From Smuggling to Social Reproduction: Migration and Livelihood Strategies of Young Somali Men in Toronto, Canada.

By

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ABSTRACT

This research paper traces the methods, modes and networks that young Somali men between the ages of 25-30 have used in order to migrate, gain entry and seek asylum in Toronto, Canada from Somalia. This thesis goes further to analyze the ways in which this group of young men seek to carve out a livelihood once they arrive in Canada. Using in depth interviews with a group of 9 young men in the Toronto area, I explore how legal status, statelessness, race and gender norms, clan affiliations and masculine kinship obligations intersect to produce a particular migratory and settlement experience for these young men. Furthermore, I suggest that these networks do not just structure the migration experience for this group of young men but they play an important role in shaping these men’s access to work and ability to survive once they arrive in Canada.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................ iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ........................................................................................................ iv

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................ 1
  1.1 Background ..................................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 Research Questions, Objectives and Main Argument .................................................. 5
  1.3 Methodology and Research Questions ......................................................................... 8
  1.3.1 Recruitment Strategy and Sampling Methodology .................................................. 8
  1.3.2 Further Ethical Considerations and Positionality ................................................... 12

Chapter 2: Literature Review ............................................................................................... 16
  2.1 Access to Employment ............................................................................................... 16
  2.2 Somali Migration ......................................................................................................... 19
  2.3 Canada’s Role in Somalia ............................................................................................ 21
  2.4 The Legacy of Bill C86 ............................................................................................... 23
  2.5 Somali Asylum Seekers Unwelcome in Canada .......................................................... 25
  2.6 The Case of Somali Men in Canada .............................................................................. 27

Chapter 3: Migratory Trajectories and The use of Networks ............................................. 31
  3.1 Family Ties .................................................................................................................. 32
  3.2 Clan Formations and Structures of Male Dominance ................................................ 39
  3.3 Migratory Experience and The use of Clan, Family and Smuggling networks .......... 40
  3.3.1 Financing the Journey ......................................................................................... 41
  3.4 Migratory Pathways, Smugglers and Detention ........................................................ 43
3.5 Transitory States and Entry into Canada.................................................................48
3.6 Stateless and Undocumented..................................................................................52
3.7 The Human Institution of Statelessness Clans, Smugglers and the Road to Asylum.....54
3.7.1 Failed Asylum Claims and Deferred Aspirations............................................58

Chapter 4: Labour and Social reproduction...................................................................... 60
4.1 Labour market Experience and Stories of Masculine Social Reproduction and Survival.60
4.2 Employment and Labour Market Barriers for Young Somali Men...........................62
4.3 Canadian Immigration Law and Barriers to Decent Work for Somali Asylum Seekers...68
4.4 The Diasporic Condition and Masculine Obligations............................................. 69
4.5 Shared Living Accommodations............................................................................72
4.6 Shifting Masculinities.........................................................................................76

Chapter 5: .......................................................................................................................78
Conclusion.................................................................................................................. 78
Bibliography...............................................................................................................81

Interviews (Pseudonyms).............................................................................................92
Appendix 1: Interview Questions ...............................................................................93
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.1 Background

Over a period of three decades, Somalis have come to Canada fleeing human rights abuses, and more recently perennial drought, famine and civil unrest. It has been recorded that almost a fifth of the Somali population had fled the country by 1990 following continued human rights abuses and civil war that ensued during the reign of the Mohamed Siad Barre regime (Ali, 1990). Currently, the region still has no stable and functioning government and the subsequent stateless order resulted with several semi-autonomous regions proclaiming their independence following the overthrow of the Barre regime in 1991; these include Somaliland, Puntland and Jubbaland. Reports suggest that close to 55,000 Somalis resettled in Canada between 1988-1996 (Abdulle, 2000). The case of Somali refugees in Canada has been well documented with much of the literature suggesting that many Somali refugee claimants continue to receive differential treatment as a result of Bill- C-86 (Alteration to Immigration act of 1978) and its lasting effects on Somali refugee claimants. The Bill itself was an amendment to Canada’s Immigration Act which stipulated that refugees had to provide identity documents which were satisfactory in order to be granted access to potential permanent residency in Canada. Somali asylum seekers were particularly affected by the changes in Canada’s immigration law as they were unable to provide identity documents due to the lack of a functioning government in Somalia. A settlement through a legal challenge in 1996 was agreed upon by the Canadian government in 2000. The terms of the settlement implemented the need for refugees without identity documents to provide written affidavits from someone prior to arrival proving who they were or through credible Somali organizations in Canada (CCR, 2015). Between
the years of 1990 and 1993 Somali refugees had a 90% acceptance rating into Canada but gradually the rates have declined to 57% in 2015 (OCASI, 2016). This falling acceptance rate occurred despite many of same challenges facing the country persisting two decades after the end of the civil war.

The prolonged period of war and the instability that ensued in Somalia significantly changed the labor market in the region. The number of jobs in the public sector that previously employed a large number of men has consequently vanished resulting in a high level of unemployment among the male population. As a result, young men from Somalia today almost exclusively leave their homeland because of the limited economic opportunities available to them (Nimo, 2015). However, once they get to Canada or other destination countries many are often refused asylum due to lack of documentation and or suffer from the perpetual waiting game for processing of immigration papers, thus resulting in them working in poor quality, often exploitative and precarious work (Danso 2002, Kasozi 1988, Austin and Este 2001, McDowell 2008, Batnizky et al 2009). Being unemployed as a Somali man often carries a set of constructed social and cultural implications that inform the way they navigate Somali society both in Somalia and the diaspora. Men in Somali society are expected to fulfill certain traditional responsibilities and are in some cases penalized socially for not doing so. These ideas are propagated primarily by patrilineal clan systems that uphold particular norms that are ascribed to men, such as responsibilities and obligations to their clan and to their family alike. Indeed, the clan system in the Somali context – which is a large group of families that trace their ancestry through generations to a common male ancestor by name - dominates certain aspects of social and political life. To understand how Somali society functions
one must first understand the clan structure. Kusow (1998) defines the Somali clan structure as follows:

Somali society is divided into six major groupings known as clans. These clan groupings are a vast amalgamation of kinship ties that trace their ancestry to one mythical ancestor. Following a patrilineal lineage, these clan structures function as an organizing tool and in certain circumstances can be used as a political or economic tool as small clans affiliate with larger clans for protective purposes. While larger clans affiliate with smaller groups for purposes of creating strong coalitions. Social order within the context of Somalia is directly related to political organization, social differentiation, and economic distribution. These are mediated by clan differences and supported by its segmentation. “This kind of lineage segmentation as a social institution function in two-fold it is a tool of divisiveness and fragmentation but at the same time it functions to buttress a move in the other direction” (Kusow, 1998).

While clan affiliations profoundly shape individual Somali’s access to resources such as social networks, Somali identity as it is expressed through the shared understanding of Somalinimo (Somaliness) plays an important role in how Somalis express their political views, through loyalty and responsibility towards their particular lineage. Following Muna (2015) the definition of Somalinimo is,

“For Somalis it is the connection to a land, greater social network and language that defines Somalis. Being one of the societies in Africa that has had an actualization of their
commonality as being one people, Somalis were a nation state before it was actualized” (Muna, 2015)

These lineages are geographically specific, which in part is blamed for the historical tensions, civil unrest and present day crisis in the country vis a vis clan domination and breakaway semi-autonomous regions (Ali, 1990). This inherent divisiveness in the clan structure can be viewed as the primary cause of the fragmented nature of the clan system. Notwithstanding, these same clan structures and affiliations work in ways to give meaning to young Somali men, how they are viewed and how they view themselves. As a consequence, these clan structures have worked and continue to work as a network in ways to facilitate the movement, reception and arrival of young Somali men in to Canada.

In chapter one I begin by introducing the main research questions, objectives, arguments and methodologies of this thesis. I follow this in Chapter two by presenting a literature review of both the historical context of Somalia as well as Canada’s historical immigration practices and interaction with the people of Somalia and other ethnic migrants. In chapter three, I present through findings the experience of the nine young Somali men who participated in this study, who have recently sought to seek asylum in Canada and the kinds of migration and asylum process and procedures they have endured. Following this in chapter four, I will further demonstrate through findings how this group of young men seek gain livelihoods and settle once they arrive in Canada.
1.2 Research Questions, Objectives, and Main Arguments

In this thesis I ask two questions: What methods, modes and networks have young Somali men originally from Somalia used in order to migrate, gain entry and seek asylum in Canada? Second, once they arrive in their host country how have they managed to carve out livelihoods and survive?

My objective has been to capture and document the particularities in the experiences and more generally the challenges and opportunities they have encountered in migrating to Canada and in carving out decent livelihoods in Toronto.

Together a second aim of the interview responses was also to analyze and gauge the existence of certain trends, i.e. diasporic networks, shifting masculinities and transnational activities that served to gain further understanding of shared experiences beyond socio-economic or clan affiliations that this group of men experience. By doing this I gained an empirical understanding of the kinds of connections that might transcend their particular migratory and workplace experiences and garnered deeper understanding into the process of acculturation and identity making post-migration.

As much of the work on Somali asylum seekers has primarily focused on the experience of women (Spitzer 2006, Bassel 2010, Hopkins 2010) it is therefore important to gain inquiry into how the lived experience of young Somali men who seek asylum in Canada is interpreted and how they seek to give meaning to the predicaments in which they find themselves in post-migration. As a group of people who have been significantly understudied, research on young Somali male asylum seekers in Toronto is not only timely but apt. What is virtually absent in much of the literature are insights on how this group of Somali men negotiated their migration to Canada, how they navigate
the labour market after their immigration status decision, and how their own nuanced conceptions of masculinity, Somali identity (Somalinimo), and family obligation shape their strategies to migrate, settle and find work.

I employ an intersectional approach (Crenshaw 1989; McDowell 1997), drawn from labour geography and critical race theory to understand these men’s experiences as ones that are the result of intersecting forms of oppression and power. Therefore, this project has sought to document and understand how legal status, statelessness, race, and gender norms and kinship obligations intersect to produce a very particular migratory experience and labour landscape that these men must navigate in Canada.

Based on the nine in-depth interviews with young Somali men between the ages of 25-30 who have migrated to Canada, I document how young Somali men’s migration trajectories are underpinned by various forms of social networks provided through clan affiliations and resulting from a shared understanding of Somalinimo which they harness in order to migrate. Through this I build on the insights of Thompson (2017) and argue that these young men’s migration trajectories are uniquely shaped by their condition of statelessness and this functions in ways to situate these young men on their course to Canada. Moreover, I argue that networks in the context of migration, seek to disrupt the particular conditions of statelessness that young Somali men who originate from Africa are faced with. In this thesis, I seek to expand on the conventional understanding of statelessness and stateless refugees; by broadening what has predominantly been applied to individuals who have no state, lack rights and are in total exclusion (Arendt, 1973), I suggest, like Wessel (2015) that undocumented persons are in fact rendered stateless as individuals who are the subjects
of borders, control and the law. For Somali people ideas around statehood are in fact linked to their shared understanding of Somalinimo that also acts as a self-referential tool linked to a broader identity and a networks of family, kin and community. This is in contrast to those invoked through conventional legal conceptions of the state and statehood itself; this distinction as I will show is important to make as it pushes back, as well displays how this group of young men have sought enact a particular kind of statehood through the reliance on these networks provided to them during their migration experience.

Building on works by Austin and Este (2001), McDowell (2008), Dyer and McDowell (2009), Warfa et al. (2012), Valerie (2015), and Ahmed (2010), I explore how conceptions of masculinity, Somali male identity and family obligations are also shaped through the experience of statelessness and how this impacts how they navigate the labour market post migration.

I suggest that statelessness is a condition that these men continue to experience in Toronto, Canada as undocumented and as refugee claimants. I argue that statelessness and diasporic networks don’t just structure and facilitate these men’s migration, but that they play a crucial role in shaping these men’s access to the workforce and their ability to survive and thrive in Toronto. This paper will explore how this complex intersectionality produces a particular migratory experience for young Somali men that is heavily coded and functions through categorical distinctions that are managed and (re)negotiated through the process of asylum.
1.3 Methodology and Research Questions

The findings of this project are based on nine semi-structured interviews conducted in Toronto, Canada alongside a review of secondary materials and the historical context of Somali migration to Canada. I began this project by conducting a literature review and analysis of scholarship on Somali men and migration, which helped to situate my research within contemporary migration theory and intersectional frameworks of analysis. Through interviews, I explored the extent to which these young men’s immigration experience helped or hindered their asylum claims and the process of gaining access to legal status in Canada, as well as how the networks and trajectories of their migration has shaped their access to decent employment in Toronto. This process involved a field based study on nine recent young Somali refugees and asylum seekers, conducted through semi-structured interviews in the Greater Toronto Area.

The complex understandings of social networks that enable migration and that also structure the Somali context required in depth interviews; I could not have gathered this kind of information through surveys or other methods. As McIntosh and Morse (2015) note, semi-structured interviews allowed for a level of flexibility in responses which granted the participants the ability to detail experiences they found important which may have not been necessarily been thought of by me.

