EMERGING STORIES: TEMPORARY PROTECTION VISA HOLDERS AND
THE CREATION OF DISCURSIVE SPACES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the discursive representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the Australian print mass media in terms of cultural injustice on individual asylum seekers. The project uses a critical discourse analysis to investigate media texts, news stories and letters-to-the-editors that address asylum seekers arriving in Australia and, in counterpoint, interviews undertaken with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Texts are analysed from the perspective of critical theory and the critique of justice and ethics that has emerged in the field.

This study provides an opportunity to link theory and practice in studying issues of cultural justice since it examines the functions of discourse beyond its linguistic properties. It explores the responses, the effects, the negotiations of meaning and values involving asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and Australian citizens in and through the public sphere. This study focuses specifically on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and does so from a perspective of an ethics of welcome to analyse how varying subjectivities are represented. It draws together a range of theories, including the work of Foucault, Levinas, Butler and Derrida, and undertakes the analysis by deploying Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis. This project analyses the distinction in how the subjectivities of asylum seekers are represented by Media on the one hand (in news and letters-to-the-editor) and, on the other, by the subjects themselves through interviews. This study aims to contribute to the ethical and political understanding of Australia’s identity defined by its relation to alterity, namely asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

Asylum seekers’ narratives exemplify the extent to which they are prepared to exercise their ethical responsibilities towards Australian citizens and to assert the interdependency of our lives. The asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ narratives proclaim their rights for cohabitation and justice by insisting on the need to be treated as equal human beings, and by offering the individual stories of their embodied experiences as abject Others, and to do this they inhabit the English language in the realisation that there is no home without adjacency.
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to Sergio, Israel, Rubén, Mollie, María Elisa, Alicia Aura, Don Rubén, Orlando, Raquel, Sergio Disraeli, Laura, Berta, Rebeca, and Margarita Ronda. I especially dedicate this thesis to M, T, A, M, Z, A, T, N, K, M, and Z. For confidentiality reasons I cannot disclose their identities, however these letters symbolise their very precious presence in this work.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

I know that a future will only be possible again when we find an answer and do what, as guests on this orbiting chunk of nature, we owe to one another; namely, stop frightening one another, relieve one another of fear by disarming to the point of nakedness (Grass 1985, p. 140).

1 Background to the Study

The reasons for developing this thesis emerged more than a decade ago in the year 2001, as at the time I was employed as a counsellor/advocate by the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT). During that period, as part of the early intervention team, I was one of the first points of contact for many men, women and children asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as they were being released from detention centres, a detention that officially responded to the ‘unauthorised manner’ in which these asylum seekers arrived in Australia (namely, by boat). I was profoundly impacted by their experiences. I remember the first desperate request that many of these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas made to us, which was to advocate for the release of their fellow asylum seekers that were still detained and this was despite (or perhaps precisely due to) the experiences of subjection that many of these asylum seekers faced while in detention - these were stories that emerged in subsequent contacts with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Given that through my work I was in regular contact with an increasing number of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas sometimes I also became a primary witness of a direct hostile response to their presence from seemingly ‘ordinary’ members of the Australian community, as for instance I vividly remember one occasion in which I was walking with a group of about 20 or 25 Afghan women, men and children in the streets of West End, Brisbane - as I was helping them to locate the nearest Centrelink office - and as we were waiting for the green pedestrian light to cross the street, some passing motorists unwound their windows and shouted “queue jumpers” and made other similar remarks.

Years later, while conducting individual interviews with some asylum seekers on temporary protection visas for the purpose of this study, I was reminded of the power of
language and the media. While I was at the house of an Afghan woman who had two young children - she became visibly upset when recalling an incident that she and her children experienced shortly after the attack on the United States of America in September 11, 2001. She reported that a motorist stopped his car and started to throw eggs at her and her very young children. Similarly other interviewed women mentioned their fearful encounters with angry people in the streets who threw rocks at them and/or tried to pull at their hijabs at suburban bus stops and/or streets during the same period of time. In addition, during my present work at the Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS) I have the opportunity to work with some former asylum seekers on temporary protection visas who still present symptoms indicative of traumatisation, and who are trying to manage the impact of detention and the subsequent regime of temporary protection visas on their lives.

The previously mentioned incidents that affected asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and my face to face encounters with these asylum seekers and their initial experiences mostly of displacement and rejection in Australia, contributed to the development of a relationality that attested a disposition to learn how to listen and respond to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas beyond the expectations of my counselling role. For asylum seekers on temporary protection visas this type of relationality reflected these asylum seekers’ positions concerning cohabitation and liveable lives which this thesis further explores.

This disposition to learn how to listen and respond to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas however was not free of complexities as it required my own displacement from my Australian communitarian frame already unstable due to my non-English speaking background. Also affecting my Chilean communitarian frame, along with a process of cultural translation that in this case has a ‘literal’ reference as in order to communicate with these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas I needed to work with professional interpreters. However, this translation also refers to the process of questioning my sense of self, initiating in this way a movement towards these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas whom I did not really know or choose. This leap to the unknown developed as a process that constituted the ground for the materialization of an ethical response that among other things comported me to do this thesis. As I received the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas claims for recognition in a way that challenged my selfhood, I questioned whether and how to respond to them even though as mentioned these were people that I did not fully know
and I did not fully choose (Butler 2012, p. 9), given that I received these asylum seekers’ presence and solicitation without actively seeking it.

Consequently, my position as researcher is influenced by my direct past and present work experience as counsellor, advocate for survivors of torture and trauma including asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This gives me an insider status in relation to this field of study as in that role I directly heard (and continue to hear) many of the stories that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas entrusted to me. As a result of this work I was also familiar with the temporary protection visa policy and legislative framework and its impact on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as well as on some Australian citizens. More importantly, the opportunity to meet and work with many asylum seekers on temporary visas has had a significant influence on my understanding and experience of the Australian nation, considering that I am a person who was born in Chile, South America, a non-English speaking country. Consequently like the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas I had to learn to communicate in the English language, and learn to live within cultural differences including the experiences of Chile, a country with a history of European-Spanish colonisation and the exercise of human rights violations as well as the short lived but significant experience of a ‘Popular Unity Government’.

The experiences narrated by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas comported me to revisit previous instances of Australian history that are still present such as its racist treatment of Indigenous people, the first people of this land who continue to experience dispossession through the permanent refusal of the Australian nation to acknowledge their sovereignty over this land. Accordingly, I declare that my position is informed by the recognition that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been and in some cases continue to be subjects of important injustices. Nevertheless, this study was guided by an inquisitive and genuine desire to learn and understand through and beyond textual analysis the situation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in relation to the Australian nation.

1.1 Focus of the Study

This thesis examines the discursive representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the Australian print mass media in terms of cultural injustice to
individual asylum seekers and an ethics of welcome. As the public space is restricted by highly competitive political communication print mass media constitutes an important source of narratives, language and knowledge that shapes the public understanding, regarding asylum seekers moreover arguably defining what Australians are and what constitutes deviance. Although the representation of asylum seekers in mass media is also highly visual seeing that this study’s focus is on language and discourse it has limited its scope to print mass media to allow for a more in-depth exploration of the type of narratives, language, views and beliefs that dominate public discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. In addition, printed mass media also facilitates the investigation of the sources that articulate concepts and categorisations about asylum seekers since this mediated type of information may also constitute the most important basis of information about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas for many members of the Australian public. Asylum seekers are also discussed in new channels of communication such as internet an online media that have the capacity to expand the public sphere and to express the Australian community’s ethical mood in these matters nevertheless a significant limitation is that these channels may only be of relevance to a specific number of members of the public (Koopmans, 2004). Internet media is also conceived simply as a device acting within the same socio-economic and political structures of democracy as the traditional media (Fenton, 2011:68).

This study focuses on asylum seekers who were granted temporary protection visas, specifically the visa subclass 785 which was a category that emerged in 1999 as a result of legislation created to deter ‘unauthorised entrants’.

In this study the emergence of the asylum seeker on temporary protection visas is regarded as part of the ethical field that the bodies of these asylum seekers had traversed since the forced departure from their country of origin, including the literal and figurative journey in search of safety both before and since their arrival in Australia. Consequently, this study formally distinguishes the temporary protection visa 785 subject position as a specific visa category, significantly distinct from other refugee speaking positions at the time as there were numerous attempts to render asylum seekers on temporary protection visas voiceless and invisible, such as being detained in remote camps, and not being able to speak in public without the threat of being denied the right to a permanent protection visa. Eventually, many asylum seekers on temporary protection visas obtained a permanent protection visa, however this menace remained real for those who wanted to be reunited with their families. From the perspective of the
previously referred to ethical field, in this study the asylum seeker in the temporary protection visa position also alternates with the subject position of the refugee. Nevertheless, as the categories of asylum seeker and refugee have quite different legal implications it is important to consider that an asylum seeker is a person who maintains to be a refugee yet his/her claim for refugee status has not hitherto been assessed. A refugee is a person who has been assessed by a national body or by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and meets the Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951 (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012:36).

1.2  Context of the Study: Immigration and the Introduction of the Temporary Protection Visa Subclass 785

After the Second World War Australia began to offer protection to people escaping persecution and other serious human rights violations. In 1958 Australia became a signatory to the Refugee Convention established in 1951. Consequently it is bounded by international obligations arising from this arrangement. The Refugee Convention was drafted with the intent of assuring refugees the widest possible exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms, affirmed in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Charter and the Universal Declaration (Bostock 2002, p. 285).

The Refugee Convention defines the term refugee as an individual who:

As the result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being prosecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees quoted in Bostock 2002, p. 284).

The aims of Australia’s Humanitarian Program are to:
• assist people in humanitarian need overseas, for whom resettlement in another country is the only available option

• share the responsibility for refugee protection with the international community and

• honour Australia’s obligations as a signatory to the *1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* (‘Refugees Convention’) and its 1967 Protocol and other international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party (DIAC 2011, p. 2).

The Humanitarian Program has an offshore and an onshore component. The offshore program provides resettlement to persons outside Australia who are the subjects of persecution, significant discrimination and human rights violations in their home country and that consequently are outside their country of origin and are unable to return to it due to fear. The onshore component is for people seeking a protection within Australia. There is one visa available for onshore applicants, the Protection Visa (Subclass 866), which is designed for people who are refugees as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The Howard Government changed a number of features of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program. An important change was made in 1996 when the offshore resettlement and onshore asylum processes were brought together under one program limited to 12,000 places per year. The Australian Government introduced Temporary Protection Visas in 1999 in response “to a surge of unauthorised boat arrivals” (this is the government language) that had used people smugglers to travel to Australia illegally (DIMIA Fact Sheet 68 2003). In 2001, further legislative changes were introduced to provide that a temporary protection visa holder would be ineligible for a permanent protection visa if, en route to Australia, they resided in a country for seven or more days where they could have sought and obtained effective protection.

The introduction of the legislation that created the temporary protection visa category was supported by the convergence of a media and politically discursive positioning of asylum seekers that amounted to an informal but effective media campaign to discredit asylum claims. Since, the media largely portrayed asylum seekers as ‘illegal immigrants’, and ‘queue jumpers’. Much of the media coverage at that stage had clear racial overtones, as what was seen in the printed media was the marking and positioning
of the bodies of asylum seekers, underpinning its portrayal of dehumanised masses of people of other races arriving on Australian shores (McMaster, 2001, p. x). These narratives circulating in the public sphere often disguised the power and privilege of white coloured subjects producing the emergence of asylum seekers as racialised others, regularly been portrayed in negative and marginalising ways in the Australian media (Pedersen, Atwell & Heveli 2005; Pickering 2001; Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow & Ryan 2005). This media representation regularly underplays exactly what motivates one to leave a country and flee overseas. Consequently this type of representation gives prominence to how asylum seekers are going to be dealt with and offers limited or no emphasis on the reasons for their arrival in Australia’s shores.

Under the temporary protection visas regime unauthorised arrivals found to be refugees were able to access only a three-year temporary visa (subclass 785-TPV), in the first instance. Those still wanting protection after three years were able to apply for a further protection visa (DIMIA Fact Sheet 64 2003, p. 2) only after at least 30 months had passed since the granting of the TPV. TPV holders were not eligible for family reunion and had no right to return in case they travelled overseas.

According to the then Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA, later the Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC] and currently the Department of Immigration and Border Protection) planned immigration has been a key feature of the Australian social and economic landscape since European Settlement. Thus, DIMIA stated that over the last two decades, global migration flows have grown in both magnitude and complexity, with significant implications for Australia’s planned immigration intakes, as well as for the management of unauthorised arrivals (DIMIA 2003, p. 37).

Thus, according to DIMIA in order to meet Australia’s international obligations towards refugees, temporary protection visa holders were provided with access to services consistent with the temporary nature of their stay. These included: work entitlements and Job Matching from Centrelink, eligibility for Special Benefit, Rent Assistance, Family Tax Benefit, Child Care Benefit, Double Orphan Pension, Maternity Allowance and Maternity Immunisation Allowance. (Any Special Benefit entitlement was stringently means-tested and was reviewed every 13 weeks).

They also had access to Medicare benefits, eligibility for referral to the Early Health Assessment and Intervention Program, eligibility for torture and trauma counselling,
and ability to apply for a Protection visa after a period of 30 months, or a shorter period specified by the Minister, if there was a continuing need for protection. TPV minors were also eligible for the Commonwealth funded English as a Second Language New Arrivals program to assist their participation in school classroom activities (DIMIA Fact Sheet 64 2003, p. 2). It excluded them from citizenship rights, permanent residency, and membership rights to reside within a specific territory, and from freedom of movement outside the Australian territory.

Entitlements of TPV Subclass 785 Compared with Permanent Protection Visas (PPV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entitlement</th>
<th>Permanent Protection Visa</th>
<th>Temporary Protection Visa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Income Support</td>
<td>Immediate access to the full range of social security benefits</td>
<td>Access only to Special Benefit for which eligibility criteria apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Same access to education as other permanent residents</td>
<td>Access to primary, secondary and TAFE education subject to state policy (access granted in Queensland). Effective exclusion from tertiary study due to imposition of full fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Support Service</td>
<td>Access to full DIMIA settlement services, including Migrant Resource Centres and interpreter services.</td>
<td>Not eligible for most DIMIA funded services, except for health screening and referral and torture and trauma counselling services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Ability to bring</td>
<td>No family reunion rights,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunion</td>
<td>immediate family members</td>
<td>including spouse and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Same ability to leave the country and return as other permanent residents</td>
<td>Travel voids the protection submission and gives no right to return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Rights</td>
<td>Permission to work</td>
<td>Permission to work but job search severely restricted by TPV status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language classes</td>
<td>Access to 510 hours of English classes through AMEP</td>
<td>Not eligible for federally funded English language programs or translating and interpreting services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Benefits</td>
<td>Same eligibility for Medicare and Health Care Cards as other permanent residents</td>
<td>Eligible for Medicare and Health Care cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Assistance with public housing included within settlement services</td>
<td>Not entitled to on-arrival accommodation and limited access to public housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table has been reproduced and adapted from the study called “Temporary Protection Permanent Uncertainty” (Marston, 2003, p. 17).

### 1.3 Changes Concerning Australia’s Response to Asylum Seekers Since 2001

Prior to outlining the relevant immigration policies changes regarding asylum seekers seeking protection in Australia, I would briefly contextualise this issue in terms of the global number of asylum seeker and refugee movements, given that asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia have been and continue to be the focus of political and media attention for the last 14 years. The latest UNHCR reports that at the end of 2012
there were more than 45.2 million displaced people, including 15.4 million refugees, 937,000 asylum seekers, and 28.8 million people forced to escape within the borders of their own countries. This report also states that war remains the dominant cause for displacement (UNHCR 2012). The report of the ‘expert panel’, a panel convened by the Labor Government in June 2012 and formed by Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, Mr. Paris Aristotle AM (Member of the Order of Australia), director of Foundation House, and Professor Michael L’Estrange AO (Officer of the Order of Australia), director of the National Security College at the Australian National University. The expert panel establishes that in 2001 a total of 5,526 asylum seekers arrived by boat in Australia and from 1998 to the 31st of July 2012 (excluding the figure of asylum seekers arriving by boat in 2001) a total of 29,109 asylum seekers arrived by boat in Australia (Australian Government 2012, p. 23). It is important to note that until recent times most asylum seekers applying for protection in Australia arrived by air with a valid visa and applied for protection later while living in the community. For instance in the year 2001-2002 there were a total of 7026 applications for a protection visa of asylum seekers arriving by air while there were 2222 applications for protection visas by asylum seekers arriving by boat during the same period. Importantly, asylum seekers arriving by boat are more likely to be recognised as refugees than those arriving by air. For example, the protection visa grant rate for asylum seekers from the top country of citizenship for asylum seekers arriving by boat from Afghanistan has varied between about 80 and 95 per cent since 2009, while the final protection visa grant rate for those applying for asylum from the top country of citizenship for air arrivals like China is usually only around 20 to 30 per cent (Phillips 2013, pp. 6-7).

Despite the relatively minor number of asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia when compared with the global magnitude of displaced people, Australia’s position towards officially conceived unauthorised arrivals since 2001 has become more stringent. For instance while in August 2008 the Labor government abolished the temporary protection visas and from that date until August 2013 asylum seekers who arrived by boat and who were found to be refugees were granted a permanent protection visa (PPV). In August 2012 the Gillard Labor government endorsed the recommendations of the ‘expert panel’ convened by Gillard and chaired by Angus Houston, which referred to asylum seekers as ‘irregular maritime arrivals (IMAs)’. This panel recommended the continuation of offshore processing of asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat at Nauru, Manus Island and the application of a ‘no advantage’
principle as a means “to ensure that no benefit is gained through circumventing regular migration arrangements” (Australian Government 2012, p. 14). Asylum seekers who came to Australia as irregular maritime arrivals before 13 August 2012 could be granted a bridging visa by the Minister with permission to work, and released into the community while their claims for refugee status were assessed. However, asylum seekers who arrived on or after 13 August 2012 by boat at an excised place such as Christmas Island date would be subject to the 'no advantage' principle, and could be transferred offshore to Nauru or Manus Island, Papua New Guinea for regional processing. Though the Australian Government will continue to transfer people offshore for regional processing, some asylum seekers boat arrivals from this group will be released into the Australian community on bridging visas. In line with the 'no advantage' principle, these asylum seekers will not be granted a permanent protection visa if found to be a refugee, until such time as they would have been resettled in Australia after being processed within Australia’s region. The conditions of this bridging visa do not permit these asylum seekers to work; asylum seekers in this group remain liable to be taken to a designated country for regional processing. Asylum seekers from this group who are found to engage Australia's protection obligations and have satisfied all checks will be granted a Protection visa (Australian Government: Fact sheet 65).

In a similar political posture as the previous Labor government, the new Liberal-National Coalition government’s little attention to the humanitarian side of the situation of asylum seekers arriving by boat is evidenced by the recent change of name of the immigration department that now is called ‘Department of Immigration and Border Protection’. This government will reintroduce the temporary protection visas (TPVs) for asylum seekers that are already in Australia. The period of validity of the temporary protection visas will be established case by case, however the temporary protection visas can’t exceed a three years period. In addition, no permanent protection visas will be granted to holders of temporary protection visas within the first five years of their temporary protection visa being issued and the granting of permanent protection visas is at the discretion of the Minister of Immigration (Refugee Council of Australia, 2013) this means that after three years when the visa expires the holder of a temporary protection visa can only apply for another temporary protection visa.

On July 2013 a Regional Settlement Arrangement was announced by the Australian government with the government of Papua New Guinea, under this arrangement, asylum seekers arriving by boat after the 19th of July 2013. These asylum seekers will
be transferred to Papua New Guinea for processing and resettlement if they are found to be refugees, if they are found not to be refugees they will be returned to their country of origin or a country where they have a right of residency. On the third of August 2013 the Australian government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Nauru, in order to settle those asylum seekers to be found in need of protection in Nauru (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2013).

In brief, the changes by the Labor government and subsequent changes established by the new Liberal-National Coalition government illustrate a further deterrent and punishing stance from Australia concerning asylum seekers arriving by boat, measures that undermine the institution of asylum (Towle, R. 2013) since these measures over-emphasise border protection at the cost of solidarity, eroding the support for asylum seekers and effectively denying the understanding that asylum seekers have equal rights of protection from violence and harm, an awareness that is equally denied to asylum seekers and Australian citizens.

2 Establishing the Field

2.1 Global Theoretical Argument, Discourse and the Other

This study has emerged as a product of theories and theorists of different backgrounds and from a diverse field of studies including social science and humanities, critical social research, cultural, refugee and migration studies, ethnic and racial studies, media studies, feminism, post-colonial, language and philosophical theory all of which converge under a post-structuralist umbrella.

Every torture regime uses the same linguistic technique: something awful is being done, a verb, is transposed into some mundane thing, a noun....a re-arranged truth a mythological reality... (Cohen 2001, pp. 83-84)

The above citation serves to illustrate that in agreement with a post-structuralist stance this study assumes that knowledge is partial, situated and local and that reality is constructed in language through people’s relationships and the practice of making and reproducing meaning, within power structures.
The core conceptual framework focuses upon a critical analysis of issues of power within discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. A focus on discourse and power aims to identify the meanings, cultural forms and representations that produce consent to the status of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the discursive spaces that contest the status quo and the location of individuals within it. It seeks to demonstrate that linguistic descriptions (stories) are not simply about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas but serve to construct them and shape the understandings and actions of others.

This study approaches this analysis through a post-structuralist orientation to discourse and representation. Positivist and structuralist approaches are not adequate to explain the differential subject positions and individual interpretations of subjects’ own experiences. Structuralist approaches are not sensitive to difference, differences in experiences, histories, in body shapes, in gender, in countries of origin, in languages, in cultural practices. At the same time it is important to recognise that post-structuralist stances are criticised for their endless partiality and fragmentation. It is said that this may not only obscure the structural origins of domination such as those based in race, class and gender but may also undermine the material manifestations of oppression and subordination. This study considers that poststructuralist perspectives do allow the understanding of the interrelation between words and things, disallowing the undermining of one instance over another (for instance preferring objective over subjective, emotional over rational) (Belsey, 2002). Accordingly, rather than obscuring the practical manifestations of subordination, post-structuralism brings it to light by emphasising language in the process of identity building, and highlighting how the meanings vary according to the cultural expectations and our particular positioning and the degree of acceptance of these cultural norms.

In more general terms, post structuralism refers to a group of theories that investigate the relationship between people, and the practice of making and reproducing meanings (Belsey, 2002, p. 5). This is particularly useful in this study as it seeks to investigate whose interests are served by accepting particular beliefs, values, and meanings regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Post-structuralism’s posture concerning difference recognises that subjects differ and can be inconsistent with themselves, as it conceives subjects as both subjected beings (to the meanings and sentence structures) and as agents (source of initiatives, agent of a verb) (Belsey 2002, p. 37). For instance contemporary Australian discourses proclaim Australia as a land of
freedom, amicability, equality, sexual emancipation and multiculturalism thus, creating the impression that Australia and its citizens actively and consistently exercise hospitality, love and care towards one another and Others. However, this thesis traverses the inconsistencies of the type of discourses that place most Australian citizens on one side as active agents of hospitality and creators of liveable lives conditions. While on the other side, in the face of official narratives regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas most Australian citizens become subjects subjected to the exercise of inhospitality and rejection becoming at once the creators of the conditions for unliveable lives whilst subjected to unliveable lives.

The public space is a space conceptualised as differing from the state where social meanings are created, distributed, contested and rebuilt a space where the making of common sense is embedded in social structures (Fraser, 1995). An important medium for the circulation of discourses in the public sphere is the printed media; the media can bring ideas or images to life for those who experience this on that abstracted level. Thus, it can also construct social reality and can organize people. Similarly, it can affect reality imposing a way of seeing the world (Bourdieu, 1998) processes that are increasingly framed by the market. An important example of the type of narratives circulated by the printed media in the Australian public arena is provided by the chapter of Critical Discourse Analysis of the Australian newspaper articles June-December 2001. In particular the section that analyses the disallowance or rejection of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas demonstrates how ideas regarding asylum seekers were brought to life constructing them in opposition to Australian citizens, by naming them as illegals associated with an illegal immigration trade. This chapter also reveals the workings of language supporting this way of seeing the world of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas showing how this view precisely lacks their narratives, attesting their exclusion and subordination to the narrator’s way of seeing their reality.

Discourse is a central concept in the study, in terms of theory and in terms of data. Discourse is language in use that produces a text (spoken or written). It is also a social practice as it represents reality ratifying social relations of power, creating social identities and mobilising people. Ideology is solidly manifested in discourse as ideas penetrate social life when they find forms of expression (can be communicated). “The social character of the speech acts is then manifested in the fact that we may want to change the knowledge, the desires and eventually the behaviour of our addressee.” (Van
Discourses about race and ethnicity are relevant to the focus on representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas because the dominant representations have strong race and ethnic dimensions. One of the key concepts to understand how and why race and ethnicity influence the discursive positioning of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the Australian public sphere is ethnicity which “refers to an identifiable social category or membership of an ethnic group and constitutes a social construction sustained by a process of self ascription and/or ascription by others, especially the dominant groups in society” (Jayasuriya 1997, pp. 4-5). It is through discourses that ‘common sense’ views and interest can be articulated. By looking at discourses in the public domain questions emerge about who is authorised to speak and on behalf of whom.

It is through discourses, that is through texts, utterances, statements and the specific ways in which words are interrelated, that particular judgements are made regarding ethnicity, race and nation. Given that discourses are part of the means that we have to relate to one another and/or keep separate from each other, additionally discourses can assist us in changing the ways in which we relate with each other (Fairclough 2003, p. 125). One of the main functions of discourse is to construct and disseminate subject positions for appropriation and/or resistance; as such it is important to define how the concept of subjectivity will be used for the purpose of the study.

The significance of theorising subjectivity from a post structuralist perspective is that this perspective allows knowledge from the subjugated. Venn (1999) invites us to think about who has the power and authority to be the narrator, and who tells the stories of identity. What is more he also asks us to think about what are the specific effects of these narratives in the subjects’ lives, which is an important dimension of the proposed study. People can also be subjects capable of exercising power (Lister 2003, p. 41).

In the case of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas the politics of identity and otherness characterised by marginalisation and criminalisation used by the Australian government and the mass media has served to establish distance, mistrust and fear between asylum seekers and Australian citizens (Mares 2001).
Meanings are articulated through discourses and in social institutions, one of which is the mass media. The media engages in reflecting, informing, influencing and constructing cultural realities and public opinion (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia as cited in McDougall and Fletcher 2002, p. 33).

The mass media obscures distinctions between readers and writers or creators and audiences, in as much as it mobilises prejudices and interpretations. These interpretative acts are part of historical and contextual processes reflective of attitudes, beliefs that form the contents of discourses and meanings about self-identity from an individual perspective and that of nationhood from a societal perspective. This is clearly stated by Fairclough in his assessment of news narratives and the way in which they interconnect with various voices to become representative (Fairclough 1995, p. 77). This study follows Fairclough’s perspective on the mass media, particularly how it mediates between the public and the private. Similarly this study’s ethical reflection puts in question the media’s ethic of reporting in the public interest, as this study’s perspective on printed mass media is aligned with the view that the increasing market driven conditions in which the mass media operates undermine the provision of news in the public interest (Fenton 2011:65).

2.2 Significance of this Study

This study is significant in that it addresses the important issue for Australian media as to how refugees are represented. This study focuses specifically on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and does so from a perspective of an ethics of welcome and questions of cultural justice to analyse how varying subjectivities are represented. It draws together a range of theories, including the work of Foucault, Fraser, Levinas, Butler and Derrida, and undertakes analysis by deploying Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis. These theorists’ works are rarely, if ever, addressed through Critical Discourse Analysis, and the methodological approach developed through this will be a significant contribution to the field. There has been no work to date which analyses the distinction in how these subjectivities are represented by Media on the one hand (in news and letters to editor) and, on the other, by the subjects themselves through interviews.
This study is original as it emphasises the ethical dimensions of welcoming seeing that it gazes through a tridimensional looking-glass in a situated context such as discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. It examines discourses produced by those who exercise socio-political influence in newspaper articles. It also examines the ethical dimension of ‘everyday’ discourses generated by members of the Australian community regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas which provide an insight into the worldviews of the letters to the editor contributors who play a part in the construction, reproduction and/or change of identity politics. Thus, this study also scrutinises the ethical content of the narratives of asylum seekers bringing the ‘subjective’ into the public and presenting what is valued by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, thus contributing to making visible the doings of language and some of the consequences of injustice, as well as the politics of subversion emerging in the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The study provides an opportunity to link theory and practice in studying issues of cultural justice (Fraser 1997), and the ethics of welcome as it examines how discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas construct and disseminate their specific subject positions within the Australian society, as well as the subject positions of those disseminating these discourses. This study also explores the responses, the effects, the negotiations of meaning and values involving asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and Australian citizens in and through the public sphere. This is important in terms of representation and action, as meaning does not reside entirely in the discursive practice itself but rather in the actions that people take with it (Norris & Jones 2005, p. 4). This study also contributes to knowledge by demonstrating that asylum seekers on temporary visas are not only objects of ethical debate, given that it presents the ethical reflections of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as subjects of ethical debate who are making ethical claims about the kinds of practices of hospitality, cultural justice and openness to the other attesting for an embodied ethics.

2.3 Research Questions

This thesis is concerned with three inter-related questions. First, how are the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas constructed in the Australian printed mass media? Second, are the discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas identity contested and by whom? And third, what effects do these dominant constructions have on the lives of individual asylum seekers on
temporary protection visas? To respond to these questions I begin by describing the theoretical, philosophical orientation and literature pertinent to the subject matter. This is followed by the presentation of the methodology and analytical tools used by this study.

These research questions mean to investigate and reflect on the ethical responsibilities that emerged with the unwilled presence of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and their solicitation of refuge made to Australian citizens. Importantly these research questions guide the exploration of the type of discourses that emerge and the identification of discourses that have become established truths regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. These questions also assist to focus on considerations about the degree of closure created by the regime of truths intending to universalise the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ experiences and subjectivity. Furthermore these questions assist the ethical exploration of the type of discursive responses to their presence and solicitation from some Australian citizens and by the official establishment. These questions also facilitate the pondering of what is at stake when challenging these regimes of truths from an ethically responsive stance as informed by Levinas.

The research questions are addressed from a relational and ethical posture as proposed by post-structuralist thinkers such as Butler, Derrida and others. This approach requires a constant process of reflection and of subject-making, in Butler’s words “...an exilic moment, one that disposes us ethically.” (Butler 2012, p. 127) given that from this stance the ethical demand made by asylum seekers is made directly upon me and Us (Australian citizens), and from this ethical perspective this demand cannot be disavowed as this position requires Us to respond, to exercise our ethical responsibility towards these asylum seekers. This way of approaching the research questions also provides the opportunity to critically think about the essential and enclosing nature of identity and nation when this is framed by rejection towards the Other, and consequently this relational approach facilitates an openness to the unknown Other visible in the discourses analysed by this thesis. Additionally, this stance is supported by ethics, the ethics of the primacy of the Other as postulated by Butler in her reading of Levinas, and by the realisation that this position requires continuous reflection about justice. This is evidenced by the structure of this study which in chapters such as Critical Discourse Analysis of newspaper articles, and letters to editor and the interview chapter entitled “The Political Field of Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas”
focus on subjectivities, subalternty and inequality, the subverting subject as well as the conception of nation emerging in these discursive frameworks. All of these considerations facilitate the movement and reflection from identity and nation to hospitality as a way in which we relate to each other in pursuit of liveable lives, striving to end the condition of statelessness and to develop a sense of belonging and home as discussed in the analysis of two of the interview chapters, namely Hospitality, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others and Hospitality, Relationality and Liveability for Asylum seekers on Temporary Protection Visas.

2.4 Thesis Organisation

The thesis is organised in eight chapters. Apart from the introduction and conclusion respectively, each chapter analyses a different aspect of the elements contained in the research questions.

In Chapter 2 Conceptual Framework, Research Design and Methodology I discuss the theoretical domain underpinning this study and the literature that supports the post-structuralist positioning of this investigation. This includes a framework that acknowledges the fragility of intercultural standpoints and the conception of culture neither as essentialist nor as purely discursive. This chapter also contains a focus on Discourse and media discourse, an exploration of power and subjectivities, the intersection of Critical Discourse Analysis (as developed by Fairclough) and Governmentality (as developed by Foucault) and the examination of cultural justice. I also delineate the Critical Discourse Analysis methodology as used by Fairclough who sees language as a social practice (Fairclough and Wodak 1977), thereby integrating analysis of texts, analysis of text production, consumption and distribution, and socio-cultural analysis of the discourse event (three-dimensional framework including text, discourse practice, and socio-cultural practice (Fairclough 1995)). Similarly, Foucault’s ideas of power within a dialogical context are critical, as he conceives power as a continuous force within human relations. Foucault’s particular interest in examining the localised workings of power, its interaction between subjects and institutions in order to bring to view what he calls ‘disqualified knowledges’ (Foucault 2003, p. 8-9) provides the basis for scrutinising language and discourse.
Chapters 3 and 4 comprise the first section of the Analytical work developed in this thesis.

Chapter 3, Critical Discourse Analysis of Articles in the Australian Newspaper June-December 2001 scrutinises the language used in newspaper articles regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas from an ethical stance. The Critical Discourse Analysis approach undertaken here is grounded in Gayatri Spivak’s reflections on subalternity (Spivak 2005, p. 475-486). In this chapter, the link between CDA and Spivak’s examination into what brings about the specific case of inequality (the subject position of the subaltern) is extended through the textual critique of newspaper articles in the Australian. This chapter analyses three types of discursive subject positions that emerges in response to the ethical solicitation made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, namely rejection, ambivalence and allowance of ethical recognition.

Generally, the subject positions of rejection marked the bodies of asylum seekers as a subaltern- other while the ambivalent subject positions simultaneously humanise and de-humanise asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Moreover, the subject positions allowing an ethical recognition emerge as subjects embodied in an ethical responsibility that resists the politics of closure. A closure that universalises and fixates asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, as the subject positions allowing an ethical recognition recognise the vulnerability of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as well their own vulnerability showing a readiness to risk the knowing posture.

Chapter 4, Critical Discourse Analysis - Letters to Editor /constructing the subjectivities of Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas examines the discursive construction of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in Letters to the Editor (LTE) to The Australian Newspaper during the period June-December 2001. This analysis draws attention to the systematic emergence of opinions, ways of thinking and language found within the texts of LTE that shape the dominant discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This chapter’s findings provide an insight into the formation of common-sense discourses by some of the LTE writers who naturalise the asymmetrical position between asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and Australian citizens. It also exposes contesting positions between LTE writers, and explores justice through issues of border security and the discourses of absences.
Although LTE is a mediated genre it is also a genre considered to have a lower degree of mediation as it has been historically regarded as the expression of the exchange of ideas between the readers and a newspaper (Bromley 1998). Consequently, LTE constitutes an important medium to look at the emerging narratives about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas among the Australian population.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 comprise the second section as these contain the analysis of the interviews conducted with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

Chapter 5, *The Political Field of Temporary Protection: Analysis of Interviews* analyses face-to-face interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to determine the effects of media discourse. The interviews are discussed in several sub-sections. The first section, ‘Breaking down of the I’, summarises the ethical consideration of my positioning as a witness of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas narratives and the understanding that these are the narratives of human beings who had and continue to suffer injury and violence. The section ‘Multiplicity of Subjectivities the Indefinite Journey toward Recognition’ depicts the variety of subject positions occupied by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas which includes the asylum seeker subject, the refugee subject, the temporary protection visa holder subject, the subaltern subject and the subverting subject.

In Chapter 6, *Hospitality, the Manner in Which we Relate to Ourselves and to Others* the analysis of the narratives of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas aims at accomplishing a close reading of the type of ethical demand for recognition which is made by the interviewees. Consequently, this chapter focuses on ‘hospitality’, and the development of this topic is strongly based on reflections about place, habitation and co-habitation (Butler 2011), an exploration of the relationship of responsibility with another (Levinas 1993), the manner of being at one’s home as put by Derrida ‘the ethics of hospitality’ (Derrida 2001) and of ‘crossing boundaries’ within self and the other. Notwithstanding the mediation present in newspaper articles, letters to the editor and interviews, this approach advances the understanding that the presence of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas requires our ethical response as we are interdependent of one another.

Chapter 7, *Hospitality, Relationality and Liveability for Asylum seekers on Temporary Protection Visas* shifts focus to the topic of ethical recognition of
hospitable responsiveness “as a relational practice”. Since Butler’s reflection about the ethics of cohabitation is based on changeable and flexible relations to the outside, a relational practice from this perspective means that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas would not be approached as the Other situated over there (Them), or outsiders by Australian citizens (Us) situated here as the nation insiders. It follows from this ethical stance that these two modes of being, namely Australian citizens and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, would be fundamentally concerned with each other (Butler 2012, p. 127).

In Chapter 8, Striving for an Ethical Response in the ‘face’ of the Solicitation presented by Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas, Concluding Comments I summarise the analysis conducted in previous chapters, outlining the differences emerging from the political, cultural and discursive territory navigated by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The presence and demand for an ethical response from asylum seekers is inescapably linked to the examination of the practices of identity, space and exclusion, of (in)hospitality and (in)justice, a question of being, and of the manner of being that is configured in Australia about its citizens and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The finding and conclusion of this thesis is that the scrutiny of language through Critical Discourse and thematic analysis founded in philosophical post-structuralist approaches such as those of Derrida, Butler, Foucault and others confirms the necessity of detecting practices of exclusion that are the linguistic practices of subsuming the Other into the same. This emerges as an essential task for the materialization of ethical sensibilities. The analysis of interviews offers an important insight into a ‘new ethical language’, as the voices of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas mostly reject self-referential modes of belonging thereby inviting us to think that there is no home without adjacency.

Finally, this thesis stands in stark contrast against the increasingly official hegemonic approaches adopted by Australia against asylum seekers positioned as the subaltern – Other. The Australian subject position emerged by racially, legislatively and religiously producing asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as racialised objects distinguished from white bodies. As a result the emerging image of the Australian nation is based in some bodies namely Anglo-Celtic and not the bodies of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Moreover, some white bodies through newspaper articles and letters to editor derived from the centrality and normality of their whiteness racialising Islam and/or Muslims as a factor prompting terrorism.
This thesis has unearthed discursive hierarchies, linguistic power struggles and linguistic strategic moves through which asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been excluded from liveable lives. This thesis’ analytical gaze turns to ethics as a relational manner of being, and living. A manner which is grounded in resistance against the oppression and suffering of the Other, in this case asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. As long as asylum seekers continue to be excluded and rejected we are all destined to live unliveable lives, and we are consequently, unable to call Australia a generous and just nation of generous and justice-striving citizens.
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1. Conceptual Framework

This research examines the discursive representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (TPVs) in the Australian printed mass media and the ways in which media and other textual representations relate to questions of cultural injustice in regard to the refugee experience in Australia. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the theoretical domain underpinning this study. This study’s approach manoeuvres through a critical conceptual positioning, navigating the tensions within a range of approaches that are inscribed in a Euro-centric framework of enunciation (post-structuralism, post-modernism), which includes perspectives that have originated in Europe and which may not necessarily be adequate to addressing, critiquing, deconstructing or otherwise theorising the experience of asylum seekers on TPVs in Australia. That is to say, the study is attempting to re-frame the contemporary understanding of such refugee experiences in the context of media and other representations through inter-cultural knowledge. Such a re-framing involves the examination of a cultural phenomenon in ways which go beyond liberal-humanist perspectives on intercultural communication.

The pursuit of inter-culturality presupposes that there are well-defined cultures between which one positions oneself in order to establish mutual understanding and to open means of communication (Mohanty 1998, p. 237). Inter-culturality as conceived by Walsh means the dialogue and co-existence of diverse cultural groups under conditions of equality (Walsh 2009b:24 as cited in Escobar 2010).

An alternative to such liberal-humanism is to address the situation and representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas through a framework that acknowledges the fragility of inter-cultural standpoints, whereby interaction between people, and particularly people of different cultural backgrounds, favours a view of culture as continuously constructed by these interactions. Conceiving culture neither as essentialist nor as purely discursive is significant to this study, as the cultural experience of migration and refugee movement is historically inscribed and not external to the everyday experiences, practices and representations of all involved parties. Inter-culturality is linked to Post-structuralism since for inter-culturality to be possible it requires a significant change in the protracted social structures that impose a hegemonic
cultural vision, relegating the diversity and variety of social experiences to a single mode of knowing and a way of being. Thus, as said by Zibechi ‘prioritizing displacement over structure, mobility over fixity, society in flow...’ (Zibechi 2006:33 as cited in Escobar), inter-culturality refers to a process of continuous interaction among various groups which is always under creation, a process characterised by tensions and divergences.

This thesis positions inter-culturality as a methodology that emphasises in the words of Walsh ‘the thinking from, between and with, instead of the study about’ (Walsh 2012:115), since for inter-culturality to occur it is necessary to attempt to mitigate against the risk of ethnocentrism. This is the tendency to interpret cultural practices distant from us based in the principles of our own culture (Alsina 1999). The place of enunciation of inter-cultural knowledge originates in the Indigenous side of the Latin American world, thus opening a framework which competes with — or, more rightly, complements—European knowledge, and is thereby strongly relevant to a study which undertakes to example the relationship between representation and groups of persons who are depicted through those representations through a concept of cultural 'otherness'.

The overall purpose of this study is thus to respond to the silenced histories of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, most of whom are non-European and of Middle Eastern backgrounds, by seeking out through theoretically-grounded analyses the voices and silences, including those that occur within the context of their own speech as well as the dominant discourses about them (Coronil 1994, p. 657). Consequently, it requires a conceptual framework that is attuned to these silences and voices and that allows the exposure of how asylum seekers on temporary protection visas become positioned as a 'social problem' in and for Australia. I also explore how refugees create a space for participation that fractures dominance and subordination, opening the critique of dominant discourses about them and consequently generating intercultural knowledge. From this perspective the intercultural knowledge generated by the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ voices becomes a strategy that attempts to redress inequality and to reduce ethnocentrism by firstly recognising and then attempting to balance the differential subject positions in which they are located.
1.1 Core Conceptual Framework

The core conceptual framework focuses upon developing innovative, theoretically-grounded and critical ways in which to analyse a range of discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas that allows the development of new knowledge from the perspective of justice (always a tenuous concept). A focus on discourse aims to identify the meanings, cultural forms and representations that produce consent to the status of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the discursive spaces that contest the status quo and the location of individuals within it (Fairclough 2003, pp. 2-3). This focus seeks to demonstrate that mediated, linguistic descriptions (stories and narratives) are not simply about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas but serve to construct them and shape the understandings and actions of others.

The section below will cover in detail the theoretical framework that informs this study, the specific sub-sections explore the conceptual use in this dissertation of post-structuralist theory and perspectives and their relevance to this study. This chapter also introduces theoretical notions important to the study’s conceptual framework, including the concepts of the public sphere, discourse, subjectivity, media and media discourse, and the ethics of hospitality and liveable lives.

This study draws on the post-structuralist concern regarding the processes of production and reproduction of meanings, rejecting the origins of meaning in the world around us but rather emphasising the understanding of how we are able to mean, and about how language becomes a way of understanding and differentiating the world (Belsey 2002). There are relationships and tensions within the theoretical approach adopted for this study, which I will now explore by looking at this approach in more detail.

