

Irregular Migrants or Illegal Migrants?: The Canadian News Media's Representation of Haitian Asylum Seekers in the Imagined Nation

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Thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Masters of Arts.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the people who have assisted me throughout this journey.

I would first like to thank my supervisor Dr. Baljit Nagra. Her support, guidance and encouragement were invaluable for the completion of my thesis. I would also like to thank my examiners, Dr. David Moffette and Dr. Christine Gervais, for their insightful feedback.

Dr. Maritza Felices-Luna, your research seminar and feedback was a great help for starting to write my thesis.

Dr. Erin McCuaig-Lambrinakos, thank you for your support and I had great experience being your TA.

To my cohort, I will miss having our chats on the 13th floor.

To my friends and family, thank you for pushing and motivating me throughout this process. This accomplishment would not have been possible without you all.

Abstract

In Spring/Summer 2017 there was an increase in Haitian nationals from the United States, entering Canada, reaching numbers as high of 7,787 (Government of Canada, 2019). This increase in irregular migration was covered by various news outlets and Canadian government officials addressed this as a ‘problem’. Given this important media and political reality, this thesis sought to explore the media representation of Haitian irregular migration. More specifically, I examine the media’s depiction of Haitian asylum seekers as well as the nation. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to contextualize this media representation within a wider socio-political context.

Through a Critical Race Theory perspective, I conduct a qualitative content analysis of news media articles published in the *Toronto Star* and *The Globe and Mail*. The analysis reveals that the nation is imagined as innocent while the asylum seekers are constructed as threats. This thesis goes on to demonstrate how the media has relied on a discourse of inclusion/exclusion and of victimization in order to positively imagine the nation. Meanwhile, by framing asylum seekers’ motivations for entering Canada as frivolous and by utilizing techniques of vilification, the media is able to delegitimize the asylum seekers’ claims. Finally, this thesis concludes that the media has a tendency to omit the socio-political context of its portrayal of the asylum seekers and of the nation. Therefore, it is important for the media to accurately represent irregular migration in order to expose global inequalities.

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Introduction

In 2002, Canada and the United States signed *The Safe Third Country Agreement*¹. According to this Agreement, refugee claimants must request refugee protection in the first safe country that they arrive in (either Canada or the United States) (The Safe Third Country Agreement, 2002). This *Agreement* permits individuals to make a refugee claim in Canada if they arrived by air, sea and in-between land ports of entry. As a result, if an individual attempts to enter Canada through the United States at a land border port of entry² in order to make a refugee claim, the individual will be sent back to the United States in order for the person to make his or her refugee claim there. However, there are four types of exceptions to this according to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulation (IRPR) s. 159.5. First, an individual will not be sent back to the United States if the person has a family member that is: a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, a protected person or has a refugee claim referred to the Immigration Refugee Board. Second, unaccompanied minors and third those holding documents (i.e. a valid work permit, a study permit etc.) are permitted to make refugee when entering the country through a land port of entry. Lastly, if an individual was convicted of an offence that is punishable by the death penalty, this individual can make a refugee claim at a land port of entry.

In the Spring/Summer 2017 there was an increase in Haitian nationals from the United States entering Canada, mainly, at a location that is not a port of entry in St-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Quebec, in order to seek asylum. That year, Quebec had the highest number of irregular

¹ On July 22nd, 2020 the Canadian Federal Court ruled that the Agreement violates the section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and that the United States is not a safe third country. Therefore, the Agreement will be suspended 6 months from this decision (2020 FC 770). It is important to note that this decision was rendered after my sampling period.

² Land border ports of entries are any designated land port of entry outlined in Schedule 1 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations. Therefore, when a claimant enters Canada, by land, at a location other than a land border port of entry that is listed in Schedule 1 of the Regulations, it is referred as entering Canada in-between ports of entries.

migrations with 18, 836 asylum seekers being ‘intercepted’ by the Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) and 5, 530 during the month of August (Government of Canada, 2020).

According to Statistics Canada, the highest number (7,787) of asylum seekers in 2017 was from those holding citizenship from Haiti (Government of Canada, 2019). This could be, amongst other reasons, because after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, many countries, including Canada and the United States, allowed Haitians to temporarily enter their country until it was safe for the Haitians to return to Haiti. Canada ended its program in 2014 and several Haitians, if they did not apply for permanent residency, were subject to deportation by 2015 (Government of Canada, 2015, para. 1). This program gave priority to permanent resident applications, refugee claims and extension of temporary resident visas (Government of Canada, 2017).

However, the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in the United States for Haitians had been renewed every 18 months since 2010. Nevertheless, before the increase in irregular migration to Canada, President Trump said that it was unlikely that the TPS would be renewed in January 2018. Following this uncertainty, many Haitians living under the TPS decided to enter Canada by irregular means (Government of Canada, 2017c, para. 4). This increase in irregular migration was not only covered by several news outlets, but the Canadian government also created the Ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration in order to address this ‘problem’ of increased irregular migration. Its aim is to work on “issues related to the recent and sustained increase in asylum seekers entering Canada from the United States” (Government of Canada, 2017c, para. 1). Consequently, as Greenberg and Hier (2001) argue, it is important to understand “why do certain groups of people (and not others) come to be perceived as posing grave threats to the stability of the [nation]” (p. 575). Therefore, for my thesis, I am interested in exploring the following question: How have the media and political statements (featured in the

media) represented Haitian asylum seekers as well as the Canadian nation? Furthermore, how are racialized discourses embedded in these representations? Therefore, this research will attempt to contextualize the media's representation of the increase in Haitian irregular migration within a wider socio-political context.

In Chapter 1 of this thesis, the literature review will aim to contextualize the research and to understand the gap that this research seeks to fill. It will explore the literature on the media's and political discourse on asylum seekers, the notion of the border and Canadian nation formation. This contextualization is done by dividing the literature review into two sections. The first is: *Border & the Nation*, where the border will be discussed in general in reference to globalization and security. The second section: *Racialized Bodies & Canadian Migration* will discuss Canadian nation formation and its historical exclusions of racialized bodies. Throughout this chapter, it will be discussed how the media and politicians tend to reproduce the various exclusionary discourses regarding the border and nation formation.

In Chapter 2, I discuss my theoretical approach. This research is grounded within the Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective and I draw on theoretical concepts developed by various Critical Race Scholars such as *Imagined Communities*, *The Stranger*, *Exalted Subject* and *Mangers of Space* (Anderson, 2016; Ahmed, 2000; Thobani, 2007; Hage, 2012). Through these concepts, it will be possible to analyse and examine the various discourses produced by the media and political statements featured in the media. Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological approach used. I discuss the data collection process, the analytical strategy used and the limitations to this research.

Chapter 4 discusses how the media's and political statements (featured in the media) represent the nation. This chapter is divided into two different sections. The first section, titled

Techniques of Inclusion and Exclusion, explores how media and political statements featured in the media produce an imagined community by making references to the law and border security. The second section, *Discourse of Victimization*, highlights how the nation is constructed as a victim due to its image as having: an unprotected border, immigration system flaws and excessive exalted values. This chapter concludes that the discourses refer to the enforcement of the border as a way to maintain the nation's image.

Chapter 5 explores how asylum seekers are constructed. In the first section, the representation of the asylum seekers' *Motivations* are examined. In the second section, the *Techniques of Vilifications* are discussed. This chapter illustrates how asylum seekers are vilified in order to delegitimize their refugee claims; thus, justifying the use of exclusionary measures. This chapter concludes that the media and statements made by politicians represent the asylum seekers as individuals whom the nation needs to be protected from, rather than as individuals who are in need of protection.

In the conclusion, findings from Chapter 4 and 5 are discussed in relation to the research question and the socio-political context. In it I argue that the media and political statements represent the nation in a positive manner while negatively representing asylum seekers. Border security is an implicit way to enforce the imagined nation and to manage the Other. By contextualizing these problematic representations within a wider socio-political context, this research sheds light on how the media and political statements (featured in the media) ignore conditions in Haiti, particularly the Global North's historic involvement in the displacement of Haitian nationals. This thesis will then conclude that it is important for the media to accurately represent asylum seekers due to this problematic history and in order to expose global inequalities.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The perception of irregular migration as problematic is not new in this era of globalization. In order to understand the media's and politicians' portrayal of irregular migration, the literature review will discuss globalisation and forced migration, the border and migration, nation building and Canada's history of anti-blackness. This chapter is divided into two sections: *Border & the Nation* and *Racialized Bodies & Canadian Migration*. The first section will discuss the ideology of the national border. This section is divided into two subsections where, first, border, security and the criminalization of migration will be discussed, and second, globalization and imperialism will be examined in relation to the national border and forced migration. Globalization is often viewed in positive terms, however since it also imposes unfair economic policies, which contributes to the forced migration of individuals from the Global South, *border imperialism* can be used to describe this phenomenon (Walia, 2013). In opening their borders for economic flow, Western States tend to close their borders to migrants. Thus, the national border has both a security function, in order to protect the nation from the Other, and an ideological function, which aims to reaffirm the Western nations' white identity through the exclusion of those who are deemed undesirable. This is likely due to the fact that nation-building has historically been Eurocentric for countries such as Canada.

As such, the second section of the literature review will examine the literature on racialized bodies, more specifically Black bodies and Haitian migrants, in the context of Canadian migration. It will be discussed how nation-building has historically excluded black bodies as *belonging* to the nation. Additionally, these discourses regarding the border and nation-building are also reflected in how the media portrays irregular migrants as being a threat and not

belonging in the nation-state. The literature review will then end with a conclusion outlining the gaps in the literature and the contribution that my research seeks to make.

1.1. Border & The Nation

1.1.1. Border, Globalization and Imperialism

Scholars have argued that when studying migration, there should not be a focus on the local or frame migration as something that is fixed, but rather perceive migration as a process that is linked to various factors, such as globalization (Fleras, 2014a; Castles & Miller, 2009; Aas, 2007). Globalization can be understood as either an *economic process* or a *political project* (Castle & Miller, 2009). First, globalization described as an economic process focuses on the creation of a new world economy caused by the liberalization and deregulation of cross-border flows of services, technologies and capital (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2000). Second, as a political project, globalization is conceived in ideological terms where there is the creation of a new world order which has its own institutions and created new living conditions worldwide (Castle & Miller, 2009). However, globalization can no longer be understood as only an economic process or as a political project. This is due to the rise of global inequalities, as a result of unfair trading policies with poorer countries, and the rise of new powers, such as Japan, which challenge the western domination of world politics (Castle & Miller, 2009).

The rising inequalities between the Global North and the Global South can be understood through the concept of *racial capitalism* (Robinson, 1983). Racial capitalism “relies on racial hierarchies to justify unequal power relationships that appear and make them appear natural”, as such, “the history of slavery and colonization are inseparable from the development of modern capitalism” (Maynard, 2017, p. 57). Throughout history, European nations have relied on racial categories in order to expand capitalism. As seen in the history of colonization, race was a

rationale used for domination, exploitation and extermination of non-European individuals (Robinson, 1983). The effects of racial capitalism can still be viewed in the continued subjugation of the Global South to the Global North. Consequently, as argued by Maynard (2017), the concept of racial capitalism is an important concept in order to understand the migration of individuals from the Global South to the Global North. It becomes necessary to examine the contribution of nations, such as Canada, in economic processes which have contributed to mass displacements.

Since countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have a long history of imperial ties and exploitation by at least one imperial power, the current form in capital flow and trade in goods and services must be understood under this context (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2000; Aas, 2007). Due to such criticisms of globalization, some scholars prefer to use the term *imperialism* in order to describe the recent changes in the world, such as the growing inequalities and the concentration of power and income in international systems (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2000). Thus, the term *imperialism* highlights that the current economic flow relies on this system of domination and exploitation of imperial nations (Petras & Veltmeyer, 2000). Contemporary imperialism has transformed from the classical period of the Global North's benevolence of explicit racist ideologies of dominating the 'uncivilized' Global South to the Global North's benevolence of saving the Global South from itself through, for example, debt management as a way of providing economic stability and war justified by notions of democracy and security (Gordon, 2010). So, in order to understand the link between migration and globalization, Walia (2013) argues that the global economic inequalities, amongst other factors, contribute to the forced displacement/migration of those from the Global South. As such, *border imperialism* "represents the extension and imposition of Western rule, with the current dynamics of global empire

maintaining unequal relationships of political, economic, cultural, and social dominance of the West over its colonies” (Walia, 2013, p. 42). Hence, international migration can be argued to be a consequence of global inequalities (Castles, 2013).

For example, scholars have identified several factors linked to Haiti’s history of colonialism and unfair economic policies which has contributed to the forced migration of Haitians (Maynard, 2017, Mills, 2013; Mills, 2016, Mombrun, 2015; DeWind & David, 1988). Mombrun (2015) identified four migration peak-periods for Haitians migrating to the U.S.: the revolutionary period (1791-1810), the American occupation (1915-1934), the Duvalier regimes and post-Duvalier years (1957-1994) and the Aristide period (1994-2009). The Haitian economy was left destitute after the Haitian revolution in 1804 for a few reasons. The island of Hispaniola, which encompasses both modern Haiti and the Dominican Republic, was first colonized by Spain in 1492. Later, in 1697, the Spanish recognized the French presence and ceded the western part of the island, Saint Domingue, modern Haiti (Coupeau, 2008). The island became one of the most prosperous French colonies. Therefore, once Haiti successfully gained its independence in 1804, Haiti had to pay an independence debt to France, where it paid ‘reparations’ for the losses France suffered due to the rebellion and this debt was paid in full, with interest, in 1947 (Maynard, 2017; Mombrun, 2015). Also, after the Haitian Revolution, the major European powers, such as France, Spain and England, and the United States refused to recognize Haiti’s independence (Mombrun, 2015). This led the to the United States to wait 60 years before granting Haiti diplomatic recognition while imposing a trade blockage on Haiti. This blockage on Haiti was due to the fear that its ex-slave liberation ideology would influence the U.S. and it prevented Haiti from trading its cash crops, such as sugar cane (Mombrun, 2015; Coupeau,

2008). Consequently, the debt owed to France and the blockade severely impacted Haiti's economy.

Scholars have also examined the impact that the United States' occupation had on Haiti (Mills, 2016; Mombrum, 2015). As previously mentioned, the Global North imposes its rule on the Global South under the guise of benevolence. This can be seen when the U.S. marine occupation of Haiti (1915 - 1934) under the pretext of establishing political and economic stability, however, their goal was to secure U.S. interests (Mombrum, 2015). During this period, the United States controlled 60% of the Haitian economy due to the introduction of various private American companies (Mombrum, 2015; Coupeau, 2008). As a result, after the end of the occupation, the country went through a period of intense political instability (Mills, 2016). For example, the dictatorships of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier (1957-1971) and Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier (1971-1986) were marked by human rights and power abuses (Mombrun, 2015; Coupeau, 2008). Both dictatorships were marked by fear and instability due to violence committed by (ex)members of the secret police militia (*Tonton Macoutes*) (Congressional Research Services, 2011). It has been argued that the Duvalier regimes were sustained by western nations, such as Canada and the United States, who provided economic and technical support (Mills, 2016; Maynard, 2017). For instance, Canada provided foreign aid during the 70s; however the money was not used to improve the country's infrastructure. It was used to enrich the friends of the regime while impoverishing rural areas (Mills, 2016). Furthermore, the United States has ignored its contribution to the forced migration during the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier. In 1981, President Reagan signed an agreement with Jean-Claude Duvalier where the United States Coast Guard could stop boats suspected of transporting undocumented Haitians and return them back to Haiti (Congressional Research Services, 2011).

Finally, scholars, such as Gordon (2010) and Engler and Fenton (2005), have critically examined the involvement of Canada in the 2004 *coup d'état* against democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Under his presidency, the minimum wage was raised, schools and literacy programs were expanded, taxes were raised on the rich and more jobs in the public sector were created (Gordon, 2010). After the coup, René Préval was elected; however, the conditions for the poor majority did not improve due to Préval's alliance with anti-Aristide factions. For example, a riot occurred in 2008 due to the high price of food which resulted in violent clashes with UN forces. Many factors contributed to create an environment where the coup could occur. Under the guise of security, which hid the perception that President Aristide presented a threat to western interests, Canadian politicians and officials funded oppositional groups until the coup occurred (Gordon, 2010). In May 2000, President Aristide was elected and aimed to empower the poor majority which would not serve imperial interests (Engler & Fenton, 2005). Initially, the Organization of American States (OAS) reaffirmed that the election was fair, however after some urging from the United States it announced that the election was flawed. Canada and France also questioned its legitimacy, despite the fact that the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) confirmed the fairness of the election using the same methodology as previous elections (Gordon, 2010). France held a special interest in delegitimizing the elections because President Aristide initiated a campaign to pressure France into paying a debt restitution fee to Haiti (Engler & Fenton, 2005).

Furthermore, there was a shift in Canadian state funding from cutting funding to the Haitian government to supporting 'civil society' which were organizations that opposed the elected government (Engler & Fenton, 2005). In 2003, the Ottawa Initiative on Haiti meeting occurred, hosted by the Canadian government, with representatives from the United States and

France (Gordan, 2010). The nations argued that under the President Aristide, Haiti was a failed state which required intervention. Thus, the need to remove President Aristide and put Haiti under the control of the United Nations under the guise of Responsibility to Protect.

Approximately a year after this meeting, the 2004 *coup d'état* was led by National Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Haiti (FLRN) which have been argued to be funded by the United States (Gordan, 2010). As a result of the coup, many Haitians fled the country due to insecurity and economic conditions (Engler & Fenton, 2005). However, as Maynard (2017) argues, in the discussions of the forced displacement of Haitian people, Canada's role in these forced displacements have often been silent.

Forced migration, amongst others, is a way in which the movement of migrants can be conceptualized. Some scholars make a distinction between forced migrants and voluntary migrants (Castle & Miller, 2009). Within this perspective, forced migrants are those who flee their countries in order to escape persecution or conflict and voluntary migrants are those who leave their country of origin for better economic benefits (Castles & Miller, 2009). Within the category of forced migrant, there is the status of refugee, which is defined by the *United Nations Convention Related to the Status of Refugees*, and asylum seekers, who are those "who have crossed international borders in search of protection" (Castles & Miller, 2009, p. 189). However, Castle and Miller (2009) recognize that most forced migrants flee their country for reasons not recognized by international law. Other scholars do not make the distinction between forced and voluntary migration (Fleras, 2014a; Innes, 2010; Maynard, 2017; Walia, 2013; Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). Forced migration, which is one of the major consequences of Western imperialism, is seen as being due to the long history of colonialism and capitalism (Walia, 2013). Some academics use the term *asylum seeker* to include those who attempt to escape poverty and

national disasters (Innes, 2010), because they are not so different from those who are fleeing violence and persecution (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007).

A paradox emerges within this context of globalization and forced migration (Fleras, 2014a; Pratt, 2005; Castles & Miller, 2009). Globalization is dependent on migration where the flow of human capital from poorer countries to richer countries is encouraged through employment opportunities (Castles & Miller, 2009). On the one hand, nation-states encourage the free movement of skilled-workers and on the other hand, nation-states attempt to close their borders to those forced to migrate due to the consequences of globalization (Fleras, 2014a). In the effort to reach a borderless economy, nation-states securitize their borders against the ‘undesirables’ (Pratt, 2005; Aas, 2007). Fleras (2014a) calls this phenomenon a *global apartheid* where “the rich industrialized countries collude to create a world-wide system of migration controls that serves the interest of markets and global elites while excluding the impoverished from admission” (p. 67). The Global North securitizes migration while ignoring that migration flow is often a result of lack of human security in many poorer countries, such as poverty, hungers and lack of human rights, which is exacerbated by factors, such as economic and political structures (Castle, 2013). It has been argued that globalization in the form of migration is perceived as threatening the cultural identity of nation-states, consequently the securitization of borders can be understood as an attempt for nation-states to reinforce their cultural and national identity (Aas, 2007). Academics have concluded that this securitization leads to an increase in clandestine migration from individuals from the Global South (Aas, 2007; Hyndman & Mountz, 2007; Castle, 2013).

1.1.2. Border, Security and The Criminalization of Migration

The nation-state protects itself from those who are deemed undesirable through the securitisation of the border. The existence of the border can be seen as conditional to movement because borders do not exist until they have been crossed or violated by something or someone's movement (Rahola, 2011). The refugee or asylum seeker can be seen as a *polluting* person because she has crossed or threatened to cross the border which creates a sense of danger (Haddad, 2007). Scholars argue that migrants often occupy the space outside national belonging because they represent insecurity (Hyndman & Mountz, 2008). In the post-9/11 era, several authors argue that this movement has increasingly become a security issue (Kruger, Mulder & Korenic, 2004; Pratt, 2005). This created a shift from a discussion of *border* security to *national* security where it is the nation, and not the border, that must be protected from outsiders who pose a threat (Kruger et al., 2004). In the news media³ and political statements, asylum seekers are frequently perceived as threats. This portrayal is dependent on constructing them as a *collective* threat, rather than individual threats (Innes, 2010). Moreover, through their choice of language, news media construct asylum seekers as a (collective) population that 'we' must be protected from, by making references to the number of asylum seekers entering the country (van Dijk, 1993; Jiwani, 2006). The media has used superlatives and unsourced statistics regarding asylum seekers in order to help construct them as a threat (Philo, Briant & Donald, 2013; Mountz, 2010). Jiwani (2006) argues that this produces "the threat of being engulfed by the Other" (p. 50). This can be seen through the media's use of catastrophic metaphors, such as 'waves', 'flooding', 'soaring' and 'flood of illegals', which creates a sense of crisis and

³ The literature on racism in the media suggest that the Canadian mass media are sites of racism which tends to underrepresent minorities, however, when there is coverage of minorities, the coverage is often racialized (Chan & Chunn, 2014; Fleras, 2011). Since the news media tends to focus on narratives about disruptions to and threats in the social order, representations of minorities are often within such contexts (Jiwani, 2006). Consequently, racialized minorities are often in news stories regarding social problems and threats to society, such as crime (van Dijk, 2000).

emphasizes the ‘risk’ that asylum seekers posed to the country (Philo et al., 2013; Greenberg & Hier, 2001).

Researchers have found that fear and insecurity are important elements in the construction of a ‘crisis’ (Hyndman & Mountz, 2008; Hier & Greenberg, 2002). Consequently, when there is an increase in asylum seekers, the media has a tendency to portray asylum seekers, as risky subjects and thus, constructing their ‘arrival’ as a crisis (Greenberg & Hier, 2001; Mountz, 2010; Hier & Greenberg, 2002). This construction is consistent with the fact that academics have found that minorities are often depicted as problem individuals who are troublesome by making “demands that challenge the national unity, identity, or prosperity” of the state (Fleras, 2011, p. 65). Immigrants, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are often depicted as such and are perceived as a threat to the nation (van Dijk, 2000; Fleras, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Fleras 2014b). For example, Bradimore and Bauder (2011) found that, in the media’s portrayal of the Tamil refugees in 2009, the Tamil refugees were constructed as a threat to Canadians as a result of using words such as ‘seized’ and ‘found’, thus using language that is linked to criminals and the police.