1.3.1 Recruitment strategy and sampling methodology

All nine of the research project participants were recruited through my own personal network as a member of the Somali community in Toronto, Canada. This is in part because gaining access to participants proved to be a bigger challenge than I had initially anticipated. So much so that my
preliminary avenues for recruitment had to be changed because of these challenges. For instance, my initial methods of recruitment involved engaging with community organization that service the Somali neighbourhoods of Toronto. This proved to be a challenge as communication was difficult as they were not responsive and many were not so interested in participating in the study upon hearing about the nature of the project. I found this particularly disheartening as I felt I was received as a non-member of the community and a representative of the institution I was conducting my research through. Consequently, I decided to network with my Somali peers and friends and this proved to be a more fruitful endeavor. I feel that this was a legitimate sampling process because the purpose of this study was not to achieve a representative sample of young male Somali men, but to investigate questions about the intersections of statelessness, masculinities, diasporic networks and livelihoods among a sample of young asylum claimants. I chose to change my sampling plan but this still gave me what I would have acquired had I stuck to my original plan.

Thus while my positionality enabled me to gain access to my sample, it can also be understood through the serendipitous nature of networking I employed during my encounter and introduction to the participants. My understanding of serendipity is derived from the works of Ryan and Loric (2016) whereby they describe serendipity as merely not just luck but the necessary recognition to seize an unexpected moment. In the case of this study, it was my meeting of two potential participants through a peer of mine. In this encounter with the right persons or gatekeeper, as Gillies (2004) and Henderson, McGrellis and Sharpe (2004) state, it presented an opportunity for the negotiation of access to more participants as not just a matter of luck but as a product of skillful networking, and probably also due the fact that I am an ‘insider’ in the community. Although much of my time had been spent in contact with the community organizations, the serendipitous nature of my encounter and introduction to potential participants proved to be the much needed progress
that I had sought after. It initially began with me being introduced to two recent asylum seekers in Canada through a close friend, who both then informed me of their peers who went through the process or are currently undergoing the process of claiming asylum through the immigration courts of Canada. My initial contact with two of the participants opened up the door for me with this group of research subjects through snowball sampling. Their level of comfort with me and the project goals that I described to them made it easier for their peers to come onboard once they were informed. Every attempt was made during the outreach process to access participants that fit into the desired sample, this included young Somali men between the ages of 18-30 who have recently applied or have gone through the process of seeking asylum in Canada. Each participant was contacted through the telephone and no other personal information including email was shared with the participants and vice versa. In accordance with the ethics protocols in place for this project, each participant was informed to delete contact information of my number on their phone once interviews took place. By finding participants through these methods and following these protocols it ensured a high level of confidentiality and security of participants. It also inadvertently presented me with a number of participants with a variety of statuses in Canada including (un)employed status as well as a variety of language skills levels and personal marital status.

Each interview took place in a safe space that facilitated the utmost security and safety for participants as they shared their experiences. Some of the interviews were conducted at the shared living accommodations of the participants, and some were conducted at my relative’s home in their neighbourhood. The interview in and of itself was structured in a manner that would elicit clarity in each of the participant’s statuses here in Canada as well as employment status. Each interviewee
was subjected to the same questions (See Appendix A) with each expressing their very own experience with regards to the various themes. The main aim of the semi-structured interview process was to draw particular narratives from each participant and draw links from each narrative and where there were divergent experiences this was detailed as well.

In terms of the interview procedure the kinds of questions each participant was asked was structured in three phases. The first section of the interview process began with background information with a specific emphasis of their current status, level of schooling and personal histories as it relate to life back in Somalia. The second section of the interview delved into their particular situation currently here in Canada, for those who had previously gone through the process of gaining legal status they would speak of their previous experience as a refugee claimant before obtaining legal status. The questions in this section asked for participants to describe their immigration experience, how they ended up in Toronto, Canada, their personal expectations, motivations for claiming asylum and the process of immigration. The third and final section of the interview process asked participants to describe their current and previous employment and economic conditions pre and post-migration. Each section of the interview process was conducted vis a vis a conversational approach through the semi-structured interview, as this was in the hopes of formulating a narrative around each participant's experience. I recorded each interview with the consent of the participant, and I made use of note taking during the interview process in case any issues arose to do with clarity of their answers and or highlighting particularly interesting points. Each participant was provided with a copy of the interview questions both in English and Somali in case there would be any difficulty in answering the questions. Participants were allowed to answer the questions in
Somali if in fact they had any issues understanding the questions. As a native speaker of Somali I was well equipped to understand and explain any interpretation issues that may have come up.

The data analysis process was helpful in that it provided an opportunity for familiarity with each interviewee. The interview themes were then subsequently correlated with the theoretical frameworks and literature upon transcribing. This process made it easier to identify links and draw from information that was relevant and important.

1.3.2 Further ethical considerations and positionality

My fieldwork experience conducting this research project was particularly interesting, as much of my predetermined ideas around the process were established through the presumption that participant recruitment and involvement would be an easy task. These presumptions stemmed from the idea that access would be afforded to me much more easily as a member of the community I was researching. What I found to be the case, as Abdi (1998) notes, was that my identity as a member of the community and my identity as a researcher were inseparable. As part of the preliminary research process of this project much consideration was paid to how dynamics of power as researcher as well as a member of said community and how this situates this work and myself. Prior to the interview process extensive research on matters of knowledge acquisition through the process of interviews of subjects for the purposes of ethnographic analysis was conducted. In this endeavor I incorporated my very own understanding and knowledge of the community as a member and sought to avoid ethical situations that would be compromising during the recruitment of the sample as well as during the process of interpretation and analysis of gathered information. I used what Mullings (1999) calls a ‘positional space’ during the interview process; this, she states,
enables for both participants and interviewer to consciously engender a level of trust and cooperation. This particular method was afforded to me due to primarily the fact that I was received by the participants as a community member and not an outsider also supported by visible attributes gender, race, and ethnicity and as a former asylum seeker. Both participants’ and my positionality in relation to one another complemented each other which at times according to Mullings (1999) is difficult. This is particularly the case when both parties are situated within disparate positions in asymmetrical socio-economic spaces. In my case it was imperative that I presented the basis of my work as a personal one, in which I was invested in documenting the case of young Somali men seeking asylum in Toronto, Canada as I was one a number of years prior. Explaining to the participants my very own immigration process to Canada presented an opportunity for the participants to become more comfortable in disclosing their own experiences. This kind of self-representation helped in gaining further cooperation with the participants. Mullings (1999) describes this insider positionality at times presents divergent effects on researchers, it is important to note that my particular work experience both in the Somali community in Canada and in Somalia afforded me a particular kind of access that would not be readily available to someone from outside the community.

Certain challenges of being an insider as a Somali during the process of interviews, however, also arose, and derived from the implicit meanings in which some information was at times presented by participants. In Somali culture as a group of people who speak a language imbued by poetry, nomenclature is used to describe certain experience. In this I had a tough job of understanding the implicit meaning to some of the experience details presented. For instance, the term “Gal Canada” which was used from time to time by community members to describe this group of participants
had no implicit meaning to me as it translates to “Enter/stay Canada” in English. In the case of the Somali community this name was given to individuals who sought to cross the Canadian border irregularly from the United States. This term was given to them as a way of giving meaning to the experience these young men faced as failed asylum claimants in the United States, and their subsequent exit from the United States and Entry into Canada. This presented an interesting situation as a reflection on my own position as an “insider” in terms of gender, ethnicity, and race and as an asylum seeker, but also an “outsider” to the very fraught form of migration that these men narrated. I also had to be mindful of masculine performance during the interview process and how this may have been presented by interviewees and later interpreted by me. As a member of the community and as a cis gendered man, I was aware of the difficulties in discerning what information the participants expected and thought I wanted to hear. These are some of the difficulties presented in research work that includes first-hand interviews. At the same time, I was encouraged and comforted knowing that this group were able to share their experiences and traumas freely with me as a peer and this I believe helped in ensuring the quality of data collected.

As someone who speaks the language of Somali but at the same time is conducting a research project to be presented in English this is something that I had to take into consideration. For the most part, this group of participants’ first language is Somali; this could have posed as a barrier that may have prevented the participants from presenting their experiences in a way that could convey their thoughts fully. I aimed at conducting the interviews primarily in English, and on occasion, when fitting, participants were allowed to convey responses in Somali and this was encouraged.
My interest in the topic at hand began with my experience working in Somalia in 2014, during this time much of the discussions around the community involved the issue of Tahriib. Going on Tahriib according to UNICEF Somalia (2016) is largely a youth phenomenon whereby young people make the decision to make the perilous journey to leave Somalia which are unlike previous migrations, usually facilitated by human smugglers who they pay and encourage migrants to leave. During my time in Somalia became part and parcel of everyday discussion and this word became part of the lexicon in the community. As a topic that is still growing in discussion and research by scholars such as Houssein (2013) and Nimo-Ali (2016) I wanted to gain further understanding on how this issue related to the experience of young Somali refugees in Canada. My initial interests opened further doors as I began to use my networks within the community to gain inquiry into the issues facing refugees who arrive in Canada from Somalia. During this time, I attended community talks and events in an effort to gauge and connect with people who would give me further access to potential participants. This included attending functions at Khalid Bin Waleed mosque in the Etobicoke area of Toronto as well other community led initiatives in the same neighbourhood. The process of entering this research project in fact began years before the project methods had been established.
CHAPTER TWO: Literature review

2.1 Access to movement

Mobility, or lack thereof, is a political tool, and is also a productive apparatus for analyzing displacement because it acknowledges the difference in the access to movement of refugees and asylum seekers (Hyndman and Giles, 2011). Canadian immigration policy historically regulated the migration of non-white people into the country (Abdulle, 2000). This was primarily done through the distinction between preferred and non-preferred countries of origin, with a specific preference to immigrants from the United States and Europe. This dual function of preferred and non-preferred distinctions in Canadian immigration practice has brought forth policies that have encouraged the screening of individuals through disparate measures of admission and control. This emphasis on individuals seen as undesirable is not historically new; Canadian immigration policies prior to 1967 tended to exclude those considered non-white. Canada’s racial bias within its immigration policy is one that has a long history and continues to be implemented through ongoing discriminatory legislation. These biases are influenced increasingly by global political trends that demarcate specific bodies as acceptable and those that are not. These demarcations i.e. preferred and non-proffered migrants are not only constructed upon point of entry but rather function as borderless apparatuses that inform the ways in which migrants travel and are identified prior to arrival into Canada vis a vis country of origin. Migrants from the global South, as McDowell (2008) notes, have historically been constructed through the colonial gaze as other, a position constructed through comparisons with western society as backward and non-modern. Gogia and Slate (2011) argue against the myth of Canadian historical liberalism and enlightenment on matters of race and immigration. They point to the very abysmal history of Canada’s acceptance of black people, Jews and those of Chinese, Japanese, and Indian origin. Canadian immigration policies
systematically avoided the entry of people of African origin into Canada. This can be seen in the numbers of Africans gaining entry into Canada from 1950-1970 (Konadu-Agyemang, 2003), it is only after this period that there had been a gradual increase in access entry for African immigrants into Canada (Mensah, 2014). This policy was partially in response to the countries need to attract skilled workers destined for the labour market. The general profile of the immigrants into Canada did not change until 1979, with majority of immigrants arriving from the US and Britain. In reality this remained unchanged until 1982 when an influx of Vietnamese asylum seekers arrived in Canada (Abdulle, 2000). Canada’s point based system has shifted over time, and this has historically been structured in relation to the country's economic circumstances more recently it has adopted an effort to attract the most suitable and preferred economic immigrants. Language facility, education, and work experience have all increasingly become more important in the selection of immigrants and their subsequent reception and settlement process in Canada. People of black African ancestry had historically been categorized as non-preferred and Canadian policy had discouraged their entry (Abdulle, 2000). Even after the removal of the racially discriminatory policies in 1967, Canadian immigration system systematically avoided the entry of people of African origin into Canada. Canada’s historically-limited contact with the continent of Africa both politically and economically, especially with countries from Sub-Saharan Africa gave way to more Africans gaining legitimate access to entry to Canada (Abdulle, 2000). Many of the people immigrating to Canada were fleeing political and economic persecution.

Hashemi (1993) states that the various screening practices that this has given rise to sheds light on troubling patterns in Canadian legislation. This emphasis on individuals seen as undesirable is not
historically new, Canada immigration policies prior to 1967 were ones that excluded those considered as non-white. Prior to this, Canadian policy between 1896-1914 gave preferential treatment to those from preferred sources, as this served as an opportunity for the country to populate its large landmass (Avery, 1994). Canadian legislation of the time had instituted an aggressive policy whereby free land was given to immigrants from Northern Europe (Driedger, 1996). With a particular emphasis on economic growth, Canadian legislation encouraged migrant workers to immigrate to Canada in the hopes of satisfying the country's labour needs (Avery, 1994). The development of Canadian immigration policy throughout history was generally marked by racist attitudes primarily towards visible minorities up until 1967. This development was marked by a variety of shifts attributed to very specific historical moments including post world war Canada, and following this, the rise of the “national security state” during the cold war, which moved the country’s immigration policy from an economic approach to a system imbued with the criteria of state protection from outside communities.