1.2 Post-structuralism

This study uses a post-structuralist orientation to discourse and representation. Positivist and structuralist approaches are not adequate to explain the differential subject positions and individual interpretations of subjects’ own experiences. In more general terms, post-structuralist perspectives refer to a group of theories that investigate the relationship between people and the practice of making and reproducing meanings (Belsey 2002, p. 5). This is particularly useful in this study as it seeks to investigate whose interests are
served by accepting particular beliefs, values, and meanings regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Post-structuralism also embraces difference by recognising that subjects differ and can be inconsistent even with themselves. Post-structuralism generally conceives subjects as not self-grounded, seeing that from this perspective subjects are constituted in and by discursive representation, subjects are capable of transforming discourses and as readers become the primary subject of enquiry. Subjects from this perspective are incomprehensible to themselves as they are ungrounded and divided by language, and social norms. This body of theory conceives subjects as both subjected beings (to the meanings and sentence structures) and as agents (source of initiatives, agent of a verb) (Belsey 2002, p. 37). At the same time it is important to recognise that post-structuralist stances are criticised for their endless partiality and fragmentation. It is said that this may not only obscure the structural origins of domination such as that based in race, class and gender but also undermine the material manifestations of oppression and subordination. However, defenders of post-structuralism claim that:

knowledge from the point of view of the unmarked is truly fantastic, distorted and so irrational...But it is precisely in the politics and epistemology of partial perspectives that the possibility of sustained, rational, objective enquiry rests. (Haraway 1991, pp. 191-193).

This citation critiques the closure of knowledge that is marked/fixed and totalising, instead proclaiming that knowledge is possible from what escapes totality, that is the partial/the situated, and the local. This type of knowledge is what Foucault calls ‘subjugated knowledges’ (Foucault 2003, p. 7) which are subjugated to the hierarchical and centralising forces of institutional and scientific discourses. Foucault maintains that these common knowledges open the closure of totalising knowledge and create the opportunities of new knowledge by making critique possible and by traversing the strategies of domination. In the same line Michel Serres brings our attention to the black spots in language that tend to hide the receiver and the sender, obscuring what makes the system, what belongs to it and what is against it. As he puts it:

“noise gives rise to a new system, an order that is more complex than the simple chain. This parasite interrupts at first glance, consolidates when you look again” (Serres 1982, p. 14).
Serres here conceptualises social relationships as parasitic and unbalanced (Serres in Mortley 1991, p. 58) since in these relationships language plays a vital role; language can be parasitic when the emotion behind the action belongs to a different domain in the logic that discards the other. Conversely, his conception of language is fluid and includes spots in language like the noise that disorders and confuses communication, forcing us to listen and concentrate. Although noise may assist in securing understanding he asserts that within language a form of knowledge is lost. Serres affirms that what is lost is the other side of the speakable, namely the unspeakable, which is not reducible to the rational, that is the qualitative, the empirical (sensations), a human capacity which does not have language (Serres 1991, pp. 54-55). Hence, this study is underpinned by the idea that poststructuralist perspectives do allow the understanding of the interrelation between words and things, disallowing the undermining of one instance over another (for instance preferring objective over subjective, emotional over rational). Accordingly, rather than obscuring the practical manifestations of subordination, post-structuralism brings it to light by emphasising language in the process of identity building, and highlighting how meanings vary according to cultural expectations. In other words, a post-structuralist approach to language is particularly relevant for this study which seeks to examine the media representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas: it allows the tracing of the processes of the construction of meaning and the uncovering of what is taken for granted in the depiction of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. For example, this study will look at the discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in newspaper articles, letters to the editor and interviews with asylum seekers on TPVs, all of which take place in language. This post-structuralist approach permits the exploration of the place of language, namely, what is uttered or not said, and under which circumstances by the speaking subjects, as well as making it possible to examine how these discourses define and produce asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as objects and subjects of knowledge (Barker and Galasinski 2001, pp. 4-10).

1.3 Public Space

Until now I have argued the relevance of a poststructuralist stance for this study. Juxtaposed with a critique that is grounded in poststructuralism, I shall also be investigating the representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas
through the concept of public space within a poststructuralist perspective, since public space plays a significant role in the creation, stabilisation and circulation of discourses.

The public space is a space conceptualised as differing from the state. Indeed, as a theoretical framework it can, in principle, be critical of the state (Fraser 1995, p. 287), even though the state plays a part in expanding or shrinking the public sphere. It is a space where meanings are created and distributed, and a space where the making of common sense is embedded in social structures (Fraser 1995, p. 288). In other words, the construction of discourses that set up 'truth regimes' in the public sphere is knitted in the body of institutional processes and professional interventions. This study will examine the ‘discourses of truth’ that lead to the emergence of the temporary protection visas, discourses that the Howard government established as legislative measures against ‘unlawful’ onshore arrivals (Leach & Mansouri 2004, p. 4).

According to Fraser, discourses are rooted in relations of domination; thus the public space becomes a key ground in the creation of hegemony (dominant perspectives) often constructed as common sense knowledge. Furthermore, Fraser critiques the modern liberal notions of public space, which assumes that there are no formal barriers to equal participation of citizens. Instead she affirms that equality in participation can only be achieved when social inequalities - those that are governed by public space as it produces particular discourses - are eliminated.

Habermas’ use of public sphere does not sit well with a poststructuralist account. His view is based on the concept of a liberal public originating from the Enlightenment whereby public opinion and consensus is achieved on the basis that there is freedom of speech, free press and the right to contribute to political debate and participation in decision making. These rights in Habermas’ views are warranted by various constitutional orders that mediate between individuals and the state (Kellner 2000, p. 262). In this conception the public sphere is composed by a public that is a community of authors, readers, and writers that embody critical opinion, which is underpinned by communicative rationality (Benhabib 2008). This study, however, is not following Habermas’ particular Enlightenment approach to the public sphere since a poststructuralist perspective does not fit well with Habermas’s notion that the public sphere ‘can be’ a site for deliberative democracy.

Another feature of the public sphere is that it is distinct from the private realm. This distinction is significant since it differentiates the public from the personal, the general
from the singular. Such a distinction is, of course, artificial. Susan Gal says that the principles linked to public and private realms coexist in the everyday life affairs and although it is assumed that these are separate fields in practice, most social systems and relations are not clearly limited to one or another field (Gal 2002, p. 78). This is to suggest, then, that the public sphere is the ground for the making of facts that are independent of the subjects (him/her). It objectivises the local history and context substituting the actual relations and practices of its participants for grand narratives that draw on common sense. In contrast, the realm of the private is associated with inner desires and needs, with localised and common sense knowledge. An example of a grand narrative in the case of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas is the Migration Act with its mandatory detention which requires that asylum seekers who arrive in an unauthorised manner be detained until they are deemed to be refugees and granted a visa or removed from the country. What is obscured within this grand narrative is that these asylum seekers are marginalised and traumatised human beings who are asking for help and recognition.

An important medium for the circulation of discourses in the public sphere is print: news journalism, features and letters to the editor, predominantly. Print media play a central role in the construction and circulation of ideas and images: print media construct social reality. Similarly, it can be said that print media, through the use of expertise, legitimacy and authorisation (Hall 1974, p. 21) establishes particular 'authorised' ways of seeing the world (Bourdieu 1998). Lilie Chouliaraki provides a valuable insight into the role of the media as a mediator between the public and the private, since she says that “the concept that connects the media as discourse and text with the media as institution and technology is the concept of mediation” (Chouliaraki 2006, p. 3). This mediation heavily relies on blurring the distinctions between the personal and the public, between delivering and manufacturing the truth (Chouliaraki 2006, p. 38). In other words, the media has a significant role in articulating the public through the representation of the private (people’s interiorities). Morley (2005, p. 175) asserts that the power of readers/viewers to reinterpret meanings is barely comparable to the discursive power of centralised media institutions to create the texts. However, the media discourse claims to represent the values of mass media audiences, thus it is persistently preoccupied with people’s interiorities. For example, some media discourses resemble a conversational speech of mutually present people to which it claims to belong (Thwaites, Davis & Mules 1994, p. 142). In this section, I have highlighted the
relationship between the media discourse and the public sphere. The ways in which discourses are mediated through particular news routines and the production of knowledge will be further elaborated later in this chapter.

1.4 Theorising Discourse

The approach to language and discourse is best undertaken for this study from a post-structuralist perspective which critiques and looks for the instabilities in the production of meaning and — particularly — mediated common sense. From the realm of philosophy and literary studies usually concerned with the interpretation of texts, and with revealing the meaning behind the texts, Derrida’s work on intertextuality, deconstruction, difference and instability of meaning has been tied with the post-structuralist venture. His work questions the structuralist project by focussing on the text as the centre of the play of language (the figures of language in abstraction) while structuralism proposes a centre outside language. Hence Derrida destabilises the rationality of a truth behind the text, proclaiming instead the instability of meaning (Derrida 1992, p. 149-165). In contrast, Foucault situates language in the context of its use by emphasising the idea of the regulatory processes (discursive formation) influencing discourse that define and produce objects of knowledge thus governing how topics are discussed and which topics are considered reasonable while excluding others as irrational (Barker and Galasinski 2001, pp. 9-12). In Society Must Be Defended Foucault affirms that discourse is a strategic field in the sense of being a tool of power and control that masks the subjugation of certain knowledges; these knowledges also contain traces of confrontation between the erudite and superior knowledge and the disqualified or insufficiently elaborated and thus inferior knowledges (Foucault 2003, pp. xvi-xix). Thus, Foucault’s approach will guide the scrutiny of the printed media discourses focusing on the regulatory processes that subjugate asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as objects of knowledge, as well as the identification of the sites of confrontation within these discourses that constitute asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as objects of knowledge. Derrida’s deconstructive approach to texts will assist to destabilise the meaning and truth in the printed media discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to develop an understanding of the representation of these people.
Cognitive approaches to discourse differ from the post-structuralist approach previously described since their emphasis is on the cognitive structures that mediate social and discursive practices. These approaches are also concerned with the understanding of power relations though in a differing way to Foucault, as for instance Van Dijk’s cognitive approach sees power as an oppressive force imposed on passive subjects (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002, p. 91). Thereby, Cognitive approaches to discourse analysis call attention to the subjective dimensions of the communicative process that mediate between the objective and social dimensions of text and talk. Within this perspective Van Dijk highlights the use of language through taken-for-granted mental models, norms, attitudes, values, and ideologies (Wodak and Meyer 2009, p. 14).

Ideology is solidly manifested in discourse as ideas penetrate social life when they find forms of expression (can be communicated). Van Dijk puts it best:

The social character of the speech acts is then manifested in the fact that we may want to change the knowledge, the desires and eventually the behaviour of our addressee” (Van Dijk 1978, p. 82-83).

From a social position, discourse is thus language reflecting and shaping social order and individuals’ interactions with society (Jaworski & Coupland 2006, p. 3). Norris and Jones (2005) draw attention to the role of language and discourse as social action, an understanding that is inscribed within theories of social constructivism where language is irrefutably part of social life.

...language not as an abstract code but as a set of tools through which people realize particular social functions, and of discourse not as a matter of words, sentences or texts, but as a matter of social action (Norris and Jones 2005, p. 6).

This approach to discourse has its predecessors, of course. For example, Mikhail Bakhtin’s writings prior to post-structuralism, similarly provide a perspective that suggests language may be situated constructively. He considers discourse as an action, suggesting that when we use language we do not just send and receive messages; rather any utterance is part of a complex chain of communication, whereby “[l]anguage enters life through concrete utterances [which manifest language] and life enters language through concrete utterances as well” (Morson 1986, pp. 61-64).
Important in this study is to understand that discourse, then, is not merely a linguistic concept constructing ideas through words, sentences and narratives without the sociality that surrounds discursivity itself. Foucault approaches discourse not as a linguistic concept; instead he concentrates his analysis within the political and material functioning of discourse, and asserts that *power* is inscribed within discourse (Hook 2007, p. 102). Consequently, Foucault’s analysis of discourse increasingly begins to interrelate with the analysis of the non-discursive, that is, of practice. He developed three categories to examine discourse being: (1) categories that relate discourses, (2) categories that classify discourses and (3) categories that guarantee infinite continuity of discourses:

Las prácticas discursivas no son pura y simplemente modos de fabricación de discursos. Ellas toman cuerpo en el conjunto de las técnicas, de las instituciones, de los esquemas de comportamiento, de los tipos de trasmisión y de difusión, en las formas pedagógicas que, a la vez, las imponen y las mantienen.

[Discursive practices are not simply pure ways of fabricating discourses. These take shape in the totality of the techniques, the institutional and behavioural practices, the types of pedagogical forms of diffusion and transmission, which, at the same time, keep and impose them. (Castro 2004, p. 94, my translation).]

For Foucault discursive practices work as restrictive and constructive processes involving both exclusions and options: discourse takes shape and exists within this shared constitution. Discourse should therefore be approached not as a language or textuality, but "as an active ‘occurring’, as something that implements power and action, and that also is power and action” (Hook 2007, p. 120). Hence, discourses tend to bring forth knowledge that follows convention in a mutually reinforced trail of signifying practices that construct reality. Thus, discourses are relational systems of meaning and practice constitutive of subjects’ and objects’ identities (Howarth, Norval & Stavrakakis 2000, p. 6). Foucault’s approach to discursive structure and order in the Western paradigm is comprehensive, and his work of recuperation of subjugated knowledge to uncover the connections between knowledge and power is applauded. He is criticised for remaining culturally narrow-minded in relation to non-European societies (Gandhi 1998, p. 73). Notwithstanding this criticism, some assert that Foucault’s perspective
allowed Said (1991), for example, to examine a variety of Western texts revealing that what united these texts is the kind of knowledge produced and relations of power concerning its object of study, namely the Orient (Childs and Williams 1997, p. 99). Foucault’s approach is relevant to this study for his significant contributions to discourse analysis including his consideration of time and place and his solid focus on the subject’s resistance. Foucault’s theorisation of discourse as deployed in this study permits the examination of the printed media discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the interviews with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas from a perspective which allows identification on one side, of the type of knowledge, power relations, and truth formation that might assist in retrieving the embodied experiences of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas which constitute them as subjects of knowledge. On the other hand, it also fosters the identification of the type of knowledge, power relations, and truth formations that establish asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as objects of knowledge.

In line with the outlined features of discourse, a critical stance towards language use requires not only an eclectic approach. It also needs an examination of its form and organization, scrutinising the linkages within texts and texts types moving beyond its contents, ascertaining how texts work within socio cultural practice (Fairclough 1995, pp. 4-7). Thus, Fairclough and Foucault provide a solid critical platform to approach the discursive representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, in that these two authors are preoccupied with how language use - discourse and discursive practices - contributes to the subjectification of people. Similarly, their approach to language and discourse facilitates the examination of how certain discourses disguise the workings of power to create consent, ascertaining truth in constituting social identities and relations.

Specific discourses of race and ethnicity are substantially important in this study, since such discourses govern the configuration of race, ethnicity and refugee status that make up the devalued subject position of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Discourses about race and ethnicity are relevant to the focus on representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas because the dominant representations have strong race and ethnic dimensions. One of the key concepts to understanding how and why race and ethnicity influence the discursive positioning of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the Australian public sphere is *ethnicity* which “refers to an identifiable social category or membership of an ethnic group and constitutes a social construction sustained by a process of self ascription and/or ascription by others,
especially the dominant groups in society” (Jayasuriya 1997, pp. 4-5). It is through discourses that ‘common sense’ views about ethnicity can be articulated. By looking at discourses in the public domain questions emerge about who is authorised to speak and on behalf of whom.

At the same time, it is through discourses that the specific ways in which issues and words are interrelated and particular judgements are made regarding ethnicity, race and nation. These discourses are supported by a social field or particular relational webs (investigative journalists’ models, commercially inspired media production, little space for the voices of the dominated) of discursive production (Bourdieu 2001, pp. 38-39). In Australia for example, the stance towards ‘outsiders’ is closely linked to the construction of ‘insiders’, and has a historical origin emerging from the first encounter with Aboriginal people, an encounter characterised as invasive and by dispossession by the British colonisers, who labelled the land terra nullius—a land of no people (Atkinson 2002, p. 25). Lopez in his investigation about the origins of multiculturalism in Australia highlights the fact that, during the assimilation era potential migrants were classified in accordance to their racial and cultural similarity with British Australians (Lopez 2000, p. 43). David Hollinsworth for example asserts that Australian multiculturalism while recognizing cultural diversity, affirms the primacy of an Anglo-Celtic Australian heritage at the core of the nation’s identity (as cited in Leach and Mansouri 2004, p. 113). In the same way Hage asserts that the ‘racist’ labelling of otherness takes place within a routine of controlling the social environment in pursuit of a homely space (Hage 1998, p. 76). Similarly, postcolonial scholars argue that concepts such as nation and nationalism are constructed to serve particular interests:

This myth of nationhood, masked by ideology, perpetuates nationalism, in which specific identities are employed to create exclusive and homogeneous conceptions of national traditions. Such signifiers of homogeneity always fail to represent the diversity of the actual ‘national’ community for which they purport to speak, and in practice usually represent and consolidate the interest of the dominant power groups within any national formation (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1998, p. 150).

This citation draws attention to the fact that the role of discourse in constructing nationhood and citizenship establishes the vocabulary that activates a ‘national
community’, often based on signifiers of homogeneity. Such discourse implies a simultaneous method of inclusion and exclusion as well as disciplinary and resistant speech (Lister 2003, pp. 4-5). An example of dominant discourses of nationhood is immigration control, which in Australia for instance has a history embedded in exclusionary practices since the passing of the first federal immigration law in 1901. Jupp for instance, describes Australia as the ‘product of conscious social engineering to create a particular kind of society’ (Jupp 2002, p. 5). During the Howard government this acquired a more radical nature in developing stronger means to restrain asylum seekers from claiming refugee status (Singer 2004, p. 64), thus leading to measures that literally drew a line between citizens (Us) and asylum seekers (Them), establishing hierarchies and tensions between human rights and citizen’s rights. From this perspective, notions of the nation, citizenship and the self are shaped and constructed through language materialised in discourses that tend to build an epistemology of sameness, within these discursive spaces people who are forcibly displaced travel through territories often marked by values that disallow difference, putting in motion an ethics of rejection.

1.5 Theorising Subjectivity

This study aims to uncover the power dynamics at play through the types of voices that are most prevalent about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivities in the public domain, and the voices that are silenced or displaced. I examine the mechanisms of discursive power and the ways in which media discourse legitimises certain voices and displaces others. One of the main functions of discourse is to construct and disseminate subject positions for appropriation and/or resistance; as such it is important to define how the concept of subjectivity will be used for the purpose of the study.

Foucault with his perspective on disciplinary power provides an important insight into the mechanisms that displace or delegitimize certain subject positions. He observes that disciplinary normalisation goes from the norm to the final distinction between the normal and the abnormal (which requires disciplinary techniques to be rendered normal) (Foucault 1977-78, p. 57). In his view this normative process then individualises a collective phenomenon making it ‘a case’, so that we have a hierarchical gaze that makes possible qualification, classification and punishing. Said in Orientalism studied...
how the positioning of superiority of Europe puts Western society in a hegemonic place that generates a body of theory and practice, a system of knowledge about the Orient (Said 1978, pp. 1-28).

In colonial discourse, the subjectivity of the colonized is continually located in the gaze of the imperial Other, the ‘grande-autre’. Subjects may be interpellated by the ideology of the maternal and nurturing function of the colonising power, concurring with descriptions such as ‘mother England’ and ‘home’. On the other hand, the symbolic other may be represented in the father. The significance and enforced dominance of the imperial language into which colonial subjects are inducted may give them a clear sense of power being located in the colonizer, a situation corresponding metaphorically to the subject’s entrance into the symbolic order and the discovery of the law of the father (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 1998, pp. 170-171).

The importance of the concept of Other/other within post-structuralism is that it describes the ways in which colonial discourse constructs its subjects. Said builds his argument on the construction of the Orient by the West as invested in positioning the Orient and other colonised countries as a denigrated and negative Other, resulting in certain people being denied a human status while distancing them from the status of the narrator as representative of the colonising power (Mills 1997, pp. 114-116). Similarly, poststructuralist writer Judith Butler contributes to the above perspective in her examination of the processes of language that govern the regulation and constitution of subjects as she reveals that oppressive language attains its own violence that materialises in a speech act that, however, is vulnerable to failure. She states that the address that comprises a being is contained in trails of recognition, consequently its outside constitutes abjection (Butler 1997, p. 5-8). This concept of the Other is very relevant in this study as TPV asylum seekers’ subjectivity within dominant discursive practices in Australia can be located in the realm of alterity. In other words we tend to hear and see stories of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as told by the dominant media and voices (the press, the authorities) that develop particular language and meanings to reduce asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to an essentially different human being separating him/her from the rest of the Australian nation (‘the significant Other’).

Although useful in developing an understanding of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as the Other, this stance has its limitations in as much as these
perspectives are inscribed within a Eurocentric paradigm and tend to position non-European people as objects of study. Thus, the racial Other has a colonial origin and character and a specific rationality, that is, Eurocentrism (Quijano 2000, p. 533). Quijano uses this term to explain how since the 17th century, the Western European modern rationality discharged the idea of the body as part of a person or human thus emphasising that spirit and reason constituted the subject. The separation between body and soul, although having a Christian origin, was philosophically articulated by Descartes. Within this conception, the body had a lower status and became an object of study while the spirit or reason became the significant components of the (cogito) subject. In this way, a European worldview and epistemology lies on the assumption that the individual mind is the basis of knowledge and existence (Ladson-Billings in Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p. 398). This way of articulating the relationship between body and spirit/reason also influenced the relationship between European and non-European, so that all non-Europeans became disembodied, belonging to the past and considered inferior since they became objects of study, domination and exploitation. Thus, Quijano argues that this is the colonial origin of a Eurocentric hegemonic and ongoing perspective.

In the case of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas the politics of identity and otherness characterised by marginalisation and criminalisation used by the Australian government and the mass media has served to establish distance, mistrust and fear between asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and Australian citizens (Mares 2001).

Postcolonial and Feminist studies also contribute to understanding conceptions of otherness as Postcolonial and Feminist postures endeavour to subvert prevailing positions in regards to gender, culture, race and subjects emphasising the importance of embodied and situated knowledge in geopolitical and conceptual ways. For example Said stated the following: “My argument is that each humanistic investigation must formulate the nature of that connection (relationship between knowledge and politics) in the specific context of the study, the subject matter, and its historical circumstances” (Said 1978, p. 15). Likewise, poststructuralist writer Lyotard argues that in order to maintain heterogeneity of thought we must reject unanimity and seek thorough dissenting (Lyotard cited in Gandhi 1998, p. 28).
On the other hand, the significance of theorising subjectivity from a poststructuralist perspective is that this perspective allows a situated knowledge from the subjugated. This knowledge is vital in revealing the role of covert unequal power dynamics, therefore demanding a shift in the conceptualisation of the subordinated humans who strive to achieve a new presence.

When the other speaks, it is with the tongue of a nation, the intonation of a class, the rhetoric of a social position, the idiom of a subculture, the vocabulary of an age group (Lingis 1994, pp. 24-25).

Venn (1999) invites us to think about who has the power and authority to be the narrator, and who tells the stories of identity. What is more he also asks us to think about what are the specific effects of these narratives in the subjects’ lives, which is an important dimension of the proposed study. People can also be subjects capable of exercising power (Lister 2003, p. 41). This contested stance reflects instability of the system of subordination and of the subordinated subjects. Clarke argues that the subordinated live their subordination in ways that are not just passive (Clarke 2004, p. 2).

Within a poststructuralist theoretical perspective, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are therefore a constructed and contested subjectivity. In terms of media and political discourse asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are subordinated subjects. Their subordination originates in part from the Eurocentric and hegemonic stance that Australia takes in its conception of nation and citizenship (also constructed identities) (Jupp 2002, p. 6).

Analysing asylum seekers (by and for) in the printed mass media will bring about not only a reflection on the dominant understanding of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivity, but will help to identify instances of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ contestation in and through media discourse. This analysis will also create the opportunities for an undoing of this dominance (denunciation) and the rearticulation of our understandings and meanings regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (enunciation).
1.6 Theorising Media Discourse

There are several approaches to mass media analysis. In this section I shall outline some of the most relevant to this study. The features, news and letters to the editor analyses will inspect the narratives, words, views and the positioning of asylum seekers by the writers of the articles, news and letters within the Australian public sphere. Similarly, the analyses will help to understand the positioning of Australian citizens regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The analyses of features and news will illustrate the discursive strategies and narratives from official sources that legitimate - their interest regarding asylum seekers, whilst letters to the editor will constitute the means of examining the worldviews of members of the Australian community regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The intention of this analysis is to explicate the making of these narratives as discourses of ‘truth’. Media discourses are important within the available framework for discussing refugees and asylum seekers on in view of the fact that meanings are articulated through discourses and in social institutions, one of which is the mass media as highlighted by the citation below:

Through the media-created spaces we inhabit we shape our conceptions of reality and spin out like spiders the collective ‘common sense’ which underpins social life, the basic tissue of our prevailing sense of community (Devereux 2003, p. XII).

Some media theorists maintain that media texts provide information and knowledge about the social world, about power relationships, and about constructing political and cultural differences (Devereux 2003, p. 8). It is also argued that the mass media obscures distinctions between readers and writers or creators and audiences, in as much as it mobilises prejudices and interpretations that are part of historical and contextual processes reflective of attitudes and beliefs that form the contents of discourses and meanings about self-identity from an individual perspective and that of nationhood from a societal perspective. This is clearly stated by Fairclough who says that news narratives interconnect with various and multifaceted voices to become representative (Fairclough 1995, p. 77). Likewise Bourdieu argues that:

The farther a paper extends its circulation, the more it favours such topics that interest “everybody” and don’t raise problems. The object – news- is constructed in accordance with the perceptual categories of the receiver (Bourdieu 1998, p. 44).
Bourdieu states that it is the structure of the journalistic field (as a specific system of social positions structured by relations of power) that controls its orientation and effects on other fields (Bourdieu: 1998, p. 73). From a Marxist perspective, the media is seen as having the control of large-scale production and diffusion of information. The media is then conceived as ‘a culture industry’, as an agent of socialisation and transmission of ideologies of domination. Following a Marxist approach to institutions that contributes to post-structuralist theorisation, Althusser considers mass media as an ‘Ideological State Apparatus’ that is used to manage the consent of individuals to accept (capitalist) ideology as representative of the whole of society (Althusser 1971). However, this approach is criticised for not considering linguistic dimensions in its analysis.

Baudrillard conceives the role of the mass media in the postmodern world in a more challenging way as he considers it as an autonomous and powerful social force, constituting a new dominion of experience in as much as it is a simulation machine that through the reproduction of images creates its own reality eliminating the social and becoming a hyper reality, more real than the real. In his words:

...Information devours its own contents; it devours communication and the social...information dissolves meaning and the social into a sort of nebulous state leading not at all to a surfeit of innovation but to the very contrary, the total entropy (cited in Kellner 1988).

In earlier academic thinking, media communication used to be regarded as a mere process of transmission (linear approach) that did not consider language in problematic terms, as it was mainly seen as a vehicle for passing information (see Shannon and Weaver 1949; Colombo 2004). Links between mass media and representation started to emerge after the 1960s, when sociological and language studies began making connections between production, distribution and reproduction of knowledge (Colombo 2004).

The mass media is important as it influences the emergence of specific rhetoric, ways of thinking and talking about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and refugees. It also provides the means for ‘writing out’ like in the use of the term ‘illegal refugee’ or ‘queue jumper’, words that illustrate the absence of control by the people concerned. Therefore, they are spoken of more than they speak (Champagne 1999, p. 51). In this way the media becomes a tool in the preservation of Eurocentric hegemonic discourses about the Other.
This study will follow Fairclough’s perspective of the mass media, particularly how it mediates between the public and the private. This mediation occurs through a series of what he calls communicative events: news is produced in the public domain and consumed in private spaces such as homes, within the family for instance. One such communicative event is the type of language that is used like informal and conversational that resembles the colloquial tone of private conversations. The media also uses technology like photography and printing (in the case of printed mass media communication). These communicative events try to close the spatial and temporal lapse between the time and place of production and the time and place of reading and viewing (consumption) (Fairclough 1995).

For policy makers and legislators the verbalising of asylum seekers as ‘illegal’ in the media helps to create a cultural system that allows the application of punishment in the form of incarceration or so called mandatory detention. It also served to establish in October 1999 the new visa category 785- TPV (Temporary Protection Visa Category) amidst the “sudden increase of unauthorised boat arrivals”, thus setting up the emergence of a new category of refugees who occupied a marginal position which excluded them from citizenship and other rights within the Australian nation. For refugee advocates the reference of asylum seekers as “illegal” offers an opportunity towards a reformulation of the more material aspects of culture, focussing on issues of justice, otherness and equality. For asylum seekers the term “illegal” situates them in a hostile and marginal space. However, it also puts asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in a position to intrude, disrupt and question the existing meanings and practices about migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and the other in Australia.

1.7 Knitting the Conceptual Map

This study heavily relies on Foucault’s work in the areas of subjectivity, power, knowledge and discursive practices, which is the milieu of the conceptual framework of this study. In this section, I examine the analytical and epistemological intersection of Critical Discourse Analysis and Foucauldian Governmentality as I believe that CDA and governmentality intersect in various ways.

CDA is valuable as a problem-oriented approach not totally centred in linguistic elements as it seeks to identify responsibilities and critique of the reproduction of
dominance and inequality to get results of practical importance. Governmentality draws attention to how emerging mentalities, in particular temporal and spatial contexts, rule in the broad sense; that is, how the ‘conduct of conduct’ (Foucault, cited McKee 2009, p. 468) is made practical and technical, and how the subject is discursively created. Governmentality does this by interrogating the way in which matters are framed and the technologies that are used to control the lived experience of subjection. Nonetheless, it considers this subjection as unstable and embodied with tensions.

I draw on McKee’s reflection about a ‘realist governmentality’ (McKee 2009, pp. 479-480) to demonstrate the intersections between CDA and governmentality approaches. McKee asserts that ‘realist governmentality’ should include the examination of the relationship between discourse and its factual effects. Likewise, Fairclough’s methodological approach to Critical Discourse Analysis emphasises the relationship between the social event and the text integrating the analysis of discursive practices with an empirical focus. McKee also affirms that a ‘realist governmentality’ pays attention to subjects’ counter-actions that resist mentalities of rule. Similarly, Critical Discourse Analysis emphasises the perspectives of those afflicted by injustices. The third point of McKee’s ‘realist governmentality’ is based on the fact that this is observant of temporal and spatial circumstances, consequently it studies the specific contexts in which governmental rationalities and techniques are shaped and resisted. Equally, CDA as developed by Fairclough includes in his three dimensional framework the socio-cultural analysis of the discourse event (Fairclough 1995).

This study’s approach follows Foucault’s perspective on the practices of subjectivity, which investigates the ways in which the subject is made the object of knowledge and power to him/herself and others. Power inscribed in the particular works of governing underlies these relationships. Government for Foucault has two important features, namely, governing relationships between subjects and governing the individual’s needs, desires and wants. The first feature refers to the range of behaviours over possible behaviours, an open field of possible subjects’ behaviours that could be incited, facilitated, coerced, and made more or less probable. Consequently, government in this first sense consists in governing behaviours on a large scale, while in the second sense refers to the ways of governing our own desires and wants.

The concept of governmentality refers to the study of the ways of governing the population via practices: procedures, techniques, thoughts and ideologies exercised in
the economic and political spheres by institutions heavily dependent on mechanisms of security. Thus, this way of governing has its origin in Occidental forces that made this way of government more prevalent by the exercise of coercion and discipline that at the same time allowed the emergence of new ways of knowing. The study of governmentality from this perspective entails the study of the rationality, the technical procedures and practices through which individuals are governed. Governmentality is relevant to this study given that it provides an analytical perspective to the understanding of the specific procedures, and discursive tactics that allow the exercise of power and the emerging of particular asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivities that mobilise an apparatus of security like border control and mandatory detention. Governmentality also facilitates the identification of the ‘line of force’ that ties particular types of knowledge of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas that justify the development of specific sorts of disciplinary measures to govern them and to exercise sovereignty (Foucault 1977-1978, p. 108).

Here we find the power techniques that mobilise individuals’ own governing of desires, wants and needs. It is precisely within the realm of relations of knowledge and modes of thought by which individuals are governed and individual needs, desires and wants that the opportunity for resistance emerges.

The textual analysis of media articles in The Australian represents a *macro or higher order of governmentality* with large numbers of readers, which alluding to rational (objective) professional conventions and institutional stances (disguised in colloquial informal tones) generates knowledge-to-power and power-to-knowledge relations (Hook 2007, p. 77). In brief, at this higher order of governmentality, specific truth and knowledge about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas emerges. In assigning authority to certain narratives about them the articles influence the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as well as of Australian citizens.

Within the disciplinary area of communication studies, media literature regards letters to the editor (LTE) as a forum for public debate as well as providing a sense of balance for newspapers, thus fulfilling the expectation of printing a diversity of perspectives of a debate. This *mid-lower order of governmentality* (referring to lower degrees of mediation in the production of discourses) introduces new elements, namely, perspectives that negotiate knowledge and truth about asylum seekers on temporary
protection visas developed by newspaper articles appearing to give testimony to the diversity of people’s world views.

The face-to-face interviews with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as a lower order of governmentality represent ‘a noise to discourse’ that retains a capacity for truth (Hook 2007, p. 103). Regardless of the mediation (for instance, interviews conducted in the English language) the people interviewed have been directly affected by the discourses, policies and practices (structures of dominance, power and control) that identify them as ‘temporary protection visa holders’. However, the interviewees also play a significant role in the functioning of the power that acts upon them (Hook 2007, p. 79). Thus, the interviews provide an insight into how asylum seekers negotiate difference and open new discursive spaces.

1.8 The Issue of Cultural Justice

This study will not only attempt to understand the rationality, the technical procedures and the discursive practices through which asylum seekers on temporary protection visas were/are governed. I also want to bring attention to how asylum seekers on temporary protection visas resist and speak back, and elaborate subaltern discourses. This is important not only in exposing fallacies within the official stances in regards to this issue, but also to reveal structural sources of injustice. The issue of cultural justice emerges as a key dimension of this conceptual framework, relying particularly on Nancy Fraser’s work in this area which has involved: developing an expanded theory of justice, capable of integrating the problematic of recognition with that of distribution, and more recently with that of representation (Fraser, Gomez-Muller and Rochill 2009).

Fraser’s interest in culture as a theory of (in)justice features culture as a medium of injustice given that she partly conceives culture as regulating social interaction via hierarchically institutionalised patterns of values, which hinder equal participation. Unequal participation thus establishes the conditions for injustice and misrecognition. To be misrecognised is to be denied the position of a peer or that of a full partner in social life, due to the institutionalised hierarchies of cultural values. Consequently, for Fraser, the critical task of cultural analysis is to understand how institutionalised significations and norms are at the root of differential capacities for social participation.
Fraser is located among those who problematize capitalist culture of consumerism and sexual repression (Olson 2008, p. 1), who prioritise distributive injustices and class inequality. Fraser’s views differ from Nozick who advocates for a libertarian society, where the role of the state ought to be very limited. In his view the state must respect individual self-ownership with rights including the fruits of their labour; Nozick considers that distributive justice is not neutral, as it implies a central distributor of resources entitled to control resources. On the other hand, Rawls (Rawls 1971) develops a political conception of justice that identifies principles leading to sound judgements in particular cases, thus establishing the specific moral principles that govern the structure of a just society. Rawls asserts there are two principles of justice: the guarantee of fundamental individual liberties and the arrangement of social and economic inequalities to provide the greatest benefit to the worst-off in society whilst preserving equality of opportunity. The postures of Rawls and Nozick are illustrative of the divisions in the understanding of social justice that remain separated between the redistribution and recognition approaches to justice. Fraser’s framework incorporates the insights from both orientations and combines the politics of redistribution with a politics of recognition (Olson 2008, p. 4).

This study is also guided by Fraser’s perspective in regard to justice. It does so not just to affirm the specific group-identities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, but by seeking new ways of responding to their presence in mutual recognition articulated in private and public life. Fraser’s three-dimensional theory of justice includes considering the lack of resources for full economic participation with others as peers by economic structures (distributive injustice), cultural devaluation by institutionalised hierarchies (status of inequality or misrecognition) and the realm of the political. Although embedded in the previous dimensions, Fraser’s theory is distinct by providing the platform on which struggles over distribution and recognition are performed and thereby dictates who is entitled to make claims of justice. It also structures public processes of contestation (Fraser 2008, p. 279). My study focuses on the misrecognition, political and ethical aspects of (in)justice in regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas since there are other studies that have examined economic/distributive injustice in regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (Marston 2003; Refugee Council of Australia 2003; Australian Human Rights Commission, Johnston, Allotey, Mulholland & Markovic 2009; Hinsliff 2007; Burvill, Callaghan, Martin, Lazaroo, & Coleman 2004).
1.9 Justice in the Context of the Ethics of Hospitality and Liveable Lives

The presence of asylum seekers arriving by boat on Australian shores generates a demand for an ethical recognition and a response to their unwilled presence, and solicitation for ethical recognition. There are official as well as individual and communitarian responses. The official encounter often is framed by the language of what “will or will not constitute recognisability” (Butler 2001, pp. 23-24). It follows then that the communitarian and/or individual responses will also be framed by the language of what will or will not constitute recognisability. This will be further elaborated later in this section. In order to advance the consideration of justice invoked by the presence of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, this study follows Butler and Derrida’s conception of ethics, to be more precise the ethics of welcoming, hospitality, cohabitation and liveable lives derived from their readings of Emmanuel Levinas as well as Butler’s readings of Arendt. Derrida postulates that “heteronomy of a law comes from the other, a responsibility and decision from the other - of the other in me”. (Derrida in Derrida, Brault and Naas 2004, p. 329) For Derrida, the presence of the Other, the foreigner, generates questions: the question of the foreigner, the question of response and responsibility, and the question of law. He asserts the necessity to separate sovereignty from unconditional law and justice. Derrida affirms that the arrival of the Other, the foreigner as he says, “someone who doesn’t speak like the rest” (Derrida 2000, p. 5), has to be welcomed by the law of unconditional hospitality which constitutes a difficulty as this unconditional law of hospitality requires ‘the laws’ to materialise, even with ‘the laws’ refusing or corrupting the unconditional law of hospitality. Derrida proposes that these two laws, though antagonistic, require each other. Thus, the foreigner also brings with his/her presence a question from abroad: a question of language and the values and meanings that occupy this language (Derrida 2000, p. 133). In turn, this means that Derrida sees the unconditional laws of hospitality as the extension of democracy beyond nation-state structures, outside sovereignty and citizenship. In brief, Derrida proposes that justice is inseparable from the mystery of the Other (Derrida in Derrida, Brault & Naas 2004, p. 333). In the succeeding interview chapters this proposal, together with Judith Butler’s conception of justice, ethics and cohabitation constitutes precisely the framework, the analytical lens that guides the analysis of the interviews with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

Butler places relationality at the centre of ethics, in the sense that she considers that though recognition takes place under certain conditions and norms of recognisability,
she also affirms that there is a remainder of life. Something outside this normative frame which seeks to contain, to assign recognition of lives differentially and so limiting our sense of reality. When we are in proximity to the Other, she says, the distinctiveness of the Other is bared to me, as my uniqueness is also exposed to him/her. We are bounded in our singularity, namely what differentiates us (Butler 2001, p. 25). Accordingly, Butler states that recognition must be based on the comprehension of our precariousness, our shared dependency and exposure to others, and in the recognition of the importance of preserving life (Butler 2009, pp. 13-14). This is the realm where our responsibility towards the Other emerges, and she proposes that this responsibility towards the Other is driven by the Other - that this responsibility originates outside the subject. In other words, we ought to be ethically responsible to care about and support enabling conditions of life and liveability whether we know or do not know the Other, as the presence of the Other in fact interrupts established notions of the ‘we’ (Butler 2009, pp. 22-23).

Butler’s conception of ethics derives from relationality as she affirms that to be responsible to the suffering of others we need to be in a relationship with others and in order to be appealed to we need to be willing to listen. This means that the subject is constituted by a network of relations which are the result of power differences, as these relationships are marked by exclusions as well as by connections and proximity (Butler in Murray 2007, pp. 418-419).

Butler’s conception of cohabitation emerging from her readings of Arendt is linked to a critique of the manner in which the nation-state continually produces the problem of statelessness, or mass refugees (Butler 2012, p. 121) hence this conception of cohabitation is rejecting communitarian ethics, in the sense of only responding to the suffering of those who belong to the same community, as this would lead to the differentiation, of those who are lovable and those who are not.

Cohabitation emerges as an unchosen condition which is the result of exile, an exilic state. This means that no one has the right to choose with whom to cohabitate, and this is the condition of our social existence as we are all inhabitants of the earth alongside other non-human living beings. Any attempt to choose with whom to cohabitate would constitute genocide. It is in this concept of cohabitation that Butler positions the idea of precarious life: “being a body at the mercy of another body can produce a great source
of pleasure and/or a terrifying fear of death” (Butler 2012, p. 177). The analysis of the interviews with asylum seekers will be entwined in this philosophical approach.

I have discussed the theoretical domain of this study by examining discourse in general, discourse in the media and subjectivity from a post-structuralist perspective. I have also considered concepts related to race, ethnicity and nation and their relevance to the dominant representation and devalued position of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas within the Australian public sphere. I have made the case for the intersection of Critical Discourse Analysis (as developed by Fairclough) and Governmentality (as developed by Foucault) as theoretical and methodological tools. I have also presented the argument of cultural justice as conceived by Fraser, and the ethics of welcome, hospitality and liveable lives as conceived by Butler and Derrida. These theoretical and methodological tools are used to examine the discursive (mis)representation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the Australian printed mass media, and the ongoing effects of cultural injustice on individual asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

CDA underpinned by governmentality will assist in exposing the power dynamics and the mechanics at work in the elaboration of the most prevalent articulations of asylum seekers’ subjectivities in the public domain. This will be done by examining the printed media discourses about asylum seekers and will also explore how asylum seekers negotiate and contest these subjectivities. The examination of the effects of cultural injustice on individual asylum seekers on temporary protection visas by face-to-face interviews will illuminate the complex nature of power, and suggest new ways of responding to their presence in mutual recognition articulated in private and public life.

2 Research Design and Methodology

In the following subsection I shall focus on the research design and methodology underpinning this study. I previously described the theoretical domain of the study, inscribing it in the theoretical and methodological field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with a post-structuralist orientation. Consequently, several vital concepts have underpinned the research design and this section outlines the operationalisation of these concepts. The topic concerning this study is the cultural and political territory that asylum seekers, arriving in an unauthorised manner navigated during the year 2001,
some of whom were later granted temporary protection visas. This study’s focus is on
the discursive practices, the discursive borders that constituted the asylum seekers on
temporary protection visas as outsiders, as well as the discourses that marked the
subjects constituting the insiders of Australia. The importance of utilising a discourse
analysis approach and in particular a CDA methodology within a poststructuralist
perspective, is that this perspective allows a critical stance toward grand narratives such
as, ‘illegal entrants’, ‘genuine refugees’, ‘flows of illegal immigrants’ that ascertained
objective or said to be true knowledge about these asylum seekers’ experiences, thus,
categorising, objectifying and establishing a regime of truth about the nature and the
causes of their refugee experiences. In addition, CDA takes the view that discourses not
only represent the world, that discourses constitute it (Chouliaraki 1999, p. 122), what is
more, the realm that interest CDA is the subjugation of difference via imposed
discourses that assert to be universal.

The first section presents an overview of the specific conceptual elements used in the
research design whilst the second section outlines how the corpus was generated and the
rationale for using specific data sources. Addressing issues of validity and ethical
considerations, this section also outlines my position as a researcher, concluding with
some further reflections about the strengths and limitations of the methodology.

2.1 Overview of the Conceptual Elements in this Research Design

This section summarises the centrality of discourse in this study, a focus on language in
use, that is, frames of references, and power relationships that for instance were
inscribed in the ‘management’ of asylum seekers whom arrived in an ‘unauthorised’
manner. Since this study explores the narratives, the discursive printed media
preoccupation with regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, and the
subject positions that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas occupied as
‘objects’ of knowledge in feature articles and LTE. And also examines their stance as
‘subjects’ of knowledge through their narratives from the interview process.