This representation of asylum seekers as threats to the nation in the media, also invokes the need to securitize the border against those who are outside national belonging. Academics have found that the media has made a causal link between the arrival of ‘illegal’ asylum seekers and the state’s ‘flawed’ immigration and refugee system (Greenberg, 2000; Bradimore & Bauder, 2011). This discourse often claims that the immigration and refugee systems are flawed due to the government’s policies which encourage asylum seekers to enter the country (McKay, Thomas & Warwick Blood, 2011; Greenberg & Hier, 2001). So, within this narrative, the ‘invasion’ of the migrants is symbolic of the lax border control (Mountz, 2010). This discourse

permits the media to present immigration reform and tougher border control as solutions to the 'invasion' (Kim, Carvalho, Davis & Mullins, 2011). To give an example, Greenberg and Hier (2001) argue that in the case of the Chinese refugees, who arrived by boat in Canada in 1999, the discussion regarding solutions focused on short-term solutions, such as legislation changes, while omitting discussions of long-term solutions, such as political economic factors that motivated those in poverty to seek a better life. Bradimore and Bauder (2011) argue that "the media are inseparable from the political process" (p. 656). As such, the attempt to control and regulate migration came to the forefront of the government's agenda (Ibrahim, 2005). For example, the arrival of 76 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka at the coast of British Columbia on October 17th, 2009, provided the catalyst for immigration reform, where Bill C-11 was rushed through parliament (Bradimore & Bauder 2011). Furthermore, scholars argue that the emphasis on tougher border control represent "an effort to seal the border and keep out foreign-nationals" (Kim et al., 2011, p. 311). As such, Greenberg (2000) argues that this is an attempt for the government to protect the 'integrity' of its border against the 'others' who attempted to enter the country through 'illegal' means.

In order to protect the nation from the Other, the various strategies put in place in order to 'manage' migrant flows criminalize asylum seekers. Nakache (2013) argues that the criminalization of asylum seekers is a result of government policies where asylum seekers are under suspicion, thus constructing them as illegitimate. van Dijk (1993) argues that within political discourses there is the use of rhetorical figures which are part of racist discourses such as: 'illegal' vs. 'legitimate'. De Genova (2004) makes a similar argument, by arguing that the law constructs migrants as 'illegal' because the 'illegality' is against the sovereignty of the nation-state. As such, the state is the 'victim', while the migrant is constructed as being 'illegal'

and a ‘criminal’ through its assault on the state: the unauthorized trespass of the symbolic border (Walia, 2013). This reinforces the state’s exclusionary migration laws when it is faced with a threat (Dauvergne, 2008). Furthermore, the label of ‘illegal’ is used to construct the migrant as deviant in order for the state to maintain its state power (Walia, 2013) when the symbolic border fails to exclude those who pose a threat to the nation (Dauvergne, 2008). There is a production of an ‘illegal’ identity which serves to exclude asylum seekers within the nation by creating an ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ dichotomy (Dauvergne, 2008). These discourses are also present in mainstream media.

Numerous studies have found that the media labels asylum seekers as ‘risk’ subjects and as ‘illegals’. Scholars have found that the media focused on the refugees’ actions by labelling them ‘illegal immigrants’ (Greenberg & Hier, 2001; Bradimore & Bauder, 2011). Consequently, asylum seekers who do not enter the country through ‘legitimate’ means or whose refugee claim have been rejected are deemed to be ‘illegal’ (Philo et al., 2013; Ibrahim, 2005). This label, amongst others, used by the media is problematic because labels carry different meanings which have various implications (O’Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007; McKay et al., 2011; Saxton, 2003; Lueck, Due & Augoustinos, 2015). The use of terms such as ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’ imply that the individuals are fleeing violence and are in need of protection (O’Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007; Saxton, 2003). Consequently, when the media uses terms, such as ‘illegal immigrant’ and ‘illegal migrants’, the media ignores the reasons behind why the individuals have entered the country, thereby dehumanizing them implying that they have *freely chosen* to enter another country (Saxton, 2003; Hier & Greenberg, 2002). As such, academics argue that by using the term ‘illegal’, in reference to asylum seekers, the media reinforces the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ narrative which allows the media to discuss exclusionary measures (Mountz, 2010;

O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007; Saxton 2003). Thus, their status as a problematic population is reinforced by this label (Fleras, 2011).

The label of 'illegality' renders the asylum seeker *disposable* due to invoking the possibility of being excluded from the nation-space (De Genova, 2002). This permits the nation to protect itself from the threat that the asylum seeker poses by rendering the 'illegal' asylum seeker deportable (Chan & Chunn, 2014; De Genova, 2002; Innes, 2010). The state is able to use detention and deportation as ways to punish asylum seekers for the very act of migration, thus criminalizing migration (Walia, 2013). Benjamin (2002) calls these methods *legal banishment*: "the physical banishment of individuals through the removal of the person by such acts as incarceration or deportation" (p. 184). Similarly, authors argue that the state utilizes detention as a method of *containment*: a method used to control the 'flood' of migrants (Mountz, 2010). Through the migrant's state of deportability, a connection is established between the individual and another state which produces his identity as a citizen to another country (Aas, 2014). Through detention and deportation, those who do not belong to the nation are excluded, thus creating a vision of national identity (Chan & Chunn, 2014). The media's discourse on the securitization of the nation-state includes the portrayal of asylum seekers as a threat to the national identity (Innes, 2010).

Similarly, in the media's representation of asylum seekers as 'illegal', the media is able to homogenize and construct the migrants as not belonging to the country they entered; thus, they are outside the law and deportable (Hier & Greenberg, 2002; Lueck et al., 2015; Saxton, 2003). Through the analysis of categorization of 'unexpected arrivals' within the media, O'Doherty and Lecouteur (2007) found that using terms such as 'refugees' or 'asylum seekers' in media articles would make it more difficult to justify the discourse of returning them home. Also, McKay et al.

(2011) examined how the media represented the asylum seekers who arrived by boat in April 2009 in northern Australia and how the public responded through the use of online fora. They found that the discourse of illegality increased the sense of a moral panic and social anxiety about allowing asylum seekers in Australia. So according to several scholars, the construction of asylum seekers as 'illegal' invokes the state of exception, as theorized by Giorgio Agamben (2005), whereby the asylum seekers are deemed unlawful which constructs them as an enemy of the state where the use of force is justified due to their status (Lueck et al., 2015; Saxton, 2003). Subsequently, the media's narrative of detention and deportation are used in order to remove those who have 'illegally' entered the country (Saxton, 2003; O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007). Thus, in the case of the British media and politicians, the legitimized exclusion of asylum seekers allowed "the UK to maintain its imagined cultural identity without undermining the British liberal myth of acceptance and benevolence" (Innes, 2010, p. 473). This separation between 'illegals' and 'legals', by only speaking about those who are deemed 'illegal', reinforces the unity of the nation in this era of 'globalization', where nations struggle at times with their identity and irregular migration (Schinkel, 2009).

The construction of asylum seekers as 'illegal' is not the only way that they are perceived as threats. Asylum seekers are also constructed as a 'criminal' threat based on the perceived *self-selected* aspect of seeking asylum (Pratt, 2005). Self-selected implies that the individual made a calculated choice in where he or she sought asylum. Asylum seekers are often characterized as a 'bogus' refugee, compared to the 'genuine' refugee (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007; Anderson, Sharma & Wright, 2009; Pratt & Valverde, 2002). In Canada, this comparison emerged in the mid-1990s due to Neoliberal discourses. Neoliberal welfare fraud campaigns in the mid-1990s were conducted because provinces and the Immigration Department expressed concerns that

immigrants would drain the welfare system (Pratt & Valverde, 2002). This made it possible to look at immigrants and refugees as threats to the welfare system. The genuine refugee implies that the refugee had no choice in fleeing persecution, in contrast to the ‘bogus’ refugee who is constructed as having a choice and is undeserving of protection (Pratt, 2005). In the official definition of a refugee in the *United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention*, the economic refugee, for example those seeking to escape poverty are not covered under the term ‘refugee’ (Innes, 2010; Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). Consequently, the economic refugee is constructed as a ‘bogus’ migrant who seeks to enter Canada by fraudulently claiming a refugee status (Pratt, 2005). So, economic deprivation may not, legally, be deemed as something that one must be protected from; however the ‘bogus’ refugee is constructed as an economic threat to the nation (Fleras, 2014a). Economic deprivation in the Global South is not considered a threat that justifies claiming refugee protection; however the figure of the economic refugee is constructed as a threat to the Global North. In other words, in this era of globalization, instead of attempting to solve the problem of global inequalities, Western nations label the economic migrant as a threat to the State (Schinkel, 2009). This threat of the economic migrant is constructed as causing unemployment (Haddad, 2007), a burden to the welfare state (Fleras, 2014a) and as an individual who commits welfare fraud (Pratt & Valverde, 2002). As such, asylum seekers are viewed as a population that the nation needs to be protected from and not as a population that needs protection (Aas, 2007). These negative constructions of asylum seekers are also reproduced in the media.

Metaphors used by the media to refer to asylum seekers, such as ‘floods’ and ‘wave’, are found to be linked to narrative of the economic risk that the migrants posed, such as taking the jobs of citizens and taking advantage of the welfare state (McKay et al., 2011; Greenberg, 2000;

Fleras, 2011). Academics argue that asylum seekers are portrayed as burdening and draining the welfare state, especially by the use of terms such as ‘pay-out’ and ‘hand-out’ (Philo et al., 2013; Ibrahim, 2005). This reinforces the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ dichotomy, where the media is able to create a narrative about protecting the state’s economic benefits by portraying the asylum seekers as economically taking something away from the state and its ‘legitimate’ citizens (Innes, 2010). The maintenance of asylum seekers as the Other is upheld by the media’s discussion of the state taking better care of ‘illegal’ migrants than the ‘legal’ citizens (Greenberg & Hier, 2001). As a result, these discourses give priority to the needs of the ‘legitimate/legal’ citizens over the needs of the asylum seekers who continue to be excluded (Innes, 2010).

This portrayal of asylum seekers as taking advantage of the welfare state is aided by the media constructing asylum seekers as ‘bogus’ refugees (Pratt & Valverde, 2002). Instead of constructing asylum seekers as political refugees or as escaping persecution, the media construct asylum seekers as economically driven, by using words such as ‘trying their luck’, and portraying them as wanting to enter the country in order to gain financial success and to take advantage of the state (Mountz, 2010; Saxton, 2003; Lueck et al., 2015). Additionally, this construction of the ‘non-genuine’ refugee creates the perception that asylum seekers are fraudulent and portrays the immigration system as being there to expose their ‘bogus’ claims (Philo et al., 2013). Meanwhile, the state is portrayed as a victim because the refugees are seen as taking advantage of a generous system (Greenberg, 2000). Thus, this portrayal of the ‘non-genuine’ refugee constructs the refugee as a threat to the state (Innes, 2010; Pratt & Valverde, 2002). In the study of the media’s portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers, few academics ask the question of: “Why do certain groups of people (and not others) come to be perceived as posing grave threats to the stability of the state?” (Greenberg & Hier, 2001, p. 575). Greenberg

and Hier (2001) argue that, in the context of the Fujian refugees, it is necessary to contextualize the media's representation of the Chinese migrants within Canada's legacy of racial exclusions of people of Asian descent by arguing that the narratives within the news coverage of the boat arrivals could be placed within the broader political, cultural and economic context in the historical treatment of Chinese people by the Canadian state.

Additionally, scholars argue that national borders are not simply territorial, but they are also symbolic of the limits of political control, the state's sovereignty and play a role in designating national identities (Haddad, 2007). When the state is able to assert its sovereignty by closing its borders, the state is able to exert its power by separating 'us' from 'them' (Dauvergne, 2008). The borders can be perceived as filters (Anderson et al., 2009) which are used to "purify and keep toxic material away" (Haddad, 2007, p. 123). They also establish the limits of a community by determining who is allowed to enter and who remains outside the national space (Aas, 2007), by producing new types of subjects and new power relations based on division and inequalities (Anderson et al., 2009). Through the inclusions and exclusion based on identity (Nah, 2007), scholars argue that the nation is able to define itself based on what is outside the nation-state (Hyndman & Mountz, 2008). The policing of borders allows the nation-state to define who belongs in the nation space (Fleras, 2014a; Haddad, 2007; Ahmed, 2000). By determining whose movements are legitimate, border control practices reflect people's unequal rights and produces inequalities (Anderson et al., 2009). Walia (2013) argues that "experiences of otherness are shaped by imaginings about who is entitled to protection *from* the nation-state because they represent the national identity, and who faces violence *by* the nation-state because their bodies are deemed not to belong" (p. 64).

As security threats, migrants are dehumanized and racialized (Walia, 2013; Kruger et al., 2004). The media's discourse on illegality is often racialized (De Genova, 2004) since the term 'illegal' is often not applied to white tourists who overstay their visas (Walia, 2013). When the media refer to those who overstay their visa, their nationality is seldom mentioned, meanwhile the nationalities of 'illegal' foreign individuals are mentioned (O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007). Scholars, such as Innes (2010), argue that the construction of the migrant as 'illegal' and 'criminal' creates an image of a threat that is within the boundaries of the state. This construction of an 'illegal' racialized threat is reproduced by the media. These racialized portrayals are a form of social banishment, whereby there is an absence of concern for issues related to racialized minority groups (Benjamin, 2002). Greenberg and Hier (2001) found that the media discourse othered Chinese refugees by focusing on their cultural difference which was linked to a discourse of criminality, such as the fear of an increase in Asian organized crime (Ibrahim, 2005). Moreover, in Saxton's (2003) discourse analysis of the coverage involving Indonesian asylum seekers arriving to Australia by boat in October 2011, the media alleged that the asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard in order to manipulate the Australian Navy. The asylum seekers were seen as not having the same humane behaviours as Australians. Consequently, they were constructed as undesirable for Australia and as the Other against which the dominant culture must protect itself from (Saxton, 2003). Greenberg and Hier (2001) also found that the Chinese migrants were constructed as posing health risk to the Canadian society, in the summer of 1999, due to the media's narrative that the migrants would bring communicable diseases, such as AIDS and tuberculosis, which would harm Canadians (Hier & Greenberg, 2002, Ibrahim, 2005; Mountz, 2010). These discourses of security and health risk were used by the media to justify the desire to limit the number of migrants entering Canada (Ibrahim, 2005). This

racialized construction is also due to the media's discourse of illegality, whereby the media racialized and objectified the Fujian refugees by using terms such as 'human cargo', 'boat people' and 'waves of Chinese' (Hier & Greenberg, 2002; Greenberg, 2000; Ibrahim, 2005). However, the Tamil refugees, who sought refuge in Canada in 2009, were racialized within a discourse of security by describing them with terms such as 'barefoot' and 'bare-chested' and referencing them as terrorists or criminals (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011).

It could be argued that underlying this racialized security discourse in the media is a racial crisis. Throughout history, with a few exceptions, white populations have generally been able to move as they please (Thobani, 2007). Therefore, racialized migrants can be seen as threatening the white supremacy of Western nations. In other words, the movements of white populations can be seen as legitimate (Anderson et al., 2009). Furthermore, academics argue that migrant flows are constructed as a problem that must be managed (Walia, 2013; Hyndman & Mountz, 2008; Pratt, 2005). This 'problem' can be seen as regulating the movement of racialized individuals who refuse to remain where they belong: in refugee camps or in the Global South (Thobani, 2007; Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy, 2019). In order to restrict their movements, the state employs strategies to fortify the border (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). These *source reduction* strategies, such as implementing new legislations, are aimed at preventing or reducing migration at its source (Haddad, 2007).

After 9/11, the Canadian government implemented the *Safe Third Country Agreement* with the United States in 2002 in an effort to limit the number of refugees able to seek protection in Canada (Pratt, 2005). Due to this agreement, refugee claimants must request refugee protection in the first safe country that they arrive in (either Canada or the United States) (The Safe Third Country Agreement, 2002). Scholars argue that the Agreement serves as a tool to

exclude refugees from the Canadian territory in order to prevent ‘asylum shopping’ and ‘abuse’ of the refugee determination system (Pratt, 2005; Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). The idea of being able to ‘choose’ a desired country for asylum is constructed as an opportunistic abuse of the system (Macklin, 2005). This is because offering refugee protection is seen as a humanitarian gesture, one motivated by generosity and not of duty. Therefore, those who are perceived as being on the receiving end of this generosity are constructed as not being entitled to choose which benefits they receive (Macklin, 2005). As such, the Agreement is more concerned with restricting migration than protecting asylum seekers (Ighodaro, 2006). The underlying logic of this Agreement suggests that those who are truly fearful for their lives, will stay in the first safe country they arrive in (Macklin, 2005). Consequently, they are constructed as ‘genuine’ refugees, while the others are ‘bogus’ refugees abusing the system.

Scholars have identified many problems with this Agreement. For example, the Agreement has ignored the differential treatment of refugees within the United States. Between 2000 and 2004, there was a vast difference in the rates at which asylum claims were accepted based on country of origins: Cuba (80%) vs. Haiti (10%) (Akibo-Betts, 2006). Thus, suggesting that there might be more restrictive measures placed on Haitian asylum seekers. Refugee claims based on sexual orientation and domestic violence are more likely to be accepted in Canada than in the United States (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). Additionally, it has been argued that the agreement should be suspended because the United States has fallen short on international and Canadian legal standards, especially under the anti-immigration climate of President Trump (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2017). Additionally, an individual is unable to claim asylum in the United States if he or she has lived there for more than a year or if he or she is being prosecuted for ‘illegal’ entry (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2017). This type of agreement

leads asylum seekers to use irregular means, such as smuggling, in order to enter Canada (Chan & Chunn, 2014). As a consequence of globalization, these irregular migrants tend to be those from the Global South (Schinkel, 2009); therefore these source reduction strategies can be argued to be used to maintain a vision of a white national identity. Due to these strategies used to deter migration and the racialized discourse's emphasis on security, it permits the reinforcement of the nation-state's social identity by distinguishing between those who belong to the nation-state and those who do not (Innes, 2010). For example, President Trump has been able to target immigrants and refugees by associating them with crime and national security issues and by relying on a white nationalist rhetoric (Human Rights Watch, 2017). In January 2017, President Trump issued an executive order to temporarily suspend the US refugee program, lowered the number of refugees who can be resettled in the United States and also temporarily banned nationals from 7 Muslim-dominant countries (Human Rights Watch, 2017). There has also been an increase in deportation and immigration detention where families are often detained without proper medical care and legal counsel (Amnesty International, 2018).

1.2. Racialized Bodies & Canadian Migration

1.2.1. Canadian Nation Formation

National identities are produced through creating meanings about the nation which can be identified through stories about the nation and memories which connects the present to its past (Hall, 1996, p. 613). The discourse on Canadian nation formation “reproduces the naturalization of the nation as arising from the common bonds of shared history, race and ethnicity, values, characteristics, and aspirations” (Thobani, 2007, p. 19). On the one hand, the nation is produced through the identification of individuals as belonging to the nation (Ahmed, 2000). On the other hand, the nation defines itself by differentiating itself from and excluding the Other: those who

do not share the same qualities or values as the nation (Thobani, 2007). Several academics have argued that Canada's ideological foundation as a white nation persists in current nation-building practices (Chan & Chunn, 2014; Valverde, 1991; Thobani, 2007; Mackey, 2005). Others, such as Maynard (2017) argue that white supremacy and the appearance of racial tolerance were essential for the nation-building process and for the creation of the national identity.

In the discourse of national identity, there is a *foundational myth*: “a story which locates the origin of the nation, the people, and their national character so early that they are lost in the mists, of “real”, but “mythic” time” (Hall, 1996, p. 614). In this foundational myth, the British and the French were cast as the lawful subject of the nation, while Indigenous peoples were constructed as lawless (Thobani, 2007). In other words, the colonization of Canada involved an explicit racial hierarchy where white settlers were deemed the rightful subject of the nation and inheritors of various rights, such as land and political rights (Thobani, 2007; Maynard, 2017). Violence was the method used to build the nation whereby Indigenous peoples were perceived as the ‘uncivilized other’ (Thobani, 2007). Through this colonial project, the Canadian historians compared the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada to the treatment of Indigenous peoples in the United States. They attributed Canadians as being more tolerant and generous, thus ascribing these values to the Canadian national identity (Mackey, 2005).

Immigration was also both essential for the nation building process and was seen as a threat to the national identity (Mackey, 2005). Scholars have critically examined the different racist immigration policies which have helped reinforce white national identity by excluding the Other (Valverde, 1991; Simmons, 1998; Jiwani, 2002; Maynard, 2017). Scholars, such as Maynard (2017) and Valverde (1991) argue that throughout history, racialized minorities have

relatively been represented as unwanted populations in Canada. Indians, Asians and Blacks⁴ were the least ‘preferred’ races for immigration. During the 1870s and early 1960s, immigration policies embodied the imagined future of Canada as a European and Christian nation (Simmons, 1998). For example, the Immigration Act of 1910, which remained in effect for fifty years, prohibited immigration based on race and actively sought immigrants from Europe in order to keep the nation White (Thobani, 2007). In 1923, through the Chinese Exclusion Act, Chinese immigrants were completely excluded from immigration due to their perceived moral ‘degeneration’ linked to using opiates in order to induce sexual desires and perceived threat to the white nation (Valverde, 1991; Carstairs, 1999). Other groups were also excluded, for example in 1906 when the ‘continuous journey’ provision was added to the Immigration Act, it sought to limit the migration of east Indians (McCalla, & Satzewich, 2002). This was because east Indians were constructed as having lower standards of civilization. The provision stipulated that that in order to immigration to Canada, one had to make one continuous ocean journey. However, at the time, Indian immigrants had to make 2 boat journeys in order to come to Canada: one boat to Japan and another to Canada. Additionally, prior to the 1960s, immigration law was also gendered due to the view that white women were the ‘mothers of the nation’ (Thobani, 2007). This led to few women from China and South Asia immigrating to Canada.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a shift in Canadian immigration laws with the focus on the labour market (Simmons, 1998). The Immigration Regulation of 1962 removed overtly racial discrimination, by introducing a point system which focused on education, occupation, language, profession and skills (Thobani, 2007). As such, migration from the Global South became an economic necessity for the nation. This led to a change in the Canadian national identity from

⁴ The treatment of Black bodies will be discussed in the following section.

being defined as a White nation to a multiculturalist nation (Thobani, 2007). Multiculturalism was adopted as an official state policy in 1971 (Mackey, 2005); however, despite this policy new immigrants and racialized minorities continue to face racism. The nation's new multiculturalist identity was a response to an identity crisis where the nation could not define itself as white due to the increase of migration from people of colour (Thobani, 2007). The multiculturalism discourse appeared as though it was a natural continuum of Canadian historical tolerance (Mackey, 2005). It works as a racial ideology to attest the superiority of whiteness due to its ability to transform and accommodate to changes (Thobani, 2007). Multiculturalism is "a way of imagining the nation itself, a way of 'living' in the nation, and a way of living *with* difference" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 95). In other words, it is a way of managing internal differences within the nation (Mackey, 2005). Hage (2012) calls this 'White' multiculturalism, where one is centered around an image of a white nation and the Other becomes an object to be managed. Additionally, this multiculturalism rhetoric contributes to the erasure of ongoing violence against racialized populations, especially through the erasure of slavery and the nation's ongoing Anti-blackness.

1.2.2. Canadian Treatment of Black Bodies

In addition to the various historical racial exclusions within Canadian migration, it is important to specifically discuss Black migration and the treatment of Black bodies in Canada. It has been argued that the dehumanization of Black bodies began with the introduction of slavery where Black bodies were constructed as inferior and pathologized (Maynard, 2017). Black slavery was introduced as early as 1608 and continued into the 19th century until it was officially abolished in all British colonies in 1833 (McCalla & Satzewich, 2002). This logic of Black 'inferiority' continued and influenced immigration policies. Valverde (1991) examined the sexual purity of the nation during the late 1800s and early 1900s. She argues that black people

and east Indians were deemed to be undesirable immigrants because they were perceived as ‘savages’ who were unable to control their sexual desire, and thus a threat to the moral character of the nation. This representation of the Black body as a sexual threat emerged after the abolition of slavery as a way to marginalize black populations (Maynard, 2017). The construction of the Black man as a sexual threat was related to the moral panic concerning the sexual influence that Black men had over white women (Maynard, 2017; Valverde, 1991). Additionally, due to their inability to reproduce a white population, Black women’s sexuality and fertility were perceived as threats to the racial purity of the Canadian nation (Thobani, 2007; Valverde, 1991). So, in the context of sexual deviance, this exclusion of racialized bodies is also an exclusion “of the non-moral” (Valverde, 1991, p. 119).