It is important to note here that whilst Canadian legislation made drastic shifts in accepting refugees under the guise of humanitarianism and an end of discriminatory practices, many of the subsequent legislations sought to function in similar fashions to their predecessor (Hashemi, 1993). This is not to overlook the very important gains the country made by the changing of immigration legislation, however it is important to highlight how Canadian legislation was and continues to be informed by discriminatory practices. These practices have increasingly been constructed around particular narratives about outsiders under the guise of increasing the importance of securitizing the country from imminent threats.
2.2 Somali Migration

The political instability that historically forced Somalis to migrate was also a condition of an economic pull that saw many choose to seek employment in other countries. During the oil boom years of the late 1970’s and 1980’s an estimated 300,000 Somalis - mainly men - immigrated to the Middle East (Abdulle, 2000). Previous to this, the period of 1970-1976 was marred by a stringent governmental control over the economy in Somalia. Prices of production and retail were fixed by the central government, the nationalization of major industries and financial institutions occurred and inflation was regulated. The economic characteristics of the country significantly shifted when the country went to war with Ethiopia in 1978 at a time when a severe drought hit the country. Somalia's relationship with its previous ally the USSR also disintegrated during that period further affecting the country's economic conditions. In addition, the increase in migration to the Middle East during a period of rising oil-prices and oil-boom in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council further compounded the country’s economic situation. The Gulf states took advantage of this and combined with the ongoing economic instability in Somalia during that period close to half a million Somalis migrated to the Middle East (Ali, 1990). Theoretical literature on migration suggests that labour migration has adverse effects on exporting countries including “brain drain” by way of attracting skilled personnel and laborers who are in short supply in their home countries and the splitting of families. The literature also suggests that under appropriate conditions, labour migration could have positive effects on exporting countries. Most apparent in the case of Somalia are the flows of remittances back to Somalia that help to support the local economy, nevertheless a second consequence of this in-flow of remittances is that it helps to disrupt local economies and production (Ahmed 2000, Hansen 2004, Castles et al 1973).
Factors such as political repression, economic instability, war with Ethiopia and finally the outbreak of the civil war all led to the migration of millions of Somali asylum seekers and refugees. Canada was one of the primary destinations for Somali asylum seekers as well as former colonizing countries including Britain and Italy. Many of those earlier waves of Somali asylum seekers to Canada had the economic means to travel or had relatives to help them pay for their trips (Abdulle, 2000). Many were choosing to flee dictatorship, human rights abuse and an unjust political system. The first waves of asylum seekers to Canada were members of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) and The Somali National Movement (SNM). These were political asylum seekers who had fought for years against the Barre regime to little avail. These included mainly elite politicians and intellectuals, who were mostly men (Ali, 1990).

Prior to the implementation of the immigration act of 1976/77 Canadian citizenship was granted through the process of naturalization with particular preference to British subjects. The immigration act of 1977 brought about new frameworks that were implemented through a new citizenship act that declared a citizen to be citizen (Leila-Hussein, 2016). The immigration act of 1978 introduced particular clauses that would in effect enable the future amendment and modification of various acts. In theory the immigration act of 1978 was meant to end the sort of arbitrary and racist impetus that defined previous legislation. The act was an effort to devise and strengthen Canada’s role in the global trend at the time for greater liberalism and create the image of a longstanding history and tradition of humanitarianism (Hashemi, 1993). The act in its essence sought to rupture the laws that had previously discriminated against visible minorities from gaining access to immigration to Canada.
By 1991 Somali immigrants and refugees entering Canada had reached its peak. Somalis had now become the top source for refugee countries on the list of mainly sub-Saharan countries (Abdulle, 2000). During this same period the Somalia had plummeted into civil war after years of instability and the overthrow of the president Said Barre and a state of non-government took course. A significant number of these refugees used various methods to arrive to in Canada. Some took advantage of the various humanitarian and government programs of resettlement although minimal, others were able to travel with false documents and others were able to be sponsored by extended families (Affi, 1997). Many were able to take advantage of the opportunities for asylum into Canada during that time, many also chose Canada as they mainly gravitated towards countries with already existing communities.

2.3 Canada’s role in Somalia

Canadians first came into contact with Somalis when Somali refugees arrived in the country following the instability and subsequent civil war in Somalia. Abdulle (1993) describes how the Canadian media’s initial reporting on Somalis only began after large numbers began to arrive into Canada and settle. Fellin (2015) describes the interaction between the Canadian media and the Somali community as one that has throughout history been entangled and laden with explicit violence. In 1993 Canadian peacekeepers stationed in Somalia fatally shot two Somalis and tortured one sixteen-year-old Shidane Abukar Arone. Much of the reporting at the time was heavily undermined by popular discourse of backwardness of Africa (Razack, 2004:4). After photographs and documentation of the incident were revealed the Canadian government initiated an inquiry into the incident which was later coined as the “Somali Affair”. By 1997 the inquiry was shut down due to a failure to produce a full investigation of the incident (Mire, 2017). Much of the popular discourse
of the time was that this was an incident perpetrated by rogue soldiers, soldiers who did not have leadership and were pushed to near insanity by Africa and Africans (Fellin, 2015). Razack (2004) describes the situation as an incident that represented in popular media as an isolated situation where by Canada’s gentle peacekeeping role was stained by a few unscrupulous men.

Hall (1990) describes how media representation is an important site for examining how structural racism is enabled by national ideologies of racism, sexism, class oppression and other forms of discrimination and how these intersect and can be transformed and reproduced. Popular representations of Somalis in Canadian media have historically been intertwined with racist and Islamophobic ideologies revolving around violence that have specifically criminalized Somali men. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation since 1992 produced documentaries that have depicted Somali men and by extension the community as harboring gang members, immigration fraudsters and terrorists. The 1992 documentary “Crimes against Humanity” was for many Canadians was the first introduction into the Somali Canadian experience, the documentary was especially latent with a dominant narrative that depicted Somalis as criminal warlords, immigration fraudsters, violent and unwelcome. The reproduction of these racist ideologies were further perpetuated by the CBC in other noteworthy documentaries including “A Place called Dixon” (1993) and the “The Life and death of Abdinasir Dirie” (2010). Hall (1990) describes how media constructs and defines race and produces and reproduces often unquestioned ideologies of which become “common sense”. These racist and dominant narratives on Somalis in Canadian media have been constructed in a manner that couches them not only within the nation state but within a global focus on violence and conflict. Throughout its history, Canada has been particularly interested in the protection of its borders from threats has used these very racist ideologies to justify its immigration policies.
This kind of technique as Stasiuslis and Ross (2006) state is implemented through the transformation of structural difficulties such as individual gender, race, culture and religion into security threats in order to render populations governable within the paradigm of security.

2.4 The legacy of Bill C86

The introduction of the amendment to Bill C86 in 1993 was during a period of heightened anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment in the Canada (Hashemi, 1993). Policy makers of the time had chosen to ride the rising tide of prejudice under the guise of populist opinion and outline a system that would pander to the anti-refugee factions of the population. Much of the outcry of the time stemmed from allegation of massive abuse of immigration and refugee programs and fraud. Hashemi (1993: 5) states that the implementation of this Bill at the time was “…couched under the common and ultimately meaningless rhetorical concession to the maintenance of Canada’s humanitarian tradition the predominant emphasis was on enforcement and deterrence”. The Bill was introduced to the public as Canada’s response to address the issue of refugee fraud, as well as a stance to display Canada’s policy makers taking action against individuals taking advantage of Canada’s’ welcoming, humanitarian nature. It was also interestingly introduced The Somali community was especially affected by the enactment of this Bill which purported to deter immigration fraud, the Bill was meant to put in place apparatus that would catch those who were suspected of bypassing the rules and to prevent fraudulent status claims, terrorists and criminals from entering the country.
Bill C86 affected the Somali community not only by placing restrictions that specifically affected their status claims, but also by moulding a particularly negative narrative around the community, its people and refugees at large. The Bill which was enacted during the peak of the Somali exodus required those claiming asylum and or permanent residency to show documentation revealing their identity. Many saw this as a violation, and specifically discriminatory against Somali asylum seekers in particular, as the country moved into a system that would regulate and restrict admission into Canada. The Bill was seen as cynical gesture that placed stringent barriers in front of individuals who needed the protection of Canada (Hashemi, 1993). Many Somalis who did not have proper identification due to the collapsed institutional infrastructure in their country and the inability for their government offices to provide its citizens with proper identification were affected by this (Leila-Hussein, 2016). The Canadian government's initiatives to get tough on what they deemed as false refugee claims and deter criminals also discriminated against the Somali community. The Bill introduced tougher measures that made the obtainment of permanent residency more difficult, through the ID rule. Those who were considered refugees were then left in limbo for a period of five years before being issued permanent residency (CCR, 2015). The Bill and the issue of satisfactory ID also proposed to set out particular criteria that would increasingly target refugees, especially those suspected of fraud, crimes and terrorism (Leila-Hussein, 2016). The Bill also sought to re-introduce a wide range of uncertainty with regards to criteria around future amendments and the law also broadened the power of the Minister of Immigration to incorporate future regulations as he/she feels necessary (Hashemi, 1993:15).
2.5 Somali asylum seekers unwelcome in Canada

The legislation implemented by the Canadian government at the time reinforced the same kinds of exclusionary practices of picking and choosing which individuals were worthy of entry into Canada, but more importantly, those who were worthy of claims to status. Canada’s introduction into this new arena of increased securitization of border entry through stringent immigration entry practices was manufactured through the production and exploitation of insecurity. Somali refugee and asylum claimants escaping war back home were particularly affected by this through practices that legitimized and further provided context to the increase of securitization by rendering entry exclusionary. This practice rendered Somalis particularly incapable of claiming asylum even prior to arriving in Canada. Stasiulis and Ross (2006) describe this a kind of securitizing of citizenship by fragmenting and enabling a flexible form of sovereignty to exercise power through and across territorial borders, a form of securitization that was preemptive in nature and castigate those unworthy of entry as threats to the Country. Somali refugees and asylum claimants occupied a space that neatly fitted into the kinds of exclusionary tactics imposed through Bill C86. Their apparent inability to access documents that readily identify them as who they are puts them in a position of precarity by way of their country of origin, their inability to gain access into Canada because of this marks them as threats to the country of destination. The most apparent significance of the law was that in its exclusion of claimants it in effect suggested that all Somalis were not welcome in Canada.
The effects of these regulations were readily seen in the rates of Somali acceptance into Canada which gradually declined from 90% to 57% in 2015, despite the country not having a democratically elected and recognized government for years to come. The enactment of the Bill further reinstated the distinction that had historically been present by way of staking claim to those who were seen as insiders and those seen as outsiders. Through the shaping of legislation and popular narratives around threats to Canadian humanitarianism and safety, policy makers constituted specific forms of exclusion that were particularly discriminatory to the Somali community. The negative effects of Bill C86 on the Somali community can still be felt today as many of them face challenges to their status claims which in turn have placed them in positions of liminal legality where by access to work and education are a far reach. In 1997 the Canadian government introduced the convention of undocumented refugee which allowed Somali refugee to gain legitimate status of permanent residency after a period of five years (Mire, 2017).

After September 11th, Canada’s legislature passed a revised Immigration Refugee Protection Act. This act was meant to replace the previous act of 1976 by introducing new legislation that would combat and reconstitute Canada’s terms of engagement with refugee and asylum claimants. More specifically the act served as a particularly noteworthy moment in global political trends that seemed to usher in new attitudes towards broader tightening of borders and increasing security in an attempt to protect citizens. The act also outlined the particulars on how to select immigrants and future permanent residents including methods of examination, admissibility processing and enforcement issues such as detention (Leila-Hussein 2016). This also included the role of the immigration and refugee boards vis a vis guidelines and duties in the administration of claims and rejections. The act sought to increase the speed in processing times for refugee claims by grouping
claims according to risk and or threats. The act was met with much concern by the Canadian Council for Refugees as much like prior legislation devolved power to policy makers without the parliament of Canada having an opportunity to examine new regulations (Leila-Hussein, 2016).

In the wake of September 11th Canada’s immigration legislation shifted once again to a tougher stance on potential threats to the security of the nation and its borders. Canada’s effort to secure it borders set out particular criteria that would increasingly surveil, incarcerate and deport refugees, especially those suspected of crimes and terrorism. These new practices only sought to reinforce already existing restrictive measures to obtaining asylum in Canada for the Somali community. Browne (2005) has illustrated how claims to legitimate or normative pathways to citizenship are first understood through particular forms of bordering of individuals who may be considered as potential threats to claims. Somali asylum seekers to Canada find themselves as subjects of restrictive border practices. Bigo (2002) discusses how this kind of immigrant demarcation of the insider and outsider informs a model he terms as the “stock exchange of security” this is whereby at particular levels some “bodies” are seen as less threatening than others based on where they originate from or the likelihood of risk they may present. This nature of Canadian policy has created a space for the inclusion and exclusion of some through a particular kind of racist othering that defines the parameters around those considered worthy of entry.

2.6 The case of Somali men in Canada

workers and the multiple identities that they take up and produce upon arrival in their host countries to explore the downward labour mobilities that often times meet recent immigrants and asylum seekers in Canada. Young Somali asylum seekers take on various forms of acculturation that meet individual immigrants in host countries. In particular, the process of finding work is often (re)shaped structurally through a multitude of systems of regulations on access to work (i.e. work permits) and basic survival that influence how immigrant workers view themselves post migration. This is also in relation to how they access the workforce and how they are viewed and treated in the host country at large vis a vis their status in the country. Somali men are uniquely placed at the intersection of various oppressed and marginalized identities in North America. These include their race, religion and culture. Much of their interactions within Canada are positioned through a particular frame that fragments their experiences in society and the workplace. It is important to note that although there are several policies and programs that seek to help the integration and acculturation process of immigrants and asylum seekers to Canada, some suggest that many choose to hold on to their connection to their homeland and this is seen in many of the transnational activities in which they take part (Leila-Hussein, 2016). Batnizky (2009) describes this as “dual frame” which migrants adopt in their host countries as a way to reconcile their new identities vis a vis work, status, gender roles in relation to their previous ones they held back home. The analysis suggests that the kind of flexible masculinities that migrants adopt in their host countries also pushes back on traditional social norms that they may have been accustomed to. The process of migration to some extent, Batnizky (2009) states, empowers men through the loosening of rigid ideas of masculinity and patriarchy. As much of the work on Somali asylum seekers has primarily focused on the experience of women (Spitzer 2006, Bassel 2010, Hopkins 2010) it is therefore important to gain inquiry into how the lived experience of young Somali men who seek asylum in
Canada is interpreted and how they seek to give meaning to the predicaments in which they find themselves in post-migration.