This study uses a post-structuralist orientation to discourse and representation. As
previously mentioned positivist and structuralist approaches are not adequate to explain
the differential subject positions and individual interpretations of subject’s own
experiences. What is more, structuralist approaches are not sensitive to difference,
differences in experiences, histories, in body shapes, in gender, in countries of origin, in languages, in cultural practices. In contrast to positivist views, Fairclough sees language and discourse as part of social life and as an interactive explicit-implicit process of meaning-making (Fairclough 2003, pp. 3-6) that he describes as a system of knowledge. Fairclough is interested in the analysis of how discourses work within socio-cultural practice (Fairclough 1995, pp. 4-6).

Thereby, Fairclough conceives discourse as a form of social practice, (Fairclough 1995, p. 7) as a specific way of partly representing the physical, social and psychological world (Fairclough 2003, p. 17) expressed in utterances, statements, narratives that constitute texts. Similarly, Hall states that discourses construct knowledge, as he conceives discourse as a configuration of ideas, images and practices that bestow forms of talk and knowledge which are tied to power and that contribute to the shaping of subjectivities (Hall 1997, pp. 2-6).

There are several approaches to discourse analysis, within Critical Discourse Analysis for example, the Socio-Cognitive (emphasises the subjective definitions of communicative situations that influence text and talk), the Discursive Historical Approach and the Social Actors Approach (social actors and discursive historical approach emphasise detailed linguistic operations). This dissertation utilises Fairclough’s methodological approach since it focuses upon the relationship between the social event and the text, aiming to identify the role of linguistic expressions in discourses, representations of dominance, difference and resistance. Drawing together with post-structuralist approaches, this form of discourse analysis is thereby concerned with language as one of the most central elements of social relations and the practice of producing and reproducing meanings. As Woods aptly puts it:

> Words mean what they wish them to mean. Bad news is good. Up is down. Black is white. Fiction is fact (Woods 2006, p. 53).

CDA provides the analytical tools to describe in detail the possible motives of the participants in the discourse production as it investigates what participants say in discourse and how they say it (Bhatia 2006, p. 178). Therefore, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough sees ‘language as a social practice’ (Fairclough and Wodak 1977) thus integrating analysis of texts, analysis of text production, consumption and distribution, and socio-cultural analysis of the discourse event (three-dimensional framework including text, discourse practice, and socio-
cultural practice (Fairclough 1995). As a consequence it can be said that “Discourses exercise power in a society because they institutionalise and regulate ways of talking, thinking and acting” (Wodak and Meyer 2009, p. 35). This three dimensional approach is illustrated as follows:

CDA makes visible and critiques the connections between the properties of texts (micro- linguistics options) and social processes, relations between ideologies and power (macro- analysis). In other words, CDA attempts to make explicit ‘the interconnectedness of things’ revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies (Wodak and Meyer as cited by Khosravinik 2009, p. 479).

Given this, one of the functions of CDA is to reveal power relations that are often concealed in such a ways as to generate results that will be of practical use. It is characterised as a problem- oriented approach not centred on specific linguistic items. Nonetheless CDA distinguishes the linguistic means used to maintain or deepen inequalities in society. Hence, its theory and methodology is diverse and equally integrated in order to understand the social issues under investigation (Wodak and Meyer 2009, pp. 31-32). What is more, CDA takes a specific socio-political posture (Van Dijk 1993) by aiming to ensure that through critical understanding; change will be achieved, thereby bringing to attention social injustices through the emphasis of the perspectives of those afflicted by such injustices. The strength of CDA as a
methodological form is found in the fact that it does not stop at describing discursive structures; rather it critiques and identifies where the responsibilities lie for the reproduction of dominance and inequality.

Accordingly, CDA is relevant to reveal the degree of openness and/or closure of discursive practices regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The analytical process that this chapter undertakes aims to understand the constructing of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and how asylum seekers themselves negotiate difference by contesting dominant discourses about them, and by bringing into dialogue their differences (own life world discourses). In other words, this analysis aims to uncover power dynamics at play through the types of voices that are most prevalent and normal about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivities in the public domain, and the voices that are silenced or displaced. Consequently, this study examines the mechanisms of discursive power and the ways in which media discourse legitimises certain voices and displaces others. This will provide the understanding of how discourses about asylum seekers are articulated, assimilated and to what extent they are the product of the inter-textual reworking of other discourses about race, migration, asylum seekers and nationalism. However, the analytical process will not stop at the positioning of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Thus, the exploration of media discourses about asylum seekers and the face-to-face interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas emerge as key elements in this study.

In brief, discourses developed in the public sphere are CDA objects of analysis, making it very relevant to the study of emerging discursive practices about and by asylum seekers. Since asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ contested subjectivities are mainly the product of specific socio-political conditions and particular power structures, associated with the discursive construction of national sameness and the discursive construction of difference.

2.2 Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

In order to shed light on the discursive frameworks that govern the available ways in which asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are discussed, positioned and
critiqued, I have chosen to undertake an analysis of three mediums that are in accordance with the CDA three-dimensional approach.

The corpus of this study is generated by analyses of:

1. News and feature articles in The Australian during the period of June-December 2001. Newspaper articles are important to scrutinise since they circulate discourses in the public domain, specific narratives and ways to know asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, thus shaping and influencing public understanding and opinion about them.

2. Letters to the Editor in The Australian during the period of June-December 2001. The analysis of Letters to the Editor as a less mediated genre compared with news and feature newspaper articles, contributes to the understanding of how ‘ordinary’ people, newspaper readers, may legitimate or de-legitimate certain views, and how narratives about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas circulated in the public arena.

3. Face-to-face interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, comprising an examination of their lived experience to provide an insight into the impact of the unequal power positions that they occupy.

The aim here is to present a multifaceted analysis of the discursive positioning of the interviewees by drawing on discourses which are structured through news and feature genres and conventions: discourses which ‘represent’ ordinary ‘Australians’ writing to the newspapers, and discourses which represent the lived experiences of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Given the intertextual nature of discourse and textuality, these three are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The focus of this analysis is the period of June-December 2001 for a number of reasons. October 1999 marked the establishment of the Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) legislation (Subclass 785). However, in August 2001 that legislation came into significant public focus within the Australian cultural imagination through the Tampa vessel as well as claims that refugees threw their children overboard. The public sphere
discussions about those who are often excluded from the identity “Australian,” whether by citizenship or country-of-origin or immigration status, were exacerbated with the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States of America. Shortly afterwards, on the 19th of October 2001, 353 people including many children drowned on a boat known as Suspect Illegal Entry Vessel X (Siev – X) in the Indian Ocean, a boat that formed part of a sequence of vessels which had on board asylum seekers on their way to Australia. During the second half of 2001 following the Tampa incident, certain parts of the Australian territory were excised from the Migration Act, ostensibly in order to re-orient the process by which asylum seekers and refugees come into the Australian immigration and welfare system - this was named the ‘Pacific Solution’. Most importantly for this study, it is during 2001 that significant numbers of refugees who were granted a temporary protection visa were released from detention centres and began to arrive in various cities throughout Australia, becoming a media focus for the first time.

These events are significant as they represent a ‘moment of crisis’ (Fairclough 1992, p. 226) in the discourse about refugees and immigration, and in the concepts, ideas and notions of Australian identity and Australia as a nation. There is evidence that during this period of time there was a change in the ways of thinking and talking about asylum seekers and refugees, and much of this focused specifically on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Focusing this research on the period that represents a ‘moment of crisis’ is an appropriate data selection strategy as it makes visible practices about refugees and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas that otherwise would be difficult to identify. This moment of crisis opened fields for debate and questioning about what constitutes a citizen, thereby drawing the question of refugees and immigrants into the discourse of nation building. This moment of crisis brings forth ideological perspectives on what constitutes a citizen, what kind of nation Australia views itself to be, and the values on which the country stands. While these debates occur at other non-crisis periods, they less often involve public sphere deliberation and are more likely to be generated through legislative and government policy discourses and the conventions that surround them. In the following section I shall present a more detailed account of the ‘moment of crisis’.
Late 2001 represented a moment of crisis in the Australian engagement and discourse about refugees and asylum seekers, in view of the fact that between July 1999 and June 2000 over 4000 asylum seekers from Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran arrived at Christmas Island or Ashmore Reef. October 1999 marks the establishment of the temporary protection visa legislation (Subclass 785). In the first three weeks of August 2001 six boats arrived carrying more than 1200 asylum seekers (Manne and Corlett 2004).

On the 26th of August 2001 the MV Tampa vessel incident occurred where 433 asylum seekers, mostly from Afghanistan, were rescued from the fishing boat in which they were travelling. However, the Norwegian vessel MV Tampa was refused entry to Christmas Island by the Australian government and forced to remain anchored off the coast.

Between the 7 and 8 of October 2001 SIEV (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel) 4, a boat carrying 223 asylum seekers was intercepted. This boat was stopped by Her Majesty’s Australian Ship (HMAS). In October 10, 2001 photographs were released of this boat in what became known as the ‘children overboard’ incident. The government asserted that asylum seekers on board started to throw their children overboard in an attempt to convince the Australian authorities to rescue them. Later it was found that the photographs did not represent children being thrown overboard; in fact the photographs were of children being rescued from the sinking vessel on 8 October.

On the 19th October 2001 news about the SIEVX (Suspect Illegal Entry Vessel X) sank on board there were 353 asylum seekers; 142 women and 146 children drowned. This was a controversial incident as the Australian government claimed that this boat sank in Indonesian waters while:

A cable from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, sent on 23 October 2001, declassified well after the election, stated, ‘the exact position of the vessel at the time of sinking is unknown, but it is judged as no further south than 8 degrees south latitude on a direct line from Sunda St. to Christmas Is’ (Herd 2006, p. 118).

During 2001 certain parts of the Australian territory were excised from the Migration Act that introduced the Border Protection Bill and the Migration Amendment Bills 1 and 2. A number of other bills included a Bill to allow strip searches of refugees, to increase prison terms for refugees who escape detention and to further restrict access to detention centres (McMaster 2002).

In addition, the international event such as the 11 of September 2001 also known as 9/11 referring to the coordinated terrorist attacks against the United States of America, and the 10 of November 2001 Australian federal elections.

2.4 Methodological Tools for the Analysis

The question of discourse as a vital component in the successful functioning of power is crucial here; modern power is only effective to the degree to which it succeeds in blending its operative forms with various ‘languages’ of truth, knowledge ... (Hook 2007, p. 72).

The methodological approach taken in this study is rooted in critical theories as it seeks to produce and convey critical knowledge through analysis. This research is shaped by a number of theories and methods that analyse language in use, with the purpose of exposing power relations, specific elements of dominance, difference and resistance. This study has borrowed elements of the dialectical-relational approach as developed by Fairclough fluctuating between a focus on structures of social practices and a concentration on strategies used by social agents in texts (Wodak and Meyer 2009). Similarly, some elements draw on Foucault’s discourse theory. For example, it draws from Foucault’s ideas of power within a dialogical context in which power is no longer an external social influence that opposes our autonomy it is rather a continuous force within our concrete human existence and social life. Consequently, power arises from a multiplicity of force relations resulting in concrete and resisting human beings able to transform particular social orders (Falzon 1998). In other words, Foucault’s interest is to scrutinise the localised workings of power and its interaction between subjects and institutions (Derek 2007, p. 64). In particular, he wants to bring to view what he calls ‘disqualified knowledges’ with the purpose of outlining a ‘genealogy’, which Foucault sees as a form of investigation that amalgamates scholar erudition and what people know to constitute ‘knowledges of struggles’, thus organising them against the
centralising, hierarchical power-effects, of scientific and institutional discourses (Foucault 2003, pp. 8-9). This is precisely, the focus of this study whose domain of interest is positioned within the discursive fields that dominated the public sphere in the form of newspaper articles and letters to editor regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Hence, it uses critical sensibility to scrutinise the settings and procedures that bring about the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

I have chosen a three-dimensional approach illustrated in the figure above (page 51) as a way of demonstrating Fairclough’s approach to critical discourse analysis, since he states that it is possible to uncover the connections between the properties of texts and social processes given that texts are elements of social events. As a result, in this study I want to expose the interconnection between texts such as the newspaper feature and news articles, letters to editor and the sample narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. By highlighting the presence of struggle and negotiation between these texts, similarly by examining the differing discourses and ideologies inscribed within these three levels of discourses (Wodak and Meyer 2009, p. 10).

Two of the chapters of analysis of the interviews of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas follow a thematic approach to discourse as proposed by Fairclough, in the sense of identifying the main themes emerging in the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. As well as focusing on the specific perspectives or positions present in their narratives. (Fairclough 2001, p. 129). Hence, as mentioned this thematic approach is immersed in the ethics of hospitality, cohabitation and liveable lives as per Butler and Derrida’s reading of Levinas and Arendt.

2.5 Introducing the Rationale for Examining Newspaper Articles and Letters to the Editor

The printed media is an important medium for the circulation of discourses in the public sphere, for instance Klocker and Dunn’s analysis of newspapers, government and representation of asylum seekers in Australia in 2001, affirm that news journalism is part of a machinery of representation that significantly shape our awareness of society, further stating that in the case of detained asylum seekers media access was extremely restricted. Consequently journalists were forced to rely on official (government) sources
of information. Thus the findings of their study led them to conclude that the most common terms used by the government to represent asylum seekers were ‘illegitimate’, ‘illegal’ and ‘threatening’. (Klocker & Dunn 2003, p. 78). While meanings are articulated through discourses and in social institutions as the quotation below suggests, the media engages in reflecting, informing, influencing and constructing cultural realities and public opinion (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia cited in McDougall and Fletcher 2002, p. 33). Newspapers as social institutions operate within certain conventions and newspapers are expected to provide objective, factual and credible information and knowledge.

…we function within a dependency culture, in which we are dependent on the media for information about the world around us, then what goes on inside, and emerges from, those institutions becomes crucial in understanding the question of what is going on inside the public mind. (Dickinson Ramaswami and Linne 1998, p. 78).

Australian newspapers have long been concerned with discourses on/about immigration, asylum seekers, and refugees. Newspapers are important in influencing the emergence of specific rhetoric, ways of thinking and talking about asylum seekers and refugees. They also provide the means for constructing asylum seekers as not entitled to Australia’s protection (Klocker & Dunn 2003, p. 77) The use of terms such as ‘illegal refugee’ or ‘queue jumper’ are also words that illustrate the absence of control by the people being referred to.

The mass media obscures distinctions between readers and writers or creators and audiences, in as much as it mobilises prejudices and interpretations. These interpretative acts are part of historical and contextual processes reflective of attitudes, and beliefs that form the content of discourses and meanings about self-identity from an individual perspective and that of nationhood from a societal perspective. This is clearly stated by Fairclough when he talks about how news narratives interconnect with various voices to become representative (Fairclough 1995, p. 77).

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The textual analysis of media articles in The Australian, established in Australia about 40 years ago with a readership of 432,000 people, is relevant since it is the only national newspaper that covers national and international news. Interestingly this newspaper’s profile states that “The Australian is able to maintain its impartial and independent thinking in delivering the news and information to its avid readers”. In contrast to this claim of impartiality and independency, McChesney argues that journalism is inclined to agree with elite interests in political matters. He advances his argument by noting that newspapers are increasingly dependent upon the income generated by advertising, a situation that leads according to this author to a narrowly defined self-interest (McChesney 1997, pp. 6-23). As a national newspaper The Australian represents a macro or higher order of governmentality since regardless of claims of independence, newspapers are also bound to build closeness to their audience, needing to rely on the population’s observations and knowledge in order to appeal to common sense or construct ‘nodal points’ as called by Chouliaraki and Fairclough to articulate certain dominance (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, pp. 123-124). In addition, texts are the result of other culturally positioned texts organised in a new structure according to Fairclough: “...discourses, can themselves be seen as combinations of other discourses articulated together in particular ways.” (Fairclough 2003, p. 126). Consequently, the newspapers are part of social forces that generate knowledge-to-power and power-to-knowledge relations (Hook 2007, p. 77). In brief, at this higher order of governance there is little space for localised knowledge. For instance, in the particular case of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as noted at the beginning of this section, the procedures to obtain information with regard to their experiences were highly restricted and consequently the main source of information at that point was official. Subsequently, from the collection of procedures, analysis, and reflections focused on asylum seekers exercised by the media, a specific truth and knowledge about asylum seekers emerged that assigned authority to certain narratives about them and that facilitated the emergence of specific asylum seekers’ subjectivities.

Australian newspapers’ protracted concern with discourses on/about immigration, asylum seekers and refugees. Hence, the specific narratives and knowledge about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas emerging from the news and feature articles arguably find a space for contestation in the genre of Letters to the Editor. LTEs are not written by an ample range of citizens, and are largely selected according to the

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subjective criteria of journalists (Renfro and Wahl-Jorgensen in Reader 2008, p. 607). The media literature regards LTEs as a forum for public debate as well as providing a sense of balance for newspapers thus fulfilling the expectation of printing a diversity of perspectives of a debate. For Van Dijk this genre is one of the few that allows the non-elite to gain access to public discourse normally controlled by the powerful and influential (Van Dijk quoted in Rojas-Lizana 2007, p. 81).

Although the genre is mediated by the Editor and by its own constraints, as a form of language in use it contains and produces an inexhaustible source of elements that give testimony to the diversity of people’s worlds and identities, as well as their linguistic power for constructing themselves as individuals and members of a community (Rojas-Lizana 2007, p. 81).

Rojas-Lizana proposes that LTE is a genre that gravitates within a mid- lower order of governmentality, in reference to the lower degree of mediation in the production of discourses when compared with news and feature articles since it introduces new elements: perspectives that negotiate the knowledge and truth about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas developed by the newspaper articles in that it gives testimony to the diversity of people’s worlds and identities. Conversely, the media/editor scrutinizes events, letters and decides what constitutes news, sorting and framing the issues (Cohen 2001, p. 169). Yet, LTE could be a source of alternative discourses and ways of knowing from those embedded in official discourses, since LTEs are expected to express ordinary people’s opinions, and the authority of the writers of these letters originates in the fact that they are members of the community expressing their opinions and to some extent having their individual voices heard (Rojas-Lizana 2007, pp. 81-82).

Letters to the editor represent the intersection of ‘everyday talk’ and ‘mediated discourse’; the individual, personal and often anecdotal insights of a newspaper’s readership on contemporary events are edited by the newspaper, often changing the order of sentences and paragraphs, and are purposefully placed in relationship to and with other readers’ letters (Richardson 2001).

The literature about letters to the editor indicates that in spite of mediating processes influencing media discourse the genre appears to be the least mediated. Hall as cited by McCormack (McCormack 2001), characterises this genre as structured dialogue between papers and readers/writers. This is important as Fairclough states that the
analysis of any discourse involves a focus on communicative events and the order of discourse. The dimensions of a communicative event in turn are text, discourse practice (the processes of text production and text consumption) and socio cultural practice of which the communicative event is a part (Fairclough 1995, p. 57).

The concept of governmentality is developed by Foucault that links processes of governing (“gouverner”), investigating the relations of knowledge and modes of thought (“mentality”) through which individuals are governed not exclusively by means of coercion but rather within a flexible balance of power techniques that facilitate the participation of individuals (Lemke 2000, pp. 4-5) by mobilising her/his needs, desires and wants (Dean 1999). This section has argued that two genres of the printed media, namely, news and feature articles and LTEs construct, shape and influence the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and readers as a form of governmental practice external to the subject. On the other hand we have subjects; asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and readers who adopt specific practices and techniques to give shape to their own selves (Ball 2007, p. 449).

2.6 Rationale for Examining Face-to-Face Interviews with a Sample of Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas

The third stage of generating a corpus is interpretation, which is also referred to as member resources (MR), whereby the relationship between the text and society occurs on the background of social interaction. Thus, interpretation is a combination of what is in the text and what the interpreter brings to it (MR).

For this purpose I utilise face-to-face interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (a total of 11 interviews were conducted) to determine the effects of media discourse. The method for interviewing drew on the personal narrative approach, which aims at exercising the least possible control over the stories that asylum seekers tell regarding the effects that dominant discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have had or continue to have in their lives. This approach (personal narratives) has been utilised in feminist studies privileging positionality and subjectivity instead of assuming objectivity, bringing both perspectives into view, those of the narrator and the analyst (Riessman 2000).
The importance of this method is that it promotes understanding through various social locations, thus opening opportunities for action towards change, as personal narratives can bring about personal and shared meanings of the social practices that make human relationships. Within this there is recognition of shifting positionings (active, passive), and shifting connections between past, present, and future. Also from this perspective, personal narratives are central units of meaning making discourse (Riessman 2000).

This lower order of governmentality represents ‘a noise to discourse’ that retains a capacity to truth (Hook 2007, p. 103). In spite of the mediation, that is interviews conducted in the English language which was the preferred language of participants for reasons that will be explained later in this study, the people interviewed have been directly affected by the discourses, policies and practices (structures of dominance, power and control) that identify them as asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. However, they also play a significant role in the functioning of the power that acts upon them (Hook 2007, p. 79). Thus, the interviews provide an insight into how asylum seekers on temporary protection visas negotiate difference and open new discursive spaces. This is particularly important since most people would not be able to personally know and listen to asylum seekers’ stories and experiences other than by newspapers or other mass media productions.

The importance of examining these new public discourses that fixate and produce knowledge on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas is apparent in noting the ways in which acts of resistance bring attention to matters of justice and injustice and ethics. And to outline the workings of power in discourse that could make subjects, objects of knowledge and/or subjects of knowledge as said by Butler “...the real task is to figure how a subject who is constituted in and by discourse then recites that very same discourse but perhaps to another purpose” (Butler 1999, p. 165). Furthermore, there is recognition that these refugees, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been the subject of significant attempts to be silenced for example being detained in remote camps, not being able to speak in public without the threat of being denied a permanent protection visa. For instance Marston argues that asylum seekers were granted not only fewer settlement services but also fewer rights (Marston 2003, p. 1). After the 3 years period and confronted with the expiration of their temporary visas, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas had to re-apply for further protection to the Department of Immigration, consequently they were subjected not only to a regime of uncertainty but also of constant fear of possible deportation (Burnside 2003).
Despite the heavy mediation of processes by which asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have their voices recorded, heard and known, their voices create a space for questioning what is known, undermining the validity of the media language and words that positions them in an unequal space regarding other refugees and Australian citizens.

2.7 Selection of Interviewees

Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (Visa subclass 785) are the specific focus of this research which is motivated by the fact that former and current asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are particularly vulnerable due not only to the experience of traumatic situations prior to arrival in Australia but also the ongoing experience post-arrival. This includes, in particular, the subjection to detention (in some cases prolonged) and the holding of temporary protection visas which precluded former asylum seekers on these visas among other things from family reunion, travelling overseas, and from most services funded by the Department of Immigration including federally-funded English language programs.

The sample included 11 refugees between 18 and 65 years old (female and male) from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. Without exception these participants came to Australia by boat, were detained at various locations in Australian detention centres and were or had been holders of temporary protection visas. The participants were recruited by Romero Centre staff in Brisbane. The staff at Romero Centre provided a point of safety for the interviewees, as they had first hand understanding and knowledge of the psychological and emotional wellbeing of the participants consequently the staff at Romero Centre suggested a number of possible interviewees for me to approach. The Romero Centre is a faith-based, ecumenical organization, which provides services such as hospitality and a drop-in centre; a meeting place, settlement support, friendship, emotional, practical and spiritual support. It also provides advocacy through speaking up for refugees and empowering them to speak for themselves and in calling on government for better legislation. The Romero Centre undertake these tasks by employing social workers and volunteers that link and participate in various forums such as refugee services networking meetings, Brisbane City Council community development activities, presenting papers on refugee and asylum seekers issues.
I facilitated a joint planning and preparation process; the joint planning process ensured that participants who were undergoing mental health treatment and were vulnerable to harm were not included. The planning meetings also helped in identifying barriers to participation such as transport and childcare: for this a sum of $50 was offered to participants to partially lessen these barriers.

The focus of the interviews was on the responses of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to their representation in the print mass media.

All of the interviews were conducted without interpreters though the participants were offered this option. All of them felt that they did not need to have interpreters since they were confident with their English language level; some reported feeling safer without an interpreter. Only one female participant had a level of English language that required the use of an interpreter—she considered it a safer option that her eighteen year-old son undertook interpreting for her. All of the participants except for one agreed to the recording of the interviews after I thoroughly explained to them that I was going to keep identification details confidential. There was a female participant who did not agree to the oral recording of the interview but she had no problems with the recording of written notes of the interview.

Most of the interviews were conducted at the participants’ homes since this was their choice; only four participants elected to have the interviews at the Romero Centre.

The graphs below summarise gender and age of participants:
2.8 Tasks Involved in the Interviews

The following tasks were undertaken:

- Writing an explanatory script that briefly explained the purpose of the study and the role of the interviews in it. I read this during the interview process (included in appendix).
- Ascertaining the need for interpreter services
- Designing Semi-structured interview tool (included in appendix)
- Consulting and arranging for feedback mechanism to participants
- Collating interviews
- Transcribing interviews.
2.9 The Workings of Data

2.9.1 Selection of Material

Search and Selection of the Newspaper Articles and Letters to the Editor

The search for The Australian LTEs and feature articles was done using the Factiva database. With this database I was able to elect to search for a particular publication such as ‘The Australian’. I found that restricting the search to articles containing the words ‘TPV holders’ limited the number of articles to work with. The tables below clearly illustrate the numbers of articles/letters engaged in discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the period June-December 2001.

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Articles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Number of articles in The Australian = 70
2.9.2 Data Analysis

I adopted the three-dimensional method of discourse analysis as proposed by Fairclough (1995, pp. 96-97): (a) a language text, spoken or written (b) discourse practice (text production and text interpretation) (c) socio-cultural practice (in the immediate situation, wider organisational structure, and at a societal level). By examining media articles using this tri-dimensional approach I was able to understand what participants say in discourse and how they say it, and the means, the techniques and the rationalities of power processes embedded in these discourse practices.

In examining the dominant media discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, I focussed on the techniques, procedures and language that may be used to influence a particular representation and meaning about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. From this perspective I looked at power as exercised by those who are in a position to choose, and how their choices are directed towards specific options. In other words, I was looking at subordination from an institutional
perspective and how much space for movement there was in terms of the asylum seekers’ representation. Using Fairclough’s modality of textual analysis named ‘Constructing Social Relations’ I located the discursive devices used in the Australian newspaper articles to constitute the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as outsiders and the subjectivities of the insiders in the form of newspaper articles writers and readers. I specifically utilised the oppositional stance Us/Them to guide the search for common sense journalistic procedures that might be used to conceal the reinforcement of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subaltern position. Similarly I used the Us/Them stance to identify positions in which there was an ethical recognition of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ presence and solicitation.

I have utilised what Fairclough calls the ‘social matrix of discourse’, a tool used to identify the social and hegemonic relations and structures comprising the matrix of a particular case (Fairclough 1992, p. 86). From this basis I chose ‘democratization’ and ‘technologization’ and ‘commodification’. ‘Democratization’ enabled the search and identification of discourses that allowed the demand for recognition posed by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to be accepted, while ‘commodification’ enabled the search and identification of discourses that disallowed the demand for recognition posed by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Fairclough defines ‘technologization’ as the process of increasing control over people’s lives, which are increasingly controlled by institutions by selected social agents. Technologization includes simulation of ‘common sense knowledge and talk’ for strategic and instrumental purposes (Fairclough 1992, p. 201). These tools help to explain how and why the specific discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are produced in the newspaper articles.

I used a thematic focus oriented to the identification of the main types of discourses found in LTE such as the systematic emergence of opinions, ways of thinking and language found within the texts of LTE. I aimed to identify the type of discourses of the Other to be found within LTE, and also focused on the discourses that were absent within the LTE investigated by this study.

When concentrating on my research question about contestation the focus was on the resistance to power. I was looking at the language, techniques, procedures that allowed asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to exercise power. I was searching for the
mechanisms of subordination that constrain and enable asylum seekers to exercise power. The above stance is consistent with Foucault’s conception of power as manifested in the instruments, techniques and procedures that may be used to achieve particular actions from others, thus also conceiving power as heterogeneous and reversible and not possible without resistance (Hindess 1996, p. 97).

The analysis attempted to uncover not only how behaviours are regulated by a number of devices (law, policies, and printed media portrayal) but also how individuals regulate their own behaviours.

I undertook the interpretation of the textual analysis of the semi-structured interviews with the 11 asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as a dialogical process between what I brought to this analysis and the properties of the text as I wanted to minimise as much as possible mediations and facilitate the emergence of this local, personalised knowing in which difference might unfold.

The analysis of both texts in newspaper and personal narratives was linked to concepts of the Australian nation, uncovering relationships between official discourses and individual behaviours of its citizens in matters regarding refugees, asylum seekers and more specifically asylum seekers on temporary protection visas Subclass 785.

2.9.3 Technique for Working with the Data

As the data volumes were manageable, I used manual techniques for coding and analysing the data. This method allowed my immersion in and beyond the text, thus maintaining a focus on qualitative perspectives. Similarly these techniques were useful in keeping data in context, thereby preserving as much as possible the full textual integrity of the data source, allowing for a more contextually embedded analysis. Nevertheless, this traditional method of working with data has generated significant criticism against CDA in regards to its reliance on researcher bias (Widdowson as cited in Wodak and Meyer 2009, p. 123). Consequently throughout the analysis I have remained fully aware of my own bias bringing it to attention when appropriate.
3 Validity

Reliability and validity draw from positivist approaches to research. For example, as Kendall and Jablensky (2003, p. 5) have indicated, the term ‘valid’, is derived from the Latin validus for strong, defined as well-founded and applicable, sound to the point “against which no object can fairly be brought”. The concept of validity is part of the discourse of scientific knowledge that is committed to the accurate representation of reality and to the unitary and totalising truth by means of reliable research elements, exteriorisation of the knower and rational discussion (Humphries 1997, p. 2). This research study, however, takes a post-positivist approach that embraces the idea that truth is a cultural and historical construct and that it is not free from political interest. As Lyotard puts it: “there is a strict interlinkage between the kind of language called science and the kind called ethics and politics: they both stem from the same perspective, the same “choice” if you will - the choice called Occident.” (Lyotard 1979, p. 6). Therefore, this study unties the positivist discursive approach of validity by bringing in the validity of the experiences of those that European modernity historically has left out of its universalising realities.

Critical social research needs to be reflective of the position from which it is developed (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, p. 66). From this perspective it is important to have contact with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to have their views in establishing what is important for them in analysing the issues of representation. Stuart Hall, for instance, points out that textuality is never enough even if this is critical textuality, as there will always be a tension between critical text analysis and its connection with nations, institutions, groups, races and genders (cited in Leistyna 2005, p. 173). For this reason a three-dimensional approach as proposed by Fairclough permits the navigation of intersecting fields of discourse locations, in order to identify and articulate power struggles.

The importance of going beyond text analysis and drawing on interviews is to attain a sense of how the subjects make meaning of the discourses about them in the public domain, and how these discourses are embodied in their daily lives. Also it will help to understand how they try to resolve or accommodate these discourses in their lives. This in turn serves to build the corpus of the study and to ensure that there is no misrepresentation of what has been conveyed through my interpretation of dominant discourses and identities.
From a post-structural perspective, scientific validity is seen as part of civilising project, as it draws on a desire to exclude, to draw a dividing line advantaging the same (creating an insider) against the other (outsider). From this perspective validity can be seen as an appropriation by a community of scientists who determine the sort of researches that are valuable and the ones that are worthless (Scheurich 1997, pp. 84-85). This is a reason for wanting to bring into this study the local voices of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas into the conversation. I expect that in spite of the heavy mediation, their voices will create a space for questioning what it is known, undermining the validity of the language and words that positions them in an unequal space regarding other refugees and other Australian citizens.

The ethically oriented methods pursued in this study provide a more accurate and more ethical depiction of asylum seekers than a broadly generalised, distanced and universalised approach could do. In this manner by attending to the standpoints of minorities such as asylum seekers on temporary protection visas this study intends to provide paraphrasing Harding a ‘less false story’ (Harding 1997:386) about them by crafting a more valid knowledge derived from the epistemological and counter-hegemonic option originating from their experiences (Walsh 2012:111).

4 My Positioning

My position as researcher is influenced by my direct past and current work experience as counsellor/advocate for survivors of torture and trauma, among them asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This gives me an insider status in relation to this field of study as in that role I directly heard many of the stories that men, women and children entrusted to me. As a result of this work I am also familiar with the former temporary protection visa policy and legislative framework and its impact on asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. More importantly, the opportunity to meet and work with many asylum seekers on temporary protection visas has had a significant impact on my understanding and experience of Australia and its treatment of asylum seekers and refugees. Through the experiences narrated by asylum seekers I was revisiting previous instances in Australian history that still present now that are clearly identified by some as shameful. This includes its treatment of indigenous persons. Consequently, I declare that my position is informed by a significant sense that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are and continue to be subjects of important injustices however, this
study is guided by an inquisitive and genuine desire to learn and understand through and beyond textual analysis the situation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in relation to the Australian nation.

I also share with asylum seekers on temporary protection visas the fact that I am a person from a non-English speaking background constituting part of a specific section of the Australian population.

5 Ethical Considerations

Prior to conducting the interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, I submitted an application for ethical clearance to the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences (SWAHS) of the University of Queensland. This application was approved on the second of November 2007.

Trust and safety are critical considerations when working with refugees and asylum seekers as well as issues of possible harm to participants, in addition to differential power positions. Researchers in the area of refugee and asylum seeker population have a significant responsibility to ensure not to expose refugees and asylum seekers to further harm, as issues of asylum seekers and refugees are historically biased, given that stateless persons are dispossessed of a place that they can call home and consequently inhabit the vulnerability of crossing literal and discursive borders such as nation-states. Reciprocity has also been identified as another aspect of the ethical considerations when conducting research in particular with vulnerable populations. Reciprocity is understood as un-coerced giving, interchanging things of relatively equal value (Harrel-Bond in Zwi, Grove, MacKenzie, Pittaway, Zion, Silove and Tarantola 2006, p. 267). These considerations underpinned my decision to conduct the interviews in the places that they already identified as safe. Safety also guided the need for a comprehensive explanation and process that ensured voluntary participation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This was achieved by engaging support workers from the Romero Centre and by ensuring confidentiality.

In regards to the confidentiality of interview transcripts, all records were kept in a locked cabinet and all transcripts were assigned a coded name (invented) for each
person. Participants were informed that they were able to withdraw from the study at any time. In terms of reciprocity without exception those participating in the interviews wanted to share their experiences and points of view as they wanted Australian citizens to know their points of view, despite the risk still present at the time of conducting these interviews as some of them were still attempting family reunion and were experiencing the effects of the traumatic experiences endured prior and following their migration to Australia.

6 Concluding Comments

This study aligns with the view that scientific knowledge in the form of grand narratives does not correspond to the totality of knowledge (Lyotard 1979, p. 5). Hence, Critical Discourse Analysis as articulated by Fairclough, and in particular its focus on the connections between the properties of the texts, social agents and social processes, constitutes an important aid in facilitating the emergence of situated and contested knowledge. Thus, the relevance of going beyond textual analysis and drawing on interviews is to attain a sense of how the readers (asylum seekers on temporary protection visas) make meaning of the discourses about them in the public domain, how these discourses are embodied in their daily lives. The interviews help to understand how they try to resolve or accommodate these discourses in their lives and serve to build the corpus of the study, ensuring that there is no misrepresentation of what has been conveyed through my interpretation of dominant discourses and identities.

The strengths of this study are that it provides an opportunity to link theory and practice as it examines the functions of discourse beyond its linguistic function. By exploring the responses, the effects, the negotiations of meaning and values involving these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and Australian citizens’ stance on refugee issues matters of cultural justice, and ethics have been unearthed. From this point of view this study is aligned with the position within cultural studies that critical textual analysis is not sufficient to account for what is outside the text.

The limitation of this study is that its approach is inscribed in a Euro-centric paradigm (post-structuralism, post-modernism) and it this way is heavily dependent on dominant discursive fields. Similarly, this study does not develop a transcultural stance; considering that the refugees granted temporary protection visas are, like the researcher,
from non-English speaking backgrounds. However, I follow Butler’s reflection when she states:

It’s actually a certain principle of humility and a certain principle of historicity, of being installed in a historicity that is not my own, but which is the condition of my own. In that sense it’s a historicity that exposes the limits of my autonomy but which also says is the condition of my autonomy, oddly enough (Butler 1999, p. 166).

I believe that Butler’s assertion is applicable to this study, since, although post-structuralist and post-modern are Euro-centric approaches, these are equally highly critical of dominant and totalising Euro-centric epistemologies. It could be said that these approaches do create the conditions for autonomous and critical knowledge.
CHAPTER 3
CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ARTICLES IN THE AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER JUNE-DECEMBER 2001

1 Positioning the CDA Analysis

This chapter examines the use of language in The Australian newspaper articles (texts) from June to December 2001. An ethical approach to understanding the available discourses around temporary protection visas requires rendering visible the possible articulations and/or exclusions whereby the specific use of language in these texts actively defines asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, their experiences, status, conditions and identities. The texts examined in this chapter are feature articles. These texts have been scrutinised in order to trace the ways in which agents texture these meanings. This is an exercise of considerable significance for the project, given that news and feature articles constitute specific genres within the printed mass media. These genres are inscribed as ‘soft news’ – distinctive from ‘hard news’ which reports on events that occurred or came to be known or revealed. Features are longer articles reporting on events which, according to Bell, although are edited, provide the writers with a degree of freedom in terms of styles deployed and in that these can also be written by non-journalists contributing to public sphere debates (Bell 1991). However, as ‘editorial’ these pass through a complex web of news and language production. Generally, it is argued that the printed mass media cultivate structural relations by privileging and or excluding particular discourses in relation to local, regional, national and global scales of interaction. Fairclough, for example, understands media (including print media) as an apparatus of governance, in as much as it recontextualises. The emphasis of intertextuality according to Fairclough is on how texts can change prior texts and reorganise existing conventions and discourses to generate new discourses or conventions these are processes that occur within power relations (Fairclough 1992, p. 269). Recontextualising is expressed in the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of texts as Fairclough conceives recontextualising as a dialectical practice of appropriation of other discourses. For instance, media articles include political and governance affairs in texts and interactions within different realms including everyday life, thus critically

4Concept developed by Bernstein 1990 to explain the internal logic of the educational field, the recontextualising principle selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order (Charalambous, P 2009).
contributing to the ways in which media shape the meaning we give to our lives and the lives of others (Fairclough 2003, pp. 33-34).

Hoskins, in his analysis of the nexus between media and catastrophe after September 11, argues that certain media events due to their intensity and self-referentiality might intrude into everyday topics of conversation, saturating our public and private spaces with information and entertainment endeavouring to present an external world immediate to our own (Hoskins 2006, p. 455). He also refers to ‘media templates’ as structuring the various ways used by television and other media to encourage a specific interpretation, organisation and narrative on a current news story, which includes narratives that are generated in contexts and histories composed by actors in the media themselves. Nylund (2003, p. 844) argues that news items are to a significant degree ‘talked into being’ as content moves around the practice of quoting. Although quotes are distinguishable from other written textuality, they are drawn from the co-texts and inter-texts in which they are embedded, such that quotes are a dynamic element in the news story as they actively support claims and descriptions made in other parts of the text. Thus news production routines and the practices of news and feature writing play a significant role in making available certain meanings that define persons and actors including, in this case, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. None of this, of course, is to suggest that media processes produce a monolithic or ideological view of this group of people, but that they play a central role in defining the available ways of thinking, discussing and debating the place of these people within the context of national identity.

The above stances with regard to mass media and, in particular, print media alert us to the fact that discourses in newspaper articles are rooted in large and hazy structures of power discourse that conceal its influence in everyday conversation. Sykes (2006) in a paper about the origins of advocacy in journalism concludes that media as an instrument for a greater society needs to discuss issues to their greatest extent, that media processes should not be limited by government, media proprietors, and other journalists and media commentators. He sees media as having an important advocacy role against oppression and in exploring principles that can unite people in happiness and freedom. However, Norman Fairclough (1999) in his revision of Wodak’s (1996) ‘Disorders of Discourse’ states:
But the way language is used is still a part of the problem, because the question of how the political is structured is substantively a question of what the discursive practices of politics are, and how they are linked (or not linked) to each other - how politicians address publics, what passes for political dialog and debate, what sort of language is used in the news, and so forth. It's a matter of how to frame issues like how much (or how little) people get from the news (Fairclough 1999, p. 609).

With regard to the importance of focusing on ‘the way in which language is used’ to uncover the ‘practices of politics’ and ‘what passes for political dialog and debate’ with respect to texts about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, Fairclough’s approach provides a powerful opportunity to enact/act out Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), that is, to distinguish the rules which regulate the textuality and statements of the articles reviewed in this chapter. This method seeks to add further insight into the ‘contentious’ and ‘ever’ present asylum seeker issues in Australia. It is notable that a significant element in the ethics of this debate involves tracing, as Mignolo (2006, p. 314) suggests, the issues of citizenship, foreigners and passports as part of the imperial history that gave rise to the idea of what constitutes ‘human’ while demarcating frontiers with the ‘less humans’ and ‘non-human.’ This will be further examined in later chapters, although it guides the motivation for the discourse analysis undertaken in this chapter.

The CDA approach undertaken here is grounded in Gayatri Spivak’s reflection about subalternity—not in its general sense since, as according to Spivak, a general perspective of the subaltern is narrow and hegemonic and effectively constitutes and reproduces subalternity. Instead, Spivak proposes to fill the content-emptiness of the subaltern category through a critical engagement which has an emphasis inquiring about people’ specific cases of inequality. Thus, identifying what brings about the use of this difference (subaltern), and by identifying who denies it (Spivak 2005, pp. 475-486), a researcher is positioned to tease out the reasons why discursivity produces the human in one case and the ‘less human’ (subaltern) in another. Spivak problematises the recovery and making of subaltern speech as dependent on dominant discursive fields as these, she suggests, delineate where they are situated, the modes of expression and sets up the very place that constitute the subaltern subjects, hence determining the positions from which they speak and are heard (Coronil 1994, p. 645). Grounding this examination of the
articles in *The Australian* newspaper within the context of subalternity is thus justified by the fact that I am examining articles written about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas who are of non-English speaking backgrounds, are outsiders, non-citizens, mainly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, and in consideration of the fact that the enunciators/writers of these articles are routinely citizens of Australia.

In this study, the link between CDA and Spivak’s examination into what brings about the specific case of inequality (the subject position of the subaltern) is extended through the textual critique of newspaper articles in the Australian. I aim to identify how power and knowledge—that is, two of the three critical axes acknowledged by Fairclough to be analysed undertaking a CDA analysis (Fairclough 2003, p. 28)—combine to constitute Australian citizens as subjects of knowledge with regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, I am looking at the specific points of view, angles, and relations to other social elements in the discourses in articles in *The Australian* between June and December 2001. I am examining the ways in which these are articulated to elaborate the emerging ‘ways of being,’ or the particular ‘representations’ of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. As a result, this analysis aims to identify the types of knowledge that constitute these asylum seekers and Australian citizens as subjects who exercise or submit to power.

This analysis is also based on the premise that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are non-Australian citizens and as such are politically defined as non-legal members of the nation. Consequently, they occupy a subaltern position in the Australian polity. This analysis seeks to uncover how this subaltern subject position is constituted and maintained in news and language production. In the words of Sneja Gunew:

> How, more precisely, does English/english write on the body in ways that may be deciphered from written texts? Is it possible to map this process as a technology of subjectivity and a disciplining of bodies in quite specific material ways…? (Gunew 2001, p. 730).