Scholars have identified different measures that the Canadian government adopted in order to prevent Black migration (Maynard, 2017; Thobani, 2007). During the Jim Crow era in the United States, the Canadian government attempted to prevent the Black migration of African-Americans who were fleeing terror by subjecting Black migrants to unnecessary medical examinations (Maynard, 2017). Furthermore, under the guise of benevolence, the Canadian government legitimized restrictions on immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by stating that Africans were unable to adapt to the cold Canadian climate (Thobani, 2007). Under a similar guise in the same time period, the government had white-only immigration policies in order to avoid the racial tensions that were present in the United States (Maynard, 2017). Scholars argue that the fear of an increase in the Black population made it difficult for them to gain citizenship (McCalla & Satzewich, 2002). Benjamin (2002) uses the notion of *banishment* to explain this racist exclusion of Blacks within Canadian society. *Social banishment* refers to the absence of concern for issues related to the point-of-view of racialized groups, while *legal*

banishment is the legal exclusion of racialized bodies in order to maintain the status quo (Benjamin, 2002). In the context of immigration policies, Black bodies have historically been subjected to legal banishment in order to maintain the vision of a white Canadian nation.

This historical legal banishment of Black bodies that helped shape the Canadian identity due to the perception that Blackness as inferior, still affects the treatment of Black people centuries later (Maynard, 2017). Therefore, although immigration policies were no longer overtly racist post the 1960s, racism still has an influence on them (Simmons, 1998). Mirroring the historical representation of Black female bodies, the Canadian government sought to reduce the flow of permanent resettling in Canada by female domestic workers in the early 1960s (Satzewich, 1989). Single Black women were allowed to enter the country as domestic workers only if their families did not accompany them (Thobani, 2007). This reflected the sexual threat of the Black woman, where the fertility of women from non-preferred races was constructed as a threat to the white nation. Additionally, current Temporary Workers Programs have been argued to be reminiscent of slavery's exclusionary logic whereby Black and Brown bodies are used for labour while not having access to basic rights that are given to Canadian born labourers, such as prohibition from joining unions (Maynard, 2017).

Furthermore, Mills (2016) argues that it is within the historical context of the fear of the Black man's sexuality that one should understand the stigma that emerged in the 1980s regarding Haitians and HIV/AIDS. During the AIDS crisis in the early 1980s, Haitians were stigmatized for being a carrier of the disease, due to the mistaken belief that the outbreak originated in Haiti. In 1983, the Canadian Red Cross issued a statement identifying Haitians, the only group named by nationality, as an at-risk group for HIV/AIDS. So, the Canadian government distributed pamphlets which made links between Haitians and HIV/AIDS, thus constructing them as a threat

to the nation (Mills, 2016). This resulted in negative consequences on Haitians living in Quebec, such as being fired from their jobs, marginalized in schools and evicted from their apartments (Mills, 2016).

In the literature, the specific treatment of Haitian migrants in Canada during peak migration periods (see Mombrun, 2015) seems to be under-researched. However, Maynard (2017) argues that there were times in Canadian history, where the assumption underlying government actions was the idea that there were too many Black people in the country. This can be seen in the deportation crisis of 1974 (Maynard, 2017). Similarly, Mills (2013, 2016) examined the deportation crisis of 1974 and the fear of Haitian irregular migration in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Those that were threatened to be deported were fleeing the dictatorship of François “Papa Doc” Duvalier (1957-1971) or his son Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier (1971-1986) (Maynard, 2017; Mills 2016). In contrast to the Haitian migration in the 1960s, many Haitians migrating to Canada were economically impoverished and less skilled (Mills, 2013).

Mills (2016) argues that the crisis of 1974 can be understood in relation to the introduction of the immigration point-based system in 1967 and to the fact that in 1972, the government announced that it would no longer be possible to apply for permanent resident status within Canada. However, from November 1972 to August 1973, approximately 1,500 Haitians entered Canada in order to escape the Duvalier Regime and hoped to apply for permanent residence within Canada. Consequently, by the fall of 1974, they were threatened with deportation due to the lack of ‘legal’ status (Mills, 2013). Additionally, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the government began to worry about an influx of Haitian migrants which they feared they would not be able to control (Mills, 2016). So, many incoming irregular Haitian migrants were detained. Mills (2016) argues that this discussion on ‘illegal Haitian migration’

through the Haitian community's campaigns in Quebec, brought the recognition that immigration could not be thought of independently, but that it was a way to challenge the unequal economic system. The campaigns highlighted the role that countries from the Global North, such as Canada, has played in supporting dictatorships in the global South, as well as maintaining unjust economic relations (Mills, 2013). However, economic migration from the Global South to the Global North is met with deportation.

1.3. Conclusion

This literature review has demonstrated that in the era of globalization, while there is the promotion of the free-economy, the Global North imposes unfair economic policies on the Global South which contributes to forced migration. In order to accurately describe this phenomenon, the term *border imperialism* can be used. While there is the promotion of free-economy, the movement of certain individuals, who tend to be racialized minorities, is often limited and controlled. However, what is often excluded from the discussion on migration control is the role that *imperialism* has played in these movements. In order to manage migration, Western states invoke the discourses of security in order to close its borders. The national border becomes a symbol which operates on a securitization discourse aimed at protecting the nation from the Other. As a result, migration is seen as a threat to the nation and its criminalization is a way to exclude those who are deemed to be undesirable. This exclusion, often of racialized minority bodies, also serves as a way for the nation state to reaffirm its (white) national identity. This (white) national identity has its origins in the nation state's history of nation-building during colonialism. The literature concerning the Black bodies in Canadian migration demonstrates that, historically, the nation-building of Canada has been Eurocentric and has historically excluded Black bodies as *belonging* to the nation.

Furthermore, often through a Critical Media's perspective, it has been found that the mainstream media's portrayal of asylum seekers reproduces these discourses, where asylum seekers are often racialized, criminalized and portrayed as a threat to the (white) nation. Therefore, although some of the studies have highlighted that the representation is racialized, few have done so through a Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens or from a criminological perspective (i.e. Ibrahim, 2005). Additionally, the studies acknowledge that the asylum seekers are represented as a threat to the nation, however not many try to understand the specific ways in which the nation is represented in their study of the representation of asylum seekers. Also, few studies have examined the representation of asylum seekers within a wider historical context (i.e. Greenberg & Hier, 2001).

The studies on the representation of asylum seekers is often focused on how the media represents asylum seekers during a period of 'unexpected arrivals'. For example, when Fujianese migrants came to Canada via boat in the summer of 1999 (Hier & Greenberg, 2002), when Tamil refugees came to Canada via boat in October 2009 (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011) and when Mexican refugee claimants came to Canada in 2007 in between-ports of entries (Gilbert, 2013). By studying a specific period of increase in asylum claims, it permits researchers to study how the mainstream media represents a specific group of asylum seekers. For example, it is possible to examine how the media utilizes various racialized discourses to represent different groups of racialized asylum seekers. For instance, it was possible for researchers to find that the media used terms such as 'barefoot' and 'bare-chested' in reference to the Tamil refugees (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011) and suggested that the Fujianese refugees would increase organized crime in Canada (Hier & Greenberg, 2002). However, the use of a specific time period does not allow

researchers to identify how (of if) the general representation of asylum seekers has changed over time.

Additionally, although the primary focus tends to be on the representation of asylum seekers, the studies often have an underlying interest in public opinion and/or political opinions/legislations. This is likely because these studies often view the media as being able to influence the public's perception of asylum seekers (i.e. Blinder & Allen, 2016) and view the media and politics as influencing each other (Ibrahim, 2005). By recognizing the factors of public and political opinions, it demonstrates that the mainstream media is not an independent industry that has no impact. Thus, this highlights the importance of studying the mainstream media's representations of asylum seekers because representations can influence the public and legislations.

In terms of the methods used, they vary. They either solely utilize a qualitative approach (i.e. critical discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis or thematic analysis) or use a mixed methods approach (i.e. quantitative content analysis and thematic analysis). Through a purely qualitative approach, it is possible for the researcher to focus on gaining a greater understanding of how asylum seekers are represented. Thus, the ability to provide a detailed and in-depth discussion of the findings. However, a mixed methods approach allows for the researcher to numerically quantify the findings (i.e. how many times a certain word was used) in order to provide a broader understanding of how prevalent their findings are.

Some studies have analyzed one mainstream newspaper (i.e. Gilbert, 2013) and others have analyzed 5 mainstream newspapers (i.e. Sulaiman-Hill et al., 2011). The analysis of one mainstream newspaper permits a more in-depth analysis. However, analyzing more than one mainstream newspaper allows for the researcher to either compare the various representations to

one another and/or to give a more global understanding of the representation of asylum seekers based on multiple newspapers. Although many researchers only focus on mainstream newspapers from one country, others include: newspapers from other countries (i.e. Sulaiman-Hill et al., 2011), the public's comments (i.e. Krishnamurti, 2013) and TV (O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007) in their research. By adding these various media sources, it permits the researchers to assess the similarities and differences between newspapers and other media sources (and /or of other countries). However, this also means that the researcher's main objective is not on the representation of asylum seekers within mainstream newspapers or within one country.

Consequently, my research contributes to the little research completed on the Canadian mainstream media representation coverage of the 2017 Haitian irregular migrants. Furthermore, my research will try to fill in a research gap by trying to understand how the nation is represented within the media's coverage of irregular migrants. Since many studies have already been completed through a Critical Media Studies perspective, I will utilize a conceptual framework guided by CRT and conduct this study through a criminological perspective. This is important, because, language has meaning, and it often serves as a way to criminalizes asylum seekers and to invalidate their claims. Finally, since few studies attempt to contextualize the representation of asylum seekers, my research seeks to contextualize the representation of Haitian irregular migration within a wider socio-political context. Through this, it is then possible to provide an analysis of the broader discourses at play in these representations and to expose how they build on and reproduce historical structures of power. Consequently, a question that can be asked is: How has the media and political statements by politicians (made through the media) represented Haitian asylum seekers as well as the Canadian nation? Furthermore, how are racialized

discourses embedded in these representations? Therefore, this research will attempt to understand how the media decontextualizes the increase in Haitian irregular migration.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

My research questions will be guided through a Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective. More particularly, I will utilize the following concepts coined by critical race scholars: *imagined communities*, *the stranger*, *exalted subject* and *managers of space* (Anderson, 2016; Ahmed, 2000; Thobani, 2007; Hage, 2012). CRT will be used to call “attention to the ways in which structural arrangements inhibit and disadvantage some more than others in our society” (Trevino, Harris & Wallace, 2008, p. 8). For critical race theorists, history is seen as having an effect in the present (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Carbado & Roithmayr, 2014). This is because reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, and economic forces which have crystallized into a series of structures (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). However, mainstream ideologies work to distort this reality (Glesne, 2010). The aim of CRT, therefore, is to reveal and critique these distorted ideologies and the associated structures that keep them in place (Glesne, 2010).

CRT seeks to study and transform the relationships amongst race, racism and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 3). Its aim is to critique the discourses that appear to be neutral or objective, thus naming and rooting out inequalities and injustices (Carbado & Roithmayr, 2014; Trevino, et al., 2008). Therefore, a *call to context* is necessary because “social relations and truth require close attention to history, particularity, and experience” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 157). It becomes imperative to situate the experiences and perspective of oppressed groups in a social and historical context and reveal how these conditions serve certain groups and not others (Glesne, 2010). By situation the experiences, this produces knowledge that can challenge the current power structures in order to transform reality (Strega, 2005). As such, through the theoretical concepts chosen it will be possible to identify and understand how various discourses

help maintain the current power structures. The first two theoretical concepts that I will be discussing will be *imagined communities* and *the stranger*.

2.1. Imagined Communities and The Stranger

In order to understand the discourses that are reproduced in the construction of the nation and the asylum seekers, the theoretical concepts of *imagined communities* and *the stranger* are useful. Anderson (2016) defines the nation as “an imagined political community which is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (p. 5). He argues that the nation is imagined because the members of the nation will never know every fellow member; however they perceive themselves as belonging to the same group. As such, nations differ from one another due to the way they are imagined. The imagined nation is also *limited* and *sovereign*. It is *limited* because boundaries exist and beyond those boundaries, other nations exist. A nation does not imagine itself as encompassing humankind. In other words, members of the nation do not wish that one day the entire human race will join their nation. The nation is *sovereign* as a result of the Enlightenment and Revolution period where the nation no longer gains its legitimacy from the divine, but the nation becomes its own authority. Finally, the nation is imagined as a *community* because regardless of the inequalities and exploitations that exist, the nation is constructed as having a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson, 2016). The ultimate expression of this comradeship is the willingness to die for the nation. The concept of imagined communities was utilized and adapted by Sara Ahmed (2000) in discussing the concepts of the stranger and neighbourhoods.

For Ahmed (2000), the *alien* stranger is a subject within a given community of citizens: a subject “who does not belong in a nation space, and who is already defined as such by the Law” (p. 3). The nation-state’s border produces the alien and establishes the necessity for policing the

border. As a result of the stranger, it is possible to employ techniques that allow the differentiation between those who belong and those who do not belong in the nation space. It is important to understand that the stranger is produced as a result of inclusion and exclusion processes which create the boundaries of communities. This is because the community (neighbourhood) is imagined as organic and a pure space due to the perception of the dangers posed by outsiders (Ahmed, 2000). However, there is the potential for a community to fail due to its weak or negative connections. This occurs when neighbours can appear as strangers to each other, thus posing a threat from within.

However, this very same potential failure of the community is necessary in order to imagine the community. Enforcing the boundaries between those who are already out of place allows boundaries to be created. By having an image of a failed community, it creates an image of an ideal 'healthy' community. Through the identification of the symptoms which contributed to a failed community, the image of the ideal community is maintained. Consequently, this creates the need to regulate social spaces where the imagined community requires enforcement through laws (Ahmed, 2000). The stranger then becomes individuals who are suspicious because they have "no legitimate function within the space which could justify their existence or intrusion" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 31). Their presence is constructed as illegitimate in the community and they become suspect. The projection of danger onto the stranger permits the definition of the subject-at-home and the home as inhabitable.

The (mis)recognition of others as strangers legitimizes certain forms of mobility or movement within the public space, while delegitimizing others. The community is able to come together through the recognition of dangerous strangers and work to expel him or her (Ahmed, 2000). The ultimate form of dangerous strangers are imagined as immigrants: "they are the

outsiders in the nation space whose ‘behaviour seems unpredictable and beyond control’ (Merry 1981: 125)” (Ahmed, 2000, p. 36). This figure of the stranger becomes defined as dangerous when it comes too close to home: the nation. Thus, legitimizing mechanisms used to enforce boundary lines in order to keep the nation safe and establishing the community. In other words, the use of exclusionary measures is used against those who are associated with danger to the ‘purified’ nation space.

The concept of imagined communities is relevant for this research because it offers a way to conceptualize the nation. By viewing the nation as imagined, it will be possible to identify the qualities and attributes associated with belonging to the nation. In other words, I will be able to examine how the nation defines itself by identifying who is viewed as a threat to its image. Additionally, various authors with similar research goals have utilized it. It has been used by various authors who have studied the Canadian national identity and nation formation (Mackey, 2005; Thobani, 2007). For example, Thobani (2007) discussed how Canadian immigration policies helped build an imagined Canadian community. The concept was also used in order to look at the representation of asylum seekers in the media (Lueck et al., 2015; Henry & Tator, 2002; Greenberg & Hier, 2001; Hier & Greenberg, 2002). These authors have suggested that the media is a site where an imagined community is reproduced. Similarly, studies that have analyzed the construction of asylum seekers in the media and political discourse have found that they both simultaneously reproduce a similar imagined community (Innes, 2010; Saxton, 2003; Gale, 2004). Consequently, for this research, the concept of imagined community in conjunction with Ahmed’s (2000) concepts of the stranger and neighbourhoods, will be used in order to understand how the construction of the Haitian asylum seekers aid in reproducing a Canadian imagined community. It will then be possible for me to better understand what is defined as

outside the boundaries of the imagined community and the discourses which contribute to inclusionary and exclusionary processes. However, in order for me to examine how the nation is imagined, it is also important for me to explore how members of the community are produced and how qualities are attributed to the nation. Therefore, the next concept that I will discuss is the *exalted subject*.

2.2. Exalted Subject

Thobani (2007) explains that exaltation is important in the construction of the national subject as a member of a community. This national subject is constructed in relation to the Other. In her work, she identifies various exalted qualities within the Canadian context: law-abiding, compassionate, caring and multiculturalism. She identified these by examining how the governance of subjects/objects has been organized through state policies and practices by producing various subjects. These subjects include the:

[...] [exalted subject] (nationals), others as marked for physical and cultural extinction or utter marginalization (Indians), and yet others for perpetual estrangement or conditional inclusion as supplicants (immigrants, migrants, and refugees) (Thobani, 2007, p. 6).

Through the technique of exaltation, the Canadian national subject is inscribed with specific traits which elevates the subject's rights over and above that of Indigenous peoples and the immigrant. These traits and characteristics are part of the political identity of the Canadian nation which enables the subjects - those who are perceived as belonging to the nation - to ascribe those traits to themselves. This exaltation is said to be linked to and reflective of the subject's superior humanity due to its natural moral goodness. As such, exaltation facilitates the experience of belonging to the community through the recognition of a shared nationality (Thobani, 2007). Racialized Others are then constructed as different kinds of legal and human beings who are assigned different characteristics and values intrinsic to their (quasi)humanity that are different

from the exalted subject. Consequently, exaltation creates a particular subject position, where the intrinsic rights associated with the national identity must be protected by the nation's insiders from the undeserving Other. Thus, limiting the Other's access to the national identity. Measures are then deployed by the state against outsiders in order to preserve the subject's rights (Thobani, 2007).

The process of exaltation allows the national community to define itself with these human traits, regardless of the actual individual attributes of its members. In the Canadian context, the process of exaltation conceals the colonial violence which marks the original national subject (Thobani, 2007). Using Achille Mbembe's (2003) theory on necropolitics, Thobani (2007) argues that the formation of Canada's sovereignty was based on the cultural and physical extinction of Indigenous communities through the creation of reserves and residential schools. This established white Europeans as the nation's exalted subject. Furthermore,

the state organizes the rights that nationals come to acquire by treating these as rooted in their own intrinsic worthiness and not in the colonial violence, political, racial, and ethnic dominations, or in the classed and gendered exploitations and resistances that characterize nation formations (Thobani, 2007, p. 11)

For example, the Canadian subject was characterized as 'civilized' and 'law-abiding', while murdering, enslaving and torturing the 'uncivilized' Indigenous peoples. The British and French conquest over Indigenous peoples and land constituted Europeans as religiously, racially and culturally superior. The Canadian nation and its subjects are sustained through the violence that constitutes colonialism. This violence became inscribed in law as racial power and racial violence, since the Canadian national was produced on the basis of the suppression of Indigenous peoples (Thobani, 2007). This can be seen in the Indian Act where it sought to eliminate the 'savage' Other, the indigenous population, in an attempt to construct the nation as a white settler's nation. Consequently, through the evolving national identity being linked to the right to

own and work the land, the exalted white subject was a lawful subject that is different from the Indigenous person. So, European settlers transformed themselves into Canadians, a national subject (Thobani, 2007).

The establishment of citizenship transformed Indigenous peoples into aliens in their own territories while transforming others, such as colonizers, settlers and migrants as exalted insiders, Canadians (Thobani, 2007). Thobani (2007) gives the example of the preferred race immigration policies in order to argue that the white racial identity as a political (citizen) identity was inscribed in the country's legal citizenship for over a century after confederation. Furthermore, she argues that the Canadian citizenship emerged as a way to reproduce racial division within the population and this division remains significant to this day. Exalted national subjects are attributed the characteristics of 'compassionate' and 'caring' and as such are considered deserving of the social safety net, while Indigenous and 'immigrant' families are defined as threatening the welfare state. Consequently, the racialization that constructs immigrants as less deserving of citizenship implies that all people of colour are outsiders regardless of their citizenship status or whether they were born in Canada (Thobani, 2007). So, the welfare state reproduces the construction of a white citizen whose needs were institutionalized in various programs. Additionally, multiculturalism, which exalts the nation as being tolerant of differences, is a continuity of white privilege where the national subject remains empowered by displacing the patterns of discrimination onto the past or on the stubborn minority of the present (Thobani, 2007).

Through the concept of exalted subject, Thobani (2007) is able to problematize the qualities which have been attributed to the nation. She highlights how these qualities were able to emerge due to the erasure of, amongst others, Canada's colonial history. For the purpose of this

research, I will use the concept of exalted subject in order to highlight how the qualities attributed to the nation is rooted in Canada's historical past. It will also be possible for me to demonstrate how certain discourses are used to dictate who does or does not belong to the nation. In other words, I will examine how the media's representation of the asylum seekers and the construction of the nation is linked to Canada's historical context. Furthermore, I highlight how various omissions made by the media contributed to the exaltation of the qualities attributed to the nation.

2.3. Managers of Space

Hage (2012) argues that White racists and White multiculturalists both “share in a conception of themselves as nationalists and of the nation as a space structured around a White culture”, where racialized individuals are objects to be either moved or managed according to the White *national will* (p. 18). This White *nation will*, is rooted in what Hage (2012) calls the ‘White nation’ fantasy. This fantasy “is a fantasy of a nation governed by White people, a fantasy of White supremacy” (p. 18). According to Hage (2012), Whiteness is a cultural historical construct which has its root in European colonisation. Whiteness was opposed to Black and Brown bodies, but now it is in opposition to First World and Third World. Therefore, Whiteness is itself a fantasy. For Hage (2012), three conditions must exist in order classify certain practices as nationalist. First, there must be an image of the nation, second, one must see themselves as a master over the nation space and third there must be an image of the Other as an object within the nation space. Consequently, within nationalist practices of exclusions, one must see themselves as having a privileged position within the nation space and see themselves as enactors of the *nation will* (Hage, 2012). The goal is to build what is imagined as a ‘homely’ nation where there is a sense of familiarity, security and community. The nationalist sees

themselves as spatial managers and whoever (often racialized minorities) stands between them and their imagined nation is constructed as undesirable and must be removed from the nation space.

Hage (2012) identified two different types of belonging. The first is *passive belonging* where one believes oneself to belong to the nation, where one believes they have a right to the nation's resources and to feel at 'home' within it (Hage, 2012). The second, *governmental belonging*, involves the right that one feels over the nation including the right to contribute and have a legitimate opinion in the management of the nation. Although those who hold state power can exercise *governmental belonging*, it is not limited to such individuals. *Governmental belonging* can simply be the feeling that one is legitimately entitled to make managerial statements about the everyday life of the nation (Hage, 2012). This type of belonging is often claimed by those who hold a dominant position within the nation. In this thesis, I argue, that the mass media, as an institution, holds a dominant position in Canadian society exercises governmental belonging through its representation of asylum seekers.

2.3.1. Media and Governmental Belonging

Various authors have examined the role of the mass media in society in their studies of the representation of asylum seekers in the media. They have signaled the importance of the mass media by highlighting its dominance and power within society. Some authors view the media as constructing and reproducing society's dominant core values (Gilbert, 2013). Others view it as having an agenda setting function where its purpose is to tell people what to think about and how to think about it (Ibrahim, 2005; McKay et al., 2011). Consequently, it has been argued that the media plays an important role in defining social problems (Kim et al., 2011). The media is not an objective institution since it has the power to selectively frame social problems

and set agendas (Karppinen, 2013). The media is also theorized as having an influence on shaping the attitudes of individuals on immigration issues (Blinder & Allen, 2016; Sulaiman-Hill, Thompson, Afsar & Hodliffe, 2011; Greenberg & Hier, 2001). Overall, the existing literature suggests, that the mass media is an important agent of social control which tries to shape our perception of the world by being the main source of information of an event (van Djik, 1993; Hall, 1978).