As stated previously Somali identity for men carries a set of constructed social and cultural implications and obligations that inform the way they navigate not just Somali society but Canadian society upon emigration. These ideas are enforced by a clan system that uphold particular gendered norms that are ascribed to men, such as responsibilities and obligations to their clan and to their family alike. The clan system in the Somali context dominates certain aspects of social and political life. Many of these clan obligations are brought with them to Canada and in some cases inform the ways in which they organize, receive one another and mobilize in Canada. These same clan affiliations translate into how Somali men navigate the work force in accordance with how they seek work and the kinds of work they perform. Migrant workers’ ability to find work is informed by structures that include the global economic and political trends to how gender, race and class manifests itself in the migrant worker (as subjects) experience in the labour market (McDowell, 2008). Many take up jobs they did not necessarily see themselves performing and often times these include low-wage and exploitive work. McDowell (2008) speaks to the particular global trends and policies that situate the ways in which migrants are received and socialized depending on their existing racial, gender and class identities, arguing that this then determines how they are positioned in the labour force. In particular, the types of work migrant workers are relegated to based on their access to citizenship and legal status as well as the non-recognition of education and occupation from their home country. Immigrant workers from the global south tend to be viewed by a colonial gaze that not only others them but situates them as backward and non-modern in comparison to their western counterparts.
In the following sections I seek to demonstrate that young Somali men’s access to migration infrastructure and the labour market in Toronto are significantly underpinned by the use of social networks resulting from a shared understanding of Somalinimo. These networks function in a manner to disrupt their particular condition of statelessness and give further meaning to their new found identities post-migration.
In this chapter I explore the particular ways in which young Somali men who have sought asylum in Canada find their way from their country of origin. This chapter begins by drawing links to how familial dynamics, clan networks and other intermediaries function during the migratory experience of these young men, and how they work in tandem to facilitate the project of migrating to claim asylum. In this chapter I seek to show that the migration experience of this group of young Somali men is significantly underpinned both by the condition of statelessness imposed on them by their circumstances in their countries of origin, and by the formal and informal networks that they use in order to facilitate their migration process. In the following sections of this chapter I explore these men’s migration trajectories, clan affiliations, migratory pathways and networks. Following this I will draw from the participant’s narratives and subsequently discussing conditions around statelessness, human trafficking and end finally end the chapter by examining the road to asylum. I discuss and draw on the insights of Thompson (2017) on the ways statehood is enacted by informal networks by those without state citizenship, I explore the conditions around statelessness and migration for these young men to argue that statelessness requires young Somali men to migrate informally/irregularly, and that participants enact statehood as migrants and asylum seekers not only through networks of clan affiliations and kinship supports, but also through fellow migrants and smugglers.
3.1 Family ties

The young men who participated in this study and migrated recently to Canada were between the ages of 25-30, a majority of whom originated from a part of Somalia known as Lower-Jubba, Kismayo area (Figure 1). Some of the participants who had previously lived in the region were forced to leave after the civil war broke out in Somalia in 1992. Many of these young men and their families found themselves in Kenya, some of whom lived in what is the largest refugee camp in Africa, Dadaab. One of the participants originated from the northern parts of Somalia which is considered as the semi-autonomous state of Somaliland (Fig. 1). All the participants of this study except for one had family living in Canada when they arrived. Two out of the nine participants completed post-secondary education while the rest either only completed primary or high school education. All the participants migrated from Somalia to neighbouring countries initially. The participants began by detailing their background and from where in Somalia they originated. Some of the participants were more comfortable in detailing their clan affiliations than others. This was mainly because of the particular politics that are derived from clan networks and among those of whom come from minority clans, this was a sub-theme that came about through the interview process as some from minority clans were less forthcoming. The participants were also asked about their families’ socio-economic status pre-migration and how they financed their migrant journey.
Figure 1: Clan geographic distribution (European Asylum Support Office, 2014)
Many of the participants shared their particular experience detailing how they initially sought refuge from the war and the following years of instability in their region in neighbouring countries. Following the collapse of the central government and limited economic opportunities available to them and their families in Somalia, fleeing the war and instability to neighbouring countries for these participants offered a temporary respite, but set the stage for future migrations elsewhere as economic opportunities were extremely limited in many cases in their first place migration, as one participant, Abdirahman said,

“I was born and grew up in the Mogadishu area, I moved to Ethiopia when I was a kid. That is how I migrated from Ethiopia to Canada. We lived in Ethiopia for a number of years after the war broke out.” -Abdirahman (27)

Two other participants, Ahmed and Younis, detailed their experience living in a refugee camp in Kenya for much of their childhood. They both described that living in the camps was like living in jail because there was no access to the outside world. Their movement was restricted to the parameters of the camp and they both explained that leaving Kenya was their only option.

“I was eleven years old when we left Somalia, we lived in the refugee camp in Kenya called Dadaab. My family still lives in the camp, they have been there for eighteen years and they have never left refugee camp, only me.”- Ahmed (28)

“We left Somalia in 1992, so I do not remember that time about life, because all I know is about the camp in refuge. When I grew up and reached sixteen years that is when I know I was real
refugee and I cannot do life because we were not allowed to leave the five kilometer square that we stayed in. Because the Kenyan authority would catch us and bring us back because we did not have Kenyan ID to move around” - Younis (30)

What is highlighted here is that these young men experienced a sense of confinement in the camps through the restrictions of movement in Kenya because of their lack of status and IDs outside the parameters. Life for these young men was profoundly limited both physically and economically in the camps, seeking ways and opportunity to leave camp life was a major priority for both of them as they also expressed.

Four out of the nine participants came from the Ogaden clan all of whom had no qualms with sharing their clan affiliations. The Ogaden clan is one of the largest sub clans under Darood in the region. Five of the participants who all originated from Kismayo and the surrounding area of Lower Jubba came from minority clans in that region. Those who chose to disclose this information did so freely whilst a few of them chose not to detail their specific clan affiliation. This is important to highlight as it goes further to show how the divisiveness and structure of power through dominance described earlier is embedded through the clan formation.

It is important to note that Somalia is a classic example of the partition of Africa by the colonial powers during the Berlin conference of 1885; much of the geographical scatteredness of Somali people in the horn of Africa region is attributed to this (Abdulle, 2000). For example, participants whose particular lineage is from the Ogaden clan inhabit areas all over the horn of Africa (see Fig. 1), these connections to various geographical spaces render them more mobile and grant them
geographical access in contrast to other clans found in specific areas. Clan affiliations in some cases afford particular groups certain privileges in movement in Somali society over others. Participants who were from the Ogaden clan detailed their families’ choices to move to areas in Ethiopia and Kenya where they knew other families from their clan resided. Due to the geographical scatteredness of Somali people within the horn of Africa region it is not uncommon to find them living in neighbouring countries. This is an important note to highlight the ways in which some of the participants first settled in neighbouring countries because of this kind of access. These diasporic clan networks structured the exodus of particular families during the period of war and instability. Clan affiliations facilitate the settlement of refugees from Somalia in neighbouring countries, this has historically been of observed in Somalia during the Ogaden war with Ethiopia in 1977-1978 whereby many settled in Lower Jubba-Kismayo region (Kagwanya, 2000). As Abdirahman explained,

“I am Ogaden, and mostly Ogaden live and are scattered, if you look at the Somali region the Ogaden are in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. My parents originally if I go back a couple of years my Grandfather came from Ethiopia and moved to Somalia and that is how I guess I ended up in Mogadishu, and finally that is how I was born there. When the war first started to had to leave and the first place we went to was Ethiopia.” - Abdirahman (27)

Ahmed (28) explained how the existence of his clan in North Eastern Kenya region determined where his family would flee to during the war:
“I am Ogaden and we are one of the largest clans in Somalia. In Kismayo we are not the majority but we still reside there along with other clans, we are majority in Dadaab where we moved to, my family still stay there now” Ahmed (28)

Others, like Aman (27) and Hassan (25) were also able to flee to neighbouring countries in the region mainly relying on their immediate families’ resources to facilitate their exodus.

“‘My clan is Asharaf we are a minority clan who are in Buale District, and the Ogadens are the majority clan in the Kismayo area, my family is now in Kenya, we left Somalia when I was young’”- Aman (27)

“I am from minority clan, Ogaden and Marexaan that is the main tribes now in Kismayo...my family they stay in Kismayo, I left by myself to Ethiopia first.”-Hassan (25)

Aman and Hassan, unlike Abdirahman and Ahmed, mainly depended on their family who owned businesses or took care of livestock to facilitate their migration in the absence of immediate diaspora networks in neighbouring countries that could receive them. All of the participants relied on their immediate families financially as they described that they all lived fairly comfortable lives before they left Somalia after the civil war broke out and the years following the collapse of the country.

One of the more salient findings that came from each participant’s background and relations to Somalia was the proximity to which each of the participants were to each other. Living together
now in Toronto, a majority of the participants came from the Lower Jubba and Kismayo area, and are all from clans who are geographically close to each other in the region. It is therefore not surprising that this group of young men managed to find each other once they arrived in Canada; some of whom knew of each other back home while others used clan affiliations and networks to meet each other.

As mentioned previously in the literature review, Somalinimo by and large not only informs the ways in which young men in particular see themselves but in part how they identify themselves. Kusow (2009) describes this kind of proximity to Somalinimo as an attribute to clan membership, individuals who identify their affiliations to a particular patrilineal ancestor, and is shaped around ideas of noble-hood that is informed by the social stratification of clanship. Many of the participants who came from dominant tribes in the region had no reservations in identifying their clan affiliations, those of whom came from minority clans in some cases chose not to identify their clans. This is important to highlight because we see here that although the economic conditions of these young men pre-migration determine their ability to migrate, their proximity to Somalinimo determines their choices to express their affiliations or not. This functions through the view that those from dominant clans have a higher value in Somalinimo compared to those who are from minority clans. This was also apparent in some of the participants’ experiences, those who were from majority clans and had a higher value in Somalinimo, were afforded better access through a robust network of clan networks after the war in neighbouring countries. This is an important point entry into understanding how clan formation within the particular context of Somalia has in part been shaped through hierarchies of dominance and power through the use of these networks. These
structures are not necessarily fixed but do play a role in the ways in which Somali young men navigate Somali society.

3.2 Clan formation and structures of male dominance

For most of the participants, their particular socio-economic status in Somalia pre-migration was tied to livelihood and wealth many of whom whose family owned land and animals. All the participants detailed their families’ socio-economic status in Somalia without reservation. Traditionally, Somalis have been agriculturalists, and many to this day still practice livestock rearing (Abdulle, 2000). Although as I will detail below, diasporic clan networks were essential in facilitating international migration itself, participants who fled escaping war primarily relied on immediate family resources to escape. Six of the nine participants still have immediate family living in Somalia to this day.

By following patrilineal kinship ties, clanship in its broader understanding ascribes particular roles to men in traditional Somali society in which men tend to be the providers and the head of household and women are domestic home keepers. I shall explore later in the dissertation how the structures of masculine obligations through familial expectations to provide and support were (re)shaped post-migration for this group of men. For now, however, what I want to highlight is that clanship in Somalia provides the individual with a sense of primary group identity and commands his or her loyalty. Historically dominant clans have exerted power over minority clans through political and economic structures; this can be seen in the ways minority clans have been disproportionately affected in times of famine and instability specifically in 1991/1992 (Majid, McDowell, 2012). By and large, the root causes of some the current state of affairs in Somalia can
be traced to the fragmented nature of the clan system and the ways in which particular forms of repression and dominance are practiced.

The clan affiliations of all participants as expressed during the interviews was not a prerequisite for their initial migration into neighbouring countries. Those of whom came from dominant clans were afforded better access by their diaspora networks in neighbouring countries and took advantage through their support, while those who did not have access made do. Despite this most of the participants chose to flee to areas that where inhabited by their clan members but more generally areas where other Somalis lived. The following section will detail and examine how this group of young men have harnessed their networks of clan, kin, family and intermediaries to facilitate their migration trajectories, as well as the transitory spaces and communities that they navigated through this process.

3.3 Migratory experiences and the use of clan, family and smuggling networks

The findings in this section of the chapter detail the ways in which this group of young Somali men found their way into Canada (see Figure 2). By looking into the migration trajectories of these young men, I illustrate below the links between the migrations experiences of these young Men, their particular condition of statelessness and the networks of people and spaces that they navigated on their journey and finally, their particular aspirations and motivations.
Figure 2: Migratory trajectories and routes of travel (Mahmoud, 2018)

3.3.1 Financing the journey

As participants detailed their experience travelling from Africa and finally arriving in Canada, a number of major sub-themes began to emerge. The first is how critically important clan networks were to each participant in facilitating their journey to North America. These include the cities in which all nine participants initially spent time in, their method of entry into Canada and finally their current city and neighbourhood or residence. Other sub-themes that came out of the participants’ accounts include, time spent in detention facilities in America, the waiting periods at various
points in their migration, experience with immigration authorities and finally, for some at least, the end of a long period of statelessness and the acquisition of refugee status. This section will begin by detailing the process of financing the journey of some of the participants and then their migratory experience and finally their current legal status in Canada. All the participants in this project relied on their immediate families for support during the initial migration to neighbouring countries as well as their international journeys. Some of the participants, as detailed below managed to work while in transitory countries and saved enough through the support of relatives to finance their journeys. What is particularly highlighted through all the experiences detailed is what each participant’s families’ went through to facilitate their journeys. This we see was accomplished through the selling of family land, animals and other economic sacrifices made. While family wealth and class was the most important factor in initiating these men’s journeys, some of the participants relied on extended family, and clan affiliations to finance their journeys. All the participants, as we will later see, tapped into these social networks not only for financial purposes but used the infrastructure of clan networks and family relations to gain information and knowledge that would set the stage for their journeys to North America.