Gunew asserts here that although English does not automatically uphold a colonizing accusation, the English language is nevertheless solidly knitted in a range of disciplinary and subjugating regimes that prevents its consideration as a lingua franca (Gunew 2001, p. 730). Thus, I argue that these are the situating points of the CDA approach that this chapter undertakes while also borrowing from Foucault’s position on
the productive and subjected body (Foucault 1977, p. 3-31), in particular what he referred to as the ‘disciplines’. These are the methods used to produce particular operations of the body with the purpose of exercising persistent subjection within a relationship of docility-utility (Foucault 1979, p. 137). Bearing this in mind in the context of the analysis provides a robust position for the reading of the technical specificities and political strategies used in these newspaper articles. Given that newspaper articles are comprised within a mediated genre which is part of a larger apparatus of governance (Fairclough 2003, p. 34) that allows or disallows an economy of suspended rights (Foucault 1997, p. 11), this chapter will explore how the use of specific utterances allows the bodies of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to become the focus of punishment embedded in bureaucratic, legal and political acts, and consequently disallows the possibility of an ethical recognition. Alternatively, I also want to highlight the specific utterances that disallow punishment and rejection thus allowing the possibility of an ethical recognition in response to the demand for recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

Finally, this chapter’s CDA approach is also grounded in Judith Butler’s recent reflections on the ethics of recognition. As Butler puts it:

... modes of involvement bear different moral meanings for us; they are bound by no single pre-given structure, relation, or bond, much less a normative one, and that is why we are under a responsibility to negotiate among such involvements as best we can. It is not a matter of returning to what we "really" know or undoing our deviations from the norm, but of struggling with a set of ethical demands on the basis of myriad affective responses that, prior to their expression in action, have no particular moral valence (Butler 2008, p. 104).

Butler’s theoretical approach to the ethics of recognition provides a sound stand for the application of a CDA analysis of the newspaper articles about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Butler considers that we are equally capable of respectful care and recognition of the other as well as of exercising extreme aggression and carelessness towards the Other. She affirms that to be involved with others is not necessarily good in itself, and that this involvement would be morally neutral unless we ensure that the other is affirmed. Further, she says we need to be attentive that we are not instrumentalising others. The analysis of the newspaper articles seeks to uncover the
type of affective responses that dominate these discourses, and thus to expose the discourses that instrumentalise asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and that consequently reject the ethical demand for recognition. The exercise of respectful care and the responsibility to respond to these asylum seekers’ demand for recognition as well as the discourses that remain neutral or ambivalent to their demand for recognition is uncovered in this study. This analysis also seeks to explore our understanding of the group/individual ethical standpoint towards asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (what upholds the status quo) in terms of the public imagination of what Australia is and where asylum seekers on temporary protection visas sit. It similarly guides the detection of the processes of departure from what upholds the status quo, that is, the processes of change.

An element in this analysis is the examination of how the subject positions in the newspaper articles negotiate the practice of identifying the moral valences in which these subject positions are based and how these are expressed in the workings of the discursive mechanism to allow, disallow or remain ambivalent to the ethical demand for recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This comprises what Fairclough calls the axis of ethics (Fairclough 2003, p. 28). With both working in a Foucauldian framework, Spivak and Butler’s importance for this analysis is that they share a concern for the study of how the position of minorities as differences and alterities (otherness) come to being. Butler emphasises the power of inscriptions on the body, and she unpacks the ways in which culture acts upon the body. In particular she disavows the more pedestrian approach of universalising categories such as sex, gender, and sexuality and, instead, argues that these theories are more than forms of knowing that affect our bodily lives (Butler 2007). Spivak, on the other hand, is concerned with the place from which someone attends to or considers an issue, in particular pointing to the subject position of the ‘subaltern’ resulting from the effects and inscriptions of colonial historiography (Spivak 2005). For Spivak the intersection between power, meaning and knowledge leads to an ‘interested’ construction of the facts that in the specific cases of the colonised is violent as it imposes the imperialist discourse of the coloniser and the colonised. Consequently, she strives for unearthing the ‘assumptions’ and ‘workings’ of the specific cases of inequality that bring about the use of difference.
1.1 Outlining the Tools Assisting this Critical Discourse Analysis—Beyond the Reason and the Technology We are Light Stars, with Heart and with Conscience.

This chapter uses Fairclough’s modality of textual analysis named ‘Constructing Social Relations’ which traces the discursive devices that are deployed in the articles in *The Australian* newspaper that constitute the social identities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (other/’selves’/ ‘them’) and the responses emerging from citizens of Australia in the form of the writers of the Newspaper articles reviewed here (me/self/us). The heading of this chapter makes reference to the ethical dimensions that embed the analytical devices used in this chapter. Within the constructing social relations framework Fairclough seeks to expose what models from other genres and discourse types are used to create subjectivity. I have chosen a specific device which he calls ‘ethos’ which is participation constituted by the projection of linkages in certain intertextual directions rather than others. Fairclough centres his analysis in the domain of social practice in the type of power exercised over people which is based upon alliances, the inclusion of subordinate groups and the creation of consent. I believe this is a pertinent tool as it is flexible enough to include diverse features (verbal-nonverbal) (Fairclough 1992, p. 166), which I have interpreted as implicit (not stated but understood) and explicit (expressing details in a clear way). This is intended to assist in the depiction of the dominant subject positions emerging in the newspaper articles, with regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (already identified as a subaltern other in the political realm, since they are non-citizens) and Australian citizens. This approach will also guide the identification of the discursive mechanisms and the types of alliances that generate consent with respect to asylum seekers being subaltern subjects. And the sites of subversion or struggle with regard to the dominant stances towards asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

I have also chosen to utilise what Fairclough calls the ‘social matrix of discourse,’ a tool used in the analysis of ‘social practice’ (discourse in relation to ideology and power) which aims to identify the social and hegemonic relations and structures comprising the matrix of a particular case of discursive practice (Fairclough 1992, p. 86). From this basis I have chosen ‘democratization’ and ‘technologization’. I have chosen ‘democratization’ as I see this tool as an aid in the identification of discursive acts allowing the demand for recognition, while commodification facilitates the recognition of discursive acts that disallow the demand for recognition of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Fairclough defines ‘democratisation’ as the removal of
inequalities and asymmetries in the discursive and linguistic rights, obligations and prestige of groups of people. He defines ‘technologization’ as the process of increasing control over people’s lives, which are increasingly controlled by institutions by selected social agents. Technologization includes simulation of ‘common sense knowledge and talk’ for strategic and instrumental purposes (Fairclough 1992, p. 201). Using these tools helps to explain how and why the specific discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are produced in the newspaper articles reviewed by this chapter, directing our attention to the larger social forces that are impacting on the discourses emerging from these newspaper articles and on how these discourses might shape Australian society.

In previous chapters including the conceptual framework, I have outlined how the analysis of Spivak and Butler contribute to the CDA approach applied in this study. At this point I would like to succinctly chart the way in which this works. At the beginning of this chapter I argued that the printed mass media cultivates structural relations by privileging and or excluding particular discourses and creates consent by recontextualising political and government affairs into commonsense or matters of everyday life. Fairclough’s ‘technologization’ fits with Spivak’s scrutiny of the mechanism, the specific workings of power and knowledge that bring about inequality and the subaltern-other. ‘Technologization’ helps identify the selected agents and institutions that exercise control over people’s lives, that simulate common sense and talk for strategic purposes. Given that the journalistic work conceals how the politic is structured in its workings, this study’s focus is on newspaper articles. I am using the Us/Them divide as a means by which to uncover if common sense and journalistic language reinforces the subaltern position of asylum seekers (the subaltern other). However, the focus on Us/Them is also used to guide the search for the identification of how this subaltern other is treated by Us (me) thereby requiring per Butler that we use Fairclough’s tool to ethically recognise the vulnerability of this subaltern. The Us/Them focus is useful for the task of identifying the occurrence of democratisation (the removal of inequalities and asymmetries in discursive and linguistic rights) which facilitate ethical recognition since Butler asserts that a vulnerability must be perceived and recognised in order to come into play in an ethical encounter (Butler 2004, pp. 42-43). She further states that the problem of ethical responsibility is relational as that it requires the other, that we are implicated in the other, as put by her “I find that my very formation implicates the other in me” (Butler 2004, p. 46).
1.2 Brief Synopsis of the Articles Reviewed

Table 1

Table 1. Illustrates the temporal rate of topical articles reviewed in the Australian newspaper from June to December 2001. A total of 70 articles were reviewed between the months of June- December 2001.

1.3 The Subject Positions: the Us/Them Divide

I scrutinised these articles using the themes within the Us/Them divide. I identified the Subject Positions within the emerging discourses by ascertaining the type of subject who is responding to the demand of recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. I used the Us/Them identificatory distinction to justify the discourses of Allowance, Disallowance and Ambivalence. In this study, the term ‘allowance’ is defined as the discursive act of acknowledging subjects’ demand for recognition. This term is closely connected with Fairclough’s definition of ‘democratisation’ as exercised by Australian citizens who use their discursive linguistic rights, obligations and prestige to remove the inequalities and asymmetries and position themselves to acknowledge the demand for recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The term ‘disallowance’ is defined as the discursive act of refusing to acknowledge the demand. This term is closely related to Fairclough’s definition of ‘technologisation’ as
exercised by Australian citizens who use their discursive linguistic rights concealed in common sense to increasingly control and objectify asylum seekers as the subaltern-other, thus positioning themselves to refuse acknowledging the demand for recognition. Lastly, ‘ambivalence’ refers to the discursive acts that do not clearly acknowledge or refuse to acknowledge the demand for recognition. The subjects within this discursive field express uncertainty and conflicting utterances in the presence of this demand. For instance in the following article that has an overall ethos of discursive allowance or openness to the presence and inherent needs of suffering presented by the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (other), the Us/Them divide works as follows “…there are people in Australia (Us) who don’t agree with this Government’s racist policies…. She said much of the public (Us) had come to fear and loathe asylum-seekers—so-called “queue jumpers” (Them) (The Australian, Local Section 04.06.01). The next article which has an overall ethos of disallowance or rejection of the appeal of recognition the subject position is illustrated by “These migrants (Them) will have forfeited thousands of dollars paid to people-smugglers. Two other smaller boatloads of migrants seeking illegal entry (Them) to Australia (Us) have also foundered in recent days (The Australian, Local, 30.07.01). And the next article provides an example of an ambivalent (nor clear allowance or disallowance) response to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas: “Ruddock (Us) exploits this idea. “What many of my critics (Us) are advocating is a borderless society (Us)”, he says. “Some people who come here as asylum seekers (Them) want a migration result. I believe we’re (Us) entitled to detain people (Them) to assess health needs, (Them) to determine who they are, (Them) where they come from (Them) and whether they have a criminal record (Them)” (The Australian, Feature 25.07.2001).

A more in-depth analysis of these types of articles will be offered in the following sections of this chapter.

1.4 Reading for Discourses of (Ethical) Encounters, Rejection and Ambivalence

... how to read in the most robust sense, that is to say, suspending oneself and entering the text and the other. If indeed we are thinking about othering as a good thing, it is a kind of chosen othering, as it were, the chosen othering through the imagination... (Spivak 2003, p. 622).
This first analytical category dealing with the Us/Them distinction is also used as a guide to detect discourses of (ethical) encounters, rejection of these encounters and ambivalent responses to the demand of recognition made by asylum seekers to Australians citizens, and to illustrate how the Us/Them dichotomy structures these encounters. In this study the notion of ethical encounter refers to the act of recognition of the vulnerability of asylum seekers. Clearly this act of recognition or movement towards asylum seekers, as with the acts of rejection and ambivalence of response toward asylum seekers, takes place in language. I am looking for these ethical encounters, rejection of this demand for recognition and ambivalent responses toward asylum seekers in newspaper articles, which add a social dimension or normativity (Butler 2005, pp. 23-24) that govern these encounters, rejections and ambivalence. I also believe that Spivak’s citation above illustrates the complexity of the task of analysing the newspaper articles which is a sort of entering the text and the other; I think that the task of suspending oneself in this process also provides an opportunity for further analysis.

Table 2 below illustrates that of the 70 articles reviewed a total of 32 articles clearly disallow recognition or reject the possibility of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers. In other words, 32 narratives within the newspaper articles reviewed here overtly reject the demand for recognition put by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and consequently instrumentalise those asylum seekers. Then 25 of the newspaper articles allow the possibility of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers, meaning that these discourses are affirming the presence of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and embracing their demand for recognition. 13 of these articles have an ambivalent response to the possibility of this ethical encounter; these discourses remain neutral towards the demand of recognition.
The following are examples of rejection of the possibility of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers.

**Example 1:** Corrupt officials at Asian airports are allowing illegal immigrants (Them) to travel to Australia (Us) with false documents…The report says more resources need to be devoted to the battle against the trade in illegal immigrants (Them) but concedes a lack of screening in the immigrants’ countries of origin makes the task formidable….the Australian Institute of criminology (Us) has found corrupt customs officials at Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Hong Kong airports are letting illegals (Them) travel to Australia (Us) with papers from “document mills”.

The report (Us) says the traditional ramshackle wooden vessels of boatpeople (Them) have been replaced by larger boats with steel hulls.
and hi-tech navigation equipment… A spokesman for Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock (Us) said last night he was aware of Iraqi-born Australians (Us/Them) arranging illegal boat passage for friends and relatives (Them). More than 80 per cent of illegal arrivals (Them) in 1999 and 2000 had come from Iraq or Afghanistan (The Australian, Local Section 08.06.2001).

In this article the subject position Us has the demarcation of a national membership that is the Australian nation officially represented by a spokesman for the immigration minister and a report from the Australian Institute of criminology. This subject position (Us) is defined in opposition to the subject position Them corresponding to corrupted officials from Asian Airports, and illegal immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan including Iraqi born people in Australia. The normative context of these subject positions is given by immigration policies, concepts of sovereignty, border control monopoly over territory to keep out intruders and the international human rights convention of which Australia is a signatory. This article is illustrative of a clear rejection of asylum seekers as human beings capable of articulating a demand for recognition that this article does not allow, due to its standpoint. Although this article makes no explicit reference to any of the features that are part of the normative context, it is offering a justification for its exclusionary or rejecting stance, it might be that asylum seekers (Them) with their very presence put in question the Australian (Us) rational community. The asylum seekers are named as illegals who travel with false documents as part of a trade of illegal immigration, and who travel in larger boats with steel hulls and hi-tech navigation equipment. This terminology originates (according to this article) in a report by the Australian Institute of Criminology. Consequently the subject position Us is justified by the rational knowledge that asylum seekers are not worth an opportunity to articulate a demand for recognition with their presence. In this act of disallowance or rejection the rational knowledge of the other as fraudulent illegals silences this very other from speech, thus these others cannot enter into discourse with us. Consequently, this article’s position reiterates the universal—the knowledge that criminal foreigners must be subjects of vilification and discipline (rejection), to safeguard the national sovereignty by protecting its citizens within its civic and territorial boundaries (Benhabib 2004). This article’s text is exercising the power to disallow any possibility that the other, namely asylum seekers, share any rational capabilities to articulate knowledge, to articulate a demand for recognition. In fact, the
subject in the speaking position (the article’s writer) inscribes its authority in institutions such as the Australian Institute of Criminology and the spokesman for the Immigration Minister which appear to be unquestionable, objective and transparent carriers of the truth about asylum seekers. The text of this discourse achieves a distancing effect where the speaking subject acquires an absolute authority by assuming a position of being supported by this supposedly neutral and rational knowledge without questioning the mechanisms that construct this knowledge.

Example 2: The last of the Middle Eastern boat people (Them) might have been flown off Western Australia’s tiny Christmas Island yesterday, (Us)...In the second-biggest arrival of boat people (Them) on Australian territory, (Us) 348 men, women and children (Them) arrived at Christmas Island (Us) last week in a decrepit Indonesian fishing vessel. But local businessman Phil Oakley (Us) said the influx of boat people (Them) was a good cash injection (Them) for the local economy (Us).

While RAAF Hercules aircraft (Us) took the last 100 people (Them) from the tropical island to the Port Hedland detention centre, (Us) islanders (Us) were bracing themselves for another arrival of asylum seekers (Them).

With the rental of the sports hall and the tents for accommodation and the provision of three meals a day for the asylum-seekers, (Them) the economy had been boosted by about $15,000 a day for the past three or four days (Us) (The Australian, Local Section, 21.08. 2001).

In this discourse the text of the subject position Us/Them provides a ready-made categorisation of asylum seekers who are presented in groupings such as: Middle Eastern boat people, 348 men, women and children, 100 people, another arrival of asylum seekers, a good cash injection. These categories of Them in this text work to create a distancing from the knower, the Us, who in this text also appear as ready-made categories such as: Christmas Island, local economy, RAAF Hercules aircraft, Port Hedland detention centre, islanders, boosting of the economy of about $15,000 a day and exceptionally an individual local business man, Phil Oakley. The text of this discourse has a documentary style detached from the local and historical context that it is representing. This text heavily relies on figures (numbers of asylum seekers arriving)
where the reality of asylum seekers is reduced to the single feature of numbers, an exaggerated dimension of numbers of arrivals, and as a good cash injection for the economy. The coloniality of power is at work in this article’s text, which presents the 348 asylum seekers arriving in ‘decrepit Indonesian fishing boats’, people coming from third world countries who lack modern means, and who are threats that need the ‘bracing’ of local islanders.

This reduction of these asylum seekers’ experience (Them) works to reject their claim for recognition as human beings, allowing the exercise of power over their bodies that secure the subject positions of objects that are transported as numbers from the tropical islands to detention centres. This discourse of reduction of asylum seekers to numbers and of a good cash injection (subject position of objects) is intersected with the rational discourse of economy. The fact of knowing that asylum seekers are a good economic phenomenon resembles an institutional production of reality, which establishes this case as a rational and objective fact. This reduction of these asylum seekers’ experience is ultimately an abstraction, a dehumanisation and objectification of the asylum seekers which produces a knowing of Them that excludes the exercise of our (Us) sensitivity to their suffering. Similarly, the labelling of Us as ready-made categories permits the blurring of a political, official intentional act of exclusion and rejection of these asylum seekers’ claim for recognition. The Us in this article has the power of an impersonal disciplinary force, a territory like Christmas Island that acts as a law enforcer for the Australian nation and its citizens. The Us in this article is also represented by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) which must aid in the application of the mandatory detention law and transport these asylum seekers from the Island to the detention centres. And the Us as an economy boosted are all effective devices of power (common discourse) that contribute to produce and formalise this article’s discursive stance of disallowance. This article’s discourse of rejection is grounded on the above mentioned rationality which brings forth the collective rejection of the other (Them) closing the opportunities of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers thus negating our (Us) movement and proximity to this other.

Example 3: …affluent continent (Us) on the periphery of one of the world’s poorest, most crowded and volatile regions (Them) makes Australia a magnet (Us) for asylum-seekers, drug-smugglers and gun-runners (Them).
When Coast watch’s limited resources (Us) get diverted to Ashmore Reef and Christmas Island to spot boat people, (Them) its other priorities suffer (Us).

The current ad hoc approach - as epitomised by the Government’s build-more-detention-centres response (Us) to the sudden arrival of several hundred boat people (Them) last week - is not the answer.

Sovereignty is synonymous with the right to control who and what crosses the frontier (Us). Laws governing trade and immigration evolve over time, but almost every country draws the line at the smuggling of people, drugs, arms (Them) and the poaching of natural resources (Us)….For most of its history, the geographical tyranny of distance has worked to keep Australia (Us) safely isolated from the rest of the world. This isolation allowed a unique array of flora and fauna to evolve, from the eucalypt to the marsupial (Us). Australia’s frontiers (Us) are the vast oceans that kept the Great South Land an enigma until the 18th century - making it the last of the great land masses to be colonised by European or Asian powers - But how do we (Us) control who (Them) and what crosses our borders (Us) in an age where the barriers to the flow of people (Them), services, goods and ideas are being rapidly dismantled and where technology has slashed the cost of movement?... Australia (Us) must make it known (Implicit Them) that it takes border protection seriously.

The choosing of this article’s terms such as ‘affluent continent on the periphery of one of the world’s poorest, most crowded and volatile regions’ elaborates a frontier - a border that divides the Us, namely an affluent continent, an isolated Australia with a unique array of flora and fauna, the Great South Land, with coast watch priorities other than spotting boat people, as insiders from the Them, namely asylum seekers, drug smugglers, boat people, gun-runners, people smugglers, and a flow of people as outsiders. This article builds the story of an affluent continent (this great land mass) with a plethora of natural resources whose vast oceans have kept away colonisation until the 18th century. Consequently, an image of the Australian nation ‘safely isolated’ from the rest of the world emerges as a desirable everyday knowledge. The meaning of a safe Australia is constructed in the fantasy of the purity and wealth of the Australian
sovereign nation which must draw a line to protect its border, its natural resources, and to be protected from the smuggling of people. The construction of meaning in this article contributes to the legitimisation of the subject position Us as the sovereign defender of the Australian borders, consequently maintaining the status quo of sameness and dominance which excludes the intruding poor other (Them). In this article the Australian region is seen as a fixed rich abundance threatened by the scarcity of its surrounding regions that are a menace to its borders. The violence exercised in the construction of Australia’s ‘safe’ isolation from the rest of the world, is given by the fact that it organises a belief of Australia as a nation with an identity that is differentiated and threatened by the other, namely asylum seekers who (Them) are attempting to cross ‘our’ (Us) borders. This violent rejection of asylum seekers also rests upon the construction of them as subaltern-others, different, a reference to asylum seekers as a threat not only to the flora and fauna but to the people. Asylum seekers in this article are constructed as a marginalised group, the essential others belonging to ‘the world’s poorest, most crowded and volatile regions’. In this text, the knowing self-positioned as the Us stitches a subjugated and totalising knowledge of a dangerous other (Them) who can’t deny or contest this knowing, as asylum seekers are already marked, reduced and positioned as a ‘universal’ destructive danger to this western nation.

1.6 The Workings of the Us/Them Divide, the Discourse of Recognition that Allows an Ethical Encounter

*Example 1:* Opinions, perhaps by a majority of around seven or eight to one, (Us) take the view Howard’s election success (Us) is clouded by a heartless, bigoted attitude towards asylum-seekers (Them). There was almost no difference between the Howard and Beazley approach (Us) to asylum seekers, (Them) except one of emphasis. Whereas Howard (Us) was happy to talk about and defend his views on refugees, (Them) Beazley (Us) searched out avenues through which to divert interviewers to domestic matters such as health and education.

You must, (Us) given what’s above as a rough guide, make what you will of Fraser’s handling of Jones’s (Us) final query: “You’re obviously extremely disturbed by the way in which the national
interest (Us) in relation to asylum seekers (Them) has been interpreted. Why do you think it’s been interpreted in this way?”

“I don’t want to say the victory was tainted. But I believe the boat people (Them), the border issues (Us), were used. You only have to follow the advertisements that were used from day one to the last possible day of the campaign…” Former Coalition Prime Minister Mr. Malcolm Fraser

You could go on (Us). You could contend (Us) for example, that a nation (Us) in which the all-consuming election issue becomes the demonising of five or six hundred destitute unfortunates in dangerous boats (Them), and must lack for intellectual heft and nobility (Us).

(The Australian, Features, 22.11. 2001)

The ethos of this article is of allowance of the demand for recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas; this writer builds his/her argument by criticising the 2001 election process. The writer overtly says that ‘Opinions, perhaps by a majority of around seven or eight to one, take the view Howard’s election success is clouded by a heartless, bigoted attitude towards asylum-seekers’. This discursive subject position (Us) responds to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ demand for recognition (Them) by criticising the government’s (Us) posture towards asylum seekers as ‘bigoted’ and ‘heartless’. It also confronts the government’s opposition (Us) by asserting that ‘There was almost no difference between the Howard and Beazley approach to asylum seekers’. It further builds its argument by quoting former Coalition Prime Minister Mr. Fraser who overtly says that asylum seekers were used from the beginning to the end of the election campaign. The article advances its critique by stating that ‘a nation in which the all-consuming election issue becomes the demonising of five or six hundred destitute unfortunates in dangerous boats, must lack for intellectual heft and nobility’.

This article's writer materialises a collective discontent of the national community, the discursive subject position of Us is troubled by Them in the form of destitute and demonised boat people, asylum seekers. The subject position Us sets down his/her defences, is exposing herself/himself, (Us) to the other (Them). As Levinas says, “The relation with the Other puts me in question, empties me of myself and does not cease to drain me, by uncovering for me ever new resources” (Levinas 1966, p. 39). The subject
position (Us) recognises the vulnerability of the other (Them) by making the claim that asylum seekers (Them) have been used and demonised, thus these utterances put forth the power to change this vulnerability unlike the subject position that disallows recognition thus distancing himself/herself from the other, and reducing the other to a subaltern-other. Closing the possibility of an intelligent response is closed with this closure to emotions and affect toward the other. The subject of this article is implicated, is not a separated identity of the other as he/she is compelled to exchange with this other (Them) and is seeking to bring about a process of change (Butler 2004, p. 44) by putting in question the lack of intellectual heft and nobility and the heartless and bigoted attitude of the national community (Us) toward asylum seekers. This subject position of allowance of ethical recognition makes possible a critical opening of the normative context of immigration control, by exposing the violence of this civilising process which ‘uses’ asylum seekers for political purposes. This allowance reveals some of the concealed inscriptions of colonialism that exclude from membership to the Australian nation ‘unauthorised boat arrivals’. The discursive subject Us in this article also brings to view the power and authority that form the mythical ‘national community’ (Us) which frames the knowledge of the other (Them) as illegal, as a blank page for immigration authorities and non-critical printed media on which to inscribe a narrative of rejection. And is doing this by positioning the subject (Us) in question, and by articulating a discourse that enables thinking about the objectification of asylum seekers (Them) by politicians and Us, consequently exposing to view who has the power and authority to tell the stories of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The discursive subject Us in this article offers a chance to think about how I (Us) ought to treat asylum seekers (Them).

Example 2: Philip Ruddock (Us) says that most of the world’s 12 million refugees (Them) endure conditions far worse than those experienced by asylum-seekers (Them) in Australia’s immigration detention centres (Us).

Mr. Ruddock (Us) continues to use selective criteria to reject arguments for substantive changes in an immigration policy that threatens asylum-seekers (Them) worse than criminals.

Granted, Australia (Us) is generous by world standards in accepting refugees (Them) and people-smuggling (Them) is wrong. But where is
the Australian embassy (Us) that people (Them) can go to in Baghdad or the bombed-out Afghan capital, Kabul? (Them)

Mr. Ruddock (Us) is playing into the hands of those who would turn back (Us) asylum-seekers (Them) the moment their boats (Them) entered Australia’s waters (Us). One Nation senator Len Harris (Us) has already jumped on the Ruddock bandwagon, (Us) backing the minister’s comments (Us) with his own erroneous observation that “illegals…(Them) are not immigrants. They are criminals. (Them)(The Australian, 20.06. 2001)

The subject position Us in the form of Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock and politicians such as One Nation senator Len Harris is overtly questioned in the article utterance about the ‘selective criteria’ used by Immigration Minister to prevent changes to the current immigration policies, which are noted as responsible for treating asylum-seekers ‘worse than criminals’. In addition it explicitly says that ‘Mr. Ruddock is playing into the hands of those who would turn back asylum-seekers the moment their boats entered Australia’s waters’. Clearly the subject position Us in this article is disturbed by the dominant role of politics and the government policies that position Them, asylum seekers as a subaltern-other who deserve to be treated worse than criminals. This article moreover questions the makings of consent by directly asking ‘Where is the Australian embassy that people can go to in Baghdad or the bombed-out Afghan capital, Kabul?’ in reference to the government’s posture of asylum seekers as ‘queue jumpers’ (Manne and Corlett 2004: p. 9). In this case the workings of consent that this article is questioning refer to the knowing of asylum seekers as queue jumpers, stealers of places from worthy refugees, hence making Them not only unworthy refugees but criminals. While Mares (2002, p. 18) in his discussion of the restrictions imposed by the legal immigration process is arguing that the image of the ‘queue jumper’ is very powerful as it contains an element of truth, in the sense that people who can afford to pay smugglers are more fortunate than those who cannot. Consequently, he also states that the image of the queue jumper not only raises the question for Us about the reasons to give favoured treatment to Them, people who can afford to pay their way to Australia, in this manner these people deeply offend Us, and our sense of ‘fair play’. The subject position in this article is actively challenging the notions of ‘unworthy’ refugees, although this example article does not make direct reference to the term ‘queue jumper’. This image is part of the normative contextual background that
allows the subject of this article to critique the government’s and politicians’ position towards asylum seekers in immigration detention centres.

The subject position in this article does not question the nation’s preoccupation with border control and contentiously states that ‘Australia is generous by world standards in accepting refugees’ considering that the historical background shows among other important issues, that before 1966 the White Australia Policy disqualified non-European refugees from entering Australia (for a historical perspective on Australia’s humanitarian record, see Neumann 2004). Nevertheless, the subject writer in this article that critiques the hostile attitude towards asylum seekers is furthering his/her critical position by stating that a politician like Harris ‘erroneously observes that illegal asylum seekers are not immigrants but criminals’. By affirming that politicians like Harris ‘erroneously observe[s]’ that asylum seekers are criminals, the subject Us in this article is positioned to allow that the presence of unfamiliarity is not threatened by Them (the other) and is a subject who does not feel compelled to manage, exclude and objectify Them (asylum seekers). Therefore, this article’s utterances are recognising the vulnerability of asylum seekers demonstrating that this subject’s position is bounded in a relational net with this Other thus opening the closure of the existing normative immigration context which punishes and excludes.

Example 3: Philip Ruddock (Us) loves a queue. Indeed, he has made a fetish out of the need for asylum-seekers, (Them) no matter how desperate, to wait in line rather than come to Australia (Us) first. Heaven help if you try to jump the queue.

Now after all the poll-driven attacks on so-called illegals from Iraq and Middle Eastern countries, (Them) the Immigration Minister (Us) has been forced to admit that, yes, his office (Us) intervened to grant a visa application to the Iraqi father of a Liberal candidate(Us).

No compassion has been extended to boatloads of asylum-seekers (Them) in recent months. Not only have they been demonised (Them) by the Coalition (Us) as illegals, queue jumpers, potential baby-killers and terrorists (Them) …
After more than 350 boatpeople drowned (Them) Mr. Ruddock (Us) said they met their fate because they were breaking the law (Them), and to relax the rules would only encourage them (Them).

Yet it was Mr. Ruddock (Us) who created the refugee category (Us) that ensures asylum-seekers (Them who arrive on hived-off islands, or are sent there by our navy, (Them) get less access than the overwhelming number of illegal immigrants who enter through (Them) our airports(Us).

Mr. Ruddock (Us) is prepared to treat so-called queue-jumping asylum-seekers (Them) indecently when it suits him (Us), yet he gives special treatment to others who won’t wait in line (Them)(The Australian, Features (1 edition) 31. 10.2001).

The ethos of this article is of allowance as it overtly objects to government policies towards asylum seekers by criticising the naming of asylum seekers as ‘queue jumpers’ by the government, in particular the Immigration minister Mr. Ruddock. ‘He has made a fetish out of the need for asylum-seekers, no matter how desperate, to wait in line rather than come to Australia first. Heaven help if you try to jump the queue’. The subject Us (in the form of the Coalition and Immigration Minister Ruddock) is being challenged by the subject of this article who is positioning Us as the obsessive powerful enactors of the Australian national will, the managers of the subaltern bodies of asylum seekers. A subject who is empowered to exclude the asylum seekers coming by boat since they have not come through ‘the right channels’ in this exclusionary context is capable of ‘granting a visa application to the Iraqi father of a Liberal candidate’. Utterances such as ‘the Immigration Minister has been forced to admit…’, ‘No compassion has been extended to boatloads of asylum-seekers in recent months. Not only have they been demonised by the Coalition as illegals, queue jumpers, potential baby-killers and terrorists’, reveal the workings of the making of the subaltern-other and the racist classifications put to work by Us in the figures of the Coalition and the Immigration Minister. This article emphasises the position of power: who has ‘legitimacy’ to knock at the gate-keeper’s door for entrance to the Australian territory. It also reveals Mr. Ruddock and the government’s appeal to popular rejection of asylum seekers coming by boat by favouring the term ‘queue jumper’. The article’s narrative prevents the discussion of the difficulties confronted by asylum seekers to apply for resettlement
under the Humanitarian Program (when this option is available) which, according to Mares (Mares 2002, p. 20), apart from being a slow bureaucratic process has at best a one-in-five chance of success. By criticising the lack of compassion toward asylum seekers coming by boat the subject in this article is positioning her/himself to ethically respond to this other, namely asylum seekers who are humanised in the following statement, ‘Mr. Ruddock is prepared to treat so-called queue-jumping asylum-seekers indecently’. The normative context to this statement that remains implicit or obscured from view, is that the Howard’s government/Us collapsed the onshore and offshore categories of the Humanitarian Program into one, due to the number of asylum seekers arriving by boat. In this manner arguably setting one community of refugees against the other. The subject of this article is exposing a nationalist practice where the image of the national space needs to exclude the threatening presence of asylum seekers, the ‘so-called illegals from Iraq and Middle Eastern countries. The writer is also exposing how this other is made a subaltern-other and constructed as an ‘object’ of spatial exclusion and in doing so the nationalist Us appear as masters of the Australian national space (Hage 1988, p. 28): ‘…Yet it was Mr. Ruddock who created the refugee category that ensures asylum-seekers who arrive on hived-off islands, or are sent there by our navy get less access than the overwhelming number of illegal immigrants who enter through our airports’. The writer of this article is making visible the act of categorisation, the marker of racial difference, the colonial power at work by noting how we/Us articulate differences in values of the subaltern-other: ‘they met their fate because they were breaking the law, and to relax the rules would only encourage them’. The Us in the form of Minister Ruddock is saying this subaltern other is criminal, they are undifferentiated subjects bearing completely different moral values and cultural legacies to Us. The writer of this article shows ethical care for asylum seekers by the above exposure of Us that is only possible in front of the other/Them asylum seekers, whose presence elicits questions of our/my ethical responsibility toward them.

1.7 The workings of the Us/Them Divide, the Discourse of Ambivalence toward an Ethical Encounter

Example 1: Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock (Us) has rejected as ‘extraordinarily naïve’ a parliamentary committee’s (Us) key recommendation of a 14-week time limit on the mandatory detention
of illegal immigrants (Them). The committee (Us) had unanimously recommended that illegal immigrants (Them) who have security clearance should spend no longer than 14 weeks in detention.

If a detainee (Them) has not been processed in the set time, the committee (Us) has called for consideration of a sponsorship scheme to free detainees (Them).

Committee members (Us) said they were shocked by the physical impact of the centres, with high fences, double gates, razor and barbed wire, and the personal stories of detainees. (Them) (The Australian, 19.06.2001).

This article’s writer is presenting the overt rejection made by Us in the form of a parliamentary committee of the prolonged detention of ‘detainees’, and is discursively showing this committee’s (our) overt outrage at the treatment of ‘detainees’. The subject Us is positioned to draw attention to the ‘shock’ suffered by committee members about the physical impact of detention centres. The writer describes the ‘high fences’, ‘double gates’, ‘razor and barbed wire’ and ‘the personal stories of detainees’. Here the recognition of the vulnerability of ‘detainees’ is related to the ‘shock’ experienced by the committee members, the Us is implicated in Them. This recognition by Us breaks the closure of the normative context, namely the mandatory detention (Australian Migration Act section 196), which allowed the detention of on arrival asylum seekers in centres located in remote and desert camps such as Port Hedland, Curtin and Woomera. The ethical recognition of ‘detainees’ is made possible by the critical stance that the subject position Us takes with regard to the prolonged mandatory detention and its conditions. By bringing to view that ‘detainees’ have personal stories to narrate, namely their specific case of inequality, ‘detainees’ are given the power to narrate their stories. In spite of this, the subject of this article stays in an ambivalent position toward asylum seekers by explicitly accepting to name Them as detainees and by then on questioning their naming as ‘illegal immigrants’. This is an important distinction that is obscured from view since the term ‘illegal immigrant’ may be more appropriate to those who do not have a valid visa (‘unlawful non-citizens’) who are seeking protection, such as visa over-stayers. (Phillips 2011, p. 3). This writer also reports that Immigration Minister Mr. Ruddock rejected the recommendations of this committee as ‘extraordinarily naïve’. In this stance the subject position Us is not troubled by the findings of this committee.
(another face of Us). The writer (Us) is also not troubled by this assertion and proceeds to highlight it in an act of categorisation that exercises power as this visual act imposes a limit to the findings of the committee it officialises a negation of these findings, hence the impossibility of a rupture of the normative context.

Example 2: Detention of unlawful non-citizens (Them) is a unique Australian policy (Us) and it is bipartisan. It was introduced in 1992 by Labor’s immigration minister, Gerry Hand … The difference between the current situation and the 1970s Vietnamese boatpeople (Them) is obvious but unremarked - there was no real dispute about the credentials of the Vietnamese who (Them) fled a regime that Australia (Us) had fought.

In 1998-99 there were 926 boat people detained; (Them) in 1999-2000 this reached 4174. (Them) Ruddock’s gamble is that Australia’s firmness will (Us) deter the current surge of asylum seekers (Them).

Ruddock (Us) exploits this idea. “What many of my critics (Us) are advocating is a borderless society”, he says. “Some people who come here as asylum seekers (Them) want a migration result. I believe we’re (Us) entitled to detain people (Them) to assess health needs, to determine who they are, where they come from and whether they have a criminal record” (Them).

Ruddock (Us) stresses that 80 per cent of arrivals (Them) have an answer to their refugee claim within 15 weeks. The problem, however, is those who are rejected (Them).

But the Minister for Immigration (Us) asserts the sovereign right of the Australian Government (Us) to decide who (Them) shall enter our community (Us) under Australian law (Us). The minister (Us) insists that asylum seekers (Them) are ‘unauthorised arrivals’- not refugees” (Them) (The Australian, Features 25.07. 2001).

The subject in this article is positioned to overtly critique the government’s (Us) posture toward asylum seekers (Them) by using words like ‘gamble’ in reference to ‘Australia’s firmness will’ to ‘deter’ the current ‘surge of asylum seekers’ and ‘exploits’ the idea
that his critics are ‘advocating for a borderless society’. Clearly the writer is ethically recognising the vulnerability of asylum seekers by highlighting how they have been objectified, made such a ‘visible problem’ that requires ‘the firmness of Australian will to deter it’. The article’s writer in this stance is rejecting our/Us making of Them namely, asylum seekers as the subaltern-other, challenging the official, public nomination of the subaltern-criminal-other by exposing this naming as exploitative. And by questioning our/Us need of a firm will to deter, to reject asylum seekers, the writer is overtly challenging the collective mobilisation called upon in the utterance ‘Australia’s firmness will…’. Consequently, from this position the subject Us in this article establishes a relation with the subject Them and is opening the closure of the normative context by exposing the making of asylum seekers as a problem. Nevertheless, the writer’s struggle with the ethical demand presented by asylum seekers is halted by Ambivalence, as this writer chooses to highlight the numbers ‘….In 1998-99 there were 926 boat people detained; in 1999-2000 this ‘reached’ 4174’ constituting ‘….the ‘current surge’ of asylum seekers’, using utterances such as the ‘current surge’ strategically placed after the contrasted numbers of arrivals in the 1998-2000 two year period. The subject position Us in this instance is complicit in elaborating an enumerative discourse associated with a counting practice that singles out ‘unauthorised arrivals’, ‘not refugees’, ‘illegal immigrants’. The counting practice in this article generates the recognisable category of ‘surges of asylum seekers’ thus granting legitimacy to the need to protect Us and our borders. That is, this writer also facilitates the latter positioning of our/Us of rejection towards the ethical demand for recognition posed by asylum seekers in the following utterances ‘… The minister insists that asylum seekers are ‘unauthorised arrivals’ - not refugees’. Subsequently, asylum seekers (Them) become individuals who have failed to behave themselves ethically since they have not allowed Us to exercise ‘….the sovereign right of the Australian Government to decide who shall enter our community.’

*Example 3:* Asylum seekers (Them) must not be deported on mere assumption. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Megan Saunders the UN has urged Australia (Us) to isolate boatpeople suspected of terrorism or serious crimes (Them).

UNHCR spokesman Rupert Colville said yesterday the advice had been sent to Australia (Us), as well as other countries cracking down
on Asylum-seekers (Them) in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

The UNHCR says asylum-seekers (Them) can be detained if they are suspected, on solid grounds, of being involved in international terrorism. It says asylum-seekers (Them) must not be deported on the mere assumption they are involved in terrorism.

Since the Tampa crisis (Them), the Howard Government (Us) has not allowed asylum-seekers arriving on boats (Them) from Indonesia to set foot on the Australian mainland (Us).

Their call came as the Howard Government (Us) was forced to respond to another fire, believed to be deliberately lit by pre-Tampa asylum-seekers (Them), which damaged the Woomera detention centre in South Australia (Us).

Meanwhile, John Howard (Us) also condemned a call by Victorian Premier Steve Bracks (Us) to scrap the Pacific Solution (Us). “What he’s really saying is people who come here illegally (Them) should be allowed on to the Australian mainland (Us) and (be) processed here” (Us) Mr. Howard (The Australian, Local, 08.12.2001).

The ethos of this article is of ambivalence as it reports without further elaboration on the requests made by UNHCR and UN not to deport asylum seekers on suspicion of terrorism or serious crimes, following the September 11 terrorists attacks in USA. What is obscured from view in this article is that border policing intensified in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. And the figure of the terrorist had come to occupy a central place in border enforcement, hence people of ‘Middle Eastern backgrounds’ became the focus of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bigotry in Australia (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2001). On this topic Mares says, “Public fear was heightened by the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington and any remnant of public sympathy demolished…” (Mares 2002, p. 3). The writer of this article nevertheless opens the opportunity for our/US consideration that ‘asylum-seekers must not be deported on the mere assumption they are involved in terrorism’. Similarly, this article reports on Mr. Howard’s approach which ‘has not allowed asylum seekers arriving on boats from Indonesia to set foot in Australia’ while referring to the ‘… call
made by Victorian Premier Steve Bracks to scrap the Pacific Solution’. Alluding to a ‘deliberately lit fire by pre-Tampa asylum seekers in the Woomera detention centre…’ the Us in the form of Mr. Howard and Mr. Bracks is in conflict, that is to say that the writer of this article is articulating a visible act of struggle or contestation to the rejection of asylum seekers. Yet, when reporting the fire at the Woomera detention centre, the writer of this article averts from view the normative context of mandatory detention and that Woomera is located 480 kilometres North West of Adelaide, which had a record of incidents, riots, and self-harm due to the lengthy detention time and overcrowded conditions (Mann 2003). Consequently, in this section the Us is closing the possibility of an ethical encounter with asylum seekers/Them who emerge as a subaltern-delinquent-other who conduct themselves irresponsibly by setting fire to the detention facilities. Finally, this article’s ambivalent ethos is set by Mr. Howard’s critique of the Victorian Premier’s call to scrap the Pacific Solution: “What he’s really saying is people who come here illegally should be allowed on to the Australian mainland and (be) processed here,” without further discussion of our/Us. The writer of this article is closing the likelihood of Us taking into account the interest of Them, who here appear as the subaltern-illegal-other being affected by our actions. The everyday value that is legitimised is that of advancing the nation’s security as the utmost interest. In fact, in this article the Australian nation’s sense of its own worth is built upon the authority act that excludes those who are not part of it, explicitly asylum seekers, thus legitimising the violent principles of territorial division.

2 Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the workings of language in the Australian newspaper articles during the period June-December 2001. The tools utilised in this CDA approach were ‘technologisation’ and ‘democratisation’ used in conjunction with the Us/Them divide. These have guided the acknowledgment and identification of linguistic exchanges in these articles as power interchanges. These tools embedded in Spivak’s perspective of the subaltern-other have brought to view the relationship of force and of objectification underlying the responses in the discourses of disallowance and of ambivalence towards the demand for recognition presented by asylum seekers. The rejecting or ambivalent subject positions emerging in some cases are linked to neutral, objective knowledge as for instance, example 1 which portrays asylum seekers as
‘illegals’ who are part of an ‘illegal trade of immigration’ hence mobilising consent for ‘more resources needed to be devoted to the battle against the trade in illegal immigrants’. This argument is based in the unquestioned empirical knowledge of The Australian Institute of Technology. However, this article fails to introduce the empirical knowledge that for instance the UNHCR emphasises that a person who has a well-founded fear of persecution should be viewed as a refugee and not labelled an ‘illegal immigrant’ (Phillips 2011, p. 2). In general terms, the discourses disallowing or rejecting the ethical recognition of asylum seekers mark the bodies of asylum seekers as a subaltern-other. The rejecting knowing subject Us has articulated enabling, transcendent utterances that justify a rejection of this demand, thus denying our/Us responsibility for the normative context in which this rejection emerges. In fact, this standpoint rejects an exploration of our/Us implication on the Other in the form of asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia, thus precluding possibilities of change or the opening of the closure of official punitive and divisive approaches toward asylum seekers.