However, others have recognized that the media has an influence on policy makers due to the assumption that the media represents the views of the population (Jiwani, 2006). Since the media can be viewed as having the ability to selectively frame issues (Karppinen, 2013), the media is able to mobilize a moral panic based on the values held by society by focusing on fears (Curran, 2002). As such, this selectivity can lead to consequences which includes changes in policy. Policy makers can also have an influence on the media. Authors have argued that the way in which the media frames an issue can be influenced by those in power, such as the government and interest groups (Karppinen, 2013). Consequently, the media influences political decision makers and politicians also influence the media (Zeitel-Bank, 2017). The media and politicians rely on each other for information and knowledge, thus establishing a discursive cycle which omits the voices of the less powerful (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011). As such, some authors have argued that both the media and politicians help construct the nation's image (Krishnamurti, 2013; Greenberg & Hier, 2001; Henry & Tator, 2002; Jiwani, 2006). Since this research is, partially, interested in the nation's representation within the media, this last perspective will be adopted.

According to critical media scholars, the media maintains the dominance of those already in power by maintaining the status-quo (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, 2012). For Hall (1978), this is done through the assumption of a consensual nature of society by problematizing certain

events and making them intelligible to readers. Thus, the media serves the myth of *democratic pluralism*. Democratic pluralism can be defined as “the pretense that society is held together by common norms, including equal opportunity, respect for diversity, one person–one vote, individual rights, and rule of law” (Griffin et al., 2012, p. 344). As such, the media has the power to define the world (Curran, 2002). Through this power, it is possible for the media to produce and reproduce a narrative of the nation (Hall, 1996). As a member of an imagined community, it is then possible to see oneself as being part of this narrative. Consequently, through the myth of *democratic pluralism*, the media is able to construct some degree of cohesion (Hall, 1977). Although the media is seen as serving the interest of those in power, it is also important to note that the media does have pressures to pull to the other direction, such as consumer power (Curran, 2002). Therefore, it can only be argued that the media has the tendency to reproduce the status-quo (Hall, 1977).

Various authors have noted that the media maintains the status-quo through the exclusion of racialized bodies and/or their negative representation (Chan & Chunn, 2014; Fleras, 2011; Jiwani, 2006; Mahtani, 2001). Consequently, if the media is perceived as being a symbolic image of the nation (Jiwani, 2006), minorities are then made to feel as though they do not belong in the nation due these exclusions and/or negative representations in the media (Mahtani, 2001). By not challenging the status-quo, this implies that the media naturalises the current social order by reproducing the dominant ideology. Thus, fulfilling Hage’s (2012) criteria that “the dominant always aims to naturalise the field [of Whiteness] itself by naturalising the positions of all those who are located in the field” (p. 62). In other words, through the absence and/or negative representation of racialized minorities, the media plays a role in constructing Whiteness as something that is natural rather than something that is historically and socially constructed.

Few studies have conceptualized the media as an institution of governmental belonging in their examination of the representation of asylum seekers and the nation. However, some studies have conceptualized other institutions as agents of governmental belonging. For example, in Leanne Weber's (2019) study on the role police have in belonging, she theorized that the police, and other institutions, could be agents of governmental belonging due to the reinforcement of social boundaries that affect belonging. As such, the police was viewed as an institution which held the belief that it had a right over the nation. Previous studies have also found that the media has reproduced the discourse of managers of space by suggesting that asylum seekers were a threat to the White nation (Saxton, 2003; Mountz, 2010; O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007). In other words, the media was not constructed as an institution that had a right over the nation, rather it drew upon managerial discourses in its coverage of asylum seekers. Other studies have also conceptualized the media as a social agent which engages in the practice of bordering, where the media can act as an extension of the border through discourses of exclusionary-inclusionary boundaries of belonging (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy, 2019).

In my thesis, I conceptualize the mainstream media (and public statements made by politicians covered in the media) as an institution of governmental belonging. The media plays a role in the reproduction of the dominant ideologies within society through the maintenance of the status-quo. This is often done through the exclusion and/or negative representation of racialized individuals. Thus, reproducing the White fantasy. This conceptualization makes it possible to understand and highlight how the media and politicians engage in the discourse of managers of space. More specifically, this allows me to identify the various managerial statements made within the media and by politicians. Finally, it enables me to understand how the Other is constructed as an object that must be managed.

2.4. Coherence of Concepts

In conclusion, I will use the above-mentioned theoretical concepts to answer my research questions. The concept of *imagined communities* (Anderson, 2016), provides a way to conceptualize the nation. Since nations differ from one another due to how they are imagined, it will be possible to understand how the media and politicians imagine the Canadian nation. Ahmed's (2000) concepts of the neighbour and the stranger, allows me to highlight the various discourses produced in order to reaffirm/reinforce the boundaries of the imagined nation. Thobani's (2007) concept of the exalted subject, makes it possible to understand and identify the various exalted qualities inscribed to the nation and the erasures which contribute to such exaltation. Finally, conceptualizing the media and politicians as being (potential) agents of governmental belonging, enables me to highlight the various discourses produced which contribute to their function of national spatial managers of space. Overall, these concepts make it possible for me to understand how the media and politicians construct the nation and asylum seekers by attributing various qualities to the nation. This will then enable me to examine how managerial discourses emerge in order to maintain the nation's image.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this research, I explore how the mainstream media builds on and reproduces existing historical structures of power. This is done by contextualizing the representation of Haitian irregular migration in the media (and in the political statements that were featured in the media) within the broader context of border imperialism and the Canadian historical treatment of black bodies. The specific aims of this research are as follows: 1. To understand the discourses and the processes of inclusion/exclusion used to reproduce the Canadian national identity, and 2. To understand the discourses used to represent and problematize the Haitian asylum seekers. The following sections will explain the methodology used in order to reach these goals. First, I will discuss the methodological approach. Next, I will review the data sampling and collection method. Third, I will explain the data analysis procedure. In the final section, I will outline the limitations of this research.

3.1. Methodological Approach

While originally, my intention was to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), due to the time constraints a full discourse analysis was unfeasible (van Dijk, 2001). Therefore, the main methodological approach utilized within this research is qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a flexible method for analysing text data with the goal of searching and describing the meanings within a text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Drisko & Maschi, 2015). It tends to focus on the content and contextual meanings of a text. Therefore, this approach is used to capture the ‘message’ of a text (Prior, 2014). It is also a method used for the subjective interpretation of the content of a text in order to develop themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Drisko & Maschi, 2015). The themes that are identified summarize the content found in

the data set and it can be argued that they also help create a type of social reality (Caulfield & Hill, 2018; Drisko, & Maschi, 2015).

This can be done by examining the manifest content and/or the latent content of the text. The manifest content refers to the visible content. The latent content refers to the process of interpretation by examining the underlying meaning of the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Lune & Berg, 2017). In other words, the manifest content refers to the surface structure of the text, while the latent content makes reference to the deeper structural meaning of the text (Lune & Berg, 2017). Qualitative content analysis is also a research method that can be deployed in collaboration with other types of methods (Prior, 2014). Therefore, since I was initially interested in completing a critical discourse analysis, my research is also inspired by the aims of CDA.

One of the goals of CDA, is to study how power relations and inequalities contribute to social wrongs. As such, by focusing on social problems, the aim is to understand the role that discourses play in the reproduction of current power relations (van Dijk, 2001). Power is not only viewed as being within the texts and discourses, but also in how these texts serve to maintain current power relations within the social reality (Krzyżanowski & Machin, 2018). Consequently, the language used within the mass media can be scrutinized as a site of power (Wodak, 2001). CDA also views ideology as an important concept, because it is seen as establishing and maintaining unequal power relations (Fernández Martínez, 2007). Ideology can be defined “[...] as representations which contribute to constituting, reproducing and transforming social relations of power and domination [...]” (Fairclough, 2010, p. 28).

Since I am interested in representation, it is also important to discuss more specifically how I conceptualized it in relation to CDA. According to Hall, there is no fixed meaning or obvious meaning to an ‘event’ because the meaning depends on how people make sense of it and

the meaning depends on how the event is represented (Jhally, 2005). In other words, an ‘event’ does not become meaningful until it is represented. Representation does not occur after an ‘event’, but it is rather constitutive of an ‘event’ (Jhally, 2005). Therefore, representation is the production of meaning through language; as representation changes, the meaning also changes (Hall, 1997). Without language, there is no representation and without representation, there is no meaning (Jhally, 2005). However, on the one hand, meanings also depend on a type of fixing. On the other hand, meanings are never fixed. The purpose of power is to “intervene in language” and try to fix meaning through ‘ideology’ (Jhally, 2005, p. 19). Therefore, the relationship between an image and a powerful definition becomes naturalized. From this perspective, dominant structures appear to be stabilized and naturalized due to the effects of power and ideologies (Wodak, 2001).

The process of *denaturalisation* is important for CDA (Fairclough, 2010). *Naturalisation* refers to the ideological representations which appear to have the status of common sense; thus, they are obscured. Therefore, *denaturalisation* involves exposing the ideologies which make the social inequalities appear natural. In other words, “CDA aims to make transparent the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities” (Meyer, 2001, p. 30). By denaturalising discourses, it was then possible to provoke social changes by utilizing language to challenge power and/or expressing the differences between hierarchical social structures (Fernández Martínez, 2007). From this perspective, the concept of *recontextualization* is important because the goal is to “look for how ideas originating within political, policy, or organizational realms penetrate into media discourse” (Krzyżanowski & Machin, 2018, p. 65).

It is important to note that throughout my research, in an attempt to *recontextualize*, I adopt both a realist and constructionist conceptualization of representation. I acknowledge that

although I view representation as ‘constitutive of reality’, I also believe, as discussed in the previous chapter, that reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, and economic forces which have formed into a series of structure. Therefore, I believe that representation can be conceptualized as being constructed, however there are realities (i.e. inequalities) that can influence representation. Both positions (realist and constructivist) are compatible because they both aim to denaturalize/reveal/critique the ideologies that make representations appear natural.

When identifying themes, I was able to examine the language used within the newspaper articles. By utilizing certain techniques of CDA while conducting a qualitative content analysis, I was able to examine the different ways in which the nation and the asylum seekers are represented within the media. Thus, it was possible to understand how these representations contribute to social inequalities which appear to be natural. By identifying themes in the text, this led me to challenge the current power structures by exposing the themes which permit their reproduction.

3.2. Data Sampling and Collection

Sampling techniques depend on what is being studied (Weber, 1990), therefore for the purpose of this research, purposive sampling was used in order to collect the data. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique used in order to obtain a targeted dataset for the purpose of the research (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013; Daniel, 2012). This sampling procedure enables us to select information-rich cases for research which aims to understand a specific type of event/experience (Guest et al., 2013). Since this research is interested in the increase in Haitian irregular migration in 2017, I selected newspaper articles where Haitian irregular migration was discussed⁵. To obtain news articles, I chose the following two newspapers: the *Toronto Star* and

⁵ This selection criterion is supported by Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) who argue that eligibility criteria for inclusion into a study can be as broad and simple as, for example “adult males in community x” (p. 48).

The Globe and Mail. These newspapers were selected because they were the highest circulating newspapers in 2015⁶⁷ (News Media Canada, 2016).

The *Toronto Star* was founded in 1892 and is Canada's largest daily newspaper (Toronto Star, 2020). It is owned by Toronto Star Newspapers Ltd., a subsidiary of Torstar Corp. The *Toronto Star* is a local newspaper that publishes in the Greater Toronto Area. This left leaning newspapers (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011) is guided by the Atkinson Principles with the commitment to investigate and advocate for social and economic justice (Toronto Star, 2020). These principles include: a strong, united and independent Canada, social justice, individual and civil liberties, community and civic engagement, the rights of working people and the necessary role of government. *The Globe and Mail* was founded in 1844 and has won more national newspaper awards than any other news organization in Canada. This right leaning newspaper (Krishnamurti, 2013) is owned by Woodbridge, an invest arm of the Thomson family (The Globe and Mail, 2020). Their mission is to inspire and inform Canadians. It is also an organization that is customer-focused by putting the needs of the readers first (The Globe and Mail, 2020).

The following databases were used to collect newspaper articles that were published between January 2017 and December 2017: *Eureka.cc* and *Factiva*. I chose this sampling time period due to the time constraints associated with the Master of Arts degree and because the increase in Haitian asylum seekers was initially reported in 2017. Since this research focuses on Haitian asylum seekers, keywords, such as, Haitian*, asylum seeker*, irregular migrant*, illegal migrant* etc. were used in order to find newspaper articles. After sorting through the results by

⁶ Information on the highest circulating newspapers in 2017 from News Media was not available during the data collection phase.

⁷ Although this study is primarily interested in the media representation of irregular migration in Quebec, Quebec newspapers were not selected as data sources. This is because the highest circulating newspapers in 2015 in Quebec were *Le journal de Montréal* and *La presse*. These are French newspapers and I did not feel comfortable analysing the articles in French.

removing duplicate results and articles judged to not focus on or discussed Haitian asylum seekers, there were a total of 68 articles selected for this research (32 from the *Toronto Star* and 36 from *The Globe and Mail*)⁸. Once the articles were chosen, they were uploaded in the software *NVivo 12* in order to code the data.

3.3. Data Analysis

There are multiple ways to conduct a qualitative content analysis; therefore it has been said that it is the researcher that must judge which methods is the most appropriate for the research (Weber, 1990). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, I decided to adapt Carvalho's (2008) framework. The framework consists of a two-step analysis: textual analysis and contextual analysis. Textual analysis involves analysing the text and contextual analysis involves examining the wider social context.

There are four dimensions of the text that were used in order to conduct the textual analysis: objects, actors, language, grammar and rhetoric and discursive strategies. Objects is a term used to suggest that words shape reality rather than simply refer to it. Therefore, what is examined is: which objects does the text construct? (Carvalho, 2008, p. 167). The second dimension, actors, is interested in who is either quoted or referred to in the text. Actors refers to social agents who has the capacity to do something and to 'characters' in the story. Therefore, actors can be subjects (they do something) and objects (they are talked about). Here, the questions of interests are: who does the article mention? how are those actors represented? (Carvalho, 2008, p. 168). The third dimension examined is language, grammar and rhetoric. This refers to how certain linguistic devices such as the vocabulary used, metaphors and rhetorical figures are employed within the text in order to represent a certain reality.

⁸ The breakdown of the articles by type can be found in Appendix A.

The final element is discursive strategies. This refers to how social actors and journalists construct reality. Carvalho (2008) argues that it is important to differentiate between the journalists' strategies and the strategies of other social actors. Questions that can be asked regarding discursive strategies are: which actors use which discursive strategies? how are different actors involved in the discursive strategies of others (how are they constructed by others)? (Carvalho, 2008, p. 170). It is possible to "indirectly 'read' the discourse of social actors from quotes and indirect speech in the news" (Carvalho, 2008, p. 170). Therefore, my research examined the public statements made through the media by politicians. In other words, I examined how the media chose to feature certain political statements over others in its representation of asylum seekers and of the nation. This is similar to the methodology used by Ibrahim (2005), Don and Lee (2014) and Krishnamurti (2013) who have studied the representation of asylum seekers in the media. It was argued that politicians play an important role in legitimizing the representation of asylum seekers (Don & Lee, 2014). Furthermore, the engagement between the media and politicians also has been argued to contribute to a nation's self-image (Krishnamurti, 2013). Consequently, this research will also focus on public statements made by politicians through the media in order to address the research question and goals.

The second part of the analysis, contextual analysis, is composed of: historical-diachronic analysis. This analysis involves examining the discourse within their wider context and by also examining the previous media construction of a given issue. This was completed by writing the literature review which set to outline the wider historical context and discussed the various media representations of asylum seekers.

In terms of coding the data, for the purpose of this research, I decided to conduct a qualitative content analysis which allows for induction and deduction (Caulfield & Hill, 2018). Consequently, my initial coding was based on theory and the literature review, while being open to the possibility of new themes emerging from the data. However, there is no best way to code qualitative data, but it is important for the coding process to be congruent with the research questions and conceptual orientation (Saldaña, 2009). As such, by following Carvalho's (2008) framework, utilising the literature review and theoretical orientation, it was possible to code the data. Additionally, Saldaña's (2009) coding approach was utilized for this research.

Saldaña's (2009) outlined two cycles of coding each with various types of coding methods that could be adapted to various types of research. As such, the first cycle of coding involved⁹: attribute coding, descriptive coding, values coding and versus coding. Attribute coding is about coding for basic descriptive information about the data. For example, the code politician quoted was given whenever an article cited a politician. Descriptive coding refers to coding a passage regarding its topic. For example, the code immigration system was used when the main topic of a passage discussed the system. Values coding occurred when the text referred to values, attitudes and/or beliefs about worldviews. For example, when the text referred to efficiency or generosity, it was coded as such. Versus coding was in binary terms whereby it identified conflicts between, for example, social systems and processes. For example, 'us' vs. 'them' and 'genuine' refugee vs. 'bogus' refugee.

Once the first cycle of coding was completed, the second cycle of coding was used to reorganize and reanalyze the data (Saldaña, 2009). The goal was to organize the data into larger categories in order to make sense of the data. Pattern codes were used in order to group what was

⁹ A list of frequently used codes can be found in Appendix B.

coded during the first cycle under statements that described the themes that emerged. As a result, the following four themes emerged: 1. The techniques used to include and exclude the asylum seekers, 2. A discourse of victimization, 3. The asylum seekers' motivations for coming to Canada and 4. The techniques used to vilify the asylum seekers. These themes will be discussed in Chapter 4 and 5 of this thesis.

3.4. Limitations

First, the act of coding is based on how the researcher perceives and interprets the data (Saldaña, 2009), therefore, it is important for a researcher to engage in reflexivity (Drisko, & Maschi, 2015; Rogers, 2013). Positional reflexivity is a self-referential analytical exercise which allows the researcher to take his or her position in the world that is being studied and detect the unseen privilege or exploitive relationships that exist (Macbeth, 2001). Since, who we are is shaped by our position in society, through positional reflexivity we are able to examine how our place and biography influences the ways in which we view the world and those who live in it. This is because the researcher is seen as carrying the various social structures. As a critical researcher, I must reflect on my positions within society in order to identify how those positions impact my view of the world, and ultimately how my research might be impacted by these positions. I am a Haitian born woman who immigrated to Canada at the age of four, in 1999. Although my parents were not asylum seekers, they decided to immigrate to Canada due to the political instability and insecurity in Haiti. They were both born and raised during the Duvalier dictatorships¹⁰. As such, the topic of this thesis was directly inspired by my background as a Haitian. My background is further affected by this research due to the negative representations of Haitian irregular migrants. Though my background has influenced the research, my methodology

¹⁰ The Duvalier dictatorships were discussed in the literature review where it was said that it was marked by violence and human rights violations.

is supported by other researchers and my findings are supported by and consistent with the literature.

Second, the purpose of research should be to provide voice to those who are silenced or marginalized in political processes (Ezzy, 2002). However, by speaking for others, oneself is privileged over another by implying that one has a better understanding of another's experience (Alcoff, 2009). It is therefore important to note that, this research does not seek to speak for those who are marginalized. The material used for this research are media articles rather than interviews. Instead, in congruence with the critical paradigm, this research seeks to challenge current power structures by revealing how structures of inequality are reproduced within the discourses associated with the representation of Haitian asylum seekers.

Third, while it is possible to conduct a qualitative content analysis on images in order to determine what it can tell us about human life (Lee Abbott & Mckinney, 2013), the articles downloaded via *Factiva* and *Eureka.cc* did not include any images. Therefore, the role played by images was not examined. Despite this limitation, it was possible to conduct the research, because the analytical framework used did not required images (Carvalho, 2008). Fourth, only two mainstream newspapers were used in order to conduct this study. Therefore, future research should include a wider range of newspapers and other media sources (i.e. social media) in order to examine whether there is a greater diversity in portrayals of asylum seekers. Since this research focused on mainstream media, future research should also include independent media. This inclusion could lead to finding narratives that are more sympathetic to refugees and/or critical of the refugee process.

Finally, this study focused on how politicians were depicted as portraying asylum seekers in the mainstream media. Therefore, it was the journalists who chose to prioritize certain stances

over others. Future research should examine political speeches and/or government documents in order to compare them to the media. It would then be possible to determine if there are any similarities or differences between political and media discourses. Furthermore, it would be possible to better understand how/if the media and politicians influence each other. The following two chapters discuss the analysis that was conducted. The first examines how the nation was represented and the second discusses the representation of the Haitian asylum seekers.

Chapter 4: The Nation

This chapter will discuss how the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to reproduce the nation's image (exalted qualities). In order to reproduce this image, it was necessary for the media and politicians to construct the asylum seekers as a threat to the nation. However, the specific ways in which the asylum seekers were represented will be discussed in the following chapter. This chapter is divided into two sections. First, techniques of inclusion and exclusions were utilized in order to reproduce the nation's image as welcoming, generous and compassionate. Second, a discourse of victimization was utilized in order to imagine the nation as being vulnerable to abusers. This permitted the implicit and at times explicit support for the need to increase border security. Furthermore, by contextualizing these discourses within a wider historical context, it is possible to note that the media and politicians helped reinforce the nation's image as a White nation.

4.1. Techniques of Inclusion and Exclusion

In order to reproduce Canada's welcoming image, the media and political statements (selected by the media) employed two techniques of inclusion and exclusion. The first technique employed was the notion that the enforcement of laws and regulations were conditions that must be fulfilled in order for Canada to be a welcoming nation. The second technique used was the idea that the increase of border security would allow Canada to welcome the desired, while excluding the 'undesirable' asylum seekers. These discourses demonstrate that asylum seekers can only be included within the nation if certain terms have been met. These terms involve the nation's ability to enforce its laws and welcome the 'desired'. As such, border security is perceived as essential in order for Canada to uphold its image. By using these techniques, the media and politicians are able to reproduce the techniques of inclusions and exclusions that have

aided Canada's nation formation. Historically, Canada has utilized exclusionary immigration policies in order to maintain the nation's image as a White nation (Mackey, 2005; Thobani, 2007).

4.1.1. Technique One: Land of Laws

The enforcement of laws and regulation was used by the media and politicians as a way to reproduce Canada's image as a welcoming, compassionate and generous nation. This discourse exalted the nation simultaneously as lawful and as welcoming, compassionate and generous. This was done by the media and political statements (featured in the media) by constructing the asylum seekers as a threat to the lawful nation. For example, through the depiction of the actions of the asylum seekers as illegal, the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to simultaneously portray the asylum seekers as lawless and the nation as lawful. For example:

Over the past few weeks, the Liberal government embarked on an effort to correct "misinformation" that appeared to drive panicked Haitians in the United States to Canada. Meeting with the newly formed federal-provincial task force on irregular migration in Montreal last week, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shut down **any misconceptions that entering Canada illegally is a free ticket into the country.** "Canada is an **opening and welcoming society**," Mr. Trudeau said on Aug. 20. "But let me be clear. **We are also a country of laws.** Entering **Canada irregularly** is not an advantage. There are **rigorous immigration and customs rules** that will be **followed**. Make no mistake." (Zilio, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

"It's very important ... that people understand very clearly that **Canadian law applies**, and **we will be assiduous in enforcing that law**, and people should not think that border hopping is a desirable or productive thing to do," said Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale, who toured facilities at Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle with Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen. The comments echo Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's statement on Sunday that people **coming into Canada illegally will gain no fast track to residency**, suggesting the government is concerned some Canadians are worried about the surge of thousands of refugee claimants in recent months. (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017b)

In both quotes, the authors utilized the adjective ‘illegally’ to describe how the asylum seekers are entering the country¹¹; thus, framing the asylum seekers as lawless. Labels used by the media and politicians carry different meanings which in turn carry various implications (O’Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007; McKay et al., 2011; Saxton, 2003; Lueck, Due & Augoustinos, 2015). By utilizing the term ‘illegally’, it refers to criminal actions, in this case, it is suggested that entering Canada requires punishment (Horsti, 2012, p. 302). Consequently, due to the label of ‘illegally’, it reinforces the us versus them narrative where the asylum seeker is constructed as a threat from which the nation must protect itself (Chan & Chunn, 2014; De Genova, 2002; Innes, 2010). In other words, the asylum seeker is constructed as disposable and the use of exclusionary measures become justified (Mountz, 2010; O’Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007; Saxton, 2003). Thus, turning the asylum seekers into *strangers* who do not belong within the nation space, which in turn renders exclusionary processes necessary in order to establish the boundaries of the nation (Ahmed, 2000).