“Finance wise it was all about my dad and a couple of phone calls he made to relatives abroad some in Europe and the US who helped out. There were some relatives who were not immediately related to me but in Somali culture we call them relatives. It was just my family, they knew their family and my father asked them to help me. This family were the same clan as me and my family”

– Abdirahman (27)
“For Somalia we were having a piece of land, my mother sold and that is how I paid for my trip to America. And from America to Canada some friends collected some money for me and that is how I came to the border and crossed” – Aman (27)

“I worked with my uncle when I moved from the refugee camp in Kenya to South Africa and saved and he also helped me pay for the trip” – Ahmed (28)

“It was so difficult but we managed, my family and relatives paid for the trip, they sold their land in Kismayo”- Khalid (30)

“Yes at the time we had some money, my parent’s finance me they paid for me to buy a passport, buying a ticket which cost a lot that was family money that we use”- Hassan (25)

A majority of the participants in the study relied heavily on their families and relatives to assist them financially for their journeys, some of whose family sold land and used their family networks to ask for assistance from relatives. Two of the participants who had initially migrated with their families to the neighbouring country Kenya found work and moved to South Africa. These two participants worked and saved enough money to pay for their journey to the US and then Canada.

3.4 Migratory pathways, smugglers and detention

The participants narrated the danger and uncertainty of migration, in particular the challenges they faced migrating irregularly. Furthermore, they also detailed the importance of smugglers and fellow migrants who facilitated their journeys.
“I myself was in South Africa for 8 years after leaving Somalia. Then I got a lot of problems in South Africa. I got disturbed, they stabbed me, I got a lot of problems they killed my brother. Then I decided to leave, I decided to go to another area where there was a lot of Somalis called Mayfair in Johannesburg. It is like Weston road and Lawrence here in Toronto. They gave me the idea that there is an Ethiopian smuggler who could help me get from South Africa to Brazil. Then the smuggler make for me a fake South Africa passport, then after sometime he called me and told me I was leaving that night. I told the immigration officials I was travelling for vacation, the smuggler told me to go speak to the officer with the red coat he will stamp your passport no problem” - Mahmoud (30)

Younis like Mahmoud also explained how his migration journey was facilitated by his ability to pay off smugglers with money he had saved working in South Africa.

“I was a shopkeeper, first when I go to South Africa I work. In South Africa they don’t give you documents. I used to work in a shop and sleep and eat there. The salary they gave me I collect and save it because I had no expense. I work for 1 year and then I had enough to open my own shop. I opened my own shop. I worked in my shop until I leave South Africa. I left because they attack me, they burn me in my shop. It was very risky in South Africa for Somali. Because I did not have documents to travel I used a smuggler. He asked me where I was going I told him I need to go from South Africa to USA. He told me to pay this amount and he make me document to travel...if you have money it is easy, what you think you can do it, if you have money you can travel in Africa with no document, money is your document. He told me I will travel to Brazil. - Younis (30)
These two participants in their interviews discussed the discrimination and attacks they endured during a period when they lived and worked in South Africa. They both decided to leave South Africa after learning about a network of smugglers who they could pay and who would assist them in getting from South Africa to Brazil and through South America with an initial final destination of USA. Three other participants also went through a similar journey all describing their experience traversing South America using contacts they were provided with by the smugglers and other migrants. Below are the accounts of this journey and experience. Some of the participants were more eager to detail their experience compared to others, some of these young men did express their concerns in sharing particular details including the means to which they used to travel, this was mainly the case for those who were yet to gain refugee protection status.

A majority of the participants inevitably found themselves in Somali enclave communities without documentation, all of whom inevitably were forced to cross into Canada informally in order to claim asylum in the country.

"My journey was a long route I travelled to South Africa where I stayed with my uncle. I worked with him in his store. Then I began my journey. I travelled to Brazil from there I went to Colombia, then Panamá, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and then I went to Mexico then I crossed into United states. I was in detention center when I first arrived and spent 3 months inside, they denied me asylum. In America you have no status and life was hard there, I stayed there for a year and a half. - Ahmed (28)
“I spent three weeks in Brazil waiting for a connection to pass the road. I met other Somalis who helped me we take a bus to Peru and to Ecuador. When we reached Colombia there was a lady called Mama Halima other Somalis called her that name she helped us we paid her, the smugglers had given us her number. When we got to Panama we had another contact we paid him $800 by this time we were seven Somalis and five Bangladesh we travelled by boat, we did not know where we were going. The smugglers ran away from us and we were lost then we saw a boat and asked for help they made us pay them and they drop us in small village. We spent two nights there, the police in Panama arrested us and we spent two weeks in jail and they released me and told me I had to leave the country in twenty-four hours. They don’t speak English there it is very hard, I get to Costa Rica were I had another contact I had his number on a piece of paper he took us all the way to Honduras by this time we were thirty four people we climbed a big truck when we reached Guatemala another guy took us to the border or Mexico and Guatemala. We told them we were refugees and they put us in detention for eight days. I arrived in Mexico City and took a flight to the border. I called my relatives in Somalia and they sent me money to get transport. It cost $400 I took a taxi to the border of United States. When I got to the border they take me and treat me very bad. I myself they treat me very bad. I was in a room for five hours by myself. I told them my story and how I came from South Africa to Brazil and that and that. The second night they take me to the detention, they take me to detention center in Texas, I was about 7 months and 22 days in detention, I was released after they denied me” - Mahmoud (30)

“I had no documents to travel so I used smugglers to help me travel, they ask you where you going and you tell him I want to go to that country. He told me to pay this amount and he made me a document. He told me who I should pay when I get to Brazil, I saved money and I had the contacts
he have me. His name was Louise (pseudonym) he told me give to him I paid him $400 then after that he told me who to contact on my journey and pay I still remember their names. When I reached Guatemala and I arrived in Mexico I knew I was okay. When you arrive in Mexico I come straight did not hide, I came straight to immigration and said I was a refugee. They keep you there they take fingerprints for Interpol. There I took a place to Tapachula near border where there is Texas and California. I was treated like a criminal when I enter America. They put me in handcuffs, I did not get any food, and I was there in detention for eight months in America. The reason they denied me is that they did not believe that I am not from South Africa, or that you come from Somalia and that is your nationality. They told me they could not deport me to Somalia because it was too risky, they told me I could stay until the situation was good and they would then deport me.”—Younis (30)

“Before when I lived in Somalia I came to South Africa, then I travelled to Brazil. And too many countries in South America Colombia, Panamá, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico. We pay broker(smuggler) from South Africa to Brazil, then after that three countries we pay one guy and then pay another guy until we reach Mexico, Mexico you come alone I don’t pay anyone. After Mexico I come to America, they detained me for six months. When I was released I stayed in America for two years without documents. Then after I come to Canada”—Saeed (28)

“I came from Ethiopia, I fly to Brazil, all the way to South America. It was arranged by a smuggler. He is the one who arranged it for me to get here. I had many problems in Somalia, that is why I ran away from there and came to America. I was denied in there and that is why I came to Canada. Before that I was Detained in America for seven months until I was released”—Hassan (25)
Five of the participants who were detained during the journey spent time in immigration facilities both in South America and the United States. For all five a network of smugglers assisted them throughout their journey. From obtaining travelling documents to facilitating their journeys on foot and bus through several South American countries (see Figure 2). Each of the participants detailed their experience and all ended up in the same point of entry along the United States and Mexico border. Each of these participants spent a number of months in detention in the United States awaiting their hearings and decisions from the immigration authorities. All five of the participants were denied asylum based on allegedly false claims. Upon their release all found their way to Minnesota in Minneapolis (Fig. 2), as Minnesota is a hub for the Somali community in the United States. The Somali community in Minnesota is the largest Somali diaspora in the United States and is the result of the mass displacement of Somalis during the period of chaos and war in Somalia in 1991 (Pavlish et al, 2010). Regardless of whether they had been detained or not, all nine of the participants of this study spent time in Minnesota before travelling to Canada.

3.5 Transitory States and Entry in Canada

Participants all detailed their experiences upon entry into the United States of America. Each described their varied experiences and time spent in the city of Minnesota which acted as a hub for these migrants on their journey. All the participants saw Canada as their final and last option in attaining status after being denied refugee protection in the United States. Eight of the nine participants found their way to the U.S-Canada border and crossed in order to claim asylum between 2015 and 2017. Each of these participants were either informed by other Somalis in the Minnesota community to do so or learnt about the crossings from news articles. All crossed into Canada
between the Manitoba-U.S border claiming asylums through the immigration authorities at the border. Two out of the nine participants are still awaiting decisions on their claims to asylum, one has appealed the decision by the courts, while six have received refugee protection. The period of time between their claims to asylum and the decision by the immigration courts varied, some between six to nine months and one waiting as long as five years for his decision. In this section below I seek to highlight how this group of migrant men all found their way to Minnesota because of shared knowledge of a large existing Somali community. This existing diaspora network for these young men played a role in their migration journey as a repository for knowledge on claims status and entry into Canada.

One of the participants, Mustafa, detailed his experience upon arrival in Minnesota stating;

“Actually I arrived in America in 2016, other Somali people I met there in Minnesota helped me find someone to get me to the border and after that we found them. Honestly, we paid them and he helped us come across and then after we travelled to North Dakota until we reached the border of Manitoba. We travelled for eight hours, we then travelled on foot for three hours which was very long. I only stayed in America for two weeks. We were forced to do that, because there is no place where else we can cross the border easily so we decided to cross the America-Canada border and claim asylum here. Honestly we are still waiting, it is up to courts to decide. We are still waiting. I had a court date but I have not received decision on my claim to asylum in Canada” - Mustafa (27)
Another participant, Aman, detailed his experience having to leave the United States like Mustafa also due to his lack of documentation and the political climate in America whereby Somalis and undocumented individuals alike were increasingly targeted for deportation:

“First of all I came from Minnesota, there I stayed with other Somalis they told me go to Canada. I came from bus to Grand Forks, from Grand Forks I took a taxi to the Canadian border and we walked along the way to Manitoba. That is where the immigration officers get us and get us in their immigration office that is where I start my journey for asylum. I chose to leave America because Donald Trump just declared that immigrants that not have legal document are supposed to deport back which make me run to Canada. Canada has open doors for immigrants and the other way I can say they are better. I have been in Canada for six months now, I am still waiting. I was supposed to have hearing in July and they rescheduled, I don’t have status yet”- Aman (27)

Mahmoud described his experience upon release from detention in the United States and the denial of his asylum claims:

“I myself was in detention in America for seven months, then after that I got denied for my asylum in America. Then they released me, because at that time there was no embassy for Somalia in America they release me. After that when I come out I came to Minnesota then the Somali people there tell me go to Canada and you will get accepted. They tell me I will not get status in America because I have already been denied. Then after I left it was two years ago January 2016. I left and took a bus to Minnesota until the border of Canada and I just walked in snow. I walked for two hours, when I come to Canada I called 911 and they pick me up and take me to immigration. After
two months I got to Toronto, then unfortunately I don't get hearing after two month there was no judge. Last year July I had my hearing they listened to my story and then I got accepted to Canada. I got protected person, my asylum was successful- Mahmoud (30)

Khaled, another participant, also detailed a similar experience after his release from detention in the United States.

“After leaving detention I went to Minnesota; they don't give me work permit there so I work illegally. I did not have work permit but I live in America, I could not even travel. I came to Canada through America, I was in America for five years. Yes, I did not have papers there so I came here. I first try to cross border in 2013 but they denied me and that is why I am on removal list. So came back in 2016 in July, so they told me come to inside and I applied. I crossed the border on foot it took me two hours to walk. I don’t have status in Canada I am still waiting one time they deny me and now I apply appeal. I am still waiting”-Khaled (30)

For many Somali migrants, their mobility is inextricably linked to their particular condition of displacement and statelessness. For the participants of this project, much of their experience in the process of seeking asylum was not a particularly linear one but rather a continuum in migration as suggested by De Haas (2007, 2010). Many found themselves in places where mobility was regulated and restricted due to their status or lack thereof. The following section of this paper will seek to unpack the narratives that were derived from the interview process of this project.
3.6 Stateless and undocumented

The collapse of the Somali government in 1991 saw many Somali migrants and refugees flood into neighbouring countries including Kenya and Ethiopia. The government collapse set the stage for the next two decades as many sought and continue to seek asylum in the west, during that initial period Canada accepted large numbers of Somalis on the basis of humanitarianism with the highest acceptance ratings recorded in 1993 (CBC, 2015). Many found themselves in a perennial condition of statelessness, unable to freely move and restricted to the parameters or refugee camps and foreign states that are not particularly welcoming to Somalis. I use the seminal definition of statelessness by Hannah Arendt (1973) in which she describes a stateless person as an individual with a lack of rights, in a state of total exclusion, as the defining characteristics of a stateless refugee. Through this I employ the definition of stateless persons via Wessel (2015), to also include those who are “undocumented” within and outside the nation-state as a point of entry as individuals who are subjects of borders, control and the law.