Similarly, ambivalent responses have highlighted struggles for the monopoly of power to bring to view, to produce knowledge, to impose a social view based on the need to have borders and divisions to constitute the identity of Australia and its national citizens as insiders and non-citizens as outsiders. Bourdieu says that the region and its frontiers constitute the trace of the act of authority which demarcates the country and imposes the legitimisation of the principle of social division (Bourdieu 1985, p. 89). In the case of the articles reviewed here, the ambivalent discursive subjects portrayed a subject not able to take a clear ethical stand toward the demand for recognition made by asylum seekers. The subject position in these articles is variable, seeming to alternate between contesting the practices of technologisation and submitting to practices of democratisation. It appears that this position hampers our/Us capacity to respond to these asylum seekers as it simultaneously humanises and dehumanises Them.

Lastly, this analysis funnelled by the CDA tool of democratisation and rooted in Butler’s ethics of recognition has documented the viewpoint of allowance of the ethical recognition made by asylum seekers. The articles reviewed here position a discursive subject Us concerned with asylum seekers; the subject position Us in this space was willing to become undone by questioning the need to have borders, or by overtly claiming discontent with the imagined national community. The allowing subject showed his/her readiness to risk, to depart from the knowing position. This subject is
positioned as a subject that contested and opposed the relegation of the figure of the asylum seekers as a subaltern-other. This subject also made an effort to be accountable by bringing to view the normative context that facilitated the telling of Them/the others as an object of exclusion and Us/ourselves as the subjects who occupied the privileged position of managers of this Other. Thus, bringing to view the vulnerable position of asylum seekers, this is a discursive subject that perceives and recognises the vulnerability of asylum seekers and our/Us own vulnerability and foreignness to myself. In this stance the subject is positioned not to exhibit him/herself through idealised images of an Australian citizen, this subject is embodied, grounded in the ethical responsibility that resist the politics of closure that universalises and fixate asylum seekers.

The next chapter will focus on the analysis of letters to the editor regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.
CHAPTER 4

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS - LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
/CONSTRUCTING THE SUBJECTIVITIES OF ASYLUM SEEKERS ON
TEMPORARY PROTECTION VISAS

1. Introduction

This chapter examines the discursive construction of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in Letters to the Editor (LTE) in *The Australian* Newspaper during the period of June-December 2001. A total of 322 letters to the editors published in ‘The Australian’ newspaper during the period June-July 2001 were reviewed. This chapter is addressing the research question ‘How are the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas constructed in the Australian print mass media?’ The analysis below focuses specifically on discourses of the subject. Commonly, the texts of LTE writers articulate a variety of discourses; however this chapter focuses only on the discourses pertinent to the construction of subjectivities.

This analysis draws attention to the systematic emergence of opinions, ways of thinking and language found within the texts of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas that shape the dominant discourses about them. The importance of examining these discourses in the LTE is that this process renders visible the way in which inequalities in the Australian society taint existing inclusive public spheres, revealing how discursive interactions are stained by these inequalities. The analysis also shows how the inequalities that the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are subjected to may affect both asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the conception of nationalism in Australia. This chapter also explores the mechanisms of power that construct this specific knowledge and truth about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas by questioning the type of reasoning which embraces this construction.

This chapter also illustrates and examines the type of knowledge that had been displaced from these representations. It exposes how these absences had been actively produced and how alternative knowledge about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas has been disqualified within the LTE texts.

Letters- to-the- editor is a specific genre in newspaper production seen as an important means for the involvement of the public in issues they are concerned about (Reader 2008). What differentiates LTE as a specific genre in the printed media is that LTE
express views and opinions, and provide judgments of society that do not have to pass the criteria of objective or factual knowledge (Rupar 2007, p. 595). Consequently LTE are regarded as a medium for public debate as they are considered to have a lower degree of mediation, compared with news texts. News texts are framed by journalistic norms such as the choice of sources, the specific way in which the story is told (the manner in which issues are positioned within a particular framework), the principle of objectivity in reporting news (Rupar 2007) and the legal and political framework in which they are produced. While LTE provide opportunities for the public to express their opinion, it is also argued that LTE may not be written by a wide range of people. This criticism is particularly relevant for this study, as a noticeable absence from the range of writers to LTE examined in this section are asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and people of non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) in general.

For centuries a small number of writers were confronted by many thousands of readers. This changed toward the end of the last century. It began with the daily press opening to its reader’s space for “letters to the editor”. And today….at any moment the reader is ready to turn into a writer (Benjamin 1931, p. 232).

It follows that if at any moment a reader is ready to turn into a writer, why the contributors to this public debate are not refugees/asylum seekers on temporary protection visas? So the question opens, “Who is the writer that positions and subjectifies refugees/asylum seekers on temporary protection visas?” This will be explored later in the chapter. It is also said that LTE are normally edited by the subjective criteria of journalists (Reader 2008, p. 607), and for print and online letters to the editor, there is always an editorial process - unlike the increasingly common online blogs - and this involves alignment of the letters with the agenda-setting functions of newspapers (Macdonald 2007, p. 608). LTE are a type of language in use that gives evidence of the diversity of people’s views and of their linguistic power to construct and recognize themselves as members of the community (Rojas-Lizana 2007, p. 81) since LTE emerge in relation to their context and in a particular historical moment, contributing to public sphere debates but only through a very specific discourse framed by the components of this genre. For instance, the type of newspaper where letters are published has significant influence upon the topic. In this chapter I am examining LTE to a national newspaper which maintains a focus on the relationship between governance and national identity as is particularly articulated through the editorial
processes around the selection of letters. The position of this study is that LTE constitute an important instrument to examine the emerging narratives about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas within the Australian population since they are a resource for the examination of perspectives that discuss the knowledge and truth about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas developed by the newspaper articles.

As stated in previous chapters, this study uses a post-structuralist orientation to discourse and representation. In more general terms, post structuralist perspectives refer to a group of theories that investigate the relationship between people and the practice of making and reproducing meanings (Belsey 2002, p. 5). This is particularly useful in this study as it seeks to investigate whose interests are served by accepting particular beliefs, values, and meanings regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Post-structuralism also embraces difference by recognising that subjects differ and can occupied different subject positions within discourses, these subject positions are likely to change according to differential power relations in the event of the availability of new discourses (Weedon 1999). This body of theory also conceives subjects as both subjected beings (to the meanings and sentence structures) and as and agents (source of initiatives, agent of a verb) (Belsey 2002, p. 37).

Critical Discourse Analysis as articulated by Fairclough—particularly its focus on the connections between the properties of the texts social agents and social processes—constitutes an important aid in facilitating the emergence of situated and contested knowledge. This analysis aims to uncover power dynamics at play through the types of voices that are most prevalent and normal about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivities in the public domain, and the voices that are silenced or displaced.

Using a post-structuralist orientation to discourse and representation and Critical Discourse Analysis this chapter examines the emergence of the subject asylum seeker in the types of discourses found in LTE to The Australian newspaper during the period June-December 2001. The discourses found within this section are categorised as the discourse of the criminal other, the discourse of the unwanted other, the discourse of the deprived/wretched other and the discourse of the radically different other. The subsequent section investigates the emergence of the asylum seeker on temporary protection visa subject within the discourses of border security and national identity.
1.1 The Presences in the Letters-to-the-Editor - Discourses of the Subject

...how one becomes the condition of the other, or how one becomes the unmarked background for the action of the other…. (Butler 1999, p. 168)

Butler’s concern here is with the processes of subjectification or the practice of gendering and racially constituting subjects in and by discourse. She draws attention to the importance of recognizing the temporal and not always explicit dimension of the structure that produces raced and gendered subjects, since she argues that this structure has to be reiterated again and again and that this temporal dimension is the circumstance of its subversion (Butler 1999, p. 168). For Foucault the emergence of subjectivities needs to be linked to the examination of power, its object and its domain of interest. Scrutinising where it embeds itself, the effects it produces and how relations of subjugation can construct subjects, he proposes that the analysis of the construction of subjects needs to concentrate on the boundless workings of power in relationships rather than on the origin of the sovereign (Foucault 2003, p. 28-46). Foucault’s observations about the emergence of subjectivities within relationships of power are pertinent to scrutinise the specific type of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivities emerging in the LTE, given that for Foucault a good sovereign is well placed within a well policed territory in terms of the movement of ideas, wills and orders. There is also the position that our knowledge of the other is always corrupted with our own implicit norms and patterns of expectation, namely a pre-existing frame of reference (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998, p. 18).

These positions in regard to subjectivity namely, Foucault, Butler, Blommaert and Verschueren and Fairclough as below:

...semiosis figures in ways of being, the constitution of identities...Semiosis in the representation and self representation of social practices constitutes ‘discourses’ ...some ways of making meaning are dominant or mainstream in a particular discourse, others are marginal, or oppositional, or ‘alternative’. (Fairclough 1992, pp. 3 - 4)

In the above citation Fairclough highlights that signs shape the processes of the production of meaning of social subjects and the social which in turn are constituted by
discourse. He also notes that there are different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice where some discourses become dominant relegating other discourses to the margin (Mills 2004, p. 132). The previously outlined stances underpin the methodological approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the LTE to the Australian newspaper. The Letters -to-the- editor writers locate asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the domain of the Other, positioning asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as essentially different human beings separated from and subaltern to the speaking subject who speaks a truth of racism and rejection. The discourses found within the LTE present asymmetrical relationships of force where the speaking subject is fighting a war (Foucault 2003, p. 53-54), following Foucault’s conception of war as associated with internal perceptions of threats constituting the inside, outside, self and the other realms. In this case the adversary of this war is the asylum seeker on temporary protection visa thus granting legitimacy to the relation of subordination imposed by the LTE writers.

1.2 Discourses of the Criminal Other

A significant segment of the LTE in The Australian position asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as what I shall refer to as “the criminal Other”. Utilising personal pronouns of “they”, “them”, in combination with language which either directly or implicitly asserts that they are unable to obey the local Australian laws, a set of assumptions about refugees’ behaviour—both past and present—is established. Across letters in this category, the refugee is not only articulated as “Other” (different from “Us” or “Australians”) but also the Other who cannot be trusted to conform to a sense of Australian sociality that is constituted in a sense of law and responsibility. An analysis of this category of letters indicates that refugees and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are positioned and subjectified by the ‘fixity’ of an identity: they are assumed or perceived to have been criminals in the past in their home countries, and are presumed or perceived to be likely to be criminals in the future in Australia.

The criminal asylum seeker subject emerges in the context of utterances such as “…terrorists they have already landed in our country” (LTE: 201201/1), “…they will suddenly become law-abiding when they find themselves in Australia?” (LTE: 130901/1), “.... the
public should not have got to know these people as human beings. They must remain faceless threats…” (LTE: 050901/1), “…Then they have the hide to trash their facilities and inflict injury upon detention centre staff” (LTE: 150601/2), “Prison makes them ‘crims’ ” (LTE: 150601/1) “Hero or criminal: what’s the key?” (LTE: 300701/1) “…We want builders not wreckers.” (LTE: 201201/1).

The LTE writers position themselves as distant from the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas by using pronouns such as ‘they’, ‘them’, and ‘these’, constituting an US/Them dichotomy that is out of step with poststructuralist multiplicity, subjective complexity and post-colonial multiculturalism. Their construction of the asylum seeker on temporary protection visa subject relies upon their knowledge of asylum seekers as terrorists, non-law abiding and faceless threats. These writers’ standpoint is mediated by their view of asylum seekers as a group of people. One of the writers, who questions if an asylum seeker is a "criminal" or "hero" presents limited room for the representation of more complex understandings of identity, motivation and refugee discourses. Although his question can be seen to individualise the position of asylum seekers, the writer gives only two possible opposing options: either a criminal or a hero/ine.

The treatment of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as a collective or a single community, not only occludes their diversity of identities and experiences. It also serves to render these refugees subjects worthy of criticism and judgement such as that of criminality, making them an object of government through the popular speech exercised by the LTE writers. This generic representation of refugees, asylum seekers is prevalent in the Western media. Since media articles in this area hardly depict the individual/personal refugee, their stories normally represent asylum seekers as masses equated with the forces of nature (Szorenyi 2004, p. 5). This is a recurrent phenomenon in the Australian media since Australian newspapers have long been concerned with discourses on/about immigration, asylum seekers, and refugees (McMasters 2001; Jupp 2002; Mares 2001).

I believe that this type of media representation adds to the absence of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ own accounts contributed by LTE writers’ subjectification of asylum seekers. In addition, the knowledge or truth emerging from the writers of LTE concerning asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as the criminal Other
suggests an alignment with the apparatus that the Australian government put in place to impose a punitive approach towards asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

1.3 Discourse of the Unwanted Other

A proportion of the LTE writers place asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as what I shall refer to as “the unwanted Other”. Utilising personal pronouns such as “them”, “they” intermingled with figurative narratives of the primitive lunatic maniac, and the faceless threat who must be repelled. The asylum seeker on temporary protection visa emerging from these LTE is depicted as less than human, a sordid figure capable of acts against their children that are unimaginable in this part of the world. Thus, the letters in this category clearly articulate the refugee as different from “Us” or “Australians.” These letters are positioning the asylum seeker on temporary protection visas outside the cultural realms and norms that might warrant them worthy of rights. The writers of LTE in this section explicitly assert cultural differences reflective of their colonial heritage, to repel asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

The unwanted asylum seeker on temporary protection visas materializes in the following words:

“…these uninvited people…” (LTE: 150601/2), “…These societies, with lunatocracies like Afghanistan, Iran or Iraq,…Pre-modern states with astronomical birth rates and wrecked economies are run entirely by maniacs or the merely indifferent…” (LTE: 030901/4), “…Reason and Sympathy lost to faceless invaders….” (LTE: 050901/1) “There are, it seems, places in the world where tossing your children into shark-infested seas is seen as an acceptable form of protest.” (LTE: 121001/3) “…. Keep them out! They shall not land…” (LTE: 091101/1), “…and once again Australians taxpayers have to foot the bill for the damage caused by these ratbags…” (LTE: 201201/3), “…We must not be fooled by the so-called families on boats…” (LTE: 051101/4), “…shameful majority are in favour of turning the boats back…” (LTE: 051101/1), “…Australians just do not want these people in Australia…” (LTE: 030901/5).
In the discourse of the unwanted Other asylum seekers on temporary protection visas constitute a multiple referent as expressed in the pronouns ‘these’, ‘them’, and ‘they’. For these writers asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are unwanted since they have come without invitation, they are invaders, untrustworthy people that have come from countries governed by maniacs and lunatics who should be kept out of Australia. This discursively establishes an Australian identity that is constituted by what is not Australian through articulating a concept of Australian values in line with the political rhetoric that emerges through governmentality and discourses of population and national identity. The profile of the “criminal and unwanted Other” effects an erasure of the past inhuman treatment, and persecution (Tuitt 1999, p. 104) that forced these refugees to flee and seek asylum. This profile enacts the scripting over of a disciplinarian present anchored in the knowledge of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as unwanted criminals.

1.4 Discourse of the Deprived/Wretched Other

A considerable number of LTE writers depict asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as what I shall refer to as “the deprived/wretched Other”. The blend of pronouns such as ‘those’, ‘these’ with expressions of suffering such as ‘needy’, ‘desperate’, ‘poor’ create a specific narrative of asylum seekers as the essential sufferer who needs rescuing. However, the majority of (except for one) LTE writers disavow their implications in the social condition afflicting the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

The imprint of the deprived/wretched asylum seekers on temporary protection visas is marked by the next writers:

“…a needy, desperate human being in need of care and compassion.” (LTE: 150801/3), “…While we assist a giant corporation in making money out of human misery...” (LTE: 150801/4), “…who had responsibility to take” these unfortunates, and that our Government was refusing to allow…” (LTE: 300801/3) “... It is disturbing enough that our political leaders can treat these desperate people so harshly.” (LTE: 300801/6), “How can so many Afghans find $100,000 for their trip? …one of the poorest places on earth”. (LTE: 300801/23),
“…Those poor bastards only do what most of us would if we were in their shoes.” (LTE: 310801/1), “…more than 400 desperate people…” (LTE: 310801/3), “…the poor devils fleeing oppression…” (LTE: 050901/12), “…a few hundred poor and desperate people.” (LTE: 100901/6), “…people from a country which, according to the Weekend Magazine, jails a murderer for six months. And the crime? Killing his sister because the poor wretch was raped by her brother-in-law…” (LTE: 110901/3), “…against those wretched souls fleeing the Taliban’s repression…” (LTE: 180901/4), “…a few hundred miserable refugees.” (LTE: 240901/1), “…those less fortunate than ourselves…” (LTE: 131001/4), “…because they know that a tidal wave of desperate humanity is relentlessly building up in Eurasia…” (LTE: 031101/1), “…Turning boats laden with desperate people out to sea…” (LTE: 091101/1), “We are fools to think that we can rail against regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and simultaneously turn our back on those who flee them…” (LTE: 271101/1), “…These desperate people…” (LTE: 101101/5), “…genuinely dispossessed, penniless and traumatised refugees…” (LTE: 100901/4).

The emerging themes in this section progressively depict asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as exceedingly deprived foreign, desperate, needy and poor human beings whom are fleeing oppression and are pitiful and worthy of a less harsh treatment from the Australian government. Some of the writers separate themselves from the asylum seekers’ situation by contrasting it to ‘our’ situation, by inviting ‘Us’ to be in their shoes. In one instance asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are an ethereal presence as ‘wretched souls’, while in another they are objectified as a fluctuating force, as a ‘tidal of humanity’. In addition, discursive boundaries are created by the use of pronouns such as ‘those’, ‘these’.

What marks this category is that the LTE writers differentiate the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in view of their deprivation implicitly making them worthy of mercy. The theme of the wretched souls in representations of asylum seekers on the Tampa has been investigated by Perera who highlights the oppositional representation of these asylum seekers who simultaneously become the object and agent of criminal acts, such as paying to come in an illegal manner while being exploited by people smugglers. Similarly they are wretched (very poor without options) and millionaires
(selling their soul for freedom) (Perera 2002). However, these LTE writers do not interrogate the mechanism by which the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas come to be ‘only’ idealised sufferers. The writers of LTE suppress the diversity of possibilities that their encounter with this Other may offer, their narratives subsume asylum seekers outside the norm because of lack.

1.5 Discourse of the Radically Different Other

The following group of letters to the editor position asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as what I shall refer to as “the radically different other” by using personal pronouns such as ‘they’, ‘these’, ‘their’, ‘they’ knitted with racialized forms of ethnicity (Brah 1999, p. 15). For example ‘disaffected Muslims’, ‘..large Islamic ghettos…’, ‘…Middle Eastern immigrants..’, ‘…illiterate farmer from Afghanistan..’.

These narratives discursively map a distinctive other. Their writers appear sightless to the historical and political roots of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (refugee) condition. This category of writer remains within an oppositional framework embedded with racist classifications. In this framework, the asylum seeker on temporary protection visa is radically unfamiliar, unrecognisable and incapable of ‘assimilating’ in the Australian community.

The radically different Other is marked by the following writers:

“…Those of Us who dare to think of others as well as ourselves, who try to keep our primal fears of “otherness” in check, and look at issues.” (LTE: 181001/2), “… these sorts of people…” (LTE: 151001/4), “.... disaffected people have fought fiercely…for what they believe to be right. Disaffected Muslims are likely to prove no different from others before them…” (LTE: 061001/1), “…Lunatic, fanatical madmen don’t care how they die in the name of the cause for faith in their “religion”, that they will reside in paradise forever. Risking their worthless lives in a leaky boat from Indonesia (or elsewhere) mainly due to their deranged minds. And sitting for a couple of years in a detention centre this wouldn’t deter them one iota from their evil ways- - it would offer them opportunity to convert a captive audience. Some evil terrorists in New York had been for years
working away at being “ordinary” Americans.” (LTE: 180901/1), “…People have a natural fear of the unfamiliar, but what they fear the most from…it would lead to the formation and perpetuation of large Islamic ghettos within the Australian community, with unforeseeable consequences for their future lives and for the lives of their children…” (LTE: 170901/1), “…It will be impossible for Middle Eastern immigrants to assimilate into our society. It is like oil and water, they just don’t mix. We don’t want their religion, their fanaticism and their way of life. What contribution can an illiterate farmer from Afghanistan make to our country...?” (LTE: 030901/5), “…if we should find ourselves in conflict with any of the countries that our ethnics identify with?” (LTE: 310801/7), “…These people are without money and, all too often, without basic education. Many know nothing of Australia. Their lifestyle and culture is radically different from ours” (LTE: 290801/3), “…empathy with non-whites isn’t Australia’s forte…” (LTE: 050901/10)

The writers’ stance in this section emphasises asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as radically different, positioning asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as non- Western, non-whites, Islamic, and distinctively problematic strangers, depicting them as Oriental, non-European religious fanatics, awful and extremist migrants who are also unpredictable and unknown. For some of these writers asylum seekers have nothing to contribute to Australia as ‘they know nothing of Australia,’ that ‘illiterate Afghan farmers’ have nothing to contribute to Australia. Utterances such as ‘deranged minds’ and ‘these sorts of people’ appeal for safeguards against asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Pronouns such as ‘they’, ‘these’, ‘their’ and ‘they’ delimit asylum seekers on temporary protection visas differences with the Australian population.

The specificity of the asylum seekers as a radically different ethnic Other in the writings of LTE enacts white nationalist practices (Hage1988) positioning the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as objects of exclusion.
1.6 The Presences in the Letters-to-the Editor - Discourses of the Subject
Concluding Comments

Is it possible to see the subaltern without taking into account the subordinated relationship? (De Santos 2006, p. 7).

The above citation interrogates the possibilities of relating to an Other/subject, outside hegemonic dichotomies of power. De Santos states that these hegemonic relations cause the discrediting, invisibility and subjectification of the Other/subject. De Santos’ invitation is, then, to respond to the Other/subject outside totalising ideas and knowledges, incorporating in our response to the Other/subject alternative knowledges and experiences that are discarded by hegemonic relations; this he believes would contribute to the transformation of absences into presences.

Whether sympathetically treated or not the findings in regard to the subject emerging from the LTE writers are illustrative of hegemonic dichotomies, since asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are subjected to the restrictive structures of thought and reasoning used by the LTE writers. Bounding power relations emerge when considering that most writers to LTE may be Australian citizens, while asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are stateless, citizenship claimants, and when taking into account that the writers of LTE are English language speakers and that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are of non-English speaking backgrounds and may not be English language speakers.

These LTE writers are imposing a type of totalising superior rationale about asylum seekers, such as the criminal, unwanted, deprived, wretched and radically different Other. The above rationality disallows spaces for alternative knowledge and relations other than of asymmetry. In other words, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are considered a mere physical, cultural, political identity just there, something to be constructed, to be told or to be found (Hall cited in Alexander 2009, p. 467). These relations have also been explored by Said who highlighted that Orientalism is a cultural and political fact and does not exist in an archival emptiness, or in a large collection of texts (Said 1978, p. 13). Here Said is referring to the activities of particular Western states in the Arab-Islamic domain as product and producers of Orientalist discourse (Bryce 2013, 109). Said also delved into the authority of the author’s position with regards to his/her writings about the Orient (Said 1978, p. 20). Butler also investigates how the norm materialised in bodily structures, generating a field of what she calls
‘abjected bodies’: a site of deformity where those who do not qualify as fully human serve to reinforce the regulatory norm (Butler cited in Zylinska 2004, p. 532).

The subject asylum seekers on temporary protection visas emerging from these LTE writers reinforces the regulatory norm that keeps them as the focus of border security, and makes them a subject of detention, or a matter of deterrent legislation. These asylum seekers are a waste for there is nothing much to learn from them, a lack in that they are very needy and have nothing to contribute in an encounter with them. An absence is created which will be further explored in the section below. Clearly, these absences are composed by the types of knowledges that had been disavowed from this emerging asylum seeker on temporary protection visa subject. Knowledges that had not been included by the writers examined in this section, these writers nevertheless constitute a ‘known asylum seeker subject’ who emerges as a total truth from these knowing subjects. Notably, one of these knowledges is the knowledge that might transpire from the scrutiny of the LTE writers that they might not have had the opportunity to directly relate to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. A further central knowledge is that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are human beings who are escaping the horrors of war, trauma and persecution and who are appealing for justice and a humane, respectful response to their individual presence.

2. Continuing with the Presences in the Letters-to-the Editor - Discourses of the emergence of the Subject Asylum Seeker on Temporary Protection Visa in the context of National Identity—Border Security—Sanctuary

in any society . . . multiple relations of power traverse, characterize, and constitute the social body; they are in- dissociable from a discourse of truth, and they can neither be established nor function unless a true discourse is produced, accumulated, put into circulation, and set to work (Foucault 2003, p. 24).

Any examination into nationalism and national identity must be scrutinised through its discourses of truth or the narratives that give birth to its national identity. I am scrutinising the utterances, statements and practices that put forward the image of a national space with its symbols, rituals and language that support the transformation of individuals into collectives or representatives of this national community. I contend that
the following presences in LTE reinforce the bio-political perspective of Australia as a Eurocentric (Western) and colonialist nation. In this order of things, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as aspiring citizens and their appeal for sanctuary and justice as literal outsiders of this Western reign are unlikely to be met. These next presences in the LTE writers, while highlighting the stateless position of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, also illustrate the institutional barriers and the power flowing relations permeating the LTE narratives. They illustrate the rational elaboration supporting the manufacture of the distinctions of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as outsiders, and the narratives precluding their participation on a par with them and other Australians citizens, as full partners in social interaction. Similarly, an examination of the following letters intends to reveal the type of community that the LTE writers form in the face of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, who with their presence trigger an imperative of respect and recognition. What is more, the examination of the following LTE may uncover how this imperative challenges the common discourse and community from which asylum seekers are excluded (Lingis 1994, pp. 10-11).

The following citation provides insight in regard to the mechanisms at work in the LTE examined in this section:

> I am referring not only to humans not regarded as humans, and thus to a restrictive conception of the human that is based upon their exclusion. It is not a matter of a simple entry of the excluded into an established ontology, but an insurrection at the level of ontology, a critical opening up of the questions, What is real? Whose lives are real? How might reality be remade? Those who are unreal have, in a sense, already suffered the violence of derealisation. What, then, is the relation between violence and those lives considered as ‘unreal’? Does violence affect that unreality? Does violence take place in the condition of that unreality? (Butler 2004, p. 33).

I draw on Butler’s reflections since I believe the LTE reinforce particular notions of who ‘belongs’ and who ‘crosses the border security’ as ‘real subjects’, and that the statelessness, the powerlessness of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, and refugees is an act not only of exclusion but of “derealisation”. The ‘temporariness’ of
the protection visas would seem to add to the unreality of the refugee experience, and
the LTE reinforce such positioning as temporary subjects and non-subjects.

2.1 Discourse of Border Security and Sanctuary

Border security emerges in the context of asylum seekers arriving by boat in an
‘unauthorised’ manner to Australia. The border has a territorial dimension which
encloses a constructed national space and identity. The following writers in their
majority agree with the boundaries that constitute the asylum seekers on temporary
protection visas as outsiders. For example, one of the writers congratulates the Prime
Minister for his firm stand about refugee claimants on the Tampa while another
expresses the hope that those on the Tampa should be placed in safety ashore, although
he does not specify a territory within Australia. One of the writers expresses uncertainty
about how to respond to the refugees, while another acknowledges the various attempts
to keep the refugees away from Australia.

For some of these LTE writers, the asylum seekers comprise an object such as ‘the
Tampa’s cargo’, ‘turning the boats back’, ‘those rescued’ ‘that ship with its present
complement’. The seeming hospitality in words such as ‘shameful majority are in
favour of turning the boats back’, entails a paradox while this writer implies that he/she
is not part of the shameful majority, covertly colluding in the refugees’ exclusion by
not stating otherwise. The LTE writers in this group offer an insight into the
implications of the apparatus nation-state in the making of stateless persons, in that the
political and individual identities as citizens can materialize within informal speech
(Dahlgren 2006, p. 278).

Within the context of border security most writers are able to construct the sanctuary,
through the figure of these stateless asylum seekers on temporary protection visas of
their ‘natural’ sense of national belonging. This is illustrated in the use of pronouns such
as ‘our’, ‘we’ and ‘human beings who have taken incredible risks to seek a better life’,
‘those seeking escape from danger’. The LTE writers’ utterances though truthful (in the
sense that refugees are escaping persecution and are seeking a better life) do not
interrogate the punitive and violent nature of border control that protects the boundaries
of the sanctuary. Nevertheless this category of LTE writers begins to provide an
opening to the totalising truths about the subject asylum seekers outlined in previous
sections of this chapter. Some of the writers in this section do state sympathy for the refugees’ situation by declaring that ‘our’ country can ‘afford’ to be humane, while another says ‘we’ can’t turn ‘our’ back on those fleeing countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq since ‘we’ have railed against them. These discourses of border security and the sanctuary are articulated in the following LTEs:

“That ship with its present complement is simply unsafe to go to sea.” (LTE: 310801/2), “The Government has a duty to assist Captain Rinnan in removing those rescued by his ship to a place of safety ashore…” (LTE: 310801/4), “…I don’t know either, and I don’t know what should be done about those on the Tampa” (LTE: 310801/9), “Well done, Prime Minister, for Australia’s firm stand on the Tampa people and the fair international resolution achieved by you and your team” (LTE: 050901/8), “…the contortions to prevent these people setting foot on Australia soil…” (LTE: 100901/6), “…shameful majority are in favour of turning the boats back” (LTE: 051101/1), “…the Tampa’s cargo of human misery…” (LTE: 300801/14), “…albeit within the borders of Nauru, and the trade in human cargo will continue unabated…” (LTE: 050901/3), “Our country can afford to be humane and compassionate to these people…” (LTE: 250801/1), “…people seeking asylum from Afghanistan….He is committing Australian taxpayers to millions and millions of dollars to house these people overseas and to meet all associated costs..” (LTE: 120901/2), “… those seeking escape from danger, hunger and persecution….those whose lives really are at risk….40,000people who die each day around the world from malnutrition and starvation…” (LTE: 061001/4), “These people are human beings who have taken incredible risks to seek a life in a new country with…” (LTE: 181001/1), “I was profoundly saddened to hear of the death by drowning of so many people seeking a better life…We are fools to think that we can rail against regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and simultaneously turn our back on those who flee them…” (LTE: 271101/1).
LTE writers in the discourses of sanctuary category provide a glance at how the asylum seekers’ imperative for respect and recognition, in spite of the constraints, are involved in a reciprocal exchange (Butler 2009, p. vi). The following quotations are pertinent:

Consider that the struggle for recognition in the Hegelian sense requires that each partner in the exchange recognize not only that the other needs and deserves recognition, but also that each, in a different way, is compelled by the same need, the same requirement. This means we are not separate identities in the struggle for recognition but are already involved in a reciprocal exchange, an exchange that dislocates us from our positions, our subject-positions, and allows us to see that community itself requires the recognition that we are all, in different ways, striving for recognition. (Butler 2004, pp. 43-44)

When we recognize another, or when we ask for recognition for ourselves, we are not asking for another to see us we are, as we already are, as we have always been, as we were constituted prior to the encounter itself. Instead, in the asking, in the petition, we have already become something new, since we are constituted by virtue of the address, a need and desire for the Other that takes place in language in the broadest sense. One without which we could not be. To ask for recognition, or to offer it, is precisely not to ask for recognition for what one already is. It is to solicit a becoming, to instigate a transformation, to petition the future always in relation to the Other. It is also to stake one’s own being, and one’s own persistence in one’s relation to the Other. It is also to stake one’s own being, and one’s own persistence in one’s own being, in the struggle for recognition. This is perhaps a version of Hegel that I am offering, but it is also a departure, since I will not discover myself as the same as the ‘you’ on which I depend in order to be (Butler 2004, p. 44).

In her revision of Hegel’s recognition, Butler indicates that there is a reciprocal relationship between the subject and the Other built on the need and desire for recognition. For Butler, this need for recognition is a ‘levelling out’ of difference by which an ethics of equality can be built. For temporary protection visa holders, it can be argued that the need for recognition as subjects and as refugees is a petition for the their capacity to (a) cross the borders; (b) share in the resources of the nation; (c) be recognised as a citizen subject in the eyes of the nation. In the context of letters to the editor, temporary protection visa holders are understood as appealing for sanctuary, and are worthy of it because they are recognised as subjects, thereby indicating the writers
recognise themselves not only as Australian nationals or citizens, but as ethical citizens within a framework of reciprocity and sharing.

3. **Absences in the Letters to the Editor**

To explain absences in LTE this section relies heavily on Boaventura de Sousa who believes that when an identity is disqualified or is made a non-credible alternative to what already exists, what is at work is a monoculture of reasoning. He argues that there is a production of the non-existent whenever an entity is made invisible, incomprehensible or unwanted. De Sousa distinguishes five types of logic that sustain monocultural reasoning: such as the monoculture of knowledge, which emphasises the scientific truth as the only valid knowledge where all other ways of knowing are disqualified. Within this monocultural reasoning the non-existence takes the form of ignorance (De Sousa, 2006b). This stance is useful to expose the reasoning exercised by some of the writers to LTE in their construction of the subjectivities of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as an ignorant Other with nothing to contribute to Australia. Another type of monocultural reasoning identified by de Sousa is the monoculture of time, which conceives time in a lineal way where history has a unique and known direction and sense. In this case non-existence is attained by declaring something as residual or discarded. This is indeed what underlies the conception of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as criminals and unwanted. Some LTE writers have clearly packed together asylum seekers as having the status of belonging to pre-modern states and primitives who come from lunatocracies.

According to de Sousa another logic used by monocultural reasoning is social classification which naturalises the distribution of the population according to hierarchies. The most common examples within this logic are the racial and sexual classifications. This perspective is also helpful to expose the LTE writers who emphasise asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as fundamentally different, non-whites, non-European strangers. De Sousa further identifies the logic of the dominant principles of the universal and global, where non-existence takes the form of the particular or local realities which are occluded as credible alternatives to universal or global existence together with the logic of productivity where non-existence is constructed as unproductive, some LTE writers established the ‘un-productivity’ of asylum seekers in the section of the deprived/wretched Other. I believe that the
reasoning of the writers to LTE clearly fits the profile of monocultural reasoning developed by de Sousa.

In the Collins English Dictionary absence is defined as the state of being away, the fact of being without something: lack. The resultant absence in the LTEs examined in this chapter is that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are dispossessed of their particular historical identities and relocated in a new historical identity instigated by anEurocentric perspective which is colonial, racial and negative (Quijano 2000, p. 552). This way of being, namely being away, has the double function of privileging cultural values of those with the authority to utterly omit them, while at the same time, denying full rights and citizenship protection, thus giving rise to injustices of racism.

4. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the subordinating subject manufacturing processes that some LTEs exercised in regard to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. These processes were conducive of the emergence of superordinated subjects such as LTE writers who by means of popular speech ‘naturalised’ the asymmetrical position of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in regards to Australians citizens. I have found the following concepts to be very enlightening when scrutinising the LTEs reviewed in this chapter: Fairclough’s focus on the connections between the properties of the texts as social agents and social processes, Foucault’s analysis of the materialization of subjectivities in the context of power relations and governmentality, and Butler’s reflections on the emergence of the subject.

Similarly, this chapter has reviewed the emergence of totalising truths illustrative of the workings of governmental apparatuses embodied within the speaking subjects, namely LTE writers and those subjects spoken about. An interesting contesting and opening stance has emerged in the voice of some of the letters-to-the-editor writers who, while recognising asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as subjects also recognised themselves as ethical citizens within a framework of reciprocity and sharing.

In the context of discourses of border security and discourses of absence this chapter has also mentioned vital issues of justice that will be further developed in subsequent chapters.
By examining the unique and absent expressions of LTE writers I have provided an insight on the formation of ‘common sense’ discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. This analysis has not only exposed the harm and exclusion of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas who strive for recognition and justice. Another finding of the analysis of LTE is that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are more likely to be represented as Other through LTE than in the feature articles. That is, hegemonies and inequalities were reflected in LTE.

This chapter has also interrogated and re-interpreted the workings of truth and power imprinted on the ‘body of society’, the citizens of Australia such as LTE writers. Moreover, my analysis has challenged the emerging regimes of truth about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas found in the LTE writers to the Australian newspaper by exposing contesting stances within these discourses of truth.
CHAPTER 5

THE POLITICAL FIELD OF TEMPORARY PROTECTION: FIRST ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

1 Introduction

1.1 A Space Between The Place of Persecution and the Site of Asylum

This chapter analyses face-to-face interviews with a sample of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas (a total of 11 interviews were conducted) to determine the effects of media discourse. The method for interviewing draws on the personal narratives approach, which aims at exercising the least possible control or influence over the narratives that participants construct regarding the effects that dominant discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have had or continue to have in their lives. This approach (personal narratives) has been utilised in feminist studies privileging positionality and subjectivity instead of assuming objectivity; both perspectives bring into view that of the narrator and the analyst (Riessman 2000). This perspective is aligned with CDA and draws particularly on Fairclough’s method with regard to interpretation as a combination of that which is in the text and that which the interpreter, reader or recipient brings to it (Fairclough 1989, p. 27).

The importance of this method is that it promotes understanding through various social locations, thus opening opportunities for action towards change, as personal narratives can bring about personal and shared meanings of the social practices that make human relationships. Within this there is recognition of shifting positionings (active, passive), and shifting connections between past, present, and future. Also from this perspective, personal narratives are central units of meaning making discourse (Riessman 2000). However, Szörentyi in her analysis of how to read or respond to personal narratives by people who have been displaced by injustice or war, contends that these narratives often become part of practices dedicated to the management of displacement of what may possibly be called ‘refugee discourse’. She further states that written or recorded personal experiences of abuse and violence have been largely accepted as the most valuable means of communicating about injustice. She is forewarning against the commodification of these testimonies by noting that it is important to consider the content of these narratives and the way in which they are framed (Szörentyi 2009, p. 174). Similarly, Pugliese elicits the impossibility of escaping further perpetration of
violence towards detained asylum seekers’ (some later granted temporary protection visas) attempts to speak. He does this by invoking Spivak’s views on how in trying to open lines of communication that might account for a subaltern positionality, we might become accomplices in muting the voice of the other through mediating processes such as deciphering and interpretation. Thus, he is also cautioning that it is not sufficient to exercise self-reflexivity of our own positionality to prevent the insertion of these subaltern voices in the road of hegemony (Pugliese 1992, pp. 26-27). This is going to be further examined in the section below.

The number of participants was 11. Most of the interviews were conducted late November and during the month of December 2007. Prior to the interview process a ‘Participants information sheet’, a ‘Participants consent form’, and a ‘Semi-Structured Interview Sheet’ were submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences (SWAHS), obtaining approval the 2nd of November 2007 Clearance Number SWAHS 2007/8. All of the interviewees declined the use of interpreters as they declared they felt safer without the presence of an interpreter.

The graphs below summarise gender and age of participants:
The interviews will be discussed in several sub-sections. The first section ‘Breaking down of the I’ summarises the ethical consideration of my positioning as a witness to the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ narratives and the understanding that these are the narratives of human beings who suffered and continue to suffer injury and violence. The section ‘Multiplicity of Subjectivities-- the Indefinite Journey toward Recognition’ depicts the variety of subject positions occupied by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas: the asylum seeker subject, the refugee subject, the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas subject, the subaltern subject, and the subverting subject. The concluding comments of this chapter draw attention to the political and ethical field that the bodies of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have navigated since their forced departure from their country of origin, during their trip in search of safety and after their arrival in Australia.

1.2 The Breaking Down of the ‘I’

This section depicts some of the critical considerations that form the basis of this chapter, discussing the inevitable impact at a personal level on the positioned I who is narrating this story and who is in the presence of this Other, namely, the subjects who are the focus of this chapter. I, the one who is interviewing and who can’t flit away from my exposure to norms which are framing certain ways of producing these subjects as recognisable, am aware that I can’t fully give an account of them or myself. There is also the I who is narrating the stories of 11 people (i.e., those narrating their experiences and at times narrating the experiences of Others) The breaking down of the I makes reference to Butler’s view about the humility that one must have in acknowledging the limits of what is there to know and of the understanding that the subject’s constitution is much more than the reconstruction of this constitution by the narrative form (Butler 2001, p. 36). For this writer, this applies in two distinctive ways. Firstly, it guides my pondering about how to maintain an ethical relation, an acknowledgment of this Other and of my bond to this Other, being capable of recognising my constitution within the fragments of the subject knowledge arising from the narratives of those asylum seekers on temporary protection visas who constitute the subject of this study. Secondly, also it takes into account recognising that the subjects of this study are (as previous chapters highlighted) injured and vulnerable, a condition inscribed by markers of authority and
power that mark this relationship by asymmetry. These are some of the terms that are establishing this recognition, and its provisos which are politically saturated, as it will be seen later in this chapter.

.....And the written word is nothing more than the attempt to make that breath permanent and secure, carve it into rock or mark it on paper or sign it on a screen, so that its cadence will endure beyond us, outlast our breath, break the shackles of solitude, transcend our transitory body (las cadenas precarias de la soledad) and touch someone with its waters.\(^5\)

The citation above is evocative of Paul Ricoeur’s view that the self does not simply belong to the category of events and facts (Ricoeur 1991, p. 76), and of his pertinent question: what resources does the story have to make sorrows bearable? (Ricoeur 2003, p. 322). In working through the process of interviewing, transcribing and analysing these interviews, I found myself deeply troubled, entangled, and implicated in reflections such as how can I situate my position as witness of these testimonies with regard of what it is to be acknowledged or to safeguard against further injury and violence? (Butler 2009, p. 3). Similarly, I thought to consider carefully how to account for the normative restrictions that haunt the acknowledgement and recognition of the eleven people that I interviewed. And how to report of my own self-limitations Butler says, “….precisely that which exceeds any account we may try to give of it. If letting the Other live is part of a new definition of recognition, then this version of recognition would be one that is based less on knowledge than on an apprehension of its limits” (Butler 2001, p. 28). These I found are relevant considerations precisely since human beings are the focus of this section, people/subjects who as it will be seen later in this chapter, have suffered and are still suffering the effects of violence, inhospitality and rejection. The violence that these subjects have experienced and are experiencing began prior to their arrival in Australia and constituted the terms of their forced departure towards a perilous and in many ways an indefinite journey. As a male Afghani person interviewed in this study says:

\(^5\) Butler quotes a poem by Ariel Dorfman 2008 (Butler 2009, p. 60).
There is killing, persecution, putting in jail, and everything like this is a common place and everyday by these people that is what Afghanistan people’s lives at the time. So under those circumstances people the people flee for their lives and went to different countries, up here they came here to Australia more people went to Western countries you know (Male, 60 Afghanistan 13.12.2007).

The persistence of injury is also a distinctive feature affecting the subjects of this study as refugees who were granted a Temporary Protection Visa Subclass (TPV) 785. Their subject position is significantly distinct from other refugee speaking positions, as there are numerous attempts to render asylum seekers on temporary protection visas voiceless and invisible. These include being detained in remote camps, and not being able to speak in public without the threat of being denied the right to a permanent protection visa. Even after obtaining a permanent visa, this threat remains real for those who want to be reunited with their families. This will be further examined in this chapter. I am currently working as a counsellor with survivors of torture and trauma, and it is through my work that sadly, I still have the opportunity to witness the persistent effects of the violence and rejection experienced by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, a visa subclass, a category which emerged in October 1999 and was later abolished by the Rudd Labor government in August 2008.