Furthermore, the Prime Minister’s quote in the article by Zilio (2017) not only frames Canada as a nation that is welcoming and open, but also as a nation that values laws. The articles by Zilio (2017), Peritz (2017) and the direct quote from the Prime Minister and from the Minister of Public Safety all utilized different strategies in order to achieve similar goals. On the one hand, Zilio (2017) and Peritz (2017) is framing the nation as a lawful nation by utilizing the term ‘illegally’. On the other hand, although the Prime Minister uses the term ‘irregularly’ instead of ‘illegally’, he suggests that the asylum seekers are lawless by stating that the nation is a ‘country of laws’. The Minister of Public Safety also constructs the nation as lawful by stating that “Canadian laws applies” and that the nation will be “assiduous in enforcing that law”.

¹¹ The criminalization of the asylum seekers will be discussed with more depth in the next chapter.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister's, the Minister of Public Safety's statements and Peritz (2017) produces a discourse of manager of space (Hage, 2012) by positioning Canadians as the managers. This is done by defining the space in national terms through the use of the words: "Canada is", "we are", "we will be" and "Canadian are"; along with defining the nation as welcoming and lawful. The combination of these elements suggests the need to manage the space in order to maintain these values. The asylum seekers then become objects to be managed, where actions used against them are legitimized due to the exaltation of the nation as a nation that values laws. In other words, an us versus them narrative is produced where 'we', the lawful nation, must manage 'them', the lawless. Thus, by identifying the asylum seekers as out of place, it creates the need to regulate the nation space where the imagined community requires enforcement (Ahmed, 2000).

The values of lawfulness and of being welcoming are both values which have historically been used to maintain the nation's racialized image. First, the focus on Canada as a land of laws can be seen as a reproduction of Canada's exalted value as a nation of lawfulness which can be traced back to its foundation. The claim of lawfulness was part of Canada's foundation where, through colonization, the exalted national subject was lawful and Indigenous peoples were deemed lawless (Thobani, 2007). As argued by Thobani (2007), the violent colonial conquest of the world divided the world into two: on the one hand, there was a world of law and power for the settler and, on the other hand, a world where there was lawlessness and the death for the native (p. 38). The creation of the Canadian nation was based on the Europeans, the 'civilized', claiming legality and sovereignty and imposing illegality and destroying the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, the 'uncivilized' (p. 44). As such, Europeans were constructed as law-abiding, while indigenous peoples were constructed as incapable of self-determination.

Therefore, the Europeans were not bound by laws in their treatment of Indigenous peoples. Consequently, the suppression of Indigenous peoples' humanity, was necessary for the creation of Canada's sovereignty and the exaltation of the national subject as law-abiding. This helped construct the exalted subject as a White lawful subject; thus, the creation of an image of the nation as a White nation. Consequently, the media's and political statements (featured in the media) focus on Canada as a land of laws is embedded within this discourse by implying that Canada can only be a welcoming nation by enforcing its laws and regulations. Thus, also reproducing the image of a White nation.

Second, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety Goodale were respectively quoted saying the following:

"Canada is a country that understands that immigration, **welcoming refugees, is a source of strength for our communities**," Trudeau repeated last week. He also added, **"protecting Canadians' confidence in the integrity of our system allows us to continue to be open."** [Prime Minister Trudeau said] (MacDougall, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A13)

"Canada is part of a global community that is facing pressures **related to migration and asylum seekers**," [Public Safety Minister] Goodale said. "We will continue to work together closely to respond to these pressures in **accordance with the law and in keeping with our values as an open and welcoming nation.**" (Blanchfield, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

Here, the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety are able to suggest that diversity ("welcoming refugees" and "the values as an open and welcoming nation") is a value that the nation is able to maintain through the enforcement of laws ("protecting Canadians' confidence" and "in accordance with the law"). As such this exaltation can be seen as being part of Canada being imagined as a multicultural nation, where it welcomes diversity (Thobani, 2007). Embedded within this image is defining the nation in terms of Whiteness, where it renders possible the management of internal differences and distinction from the external Others

(Mackay, 2005). This turns non-White individuals into objects to be managed in order for the nation to continue to be imagined as a White nation (Hage, 2012). In order for the Canadian nation to define itself as a welcoming multicultural nation it must have the ability to reassert control over the composition of the population (Yuval-Davis et al., 2019). Thus, in order to reproduce this racialized image of the nation, laws are used to include and exclude the Other. It could be argued that without the ability to include/exclude, the nation loses its capacity to define itself. The nation would be unable to maintain its image of an ‘ideal/healthy’ community, thus turning into a ‘failed’ community (Ahmed, 2000). In other words, without the ability to manage the nation space (lawlessness), it is not possible to reproduce the image of a welcoming and open nation (control over the composition of the nation). Therefore, according to this discourse, the only way Canada can be inclusive (welcoming and open), is by having the ability to exclude (enforcing laws). Thus, by recognizing the asylum seekers as *strangers*, it is possible to legitimize the use of exclusionary measures in order to establish the imagined nation (welcoming and open) (Ahmed, 2000). A tension exists where in order to be an inclusive nation (welcoming and open), it is also necessary to exclude those who are perceived as not inherently possessing the exalted values. Through various laws, Canada has historically managed different racialized groups in order to maintain this image.

For example, Ighodaro (2006) argues that the Safe Third Country Agreement “reflects increasing social-difference discrimination and racism in global contexts” (p. 46). The Agreement restricts refugee protection, especially from the Global South. Thus, it can be argued that it is a tool control the migration of racially different refugees. Also, when 76 Tamil refugees arrived in Canada by boat in 2009, a discursive environment in order to amend (Bill C-11) the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* emerged (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011). Tamil refugees

were constructed by the media and politicians as posing a security threat (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011; Ibrahim, 2005). Therefore, the amendments' aim was to increase the securitization of migration as a way to protect the nation (and the integrity of the immigration system) from the perceived threats posed by refugees (Ibrahim, 2005). The Bill sought to manage the refugee 'problem' by linking it to crime, terrorism and national security (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011). These examples demonstrate how the construction of racialized bodies as an object of spatial exclusion was due to an already existing image of a racialized nation (Hage, 2012, p. 48).

By reproducing these discourses, the media and political statements (featured in the media) are able to reproduce the nation as a White nation by turning the asylum seekers into objects that need to be managed. By exalting the nation as a lawful nation, it suggests that those who are lawless, should be excluded from the nation. The 'lawless' asylum seekers are consequently not welcomed within the White nation.

Furthermore, the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to link the nation's image as a compassionate nation with its lawfulness. The exalted value of lawfulness was prioritized in comparison to compassion. However, exalting the nation as lawful simultaneously permitted the exaltation of the value of compassion. This permitted Canadians (and the nation) to be imagined as morally superior to the asylum seekers.

On the weekend, Conservative MPs Michelle Rempel and Tony Clement called on the **government to reinforce Canadian border security**. The **RCMP and Canadian Border Security Agency** have **boosted patrols and are enforcing the law**, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said in a statement Monday. "At the same time, **people seeking asylum in our country must be treated with compassion**," the statement said. (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A4)¹²

Most of the border-crossers are Haitians running from a change of policy in the U.S. that will rescind temporary protections put in place after an earthquake devastated their homeland in 2010. This will affect some 40,000 people. Of those, many won't come here and of those who do, many will not be granted asylum. (Canada withdrew the same

¹² The newspaper article did not indicate where the statement was made.

protection in 2014.) As the mayor of Montreal, the premier of Quebec and the prime minister have all noted again and again, **we can manage these numbers fairly and with compassion.** (Toronto Star, 2017c)

In both quotes, the nation is framed as a compassionate nation. The use of the words “our country” and “we can manage [...] with” work to define the space in national terms (Hage, 2012). As such, it permits the nation (and its citizens) to exalt itself as compassionate and gives direction as to how the nation should manage its space. By examining this construction within the wider discourse of the exalted value of compassion, it is possible to see that there is an implicit sense of moral superiority attributed to the Canadian national subject.

Historically, the welfare state, the human worthiness of the national was institutionalized as: compassionate (Thobani, 2007). This exalted quality was used to construct the national as deserving of the welfare state, while the Other was constructed as devoid of this quality; thus, not deserving of social services. As Thobani (2007) argues, the exaltation of the national enables the national to exalt itself as morally superior in their encounters with the Other. As Thobani (2007) argues, the exaltation of the national enables the national to exalt itself as morally superior in their encounters with the Other. Consequently, by exalting the nation as compassionate, in the above-mentioned quote, it exalts the national as morally superior to the asylum seekers, thus, constructing the nation as morally superior to the asylum seekers. In other words, the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to imagine the nation as morally superior due the nation’s ability to be compassionate towards the lawless; the undeserving Other. This implicitly excludes those devoid of the exalted qualities, the asylum seekers, from the nation.

Additionally, the image of Canada as a generous country was also linked by the media and political statements with the enforcement of laws and regulations. This enforcement was constructed as necessary in order to protect the nation, specifically its generosity. This suggests

that Canada's enforcement of its border security is a way for it to protect itself from the threat of those who might try to take advantage of its generosity. For example, the Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland was cited saying:

"Canadians consider our country to be a very generous country and I'm proud of that," she said in Edmonton. **"But we're also a rules-based country that has laws and regulations and it's important for us to know that our rules and our laws are being enforced."** (Levitz, Toronto Star, 2017a)

So, when [Quebec City Mayor] Mr. Labeaume tells his provincial and federal counterparts grappling with an influx of asylum seekers that they've got a communications problem on their hands, they need to listen. **"Quebeckers have always been generous. They're still generous,"** Mr. Labeaume insisted last week. **"It's just that they want to understand the plan. Where does it begin and where does it end? How many [migrants] to start with and how many in the end? Explain the plan."** After weeks of laying low, the federal government last week trotted out minister after minister, and the Prime Minister himself, **to reassure Quebeckers that the Canadian border has not become the "sieve"** Coalition Avenir Québec Leader François Legault says it is. (Yakabuski, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

The Foreign Affairs Minister reproduces an us versus them narrative by stating that "Canadians" consider "our" country to be generous and that "we're" a country based on laws (Levitz, 2017a). Yakabuski (2017) reproduces a similar narrative by featuring a quote from Mayor Labeaume which frames Quebeckers as "generous" and this is followed by a paraphrase of the Prime Minister which "assures" that the border is not a "sieve". Thus, suggesting that border security works to establish the limits of "generosity". These quotes imply that 'we' are generous, while 'they' are not and 'we' are lawful, while 'they' are not. This wider discourse of generosity can be traced back to the nation formation, where Canada exalted itself as being more generous in comparison to the United States (Mackey, 2005). According to Mackey (2005), in order to construct a distinct national identity, historians liked to portray the colonisers of Canada as being more generous than the United States by comparing the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada versus that of the United States. Thus, creating an image of Canada as innocent of racism

and hiding the inequalities and oppression suffered by Indigenous peoples during the foundation of Canada (Mackey, 2005).

Furthermore, this discourse of Canadian generosity has also been attributed to Canada's immigration laws, even though historically, Canada's immigration laws have been explicitly and implicitly exclusionary (Thobani, 2007). Generosity has also been linked to the fall of the Canadian welfare state, where the Other was constructed as taking advantage of Canada's generosity (Thobani, 2007). Consequently, by associating generosity to lawfulness, it implies that Canada needs to protect itself from those it has deemed a threat to its generosity. By reproducing Canada's image as a generous nation, the media and political statements (featured in the media) simultaneously reproduced the discourse of immigrants abusing Canada's generosity¹³. The next subsection will discuss how a discourse on increasing border security was produced.

4.1.2. Technique Two: Increasing Border Security

This section will discuss how the media and political statements (selected by the media) produced a discourse where an increase in border control was seen as a necessary tool in order for Canada to remain a welcoming country. This was done by constructing the government as the protectors of the nation. More specifically, it was stipulated that an increase in border control should be done in order to decrease the number of 'bogus' refugees.

The increase in border security constructed the government as the protectors of the nation.

"Our No. 1 job is to protect our citizens," [Trudeau] stated in his opening statement, warning once again that all existing rules will apply to the border-crossing asylum seekers. Trudeau also **pledged more resources to accelerate the screening process.** (Hébert, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A1)

¹³ This will be discussed with more depth in the Discourse of Victimization section.

Metal barricades kept the media at bay as **five or six RCMP officers waited to arrest new arrivals crossing into Quebec** from New York. (Lowrie, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A9)

In the first quote, the government is seen as the protector by saying that: “Our no. 1 job is to protect our citizens”. This reinforces the us versus them dichotomy where “our citizens” must be protected from what is implied as the threat of the Other. Consequently, the nation must be consistently vigilant in monitoring the border against the potential victimization from the threatening Other (Pratt & Thompson, 2008). This ‘vigilance’ is can be seen in the second quote where it creates an image of RCMP officers at the border protecting the nation by “[waiting] to arrest new arrivals”. According to Pratt and Thompson (2008), this constructs the nation into a ‘damsel in distress’. As such, increasing border security, as suggested in the first quote, by providing more “resources to accelerate the screening process” is needed in order to protect the nation. The government (and the RCMP) becomes the guardian of the nation whereby it is able to provide the resources for the “screening process” and arrest “new arrivals” in order to protect the nation from threat of the Other (Pratt & Thompson, 2008). Through these ‘screening processes’ and arrests, it is then possible to filter the ‘undesirable’, thus establishing the limits of the nation by determining who is allowed to remain within the national space (Anderson et al., 2009; Aas, 2007).

This construction of the border as a filtering method can be seen in the media where the filtering of the ‘undesirable’ is utilized as a way to reproduce the nation’s exalted value as a welcoming nation. By reducing the number of ‘bogus’ refugees, this will permit Canada to remain a welcoming nation. For example,

The best response Canada can offer is to **speed up** the refugee-determination process. That means spending **more money, and hiring more bodies** for the Canada Border Services Agency and the Immigration and Refugee Board. Determine status quickly, **accept those who are genuine refugees, quickly, and remove those who are not –**

quickly. It's possible to have **peace, order, good government, fairness and honesty.** The **current system is compromising all of the above.** (The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. F6)

“The rules on Canada's immigration system continue to be enforced,” [Trudeau] said. More than 7,500 people have streamed across the Canada-U.S. border since June, and Mr. Trudeau was in Montreal for a meeting of a new federal-provincial task force that is trying to address the situation. **The Prime Minister said his government has added staff to speed up their processing, but he offered no targets or timelines.** (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017d)

An increase in resources is seen as necessary in order to process the refugee claims. This increase in resources is seen as spending “more money, and hiring more bodies” and “added staff”, thus, contributing to an increase in border control. The increase in border control is equated with the ability to quickly process refugee claims. This will then allow Canada to accept ‘genuine’ refugees and remove ‘bogus’ refugees¹⁴ “quickly”. The ‘bogus’ refugee is often equated with individuals who are making a claim of asylum for the sole purpose of taking advantage of the country’s resources. This increase in exclusionary measures (border security) can be used against those who are associated with danger (‘bogus’ refugees) to the nation space (Ahmed, 2000). Consequently, this ability to separate the asylum seekers into these categories became associated with maintaining the nation’s exalted values.

In the first quote, the values of “peace, order, good government, fairness and honesty” were attributed to the immigration system. However, the current system, with the lack of additional resources, is seen as jeopardizing these values. This suggests that the asylum seekers, labelled as “bogus”, are devoid of these values: they are dishonest and associated with abuse (Thobani, 2007). Consequently, the increase in border control is implicitly linked with the nation’s ability to retain its values. This will also allow Canada to be more welcoming under the condition that it can welcome (include) those it desires (‘genuine’ refugees) and remove (deport)

¹⁴ The chapter on the Representation of Asylum Seekers will discuss the ‘bogus’ refugee in more depth.

those who are not ('bogus' refugees). Here, border control is being equated with being welcoming which is a paradox since borders are made to prevent people from entering the country rather than welcoming them. In other words, it is interesting to note that by suggesting an increase in border security (exclusionary measures), the media is able to imagine Canada as a welcoming (inclusive) nation.

Furthermore, by suggesting that the needs of an increase in border control in order to speed up the processing of refugee claims, the media is able to act as managers of national space through the language it uses to describe the asylum seekers. This was done by using categories of spatial managers (Hage, 2012). Within this discourse, one sees her/himself as belonging to the nation and as occupying a privileged position in the nation. As such, it is possible to treat the other as an object to be managed (i.e. removed from the nation space), whilst treating the self as spatially empowered to remove or position the Other (Hage, 2012, p. 42). In other words, the recognition of the asylum seekers as *strangers* permits the nation to come together in order to expel them (Ahmed, 2000). An image of the nation is necessary in order to exercise this managerial power so as to classify others as 'undesirable' as a way to maintain the nation's image.

This discourse of spatial managers is produced by the media through legitimizing the need to increase border control as a way to maintain the nation's image.

There's really two ways to **discourage the flow**. You can make the lives of border crossers rougher, by locking them up. But that means locking up desperate families. Or you can **speed the processing of refugee claims, either through reform or extra funding**, so that **people without valid claims are returned home quickly** – in theory, that might **discourage those who aren't bona fide refugees**. Right now, Mr. Trudeau's Liberals are hoping this **latest flow of asylum seekers will subside**. (Clark, The Globe and Mail, 2017, P. A4)

The asylum seekers are implicitly characterized as being ‘too many’, by suggesting that there needs to be more resources in order to process the claims. This categorization of ‘too many’, which produces an undesirable object, is what Hage (2012) calls categories of spatial management (p. 38). These categories embody some sort of racist belief where there is an assumption that there is a specific territorial space where it is possible to assess that ‘too many’ are within said space. Since the space is often defined in national terms, the problems associated with ‘too many’ is also discussed in national terms. The production of these categories of spatial management is due to the need to preserve the imagined race, ethnicity and culture of the nation (Hage, 2012). Thus, by suggesting that there are ‘too many’ asylum seekers, the media simultaneously constructs the asylum seekers as ‘undesirable’ ‘bogus’ refugees. Their presence is constructed as a problem for the nation. In the above-mentioned quote, this is done by turning the asylum seekers into objects in reference to “discourage the flow” and “latest flow of asylum seekers will subside”.

The noun ‘flow’ is also a way to problematize the asylum seekers by using a term that suggest a naturally occurring phenomenon and catastrophe (Horsti, 2012, p. 303). The border can be thought of as having “the function of a membrane, which allows the *flows* [emphasis added] to get through, but keeps the unwanted ‘residue’ out” (Aas, 2007, p. 292). By utilizing the word ‘flow’ in order refer to and describe the asylum seekers in the context of increasing border security, it insinuates that currently, the border is unable to keep the “unwanted residue out”: it will permit catastrophe to ensue. Increasing the funding for border security is seen as a way to prevent a disaster from occurring by increasing its capacity to stop (‘discourage’ and ‘subside’) the threatening ‘objects’. Consequently, the asylum seekers are turned into objects that threaten the border, the nation: the home.

The quote's reference to 'return home' non-genuine asylum seekers invokes the 'go home' discourse as discussed by Hage (2012), where the image of the ideal nation is implicitly expressed. As such, what is classified as 'undesirable' is stopping the nation from being what it is imagined to be (Hage, 2012). By expressing the desire for the Other to go home, it reveals the desire to be at home (Hage, 2012, p. 40). This desire refers to a feeling of being at home rather than a physical space. According to Hage (2012), this 'homely' feeling is often characterized by: familiarity, security and community (p. 40). Therefore, when producing the 'go home' discourse, it suggests a loss of the homely feeling where one no longer recognizes the national space. There is a loss of familiarity which is necessary in order to create a sense of community: symbolic forms of attachments. It is also not possible to have a sense of security (the absence of the threatening Other) due to the lack of familiarity and community. The desire to be at home becomes a spatial *aspiration* where it is possible to categorize the Other as 'undesirable' (Hage, 2012, p. 42). Therefore, the asylum seekers are implicitly defined as dangerous because they are too close to the home: the nation (Ahmed, 2000).

By stating that it is important that "people without valid claims are returned home quickly" (Clark, 2017), it suggests that those who are classified as non-genuine asylum seekers do not belong to the nation and thus they do not have the right to share the 'home' (Yuval-Davis et al., 2019). The increase in border security becomes a method that is used with the aspiration that it will lead to the ability to feel at 'home'. Border security develops into a tool that is used to create a sense of familiarity (recognizing the national space), community (symbolic forms of attachments) and security (the absence of the threatening Other). In other words, the increase in border security can be argued to be perceived as a way to differentiate between 'us' and 'them' in order to maintain an image of the nation through the removal of the 'undesirable'.

To summarize, this section discussed how the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to reproduce the nation's image as a welcoming, generous and compassionate nation. This was done by constructing the asylum seekers as a threat to the nation. The production of the asylum seeker as the *stranger* allowed for the suggestion of the use of inclusionary and exclusionary measures in order to create the imagined boundary of the nation (Ahmed, 2000). The media and political statements (selected by the media) were then able to utilize techniques of inclusion and exclusions in order to reproduce Canada's exalted values. The construction of the asylum seekers as lawless justified the emergence of a discourse of border security as a method used to protect the nation's image from the Other. This construction stemmed from the originary colonial violence used to colonise Indigenous peoples by constructing Indigenous peoples as lawless and white Europeans as lawful.

This representation of the nation by the media and political statements (featured in the media) allowed them to simultaneously reproduce the nation as a White nation and as: welcoming, compassionate and generous. The enforcement of laws became a condition that had to be met in order for the nation to be the latter. By exalting the nation as such, the media and political statements (selected by the media) were able to reproduce this historical dichotomy of inclusion and exclusion that has been used throughout the nation's formation. The processes of inclusion and exclusion create the boundaries of a nation through its ability to identify those who belong from those who do not (Ahmed, 2000). In order for this dichotomy to be reproduced, the media and political statements (featured in the media) implicitly constructed the asylum seekers as a threat and devoid of these exalted qualities. This created an us versus them dichotomy, where 'we' must enforce the laws in order to exclude 'them'. Thus, the focus on border security implicitly suggests that in order for Canada to be a welcoming, compassionate and a generous

nation, it must exclude ‘them’ from the nation. This exclusion is conducted under the guise of protecting the nation. This dichotomy was necessary in order for the media and political statements (selected by the media) to reproduce the nation’s image. Consequently, the enforcement of boundaries (the border) became the manner in which the nation’s image could be sustained due to a perceived threat of the Other (Ahmed, 2000).

Furthermore, the media and political statements discussed the increase in funding for border security as a way to reproduce the nation’s exalted qualities. The increase in border security was equated with the ability to remove those the nation deemed to be ‘undesirable’ and threatening the nation’s image. By increasing border security, the nation will then be able to reassert its sovereignty and reaffirm its national identity. Thus, by separating ‘us’ from ‘them’ the nation will be able to filter the desirable from the ‘undesirable’ in order to reproduce the national identity, as a White nation. Consequently, the media is able to justify the increased use of exclusionary measures in order to be more inclusive. The following section will discuss how the nation was imagined as a victim.

