the candidate since the immigration officer is the one who gives the immigrant a right to live in Canada and Quebec. Thus, the immigration officer has an effective power on the immigrant's life.

Moreover, throughout this settlement process, the immigrant sees himself stripped, little by little, of his "form-of-life", to take Giorgio Agamben's term (1998, 2000). In other words, gradually the immigrant sees himself dispossessed of his social, economic and political characteristics, to be regarded as a simple life, reduced to carrying the file number X or Y and named in the jargon as "ND2".

In this "zone of passage", this bureaucratic no man's land, it is the integrity of the individual who is called in question since one has, gradually, stripped the immigration candidate of his identities. And the more he advances in this process, the more he is reduced to a simple file number.

However, it should be mentioned that the immigration candidate that is in the middle of this process, and whose “route” has not been completed, does not have any statute with respect to the Canadian and Quebecois governments. He is nothing. He is of course the ND2 having the file number X or Y, but he is in theory nothing more. He does not have any effective power and his future is completely subjected to the immigration officer’s decision. He is a being without right and without power, whose future and “possible statute”, and even life, are in the hands of only one person, the immigration officer.

As noted, the procedures, strategies and practices at the heart of the immigration process result in the reduction of immigrant to a simple category, in particular, that of independent immigrant or ND2. Throughout this process, the immigrant finds himself arbitrarily exposed to an abstract classification that does not take into account the complexity of the identity forms which define him as somebody. The candidate who, at the beginning, is characterized as a historical being, notably by his social and family condition, thus sees himself reduced to an “individual category” that does or does not fit in the “boxes” determined by the administrative authorities. Thus, through the process of immigration a “dehistorization” of the person takes place.

Ultimately, if deep down the process of immigration dehumanizes and “dehistoricizes” the immigration candidate, it seems to me that the securitization of this same process can only accentuate these effects. This is especially evident when one considers that security logic, and the strategies which result from this, lead immigration institutions to manufacture or produce a “perfect” immigrant, an “aseptic” immigrant who will not represent any threat or danger for the host society. Which is to say, the security concern, not to say obsession, prevails over all other considerations.

Furthermore, with the implementation, by the Canadian government, of the whole of measures (laws, policies, practices, and procedures) introduced in the aftermath of the events of 9/11, many changes have also occurred in the treatment of newcomers by Immigration officers, as well as CBSA agents, including increased detention<sup>20</sup> and a lack

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<sup>20</sup> See Gauvreau and Williams (2002).

of entitlement to legal rights. Thus, in the current context, interception and detention have become “normalized”, even “essential” instruments in the ongoing attempt to control or manage immigration<sup>21</sup>. They have become an integral part of the immigration regime.

As measures of reinforcement at the Canadian borders, among others, are being introduced, foreigners, immigrants or refugees, far from being welcome, come to constitute a “danger” for the State. Each person who presents herself at the border and who is not a Canadian citizen is perceived as a potential security threat for the state. Henceforth, Immigration officers who used to be posted at the Canadian border have been replaced by agents of a security agency, namely the CBSA, who tend to consider the immigrant and/or the refugee as a “criminal”. This signals a fundamental shift in Canada’s world view and the way it is perceived in the world. Indeed, in the name of securing Canadian territory in the short term, the long held “safe heaven” tradition of Canada is being sacrificed.

This shift in the representation of the immigrant has led to moving the greater part of migratory control, i.e. “the welcoming” of foreigners at the Canadian border, from Citizenship and Immigration Canada to the CBSA. This has only widened the marked gap between Canada’s human rights obligations and its security interests. At this point, my field research conducted with immigration officers and immigration candidates leads me to conclude that the central focus on national security is compromising the rights of immigrants and refugees.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Clearly, developments at the international, regional and domestic level, through changes in laws, policies and/or practices, restrict immigrants and refugees’ rights in the name of

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<sup>21</sup> In the same line of argument, Anna Pratt argues that: “detention and deportation are the two most extreme and bodily sanctions of this immigration penalty, which constitutes and enforces borders, polices non-citizens, identifies those deemed dangerous, diseased, deceitful, or destitute, and refuses them entry or casts them out. As such, detention and deportation and the borders that they sustain are also key technologies in the continuous processes that “make up” citizens and govern populations.” (2005:1)

security. In this kind of apparatus, subjectivation processes became essential tools to manage migratory flows, means by which states can control “subjects”. But, in this context, we must consider the possibility that these policies of security, and the practices they entail, will ultimately lead to a redefinition of the contemporary political subject, a being more and more stripped of its “fundamental rights”. Thus, we can safely say that security policies and practices invite the erosion of immigrants and refugees rights.

Indeed, as Don Flynn notes in a recent article: “the right to obtain protection in the developed world is hardly compatible with the system of managed migration [...]. The right for the refugee to choose which country in which to live would mean the loss of control over key aspects of the system on the part of national governments” (Flynn 2005: 480).

In the light of this, if one agrees that there is, in theory, a right to emigration – guaranteed and framed by the international law – there are no laws, no treaties, which exist to establish a right to immigration. In the current context, it seems to me that although a “right to immigration” is not, strictly speaking, possible, immigration nonetheless constitutes, in this direction, a true “democratic challenge”<sup>22</sup> for Western states.

Moreover, drawing on my field research, I argue that the focus put on securing Canadian space carries with it the risk of endangering, in the long term, the tradition Canada has developed as a “safe haven” for immigrants.

What does “safe haven” actually mean in this context? And safe for whom? These are questions that need to be dealt with from a critical perspective. The notion of “safe haven” needs to be situated and de-naturalized in order to understand the implications it harbours for those who happen to be outside the boundaries of the designated haven.

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<sup>22</sup> Here I use the expression of Ruth Rubio-Marín and the argument she has developed in her book *Immigration as a Democratic Challenge* (2000).

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