1.3 Multiplicity of Subjectivities—the Indefinite Journey toward Recognition

What one ‘sees’ in a text, what one regards as worth describing, and what one chooses to emphasise in a description, are all dependent on how one interprets a text (Fairclough 1989, p. 27).

The above citation refers to that which Fairclough calls member resources (MR), where the relationship between the text and society occurs in the background of social interaction. From this perspective interpretation is a combination of what is in the text and what the interpreter brings to it (MR). Fairclough states that discourse is the site where relations of power are put into effect and acted out (Fairclough 1989, p. 44). He further reveals that language use—regardless of the text—has the power to establish the character of social identities, the social relations and systems of knowledge and beliefs corresponding to representations and the setting up of relations which are historically
and socially situated (Fairclough 1995, p. 55). In addition, Fairclough says that social subjects are not only shaped by discourse practices that are capable of reshaping and restructuring these practices (Fairclough 1992, p. 45). For instance, the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas interviewed in this study are framed by a dominant trajectory of misrecognition, xenophobia, punishment, hysteria, discrimination, legislative violence, inequality and rejection of asylum seekers⁶, later granted temporary protection visas. This chapter is structured to draw attention to the multiplicity of subject positions articulated in their narratives. In my view these narratives account for what Butler calls the ‘shadow of every normative instance’, ‘its own failure,’ a failure which is the reminder of life (Butler 2009, pp. 7-8). I understand that this reminder of life is present in these narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in spite of the mediating forces impacting on the narratives. These are their own stories; these are their own words that narrate their conceptualisation of their experiences, of how they feel they were affected, and of their thoughts on how to attend to their demand for recognition.

1.3.1 The Asylum Seeker Subject—Heaven the Other Side/First Encounter – Detention

This section’s focus is on the emergence of the asylum seeker subject as it materialises in the interview narrative examples. An asylum seeker is defined as someone who is seeking international protection whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recognized that by the end of 2010 there were an estimated 837,000 asylum seekers worldwide (Phillips 2011, pp. 1-2). It is estimated that between 1999 and 2001 about 9500 asylum seekers arrived in Australia by boat from Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, people fleeing devastating wars, political turmoil, and invasion (Manne & Corlett 2004, p. 6). The extracts of interviews below are illustrative of the figurative and literal journeys that characterise the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, and the reasons that force people to make this dangerous journey to seek asylum. The asylum seeker subject arises in the following narratives, samples which are presented here at length for in-depth analysis.

…when the refugee came you won’t leave your everything whatever you like, you had your country you won’t leave just for going to another country like just to come at present for that matter we can’t just say to we are going to Australia. But it was not true we just fled Afghanistan we had good life over there we were wealthy and we had a lot of money and the people who did not have money they were just killed by the Taliban so we would of not leave our good life and everything over there to just go to Australia. We just fled Afghanistan because we were victims we were victims …there was because there was there left three ways for us, either change our religion and get converted into their religion to become a Taliban, and just to be ready to get killed, and to leave Afghanistan. So whoever had the money and had the resources, they left Afghanistan...If on the other side is the heaven would you go? Would you leave? No because ten days in a small fishing boat in a very black sea or you can’t see the island, you can’t see anything, even you can’t see a bird flying on the sky is just the black everywhere is black water and you would of seeing that when the people is saying that the world is out you could not find out over there because all the way is black water, all the way is black water you won’t see a single thing with the black water and the big wave that is hitting the boat, and we were wet for ten days…My clothes were wet, my blankets were wet everything were wet because of the water keep coming into the boat. The small fishing boat and the water is just running out and the other water and we could not just open your mouth because the water was just so salty! And it was just like a poison, just this thing in your mouth, it was scary no one believe with the two little small kids even that is you say: in the other side is the heaven, do you want to leave on that boat in ten days to get there? ...What we thought that is because this is not our country we do not belong to here which is when we came here in the detention centre... (Female, 40 Afghanistan, interviewed 08.12. 2007).

...I am coming to Australia through three travels, first time after I go outside my country because close to my country is Iran because I lived in the South of Iraq, …After 1991 in March I go outside my country
after Saddam Hussein and the Iraqis with the Saddam Hussein and the government of Saddam Hussein ordered that we must go to prison because we opposite to Saddam Hussein. After we arrived in Iran I lived around 9 years and some months in the Iran but I was unhappy because Iran opposite me because my background Iran treated me negatively...I arrived in Australia through three travels one travel Jakarta to Christmas and the boat broke so the boat sank and some people died and some fisherman helped us to go back to Jakarta Indonesia. We tried again and after 8 hours the motor of the boat broke and we were lost at sea for 3 days and again some fisherman found us and helped us and took us back again to Jakarta. At this time I was feeling that this was very dangerous for me so I decided to change the route and I talked with the man that I gave $3000 US dollars, and asked him to help me to change the route I said I wanted to go to Bali and to Ashmore Island. At the end I took an airplane from Jakarta to Bali and after that he took me in another boat that took about 9 days to arrive in Australia...Then police and immigration and some other people, we don’t understand what was happening they put us in a restaurant after we finished lunch they took us by airplane to this camp called Curtin … The camp was terrible in winter and summer very hot and I used to say “please my god help me and why no any person don’t like answer me”. We were sick where were the newspapers? This people played with us… after 7 days in Curtin and I felt that this was prison because we very under vigilance by some people and the officers who were like the police. During the seven days I listened to the loud speaker some people Arabic speaking and Iranian because all the people coming at this time were Iraqi and little bit Palestinian, Afghanistan and Iranian. I understood then that we will be detained for 45 days in the camp after that they will check me for visa and I thought again that after that I will be reunited with my family. After 7 days that I lived in the Curtin I realised that I did not have lawyer or anything and that I will not have freedom, I thought at the time that I was living in a prison I have no person to ask questions to, everything finished for me. After I realised this I talked to people in the camp and I started to have problems with my heart, before this I
had good health and was taken to the hospital in Derby…. We felt enclosed trapped because no help from the government, no help from the newspapers. We can’t go to Iraq, can’t go to Iran, nowhere to go. (Iraqi Male 48, interviewed 16.11.2007)

These narratives depict unique personal stories, however there are also common factors impressed on these experiences. One of these factors is vulnerability (here I rely heavily on Butler’s concept of vulnerability which refers to exclusionary linguistic and other kinds of practices that dispossess and injure) expressed in these words: “please my god help me and why no any person don’t like answer me” (Iraqi male cited above). This asylum seeker is suffering the precariousness of his own habitation, namely Iraq his country of birth, due to the pending menace of being imprisoned there because of his opposition to the government of Saddam Hussein. He is also suffering instability in Iran, his first place of asylum, as he describes negative treatment from the government of Iran due to his Iraqi background. Then, the fragility of this habitation continues in the second country of asylum, Australia, who detained him in Curtin, a detention centre more than 2,200 kilometres away from Perth and described by a member of a parliamentary committee in the following manner: “nothing can prepare one for the visual image when approaching detention centres, especially ones such as Curtin and Woomera—the high wire fences and the general prison appearance. One could question why these centres have been established in the harshest, most inhospitable parts of Australia”7. Similarly, the woman from Afghanistan cited above, expresses the vulnerability of her habitation, that is Afghanistan her country of birth, in the following words: “We just fled Afghanistan because we were victims, we were victims …”. She is accounting for the precariousness of her life due to the Taliban regime where she faced the threat of been killed. She is also describing the helplessness that she experienced during her escape toward safety, during the boat trip toward Australia: “…My clothes were wet, my blankets were wet everything were wet because of the water keep coming into the boat. The small fishing boat and the water is just running out and the other water and we could not just open your mouth because the water was just so salty! And it was just like a poison, just this thing in your mouth, it was scary no one believe with the two little small kids…”. And finally, she narrates the precariousness of her habitation in

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her country of asylum, Australia, as she says, “this is not our country we do not belong to here which is when we came here in the detention centre…”.

The lack of or limited choices is another feature that permeates these narratives. Perhaps the most graphic depiction of this limited choice is that asylum seekers travelled in boats that were not sea worthy, that were ageing and overcrowded and consequently putting them at extreme risk of losing their lives (many in fact drowned, for instance the Siev X [Leach & Mansouri 2004]). The female asylum seeker expresses this lack of choice in the following words: “…because there was there left three ways for us, either change our religion and get converted into their religion to become a Taliban and just to be ready to get killed, and to leave Afghanistan. So whoever had the money and had the resources, they left Afghanistan…” Similarly, the male asylum seeker says “…We can’t go to Iraq, can’t go to Iran, nowhere to go…” According to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) planned immigration has been a key feature of the Australian social and economic landscape since European Settlement. DIMIA states that over the last two decades, global migration flows have grown in both magnitude and complexity, with significant implications for Australia’s planned immigration intakes, as well as for the management of unauthorised arrivals (DIMIA 2003, p. 37). The limited choices faced by asylum seekers extend also to the existing ‘official’ process of selection of refugees for resettlement. The annual number of refugee and humanitarian places in Australia’s immigration program in 2001 was only 12,000 combining offshore and offshore applications (Mares 2001, p. 18). Consequently, there are extremely limited opportunities for asylum seekers to first register with the UNHCR offices and then to apply for resettlement in countries like Australia. The UNHCR states that less than one per cent of the world’s refugees may be resettled in any given year; it acknowledges that for refugees in exile for five or more years there are limited options (Phillips 2011, p. 5).

The preoccupation for the ‘management of unauthorised arrivals’ has a place in the history of Australian immigration policies which derives from the fear of strangers, knitted in exclusionary politics such as the White Australia Policy and mandatory detention. Under the Migration Act 1958 any person who arrives on Australian soil without a visa will be detained until her/his refugee status is determined. The mandatory detention legislation was introduced by the Labor government in 1992. Pugliese describes detention centres and what he calls the legislated borders of non-Australia as: “an abyssal space that absorbs the human detritus that transgresses both our laws and
our borders, invisibilizes its subjects: traumatised and disfigured beyond recognition, they disappear behind the razor wire fences and brick walls…” (Pugliese 2005, p. 288).

This theme also addressed by the above narratives in the following words, “The camp was terrible in winter and summer very hot… After 7 days that I lived in the Curtin I realised that I did not have lawyer or anything and that I will not have freedom, I thought at the time that I was living in a prison I have no person to ask questions to, everything finished for me…”

The detention centres are a site of ‘civility’ in as much as asylum seekers in detention are subjects of and subjected to Australian law (as put by Giannacopoulos 2005, p. 30). The centres ensure that asylum seekers are promptly available as their identity is established, and health, character and security assessments are conducted. Equally, detention centres are a site of ‘incivility’ as this law exercises constitutive violence by erasing asylum seekers’ right to exercise free speech and movement, and to immediately obtain legal advice, as stated by the Iraqi person cited above Mann (Mann 2003, p. 189) in his book ‘Desert Sorrow Asylum Seekers at Woomera’ provides an overview of the deteriorating conditions in this detention centre where asylum seekers faced prolonged periods of wait for the processing of their refugee status, and a lack of educational services such as English language classes, counselling and preparation for eventual settlement in Australia.

Another subjectivity emerging from Australia’s response to asylum seekers is ‘the other side of heaven—hell’: the face of the politics of fear that takes the form of border control, legislative enforcement of violence and criminalisation towards asylum seekers (Burke 2002, p. 1). This legislative violence filtered through from the initial encounter in the water (middle of the sea), extended to the offshore Pacific Island processing camps and flowed towards the detention centres, and continued its way during and after the process of refugee determination, as will be specified in the next section. This premise addressed in the above narratives which denounce what ‘heaven’ mostly suppressed from public circulation, such as the reasons that forced these asylum seekers to leave their countries. ‘Heaven’ is suggested in the following expression “…so we would of not leave our good life and everything over there to just go to Australia.” Giannacopoulos examines violence in the realm of the Australian law with regard to the Tampa asylum seekers when she says: “The detention centres that dehumanise and violate human life are the direct product of ‘civilised’ Australian law aimed at the ‘civilised’ act of border protection,” a law that she also characterises as the consequence
of colonial imposition affirmed by racial violence (Giannacopoulos 2005, pp. 30-34). Lastly, what also appears to be concealed from ‘heaven’ is ordinary Australia. In the words of Pugliese: “‘Ordinary’ Australia is what enables _ legislatively, culturally and spatially _ the exercise of vernacular violence,” (Pugliese 2009, p. 153) as he brings forth the view that ordinary, suburban Australia in its every day ordinariness falls in a kind of in-between space which he describes as ‘interstitial,’ situated between the official political violence and the triviality of the everyday. For instance, in the LTE chapter the analysis showed that some of the writers’ (ordinary Australians) perspectives are mediated by their views of asylum seekers later granted temporary protection visas as a generic group whose profile is criminal and unwanted.

Lastly, the narratives of the two asylum seekers cited above illustrate that which Butler calls ‘larger rituals of interpellation’, a prior vulnerability to language, a dependence on the address of the Other to have a tentative existence (Butler 1977, p. 26). The terms of recognition of their status as asylum seekers are regulated, allocated, and/or refused according to larger social kinds of norms and rituals such as the UNHCR’s definition of asylum seeker, and the definition of asylum seekers disseminated by the Australian media. However, these asylum seekers are much more than these normative categories of asylum seekers being entails particularly since this is a category inserted within hegemonic nation-state international instrumentalities (McMasters 2001). These asylum seekers have a historicity past and future that goes beyond what is encapsulated by these definitions described by Butler as, “the sovereign dispersion of discursive power which operates without a subject but that constitutes the subject in the course of its operation” (Butler 1977, p. 34) The implication is that at the very least the asylum seeker subjects depicted here intersect between their local histories (two distinct people fleeing persecution from Afghanistan and Iraq who at times are also taking the more general position of Afghanis and Iraqis to narrate their common experiences) and that of a global design with the advent of the nation-state and its attention to sovereignty, borders and people who cross them. In the context of Australia this intersection is reduced to immigration policies and dominant media representation that stressed the necessity of distinguishing its significant Other that also carries the force of ongoing subjugation.

The subjectivities of asylum seekers emerging here are embedded in the violent denial of the right to seek and be granted asylum coded through biopolitical mechanisms of governance as they were subordinated to the power of incarceration (mandatory detention) exercised by the Australian nation. The very fact that these asylum seekers
were incarcerated for prolonged periods of time testifies to the abstract character of the UN Convention on Refugees which had no jurisdiction over the Australian nation-state. This was made evident with the experiences narrated by the asylum seekers in this section, who also brought to view ‘ordinary’ Australians’ in-between stances toward asylum seekers.

1.3.2 The Refugee Subject—The Claim of People Who Are Deemed to ‘Pretend’ to be Refugees

The section below focuses on the analysis of the emerging refugee subject via the example of two interview abstracts as follows:

So this means some of them were saying probably this is illegal money of drugs and things like that of some other ways that they provided the money and gave to the people smugglers and coming here. So they eventually were saying they are the people who come in illegal way and also flourished the illegal business of people smugglers that was the way in which they portrayed the refugees at the time…“We don’t know probably they are may be some terrorists among these people who pretend to be a refugee”…. … When you are leaving in that situation under strong fear for your life, how can you remain in a country that are supporters of the Taliban and you have no the legal situation there to remain and live peacefully there? (Male, 60 Afghanistan, interviewed 13. 12. 2007)

I got there I sold everything I put all my money to come here and if we didn’t suffer there, how are we displaced from our country? Because we were persecuted there and we were obliged to come here we want to live in peace not as they described us as illegal, boat people, they are not genuine refugees…. But we are genuine refugees if we are not persecuted in our country, why to come here? Why? And then after that the government finds that after 5 years we heard that we are genuine refugees, they described us a genuine after 3-5 years I don’t know. We were genuine refugees……because they are persecuted they are obliged to leave the country, they were obliged
and they said they described us as queue jumpers (Female, 53 Iraqi, interviewed 23.11.07).

After the Second World War Australia began to offer protection to people escaping persecution and other serious human rights violations. In 1958 Australia became a signatory to the Refugee Convention established in 1951. Consequently it is bound by international obligations arising from this arrangement. The Refugee Convention was drafted with the intent of assuring refugees the widest possible exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms, affirmed in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration (Bostock 2002, p. 285).

The Refugee Convention defines the term refugee as an individual who:

As the result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being prosecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (Bostock 2002, p. 284).

The Convention definition, however, leaves out internal refugees, millions of people exiled within their own country who equally suffer human rights violations and social and economic dispossession. It does not generally include driven out people who have not been the subject of specific persecution, or people who have been subjected to generalised violence, as well as deprivation and that as a result have escaped to another country (McMaster 2001, p. 24).

What are these refugee narratives articulating about the political, policy and printed media response towards refugees’ arrival? -- What are these narratives saying about Australia’s response to their demand for recognition?

Loescher, cited in Neumann, says: “The adoption of persecution as the main characteristic of a refugee was made to fit a Western interpretation of asylum-seekers. Western states who were chiefly responsible for the persecution-centred definition
perceived refugees to be victims of oppressive, totalitarian, and specifically Communist regimes…” (Neumann 2004, p. 85) in words such as ‘refugee’, for example “…they described us as a genuine after 3-5 years I don’t know. We were genuine refugees…..” These narratives are alluding to the deficiencies and incompleteness of human rights conceptions and norms within the international convention that defines refugees, since these narratives are relocating cognition to their incarnated (bodily) experience: “…We don’t know probably they are may be some terrorists among these people who pretend to be a refugee...When you are leaving in that situation under strong fear for your life, how can you remain in a country that are supporters of the Taliban and you have no the legal situation there to remain and live peacefully there?” Thus, these narratives are also expressing a critique of Australia’s response towards their arrival as asylum seekers and are verbalising an appeal toward their presence “…But we are genuine refugees if we are not persecuted in our country, why to come here? ...”. These narratives highlight the violence and injury caused by the legal and politically consistent apparatus built to articulate punitive responses to asylum seekers who are called ‘unauthorised arrivals’.

This reference (un-authorised) is constantly repeated by dominant discourses (by mass media, social commentators and some important politicians (Marston 2003, p. 2)) to knit a maze of illegality versus legality, terrorism versus arriving in the ‘right way’, and genuine refugee versus pretend refugee. Ultimately, these dominant official discourses are establishing an epistemological ‘‘truth’ located in the official discourse about refugees, namely, authorised and legal entrants who are deemed to be (genuine) refugees. As Mr. Ruddock said, "People must understand that Australia welcomes migrants - not illegal entrants”8. The narratives cited above reveal that despite being deemed illegal subjects, terrorists, unauthorised arrivals, and pretend refugees they rewrite the official narrative using the same language to assert their position as genuine refugees.

The asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are uttering narratives that are shifting and emptying the terrorising marks of the abstract refugee word enunciated by official discourses and filling it with the content of their experience as people who have been subjected to persecution, war and displacement (Spivak 2005, p. 477). They are making visible their rage toward dominance and using these utterances in ways that draw attention to the originating subordination, “…But we are genuine refugees…”

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8 DIMA Media Release 1 December 1999 - MPS 169/99 Immigration Minister Takes Anti-People Smuggling Campaign to WA.
a different purpose (Butler 1977, p. 38). Consequently, a new epistemic scope begins to emerge, namely that of the partial perspective advanced by these narratives that ground the experiences of displacement and persecution. As a result, the speakers are subverting their subordinated position from being an ‘object of knowledge’, illustrated by the scrutiny of the refugee determination process which requires that immigration officers must be convinced of the valid application made by asylum seekers in order to invoke Australia’s protection obligations.

Janet Phillips in the background note document *Asylum Seekers and Refugees: What Are the Facts?* Asserts that asylum seekers who arrive by boat are subject to the same assessment criteria as all other asylum applicants, and that under the ‘Pacific Solution’ a total of 1637 unauthorised arrivals were detained in the Nauru and Manus facilities between September 2001 and February 2008. Of those, 1153 were found to be refugees (Phillips 2011, p. 8). The processing periods for asylum claims and the conditions of detention are regulated by international standards articulated by the UNHCR documents about the refugee determination process (Leach & Mansouri 2004, p. 70). To become the ‘source of knowledge’ “…we were obliged to come here we want to live in peace not as they described us as illegal, boat people, they are not genuine refugees…. But we are genuine refugees…” As Butler says, “…The terms by which we are hailed are rarely the ones we choose…..but these terms we never really choose are the occasion for something we might still call agency…” (Butler 1977, p. 38). The two narrative examples in this section show that these subjects of speech are knowing subjects, since their experiences are inscribed in their bodies and their persecution, and overwhelming fear embodies them. They are attesting to their local embodied experiences what they have seen from where, and to this extent object and subject are fundamentally connected (Schneider 2005, p. 103-104). Consequently, these refugees’ arrival in Australia’s bounded territory is saturated by dominant narrative lines of rejection. Their subsequent testimony stands for a departure/deformation of the foreclosure contained in the dominant discourses that constitute the refugee (in the domain of power). This theme will be advanced in the section called The Subverting Subject below.

2 The Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas Subject

The following section depicts the emergent Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) asylum seeker subject, as uttered in the next narratives:
Because we got from the hand of neglecting, rejection ignoring and everything and they just ignore us for three years with the temporary visa we were getting nothing. They left us there in the one room from the glass door we just could of wave but we can’t get anything. But on the other hand we got Jim Sooley the Lord Mayor open the door for us to come a join the Brisbane City Council traineeship and also he just said to the boys: If you want to play soccer you can, he provided the funding and also on the other hand the Romero Centre were helping us that is saying: no you are like the same as an Australian person, you have rights to do this, you have rights to do that, and they were just getting people to provide us with information, they were providing information about how the system works. They were providing information about how the election works, how the politician work here and everything and also they were having sessions about how Centrelink works, how the system for electricity for gas for everything they were just telling all about the system and getting to fit into the society that was the main thing (Female 40, Afghanistan interviewed 8.12.2007)

I would like to do anything to help Australia, the government the people but if Australia puts a curtain between me and my future because Australia puts problem I can’t bring my family. I am a person I have a wife and family, but I have no road to bring my family. I have two daughters and three sons and Australia cuts road so this people can’t come to me, is this good? When I call them they ask me, “my father what are you doing when are we coming?” Would you like for us to live in Iraq? Are you happy living in Australia? This is very bad for me… (Male 48, Iraqi interviewed 16.11.2007)

. . . and then after that after 3 years of waiting, nothing then in 2005 they gave us permanent visa…..They accept that we are genuine refugees after that five years, after 5 years I got my permanent visa and from the first day that we came and we put our steps in Australia we sought the refugee status, from the first day! (Female 53, Iraqi interviewed 23.11.2007)
The Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) Subclass 785 was introduced by the Howard Government in 1999 in response to a surge of ‘unauthorised’ boat arrivals who had used people smugglers to travel to Australia ‘illegally’\(^9\). Asylum seekers who were determined to be refugees were granted a temporary protection visa for a period of three years, although in some cases for five years. This is what Phillip Ruddock, Immigration Minister at the time, said with regard to temporary protection visas: “What we are saying is there was a right way to come and a wrong way to come and the temporary visa is about saying yes, we honour our obligations but if things change at home, and you can go back, then you’ll be going back,” (cited in McMaster 2004, p. 5).

The asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ subjectivity that emerged is that of ‘conditional refugees’ (paraphrasing Marston, previously cited in this chapter who in his discussion of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas argues that they were politically, morally and legally positioned as ‘conditional citizens’). Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas though had their claim for refugee status initially heard under the temporary protection visas regulations. They were to obtain permanent protection if, after three years they could prove that they needed protection. In addition to the pending menace of being deported, some of the limitations faced by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas when compared with refugees granted permanent protection visas (PPVs), were given limited access to Special Benefit as income support, while PPVs had immediate access to the full range of social security. The asylum seekers on temporary protection visas had no family reunion rights and they were not permitted to travel outside Australia; they were eligible for Medicare and Health Care Cards. The temporary protection visa subclass created several major difficulties for refugees to participate in everyday life.

Butler and Spivak in their discussion about the operations of power that seek to effectively side nation with state, reflect that by implication the nation-state needs to scrutinize and get actively involved in the categorisation of the stateless (those who disqualified for citizenship). The following words bear witness to what Butler and Spivak call “spectral humans, deprived of ontological weight and failing the tests of social intelligibility required for minimal recognition…” (Butler and Spivak 2010, pp. 15-16). “…they just ignore us for three years with the temporary visa we were getting nothing. They left us there in the one room from the glass door we just could of wave

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\(^9\) DIMIA (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs) July 2003, TPV Holders Application for Further Protection Visas, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
but we can’t get anything...”; “…Australia puts a curtain between me and my future because Australia puts problem I can’t bring my family. I am a person I have a wife and family, but I have no road to bring my family...”, “....and then after that after 3 years of waiting, nothing…” Pugliese also examines the situation of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and concludes that they experience an abandoned way of belonging. He says asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are entrapped between the present bounded by the menace of deportation - what he calls the trauma of the past and the trauma of the future that is the (im)possibility of a home (Pugliese 2005, pp. 299-300). This entrapment is illustrated in the words of the first narrator in the form of a ‘glass door’ and in the second narrative in the image of a ‘curtain’ between him and his future. The active political enforcement sustained by legislative measures that constitute the refugee subject asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, and that (temporarily though in a prolonged manner) bars these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas from citizenship also creates the conditions for this ‘abandoned’ way of belonging. Furthermore, this speaks of a particular Australian national identity that grows to be consistent in fulfilling the requirements of the State. To facilitate by legislative means supported by national consensus the creation of this type of visa and its ‘minority’ population as ‘spectral humans’ that at the same time, forms part of this ‘produced-homogeneous’ nation. In other words, these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are manufactured in opposition to legality, as ‘illegals’ crossing Australia’s borders in ‘the wrong way’. In this respect these refugees are exteriorised, their bodies positioned as illegitimate inhabitants of civic space (Perera 2009, p. 649) to consolidate the nation’s interior rights-bearing subjects, bodies positioned as legitimate occupants of civic space who ‘honour’ their obligations.

The violence implicit in the visualising practice of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as ‘pretend refugees’ also sutures a homogenised identity of these refugees putting in motion dominant opinions and behaviours that ‘suspended justice’ (Pugliese 2005, p. 289): “…Because we got from the hand of neglecting, rejection ignoring and everything and they just ignore us for three years with the temporary visa we were getting nothing”, “....and then after that after 3 years of waiting, nothing then in 2005 they gave us permanent visa.....”, “…I would like to do anything to help Australia, the government the people but if Australia puts a curtain between me and my future...” When looking at the notion of ‘suspended justice’ Pugliese is referring to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as recipients of a distorted and
inoperative justice, or in the words of these narrators, “...the hand of neglecting, rejection ignoring.”, “...after 3 years of waiting, nothing...”, “...Australia puts a curtain between me and my future.” Although the United Nations Convention does not require receiving countries to give permanent residence and citizenship to refugees, in Australia, in 1990, the Hawke government was the first to issue 4 year temporary protection visas to Chinese students after the Beijing repression (Manne and Corlett 2004, p. 89). The Howard government then employed this punitive approach based on his (in)famous claim during the 2001 election campaign: “We decide who comes here and the circumstances in which they come,” (Cited in Manne and Corlett 2004, p. 89).

The narratives of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are a testimony to the punitive anti-asylum seeker normative frame that marks the position of the epistemological and ontological dominant, what Spivak calls ‘the master’, the knowing self that operates in a field of power. Haraway refers to as the ‘literary technology’ of speaking and writing (Haraway 1991) that generates meaning and knowledge, in this case, the ‘pretend refugees’ knowledge that initially allows their physical incarceration and later their mental (emotional and psychological) incarceration in the act of a conditional refugee status. This knowledge also suppresses and suspends; one of the most critical aspects of the temporary protection visas is the infliction of a lasting state of uncertainty (Marston 2003, p. 13) seen in these refugees’ incarnated and finite points of view and experiences. However, Haraway and Spivak also caution that the standpoints of the subjugated are tainted in as much as vision is a question of the power to see (for instance the questions produce the answers), the view from a body is always complex and contradictory (Haraway 1991). Nevertheless, the narratives of these refugees are questioning the normative frame that positions them as temporary-conditional refugees, and in this way, they are calling for attention to the partiality and imperfection of this rational and totalising knowledge. The question that transpires then is, what is it that the opening of this enclosed knowledge in the form of these embodied narratives is making possible? Maybe the response comes from these utterances: “...open the door for us...”, “...I would like to do anything to help Australia...”, “...from the first day that we came and we put our steps in Australia we sought the refugee status, from the first day!” In my view, these words are calling not only for the recognition of these speakers as actors who are situating their subjectivities outside the invested national interest accounting for the diasporic nature of their experiences. They might as well be calling for a new affective trajectory (Butler 2009, p. 11). This will be
explored in more depth in a separate interview sub-chapter examining the issue of hospitality. In the next section of this chapter I shall explore another rising subjectivity: the subaltern subject.

3 The Subaltern Subject

…Citizens, foreigners, and passports are part of a short history of the same package that constructed an imperial idea of the “human” and traced the frontiers with “the less humans” and the “non-humans” (Mignolo 2006, p. 313).

The words of Mignolo are pertinent to begin the examination of the subaltern subject emerging in the narratives of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas who are the focus of this study: the previous examined subjectivities namely, the asylum seeker, the refugee, the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas which prominently embrace a depiction of these refugees as subaltern subjects, as ‘less than humans’ or ‘non-humans’ or as named by Butler, ‘spectral humans’. Importantly, the focus of this section is on the effects of the subaltern position in the injuries inflicted by the subaltern positionality. These are voiced in the next narratives:

When you are hearing everyday about yourself that you are a queue jumper, that you are a terrorist person, that you are probably putting at risk the security of the country. These and many other things so what do you think about yourself? Probably it affects you in a very negative way, and affected actually everybody here and the first thing was a sense of isolation from other people (Male 60, Afghanistan, interviewed 13.12.2007).

. . . unfortunately this affected us. We feel empty, and at the same time the people outside….For this reason the media don’t talk don’t encourage better they used these names all the time, to keep on the minds of the people to keep in their memory….We have lots of challenges that are not easy because the media talked about us one year they talked about us and they showed us in a negative side. Is a big challenge for me to prove against that, and we need that now and
we need to let more people more Australians know about that (Male Iraqi, 47 Iraqi interviewed 21.11. 2007)

Even I had severe headaches, I already I had migraine and I couldn’t do anything, no sleeping no work and even for me to do the test for in order to work I couldn’t concentrate because all the time I think, think, think about my visa. How I am going to live, how I am going back to my country all of this affected my health and I was depressed, really depressed at that time…. imagine how would you feel if you hear that, why you didn’t sink the people? Turn them back whoever they come from. This affected our health and it affected me it affected my brain…. It especially affected me I couldn’t continue my career to work to get my test in English all of this because it affected me, affected my health. I couldn’t concentrate... (Female Iraqi 53, Woman, interviewed 23.11.2007)

I feel very hurt I feel very upset but I can’t do anything. I can’t say anything because I don’t know how can I say (Female Afghanistan 33, interviewed 05.12.2007)

These narratives are evocative of what Spivak articulates as the singular repeated with a difference (Spivak 2005, p. 480) since these narratives are showing the singular and at the same time repeated with a difference, with ‘wounds’ that linguistic acts can cause (Butler 1997, p. 4):

For this reason the media don’t talk don’t encourage better they used these names all the time, to keep on the minds of the people to keep in their memory…..We have lots of challenges that are not easy because the media talked about us one year they talked about us and they showed us in a negative side”.. “... imagine how would you feel if you hear that, why you didn’t sink the people? Turn them back whoever they come from. This affected our health and it affected me it affected my brain…. It especially affected me I couldn’t continue my career to work to get my test in English all of this because it affected me, affected my health. I couldn’t concentrate...
These refugees are clearly signalling the effects of the injurious discourses exercised by newspapers, these narratives depict as well a carefully put together (violent) episteme of refugees by the normative frame in which these discourses emerged which includes the legislative framework, political speeches and dominant media discourses about refugees. Accordingly, these narratives also illustrate the mark of injury in their bodies “…it affected my brain…”, “…to keep on the minds of the people to keep in their memory…”, “…I feel very hurt I feel very upset…” Furthermore, these narratives convey the silences in the dominant discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, explicitly what the dominant discourses refused to say about these refugees such as, “…they showed us in a negative side. Is a big challenge for me to prove against that, and we need that now and we need to let more people more Australians know about that…” The importance of looking at the effects, the wounds of the injurious dominant discourses about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, in Spivak’s words ‘to delve into the specific case of inequality that brings about the use of difference and who denies it’ (Spivak 2005, p. 482) is, on one side, to highlight the disciplinary regime of subordination that ‘deters’, ‘punishes’, ‘wounds’, ‘incarcerates’ and ‘conditions’, that also deliberately brings these refugees into marginal existence, advancing a position without identity. And on the other, to expose how the injured narratives of these asylum seekers are charting the subject position as an effect of these dominant discourses which are at the intersection of power and knowledge. Precisely, here these wounded and mourning asylum seekers know the power of discourse since it is felt in their bodies, and this is what upholds difference.

Lastly, I follow Butler’s views that violence, vulnerability and mourning pave the way of human individuation (Butler 2004, p. 31): “… and the first thing was a sense of isolation from other people,…”, “….and unfortunately this affected us we feel empty, and at the same time the people outside..”, “….all of this affected my health and I was depressed, really depressed at that time”. Butler states that the recognition of vulnerability has the power to change, that recognition is one precondition for humanisation. She claims that recognising vulnerability is to make the claim of vulnerability and that humanisation takes place in this process. Explicitly, I understand from Butler that recognising the narratives or histories of others is necessary but not enough, as we need to intentionally care for the other. Foucault, for instance, approaches this subject emphasising what he calls the practice rather than the affirmation of freedom (Bernauer and Rasmussen 1988, pp. 2-3). Nevertheless, Butler
says, vulnerability is necessarily dependent on existing norms of recognition (Butler 2004, p. 43). This will be analysed further in the section that explores hospitality.

4 The Subverting Subject

The section below examines the narratives that bring about subverting subjectivities. The focus is on the power that these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas exercise to be the narrators of their stories, and their contestation of the dominant narratives circulated in the media and official discourses. This contestation is embodied and partial. It precisely brings contradiction, complexity, and vulnerability since these narrations put into words the effects of the dominant narratives about asylum seekers on their lives. Since these are local views or singular cases, ‘the singular repeated with a difference’ Spivak (2005, p. 475), these are subjectivities that are positioned to resist simplification and fixation. They are promoting inquisitiveness about the net of differential subject positioning given that they do not inhabit a fixed epistemic location. The following narratives are examined in this section:

... a lot of lies a lot of negative representation in the media even they were telling lies about us facing this kind of situation….We came to this country for safety, is Australia like this? If this is the way this is not much better than the life the situation in Afghanistan” (Male 60 Afghanistan, interviewed 13.12.2007)

We went to Romero Centre and explained to them that we have the scarf and we feel very unsafe because we can’t go to the shops, we can’t go to the bus, we are in our houses like a prisoner. We don’t feel safe to go to the park (Female 31 Afghanistan, interviewed 05.12.2007).

We came to Australia because we needed and why is Australia doing this? Why they make problem for us? Why the newspapers don’t came to us and make news in TV or radio? Where were the newspapers?…Some people that had hunger strike and hurting themselves cutting themselves, some people were cutting their bodies or drinking shampoo……After I arrived to Australia I felt I am in
paradise but after I lived in the camp in hospital and prison I asked why? And I thought this is no different to Saddam Hussein (Male Iraqi 48, interviewed 16.11.2007).

Unfortunately some of the newspapers they do what the government want not what the media and the free way want unfortunately. They said a lie behind you or not true things about yourself so that means you feel not safe, you feel unwelcome here and we know that everybody came from all over the world to this beautiful country. Why don’t accept us because we all come from all over the world to this country? (Male Iran 40, interviewed 09.11.2007).

People protested and also a lot of people when other people got interviewed they went there and took information of who we are exactly. And a lot of people from where we are working, also we were telling the people who we are when they were getting the news. We were communicating: no! We are not that and when they were meeting other people or whenever or any other party or gathering and the people where discussing the media so they were saying oh!! No, no, no (Female Afghanistan 40, interviewed 08.12.2007)

The above narratives are articulating a transformative and liberating vision of Australia by posing a question about Australia’s response toward their arrival as asylum seekers-refugees: “We came to Australia because we needed and why is Australia doing this?, We came to this country for safety, is Australia like this?, Why don’t accept us because we all come from all over the world to this country?” Here, I understand liberation in the sense specified by Foucault namely, opening up new relationships of power controlled by practices of liberty (Bernauer and Rasmussen 1988, p. 3-4) since these narratives are questioning the principles and norms embedded in the official disciplinary knowledge that created a dominant epistemology about their experiences as asylum seekers and refugees. In addition, these utterances are making visible discontent with the dominant (anti) asylum seeker-refugee epistemological stance exercised by the media, politicians, the government and some ordinary Australians while at the same time they are standing for their self care which would made them capable of having a place in the Australian community, in the city: “… we can’t go to the shops, we can’t go to the bus, we are in our houses like a prisoner..”, and to develop relationships with
Australians and of participating in the making of Australia. Foucault also states that “…the subject constitutes himself in an active fashion, by the practices of the self. These practices are nevertheless not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group” (Bernauer and Rasmussen 1988, p. 11). I understand his words to apply here in the following way: the space to manoeuvre that the asylum seekers had was extremely limited since their lives in Australia at the time of this study were fixed in asymmetrical relationship of power and the margin of liberty was very narrow. Nevertheless, in spite of the very limited space to exercise freedom these asylum seekers had constituted themselves as subjects that care for themselves and constitute themselves in an active manner as noted in these words: “…We were communicating: no! We are not that and when they were meeting other people or whenever or any other party or gathering and the people where discussing the media so they were saying oh!! No, no, no…” In this case, the subverting subject actively constitutes herself by contesting the dominant views about her as a refugee and she does this by means of the English language (her second (imposed) language) and in a manner that differs from cultural expectations of a woman in her country of origin, Afghanistan.

In keeping with Foucault’s elaboration of the links between self-care and truth, these asylum seekers are the bodily expression of the effects of domination linked to structures of truth such as the legislative framework that created mandatory detention, the Pacific Solution, and the temporary protection visas. And of institutions charged with truth such as the printed media that promoted dominant views of ‘illegality’, portraying asylum seekers as ‘illegals’ who were part of an ‘illegal trade of immigration’, mobilising consent for ‘more resources needed to be devoted to the battle against the trade in illegal immigrants’. Consequently, these asylum seekers were confronted with the enormous task of ascertaining a different truth, namely their incarnated experiences of displacement and persecution and their need for recognition and hospitality:

“…After I arrived to Australia I felt I am in paradise but after I lived in the camp in hospital and prison I asked why? And I thought this is no different to Saddam Hussain…”, “…They said a lie behind you or not true things about yourself so that means you feel not safe, you feel unwelcome…”, “…and people protested and also a lot of people when
other people got interviewed they went there and took information of who we are exactly...”.

These subverting subjects’ narratives are disassembling the series of rules and procedures that put together the totalising epistemology of their ‘illegality’ and subsequent punishment. They show people with their testimonies that there are other possibilities of knowing about experiences of persecution and displacement, about refugee experiences that do not entirely fit the global design of the refugee definition. Accordingly, these narratives are also demonstrating to the Australian people what they disregard about their own situation, their own conditions of exploitation as expressed in the following words: “…Unfortunately some of the newspapers they do what the government want not what the media and the free way want unfortunately..” In this domain the narratives of the subverting subjects are articulating an ethical stance as understood by Foucault, ‘self-care is ethical itself, that however implies complex relations with others’. He further states that ‘the measure of the ethos of freedom is also a way of caring for others’ (Bernauer and Rasmussen 1988, p. 7). In this case this subverting subject’s narrative is opening a space for the Other to reflect on the relationship of the self to the self and about the practices that are constituting his/her positionality, and possibly change his/her positionality as the knowing subject, to exercise power and liberty to care for themselves and others.

5 Conclusion

There are many subject positions which one must inhabit, one is not just one thing. That is when a political consciousness comes in (Gunew & Spivak 1986).

This chapter has discussed the political and ethical field that the bodies of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have traversed since their forced departure from their country of origin, during their trip to and after arrival in Australia. This trajectory has illustrated the power relations that have taken hold of these bodies to mark, to deprive, to incarcerate, to invest, to found and to subvert. These bodies have encountered technologies of subjectivities and disciplining inscribed in normative frameworks such as legislation, politicians and media discourses (the defining imperial gaze) that created a system of subjection in which the bodies of these refugees became
predominantly ‘known’ as pretend refugees, illegal transgressors of ‘our’ borders. This positioning has made possible the ‘mastery’ of their bodies in the form of consented disciplinary measures embedded in punishment and exclusion by physical incarceration in remote detention centres and after release. This punishment took the more ‘subtle’ form of temporary protection visas. This system of subjection also legitimated a particular epistemology about these asylum seekers a mode of knowing that inflicted pain and suffering in the bodies. This power was conveyed through and resisted by them; this contestation was articulated in the specific narratives examined in this chapter. Their words denounced their discontent with the imposing gaze and proceeded to materialise their incarnated experiences of persecution, displacement and resistance. These narratives not only expressed their dissatisfaction with the epistemological dominance that categorised and made their experiences universal. These narratives also noted their will to truth, namely what comprises their incarnated knowledge, relocating cognition and also fissuring the foreclosure of the dominant gaze and the framework that allowed this invested gaze. These narratives also give us a glimpse of the common human vulnerability that they share with ordinary Australians, articulating a call for recognition and hospitality.
CHAPTER 6
HOSPITALITY: THE MANNER IN WHICH WE RELATE TO OURSELVES AND TO OTHERS

… ‘please we need go to freedom’, ‘please we need go to freedom’, ‘you must go with the government’ help we to freedom, every time we could, we wrote this because we don’t speak English very well’… (Male, Iraqi: 16. 11.2007)

…..the foreigner is first of all foreign to the legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated, the right to asylum, its limits, norms, policing, etc. He has to ask for hospitality in a language which by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house, the host, the king, the lord, the authorities, the nation, the State, the father, etc. This personage imposes on him translation into their own language, and that’s the first act of violence. That is where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country? (Derrida 2000, p. 15)

The analysis of the narratives of the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas aims at accomplishing a close reading of the type of ethical demand for recognition which is made by the interviewees. Consequently, this chapter of the analysis of the interviews will focus on ‘hospitality’, and the development of this topic will be strongly based on reflections about place, habitation and co-habitation (Butler, p. 2011), an exploration of the relationship of responsibility with another (Levinas 1993), the manner of being at one’s home: as put by Derrida ‘the ethics of hospitality’ (Derrida 2001) and of ‘crossing boundaries’ within self and the other.

This chapter will also focus on language as an essential element of hospitality (as positioned by Levinas and Derrida). The implications of this focus in terms of justice, as the reading of Levinas by Simmons (Simmons 1999, p. 89) states: ‘the subject who responds is also an incarnated being, who can only respond with concrete hospitality’. In the case of the interviewees the issue of language is very relevant since they are articulating their responses in a language that is not their first. The emphasis on
hospitality rather than in the argument of ‘stopping the boats’ with the aim of saving the endangered lives of asylum seekers who make the precarious journey to Australia has its basis in the consideration that human security, namely the safety of asylum seekers do not have to be opposed to the protection of borders, given that the lives of asylum seekers by definition are endangered prior to their decision to make the precarious journey.