4.2. Discourse of Victimization

This section will discuss how the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to construct Canada as a victim by constructing the asylum seekers as the perpetrators of this victimization. The nation was imagined as vulnerable as a result of three different discourses. First, Canada was imagined as unprotected due to its weak borders. Second, the nation was constructed as at risk of exploitation through the construction of the immigration system as being flawed. Finally, the nation was portrayed as being susceptible to deception due to its excessive exalted values: being too welcoming and generous allowed the nation to become a target. These three discourses allowed for the identification of the symptoms which may

contribute to a 'failed' imagined nation (Ahmed, 2000). Thus, permitting the image of the ideal imagined nation is maintained. An increase in border security is implied in order to protect the nation from further victimization, thus, protecting the image of the 'ideal' nation.

4.2.1. Unprotected Nation

This section will discuss how the media and political statements (selected by the media) were able to reproduce a discourse of victimization by evoking an image of an unprotected nation. This discourse emerged as a result of portraying the nation as having a weak border; thus, enabling the Other to 'prey' on Canada.

The media was able to create an image of an unprotected nation by focusing on the border itself and how easy it is to cross the border. The border was constructed as something that is tangible and a symbolic representation of the nation (Haddad, 2007). For example:

Most of the taxis were heading to Roxham Rd., a popular illegal crossing spot where people **hop a small ditch into Canada** in order to file asylum claims from within the country. (Lowrie, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A5)

In the bushes at the end of Roxham Rd., just steps from Canada, lay a sheet of white paper that had been ripped from a notebook and soaked from the previous day's rain. It was torn into 11 pieces and tossed away, seemingly moments before its author followed in the steps of the nearly 7,000 others who have sought asylum in Canada so far in 2017 **via this hole in the border with the U.S.** (Woods, Toronto Star, 2017)

Here, by using terms such as "hop a small ditch" and "this hole", the media constructed the border as not just something that is physical, but also as something that is easy to cross and not much of a barrier. This creates an image of an unprotected nation, where it is unable to assert its sovereignty and designated national identities (Haddad, 2007). It has lost its power to separate 'us' from 'them', unable to filter the desirable from the undesirable (Dauvergne, 2008; Anderson et al., 2009). Due to this perceived vulnerability, the nation is unable to reaffirm its exalted qualities by excluding those it deems devoid of those qualities.

Furthermore, the media and political statements (featured in the media) constructed the border as something that has failed to protect the nation by constructing the asylum seekers as the threatening Other that can easily enter the country. This was done by using metaphors and unsourced statistics to describe asylum seekers in relation to the ‘weak’ border. These metaphors are used to represent (in the general sense) the asylum seekers as a threat and through this construction, it is possible to view the border as vulnerable.

More than **7,000 people** have crossed from the U.S. into Canada at **a breach in the border** in Quebec this year, though a **wave** that began in July appears to have slowed in recent days, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said this week. (Woods, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A8)

Groups that work with migrants say those **spilling across the border** are fearful of being returned to an uncertain future in Haiti as early as next January. (Crete, Toronto Star, 2017)

Canada’s Immigration Minister denies his government was poorly prepared for the **surge** of asylum seekers **streaming** on foot into Quebec from the United States this summer, even as federal officials intensify efforts to try to **curb the flow** of those **showing up at irregular border crossings**. (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017c)

Metaphors such as “breach”, “wave”, “spilling”, “streaming”, “surge” and “flow” are used in order to represent the asylum seekers as a threat (van Dijk, 2012)¹⁵. As argued by van Dijk (2012), these metaphors construct the asylum seekers “in terms of threatening masses of water – in which “we” may drown”, thus threatening ‘our’ life (p. 26). He continues by arguing that this then renders border security a matter of life and death. These metaphors create an image of the border where it is incapable of protecting the nation from the ‘threatening masses’. Furthermore, the use of unsourced statistics is part of what van Dijk (1993) calls the “numbers game”, where the numbers are used to negatively represent immigration by constructing migrants as threats. The unsourced statistics serve to illustrate that the border has failed in exacting its primary

¹⁵ The construction of the asylum seekers as threats will be discussed with more depth in the following chapter.

function: protecting the nation from the Other. Consequently, by using these two methods, the media is able to create a discourse of an unprotected nation, that is under life or death threat of the Other. The nation is constructed as being vulnerable and weak due to its lack of border security. In other words, the border is perceived as being unable to keep the nation safe, thus unable to establish the imagined nation (Ahmed, 2000). As such, the nation is able to become victimized by the Other.

4.2.2. Immigration System Flaws

The media also constructed the nation as a victim by claiming the nation had a weak immigration system. Thus, the asylum seekers were constructed as being able to exploit these weaknesses¹⁶. The immigration system was constructed as being flawed due to its inability to process refugee claims and the Safe Third Country Agreement's inability to prevent migration. This implicitly suggests the need for Canada to increase border security in order to protect it from further victimization.

Faced with an increase in refugee claims, the nation was imagined as a victim due to a perceived inefficiency of the immigration system. This construction was possible as a result of the portrayal of the asylum seekers as a threat and devoid of the Canadian exalted values. The representation of Canada as a victim permits the creation of a homogenous and unified body that is victimized by the external Others, while ignoring how the nation has victimized the internal Other (Mackey, 2005). In the following example, it is possible to see how the media was able to construct the nation as powerless against the predatory Other¹⁷.

These people are simply taking advantage of Canada's inability to quickly weed out and dispose of queue jumpers and economic migrants in the hopes of extending their stay in North America. (Toronto Star, 2017, p. A10)

¹⁶ The construction of the asylum seekers as opportunistic will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁷ The construction of the asylum seekers as predators will be discussed with more depth in the following chapter.

Janet Dench, executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees, said **the IRB delays could attract more bogus asylum claimants**. “When the government **allows a backlog to develop**, what happens is that it creates a situation where there is an **incentive for people who don't need protection** to enter the system, even though they know at the end they're going to be rejected. But if it's not going to come for a while, **then it can be in their interest**.” (Zilio, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A21)

The portrayal of the asylum seekers as objects to be excluded (“these people”, “weed out and dispose of” and “attract more”) was necessary in order to imagine the nation as powerless. The flaw associated with the immigration system is the system’s inability to process the number of refugee claims. The nation was constructed as powerless due to the asylum seekers’ ability to “take advantage” of this flaw. Historically, Canada was able to construct an image of national innocence by locating the oppressor outside its borders (Mackey, 2005). However, here, the oppressors were located within the borders by the media; the nation is victimized by the asylum seekers. Thus, this suggests a need to fix the immigration system in order to protect the nation from the ‘oppressors’.

This perceived need to improve the immigration system is further seen due to the media’s focus on the ‘flawed’ immigration laws. As seen in the following examples, the media was able to construct the immigration system as a failure by using terms such as “quirk”, “exploiting”, “loophole” and “circumvent” in relation to the Safe Third Country Agreement:

But, in a **quirk in the application of the law**, if migrants arrive in Canada at a location other than a port of entry, such as Roxham Road, they are allowed to request refugee status there. (Ring, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

Even if Ottawa is reluctant, for a range of understandable political reasons, to take on the **Safe Third Party Agreement**, it certainly shouldn't be surprised that asylum seekers are **exploiting the loophole** that allows them to **circumvent the agreement** by entering the country illegally. Prime Minister Trudeau has urged asylum seekers to cross only at official checkpoints, but if they do as he asks they will be turned away. (Toronto Star, 2017b)

Each of these terms suggests that there is a flaw within the Safe Third Agreement where it is unable to prevent migration. This flaw implicitly suggests that the Safe Third Country Agreement is preventing the nation from reproducing its white national identity. The Agreement is used as a method to fortify the border in order for the nation to exert its sovereignty through exclusion (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007). In fact, through the Safe Third Country Agreement the goal is to prevent or reduce migration at its source (Haddad, 2007; Pratt, 2005). As a result of this type of agreement, asylum seekers tend to use irregular means in order to enter Canada (Chan & Chunn, 2014) and due to globalization, irregular migrants tend to be from the Global South (Schinkel, 2009). Meanwhile, the movement of white populations tend to be categorized as legitimate (Anderson et al., 2009). Like other methods used to fortify the border, it can be argued that the Safe Third Country Agreement is a method used to restrict the movement of racialized individuals (Hyndman & Mountz, 2007; Thobani, 2007). Consequently, the use of the Agreement can be seen as a way to reinforce the nation's white identity by determining who belongs to the nation and who do not (Innes, 2010). By suggesting that there is a flaw within the Safe Third Country Agreement, it suggests that the nation is not capable of adequately determining who belongs to the nation.

More specifically, this flaw is constructed as though the law has omitted or failed to account for the possibility of asylum seekers making a refugee claim when entering the country in-between ports of entries. Due to this perceived 'flaw', a failure of the system, the media is able to construct the asylum seekers as using this failure to their advantage: "circumventing" the Agreement. However, what is ignored by this discourse, is that the law is not flawed. In the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR) section 159.4 (1) (a)¹⁸, explains that the

¹⁸ IRPR s. 159.4 (1) Paragraph 101(1)(e) of the Act does not apply to a claimant who seeks to enter Canada at (a) a location that is not a port of entry;

Safe Third Country Agreement does not apply to those who seek refugee status from a place other than a port of entry. Consequently, by omitting the fact that there is a specific provision within Canadian immigration laws, which permits individuals to make a claim for asylum between ports of entries, the media is able to create a discourse that Canadian immigration laws are flawed. As a result, these permits the construction of the asylum seekers as a predator that is able to victimize the nation. This construction of the asylum seekers permits them to be seen as a racialized ‘problem’ to be managed (Walia, 2013; Hyndman & Mountz, 2008; Pratt, 2005; Thobani, 2007), thus implicitly justifying an increase in border security in order to reproduce the nation’s white national identity.

The media’s construction of the nation as a victim continued when it reported on the call to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement. The criticism of the Agreement was often in relation to how advocate groups and/or the New Democratic Party (NDP) believed that the Agreement should be suspended. This is because the NDP argues that asylum seekers risk their lives by entering the country irregularly (New Democratic Party, 2017). However, the media was able to dismiss this criticism through the construction of the potential suspension as being flawed and problematic and/or unnecessary:

The NDP plan to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement would only turn a **steady flow of asylum seekers** from the United States **into a flood that would rightly upset Canadians.** (Yakabuski, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

The Liberal government has repeatedly insisted there’s **no reason to suspend the deal**, noting that the asylum system in the **United States is still functioning and the country remains open to granting people refuge.** (Levitz, Toronto Star, 2017b)

In the first quote, the NDP’s intent to suspend the Agreement is constructed as problematic by referencing the asylum seekers by using the term “flow”. As previously mentioned, the noun ‘flow’ is often utilized to objectify and dehumanize asylum seekers. The result of the suspension

of the Agreement is then equated to a “flood” which, not only references to a threatening body of water, but it also implies powerlessness against such a force (van Dijk, 2000). This suggests that the “steady flow of asylum seekers” appears to be somewhat manageable for the moment, however, if the Agreement were to be suspended, the result would be an uncontrollable “flood”. Although the nation remains constructed as a victim due to the “steady flow”, the suspension of the Agreement is perceived as though it would exacerbate the nation’s victimization. As such, the suspension of the Agreement is constructed as being problematic for those who belong to the nation: Canadians. However, in the second quote, the suspension of the Agreement is constructed as unnecessary due to the United States being a country that is “open to granting people refuge”.

What has been ignored by the media is the problems that have been associated with the Safe Third Country Agreement. For example, the Canadian Council for Refugees and Amnesty International released a brief on June 27, 2017 calling for the suspension of the Safe Third Country Agreement because the United States has fallen short on international and Canadian legal standard (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2017)¹⁹. Amongst the reasons includes the inability to claim asylum in the United States if an individual has lived there for more than a year and facing prosecution for ‘illegal’ entry. Furthermore, there is also the differential treatment of refugees in the United States depending on their country of origin. More specifically, the United States has a history of interdicting Haitian asylum seekers, where Haitian refugees have often been subjected to a blanket detention policy (Akibo-Betts, 2006). In 1981, President Reagan entered into an agreement with the then dictator Haitian Jean-Claude Duvalier where the U.S.

¹⁹ On July 22nd, 2020 the Canadian Federal Court ruled that the Agreement violates the section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom* and that the United States is indeed not a safe third country. Therefore, the Agreement will be suspended 6 months from this decision (2020 FC 770). The Agreement will be suspended 6 months after the decision was made. Although this decision was rendered after my sampling period, it supports the various arguments that the Safe Third Country Agreement is problematic and that the media failed to consider these issues in its representation of the nation and of Haitian asylum seekers.

Coast Guard could stop vessels suspected of transporting undocumented Haitian migrants and return them to Haiti (Congressional Research Services, 2011). As such, for these various reasons, there has been calls for Canada to suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement. These reasons have been ignored by the media in favour of constructing the asylum seekers as victimizing the nation if the Agreement were to be suspended. Furthermore, while immigration flaws were constructed as allowing the nation to be vulnerable, the nation was also constructed as susceptible to victimization due to its exalted values.

4.2.3. Excessive Exalted Values

This section will discuss how the media and political statements (made through the media) constructed the nation as a victim due to its excessive exalted values. Canada's image as a welcoming and generous country was framed as contributing to the country's victimization. These exalted values then became flaws associated with the nation, and thus, created an image of a naive Canada where asylum seekers are able to take advantage of the nation. This created an us versus them dichotomy where Canada is seen as being too generous and welcoming and must protect itself from the Other who seeks to take advantage of it.

The media constructed the nation's welcoming image as being problematic due to it contributing to its own victimization. The nation was constructed as being excessively welcoming:

Add to the mix **Canada's reputation as a welcoming place**, and **the result has been a steady flow** of refugees entering this country on back roads and through fields. There were 4,345 illegal border crossings into Canada in the first six months of the year, according to federal government figures. The majority, **3,350**, occurred in Quebec, followed by **646** in Manitoba and **332** in British Columbia. A **second wave** began last month, after the White House's decision to extend the TPS designation for Haitian refugees for only six more months, instead of the usual 18 months. That decision came in spite of the fact that conditions in Haiti remain dire. (The Globe and Mail, 2017)

Rumours on social media, including the application WhatsApp, suggested **Canada would give Haitian asylum seekers a free pass into the country.** In response, the federal government tried to correct the “**misinformation,**” taking to social media to set the record straight about Canada's immigration policies and **dispatching** Haitian-Canadian MP Emmanuel Dubourg to Miami last week to dispel the rumours among the Haitian diaspora there. “I went on a mission to Miami to tell the Haitian community – including in Creole – that there is false information that is circulating, including on social media. I told people not to sell their goods, not to quit their jobs to try and cross the border in an irregular fashion,” said Mr. Dubourg, who sits on the task force. He said his message resonated loudly in the United States, Canada and Haiti. (Zilio, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A8)

In these example, Canada’s “reputation” as a welcoming nation is constructed as a reason as to why the asylum seekers decided to come to Canada. In the second quote, the nation’s welcoming image was attributed to “misinformation” that Haitian asylum seekers would receive a “free pass” into the country. These quotes suggest that Canada’s image is seen as making it possible for it to be ‘targeted’ by the Other. This image becomes constructed as problematic due to the construction of the asylum seekers as a threat to the nation. In the first quote, the asylum seekers are constructed as threat due to the use of words such as, “steady flow”, “second wave” and citing statistics in relation to the number of asylum seekers entering the country. In the second quote, the asylum seekers are implicitly constructed as threats due to the use of the term “dispatching”. It suggests that the MP’s message had to be delivered quickly in order to prevent more asylum seekers from entering the country.

The nation’s appearance as being excessively welcoming was also seen as a result of the Prime Minister:

The Conservatives and the NDP have also taken Mr. Trudeau to task for a tweet he issued in January shortly after U.S. President Donald Trump announced a plan to ban immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries. **The tweet²⁰ welcomed people fleeing war and persecution, using the hashtag #WelcometoCanada, and went viral.** Ms. Rempel said it gave potential asylum claimants “false hope.” “I absolutely think that

²⁰ Trudeau, J. [JustinTrudeau]. (2017, January 28). To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength [#WelcometoCanada](https://twitter.com/JustinTrudeau/status/825438460265762816) [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/JustinTrudeau/status/825438460265762816>

that set the tone. **Man, was that ever irresponsible,**” she said. (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017d)

The **tweet** was heavily criticized by the Conservative opposition for **sparking the American exodus**. (Blanchfield, Toronto Star, 2017)

The Prime Minister’s tweet welcoming the refugees was constructed as attracting asylum seekers to Canada by the Conservatives and the NDP. This was seen as problematic because it was “irresponsible”, gave “false hope” to the asylum seekers and “sparked the American exodus”. Thus, the nation is imagined as being excessively welcoming which is problematic because it has attracted ‘too many’ asylum seekers.

Similarly, the nation’s excessive generosity was constructed by the media as being harmful to the nation:

Most Canadians **feel proud that we take in refugees from war-torn countries**, people who are fleeing areas where they and their families are in great danger. They give up everything to find a country where they can feel safe and raise their families in peace. These are the genuine refugees and we welcome them. Unfortunately, there are **fake ones** who **try to take advantage of our generosity**. Haitians are **flooding our border** from the United States, not because they are in any danger but because **they think they can get a better deal in Canada**. (Toronto Star, 2017e)

Canada’s image as a generous country was constructed as being complicit in its own victimization. In the above-mentioned quote, Canada’s image as a generous country is evoked by how ‘proud’ Canadians are in taking refugees from war-torn countries. However, this generosity is constructed as problematic because there are “fake” refugees who will try to take advantage of the country’s generosity. In order to construct the nation as a victim, the media constructed the asylum seekers as a threat by using terms such as “fake ones”, “try to take advantage”, “flooding our border” and “they think they can get a better deal in Canada”. The term “flooding” is particularly important here. As previously mentioned, the term ‘flooding’ refers to a natural disaster related to a body of water, where it dehumanizes and implies powerlessness against such

a force (van Dijk, 2000). This constructs the nation as being powerless against the threat of the Other who seeks to take advantage of the nation's generosity. Thus, the asylum seekers devoid of the exalted values are the external Others who seek to victimize the nation.

This construction of the nation of being a victim due to its own image is reminiscent of the fall of the welfare state. In the 1990s, immigrants were scapegoated for the destruction of national unity (Thobani, 2007). The nation's naive generosity was seen as costly and the nation's compassion had to be measured because its excess was as problematic as its lack (Thobani, 2007). Consequently, the nation had to put its interest before those of the Other. The media has reproduced this discourse where the nation's welcoming and generous nature has to be measured because its excess is detrimental due to attracting 'too many' asylum seekers. As such, this implicitly suggests that there is a need to put the interest of Canadians ahead of the asylum seekers. The next subsection will discuss how the nation was constructed as a victim due to its weak borders.

To summarize this subsection, the media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to construct the nation as a victim through three different discourses. First, the media and political statements (selected by the media) produced a discourse of an unprotected nation which implied that there was a need to increase border security. By constructing the asylum seekers as a threat, through the use of metaphors and the numbers game, the media was able to construct the nation's border as something that is tangible and under threat. Through the construction of a 'weak' border, the media was able to portray the asylum seekers as perpetrators. Thus, the nation is vulnerable due to its inability to adequately protect itself from the Other. Second, the nation was constructed as a victim as a result of its flawed immigration system. These flaws were seen as being exploited by the asylum seekers. The first flaw exposed

was the nation's inability to process refugee claims and the second was in relation to the Safe Third Country Agreement. In both instances, in order for the nation to be constructed as a victim, the media constructed the asylum seekers as the perpetrators. This permitted the nation to keep its national innocence, where the Other is the oppressor. Finally, the nation was constructed as a victim due to its exalted values. The nation's generosity and welcoming reputation as being in excess. This excess was perceived as being problematic due to making the nation vulnerable to being taken advantage of by the Other. Consequently, the nation was constructed as a victim due to its own image. By identifying what could contribute to the image of a 'failed' nation, it is possible to imagine a 'healthy' nation (Ahmed, 2000). Thus, it creates the need to regulate the nation space in order to maintain the imagined 'healthy' nation. Here, by identifying how the nation was able to be victimized by the asylum seekers, the media was able to implicitly suggest a need to increase border security in order to protect the imagined 'healthy' nation.

In conclusion, this chapter discussed how the media and political statements (featured in the media) imagined the nation. They utilised techniques of inclusion and exclusions in order to image the nation as welcoming, generous and compassionate. This was done by exalting the nation as a lawful nation, while constructing the asylum seekers as lawless. These constructions allowed the media and political statements to establish that in order for the nation to be welcoming, generous and compassionate, the nation had to implement exclusionary measures in order to protect itself. Furthermore, these exclusionary measures included focusing on certain criteria in order to welcome and be compassionate towards the Other. A discourse on increasing border security was also present in order for the nation to welcome the Other.

The media and political statements (selected by the media) also imagined the nation as a victim by constructing the asylum seekers as the oppressors. More particularly, the nation was

imagined as a victim due to the image of an unprotected nation with a vulnerable border. The media also focused on the supposed weaknesses of the immigration system. The discourse of victimization was also present as a result of constructing the nation as vulnerable to being taken advantage of due to its 'excessive' generosity and welcoming attitude. Consequently, this discourse of victimization implicitly suggests an increase in border security in order to provide adequate protection from the Other. In the media's and political statements' construction of the nation, it was possible to examine how these discourses are linked to historical discourses which have been used to create a racialized image of Canada. In the following chapter, the specific ways in which the media and political statements (made through the media) constructed the asylum seekers as threats will be discussed with more depth.

Chapter 5: The Representation of Asylum Seekers

This chapter will discuss the different ways in which the media and political statements (featured in the media) represented the asylum seekers. The first section will discuss how the motivations of the asylum seekers were represented for coming to Canada. The motivations attributed to the asylum seekers were linked to viewing Canada as superior to the United States in regards to its generosity and welcoming attitude. By implicitly inscribing this construction within the nation's discourse of victimization, the asylum seekers' refugee claims are then represented as 'bogus'. The second section will discuss the different techniques used to vilify the asylum seekers. They were constructed as: 'bogus' refugees, criminals and perceived as being a burden and draining the nation. The negative representation of the asylum seekers worked to delegitimize their claims. This suggested that the asylum seekers were not in need of protection, but rather, the nation should protect itself from 'them'.

5.1. 'Their' Motivations

The media generally presented their motivations for seeking asylum as due to Canada treating asylum seekers better than the United States. First, this was done by quoting asylum seekers who regarded Canada as having a more positive attitude towards immigrants than the United States. As such, the asylum seekers appear to have internalized the historical perception that Canada was superior to the United States. This internalization can be argued to be part of wider discourses which has contributed to the erasure of Canada's history of anti-blackness. This was done by utilizing quotes from the asylum seekers which implicitly indicated the nation as being more welcoming and generous than the United States. By attributing the asylum seekers' motivations for seeking asylum to these exalted qualities, the media omitted the conditions in Haiti during the sampling period. As such, it reaffirmed the discourse of victimization whereby

the nation is perceived as being too welcoming and generous. Finally, the asylum seekers' quotes were often followed by a quote from a person in power. Racialized minorities are rarely quoted, therefore quoting a person in power works to validate and/or invalidate their voices (van Dijk, 2000). Here, these quotes worked to invalidate the asylum seekers by constructing them as threats and 'bogus' claimants.

