



Adopt a Canadian: A short story

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I wrote this fiction in January 2017, following a series of events in international politics. I felt the need to an alternative-to-anthropology modality of thinking about, and expression of, the concerns regarding three major issues that confront today's world: the forced displacement and refugee crisis, the climate change and its denial, and the raise of nationalism encouraged by the election of Donald Trump for the office of the president of the United States. The writing itself was triggered by the new White House administration's attempts to curtail the freedom of movement combined with the announced plans (at the time) to exit the Paris agreement.



The fiction is based on a classic anthropological type of approach: an appeal to an emic understanding of a phenomenon, or as Tim Ingold would put it for example “knowing from inside”. The aim is to create empathy for the refugee condition not by presenting a fictional or ethnographic description of a group of refugees, but by a move to otherize the self. What if the knowing “us” becomes the others? Could this be better portrayed in a story in which the development of events bring the dominant subject in a subaltern position? And to what effect?

“Adopt a Canadian” raises those questions placing the story in a not so far future when climate change and political choices provoke a change in the direction of refugee flows. It is a world that is not yet re-settled, in which new values and hierarchies did not emerge, while the old ones are shaken and reinterpreted.

The short story is a stand alone piece but could be seen also as departing point for a “Climate Change” novel. As Amitav Ghosh recently remarked, the climate change fiction does not have the prominence it deserves, because it tackles a sensitive subject. Its necessity is incontestable, and it may itself be an instrument of knowledge that enables us to think in terms of an ethnography of the future.

Currently I am working into developing the story into a film script together with [88FilmWorks](#) production company based in Southern California.

Full story

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