I have chosen the two citations above since the presence and claim made by the Iraqi person cited here illustrates the vulnerability of his position as an asylum seeker, a person dispossessed of his familiar place, a person without home. In Butler’s words, (Butler, 2011, pp. 7-8) a person who faces the precariousness of his (lack of) habitation, as he is exposed to the goodwill of Australia as a receiving country which establishes and controls by law who enters its society. He is also a person who faces linguistic vulnerability, as he named and addressed and brought into being in subject positions that have mostly inflicted injury and pain. The second citation illustrates Derrida’s views on what is at stake when considering ‘hospitality’, an ‘(un)welcomable’ guest (Morgan Wortham, 2010, pp. 71-72). Derrida invites us to think about the ethos (the manner of being) of the subject, the nation and its citizens (in this specific case) as personages who might establish primacy over their ‘guests’ by the founding violence of asking the foreigner to ask for hospitality in a language imposed to him, as said by the Iraqi person cited above “...we don’t speak English very well...”. However, Derrida’s words are alluding to a much broader consideration of hospitality which contemplates the ethics of being at home with oneself, and a reception or inclusion of the other (Derrida 2001, pp. 16-17). It follows that a reflection about hospitality is also a reflection about ethics, since ethics is about locality and our manner of being in a place: “... It is also the place where the question of the foreigner as a question of hospitality is articulated with the question of being...” (Derrida 2000, p. 9). Taking a stance within this ethics entails awareness of how knowledge and power are constructed and how they construct us as individuals and citizens. In this manner ethics is also about ‘moving away from the natural order of things’ (Bauman 1993, pp. 63-64). Consequently, this implies an attentiveness to the conditions under which we are responsive to others, to people whom we know and do not know, and to the conditions of life itself. In Judith Butler’s formulation, this type of ethics comprises notions of responsiveness, requiring awareness, reflection about our obligations to other human beings and of the conditions under which we can be affected by other human beings including in ways that we might
not choose. Responsiveness also calls for an appreciation of our general state of shared fragility and physical vulnerability and so demanding a response to the suffering that we see and sense is experienced by other human beings and to the obliteration of their conditions of life (Butler 2003, p. 102-103. For Derrida we ponder the responsibility that we hold for those who are suffering, sometimes to the point of death that life asserts and presents to us, whether we assume it or not (Derrida 2002, p. 117).

When reflecting on the ethics of hospitality Derrida brings to view what he calls the heterogeneous, tense, yet unavoidable relationship with what he conceives as the ethics of hospitality, namely the unconditional law of unlimited hospitality, which demands of every act of hospitality to exceed the law. This means to open myself to the Other, to offer my house to the complete unknown, anonymous Other without expecting anything from him or her, without even asking his/her name (Derrida 2000, pp. 25-27). And the law or politics of conditioned hospitality which he says transforms the gift of hospitality into a contract (Derrida 2005, p. 6) since it involves delimitations, a customary commitment, a right to hospitality by a familial line of descent. As a result this type of hospitality can only be offered to a foreigner who is protected by his/her family name (Derrida 2000, p. 23-25) hence within this type of hospitality a foreigner can only enter by invitation. Consequently, Derrida articulates that the law of absolute hospitality requires a departure from hospitality by right, by law (Derrida 2000, p. 25-27). He clarifies that this does not mean that unconditional hospitality opposes or denies hospitality by right; it means that gradually the unconditional law of hospitality guides, sustains, inspires the conditioned law of hospitality. These are contradictory and at the same time inseparable laws. He further states that ethical hospitality needs the invention of a new language to account for the endless re-invention of our relationship with the Other. When people who do not speak the same language meet, there is a need for translation which he conceives as an invention, an ethical hospitality requiring two-way translation (Derrida 1997). The following section will offer a more in-depth exploration of the emerging forms of hospitality, unconditional and conditional, evoked by the interview narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visa.

The subsection Hospitality, the Question of Place and Our Manner of Being in That Place illustrates that the TPV holder’s articulation for an ethical recognition is not being fulfilled. Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are subjected to a conditioned hospitality uttered by the Australian nation in a language imposed on the asylum seeker who then has to articulate his demand for ethical recognition in a language that is not
his first. In other words, the imposition of a border by the Australian nation is also a language act that inhabits Australia’s pursuit of legitimacy of its unethical position towards asylum seekers. In matters related to asylum seekers, as a nation Australia uses a language that obscures the individual differences of its citizens, as it uses a narrative of the ‘general interest’ (Kristeva 1993, p. 41). This immigration language obscures individual differences among asylum seekers by reducing asylum seekers on temporary protection visas to border transgressors. In this manner Australia’s immigration language delineates a border between its citizens and asylum seekers by using a language that mostly inscribes sensitivities of exclusion, inhibition, hate, and repression on its citizens against those who are soliciting protection. The language of immigration law in the Australian nation is articulated in English, a language that appropriates culture shaping rights and limits, that also denies and/or conditions hospitality. This subsection highlights the difficulties and necessity of translation when there is a threshold, a nation and foreigners appealing for ethical recognition.

The following section called Articulating the Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas’ Request for Recognition delves more in depth around the request for ethical recognition made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the subject position from which their request is made. It emerges that in the context of Australian immigration policies (positioned in the West), asylum seekers occupy the position of outsiders, positioned as less than human, and they are constituted as a threat to the Australian population and are subjected to rejection and imprisonment. Nevertheless, the words of the interviewees assert a call, a search for a new affective trajectory of reciprocal exchange between asylum seekers and Australian citizens.

Finally, the subsection Asylum Seekers on Temporary Protection Visas’ Solicitation of Ethical Recognition: Awakening to its Meaning explores the meaning of ethical relations and ethical obligations in the context of an ethical demand for co-existence. This subsection shows that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ presence, however much mediated, compels us to ethically respond to them, given that we are interdependent and bounded to one another.
1 Hospitality, the Question of Place and Our Manner of Being in That Place

....in every act of hospitality there are, of course, rituals and coded gestures but there is also a moment of absolute singularity which is processed with the heart (Derrida cited in Simmons and Worth 2001, p. 26)

Derrida’s words provide an insight into the impact of experiencing unconditional hospitality, a memorable affective experience of being welcomed despite the problems of language and translation as he is responding here to the hospitality offered by people of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The words of the interviewee that follow illustrate the impact of conditioned hospitality, haunted by the threat of otherness.

The interview excerpt below is chosen to illustrate the plea of a man from Iraq who is challenging the deviant and illegal positioning assigned by the Australian nation to asylum seekers and himself as border transgressor/s. His plea censure defines his exclusion to such an extent that his narrative testifies to his attempt to legitimate his position within Australian society and his plea to be part of the Australian community:

Other things we did is we started to work to look for jobs to prove to this people that we had good experience in our lives, that we are educated people, we have good experience. And we start to think about to work some people work in the farms, some people work in the hospital, because I am an artist I started to paint, some people started to study. To challenge to prove to the country that we are here to study and work not just to take the money from Centrelink office, most of them started studying and most people started to talk English very well and we started to pay tax, not just take money from the government.

This Iraqi asylum seeker further attempts to demonstrate the ‘lawfulness’ of his presence, challenging the divide that positions him as an ‘unlawful non-citizen’. His words try to remove the border between him as an economic migrant; he is reassuring us that he is not here to take advantage of the Australian economy for his own benefit; he is affirming how he and other fellow Asylum seekers on temporary protection visa are helping the economy. He further wants to close the distance with Australian citizen
by criticising other asylum seekers from the Middle East who talk loudly and angrily, as he says:

Because they talked another thing they said these people are coming because they have economic problems now there is lot of people who have big business you know, big business. They started to buy their houses and they start to help the economy and they work and have business, but the difficulty is that you know? Still this is a problem for us, still we have more good experience to talk to contact to the news. In the Middle East for example people talking very loudly and angry to prove to the people we are not happy and that is not good. I know that now I started to know that it is not good to talk like this, for example if we are not happy to talk like this we think it is good but it is no good.

Lastly, the words of the Iraqi person in this citation show his curiosity, his desire for translation. His words are also illustrative of the difficulties of his positioning as foreigner, who can’t easily create a network of relations, or build a new place where his culture, his experience, his language, can meet that of the hosts (in the manner that he perceives as appropriate). His words show his location as an outsider subjected to a conditioned hospitality needing to translate his experience to the English language:

We should explain how we are, we should describe our situation better than nervousness as is not good explanation to talk quickly or nervous or angry. This is a big problem and lots of people don’t understand because when we want to talk for the media to explain our situation we need a lot of good English, good language good English language. Because still also for me lots of things to talk, and I need to know some words, I need to talk about my language, my culture but is difficult to translate these words to English and what I think. (Iraqi Male, 21.11.07)

The Iraqi person in this citation assumes a collective stance to describe the contributions that asylum seekers like him can make to this country. He does this by challenging the view that asylum seekers are here to depend on Centrelink payments. Instead he emphasises that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are here to study and work and then he proceeds to give some examples to illustrate this. He is also reflecting
about the need to approach the media to further depict aspects of his culture and situation. However, he sees this as a difficult task mainly due to his limitation and lack of confidence in communicating in the English language (not his first language). In addition, he is openly critical of the manner in which he sees that Middle Eastern people convey their concerns when they are unhappy and sees this as an obstruction to further communication. The preoccupation of the Iraqi person cited above seems to be that of creating a favourable impression of himself/others as guest/s that could be trusted and welcomed. By shifting his place of guest as receiver to that of giver, he is positioning himself as a guest that would not abuse the hospitality of the host. Moreover, although not explicit in his narrative, the conditioned hospitality that Australia offers to him and other asylum seekers arriving by boat is ingrained in the process that he had to submit to having been granted a temporary protection and/or permanent protection visa. This Iraqi asylum seeker and others like him not only had to comply with the thorough scrutiny of officials from the Department of Immigration and supply the narrative that fit the administration regarding criteria of persecution, they also had to submit to additional hurdles such as the Border Protection Bill 2001 which gave the government of Australia the power to order ships to leave Australia’s territorial waters and the Migration Amendment Bill 1 and 2 which allowed the excising of certain Australian territory from the migration zone (McMaster 2002, p. x). This means that before being granted a protection visa asylum seekers had to surpass additional hurdles.

This narrative shows that the scrutiny and examination haunting him and other asylum seekers on temporary protection visas like him is also related to the fact that his place of refuge, namely Australia, is a place that resists housing these refugees’ differences. Although his fears of persecution from his country of origin might have been initially alleviated, his words are articulating his complex position as an outsider.

The following subsection will offer an in-depth analysis of this citation aiming at detecting and marking this asylum seeker’s articulation of an ethical recognition that is not being fulfilled. There is a call for recognition that I contend is visible in his narrative despite these comments being given in a language that is not his first. To accomplish this task I am relying on Derrida’s views of ethical hospitality which includes an examination of language and of what happens when we engage in the other’s language.

Consider the following statement from the Iraqi interviewee:
Other things we did is we started to work to look for jobs to prove to this people that we had good experience in our lives, that we are educated people, we have good experience. And we start to think about to work some people work in the farms, some people work in the hospital, because I am an artist I started to paint, some people started to study. To challenge to prove to the country that we are here to study and work not just to take the money from Centrelink office, most of them started studying and most people started to talk English very well and we started to pay tax, not just take money from the government.

Here, he is inviting us to think about language, the language of culture, values, norms that inhabit the house of the host. He is illustrating the language in which he has been taken hostage rather than been hosted, namely denied unconditional hospitality. This Iraqi person’s narrative calls into question the subjectivity of the host, in his words ‘this people’, ‘the country’ that needs proof or certainty of the ‘type’ of guest he is. Here, the Iraqi person is precisely demonstrating that Australia and its citizens are exercising a model of hospitality that is framed by the law of conditioned hospitality. Thus, the manner of being in Australia of the citizens of Australia (us) with regard to hospitality is structured mostly by the state and the nation which marginalised, criminalised, detained, rejected, and conditioned asylum seekers like the Iraqi person above.

The consequence of the conditional hospitality exercised by the Australian nation and its citizens and lived and embodied by the Iraqi person in this citation and other asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat, are also lived and embodied by Australian citizens. On one side, most ordinary Australian citizens are excluded from the responsibility of practicing, defining and searching for the specific modes of hospitality that they might be able and willing to offer to asylum seekers like the Iraqi person cited above. Moreover, most Australians citizens (us) are also barred from questioning the law of conditioned hospitality as exercised by the nation (Rosello 2001, pp. 39-40). On the other side, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are subordinated, made defenceless, and marginalised by the law of a country that rejects, detains, and/or welcomes him/her since this law is exercised in a language that he/she does/not master and that due to its exclusionary and universalising nature limits translation, that is, limits the both ways translation, the endless reinvention of ordinary Australian citizens/our relationship with these asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and
asylum seekers/Other as suggested by Derrida (Derrida 1997). Derrida states that the first violence that a foreigner experiences is that of having to claim his rights in a language that he/she does not speak (Derrida 2005, p. 7), when examining the situation of asylum seekers arriving by boat and the conditions that shape and had shaped immigration policies in Australia. These policies and processes are elaborated in a language to which asylum seekers literally and figuratively do not have access, since these asylum seekers are not trained in the English language and culture. The history of these immigration policies emphasizes the construction of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants as the nation’s significant Other (McMaster 2002, p. 38). Derrida, also elaborates that suspending this violence is almost an impossibility and that consequently this situation demands the endless and urgent task of translation, of transformation of the law, of the language of the law (Derrida 2005, p. 7). This is a problematic and very difficult task since the situation of asylum seeking involves a frontier, a border, a foreigner whose material existence is embodied in a face. This foreigner who is coming from the outside, who is appealing for refuge in another language (a language which is not imperial), is pleading to enter the nation and appealing for an ethical response, for a recognition of his/her singularity, his/her humanity. And this situation also entails a master of the house, whose name in this case is the Australian nation, which fortifies its threshold with immigration legislation, which is a sort of abstract person which, however, speaks English (one of the six imperial languages) (Mignolo, 2009), a nation which in language has made the distinction that creates itself as a nation. The nation of Australia applies a universal law thus ranking human beings legitimated by immigration policies to decree and differentiate between the lives of its citizens and the lives of these foreigners. The translation required for an ethical law is conflicting as it consists in the translation of absolute singularity into universality which Derrida says is at once translatable and un-translatable (Derrida 2001, p. 90).

The next subsection will continue the examination of the Iraqi person’s narrative, focusing on Derrida’s point, which delves further into what is at stake when engaged in the Other’s language, particularly when this Other is making a solicitation for hospitality. I maintain that what is involved in this process surpasses theory, in as much as the request for hospitality is also a demand for friendship and justice as understood by Derrida. Given that, I follow Derrida’s reflection on ethical decisions that imply something unknown and the passing through a process that he calls undecidability: “making a leap beyond the field of theoretical knowledge” (Derrida in Kearney and
Dooley 1999, p. 66). This is illustrated by the case of Iraqi, Afghani, and Iranian asylum seekers whose solicitation of hospitality poses a problem beyond language and translation. They represent the arrival of something that we don’t quite know, which, however, requires a solution, a decision that calls upon us to respond to their suffering and solicitation. What is demanded of us, Derrida says, is not a theoretical judgement, but a decision made “by the other in myself” (Derrida in Kearney and Dooley 1999, p. 67), emphasising that we are not at the centre of our own ethics. Thus, ethics involves a call for justice as it emerges in a network of relationships that surpass a singular relationship to the other (Derrida in Kearney and Dooley 1999, p. 68-69).

In his approach to language and writing Derrida affirms that thinking needs to be generated in the passage through the limit, as he conceives the outside as something that, despite being close, is always beyond a limit. For Derrida, when we are faced with the question of the foreigner, it is the limit/border that is being put in question. By soliciting refuge and asking for recognition, we are put in question. Consequently the foreigner’s presence articulates a double question of both hospitality and of being. Thus, his/her presence brings into examination our response and responsibility: I am being asked to respond to an/other person/s whose first language is not English and whose home was/is elsewhere. This highlights the issue that communicating through translation is not only a linguistic venture, it also involves a reflection on how do I/we connect and what happens when I/we take on the other’s language (Derrida in Tellez and Mazzoldi 2007, p. 370). As a result, it also becomes an ethical (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000, p. 133) and political matter as this drive for responsibility does/or does not emerge within a political context. Furthermore, Derrida’s stance when approaching the issue of our response and responsibility toward others, is conceived as a matter linked to justice: that to be just with the Other all kinds of theoretical analysis must be barred (Derrida 2001, p. 106). Hence, Derrida declares that when trying to establish what hospitality is and friendship is, he does not propose a political theory since he argues that hospitality and friendship surpass knowledge (Derrida 1997). Given that that the Other, in this case asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, stand at the threshold of the nation, at the margins of the nation, whose faces articulate a language unknown to the Australian nation a language which makes reference to an elsewhere. How would they convey their call for recognition and get their meaning

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10 See Fathy, S 1999, Por otra parte Jacques Derrida, (video recording). Available at <http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=por+otra+parte+derrida&oq=por+otra+parte+&gs_l=youtube.1.0.0i19.2139.6953.0.920>. [12 July 2012].
across? Following Derrida’s position, this can only be possible through translation, which means taking the initiative to say yes to the Other, a yes that Derrida says is the structure of a response, an opening to the Other and that consequently this opening is ultimately a personal choice when confronted with a demand for recognition or a hospitality solicitation made in this case by asylum seekers on temporary protection visa. This is not a decision forced from the outside. This act of opening to the Other implies risks, and is an affirmation of life that escapes knowledge, it presumes trust since this ‘yes’, is a leap (Derrida 2008, pp. 75-76) to an unknown Other whose language and place are different to mine/ours, and it is a movement to the acceptance of the law of the Other.

The Iraqi person, whose statement is above, is speaking from a place that is also a non-place given his condition as asylum seeker on a temporary protection visa. Consequently, he is close yet beyond a limit. His words, however, testify his closeness: “we need a lot of good English, good language good English language,” which indicates his desire to ask for hospitality in a language that is not his own. Yet, he is also revealing the secret of the distance that displaces him beyond a limit, as his emphasis on ‘good language’ denounces how he is put into question by the authority of the logos who disarms him, who somehow treats him as mad as in his words, “.....In the Middle East for example, people talking very loudly and angry to prove to the people we are not happy and that is not good. I know that now I started to know that it is not good to talk like this, for example if we are not happy, to talk like this we think it is good but it is no good”. In other words, the secret that he is articulating is that the nation of Australia and its citizens (us), when facing an asylum seeker are not prepared to talk the language, to write the language of the other. The citizens of Australia are rejecting the opportunity to live and experience an ethical hospitality. Whilst his words are making visible his ability to write and live the language of the Other, he continues to examine his inside (the outside, in his inside which is constituted by his attachment to Iraq and fellow Iraqi citizens in a similar situation here in Australia) through his words which are marked by silence and exclusion, observing his culture and his stance. Consequently his preoccupation with the ‘outside’ of the Australian nation and its citizens on the ‘inside’, shows his desire for translation, as seen in his words, “...Because still also for me lots of things to talk, and I need to know some words, I need to talk about my language, my culture but is difficult to translate these words to English and what I think.” He is appealing for the invention of a two-way inclusive language and expressing his desire
for an ethical hospitality. Thus, his stand is utterly opposed to the consideration from the Australian nation of Muslims as a threat to Australian values (even more so after September 11, 2001 since this stance forecloses the opening to inventions, translations and ethical hospitality thus positioning Muslims/Islam as one). The problem of universalising the lived experience of individuals like the Iraqi person cited above and of Australian citizens, inhabitants of the Australian nation is that it precludes interlocution. It prevents the conversation between the one who addresses and the one being addressed; it constrains the development of relations whose grounds are defined through exclusion and through contact and proximity (Butler in Murray 2007, p. 5). Thus, the nation assumes the responsibility to respond to asylum seekers presupposing that there is only one way of being an Australian citizen when facing an asylum seeker who is requesting hospitality.

1.1 Articulating the Asylum Seekers’ on Temporary Protection Visas’ Request for Recognition - We should understand and respect each other on the basis of being human beings, shouldn’t we?

...Dresses should be different should be as many as human beings who remain the same we should understand and respect each other on the base of being human beings. (Male Afghanistan: 29.11.07)

This chapter’s subtitle directs us to an assertion made by an Afghani interviewee (above) who is articulating a demand for recognition based on a ‘humanity’ that he should be understood and respected like ‘any other’ human being. To begin this analysis I draw on a South American theorist, Walter Mignolo, who delves into the geo-and body-politics of knowledge embedded in what he calls decolonial thinking, a concept which originates in the Third World to break the Western code (Mignolo 2011). Mignolo establishes that the decolonial scientia has three main tasks including showing the links between geo-history and knowledge and between bio-graphy and epistemology. He is interested in the epistemic and ontological construction of racism by Western civilisation that emerged as Europeans colonized the Americas, in order to understand the role of racisms in the management of human subjectivities (Mignolo 2011a, p. xi). Importantly, Mignolo situates his analysis not from a disciplinarian perspective but rather ‘from the subjective feelings of his own history’, that of a European descendant Creole (Mestizo) (Mignolo 2009, p. 73). Mignolo positions
himself as Mestizo joining forces with progressive Indians and Afro South- and Caribbean Americans, adopting a decolonial posture to delink from what he calls the colonial matrix of power underlying Western modernity (Mignolo 2011b). He is, like Derrida, positioning himself as distanced from Europe (Derrida 2008, pp. 31-32). Derrida deconstructs Western metaphysics to democratise (a democracy in the making, a democracy to come Derrida 2008, p. 43) the Occident while Mignolo delinks from the Western matrix of power (a locally emerging matrix of power namely the West made universal) to assert the thinking and doing of those territories and bodies who were/are disqualified by this colonial matrix of power (Mignolo 2011, p. xxii).

In his article “Dispensable and Bare Lives” (2009) Mignolo stipulates the emergence of what he calls ‘dispensable lives’, lives that are essential when turned into commodities. He asserts that human beings have been and continue to be ranked “...according to their degree of humanity (ontology) and their degree of intellectual capacities and knowledge (epistemology)” (Mignolo 2009, pp. 70-71). Mignolo further elaborates his argument by asserting that this type of ranking of human beings has a secular and religious origin in what he calls ‘European egology’ and ‘Christian theology’. This grading of human beings based on secular and religious terms is also articulated by Quijano who uses the term ‘Eurocentrism’ (Quijano 2000, p. 533) to illustrate how the separation from body and soul had first a Christian religious origin that was later philosophically articulated by Descartes. It is this conception that Mignolo says provided the frame for racial classification and management of the population, leading to injurious legal/political and economic dispensability of human lives (Mignolo 2009, p. 74).

This is a topic that Judith Butler has also reflected upon in particular when referring to Islamic populations in the context of recent wars, where they seem to have no status as ‘rational human’. Rather, they are constituted as that which threatens the ‘human’, and not ‘human’ itself. She further positions this enunciation as in the ‘West’ which she says is historically placed to articulate whose lives are important to preserve and protect as well as to publicly mourn. She argues that the West compels ‘certain’ bodies to embody cultural reductions ultimately constructing their subject position outside the course of human civilization, thus legitimising acts of coercion and violence in defence of ‘humanity’. (Butler 2008, pp. 15-21). In her reading of Levinas, Butler advances the point that ethical relations take place outside established community bonds, and that our lives are bound to the lives of others through ethical claims and ethical obligations that are grounded and emerge from our precarious ‘bodily’ life. To be bounded to those who
are human in the abstract is to prevent all attempts to culturally translate between our
own situation and that of others (Butler 2011). In other words, Butler points to
communitarianist ethical obligations that only arise and remain within established
communities, bodies corporeally gathered within borders that are narrow and
exclusionary. She further elaborates that cohabitation is the ethical foundation for the
critique of those forms of state violence that try to produce and maintain a specific
character of its population by subjugating minorities (Butler 2011, p. 76).

The following section is illustrative of the Australian nation’s conflicting examples with
regard to narrow and exclusionary ethical obligations towards immigrant Others, since
the history of its immigration policies has been characterised by the fear of strangers
(McMaster 2002, p. 38-39). And McMaster advances this view by stating that
“Australia’s history of immigration is also a history of exclusion” (McMaster 2002, p. 64).
Whilst the period of 1972-1982 saw the emergence of the concept and policies of
multiculturalism which characterised Australia as an ethnically diverse and socially
cohesive society, the hostile response to this movement has been focused on the
collective fear against an Asian invasion (McMaster 2002, p. 146). Another example is
given by Suvendrini Perera who concludes that the Border Protection legislation is
effectively strengthening the country’s “inside and outside, differentiating between the
legal and illegal” (Perera 2009, p. 658). In brief, the inside/outside distinction in the
context of the official Australian response to asylum seekers as articulated by the
Afghani interviewee shows a Western and unethical stance.

Pugliese in his study of the trauma and death experienced by asylum seekers within
Australian detention centres, illustrates how exclusionary and narrow ethical obligations
are in Australia with regard to asylum seekers in detention. In fact, he asserts that the
violence of the bio-political matrix governing Australian immigration centres is a
violence knitted in the everyday practices of this civic society, obscured and masked by
the ordinary (Pugliese 2011, p. 23). This violence is exercised from the very moment of
arrival and arrest of these asylum seekers as they are “forcefully ushered beyond the
juridical category of ‘the human’”, since the framework for evaluation of these asylum
seekers and for the limitation of their human rights is that they do not belong, and that
they are non-Australian citizens who arrived in Australia in an unauthorised manner.
He expands this by stating that these asylum seekers’ bodies are marked by racial
grading and “the loaded signifiers of geopolitical origin (for example, Afghanistan, Iraq,
Sri Lanka)...”. Pugliese also asserts that this violence is located in the ‘corpus of the
nation’ which distinctively nullifies these asylum seeker’s bodies from the category of ‘personhood’ by exercising powerful acts of refusal, rejection and imprisonment of these asylum seekers (Pugliese 2011).

Several other theorists have problematised the notion of appealing to a common humanity as a mechanism for ethical hospitality. Such a critique of ‘humanity’ is presented by Paul Ricoeur who states that ‘humanity’ as such does not exist in a distinct political unit. He argues that humanity is divided into numerous communities where only certain people can claim membership while others can only have the status of strangers. Ricoeur further details that this type of relationship namely, stranger, the one who is dispossessed of a membership to a historical community, versus the member of a historical community such as, nation-state has its origin in the problem of war and peace. (Ricoeur 2010, p. 37) He adds that within this account of humanity the foreigner “is someone who is not allowed to become ‘one of us’ as he or she pleases” (Ricoeur 2010, p. 39). An example of this type of position towards asylum seekers was articulated in some of the presences evoked by letters to the editor which positioned asylum seekers as possessing the fixed identity of assumed or perceived criminals in their home countries and thus likely to be criminals in the future in Australia. Consequently, the presences articulated by the LTE writers mostly reinforce the regulatory norms that kept asylum seekers as the focus of Border Protection legislation and justifying a deterrent legislation. Importantly, these presences also disowned any ethical responsibility towards these asylum seekers since these appeared as unworthy, needy, and having nothing to contribute to the country. Other letter writers clearly called asylum seekers unwanted and markedly different from Australians and thus making them unworthy of rights within the Australian society. Other examples of this type of position were found in the examination of newspaper articles which rejected the claim for recognition solicited by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

This chapter has shown that generally the narratives rejecting the asylum seekers’ call for ethical recognition marked their bodies as subaltern-other, preventing the possibility of developing an ethical relationship with them, and similarly precluding an opening of the official punitive stance towards asylum seekers. The ambivalent narratives in the newspaper articles analysed in the previous chapter highlighted the struggles to impose a social view of the Australian identity as constituted by borders and divisions, distinguishing Australian citizens as insiders and non-citizens/asylum seekers as outsiders. Lastly, this analysis has also shown that the presence of narratives that noted
the normative context that allowed the naming of asylum seekers as objects of exclusion, perceiving and proclaiming their vulnerability, illustrates our implication in these asylum seekers’ positioning, thus resisting the politics of closure that universalise and fixate asylum seekers.

Nancy Fraser in her analysis of Abnormal Justice, embraces a three-dimensional approach to justice, noting that ‘misrecognition’ or status of inequality occurs when institutionalised values of cultural hierarchies prevent the recognition of people as peers. She critiques humanist principles that claim justice based on common personhood as she says this approach precludes the understanding that different issues entice different frames and degrees of justice, according to actual or historical social relations (Fraser: 2008, p. 410). An example of this misrecognition or status of inequality emerges in a section of the LTE chapter of this thesis which described how values of cultural hierarchy incited disincarnated and de-contextualised hegemonic forms of knowledge about asylum seekers. Misrecognition facilitates the materialization of the asylum seeker subject by reinforcing the need for regulatory norms to deter and prevent their arrival in Australia, and the necessity of keeping them as the focus of border security and subjects of detention. The remark below highlights this status of inequality:

No, we are not criminals our country no good we came to Australia then to the migration centre and detention centre they treated us very bad, they said you are not good, you are criminals we are people who came from war if we are not in this situation how then we came by boat? We have to come by boat there was no other way. We escaped from the government in our country and came here to see something good and nice but the detention centre was very bad. (Iraqi woman: 23.11.07)

The appeal to a common humanity made by the Afghani person cited at the beginning of section 1.1 is intending to disaggregate the workings of language and power that position some citizens of Australia as ‘human beings’ capable of imposing a totalising a superior rationale about asylum seekers as ‘not fully human’. And the Iraqi woman cited above is challenging the view of her and others who came by boat as criminals, unwanted, deprived, wretched and radically different, otherwise described by Butler as ‘abjected bodies’, bodies that embody cultural reductions, bodies that do not qualify as fully human, that facilitate the reinforcement of normative actions (Butler cited in
Zylinska 2004, p. 532). Are the Afghani and Iraqi persons’ remarks intending to rework the effects of this discursive truth upon their bodies? (Butler 2007, p. 520) I assert that despite the constraints the Afghani and Iraqi persons’ remarks intend to advance their imperative for respect and recognition and to be involved in reciprocal exchange thus furthering a search for new affective trajectories involving asylum seekers and Australian citizens which would take place outside the dominant community norms that qualify asylum seekers as not fully humans. Such affective paths might lead to the acknowledgement by Australian citizens of their/our ethical responsibility to care for these asylum seekers and to the welcoming of opportunities to exercise hospitality instead of the failure and refusal of care and hospitality as experienced by the person cited above. In other words, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas with their embodied, knowledgeable and located experiences begin to claim their humanity by being where they think (Mignolo 2011, p. xvi). Their epistemic affirmations open spaces for new knowledge which in some way breaks the rigidity of the rationality of the dominant Australian geo-and body-politics of knowledge present in responses such as mandatory detention, temporary protection visas, and prevailing media portrayals. Given that, these trajectories of knowledge have mostly rejected these asylum seekers’ experiences thus situating them outside the realm of humanity and consequently making them unworthy of hospitality. These asylum seekers’ affirmations also bring to view the local racial lines inhabiting the dominant asylum seekers’ discourses in Australia, identifying who has the power and the locus of enunciation to establish the criteria that create distinctions between worthy, ‘deserving’ (somehow human) and ‘undeserving’ refugees (not fully human). What is more, the words of these refugees are naming, deconstructing and transforming the structures of knowledge that exclude them as thinking bodies and as members of humanity. They are offering their faces to Us/Other and consequently soliciting our ethical response to their presence.

1.2 Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ Solicitation of Ethical Recognition: Awakening to its Meaning

...where I, facing the Other, am liberated from myself, wake up from dogmatic slumber’. ‘Everything is from the start in the accusative....I am “in myself” through the others.’ The awakening is not in the ‘I am I’, but in the ‘I am for’ (Bauman 1993, p. 76).
The above citation notes that when facing the Other there is an awakening towards the realisation that, as stated by Butler, “to be embodied is to be exposed to unwanted or unanticipated modes of address” (Butler 2008, p. 99) and to the depth in which we are affected by other lives, “I am “in myself” through others”. This awakening seems to be an invitation to respond to the ethical demand for coexistence, as Butler in her reading of Arendt says that people with whom we cohabit the earth are given to us (Butler 2011, p. 83). These are people whose names we can’t recognise, whom we have not chosen; they are positioned as foreigners whose first language is not English. Consequently, in an ethical relation we need to make sure that the Other is affirmed to avoid the careless and irresponsible negation of the Other, since Butler states that in our efforts to affirm the Other we must struggle with both love and aggression which are constitutive of us as beings (Butler 2008, p. 104). Butler states that we have the obligation to vigorously maintain the pluralistic, inclusive and non-chosen character of cohabitation (Butler 2011, p. 84). However, this awakening is not without strain since, in her reading of Levinas, ethical obligation imposes itself upon us without soliciting our consent and prior to any norms and agreement or any individual sense. Egoism for Levinas is the defeat of ethics (Butler 2011). Thus, this ethical obligation arises from the fact of being in proximity, understood as the way in which others act upon us without our will. To be in somebody’s space without choice implies a bodily proximity, articulated by Levinas in the figure of the face which emphasises an embodied relation between the self and the other. Similarly, our ethical obligations according to Levinas also cover those who are not in physical proximity to us, those whom we do not know and whom we could never have selected, since Butler states that an important feature of this bodily proximity is our shared general fragility and physical vulnerability that makes us radically interdependent on each other (Butler 2003, p. 102). Butler points out that this type of ethical obligation towards ethical solicitations imposed on us emerge from our corporeal vulnerability and precarity, namely that of being exposed to and at the same time answerable to the Other’s demand, that is, being open to the sustenance and/or injury that might come from the Other.

In this context Butler indicates that Levinas establishes us as creatures essentially defined by this vulnerability and thus by ethical relations which are prior to any individual sense of self. For instance, the precarity, vulnerability and injurability of the Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ corporeal proximity to the bodily bounded community of Australia is reflected in the citation below. The Afghani speaker
articulates a profound sense of isolation caused by the not welcoming and dislike of some of the Australian people. However, this sense of isolation and injurability is there precisely due to the already existing bond that this asylum seeker has with the Australian people. As Butler has put it, “there is no home without adjacency, and no way to reside anywhere without the outside defining the space of inhabitation” (Butler 2011, p. 88-89). Consequently, our bodies are at once a boundary that distinguish us, while being also a site of exposure and nearness. The condition depicted in this citation can be understood to change when there is an ethical response to his ethical solicitation as illustrated below:

…and the first thing was a sense of isolation from other people and you have to contain yourself from other people. This is because you are not welcome and the people don’t like you, you know and even you know every day from ….So the main impact is for the people a kind of sense of isolation a feeling of isolation and not feeling well, not integrating well with the main community and feeling of sadness and depression. Many people suffered from this kind of problem for a long time, still many people are suffering from the consequences of this situation.

One of the things was our experience of living here within the community of Australia so at the beginning we thought that the whole community of Australia is against us and not welcoming us. But it was not the situation, after living in the community for some time we came in contact with the other people so being in contact with those people sometime and understanding more about the situation here and the political situation and the papers and difference with the thinking of the people. Make us, gave us the courage and encouraged us to be able to talk a little bit more about the situation and to overcome those feelings of fear that we had at the beginning. (Male, Afghanistan, 131207)

These words of the Afghani person illustrate the effect of being impinged by an Other who is clearly an Other to him/them, and also show that though he is noticeably an Other to Us, he is also bounded to Us. His words are demonstrative of his condition of exile, of having had to escape from a place that he called home and of being a foreigner
in Australia, needing to speak in a language that is not his first. And being vulnerable to this country’s acceptance or rejection of his/their presence, He shows how his dispossession ethically disposes him to Us the Australian community: “…and you have to contain yourself from other people;” he says, implying that though he is separated from the Australian community, his adjacency is shown in his exposure to the Australian community. He wants to socially share, he is not free of this Other, he is “at once assertive and exposed” (Butler 2003, p. 10).

His adjacency is also partly shown by the suffering caused by the initial unwelcoming of his ethical solicitation for recognition: “This is because you are not welcomed and the people don’t like you... So the main impact is for the people a kind of sense of isolation a feeling of isolation and not feeling well, not integrating well with the main community and feeling of sadness and depression.” His words are enunciating a corporeal, situated and subjective experience of striving to be for the Other before being engaged with this Other, namely “…living within the community of Australia... ” and the transformative effects that in his words take the form of ‘courage’ after making some ethical connections by being in contact with other people in the community. It follows that as embodied beings we are disposed to love and to the transformative effects of being open/bounded to others. This awakening also means that we are no longer bound, as Butler states, to hold a certain idea of sovereign selfhood, that we experience a certain dispossession that places us outside ourselves, and in the hands of the other (Butler 2011, pp. 88-89). Rather, we awake to the realisation that “I am for” the Other in the words of Bauman. Accordingly, in order to be a subject, I need the Other, I can’t be without the Other, and to be with the Other I must experience self-loss. In this relation with the Other, I give myself to the Other as hostage (Bauman 1993, p. 74), since this ethical relation dispossesses me from any sheltered and self-referential conception of belonging (Butler 2011, p. 86). Adhering to Levinas Butler asserts that ethical relations precede any individual sense I/we may have, that to be ethical I/we have to hold back, surrender self-interest As Levinas says, “To be ‘I’, ‘signifies not being able to escape responsibility’ because I am bound uniquely to the other. Even before I encounter the other, in fact, I am responsible…” (Levinas cited in Hutchens 2004, pp. 19-20). According to Levinas no ethics can be derived from egoism, the Other has priority over me. The Afghani person in this citation provides an example of the sort of ethical relationship referred to by Levinas and Butler, since he seems uniquely bound to the Australian community, as it caused him and others significant sadness, isolation
and depression before even encountering, coming in contact with, or living with the Australian people. To know, to experience the feeling of being unwelcome, he is presenting an instance of how the Other, the Australian community, has priority over him. He states that he overcame his feelings of depression and isolation once he established contact with other people in the community who did welcome him and other asylum seekers in his situation.

Butler claims that in an ethical recognition we experience that the life of the Other is also our life: “...a relational practice that responds to an obligation that originates outside the subject...” (Butler 2012, p. 9). We can still discern that the life of the other is not our own; the Other is at once distinct and adjacent. However, an ethical recognition of the Other requires a movement and act that moves us beyond selfhood, a movement that dispossesses us of our sovereign self towards the direction of the one who is calling us. This is illustrated by the Afghani person above who through his separation, is negotiating this bond. He is showing that the boundary that positions him as an outsider, a person from elsewhere, a boundary that comports him in the direction of the Other, the Australian community - those who are not him. This is a boundary that he uses to negotiate his bonding with Australian citizens since it is from his positioning of an elsewhere (another place, another language, a non-Australian citizen) that he is questioning and posing a challenge to the nationalist discourse to move beyond the bond between its citizens. He is making a request of this nationalist discourse to past nationalism and communitarianism thus bringing attention to the bond between human beings (Kristeva 1993, p. 76). I come to the realisation that I could not go back to who I was, as I was already implicated in the Other, I would therefore not be free of the Other, consequently ambivalence is at the heart of the relationship with the Other since “the price of self-knowledge will be self-loss” (Butler 2000, p. 286). In other words, as I strive to recognise this Afghani person and other asylum seekers like him, I am avowing to the realisation that I am bounded to this person who I am not and whom I do not know, and to appreciate that to recognise my bonding with this asylum seeker and others like him is complex since I become aware that I am nothing without him. And that my act of recognition of this asylum seeker and other asylum seekers like him distances me from what is expected from the national version of an Australian subject and of his/her stance towards Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Consequently, in this sense I might experience a sense of self-loss, meaning that I am recognising that if I have the power of harming another person that in fact I am harming
myself. It also means that in order to recognise him I must also recognise that each of us has the power to harm or be harmed and that we are bounded in this power and instability (Butler 2009, p. 43). The ethical act of recognition is therefore distinguished by the attention that I place in ruling out the possibility of violence of inflicting harm on the other that is, in not making the other an object or instrument of my aggression, as we generally grapple with both care and aggression toward the other (Butler cited in Jay 2008, p. 104) or the capacity to care or be careless of the Other.

Ethical recognition is based on the affirmation of the Other. As Butler says, “Recognition implies that we see the Other as separate, but as structured psychically in ways that are shared...” (Butler 2000, p. 272) with respectful care and responsibility towards the Other, in a relationship of non-indifference to the Other. Such an exposure to the Other inevitably shapes our humanity, in a way that goes beyond intelligibility, or far from reason. I have chosen this approach to recognition which relies heavily on Butler and her reading of Levinas, since it brings to view that our precarity, which arises from our bounded corporeality, makes us dependent on the world of others and at the same time distinct from Others. This is also an approach that constructs us fundamentally as relationally ethical. When ethically responding to an ethical demand for recognition, we become affected by the suffering of an Other. Butler contends that this bond precedes volition, is there prior to any contract, as it is grounded? in dependency. As she says, the constitution of our bodies is social and interdependent; as each of us share this precariousness and the possible threat of an Other this in turn leads to the mistreatment of specific populations who are deemed to be a threat to human life. Consequently, an ethical response requires an awareness of the conditions that frame our/my affect and responsibility compelling me/us towards recognising asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ call for recognition or, if not, my failure to feel compelled to recognise their solicitation.

The Hegelian version of recognition taken by Butler is distinct from that of Axel Honneth who has made important theoretical contributions regarding recognition as a form of ethical life. Honneth reflects on social interdependency as an element of everyday life, viewing injustices as the non-fulfilment of the social expectations concerning recognition (Honneth and Markle 2004, p. 383). Furthermore Honneth’s reading of Hegel allows him to affirm that “individuals act against the institutionalised rationality of society” (Honneth and Markle 2004, p. 385) linking individual freedom to
justice conceived as the necessary bridge which would allow everyone to enjoy freedom (Honneth and Markle 2004, p. 384)

The humanity being appealed to by the Afghani person quoted in the previous section, might however be better appreciated by attempting to comprehend how institutional rationalities such as immigration policies and media discourses concerning asylum seekers on temporary protection visas act on the bodies of asylum seekers and of Australian citizens; how they establish and de-establish a sense of location, temporality, boundary, vulnerability and relationality (Butler, 2007, p. 528) constituting ethical obligations. This approach to recognition slightly differs from that of Honneth below:

...that, with the help of Kant, we can now see as the result of an assessment of worth that is accorded to the intelligibility of human beings: what is made clear in expressive gestures of recognition is that a subject has already carried out a restriction of her egocentric perspective in order to do justice to the worth of the other person as an intelligible being (Honneth 2001, p. 123).

In other words, for Honneth (based on Kant) the act of recognition requires an evaluation of the worth of the other, and to do justice to the worth of the other person is only possible by restricting our egocentric perspectives as intelligible beings. His approach seems to highlight an act of social recognition that emphasises a rational process of affirmation of the other person’s worth and validity. Honneth adds that recognition has a performative character as it involves practical ways, and expressive gestures accompanying the affirmation of the other person’s validity (Honneth and Margalit 2001, pp. 119-221). Honneth inscribes recognition within an ethical life involving a three-dimensional approach: intersubjective relations (emotional recognition), legal recognition and recognition of accomplishments (solidarity). These dimensions, when fulfilled, support the individual’s growth of self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem (Honneth and Markle 2004). Honneth’s approach to recognition differs from Butler’s stance since he emphasises the normative expectations of individuals interpreted as moral claims and responsibilities that emerge from the subject’s will. However, it is useful here as a way of emphasising the importance given by Butler to social interdependency in the formation and emergence of an ethical subject and the ambivalent character of this inter-subjectivity. A subject whose
responsibility towards the Other is based on his/her recognition of his/her unwilled vulnerability towards the Other operates as a platform for exercising responsibility towards the Other.

2 Conclusion

In concluding this section, I have restricted Butler’s position focussing on the demand for recognition made by Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas only to her reading of Levinas. This approach leads to an understanding that the Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ presence, however much mediated (letters to the editor, newspaper articles, and interviews), compels us to respond ethically and without the violence of categorisation, since this is not a matter of agreement or choice, or of a sense of self-value or self-virtue, given that we are interdependent and bounded to one another in ways other than as thinking beings. Our corporeality and precarity brings about at the same time our receptivity and vulnerability and makes us responsible for the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ call or demand for a ‘liveable life’, thereby presenting an obligation to be answerable to their call for recognition. This means that our response will be not only subjective but also shaped by my/our critical stance regarding the resources available to us, as we are under an obligation to reconsider the way in which asylum seekers and my/our bodies are conceptualised in the Australian political field, and to recognise that my/our survival depends upon my/our voluntary/ involuntary (sometimes at once) interdependency (Butler 2009, p. 54).