Generally, in the mainstream media, racialized minorities are often quoted less than white participants, politicians, scholars, columnists and members of the social bureaucracy (van Dijk, 1993; 2000). When they are quoted, the quotes selected often confirm the general attitudes about the group in question (van Dijk, 2000). Here, when the asylum seekers were quoted, the quotes were often in relation to the asylum seekers' motivation to seek asylum in Canada. The quotes helped construct the narrative as Canada being a better nation than the United States:

Still, the couple said they felt they had **no choice but to leave the United States**, with the Trump administration's **hardening position against immigration**. The family left their home in New York, where they had lived for five years, to head north to Quebec. **"We had no hope left in the United States,"** the father said on Sunday, three of his children by his side. He asked not to be named before his family's case was decided on. **"Here, we are keeping our hopes alive."** (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A1)

"There's no end to the **badmouthing of immigrants in the United States**, it's become untenable," said Voltaire Timothe, a young man who had travelled from Boston with a dozen other Haitians. **"I had to do something."** (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017b)

Here, Canada was constructed as being better than the United States in terms of the attitudes towards immigrants. For example, this anti-immigration sentiment could perhaps be partially attributed to the various decisions made by President Trump. During the sampling time period, it was unclear whether the President would renew the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians. However, on May 24th, 2017 it was announced that the TPS would be renewed for an additional six months and that Haitian nationals should prepare to return to Haiti in case the status is not extended again (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2017). However, this

perception that Canada is better than the United States is not entirely true since, Canada ended its Haitian Special Measures program in 2014 (Government of Canada, 2015, para. 1). Canada's program consisted of: giving priority to new and existing permanent resident applications and refugee claims, expediting requests for extensions of temporary resident visas and suspending all deportations to Haiti (Government of Canada, 2017a). The program expired in November 2014 and the government lifted its ban on deportations to Haiti in March 2015. Therefore, all Haitian nationals without legal status in Canada could face removal (Government of Canada, 2015).

The perception that Canada is superior to the United States can be found in the wider historical context of the nation's formation where Canada exalted itself as distinct and better than the United States. Mackey (2005) argues that during the Canada First Movement in the late 1800s, the nation constructed itself as being better than the United States because the nation was not 'contaminated' by weaker southern races due to its colder climate (p. 43). The nation's colder climate was constructed as preventing the Black 'problem' which plagued the United States, from affecting Canada (Mackey, 2005; Maynard, 2017). Canada was exalted as superior to the United States, amongst other reasons, due to its untainted northern (white) blood (Mackey, 2005). However, in the 1960s, a national identity crisis emerged due to the increase in immigration (Thobani, 2007). As a response, Canada's identity as multicultural emerged as a way to be distinct and superior from the United States and other nations (Thobani, 2007; Mackey, 2005). This exaltation of a multicultural society was used to disguise Canada's violent history of colonization, slavery and the continuing abuses of Black and other racialized communities (Maynard, 2017, p. 55). Consequently, the selected quotations, of the asylum seekers by the media, fits into the existing narrative that Canada is better than the United States; reinforcing the erasure of Canada's history of anti-blackness.

Furthermore, when asylum seekers were quoted, the quotes exalted Canada as a welcoming and generous nation. It appears as though the asylum seekers had internalized the beliefs of these exalted qualities about the nation. As discussed in the previous chapter, the media constructs the nation as a victim by suggesting that the nation is too welcoming and generous. By using quotes that suggest that the asylum seekers desire to come to Canada is related to the nation's generosity and welcoming attributes, the media is able to reaffirm this discourse of victimization. For example, some asylum seekers were quoted saying the following:

Ms. Boirond said she **learned that Canada was open to newcomers** by watching the news at her home in New Jersey. She walked across an irregular border crossing with Quebec in late July, and nothing **so far in her treatment** has changed that view. **"They give health care, housing and food."** (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017a)

Sophia Cineas, a 31-year-old Haitian woman, was one of hundreds of people who arrived at an unofficial border crossing between upstate New York and Quebec last week. She described how much **more welcoming Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is to immigrants than Mr. Trump** and how she believed **Canada would welcome her**. **"I cannot stay in the United States and there's no better place than Canada,"** she said. **"I'm doing what I've got to do."** (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017c)

In both quotes, the asylum seekers imagined the nation as welcoming: "Canada was open to newcomers", "more welcoming Prime Minister", "Canada would welcome her" and "no better place than Canada". In the first quote, the nation is implicitly imagined as being generous: "They give health care, housing and food". As such, the asylum seekers' motivations to come to Canada is seen as a result of the nation's exalted values. By selecting these types of quotes, the media has omitted the conditions that exist in Haiti, which could have contributed to the reasons behind why seeking asylum in Canada was a better alternative than deportation to Haiti during the sampling period. These reasons can be due to the life-threatening conditions in Haiti. Therefore, through the failure of acknowledging the conditions in Haiti, the media is able to make it seem as though the asylum seekers want to come to Canada for superficial reasons.

There are a variety of reasons why seeking asylum in Canada is the better alternative than deportation to Haiti. For example, Hurricane Matthews caused devastation in Haiti in October 2016, displacing 175,000 people and increasing food insecurity (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Furthermore, after the earthquake in 2010, UN peacekeepers introduced cholera in Haiti and after Hurricane Matthews, Haiti witnessed an increase in cases of cholera. During this increase, 70% of the population did not have access to health care (Amnesty International, 2018). Haiti has also used child domestic workers, where there is no age minimum for this type of work. Many of them are young girls from low-income families who are sent to live in wealthier households. These girls tend to be vulnerable to physical and sexual violence (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Violence against women is also prevalent and underreported in the country (Amnesty International, 2018). The displacement caused by Hurricane Matthews has made women and children vulnerable to abuse (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The omission of these facts suggests that the media is linking the asylum seekers' motivations for seeking asylum to the perception that Canada is better than the United States. In other words, the media is ignoring the dire consequences in Haiti which could lead to people not want to be deported there. Thus, this omission implicitly permits the media to reaffirm the discourse of victimization whereby the asylum seekers are attracted to Canada due to its excessive exalted qualities.

However, it is important to note that in my sample of 68 articles, only one article published in the *Toronto Star* took in consideration the historical and social factors which have contributed to the Haitian asylum seekers seeking asylum in Canada. Thus, this demonstrates how problematic the representation of Haitian irregular migrants was in 2017.

The impacts of **Canada's imperial relationship** with Haiti are **long lasting**. We must grapple with the reality that **our foreign policy and military interests have contributed to Haiti's political and economic instability**. It is time for **Canadians to take responsibility** for our complicity and its impacts on Haitians living in Haiti and the

diaspora. It is time for Canadians to **welcome Haitian migrants seeking refuge here with open arms**; after all, we never extended that courtesy when we barged in and occupied their land. (Diverlus, *Toronto Star*, 2017)

The claim for asylum is not constructed as frivolous, but rather as something that is a consequence of Canada's historical impact on Haiti. Border imperialisms is highlighted as an important factor which has contributed to Haitians seeking asylum in Canada. In other words, Canada's contribution to the history of unfair economic processes imposed on Haiti, is constructed as having an impact on forced migration. Here, welcoming Haitian migrants is fulfilling a debt that is owed to Haitians where "it is time for Canadians to take responsibility" for current conditions in Haiti. Despite contextualizing the Haitian asylum claims within a wider socio-political context, the other articles in the sample did not do the same. Furthermore, the *Toronto Star* is said to be a left leaning newspaper (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011) with the commitment to advocate for social justice (*Toronto Star*, 2020). However, this conflicts with what was found in my sample. Only one article out of 32 from the *Toronto Star* discussed the wider social-political context which contributed to asylum seeking. Consequently, in terms of irregular migration, it appears as though the *Toronto Star* might not be as left leaning as it is said to be. Consequently, for the most part, the mainstream media ignores the conditions in Haiti and the role that Canada has played in creating these conditions. Thus, allowing the construction of the asylum claims as frivolous.

Furthermore, often when racialized minorities are quoted, they are rarely allowed to speak alone. Their quotes are often followed by a white person or person in power in order to confirm or contest what the racialized minority has said (van Dijk, 2000, p. 39). Despite the asylum seekers imagining the nation as welcoming and generous, their quotes were often followed by individuals in power who were quoted in order to delegitimize their claim. For

example, following above-mentioned quotes by Peritz (2017a) and Perreux (2017c), the RCMP and Jean-Nicolas Beuze, the representative in Canada for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), where each respectively quoted:

The RCMP says it can handle the **flow** of asylum seekers who cross on foot from New York State before **being arrested**. But the force admits the sheer numbers – **more than 7,500 since June – are on a new scale**. (Peritz, The Globe and Mail, 2017a)

In Canada, 52 per cent of Haitian refugee claims were accepted in 2016, compared with 48 per cent in the United States, Mr. Beuze noted, but **refugee claims will be tough to make for Haitians who have been living** in the United States with protected status. **“They have a different profile from the Haitians who normally come to Canada,”** he said. (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017c)

The first quote demonstrates how asylum seekers’ claims are delegitimized by paraphrasing the RCMP who has “arrested” “more than 7,000 since June” which is “on a new scale”. This constructs the asylum seekers as threatening criminals²¹ due to the use of the terms: “flow”, “arrest” and “on a new scale”. The asylum seekers are implicitly constructed as a population that the nation needs to protect itself from, and not individuals in need of protection (Aas, 2007). Similarly, the second quote works to delegitimize the refugee claims by implying that the claims will be rejected. Although, Haitian refugee claims appear to be more successful in Canada, than in the United States, Mr. Beuze suggests that this does not matter because the profile of the asylum seekers are “different” than those who normally come to Canada. Thus, implying that the asylum seekers’ refugee claims will likely be rejected due to the TPS. By quoting a representative of the UNCHR, a person that could be argued to be an expert regarding refugees, the media is able to delegitimize the asylum seekers’ refugee claims. Thus, constructing their claim as ‘bogus’.

²¹ The construction of the asylum seekers as criminals will be discussed with more depth in the next section.

In summary, this section discussed how the media constructed the asylum seekers' motivation to come to Canada. The quotes from the asylum seekers fits into the existing narrative that Canada is a better alternative than the United States because it is more welcoming and generous. This reaffirms the discourse of victimization, whereby the nation was imagined as being too welcoming and generous and thus, attracting 'predators', the asylum seekers. Additionally, by omitting the conditions in Haiti, during the sampling period, and quoting persons in power following the quotes from the asylum seekers, the media was able to delegitimize their refugee claim. In the following section, the techniques used to vilify the asylum seekers will be discussed.

5.2. Techniques to Vilify Asylum Seekers

This section will discuss the techniques used to vilify the asylum seekers as a way to delegitimize their claims of asylum. The asylum seekers were predominantly constructed as: 'bogus' refugees, as criminals and as a burden draining the nation. These individuals were constructed as 'bogus' refugees by focusing on the criteria of who is worthy of protection and by suggesting that these asylum seekers were either economic migrants, or predators or asylum shoppers. The media was able to produce a discourse of criminalization by constructing the asylum seekers' movement, crossing the border, as 'illegal'. Finally, the asylum seekers were objectified and constructed as being a burden to the nation. Each of these techniques worked to negatively represent the asylum seekers and justified any exclusionary measures used in order to manage them.

5.2.1. Technique One: Worthy of Acceptance and 'Bogus' Refugees

The media and political statements (featured in the media) also reproduced a dichotomy of 'worthy' vs. 'unworthy' refugees. This dichotomy was in reference to who is deserving of

acceptance. The asylum seekers who met the criteria of being ‘worthy’ were deemed ‘genuine’ refugees and welcomed in Canada, meanwhile, the others were not. In other words, only certain asylum seekers should be included, while the others are excluded. The criteria upon which some of the asylum seekers’ worthiness depended on were health, security and genuineness. Those who were deemed to be ‘worthy’ posed no health or security risks and were constructed as ‘genuine’ refugees. Furthermore, the asylum seekers who were constructed as ‘unworthy’ were viewed as ‘bogus’ refugees. This representation was produced by suggesting that they were economic migrants and asylum shoppers. This construction suggests that the asylum seekers are devoid of the nation’s exalted values, as such they do not belong to the nation.

Some of these standards include meeting health and security standards.

Those Haitians now in the U.S. who **meet our health and security checks** would make superb **additions** to the Canadian family. They are of varied **economic circumstances** and many are in better economic shape than the many refugees from Indochina, Kosovo, Syria and elsewhere whose arrival in Canada **strengthened our country** tremendously in so many ways. The money they send home to Haiti is of serious and significant positive impact. A country’s international responsibilities embrace many dimensions: military; trade; consular and diplomatic. But none is more important than the **humanitarian gesture** and follow-through that actually says **who we are, what we truly believe and how we see a key part of our national and societal purpose**. The economic depth, cultural cohesiveness and multivariant demographic mix of Canada’s Haitian community could absorb **new arrivals with facility and genuine warmth and welcome**. (Segal, The Globe and Mail, 2017)

By requiring asylum seekers to meet health and security standards, these criteria construct asylum seekers as potential health and security threats. The media’s emphasis on “security checks” suggests that those who pose a security risk to the nation are not worthy of protection regardless of the reasons the refugee claim was made. Furthermore, it is important to note that the suggesting that health should be a standard upon which refugees should be welcomed in Canada is against IRPA s. 38(2)(b). This provision prohibits the exclusions of asylum seekers based on health. Consequently, Segal (2017) is suggesting that the law should be stricter than

what it already is in order to decide who should be welcomed in Canada. This also creates an us versus them dichotomy, where ‘they’ must meet ‘our’ standards in order for ‘them’ to join ‘us’. Therefore, it produces a hierarchy where ‘us’ is superior to them, where ‘they’ must demonstrate to ‘us’ that ‘they’ are good enough. This dichotomy is further reinforced by the focus on wanting asylum seekers to contribute and benefit the country. The focus is on how the asylum seekers are in “varied economic circumstances” which can help “strengthen our country”. This construction dehumanizes the asylum seekers because it reduces them to productivity rather than focusing on the reasons behind their refugee claims. Consequently, the asylum seekers worthy of acceptance become those who are not health or security threats and who benefit the country. This suggests that asylum seekers who do not meet these conditions are not welcomed; they become deportable objects.

Additionally, the quote exalts the nation as a humanitarian country due to its “humanitarian gesture”. Historically, Canada has been exalted as a humanitarian country due to its immigration and refugee policies which have helped shape Canada’s national identity as one of the most generous countries in the world (Thobani, 2007). Consequently, by using this discourse of humanitarianism, the media is implicitly able to justify the desire to only accept asylum seekers who meet certain standards. Canada is imagined as having the ability to choose which asylum seekers to accept because the nation has such generous immigration policies. In other words, due to its generosity, the nation is entitled to choose who it should welcome/accept within the nation.

In addition to this, the discourse also rendered accepting asylum seekers conditional to those who are ‘genuine’ refugees. The figure of the ‘genuine’ refugee is implicitly contrasted with the figure of the ‘bogus’ refugee. This suggests that those who are devoid of the exalted

qualities are excluded from the nation; thus, this discourse is able to justify the use of exclusionary measures against asylum seekers. For example:

Rigorous immigration rules are enforced to ensure that asylum seekers who are genuinely at risk are welcomed and those who are not being removed. [the Scott Bardsley, a spokesperson for the Minister of Public Safety stated] (Keung, Toronto Star, 2017a)

But [Transport Minister] Garneau said asylum seekers, to be considered refugees, must prove there's **a risk if they're returned to their** native countries. (Crete, Toronto Star, 2017)

Here, there is an emphasis on accepting and welcoming those who are “genuinely at risk” and “remove”,/“return” those “who are not”. The construction of the asylum seeker that is “genuinely at risk” is implicit in comparison to those who are ‘risky’. Therefore, by creating the image of the ‘genuine’ refugee, it creates its counterpart: the ‘bogus’ refugee. Those who are “genuinely at risk” are the asylum seekers who are deserving of protection and should benefit from the country’s resources (Pratt, 2005). However, those who are risky are constructed as ‘bogus’ refugee claimants and are often perceived as making fraudulent refugee claims in order to take advantage of the welfare state (Pratt & Valverde, 2002; Pratt, 2005). The ‘bogus’ refugee is seen as taking advantage of Canada’s generosity (Thobani, 2007).

Consequently, by imagining who is entitled to protection from the nation because they represent the national identity, this method also constructs who faces violence by the nation because their bodies are deemed not to belong (Walia, 2013, p. 64). One such violence is in the form of deportation where it is an exclusionary method used to exclude those who do not belong to the nation as a way to create a vision of national identity (Chan & Chunn, 2014). By creating the implicit dichotomy between the ‘genuine’ and ‘bogus’ refugee, it is possible to justify the removal of those who do not belong: ‘risky’ asylum seekers. The asylum seekers are turned into disposable objects due to them not embodying the nation’s exalted qualities; thus this exclusion

contributes to an image of the nation. The media is able to justify the nation as being conditionally welcoming due to its ability to decide who is entitled to protection (those at risk) and who is not (those who are risky).

More specifically, the asylum seekers were constructed as ‘bogus’ refugees by suggesting that they are economic migrants and are more or less asylum shoppers. These constructions suggest that the asylum seekers are lacking some of the nation’s exalted values, as such they do not belong to the nation. On the one hand, Canadians are seen as holding the following values: fairness and honesty. On the other hand, migrants are often associated with abuse in comparison to these values (Thobani, 2007). The construction of the asylum seekers as economic migrants was done by both the media and political statements (featured in the media):

It is an axiom of refugee policy that you shouldn’t shuttle from one safe haven to another in search of a better outcome. And as difficult as **Haiti can be, economic migrants aren't bona fide refugees. "Unless you are being persecuted or fleeing terror or war, you would not qualify as a refugee,"** Transport Minister Marc Garneau noted Thursday after the RCMP announced nearly 4,000 crossings so far this month - double the rate for July and five times the pace in June. (Cohn, Toronto Star, 2017)

For someone to **successfully seek asylum it's not about economic migration. It's about vulnerability, exposure to torture or death, or being stateless people.** "If they are seeking asylum we'll evaluate them on the **basis of what it is to be a refugee or asylum seeker,**" Trudeau said. (Woods, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A8)

The Haitian asylum seekers were implicitly compared to a convention refugee. Canada is a signatory to the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and has based its definition of a convention refugee on this Convention. According to the IRPA s. 96 a convention refugee is: [...] “a person who, by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion”. Due to this comparison, it was possible to construct the asylum seekers as ‘bogus’ refugees. In the above-mentioned quotes, a contrast is created between the ‘bogus’ refugee and the convention refugee.

On the one hand, the asylum seekers were perceived as economic migrants due to Cohen (2017) and Woods (2017) stating that economic migrants are not real refugees. On the other hand, the Transport Minister's and Prime Minister's direct quotes made reference to convention refugees. This contrast reinforces the idea that the asylum seekers are not real refugees: they are economic migrants and they are undeserving of protection. Furthermore, the Transport Minister also implies that the migrants were economic migrants due to the use of the term "unless" at the beginning of the sentence which suggests an exception. This suggests that the asylum seekers are not 'real' refugees, those who are 'genuine' refugees are the exception. Therefore, implying that being a 'bogus' refugee is the norm, rather than the exception. This can be viewed as being part of a wider discourse which constructs economic refugees as a 'bogus' migrant who enters the country fraudulently by claiming a refugee status (Pratt, 2005).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the media and political statements (selected by the media) reproduced a discourse of victimization by constructing the nation as vulnerable to the predatory Other. This construction of the asylum seekers was done by constructing them as opportunistic and abusers. This representation is implicitly in contrast with the Canadian national who is viewed as being good and honest (Thobani, 2007; Mackey, 2005). As such, the media was able to delegitimize their claims to refugee status: their claims are fraudulent. The asylum seekers were constructed as not in possession of Canadian exalted values:

The particulars don't matter; **the Haitians are here, and more are coming because they think Canada is a soft mark.** (MacDougall, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A13)

Here, the asylum seekers are viewed as predators. By linking the asylum seekers' motivation for coming to Canada to the nation's weakness ("a soft mark"), it constructs the asylum seekers as calculated individuals who targeted the nation. Thus, they are represented as abusers of the system. The asylum seekers are seen as not possessing the qualities of being good and honest.

Furthermore, the asylum seekers were constructed as a threat due to the reference to “the Haitians are here [...] more are coming”, suggesting that there will be an invasion. This implicitly creates a sense of fear of the nation being engulfed by the Other (Jiwani, 2006). This construction of the asylum seekers as abusers of the system can be better understood within the wider discourse of ‘bogus’ refugees, where ‘self-selected’ refugees are regarded with suspicion.

The figure of the ‘genuine’ refugee is often seen as someone who had to leave a country involuntary, with no fault of their own (Pratt, 2005, p. 92). However, the ‘bogus’, self-selected, refugee is depicted as not fleeing persecution, but making a calculated choice (Pratt, 2005). As such, the media has constructed the asylum seekers as ‘bogus’, self-selected, refugees by stating that they “are here and more are coming”. The mobility of the asylum seekers becomes a threat to the nation in comparison to the image of the unthreatening ‘genuine’ refugee who remain in camps and other spaces in the Global South (Yuval-Davis et al., 2019, p. 133). Consequently, it could be argued that this mobility is against, what Hage (2012) calls, the *national will*. The *national will* is defined as the will to govern and continue to build the ideal nation. In his discussion of the *national will*, Hage (2012) explains how the term ‘*jumping the queue*’ is used in public discussions of irregular migration. He argues that this ‘queue’ does not refer to asylum seekers waiting in a theoretical line in order to inhabit the nation; rather, it refers to the manifestation of the *national will*. This ‘queue’ “is a part of the national order, the order imposed by the national will for entering the national body” (Hage, 2012, p. 113). In other words, this *national will* refers to the rules set out for entering the nation. For example:

“Coming to Canada **first** of all has to be **done through regular channels**, and **secondly** the asylum system is **only for people who are in genuine need of protection**,” Hussen told reporters. “**It’s not for everyone.**” (Keung, Toronto Star, 2017c)

The “regular channels” becomes the order imposed by the national will in order for “genuine” asylum seekers to enter the country. The *national will* is not interested in why the rules were not followed, rather, it is concerned about enforcing its rules. If the Other goes against this *will*, it will show that the *will* is weak. The mobility of the ‘bogus’ refugee can be argued to be a problem due to it going against the *national will*. As such, this ‘problem’ is about managing the movement of racialized individuals who refuse to remain where they belong (Thobani, 2007). This refusal can be seen as the Other trying to subvert the *national will*, by exhibiting a will of ‘their’ own (Hage, 2012). Here, it could be argued that the media reproduced the discourse of the *national will*, where the *national will* is constructed as being able to govern and order the nation by exercising the ability to select the refugees who are in camps or other parts of the Global South. This ability can be exercised through the “regular channels”. Consequently, the asylum seekers are represented as dangerous due to exercising their own ‘will’: the nation is now viewed as being under the threat of an invasion of racialized minorities who have targeted it. This renders it possible to implicitly delegitimize the asylum seekers’ claims due to the fear of the other and the intent to prey on the nation. Consequently, when the *national will* becomes unstable, the *national will* will have to act (Hage, 2012, p. 113). This is because a nation’s ability to exist rests upon its ability to enforce its borders (Ahmed, 2000; Hage, 2012). Thus, in order to protect the *national will* (and the nation), it is implied that an increase in border security where it will prevent an ‘invasion’ of ‘self-selected’ refugees and allow the nation to choose the refugees it wants to welcome.