The case for Somalis in this regard stems from the lack of identity documents proving where they are from during the claims to asylum at border entry points. With the collapse of the Somali government in 1992 and an absence of institutions to facilitate the identification of its citizens, Somali asylum seekers find themselves in a quagmire whereby their access to the formal bureaucratic practices that states provide. Thompson (2017), in his work on the experience of statelessness within the Somali community in South Africa, describes the kinds of ways in which states are understood for all intents and purposes as powerful, unified and encompassing entities. This, as he says, rests on the combination of everyday bureaucratic practices that produce a repeatability of experiences. This kind of repeatability in practice and experience has been impossible in Somalia
for years. Somali refugees are effectively stateless, and as a consequence of the failure of their government to provide evidence of their nationality and passports, but also to facilitate their claims to asylum and refuge in other countries. Participants of this study who found themselves in foreign countries without identification relied primarily on their de facto Somalinimo membership in order to secure access to countries of refuge. We see this in the ways in which the participants sought refuge in predominantly Somali communities that already existed, in this case in particular the city of Minnesota. The participants in effect, as Thompson (2017: 88) states, “reenacted statehood through statelessness by way of referring to assertion that legitimize activities, repeatable experiences and organize domains of actions”. Ferme (2004) discusses this as the kinds of practices in which those seeking refuge and immigrants that engage in identity making and the crossing of practices in host countries that work outside of conventional apparatuses of the state. In this I refer to the repeatability of experiences that are part in parcel of statehood; this usually occurs through the policing of populations vis a vis the issuing of identity documents. We see this kind of repeatable experience enacted in the ways in which this group of young men who found themselves in South Africa and the United States for brief periods organized themselves around their immediate kin, their clan and the social networks of other Somalis to find work, gain income and survive. The potential for risk of physical assault and deportation as some of the participants stated, was high for these individuals, often times finding themselves at the mercy of resident citizens and immigration authorities, especially in spaces in which immigrants are unwelcome (Thompson 2017; Jinnah, 2016). Participants of this study found themselves in countries whereby their statelessness rendered them immobile and restricted to enclaves in which other Somalis lived. But as I discuss below, (repeatable experiences) their mobilization of clan, fellow migrants and their use of smuggling networks enabled them to periodically overcome this to migrate to Canada.
3.7 The human institutions of statelessness: Clan networks, smugglers and the road to asylum

Beyond the kinds of neoclassical understandings of migration - these being the push and pull factors that have been conventionally understood as the reasons for migration (Castles et al. 1993); (Zimmermann and Bauer, 1999) - an important point of entry in gaining further inquiry into the processes that indeed facilitate migration are the networks that individuals use to emigrate, moving beyond those that exist and are dictated by destination countries i.e. visa procedures. In the case of individuals who find themselves in positions of statelessness these networks became crucial to their journeys as they move across international borders. For the participants of this project these networks of people and communities act as integral parts of this process of migration – what I, following Thompson (2017) suggest is that undocumented Somali migrants enact a kind of statehood through the infrastructure of clan, family and community networks of money, information and logistical support. For the participants of this project the repeatable experience provided and embodied in, clan networks, and family networks alike played an extremely important role in their journeys, from the financing for some to more importantly the knowledge and information on travel methods and access. In most of the cases the participants used purchased and falsified documents. This has been well documented, as the use of legally issued documents to cross borders and travel or enter destination country are frequently borrowed and purchased (Abel, 2012, Kyle and Koslowski 2001). This is especially the case for those who, as Sanchez (2017) notes, embark on migration journeys in clandestine ways and as other have stated through irregularly practiced migrations (De Haas, 2007, Jordan B and Duvell, 2002; Carling 2002). We see this in the methods and modes of migration practices that this group of young Somali men engaged in, in order to facilitate their on-going journeys from Africa to the United States.
Human smugglers as stated previously and described by the accounts of the participants of this project also provide a service that often times involved bribing or colluding with immigration officials to facilitate this process. In the case of the participants many described and alluded to the idea that for them “money is the only document” when it comes to their migration journey.

According to Sanchez (2017) there is a strong industry comprised by entrepreneurs who illicitly, and sometimes legally take advantage of gaps in laws and regulations to provide services that may be conducive or facilitate clandestine migration. This is primarily the case for individuals travelling from nations that have weak laws and immigration officials who are willing to bend or overlook certain practices in order to make personal gains. Participants who found themselves travelling to South America from Africa came from countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia using South Africa as a transit state. All of them purchased documents through these networks of smugglers who would then facilitate their journeys. These networks of smugglers have far reaching and transnational networks across borders. Accounts of the role immigration authorities have in this process have been documented illustrating the kinds of ways bribery and corruption is used to circumvent conventional immigration law to facilitate clandestine/irregular migration (Vigneswaran et al. 2010, Barasa and Fernandez, 2015). As Sanchez (2017) notes, empirical research on these global smuggling networks is relatively absent from the literature on migration; most of the information that is readily available comes from law enforcement and official sources. The depictions of these smuggling networks is often times presented as violent, exploitative and criminal, it is important note though that further research on these global smuggling networks and the purposes they serve and how they disrupt formal mobility and border enforcements by the use of irregular paths, vast
terrains and wilderness is required. The ways they are central to the condition of enacting statehood for stateless persons, moreover, is very important. This is especially the case for the migrant pathways that some of the participants traversed on their journey to Canada (Fig 2). The migration process for this group of young Somali men of modest means would be impossible if not for the use of smuggling networks.

These young Somali men find themselves in the nexus of ongoing statelessness and deepening processes of migrant illegalization and new forms of insecurity both abroad and in Canada. For many of the participants the long and arduous journey for asylum in Canada was a process that took a number of years and border crossings but also periods of immobility, as many of them found themselves in border detention facilities in South America, and for a short periods of time in the United States of America. Migrant detention has become more and more a means to control and limit access to states primarily through policy practices. The United States of America has increasingly become at the forefront of these practices, mainly focusing on their southern borders with Mexico. These endeavors implemented by border authority are far reaching and have tremendous effects on the mobility and movement of people beyond their borders, especially those who use clandestine and irregular methods to seek asylum. Practices that seek to limit the movement and access of those seeking asylum in clandestine methods has become a global trend in North America and Europe. Consequently, border detention and securitization has become part and parcel of Euro-American government immigration practices (Mitchell and Sampson 2013; Morris 2016; UNHCR 2015). Against the backdrop of domestic concerns and fears exacerbated by the post 9/11 War on Terror, Olsen (2012) suggests that many countries often subject asylum seekers to detention that is arbitrary or unnecessary in violation of international human rights. Mountz (2010, 2017) also
suggests in her work on extraterritorial detention practices, the important ways in which some
governments, in particular Canada and the United States, employ practices that enforce policing
and detention in hidden view by circumventing human rights law under the guise of border secur-
ritization. Individuals who are rendered stateless are particularly at risk and vulnerable in the
United States due to legal failures that fail to identify and address the concerns and problems that
confront stateless persons (Fullerton, 2014). This is primarily due to the fact that the problems
facing individuals who are stateless do not fit into the refugee paradigm of asylum in North Amer-
ica. This was the case for many of these young men as they were detained in the United States
without status for a number of months.

Ross and Strasiuslis (2006) and Bigo (2002) in their separate work also discuss the shift in border
security practices today by the further securitizing of access to status claims by making access
exclusionary and by fragmenting it through a flexible form of sovereignty that exercises power
through and across territorial boundaries. For many of the participants in this study, their claims
to asylum in the United States were denied partially due to their means of entry and further their
lack of documents to identify who they were and where they came from. For many of the partici-
pants their entry to the United States of America came at an increasingly precarious time for asy-
lum seekers in America. News media and general perceptions of “illegal” border crossings south
of the US border had become dominant news items and fears of weakened border security became
paramount to policy makers and citizens.
3.7.1 Failed asylum claims and deferred aspirations

The participants who found themselves crossing at the Canadian-U.S border felt they had no choice and had to cross the border undetected. Many of whom saw this as their last option in finally obtaining legal status. Somalis seeking asylum in Canada have and continue to find new avenues to do so despite the exclusionary and oftentimes restrictive policies that inhibit them from gaining legitimate entry. The United States, unlike Canada, until recently offered temporary protective status for Somalis due to the chaos and insecurity that prevails in Somalia, which left deportation and removals in a moratorium until recently. Canada on the other hand declared an Administrative Deferral of Removals in 2011 for regions of South Central-Somalia on the account of instability and famine (CCR, 2015). The barriers for Somalis in Canada for gaining resettlement through agencies such as UNHCR have increasingly been restricted through the limiting of applications for reunification and sponsorship. The Canadian government decided to shift its focus on resettlement programs with agencies in 2012, focusing on targeted groups, but Somalis were not on the list of these groups (CCR, 2015). This is despite the ongoing and continued instability in the region and the growing number of Somalis in refugee camps, in particular Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. The Canadians government’s fears of the Somali refugees begins before they step foot into Canada, fears of the ongoing situation in refugee camps, the sheer number of persons and concerns over integration into Canadian society were some of the concerns detailed by the government of Canada (CCR, 2015). It is important to note how the Canadian government like the United States as Abdi (2015) and Bonilla-Silva and Mayorga (2011), have stated has sought to construct a narrow idea of who belongs, who marginally belongs and who does not and cannot belong. In the following chapter I seek to examine how the narrowing of Canadian immigration policy has directly affected
the access to work and basic survival for young Somali men in Toronto. Furthermore, this section will detail the ways in which this group of young men’s claims to asylum and status informs their methods of coping and settlement in Canada.
CHAPTER FOUR: Labour and social reproduction

4.1 Labour market experiences and stories of masculine social reproduction and survival

Migration theory and labour market mobility studies have long drawn links to the importance of how populations of recent migrants and refugees’ access work and livelihoods post-migration. Scholarship by Austin and Este (2001), McDowell (2008), Dyer and McDowell (2009), Warfa et al. (2012), Valerie (2015), and Ahmed (2010) have all examined how migrant, refugee and Somali men navigate the labour market in their pursuit for decent work. In particular, these studies have highlighted the strategies they employ to gain access to employment and the forms of transnational activities and flexible/strategic masculinities they engage in to survive in host countries. These activities, as I will demonstrate, arise out of the unique barriers that this group of men face to finding work as refugees/refugee claimants and requires them enact new forms of masculine socio-reproduction, as they try to make sense of their newly found status, their aspirations to provide for their families and their ideal narratives for what life in Canada might look like. I highlight this as a contrast to the material realities and challenges they encounter once they arrive in Canada. Following from the migration narratives of Chapter 3, this chapter examines the various ways this group of recent migrants exercises their newly found legal status within and outside of the labour market, and the various factors that shape their access to decent work. Specifically, I examine various impediments they face, such as the lack of accessibility to the labour market as newcomers, the difficulties of everyday survival with few social supports while looking for work, and the role that community and diasporic networks play to facilitate their access to employment.
During the interview process, the participants were asked to detail their current employment and economic conditions. This was meant to derive from them a particular understanding of how they have managed to find work, the kinds of work they have done including their level of skill and English proficiency, and how their claims to status or asylum condition shaped their success at finding work. Originally the basis of this section was going to be to highlight how their various levels of status in Canada affected their ability to find work vis a vis access to work permits. However, through the interviews it became clear that survival and economic well-being for these young men was shaped as importantly by their support system for each other than their access to work. Therefore, I examine their labour market experiences upon arrival in relation to how many of them rely on their networks including fellow migrants and the Somali community for a sense of belonging but also for survival as they await decisions of their claims and obtaining work. In this chapter I thus argue that the search for work and the act of survival in Canada for these young men is an extension of their migration journey as they rely on networks of clan, fellow migrants and community to give meaning to their new lives. I argue further that the participants enact agency through brotherhood from their shared Somalinimo in order to deal with the various employment challenges they face. With this, I suggest that statelessness extends into the micro spaces of the host country and that just as diasporic networks stand in for the state in migration, they also stand in for the state during settlement periods for these young men. This chapter draws from findings from a portion of the interviews that explored a number sub-themes which include: the meaning of employment to young Somali men, and the various ways in which the participants rely on each other for emotional and sometimes economic support through shared accommodations and family obligations.
4.2 Employment and labour market barriers for young Somali men

In general, all the participants except for one entered Canada through the same path, all of whom claimed asylum upon arrival. Four out of the nine participants are yet to receive refugee protection under Canadian law, and five out of the nine have received protected persons status while one has attained citizenship. All the participants were very open to discuss their current economic situations including those who primarily rely on government assistance. The four participants who currently do not have legal status in Canada are unable to work due to lack of work permits and are waiting to receive their temporary permits and refugee protection. One of the participants, Aman, who currently relies on government assistance discussed his inability to apply for work due to lack of a work permit, he also detailed his wariness to the kinds of work he has been informed are available to individuals like himself. He states:

“Still I haven’t yet worked, and I am waiting for work permit. You know you have to apply and wait. When I get it now it will be winter time and you know going out is difficult I have to look for work in summer. Maybe I will see what kind of jobs are available because I haven’t worked here in Canada yet, so I am waiting to see. What I heard from friends is the kind of jobs is general laborers. But I prefer data entry because I know more about computers, I will look for that if I get the opportunity, right now I survive through the welfare, they are supporting us the government. - Aman- Refugee Protection claimant

Another participant Hassan detailed his current situation having not worked in Canada and also surviving through welfare, which he explained amounts to around $680 a month,
“Actually I have never done work, any work, I am still in school. The government helps me, and I get social assistance from them. I just help community centers sometimes with spare time when I have time” - Hassan- Refugee Protection, claimant

Hassan attends school and ESL classes in order to improve his English speaking, writing and reading skills. Another participant Khaled expressed how hard it was to survive and support his family and children on welfare alone as he awaited the appeal decisions on his case by the court. He is currently awaiting his court decision which initially denied him protected persons status. He also expressed his hopefulness that the court decision will be overturned and he will then be able to go out and seek work.

“There is no job that I have been in; when I get the work permit I will work. I have applied for it I am still waiting. Now that I have kids I have to work but it is hard to find the time, but once I get I will start working, I survive through government assistance at the moment” - Khaled-Appealing denied asylum claim.

One participant, Younis, discussed the waiting process he endured to obtain a work permit and the precarious jobs he worked to make ends meet:

“The time that I get the work permit I wait four months when I received the work permit I went to Alberta to find work from Toronto. I start what you call company that process meat. It was the first job I did in Canada. The time there that I was doing that job I worked in processing cutting
meat with a knife. I did not want to work with meat, so I left that job. I got a job in construction when I came to Toronto; I was doing work on Weston Road and Lawrence, I worked with an agency to get that work. In a week I would start work at 4 am, sometimes I would work twelve hours, sometimes two hours and sometimes six hours it depended if I could get overtime. I worked for four months until they did not need me.”-Younis-Refugee Protection Status

One participant similarly detailed the challenges refugees face in finding work. He expressed these challenges which highlight the various settlement barriers these young men face as they try to improve their skills for the job market.

“Most newcomers their job is finding work and mostly the job fairs exist for different communities. Some of them have language challenge and barrier that is why they are losing jobs. Some of them don’t have enough skills, and many have to take ESL classes and after that, they search for jobs which they fit and most work they find is temporary. What happens is that they don’t keep the job for a long time. That is the main problem for a lot of young Somali men who are newcomers”-Aman- Awaiting court decision of refugee claim

Most of the participants’ initial experience working in Canada found them working in construction or warehouse work. All the participants went through temp agencies to find these jobs and were referred by fellow migrants. It appears that many had similar experiences in the kinds work they acquired, these being primarily short-term and temporary agency placements. Each participant saw this as an unexpected reality for them, one migrant stating when asked if this is the kind of work you wanted “No, the kind of work we do is very hard, but I need money to survive” (Mahmoud,
Refugee protection claimant) The participants as illustrated have sought to make the most out their current situation despite the lack of stable work. Despite many of the participants having basic levels of English proficiency many of them were either enrolled or took ESL courses to improve their work. A lack of Canadian experience appears to have also been another major barrier to keeping or finding stable employment opportunities. Much of the economic symptoms these young men face can also be attributed to the legal status that they have in Canada as illustrated above. Somali refugees in Toronto as Danso (2001) suggests encounter considerable challenges during their initial stages of settlement including high unemployment and underemployment, refugees in particular tend to be relegated to low-wage and precarious work. Moreover, there is evidence that shows these experiences are somewhat not unique; and that this can extend beyond the first few years. Goldring and Landolt (2012) state that liminal legal status often times contributes to migrants settling for precarious and low paying jobs even after securing legal status.

Two of what could be deemed as employment success stories that were drawn from the interview process came from two participants who initially began their employment experience in Canada through temp agencies. Abdirahman and Saeed’s experience highlighted the lengths to which they both went to in order to find more stable work as Uber drivers. Both participants previously worked some temporary jobs in order to save money and purchase vehicles. Their experience also highlighted that just like their fellow migrants they both came to learn about job opportunities such as Uber through their networks of other Somalis in the community.

“I used to work in a warehouse where they make, like a bakery I also work in the restaurant and that money I made there I saved and bought a car and now I am an Uber driver. I first went to
agency on Weston Road, I gave them my work permit and SIN number they told me they would call me if they get something, then they call me, and I went. It was very hard work, but I wanted the money so I could buy a car, I used to be a truck driver when I lived in South Africa. Other Somali Uber drivers told me about this job, and I thought I can do it also” - Mahmoud-Refugee protection claimant

Saeed who also found work initially through an employment agency stated

“I first started cleaning windows in a van; I did that for one year it was very hard work, especially in the winter. Right now I work as an Uber driver, I worked cleaning and installing windows for one year and saved money to buy a car. I see Uber as better than other places; I work sixty hours a week” - Saeed- Refugee protection claimant

Abdirahman who was the only Canadian citizen in the group of participants detailed his initial experience looking for work and his current employment status. Abdirahman is also the only participant who has completed University in Canada. Like the other participants, Abdirahman, despite having obtained full status in Canada finds himself in work that he is not necessarily satisfied with or that he expected, but has no choice to do so in order to survive:

“I worked at a bakery when I arrived; I worked there for about a year. And it did not work with my schedule because I was taking courses. I got another job as a waiter, which was much more flexible. When I initially arrived, I relied on social assistance before I started working. After that, I started university, and during that period I did not work because I was taking government funding
for the school. I had a lot of difficulties finding work initially because I was unqualified, right now I work at a car rental establishment. It’s a service industry job. I won’t say it is the job I want to do, but it is something I am willing to do because I have responsibilities.”-Abdirahman-Canadian Citizen

For these young men, their experience in the Canadian labour market we see is not only linked to the methods and modes of access that they employ to gain entry, but also the barriers that they overcome. We see this in how these young men continue rely on their networks of community and fellow migrants to learn about job opportunities but also how their lack of full legal status informs this as a consequence. This is highlighted in the barriers faced by those both with refugee work permits and those without. Scholarship on Somali refugees and their access to employment in North America by Danso (2001) and Warfa (2015) suggest that these barriers and, the necessary reliance on networks is a result of an absence of national policies and particular political and social attitudes that reflect a lack of support for the acculturation of the Somali community in Canada. These young men therefore enact agency by relying on their networks to confront these existing structures that function as barriers for refugees. Lamba (2003) demonstrated in his research that refugees overcome this through the various resources and apparatuses provided by these connections to a set of community, family and kin relationships.
4.3 Canadian immigration law and barriers to decent work for Somali asylum seekers

The history of Canadian immigration law, through the introduction of Bill C86 in 1992 and the need for satisfactory identity documents for asylum claims has had a profound impact on the immigration experience, status claims and the access to work for the Somali community (CCR, 2015). The legacy of this Bill, its amendments and the exclusionary measures that regulated asylum claims continues to be felt to this day. For many of the participants who gained entry into Canada through irregularly crossing the border into Canada from the United States, this form of entry is in part a symptom of the policies that Canada put in place to curb and regulate the entry and asylum of undocumented Somalis and refugees alike. The inevitable impact that this has had on Somali refugees is that it has made access and entry into Canada difficult and often impossible on the basis of identification documents. This is in accordance with the amended Canadian immigration law that subjects Somali claimants to provide affidavits in the written and in some occasions witness proof. Many of the participants have had to seek out individuals who they know of to prove their identity and claims as undocumented peoples. These young men again have relied on their networks of community and fellow migrants in order to facilitate not only their process of seeking asylum in Canada through the courts but also subsequently their process of finding work as illustrated in the interviews above. For many, this has served as a necessary and vital tool for them to use and rely on in order to set the stage for their process of seeking asylum. This kind of support that many of these young men depended on is indicative of the endless ways in which networks of kin, clan, fellow migrants, and community play into and facilitate the process of migration, to asylum and finally to settlement. For these young Somali men, it would be difficult for them to imagine their particular material reality without the intervention and reliance on these networks.
Upon entry into Canada, many of the participants have been subjected to long periods of waiting for decisions to their claims and some to this day are still in a state of limbo and inevitably unable work. As a result of the amendments to this Bill C86 Somalis under the convention of refugee protection, participants are unable to gain access to federal and provincial student loans and bursaries as well as being eligible for certain jobs (OCASI, 2016). Austin and Este (2001) state that these kinds of “barriers to upgrading and retraining are often more difficult for newcomers than others.” They illustrate that refugees in particular struggle to reconstruct and also build on their ideal occupations because of economic pressures to survive, which came across strongly in the interviews of this project. Through this process, many find themselves in marginalized and dead-end jobs unable to find decent stable work. Furthermore, the need for Canadian experience underscores the significance of the kinds of acculturation processes that are inherent in the quest for gaining status and that in most cases these young men are subjected to as they enter the workforce. The laws that govern the procedures for gaining asylum and finding work in Canada as we see are shaped by the dominance of culture vis a vis “Canadian experience,” this we see translates into a particular barrier for these young men as they navigate Canadian society and the workforce. As a way to cope these young men continue to rely on their networks in order to disrupt these notions of dominance by relying on them as elements of Somalinimo.

4.4 The Diasporic condition and masculine obligations

These men’s efforts to find work were not just out of economic need to survive but were encoded by masculine obligations within their kin, family and clan groups. In this section of interviews, the participants were asked to describe what it meant to them to be employed as a young Somali man;
they were also asked to describe the level of support they provide for the families who are back home in Somalia or Kenya. Seven of the nine participants detailed the kind of support they provide for their families. They all expressed the importance of supporting them whichever way they could. Some of the participants alluded to the emotional support their family provides for them as they adjust to life here in Canada. Three of the participants also detailed their hopes to one day soon help their families and relatives back home but also their frustration, as they were currently unable to because of lack of work permits.

Feelings of obligation highlight another theme that ran through the interviewees’ stories; many described the importance and responsibility they had to support their families back home. Abdirahman for example felt as though despite his level of education the obligations he has to support his family as well as himself, overrides his desire to search for more fulfilling opportunities. He explained that he has dreams of going to graduate school but is financially unable to, due to these constraints.

“I support my sister, I send money to her when I can it is hard sometimes, but I do what I can” - Mahmoud-Refugee protection claimant

“I support my family back home, my parents especially my mom and siblings, six dependents I have. It is mostly financial support. I guess giving them a call once or twice monthly for emotional support regarding family members being far away is hard. So yes mostly financial support”-Abdirahman-Canadian citizen
“Back home yes, I send money to my mom and brothers who are in Dadaab refugee camp, which helps them with living” - Ahmed-Refugee protection claimant.

Abdirahman also expressed what it meant to him to be employed as a Somali man stating;

“It means everything, being employed is living, being employed is getting yourself on your feet and helping your family, because back home everyone is thinking I am here and so being employed means I am supposed to be ready for the worst in case something comes up. It is everything I would say” - Abdirahman-Canadian citizen.

Ahmed also explained the importance of being employed and his obligations to his family stating.

“It means a lot because I am paying a lot of bills, as well as support my family and of course it keeps me busy in life and helps me build a future” - Ahmed-Refugee protection claimant.

Mustafa also detailed a similar sentiment stating;

“It means a lot, it's different when you have a job and when you don’t have job here in Canada. When you have a job, you can support yourself and even help other back home. It really means a lot. - Mustafa-Awaiting the decision on Refugee protection claims

The material reality of under/unemployment and family obligations for these young men is one that motivates them and drives their desires to seek work and make something of themselves as
detailed in their interviews. For those who managed to find employment, their experiences finding work has been supported through the networks of fellow migrants who introduced them to the potential employment opportunities accessible to them. For these young men, the variety of work they have found themselves doing has typically been related to general labour, service work, and mostly low-wage work. These jobs as presented are temporary which means that these young men find themselves in situations whereby they are unemployed for extended periods of time before other employment opportunities become available to them. For many of these young men who rely on employment agencies to find work, they find themselves at the mercy of these recruitment agencies who often exploit their desperateness and availabilities and place them in precarious working conditions. Participants’ attitudes towards work and unemployment are inherently linked to their attainment of refugee status. It is important to note that for these young men gaining refugee status in Canada affords them a sense of psychological respite from their immediate challenges. For them, it is the recognition that they are indeed identifiable through their newly obtained status within Canadian society; but as I shall also show below, the ability to foster a sense of brotherhood and fraternity between this group of young men served as a mechanism for support, safety and social reproduction.

4.5 Shared living accommodations

The participants were asked to describe their current living conditions and asked to detail the methods they used to find accommodations. All the participants were very open to detailing their living conditions and the amount of rental fees they pay. All nine of the participants described the use of
community and fellow migrant networks to help them in finding accommodations once they arrived in Toronto. One of the participants who had a distant family member residing in Toronto was able to find accommodations through this, while the rest relied on other fellow migrants and community connections that they had to find places to live. All the participants shared accommodations with other Somalis all of whom were other migrants and asylum seekers.

A majority of participants reside in the North West neighbourhood of Dixon. The neighbourhood itself has played a major role in the migrant experience of many Somalis who arrive in Canada. Since the 1980s and the first wave of Somalis entering Canada, this neighbourhood has acted as a hub for other newcomers and refugee Somalis alike. Kusow (2007) details the importance that this neighbourhood has had historically in the cultural production of a diasporic and transnational Somali identity in Canada and globally and the symbiotic nature of these networks. In particular, the kinds of social reproductive networks embedded in the social and economic support for refugee Somalis in that neighbourhood have been incredibly significant. While Dixon has become synonymous with all the trapping of a stereotypical poor-urban neighbourhood, respondents paint a very different picture of safety and a deeply supportive diasporic community. Abdirahman one of the participants detailed his experience living in Dixon stating;

“It is a very good neighbourhood I like; sometimes I hear there is gangs, but I don’t see. I come home from job at night, and it’s very safe, and I usually don’t see anybody. It’s very safe you know, it’s different from what I hear in the US”- Abdirahman-Canadian citizen

Khaled had similar views on living in Dixon stating;
“You know us Somali’s we follow each other. First I heard there is Somalis buying houses here and they come here long time ago and mostly our community we follow each other. When I came from USA Minneapolis I already knew about the neighbourhood here. The first taxi I took I asked he know this community he said he know we call Dixon that Somali area” - Khaled-Appealing court decision on refugee claims.”