The asylum seekers were also constructed as ‘bogus’ refugees by suggesting that they are asylum shopping. Thus, implying that they are undeserving of protection:

Canada is receiving a **wave** of asylum seekers coming from the United States – a **surge** not seen in more than a decade. **These are people from third countries who landed in the U.S. but are now moving on to Canada.** (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017a)

In both countries, the program was to be only temporary. Canada ended its version in August 2016, leaving 3,200 Haitians facing possible deportation. The U.S. was to have ended its version this May, but the Trump administration extended the deadline to next January. **Some Haitians affected by this decision are crossing into Canada to try their luck here.** (Walkom, Toronto Star, 2017)

In the above-mentioned quotes, the asylum seekers are constructed as asylum shoppers by saying that they “are now moving on to Canada” and “[trying] their luck here”. This construction works to undermine any form of victimization that they have suffered (Pratt, 2005). This discourse can be argued to serve as a way to manage the mobility of the racialized other. This image of the asylum shopper can be better understood within the context of the Safe Third Country Agreement. The Agreement was originally created in order to prevent “*asylum shopping*”, so that the asylum seeker could claim refugee status in the first safe third country in which they arrived in (Pratt, 2005; Walters, 2002; Aiken, 2007). The official aim was to ‘burden share’ the refugee claims with the United States, and unofficially, the aim was to reduce the number of claims received in Canada (Aiken, 2007). As such, the media is able to delegitimize the claims of the asylum seekers by omitting any forms of their victimization due to their movement from one country to another. This implies that if had they been ‘genuine’, unthreatening, refugees, they would have remained in the United States, the first country they arrived in. However, both Amnesty International and the Canadian Council for Refugees have argued the United States, especially under the current climate of anti-immigration under the leadership of President Trump, is not a safe country (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2017). By implying that the asylum seekers should remain in the United States, the media is ignoring this reality. The next

subsection will discuss how the media was able to vilify the asylum seekers due to a discourse of criminalization.

5.2.2. Technique Two: Criminalization

Asylum seekers' mobility was also constructed as going against the *national will* through constructing the movement as against the law. Although entering Canada between ports of entries is not illegal, the media constructed the movement as being such. In other words, by recognizing the asylum seekers as *strangers*, the media is able to delegitimize their mobility (their entry into the nation space) (Ahmed, 2000). Consequently, criminalizing their movement implicitly constructs the asylum seekers as criminals:

Of the 13,211 asylum seekers to **enter Canada illegally** so far in 2017, 11,896 entered through Quebec. (Woods, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A9)

Earlier in the day, in nearby Hemmingford, some 40 asylum seekers sat under white tents at an impromptu reception centre that has sprung up on the Canadian side of a **popular illegal border** crossing. (Lowrie, Toronto Star, 2017)

The Immigration, Protection and Refugee Regulations section 159.4 (2)²² explains that a person can enter Canada at a place other than a port of entry as long as they appear to a port of entry once the person is in Canada. Consequently, the asylum seekers entry into Canada is not 'illegal' and entries at a location that is not a port of entry are also not 'illegal'. The construction of the discourse related to entering Canada as illegal, could be better understood by examining the wider discourses concerning illegality and the *national will*. According to Thobani (2007), during the nation formation, the exaltation of the white national subject, entitled him to claim the right to territory and mobility (p. 52). Consequently, it could be argued that the *national will* is linked to being entitled to the right to mobility. The asylum seekers' movement is against the

²² IPPR s. 159.2: Seeking entry at a place other than a port of entry

(2) Unless these Regulations provide otherwise, a person who seeks to enter Canada at a place other than a port of entry must appear without delay for examination at the port of entry that is nearest to that place.

sovereignty of the state, where this action is seen as an assault on the state: the unauthorized trespass of the symbolic border (De Genova, 2004; Walia, 2013). The label of ‘illegal’ serves as a way to maintain the state’s power when the border fails to exclude the threat of the other (Walia, 2013; Dauvergne, 2008). In other words, since the movement is seen as against the *national will*, it is labelled as illegal, even though this is incorrect. Consequently, the media was able to reproduce this discourse by labelling the mobility of racialized individuals, those who are devoid of Canadian exalted values, as ‘illegal’.

As previously mentioned, the label of ‘illegality’ permits the use of exclusionary measures when faced with a threat (Dauvergne, 2008). It renders the asylum seekers disposable and justifies the use of detention: *legal banishment* (De Genova, 2004; Walia, 2013; Benjamin, 2002). The use of the label ‘illegality’ permits the representation of the asylum seekers as not belonging to the nation, thus they become subjected to *banishment* (see Hier & Greenberg, 2002; Lueck et al., 2015; Saxton, 2003; Benjamin, 2002). Consequently, racialized bodies become excluded from the nation (Benjamin, 2002). This construction is done by suggesting that the asylum seekers are criminals:

That contrast between the U.S. and Canada, in perception and reality, has been a central theme in the ongoing saga of **asylum seekers who are breaking the law** by walking across the border into this country. (Ballingall, Toronto Star, 2017)

The office of Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale acknowledged the RCMP had **intercepted and arrested** 4,500 irregular border crossers in Quebec so far this month — on top of 3,000 that crossed in July. They are mostly Haitian and found eligible to file a refugee claim. (MacCharles, Toronto Star, 2017)

Despite the overall drop, the numbers of those **intercepted** in Quebec did continue to rise, up to 672 in April from 644 in March. Most of those crossing illegally are believed to have gone on to file asylum claims. (Toronto Star, 2017a)

The terms used, such as “breaking the law”, “arrest” and “intercepted”, were used to suggest that the asylum seekers are criminals. This discourse works to create an image of a threat that is

within the nation (Innes, 2010). By implying that the asylum seekers are criminals, the use of deportation and detention is justified as methods to punish the very act of migration (Walia, 2013). As such, these methods of *legal banishment*: the physical removal of racialized bodies, is perceived as ways to protect the nation from the threat of the other (Chan & Chunn, 2014; De Genova, 2002; Innes, 2010). Therefore, the media's construction of the asylum seekers as criminals works as a way to categorize them as undesirable objects. This categorization then legitimizes any actions, such as detention, as a way to remove them from the national space (Hage, 2012). Consequently, the asylum seekers' claims become delegitimized due to their representation as a threat to the nation. Additionally, the media is also able to delegitimize their claims to asylum through a discourse of burdening and draining the nation.

5.2.3. Technique Three: Burden and Draining the Nation

The media and political statements (featured in the media) were able to vilify the asylum seekers by constructing them as a burden and draining the nation. This was done by suggesting that the asylum seekers are problems for the nation due to the need for increased resources, potential reliance on welfare and increased wait times. Thus, turning the asylum seekers into objects which needed to be managed.

In reference to the resources used by the asylum seekers, the media and political statements (selected by the media) used language which objectified the asylum seekers in order to construct them as individuals draining the nation's resources. This was achieved by constructing the asylum seekers as objects who are overloading the system. For example:

[Quebe Immigration Minister] Weil said the rate of **new arrivals is putting a lot of pressure on temporary accommodation resources, which are needed while** the Canadian government decides whether each newcomer is eligible to make a refugee claim. She said [Quebec] has asked the federal government for help in **dealing with the volume of new arrivals**, but ultimately will be able to **handle** the claims. (Lowrie, Toronto Star, 2017, p. A9)

A dedicated Immigration and Refugee Board team has been seconded **to deal with** large groups of arrivals claiming asylum from the same countries. The vast majority in Quebec are of Haitian descent; in Manitoba earlier this year, most were Somali. [...]The [IRB] has been warning for months, however, that they are ill equipped to **manage the continuing rise in claims** without creating lengthy **backlogs**, given existing budgets and staffing levels. (Levitz, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A7)

Here, the words used work to objectify and construct the asylum seekers as problematic. The asylum seekers were turned into objects due to the use of terms, such as: “pressure”, “volume” and “backlogs”. These terms evoke the image of an object (the asylum seekers) that is exerting some sort of force/pressure on the immigration system. By using these terms, the media engages in the process of *aggregation*. According to KhosraviNik, Krzyżanowski and Wodak, (2012), *aggregation* is the process where groups of people “are systematically referred to and constructed as one unanimous group with all the members sharing similar characteristics, backgrounds, intentions, motivations, [and/or] economic status” (p. 289). By using this process, the media is able to negatively represent asylum seekers, which reinforces the use of an us versus them narrative (KhosraviNik, et al., 2012). As such, ‘they’ are seen as a burden to ‘us’. ‘They’ are constructed as overburdening the nation due to the ‘pressure’ that ‘their arrival’ has placed on accommodation resources and on the IRB. This objectification of the asylum seekers also suggests the need to manage their presence in the nation space. The need to manage is suggested to be due to the use of the words “dealing with”, “handle” and “manage”, whereby the asylum seekers become “objects of spatial exclusion” (Hage, 2012, p. 48). This is reinforced by the media and political statements (featured in the media) where it is suggested that the asylum seekers are taking away resources from the ‘legitimate’ citizens (Innes, 2010).

Similarly, the media and political statements (made through the media) constructed the asylum seekers as a financial burden to the nation, thus an economic threat. This burden was discussed in terms of how much money was being spent on the asylum seekers:

Quebec has asked Ottawa to **speed up the claims-evaluation process**, since most of the **cost of caring** for the newcomers **falls to the province** in the meantime. (Pedwell, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A4)

[Quebec politician François Blais] described the overall situation as "**exceptional**" and does not exclude asking Ottawa to **help reimburse some of the welfare costs**. (Toronto Star, 2017d)

Here, a concern for the cost related to the presence of the asylum seekers is highlighted. Reporting on where the money is coming from elicits a concern from not just Quebecers, but from all Canadians. The cost is first reported to be the responsibility of the province of Quebec; however, the presence of the asylum seekers is constructed as so problematic that the Federal government should be involved. On the one hand, the mention of "speeding-up" the claim process is implicitly linked with reducing the money spent by the province. On the other hand, the asylum seekers' presence is constructed as "exceptional" and it is implied that the federal government could help cover the costs because the province of Quebec needs help. In other words, the asylum seekers are constructed as such a burden to the province that it does not have enough money to provide welfare, which in turn is perceived as a financial burden for the nation. This construction can be better understood within the wider discourse concerning the welfare state.

According to Thobani (2007), the welfare state solidified a sense of entitlement amongst nationals, while "immigrant" families were defined as threatening the nation's welfare. This sentiment of entitlement "solidified the racialized bonds between the state, nation, and the real citizen" (p. 40) and "it simultaneously magnified the sense of disentanglement and expulsion from

the national community for those whom it excluded” (p. 110). The welfare state, by extension, is a site of (re)production of the nation and its values (Thobani, 2007). As such, by constructing the asylum seekers as a financial burden, it implicitly suggests that they are threatening the imagined community and its values. This reproduces an us versus them narrative where ‘we’ have to financially ‘manage’ ‘them’ due to their presence in the nation.

This need to manage the ‘burden’ caused by the asylum seekers can also be found in reference to the ‘backlog’ caused by the numerous asylum claims:

A skyrocketing backlog is pushing the **wait time** for refugee hearings **dramatically beyond** the federally stipulated 60 days, with recent asylum seekers now waiting 16 months to have their claims determined. (Keung, Toronto Star, 2017b)

Canadian soldiers helped build a small tent village that can house **500 people**. It will be used to **cope with the growing backlog** at the Quebec border as **processing times increase** Canadian soldiers have built a small tent village in Quebec to **relieve pressure** on a Border Services outpost **jammed** with asylum seekers who got into the country from the United States. (Perreux, The Globe and Mail, 2017, p. A1)

By utilizing words such as “backlog”, “relieve pressure” and “jammed”, the media was able to once again objectify the asylum seekers as undesirable ‘objects’ by portraying ‘them’ as blocking the ‘proper’ functioning of the immigration system. This objectification also works as categories of spatial management by suggesting that there are ‘too many’ asylum seekers (Hage, 2012). This discourse implies that because there are ‘too many’ asylum seekers, the wait times have “dramatically” increased and it created a need to build a small tent village in Quebec. This in turn suggests that there is a need to manage the ‘burden’ caused by the ‘backlog’ of the asylum claims. The use of the term ‘backlog’ has often referred to fraudulent refugee claims made by ‘bogus’ refugees and efficiently eliminating this ‘backlog’ is a way to identify and remove these fraudulent claims (Pratt, 2005). It implies the need to manage the asylum seekers in order to eliminate ‘bogus’ claims.

This focus on the efficiency of the immigration system places the focus on regulating and managing the asylum seekers, rather than on protecting them (Walia, 2013; Hyndman & Mountz, 2008; Pratt, 2005). Whereas the first quote implies the need to manage the “skyrocketing backlog”, the second quote is more explicit by stating that there is a need to “cope with the growing backlog” and to “relieve the pressure”. Both quotes turn the asylum seekers into numerical threats who need to be limited and managed in order to protect the immigration system: they are a threat to its efficiency (Pratt, 2005). This negative representation of the asylum seekers works to delegitimize their claims of asylum by focusing on the need to manage them instead of protecting the asylum seekers. In other words, the asylum seekers are no longer victims, but are blamed for causing a burden on the nation (Pratt, 2005).

To summarize this section, the media and political statements (featured in the media) used various techniques of vilification. By projecting danger onto the asylum seekers, the media is then able to suggest their exclusion from the nation space (Ahmed, 2000). First, through admission criteria, the asylum seekers were perceived as a threat to the nation’s health and security and welfare state. This created a dichotomy between ‘worthy’ asylum seekers vs. ‘unworthy’ asylum seekers where the figure of the ‘genuine’ refugees and ‘bogus’ refugees were in opposition. The asylum seekers ‘worthy’ of acceptance by the nation were those who could contribute to the nation and the figure of the ‘genuine’ refugee. Whereas, the ‘unworthy’ were excluded from the nation because they did not belong to the nation: they did not possess the nation’s exalted values. Furthermore, the asylum seekers were perceived as ‘bogus’ refugees by labelling them as economic migrants, constructing them as preying on the nation and suggesting that they are asylum shoppers. Thus, implying that they are unworthy of protection; undeserving of being welcomed in the nation. Second, despite being legal in Canadian law, the asylum

seekers' mobility was criminalized, and it was suggested that they were criminals. This then turned the asylum seekers into threats to the nation, instead of individuals that sought protection from the nation. Finally, asylum seekers were constructed as objects burdening the nation, thus focusing on the need for management rather than protection. Consequently, all three techniques of vilification aimed to discredit and delegitimize claims for protection made by the asylum seekers.

This chapter discussed how the media and political statements (featured in the media) represented the asylum seekers. First, the motivations of the asylum seekers were linked to the existing narrative that Canada was better than the United States. This construction implicitly contributed to the erasure of Canada's history of anti-blackness. Since asylum seekers' motivations were attributed to viewing Canada as a welcoming and generous nation, it implied that they were making 'bogus' claims. Consequently, the nation was viewed in a positive manner, while the asylum seekers were constructed as making undeserving claims from the nation. The second section discussed how the media and political statements (featured in the media) utilized various techniques in order to construct the asylum seekers as undeserving of protection. In other words, the asylum seekers were vilified, while the nation was viewed as requiring protection from the asylum seekers. This was done by representing the asylum seekers as 'bogus' refugees who were criminalized and viewed as a burden and draining the nation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my research examined the mainstream media representation of asylum seekers in the context of the increase in Haitian irregular migration that occurred in 2017. Thus, it contributes to the limited research completed on the Canadian mainstream media coverage of Haitian irregular migrants. Through a Critical Race Theory lens and a criminological perspective, my thesis sought to contextualize the representation of Haitian asylum seekers and the nation found in the media and statements made by politicians featured in the media. In doing so, I was able to provide an analysis of the broader narratives at play in these representations and to expose how they build on and reproduce historical structures of power.

Overview of Findings

My research reveals that the media employed racialized ideologies to depict asylum seekers drawing upon historical racialized discourses. In order to imagine the nation as innocent, the media utilized techniques of inclusions and exclusions. These techniques permitted the media (through the selection of quotes by politicians) to produce an image of the nation as welcoming, compassionate and generous by implying that in order to preserve these values, it would be necessary to enforce the laws of the nation. The enforcement of boundaries became essential in order to maintain the nation's innocent image (Ahmed, 2000). In other words, border security is suggested as a way to preserve the nation's image. Additionally, the value of being a welcoming country was equated with the nation's ability to differentiate between 'bogus' refugees and 'genuine' refugees. The media also produced a discourse of victimization where the nation was constructed as having a weak border which permitted the asylum seekers to target the nation. The perceived flaws in the immigration system and the nation's alleged excessive exalted values were also constructed as weaknesses that asylum seekers can exploit.

These images of the nation were produced by the mainstream media through the negative representation of asylum seekers. This vilification of the asylum seekers serves as a way to construct them as the ‘strangers’: those who do not belong in the nation space; thus, making the ‘home’ inhabitable (Ahmed, 2000). The asylum seekers’ motivations for coming to Canada, instead of remaining in the United States, was linked to Canada’s exalted values of being welcoming, generous and having a positive attitude towards immigration. This implicitly constructed the asylum seekers’ claims as being frivolous. Additionally, techniques of vilification were used in order to delegitimize the claims of asylum. A dichotomy of ‘bogus’ vs. ‘genuine’ refugee was created whereby ‘bogus’ refugees were viewed as unworthy of protection. Asylum seekers were also criminalized; by entering the country irregularly, the media constructed their entry as ‘illegal’. Finally, asylum seekers were constructed as being ‘too many’ in the nation space and making an unreasonable claim on the nation.

The discourses the media and politicians (through statements featured in the media) employ, ignore the wider (historical) context which have impacted the increase in Haitian irregular migration. The media failed to incorporate in their representation broader issues of global inequalities such as border imperialisms - the phenomenon of Western states having a history of unfair economic processes, which have contributed to the forced migration of people from the Global South (Walia, 2013). Western states, including Canada, have historically intervened in Haiti since its foundation (colonialism), contributing to its political instability (i.e. the removal of the democratically elected president Aristide). These interventions still have an impact in the present because forced migration is influenced by Western imperialism, colonisation and capitalism (Walia, 2013). Additionally, Canada has a history of anti-Blackness which dates back to slavery. Canada has explicitly excluded Black bodies from immigration in

order to maintain the image of a white nation and has deported many Haitians in 1974. Consequently, through the omission of this historical context, the media is able to negatively represent asylum seekers, while imagining the nation in a positive manner and ignoring its horrible history²³. It could be argued that due to the historical context, Canada has a responsibility towards forced migration and that the media should not ignore this obligation.

Within the wider context of the media representation of irregular migration it is important to represent the asylum seekers accurately. As global inequalities increase, forced migration from the Global South will also increase. Consequently, it is important for the media to focus on the reasons and conditions which push people to seek asylum in countries like Canada. As my thesis has revealed, the current portrayal maintains the status quo whereby countries like Canada are viewed as innocent and the asylum seekers, the Other, are vilified. Asylum seekers should not be vilified. Their migration to countries in the Global North is due to conditions that have been created by the same countries where they seek asylum. This type of representation reinforces the idea of closing the borders to the Other. It reinforces what Fleras (2014a) calls a *global apartheid*. This is when “the rich industrialized countries collude to create a world-wide system of migration controls that serves the interest of markets and global elites while excluding the impoverished from admission” (Fleras, 2014a, p. 67). Consequently, by accurately portraying irregular migration, it would be possible to reveal the inequalities that exist. This could be an important step towards enacting social change.

Yet, when conducting the research, only one article, which was from the *Toronto Star*, contextualized the increase in Haitian irregular migration with this problematic history and outlined Canada’s obligation towards the asylum seekers. This could be because the *Toronto Star*

²³ Although it could be argued that the portrayal of the nation as a victim could be negative, the asylum seekers were viewed as the perpetrators of this victimization.

is a left leaning newspaper (Bradimore & Bauder, 2011) and according to the Atkinson Principles, the *Toronto Star* is advocates for social justice (Toronto Star, 2020). The article in question discussed the various interventions made by Canada which contributed to Haiti's instability and forced migration. However, since only one such article was found, it suggests that the *Toronto Star* might not be as left leaning as it appears to be in terms of its representation of irregular migration. This also further illustrates how problematic the representation of Haitian asylum seekers was in the mainstream media.

Contributions

Research on the mainstream media's representation of asylum seekers is important, because, language has meaning, and it is often used to criminalizes asylum seekers and to invalidate their claims. As discussed elsewhere, mainstream media influences political decision makers and politicians also influence the media (Zeitel-Bank, 2017). As such, when the mainstream media presents negative representations of asylum seekers and produces discourses in relation to increasing border security, this could lead to further criminalization of irregular migration. In other words, irregular migration becomes a threat to the nation's identity and border securitization can be seen as an attempt to reinforce national identity (Aas, 2007). Additionally, by invalidating the asylum claims, it implicitly suggests that the asylum seekers are using the immigration system in order to make fraudulent claims. Thus, this may prompt further restrictions on the rules related to asylum seeking. Therefore, securitization could lead to an increase in clandestine migration from individual from the Global South whereby they risk their lives in order to seek asylum (Aas, 2007; Hyndman & Mountz, 2007; Castle, 2013). Consequently, the study on the representation of asylum seekers is important for the

understanding of how discourses of criminalization and fraudulent claims might facilitate further criminalization and immigration restriction through legislation.

Additionally, by conceptualizing the mainstream media as an institution of governmental belonging, I provide a theoretical contribution to the work of Hage (2012). As I have argued elsewhere in this thesis, this embodiment of governmental belonging could be because the mainstream media holds a dominant position within society (Griffin et al., 2012; van Dijk, 1993; Hall, 1978). Due to this dominant position, the media is able to express a sense of having a legitimate entitlement to making managerial statements regarding the nation (Hage, 2012). Furthermore, through the selection of quotes by politicians, the mainstream media was able to include quotes from people in power in order to contribute to the view of how the nation should be managed. As a spatial manager, the mainstream media was able to differentiate and identify those who did not belong to the imagined nation. As such, those who did not belong were constructed as undesirable and should be excluded in order to build a 'homely' nation (Hage 2012). This exclusion revealed the desired to feel at 'home' where there is a sense of familiarity, security and community. Additionally, the mainstream media was able to construct the mobility of the asylum seekers as against the *national will*. Thus, irregular migration was seen as against the orders imposed in order to enter the nation.

Although this was not the primary focus of my thesis, this conceptualization of the media as an institution of governmental belonging also reveals how the media engages in everyday bordering. By differentiating between those who belong or not to the nation, the mainstream media attempted to construct, maintain and control the nation's social and political order (Yuval-Davis et al., 2019). In other words, by constructing the asylum seekers as not belonging to the nation space, it established the necessity for policing the border (Ahmed, 2000).

Future Research

As previously mentioned, my thesis did not have bordering as its primary focus. As such, future research should examine the different ways in which the media engages in bordering. Additionally, this research focused on the representation of asylum seekers in Anglophone newspapers. Due to Canada's status as a bilingual country, future research can be conducted by comparing the representation of asylum seekers in anglophone newspapers to that of francophone newspapers. Furthermore, since this research did not conduct interviews, future research could focus on the voices of the asylum seekers to learn more about their experiences. More research can also be conducted on how other media sources (i.e. independent media, television networks, social media etc.) cover asylum seekers. Additionally, due to the recent Canadian Federal Court ruling regarding the Safe Third Country Agreement²⁴, future research should examine how this decision will (or not) impact how asylum seekers are represented. Further research into the representation of asylum seekers can continue to demystify racist ideologies which appear to be natural. This type of research can challenge the status and transform our reality.

²⁴ On July 22nd, 2020 the Canadian Federal Court ruled that the Agreement violates the section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Therefore, the *Agreement* will be suspended 6 months from this decision (2020 FC 770).

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Appendix B

List of Frequently Used Codes

Politician Quoted
Asylum Seeker Quoted
Experts Quoted
Immigration System
Law & Regulations
Enforcement
Safe Third Country Agreement
Efficiency
Generosity
Welcoming
Compassionate
'us' vs. 'them'
'genuine' refugee vs. 'bogus' refugee
Numbers
Border Security
Weak Border
Disaster Metaphors
Taking Advantage of the System
Opportunistic
Illegality/Implying Illegality
Criminalization
Canada vs. United States
Fear of Deportation
Burden/Draining the System
Increasing/Lack of Resources
Irregular
Inclusion vs. Exclusion