The participants all went further to describe their happiness with their current neighbourhood, all explaining the benefits of living in a Somali community with all the amenities they prefer including mosques and Somali restaurants and shops.

Another participant described his living conditions stating;

“I live with three guys, and I have my room and the rest share, it is a two bedroom apartment, and I pay majority of the rent because I work. My friend helped me come to Toronto and Dixon, he used to live here, and when I came I moved in” - Mahmoud-Refugee protection claimant

Younis another participant had a similar living situation stating;

“When I first came here I shared an apartment with four people; now I am sharing a room with two people, it is a house, and it is four bedrooms. We are a total of eight people and two per room. We each pay $325 per month and give it to the landlord. We help each other a lot and sometimes
share cooking responsibilities, we take care of one another. It is hard”- Younis-Refugee protection claimant

Aman described his experience living and paying for his accommodation through social assistance and living with friends.

“I am living with other Somalis, it is a two bedroom, and we are three people, I pay my rent through welfare they give me 680 dollars and we pay and live. I like this neighbourhood because it is close to the mosque and it is minutes to Somali shops”-Aman- Awaiting decision on refugee claims

Like Aman, Hassan another participant explained how those with jobs support those who are earlier along in their asylum claims stating;

“I am living with other Somali people, especially friends they work, I pay rent with government assistance, they send me money, and I pay. I don’t work so this is how I survive with my friends, it’s a two bedroom apartment and there is four people.”-Hassan- Refugee protections claimant

For many of the participants, they found living with other Somalis especially fellow migrants and asylum seekers a necessity. Many of the interviewees stated that “we are all the same”, some of them even knew each other from back home, and they all explained the importance of being around one another and the community.
4.6 Shifting and Flexible Masculinities

These unique spaces of masculine and transnational social reproduction relate to insights of Batinzky (2009), Leila (2016), and McDowell (2009) Austin and Este (2001). Batinzky describes the idea of a “dual frame” in which many migrants adopt upon arrival into their host country. The dual frame acts as a mechanism to further reconcile the new identities they take up vis a vis status, work and gender roles in relation to those they had back home and brought with them to their host countries. As part of the kinds of acculturation processes that these young men face we see how survival through shared accommodations and precarious work arrangements are linked to the kinds of flexible masculinities these young men take up that push back against their very own normative understanding of gender roles back home that they have become accustomed to. This is similarly present in how these young men organize themselves in their accommodations and the types of care work that they employ for one another. For these young men, the reliance on their fellow migrants not only to find employment and living space within the Somali community of Toronto but also to create a new sense of being while holding on to the identities they held back home is an important factor in their settlement. This also speaks to what Leila-Hussein (2016) describes as the types of transnational activities Somali men employ through their migration experiences, these being the continued connections and ties to life back home through the contribution of remittances and communication. For many of these young men, this connection to back home is a way of making sense of their new iterations of identity and positions as asylum claimants in their host country.
The particular forms of kinship and brotherhood diasporas that these young men take up is indicative of their present-day situation and in defense of those with lack of status and unable to work through this solidarity. It is further illuminating in its necessity for many of these young men as a matter of survival and fraternity in their migration experience. In this, we see how shifted masculinities are shaped and reshaped through the process of migration. Pande (2017) demonstrates this in her work analyzing the migration trajectories of Bengali young men. In her definition of particular moments during the process of migration beginning with the initial decisions young men make to migrate to better their economic situations and provide this inadvertently acts as a signifier of masculinity. On the other hand, surviving the emasculating nature of the often arduous journey in relation to their shared accommodations and their economic dependence faced by these young men proves to be the additional signifier of flexible masculinity. Finally, the solidarity that these young men enact is an attempt to deal with what Pande (2017) describes as “anomic conditions.” In other words, these conditions reflect a transformation of their own normative understanding of masculinity i.e. provide economic support and fulfill traditional familial obligations and how these inadvertently shifted through the process of migration, asylum and the search for work. These all speak to the sense of flexible masculinities these young men have had to take up to survive. By looking through the works of Pande (2017), we can draw links to how these young Somali men's normative understandings of masculinity are (re)shaped through the process of migration, arrival, and settlement. The process of migration as Batnizky (2009) says has the inadvertent effect of loosening rigid ideas of masculinity and patriarchy and in the case of these young Somali men we see this to be very apparent. As we can see here though, flexible masculinity is a matter of survival for young men in one of the most expensive cities in Canada.
In this thesis, I have examined the methods, modes and networks that this group of young Somali men between the ages of 25-30 have used in order to migrate and seek asylum in Canada from Somalia. Secondly, I have illuminated the ways that this group of young men have sought to carve out a livelihood in order to survive and live upon entry into Canada. The collapse of the Somali government and the subsequent stateless order of this territory gave way to waves of Somali refugees and asylum seekers leaving the country for safer areas. As one of the main destination countries for Somalis, Canada was met with large numbers of Somalis arriving at its borders after the overthrow of the Said Barre regime in 1992. Canada’s historical relationship with Somalia and its people can be aptly exemplified with its limited but troublesome contact with the country itself, but more importantly its policies that have governed its procedures for claims to asylum. Canada’s differential treatment in the reception and settlement of migrants and asylum seekers from Somalia as demonstrated in this paper has worked through the restrictive policy of Bill C86 and its lasting legacy on the community. Through this understanding I have drawn links to Canada’s historical role through its policies in constructing a narrow distinction between who is welcome into Canada, who is marginally welcome and not welcome.

Through my findings I have made two interlinked arguments based on the findings of this research.
First, I have documented that these young men’s migration trajectories are underpinned by various social networks provided through clan affiliations, family, kin and community and resulting from a shared understanding of Somalinimo which they harness in order to migrate. Through the scholarship on statelessness by Arendt (1973) and Wessel (2015); I have argued that these young men’s migration trajectories are uniquely shaped by their condition of statelessness and this functions in ways to situate these young men on their course to Canada. Statelessness for these young men, I argue, requires them to heavily rely on clan, kin, fellow migrants and intermediaries. Building on the insights of Thompson (2017) I suggest that statehood instead is enacted by this group of young men through a set of shared, repeatable experiences that transect their migratory journeys. These include their reliance on kin, clan and community networks, their experiences of policing and detention, the useful information they gleaned from fellow migrants they met on their journeys and their use of paid smugglers to get them across national borders. I suggest that these networks stand in and circumvent functions usually provided by the state during their process of migration, asylum and settlement in Canada.

Secondly, I have argued that statelessness is a condition that these men continue to experience in Toronto whether as failed refugee claimants, or aspiring refugee claimants. I argue that statelessness and diasporic networks don’t just structure and facilitate these men’s migration, but that they play a crucial role in shaping these men’s access to the workforce and their ability to survive and thrive in Toronto. This paper has explored how this complex intersectionality has produced a particular migratory experience for this group of young Somali men that is heavily coded and functions through categorical distinctions that are managed and (re)negotiated through the process of
asylum. Building on works by Austin and Este (2001), McDowell (2008), Dyer and McDowell (2009), Warfa et al. (2012), Valerie (2015), and Ahmed (2010), I have demonstrated that for these young men the conceptions of masculinity, Somali male identity and family obligations are also (re)shaped through diasporic clan affiliations that they seek out once in Toronto. Being unemployed for Somali men carries a set of negative cultural and social implications, as men they are required to fulfill certain traditional responsibilities to their family and kin alike. As the ones chosen to migrate on behalf of their families, these young men also shoulder the burden of being successful in a new host country where they have limited cultural capital and experience. For many, the pressures and need to survive, find work and provide for their families back home signifies the many obstacles these young men face in their settlement in Canada. Similar to the findings presented by Leila-Hussein (2016), Danso (2001), Austin and Este (2001), Warfa (2012) and Ahmed (2010) the Somalis in Canada face various barriers to their acculturation and basic survival in Canadian society and their access to employment. Although many programs service new immigrants and asylum seekers in Toronto provided by Ontario Works and community organizations such as Midaynta, these young men found it difficult to gather information or get connected with the kind of support available to them. As such, these young men have development dynamic coping strategies as a way to come to terms with their particular condition in Canada. Inquiry into the geographies of care, intimacy and sharing among migrant men is necessary within migration studies literature furthermore, better Canadian government policy that adequately addresses the challenges facing young Somali men who find themselves navigating a new labour market with limited supports is not only apt but required.
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Interviews (Pseudonyms)

1) Abdirahman: 27 years old
   Status: Canadian Citizen-Arrived in 2009

2) Ahmed: 28 years old
   Status: Refugee Protection Claimant- Asylum claim in 2014

3) Aman: 27 years old
   Status: Awaiting Decision on Claim by the courts- Asylum claim in 2017

4) Khalid: 30 years old
   Status: Awaiting Decision on appeals on Claim-Asylum claim in 2016

5) Mahmoud: 30 years old
   Status: Refugee Protection Claimant- Asylum claim in 2016

6) Younis: 30 years old
   Status: Refugee Protection Claimant- Asylum claim in 2015

7) Hassan: 25 years old
   Status: Awaiting decision on Claim by the courts- Asylum claim in 2016

8) Saeed: 28 years old
   Status: Refugee Protection Claimant- Asylum claim in 2015

9) Mustafa: 27 years old
   Status: Awaiting decision on Claim by the courts- Asylum claim in 2016
APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND
What is your nationality/Status in Canada?
What is your age? ______ Years old

Do you currently have a wife/husband or long-term partner?
_ Yes
_ No

Where does your wife/husband/partner currently live?

Is your wife/husband/partner currently working?
_ Yes
_ No

Are you supporting an extended household?
_ yes, please describe: ___________________________ (e.g. household location; number of dependents)
_ No

Are you supported by other household members (i.e. do they provide you with money, housing, or other economic supports?)

Reading
_ Fluent
_ Adequate
_ Basic only
_ None

Writing
_ Fluent
_ Adequate
_ Basic only
_ None

Speaking
_ Fluent
_ Adequate
_ Basic only
_ None
_ yes, please describe: __________________________ (e.g. family member(s) type of support
_ No

(If yes) Is this family member in Canada or abroad?

What is the highest level of schooling that you completed? (TICK ONE ONLY)

_ No schooling (SKIP TO W10.)
_ Some primary (CONTINUE WITH W9.)
_ Completed primary (CONTINUE WITH W9.)
_ Intermediate (CONTINUE WITH W9.)
_ High school and equivalent (CONTINUE WITH W9.)
_ Higher education qualification (below degree level) (CONTINUE WITH 9.
_ First degree and equivalent (CONTINUE WITH W9.)
_ Higher degree and equivalent (CONTINUE WITH W9.)

How many years of formal schooling (excluding vocational training and language courses) have you had, in total?

_____ years in total, including
_____ years in Toronto

How would you assess your proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing English?

Which part of Somalia did you you originate from?

What was your socio-economic status in Somalia?

What is your immediate family’s history to your area of origin?

What were the particular clan dynamics of your region?

**IMMIGRATION AND EXPERIENCE**

How did you come to seek asylum in Toronto?

*Objective: to explore motivations, expectations, and process of migration.*

What stage of life were you in (student finishing college? Young family? Recently unemployed? Family changes?)

What had you been working as before they came to Toronto and how much had they been earning?

Did you choose Toronto? If so, why?
What did you imagine it would be like?
Did you choose a particular type of entry? If so, why?
Did you come straight to Toronto or stay in other countries?
How did you travel and have you found employment (links between travel agencies, recruiters, and employment). Were you offered work/assistance upon arrival?
How did you finance the trip? (e.g.: loans); did anyone help you finance the trip or set up contacts upon arrival?

How long have you been living in Toronto?
When did you apply for asylum?

If still waiting:

If a decision has been rendered: what was the court decision?

EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Can you tell me about the jobs you’ve had while you’ve been in Toronto?

Changes of occupation, sector and employer?
Why did they change?
How did they find new employment?
What is your current working status?

How did you get your first job?

Did you encounter any difficulties getting that job?

Was it the job/kind of work/sector you wanted?

Can you describe the work you are doing now?
How many jobs (pros and cons of this)
Type of work performed
Hours, days, shifts, variations wages
Supervision style
Do you enjoy your job(s)? What is good and bad about it/them?
If you are not employed how do you sustain yourself and or do you receive government assistance?
Do you do any unpaid work – like volunteer, care for relatives, other religious or community work etc.?

If yes, describe ________________________________

What are your motivations for doing this kind of volunteer/community/other work?

Objective: to understand the “micro-economics” of individual participant.
Are you working/living with other people of your nationality?

Objective: to understand the impact of country of origin on relations with other workers
   Are you doing the same kind of work as others of your nationality?
   What are (or would be) advantages and problems of working with fellow nationals?
   Are you supervised by a fellow national?
   Do you work with Canadian citizens? Of what ethnic background? What are your impressions?
   Do you work with people from other countries? What are your impressions?
Can you describe your current accommodation; do you live amongst other Somalis?
   How is it rented and paid for?
   How many people in how many bedrooms, kitchen and toilets
   Does it have heating and hot water?
   How far is it from your current place of employment and how do you travel to work?
   Is it in a neighbourhood that you like? (Services, people)
   How did you find your accommodation?
   Are you happy with your accommodation?

Is there anything you else you would like to say?