The following chapter will complement Butler’s view of ethical obligations since the preceding part approached this question focussing only on Butler’s reading of Levinas, who as seen offered an important perspective on ethical relations that assumed an asymmetrical bodily proximity, as these ethical relations emphasised the Other’s priority over me. As discussed above this sense of ethical responsibility based on precarity designates the inevitability and the difficulty of ethical obligations. Butler’s reading of Arendt advances the relationship between precarity and the practices of cohabitation where ethical relations depend upon a particular condition of dispossession from national modes of belonging (Mendieta & Vanantwerpen 2011, pp. 88-89). Butler’s reading of Arendt highlights that we are all primarily inhabitants of the earth, and that there is no community or nation-state that can claim the earth for itself and that
the unchosen character of our earthly cohabitation critically shapes our existence as ethical and political beings (Butler 2012, pp. 143-145).
CHAPTER 7

HOSPITALITY, RELATIONALITY AND LIVEABILITY FOR TEMPORARY PROTECTION VISA HOLDERS

This chapter shifts focus to the topic of ethics recognition of hospitable responsiveness “as a relational practice”. Since Butler’s reflections about the ethics of cohabitation are based on changeable and flexible relations to the outside, a relational practice from this perspective would mean that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas would not be approached as the Other situated over there, or outsiders by Australian citizens Us situated here as the nation’s insiders. From this ethical stance these two modes of being, Australian citizens and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas would be fundamentally concerned with each other (Butler 2012, p. 127). A relational practice is an obligation instigated outside of us by those who are unknown to us who make us responsible to them, as they share with us the right to belong and of belonging in the context of unchosen cohabitation. This relation to the Other challenges the qualities and characteristics that make us, our self-hood, since we can only make an effort to respond to the distress of others if we are moved and dispossessed by our own suffering (Butler 2012, pp. 9-117). Our movement towards asylum seekers implies a departure from our communitarian notion of being an Australian citizen, an ‘exilic’ movement as called by Butler (Butler 2012, p. 127), a movement that she says disposes us ethically. However, this is also a movement that entails effort since we have to depart from the official inhospitable stance towards asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, parting as well from the official expectations of Australian citizens to be inhospitable. Then we can make a move towards finding ways to fulfil our ethical responsibility to be hospitable, and to respond to their solicitation, implying a process of differentiation and a commitment to equal protection. The narratives in this section show an ethical bearing that responds to the obligation that they feel to relate to Australians. This is a relationality that originates from their statelessness condition, from a place and people who they don’t really know or who they do not really choose, that nevertheless, compels them to dispel their usual ways, to behave afar from their usual selves, displacing them to the place of those who are not-them, namely Australian citizens. From this place, from this ethical relation what follows is their re-consideration of their social relationships and of their political responsibilities, compelling them to a conception of cohabitation that hauls them beyond nationalism.
1 Unchosen Cohabitation or Un-Willed Proximity - the Need for ‘Liveable Lives’

The first section of this chapter, ‘The Ethical problem of Statelessness’, looks into the meaning of statelessness emerging in the narrative of the asylum seeker on temporary protection visas examined in this section. This narrative outlines the overlapping experience of displacement from her original home and the experience of living as a refugee among those who are not the same. She is displaced from citizenship rights; her narration depicts the space that she is inhabiting which is not quite home, as this is an impossibility (Ahmed 1999, p. 331) since her words testify to the dispossession of her statelessness condition. Nonetheless, this condition of estrangement gives her a platform from which to present a critique of the Australian nation and to articulate a conception of cohabitation amidst the rejection and conditioned hospitality that she is offered by the Australian nation.

The next section, ‘Unchosen Cohabitation or un-willed Proximity’, examines the narrative of another asylum seeker on temporary protection visa whose stateless condition emphasises what is ethically possible and ethically right. His narrative allows the exploration of his ethical disposition to cohabitation and his bonding to plurality and heterogeneity. It is his condition of estrangement which embodies his ethical stance and the ethical demand that he presents to the Australian nation alongside with his critique concerning dispossession. This demand makes possible the searching for a liveable life in the form of a political stance, committed to social equality and social justice based on the recognition of our interdependency given our shared precarity.

In ‘A Brief Exploration of the meaning of Justice in the context of a liveable life’, I scrutinise the narrative of an Iraqi asylum seeker who is declaring his condition of statelessness under the established temporary protection visa regime in Australia which prevents him from being reunited with his family. His ethical stance as an outsider shows his readiness, his disposition to turn to his Other, to live, to cohabitate with Australian people, to develop an ethical relation that goes beyond nationalism since he would do ‘anything to help Australia’. He is also soliciting a response to his demand for a liveable life based on equality and plurality, demonstrated by his refusal of an identititarian closure since, for him to be Muslim means to live in relation to Christians.
The narrative of this Iraqi person also solicits and asserts his right of belonging and adjacency, namely to feel at home in Australia.

1.1 The Ethical Problem of Statelessness

A stateless condition marks the impossibility of developing a feeling of being at home, a place of belonging where one could create the conditions to be contented and safe. Statelessness also relates to the figure of the foreigner, someone who does not speak like the rest and whose presence puts one in question (Derrida 2000, p. 3). Moreover, the statelessness in the case examined here originates in the discursive and legislated closure created by the Australian state which determines those who belong to its community as well as those who do not belong. In addition, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas experience statelessness as they are unable to live in their country of origin due to their well-founded fear of being harmed. As stateless people they are immersed in a net of power since they embody an imposed sense of non-place of non-locality and dispossession stemming from the forced displacement from their original nation-state and resulting from the set of powers produced by the Australian nation to maintain their displacement and dispossession (Butler and Spivak 2010). On one side their country of origin (their nation) forces them out, expels them, and on the other side through discursive and legislative practices the Australian nation conditions their statelessness.

The presence of stateless asylum seekers in Australia compels us to reflect on the type of society we want to be, to examine the relations we want to establish with one another including asylum seekers on temporary protection, visas Australian citizens, requiring us to think about to live well or not well, a living in solidarity that extends to all humans and the natural world. Similarly, the asylum seekers’ presence imposes our realisation of our ethical obligations towards them, since it does not matter what they might have done (if anything at all), they are still making an ethical demand upon us and a responsive relation would prevent a punitive or hostile response towards them. It would rather emphasise our obligation and responsibility to ethically embrace their solicitation for a liveable life.

The Iraqi woman cited below is compelling us to think about our relationality towards her and other asylum seekers on temporary protection visas:
They accept that we are genuine refugees after that five years, after five, years I got my permanent visa and from the first day that we came and we put our steps in Australia we sought the refugee status, from the first day! This is enough! From the first day we seek the refugee status then what this means? We wanted to stay here not to go back. (Iraqi woman, 23.11.2007)

The Iraqi woman is saying, “We wanted to stay here not to go back”. She is also pointing to the fact that it took her and others five years to be accepted as ‘genuine refugees’, five years to obtain a permanent visa, to gain the status of a permanent resident of Australia, adding “This is enough”. This highlights the ‘stateless’ condition she along with others experiences—a ‘state of not belonging’ for a number of years including the time of forceful displacement from her original country prior to arriving in Australia. She continues:

And even when I came here I was very enthusiastic to work, to work but after that every day they said we will return them back to their country, we will not give them permanent visa. You know that affects, affects, my personality my health oh! I got there I sold everything I put all my money to come here and if we didn’t suffer there, how are we displaced from our country? (Iraqi woman, 23.11.2007)

Her words are also descriptive of the type of dispossession inflicted by the conditional hospitality that she is experiencing in Australia. She strives to re-establish a sense of home with enthusiastic determination to work in Australia, but nevertheless encounters rejection. She is placed in a continuous stateless condition as she is regularly reminded that she will be sent back to her country which effectively is no longer her home. She is actually being reminded that she is ‘rightless’ and homeless, a situation that affects her personality. This situation has been studied in-depth by Arendt as seen in the following words which will be further considered later in this chapter:

...Once they had left their homeland they remained homeless, once they had left their state they became stateless; once they had been deprived of their human rights they were rightless, the scum of the earth” (Arendt cited in Carroll 2006, p. 814)
This section explores the condition of statelessness within the politics of hospitality that entails limits and borders and that is differentiated from an ethics of hospitality. Here I ponder about the figure of unwilled guests, asylum seekers who are stateless, persons made visible by the politics of hospitality, since the narrative of the (unwilled) guest is linked to the narrative of the (unwilled) host and of home, namely the place of being, of (un)hospitality.

Unwilled stateless persons begin their journey towards recognition of their refugee status by having to demonstrate to immigration authorities that they have no home to which to return due to a well-founded fear of suffering further harm. Refugees start their forced exile, their enforced displacement by escaping war, persecution, torture, and political upheaval. They become unwilled stateless persons whose lives as stateless people are barely liveable, since their forced departure from their home indicates their dispossessment from their original place of comfort, intimacy and safety, from which they derive the belonging of their identities. Consequently, they are forced to initiate sometimes an infinite and perilous journey towards safety due to the fear and anxiety that the presence of asylum seekers might generate, which makes them the target of criminalisation and politicisation demonstrated for instance in the development of legislative measures designed to deter their presence, some of which had been revised in previous chapters.

In their search for a place that they might call home, a place of hospitality that possibly will end their stateless condition, they might be confronted with the tensions and ideological trends towards immigration, especially unplanned immigration. Australia’s policy of detention of asylum seekers arriving by boat breaches the UNHCR guidelines by detaining asylum seekers for long periods of times and by utilising this policy to restrict and prevent other asylum seekers from soliciting refuge in Australia (McMaster 2001, p. 70). For some asylum seekers the beginning of the end of their stateless condition is the recognition of their refugee status, via political hospitality.

I rely in this section on Butler’s reading of Hannah Arendt to discuss cohabitation and its relevance for an ethics of hospitality. However, I will briefly introduce Arendt who describes herself as a political theorist. She was born in Germany of Jewish origin. She was persecuted by the Nazi regime. She had to leave Germany without any legal travel documents shortly after her release from arrest and interrogation by German authorities. Initiating in this way her exile and precarious life as a stateless person, or as Bernstein
says, “as a stateless nonperson,” (Bernstein 2005, p. 47), this lasted about 18 years until she became a citizen of the United States. Arendt’s stance and general ethics on refugees is relevant to this study, since Arendt values the way in which the condition of exile might serve broader purposes such as advancing an ethical view of cohabitation (Butler 2011, p. 86). Refugees are people seeking a place of safety; according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees 1951 Convention, refugees are persons who are outside their country due to a well-grounded fear of persecution. Arendt critiques the term refugee as an imposed identification, stating that persons forced to leave their home do not or do not want to call themselves refugees. In her words: “Now ‘refugees’ are those of us who have been so unfortunate as to arrive in a new country without means and have to be helped by Refugee Committees”. She asserts that a stateless person is a non-person who has no legal or political status (Arendt cited in Bernstein 2005, p. 50).

I read Arendt’s argument as a critique of the subject position assigned to refugees by refugee committees such as UNHCR, which treats asylum seekers as people who are to be determined, managed and who are part of a homogenised group of people. The categorisation of refugee emerged from Eurocentric legal standardising and administrative processes following the Second World War (Hajdukowski- Ahmed, Khanlou and Berghahn eds. 2008, p. 32). These processes tended to isolate the conditions that cause statelessness-refugeeness to distinguish refugees from economic migrants, thus denying the interrelation between war and poverty and, more importantly, uprooting the history and context that cause people to seek refugee or become stateless. An example of this type of critique is provided by David Manne11 who criticises the current Australian government’s stance on asylum seeker policies rather than focussing on and reducing this complex issue to a ‘search for solutions’ as to which political party can ‘best’ stop the boats. As an alternative, he emphasises the importance of confronting the causes behind the flight of refugees. As millions of people in Australia’s region are living in inhumane conditions this issue should lead to improved protection to minimise harm (Manne 2012).

11 David Manne is the Executive Director and Principal Solicitor at Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC) Victoria who with a team of lawyers successfully challenged the Gillard’s government’s offshore refugee processing plan ‘the Malaysian Solution’ the court ruled that the solution contravened international conventions binding Australia to protect asylum seekers.
Nevertheless, the critical elements contained in the UNHCR Refugee Convention are that refugees as stateless persons are at risk of serious harm, and have experienced systematic and sustained persecution and violation of basic internationally recognised human rights, due to their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership to a specific social group. Another element contained in the convention is that these people do not have the protection of their country of origin which is unable or unwilling to offer this protection. According to the Convention, refugees are up-rooted people, their experiences fluctuate between life and death, they are also dispossessed and homeless people on the move as they are escaping persecution and oppression and seeking the possibility of establishing a home, of developing a sense of safety and belonging since they are denied the chance to live in their homeland (McMaster 2002, pp. 2-37).

The question asked by the Iraqi woman in the above citation, “If we didn’t suffer there, how are we displaced from our country?” invites us to think about the situation that compelled her to leave her country, since she is overtly alerting us to the suffering that she and others like her experienced in Iraq, her country of origin. She is also implying that she is outside of Iraq because of a well-grounded fear of persecution, (a recognised feature of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 1951) and perhaps she is challenging, as other interviewees did, the notion of not being a ‘genuine’ refugee. She is also testifying to her dispossession in material terms: “I got there I sold everything I put all my money to come here,” and, “You know that affects, affects, my personality my health oh!” Her words are evocative of Edward Said’s words about exile as a condition that produces a “crippling sorrow of estrangement” (Said 1984, p. 49). The Iraqi woman’s words, however, are not explicit of her mourning of numerous losses, and of the violent and abrupt dislocation that she is enduring from the everyday usage of her native language, family, friends, home, history, familiar places and food, plus her occupation. She talks about her need for sanctuary and protection “From the first day we seek the refugee status...”. She speaks of the fact that she had no other choice, she had to stay because she could not go back to Iraq - the reality that she has no choice but to stay in a place that has initially violently rejected her by being subjected to the Mandatory Detention Migration Act 1958, the Border Protection and Migration Amendment Bills. This highlights the fact that it might not be easy for her to develop a sense of belonging or connectedness with other people situated in Australian society as she is disconnected from this field of relations and its potential; she no longer belongs to
any community. She is a separate being situated at the edge, not inside or totally outside of this society, and this is yet another trait of her statelessness.

The statelessness experienced by this Iraqi woman is explicitly that of being delinked from the matrix which constitutes Australia as a nation and as a country. Her status of being a refugee woman in Australia brings about its own types of suppression that impact on her mental health and general wellbeing such as isolation, language difficulties, discrimination, and constant fear of expulsion. Her words also reveal that her deprived condition situates her thinking and actions at a distance given that she is a non-Australian citizen, that she is in a place that is unfamiliar, a place of being and not being. Her narrative illustrates how she is putting in question the citizens of Australia (Us) and her intertwining with the Australian nation. Her narrative unveils the hidden geo and body politics, certain naturalised, ordinary, taken for granted practices that this nation uses to disqualify her knowledge, experience and presence. In other words, her delinked experience of embodied Australia allows her to call Us/Other into account. This demonstrates that regardless of the hostile response that she received from the Australian nation to her solicitation of hospitality she does not relinquish her responsibility towards Australian citizens, and continues to strive for cohabitation, proclaiming equal rights to belong and of belonging. This Iraqi woman is demonstrating how her unwilled susceptibility becomes a resource that she uses to exercise her responsibility towards Australian citizens, since her response to Us is not that of revenge as she is striving for a liveable life with Us, those whom she did not choose.

Her stateless condition also constitutes her vulnerability to the willingness of the receiving country, Australia, to accept or reject her solicitation for admission and recognition and consequently begin to end her statelessness. Her stateless and precarious condition within Australia is illustrated by the reality that she would only agree to contribute to this study after reassurance that she was not going to be identified, and only after she was granted a permanent protection visa which occurred in the year 2007, years after her arrival in Australia. However, she was still very fearful of the implications of voicing what she had lived through the dangerous trip by boat, detention, and the uncertainty of her immigration status when holding a temporary protection visa. The treatment by the media and her vulnerable position within the community had and continues to have a profound effect on her: “You know that affects, affects, my personality my health oh!”
As stated the Iraqi woman at the moment of the interview was a holder of a permanent protection visa, yet her narrative depicts her statelessness as well as the affirmation of her right to belong and of belonging. Her narrative also illustrates her call for cohabitation and the impact of the complex modalities of space and time (then, here, and there) that she faces and of being a foreigner who with her presence puts Us in question and who also is put in question by Us. More importantly, she illustrates how her susceptibility becomes a resource for her responsiveness towards the Australian nation and its citizens as she is pleading for this to be a more hospitable place to live.

At this point it is relevant to re-introduce Spivak who was presented in the earlier chapter analysing newspaper articles, since as a philosopher and theorist she often examines the specific subject position of the subaltern within Western culture. She has argued that “words take on their meaning through usage and discursive power” (Childs and Williams 1997, p. 159), and the analysis of the subaltern subject position in the usually hidden history of the dynamics of race and power. In her article ‘Culture Alive’ (Spivak 2006, p. 359) she states that powerful groups may have the inclination to think of their/our own culture as dynamic while attributing fixed cultural qualities to less powerful groups. An example of this type of situation was highlighted in the letters to editor chapter that attributed essentialist qualities to asylum seekers. For example, characteristics such as the ones described under the discourse of the ‘radically different other’ were constructed within an oppositional framework embedded in racist classifications. Adding to Spivak’s concerns is the consideration that “All speaking, even seemingly the most immediate, entails a distanced decipherment by another, which is, at best, an interception” (Spivak cited in Pugliese 2004, p. 25). Spivak’s words are cautioning of the mediation involved in interpreting the voice of the Other, in this case the interview excerpts above, requesting my careful consideration that this interpretation might constitute yet another violent rejection of others by assimilating their voice into the same ‘Us’. Our location of power is certainly differentiated with regard to the Iraqi woman in question, and all of the previously cited refugee voices. This important power difference marks our corporeal vulnerability and validates the fact that ethical relations are mediated as Butler says by “The “being” of life is itself constituted through selective means; as a result, we cannot refer to this “being” outside of the operations of power, and we must make more precise the specific mechanism of power through which life is produced.” (Butler 2009, p. 1). In other words, what is required of me/us when faced with a solicitation for recognition such as those presented here, is to discern, to
translate, the political and social forces that intrude on my body, that regulate my body in order to be protected, to be restrained from inflicting injury and aggression. This act of translation for Spivak constitutes the subject in responsibility (Spivak 2000, p. 14). Butler declares that the body cannot be lightened from its locality, that is, from its materialization in a particular space and within a specific sphere of politics. Consequently, I understand Butler’s reflections on the locality and materialisation of the body as an invitation to acknowledge that I must respond. This ‘I must’ follows Derrida’s position which on one side indicates an openness to enter a process, namely to be engaged in the situation, considering the approach, the conditions, the language, and so on. Conversely, this indicates an urgent, immediate need to answer to the other, an urgency which denotes something that cannot endure a process. However, Derrida indicates that if I want to respond in the name of justice I have to originate singularity, to be responsible for the response (Derrida in Kearney & Dooley 1999, p. 72) and not surrender to the belief that my life is utterly restricted by the existing norms of recognition, norms that strive to inhabit my body with regard to asylum seekers who have arrived and continue to arrive in Australia by boat. In spite of the difficulties, I must endeavour to always recognise their lives, their faces, and be open to engage myself in a process in order to ethically respond to them. Even if I do not know these asylum seekers I am still responsible and answerable to them, since we share a bond of dependency, precarity and sociality which means that my life is their life and their life is my life.

Thus, the ethical position described previously constitutes a necessity and a difficulty in particular when emerging discourses and norms about asylum seekers mostly frame them as living figures (non-persons), differentially recognisable subjects living outside the norms. I believe that this manner of being articulated by Butler is similar to Derrida’s stance with regard to political, ethical and juridical responsibility which he says require ‘the task of infinite close reading’, and he understands close reading as listening, analysing and exercising a critical perspective on events, dominant rhetoric and the media (Derrida in Kearney & Dooley 1999, p. 67). In terms of relationality the stance previously outlined would mean that as Australian citizens we must find ways to refuse identitarian closure. We must strive to realise that the official discourses created by the Australian nation construct a distance which physically and figuratively situates asylum seekers or asylum seekers on temporary protection visas ‘over there’ as an ‘alterity’, consequently situating Us ‘here’ in the domain of ‘sameness’. These
discourses deceive our condition of inescapable relationality; as Australian citizens we are already constituted by asylum seekers. According to Butler’s reading of Levinas, the question of our locality, where we stand, would always be complicated by heterogeneity (Butler 2012, p. 38). It follows that in order to ethically respond, to make an effort to alleviate the suffering caused and being caused to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, we (here) must deprive, disarticulate ourselves from self referential notions of belonging (Butler 2012, p. 127) and become thoroughly implicated with asylum seekers (over there).

The next section of this chapter investigates how the stateless condition of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas materialises in their ethical claims that expose our interdependency and shared precarity and the unchosen nature of earthly cohabitation.

1.2 Unchosen Cohabitation or Un-Willed Proximity

Butler’s reading of Arendt is used to articulate the ethical obligations of proximity and is of value to understanding the conditionality of hospitality for asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in this analysis. This repetition of ‘statelessness’ (referring to the principles of social justice that Arendt derived from the Nazi genocide) is just the condition, according to Butler’s reading of Arendt, from which a critique of nationalism or nation-state has to take place: “... in the name of heterogeneous populations, political plurality, and a certain conception of cohabitation” (Butler 2011, p. 79). Arendt’s experiences of statelessness provided the opportunity for her to specifically understand action and politics (Bernstein 2005, p. 54). Butler reads Arendt as offering an ‘ethical’ view of cohabitation which provides guidelines for concrete political norms and policies designed for the establishment of a polity based on equality and in the recognition of the permanently heterogeneous character of the earth’s population (Butler 2011). Arendt, in Butler’s view, challenges the stance expressed by the Prime Minister Mr. Howard, “We decide who comes here and the circumstances in which they come.” (Cited in Manne and Corlett 2004, p. 89). Arendt argues that no one has the privilege to choose with whom to cohabit the earth; she further indicates that we are obliged to live with those who already exist and that any attempt to choose who might or might not live is always a move towards ‘genocide’ (Butler 2011) constituting an attempt to destroy the conditions of our own political and social life, (Mendieta & Vanantwerpen 2011, p. 83). Butler adds in the following words “... the life of the other, the life that is not our own,
is also our life, since whatever sense “our” life has is derived precisely from this sociality...” (Butler 2012, pp. 140-141).

Arendt articulates the condition of our living as the unchosen nature of earthly cohabitation. Namely, those with whom we cohabit the earth, are given to us prior to choice (Butler 2011) and prior to any social and political contract that we may willingly go into (Mendieta & Vanantwerpen 2011, p. 83). As a result Butler advances that ethical claims materialize from our bodily condition, as an obligation to the persistence of the other’s ‘corporeal’ existence, including the environmental circumstances that make life possible. Underlying this conception of ethical obligations is Arendt’s stance of mistrust of the rights possessed by an ‘abstract human being’ as she advocates for rights to be embodied in concrete terms and protected by political establishments. Arendt proceeds: “Equality in contrast to all that is involved in mere existence, is not given to us, but is the result of human organisation insofar as it is guided by the principle of justice” (Arendt cited in Bernstein 2005, p. 57).

Butler’s interpretation of Arendt points to the fact that ethical claims transpire from our bodily needs and the precarity that exposes our sociality, the delicate necessary extent of our interdependency. Thus, in her view, precarity is what constitutes us as more than thinking beings conceiving ethical obligations that are grounded in precarity, as she says none of us escape the precarity of social life. Butler says that this precarity of our corporeal existence depends upon the organisation of economic and social relations and the presence or absence of nourishing infrastructure and political establishments (Butler 2011). The following excerpt illustrates the value of interdependency:

And the other thing we hope from the whole Australian society from the whole government that continued their support for the complete integrity of this society, the main stream of the Australian culture. Not expect from them that in one night or one day they should change, we are going to be here by our own culture and respecting other cultures, this is the meaning of multiculturalism, we are going to do some positive things for the Australian culture, we are going to enrich the Australian culture. We are going to be helpful to the economy, to the culture, to the safety of all Australians as our own home, as our own country. We are going to understand each other, we are going to embrace each other and respect each other regardless of colour,
ethnicity, believe and so on. This is my wish this is my hope for the future of me and for the future of all our neighbours and our society here in Australia as a second country of me. (Male Afghanistan, 29.11.07)

These words of the person from Afghanistan are establishing the value of interdependency: “… we are going to be here by our own culture and respecting other cultures…” His words however emerge from dispossession as he is a refugee living among those who are not the same, he is a non-Australian citizen. His understanding of what is ethically possible and ethically right is shaped by his stateless experience, his subjection and dispossession that disposes him ethically to cohabitation and to the ethical obligations that bind him. As he states, “We are going to do some positive things for the Australian culture, we are going to enrich the Australian culture”. He is in the hand of the Other/Us which means that his stance is marked by differentiation, proximity, dependency and violence. In addition to that We/Us are haunted by the dispossessed or fail to be haunted by the dispossessed (Mendieta & Vanantwerpen 2011, p. 102). His un-willed proximity and adjacency speaks of the necessity of plurality and heterogeneity: “We are going to understand each other, we are going to embrace each other and respect each other regardless of colour, ethnicity, believe and so on”. He is calling for a way to understand and relate well to each other without removing colour, ethnicity, belief and so on. This Afghani person also seems committed to equality to make all lives liveable for the complete integrity of this society: “And the other thing we hope from the whole Australian society from the whole government that continued their support for the complete integrity of this society, the main stream of the Australian culture”. He is demanding from the whole Australian society, from the whole government, to reconsider our relationship with refugees as put by Butler: “...we need to think about what ethics would be that would help us rethink the relationship between the citizen and the non-citizen now”. (Butler 2011, p. 102) and he is demanding this “for this complete integrity of this society”. He is seeking a life beyond abjection, unworthiness and expulsion. Thus, he is also illustrating how his condition of dispossession from a national mode of belonging, and the fragility of his habitation and cohabitation is the platform of his ethical stance.

The ethical relations proposed by the Afghani person stand in marked contrast to the ethical relations that Australia has offered to him and other asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. The social conditions and political life that he faced on his
arrival and during his subsequent solicitation of our ethical recognition, affirmed the subjugating power of those who wanted to choose with whom to cohabit, thus positioning him and others like him as less worthy of protection and sustenance. His experience of interdependency and precarity in his country of origin and in the country of refuge is of territorial violence. Fortunately, as Butler says “… The very fact of being bound up with others establishes the possibility of being subjugated and exploited—though in no way does it determine what political form that will take. But it also establishes the possibility of being relieved of suffering, of knowing justice and even love” (Butler 2009, p. 61). This means that our survival depends upon the recognition of our interdependency (Butler 2009, p. 54) and that we (including Us and the Other, those whom we do not know or whom we do not choose) need to constantly find political and economic ways that minimise precarity and institute political and economic ways of cohabitation characterised by equality. The bounding of one another sustains this notion of a liveable life - this bounding is prior to any deliberate choice since our ethical obligations within this conception of life are based on our generalised precarity.

1.3 A Brief Exploration of the Meaning of Justice in the Context of a Liveable Life

In the previous section I argued that Butler’s reading of Arendt emphasises the unchosen character of cohabitation which, in Arendt’s view, must lead to a pluralistic democracy founded on equality. According to Butler, Arendt argues that the term ‘choose’ here makes reference to the Levinasian conception that the core of our relations with others is constituted by unfreedom. To honour the obligations of preserving the lives of those who are unknown to us, those who we might never choose, since we can’t reject our relation to the Other. Despite ourselves we are being solicited by the presence of asylum seekers. In other words, this relation is not a matter of will as it is a responsibility that emerges not from purpose or prior agreement. Rather the social conditions of a liveable life come to light from the very social situation of political life that has to be achieved: “The task of affirming or even safeguarding plurality would then also imply making new modes of pluralisation possible” (Butler 2011, p. 85). Butler argues that we are bound to one another in ways that exceed intelligibility, beyond the reach of the norm as she says, “…. since justice not only or exclusively is a matter of how persons are treated, how societies are constituted ...” (Butler 2001, p.
The social conditions of a liveable life emerge through our exposure to precarity and interdependency (as understood by Levinas) which constitutes a ‘we’. According to Derrida’s reading of Levinas when the ethical relation moves from the dual face-to-face relation and a third appears then, this causes the emergence of justice. Thus, in Derrida’s view this poses an unbearable situation as in certain ways, with the appearance of a third person in order to be just, somehow, we have to betray the pure asymmetrical but dual relation with the other. Derrida further states that the difficulty of exercising justice makes justice unjust (Derrida in Kearney & Dooley 1999, pp. 68-69). However, he declares that this is the very condition of justice and that we should not avoid it. Similarly, Butler says that our exposure, that is, our interdependency, is the condition of our sociability and this bond imposes on us the necessity of finding political and economic ways of limiting precarity as well as generating political and economic equality (Butler 2009, p. 54). Justice will be further explored through the interpretation of the citations below:

*...justice can become a verb. It then designates a way of being, of shining forth, of radiating, and of acting, a way of doing things, most often with words, with the performative force of a speech act: to justice. To justice would be to produce justice, cause it to prevail, make it come about ...* (Derrida 2005, p. 692).

I am Muslim and I share with many people Christians, I would like to live with Australian people. I would like to do anything to help Australia, the government the people but if Australia puts a curtain between me and my future........Now if you ask me if I am happy or unhappy I answer you, I say I am unhappy, why I am unhappy? Because I am the same like an animal, since I eat, I sleep, and I have a shower....Why I should have good life with the people? Why if you are not giving me any chance to be the same like any other Australian person? Like to have citizenship and to have my family, why?...I came to Australia and I would like Australia to look at me as a good person, good man the same I need to be making, doing things but now I seat in my room I am worried if I go to the street I may have problems, or if I make a mistake and then I will not have citizenship..... (Iraqi male, 16.11.2007)
The words of the Iraqi person in this citation designate a state outside justice, a condition of an unequal relation to other Australian citizens. His interrogations, however, constitute a demand for justice, in his words, “Why I should have good life with the people? Why if you are not giving me any chance to be the same like any other Australian person?” His words are also a testimony of his unhappiness, his request for an answer seems a call for conventional hospitality, where, as a guest he would offer his attendance to English classes, would also have a good life and relate to others. This he would do in response to the host treating him like any other Australian person, allowing him to live with his family.

I assert that Derrida’s words in the previous citation and Butler’s narrative are both noting the importance of the relationship to the other as a condition for justice (Derrida 2008, p. 67), since Derrida’s definition of justice requires a way of being that conceives the Other as ‘the closest of all possible neighbours’ (Cherif 2008, p. xvii). Similarly, Butler’s reading of Arendt affirms that we ought to actively defend the non-chosen, pluralistic and all-encompassing nature of cohabitation (Butler 2011, p. 84). For instance, the Iraqi person cited above states: “I am Muslim and I share with many people Christians, I would like to live with Australian people. I would like to do anything to help Australia, the government the people but if Australia puts a curtain between me and my future because Australia puts problem I can’t bring my family.” Here, he is actively defending plurality, thus showing us a way of being that conceives the Other, diverse others, as close neighbour/s, as he declares to share with many people including Christians, and that he would like to live with Australian people despite his suffering. Moreover, he declares his desire to do anything to help Australia, the government, the people he is motivated by and dispossessed by his own suffering, that ethically compels him to be open to the Other, namely Australia, the government, and its people. However, he is also taking a political stance which emerges from his declaration of his right to cohabitation and belonging alongside with his family. Thus he is denouncing the restrictive conditions stipulated by Australia which in his words “puts a curtain, a problem” as he can’t bring his family to Australia. He continues “...Now if you ask me if I am happy or unhappy I answer you, I say I am unhappy, why I am unhappy? Because I am the same like an animal, since I eat, I sleep, and I have a shower... Why I should have good life with the people? Why if you are not giving me any chance to be the same like any other Australian person? Like to have citizenship and to have my family, why? ...”. The questions that he is asking emerge from a certain
kind of exteriority, that of the non-citizen, the condition of being a foreigner, a person at the margins of the Australian nation. Nevertheless, his interrogations also surface from the space that his is inhabiting, which is defined by his outside, hence he is cohabitating in Australia, with Australians in a differentiated manner, which he describes similar to an animal, and certainly not the same as any other Australian person. Consequently, he exposes his proximity, dependency as well as his differentiation and his experience of violence. He is calling for a way to relate well to each other, to understand each other, to re-think the relationship between citizen and non-citizen: “I came to Australia and I would like Australia to look at me as a good person, good man the same I need to be making, doing things but now I seat in my room I am worried if I go to the street I may have problems …”. As a consequence, this Iraqi person is interpellating Australian citizens in words which translate norms as precisely needed. It is this that would ethically enable some to become dispossessed from the Australian mode of national belonging, making possible the state of being outside and prior to ourselves generating the conditions of being for another (Butler 2011, p. 88-89). In this way, through his solicitation he is enabling openness to and acceptance of the law of the Other, hence, facilitating an exploration of what would be ethically possible and ethically right within this bounded relationship, searching for the requirements that would make life liveable in cohabitation.

1.4 Cohabitation - Beyond Nationalism

In Australia... historically the threat of 'Asia' defines the external boundaries as well as the psychological, social and cultural limits of the Australian nation ... (Perera 1999, p. 187)

Derrida’s invitation to overcome general categorisations and to endlessly scrutinise and revolt against the enclosure that certain politics and institutionalised practice create, seems very pertinently to apply to the conception of the Australian nation. The above statement of Suvendrini Perera asserts that Australia as a nation invokes a fear of Asians, despite that it is estimated that the Asian population in Australia makes up 6% of Australia’s people12. Perera then invites us to think who is enclosed and exposed

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within the psychological, social and cultural limits of the Australian nation in its efforts of national self-definition. Similarly, the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, while they were territorially narrated ‘here’ in Australia, tell of subjects positioned as outsiders, not here in Australia, not there in reference to their country of origin. They demand scrutiny of the mechanisms that Australia in exercising its rights to self-determination uses to legitimise conditions and prevent asylum seekers from national belonging.

According to Butler historical analysis may show that illegality in the form of a series of illegal practices used to confiscate land turn out to be critical for the foundation and self-legitimisation of the nation (referring to the Israeli nation-state) (Butler 2012, p. 31). The illegal foundations of the Australian nation are grounded in its history of colonisation which indicates that Australia’s racism towards Indigenous people was (and arguably continues to be) especially violent. With regard to people of other races, immigration control was (and arguably continues to be) the main instrument of racial discrimination (Jupp 2002, p. 9). Thus, the Australian borders that discursively and legislatively legitimate the nation’s enclosure, increasingly become the core of power and ideology continuously generating technologies of protection and defence. An ongoing example is the ‘criminalisation’ of the unauthorised ‘boat’ arrivals which currently means that asylum seekers arriving by boat are facing a range of legislative measures to process their claims ‘outside’ Australia.

In examining the Australian official response towards asylum seekers from the perspective of borders that enclose the nation, I have been reflecting on the markers of identity that form its landscape and permeate its territory and its people. Similarly, I have reflected on the cultural myths, symbols and icons that politically recreate a seemingly unified Australian identity and about who proclaims the benefit of enjoying a specific relationship with this ‘Australian’ space, the right to control who lives here and the manner in which people should live here (Hage 2000, p. 87).

The legal and institutional arrangements that bound Australian citizens’ rights and responsibilities denote a mode of belonging, namely a collective of individuals that share language, culture, history, traditions and a commitment to the nation. Nevertheless, it also demarcates a mode of non-belonging given that the type of people,

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place and geography bounding this Australian national territory that has emerged through the examination of the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas is complicated by the presence of alterity: Australia’s Indigenous people and a large number of immigrants coming from about 200 countries, speaking 175 different languages (Jupp cited in Fozdar and Spittles 2010, p. 127).

Hence, the demand, the solicitation made by asylum seekers to Australians literally comes from a language that is not English, it does not come from within the Australian idiom, and in this manner it interrupts the familiar Australian discourses that debatably constitute the Australian character as a nation of fairness, characterised by reconciliation and inclusion. Butler claims that when a demand comes from somewhere else it constitutes a demand for translation, an opening to the unknown, to unfamiliar systems of understanding and knowledge that are not created by recognized and authorised regimes of power (Butler 2012, p. 12). Consequently, this interruption, the demand for cohabitation and hospitality posed by asylum seekers becomes an opportunity for ethical relationality, imposing on Australian citizens the task to move, to dismantle defined subject and national identity (familiar). And to displace towards asylum seekers - the Other, re-inventing and living equality and justice as fundamental components of a liveable life, requiring a re-invention of social ties and political commitments that surpass nationalism (Butler 2012, p. 9). The solicitation made by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas requires a realisation of our relationship to place, and of our condition of guests in our seemingly unified nation. We need to realise that we cannot accept the fixated character conferred to the national territory by the power awarded to some, that the question that the foreigner imposes on Us is a question of our ‘no-place’ (Defourmantelle and Derrida 2000, p. 70) in the sense that we are already tied to the Other.

2 Conclusion

By investigating the narratives of asylum seekers interviewed in this study to elicit important reflections about Australian citizens’ ethics, or the manner of being, and the type of society that Australia has been and continues to be, it is possible to bear witness to asylum seekers’ solicitation for recognition, and cohabitation, and more importantly, to point to their call for an ethical recognition that has not been fulfilled. This study has scrutinised the particular case of asylum seekers who, following a forced departure from
their country of origin, have arrived by boat in Australia. These Asylum seekers’ journeys to safety in some cases do not end when they have been granted a permanent protection visa. During their journeys, they have sought safety and a place to live, have and continue to inhabit various subject positions such as detainees, asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and refugees. As demonstrated throughout this and previous chapters, the subject position of non-persons, as presented in the narratives of these asylum seekers, has opened a space to examine the specific mechanisms of normative power that establishes their life as non-life. The examination of power here extends to the sphere of micro-power, namely, a reflection of our responsibility, regarding the imperative of an ethical relation when we face an asylum seeker (proximity). Together with the chance that we would never really face an asylum seeker in proximity and therefore she or he might remain distant to us, our relation to asylum seekers would be mediated by the macro-power exercised by the official stance of the Australian nation. As highlighted in this chapter, this does not exonerate my/our ethical responsibility towards them.

These narratives without exception were declaimed from a non-place, from a certain kind of exteriority, a dispossession both material and of ego. Their embodied the words avow the value of cohabitation as the ethical foundation to critique the violence exercised by the Australian nation. This nation responded to their solicitation of hospitality and cohabitation by seeking to produce and maintain a cohesive notion of Australia’s identity, insisting in ascertaining its rights to choose with whom to cohabit this place, and consequently rejecting plurality. These asylum seekers confirmed that their stateless condition was also their platform to critique the Australian nation, and they did it in the name “of heterogeneous populations, political plurality, and a certain conception of cohabitation” (Butler 2011, p. 79). This is precisely what has been solicited by these asylum seekers’ narratives, explicitly, the necessity of acknowledging that my/our life is bounded in interdependency to the life of these asylum seekers, and that we are answerable to them. These asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have also revealed that by challenging the Australian nation’s stance towards them, they have “...call[ed] into question the necessity of the mechanisms through which ontological fields are constituted...” (Butler 2009, pp. 7-8).

Another important reflection is that cohabitation is inseparable from hospitality, and that the type of hospitality exercised by the Australian nation with regard to asylum seekers arriving by boat is and has been at best limited, as it has been conditioned by
law and immigration restrictions. At its worst Australia has failed and continues to fail to exercise hospitality as it has focussed and continues to focus on border control and on ‘choosing with whom cohabit the nation’ rather than in minimising harm to asylum seekers arriving by boat. The insistence on this official approach denotes a persistent desire to obliterate the conditions of Australia’s political and social life, since this approach constitutes a direct assault on the non-chosen character of cohabitation. This approach also constrains the possibilities of ethical relations with asylum seekers as it prevents Australian citizens from experiencing some kind of dispossession from their national mode of belonging to Australia. As there is not home without adjacency, this approach forecloses the opportunity for new affective routes, the close reading and the translation as conceived by Derrida of our obligations to others.

Finally, in considering the shape that an ethical response to asylum seekers might take, Derrida offers an interesting stance regarding ethical responsibility. He postulates that at the moment of facing an ethical decision, at the moment of exercising my/our ethical responsibility general categories need to be surmounted by endless close reading, and that a response must be created each time in the singular situation (Derrida in Kearney & Dooley 1999, p. 72). This stance then encourages us to revolt against complicity, given that we have an ethical obligation to respond to the solicitation presented by asylum seekers and to shelter to protect their life. This requires Us to stand against normative practices and the institutionalisation of politics that restrain the possibility of an absolute welcoming of asylum seekers.
CHAPTER 8

STRIVING FOR AN ETHICAL RESPONSE IN THE ‘FACE’ OF THE SOLICITATION PRESENTED BY ASYLUM SEEKERS ON TEMPORARY PROTECTION VISAS - CONCLUDING COMMENTS

I begin the concluding comments of this thesis by bringing to view a poem entrusted to me by Ahmad Shihan an asylum seeker on a temporary protection visa, a poem which focuses on the conditions that threatened his life. A poem that also gives testimony of the precarious life that he confronted as a stateless person and as an asylum seeker arriving by boat in Australia, exposing the limits of his autonomy, thus also marking the condition of his autonomy, hence opening the possibility of presenting his solicitation to exercise his right of belonging and cohabitation.

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POEM of Ahmad Shihan

When this word does not continue generosity.  
When moments stop and decline from movement.  
There is no fragrance in rose, no splendor in happiness, and no taste in music.  
When the arteries continue expelling blood from the body.  
The wind starts tearing out all childhood dreams.  
When this place becomes a castle of ghost for dead people to flounder.  
All spaces narrow, and all directions are distance from hands.  
Panting run proceeds to the unknown…toward no goal and no glimpse of hope.  
Flying in the space of silence… no earth and no sky…from space to space.  
Useless is the conflict between the spirit and the body.  
All of us seek reason for salvation, or all of us stopped without address.  
Not time for calculation and recalling, so the wind started the harvest from all directions.  
The bodies scattered, the blood spread, and the castles fell.  
The last defense fell before the wind and the rain.  
Followed by lightning and thunder that wildly split the sky.  
The body met the fire, and the smell of burning scented.  
A hand that failed of grieving became bald.  
Grasped the last fistful of muddy breast and sank in depths.  
I wondered if there is an alternative to departure… and the echo returned with no result.  
and the body sunk in mud.

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This poem was translated from the Arabic language the 6 of May 2000. A Temporary Protection Visa Holder wrote it while in detention in Australia.
This thesis has traversed the linguistic space and narratives inhabited and produced by Australia and its citizens when facing its foreignness. Some of these narratives relate to important tensions in the Australian discursive arena, for instance Australia is a nation made up of people from a diverse range of countries as well as ethnicities, and has nationally adopted a multicultural policy which arguably embraces difference within Australia. Yet the narratives examined here depict a political class and citizenry mostly prejudiced against diversity, that is people from backgrounds other than Anglo-Celtic and European (Kevin in Douglas and Wodak 2013, p. 33), specifically asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat. Hence, the significance of difference emerges in this study in the context of the political, cultural and discursive territory navigated by asylum seekers who arrived in Australia by boat who, at the time, were officially conceived as unauthorised arrivals. Some of these asylum seekers were later granted temporary protection visas and subsequently permanent protection visas. Although the focus of this study was situated twelve years ago, the issue of asylum seekers arriving by boat and soliciting an ethical response to their request for protection continues to be very relevant for Australia, its citizens and asylum seekers. This study reveals that the presence and demand for an ethical response from asylum seekers is inescapably linked to the examination of the practices of identity, space and exclusion, of (in)hospitality and (in)justice, a question of being and of the manner of being configuring Australia’s citizens and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Moreover, in the year 2013 the threat of temporary protection visas is still present in this society since most of the asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australian shores are now issued with bridging visas which will become temporary protection visas for those found to be refugees. Although these temporary protection visas differ from the temporary visas concerning this study they still constitute a sign of conditioned hospitality. An example of the conditioned hospitality that asylum seekers arriving by boat have to face is the ‘no advantage’ principle which was recommended by the ‘expert panel’ during the previous Gillard, and then Rudd, Labor government. This principle is continuing under the Abbott government, including measures like: anyone arriving by boat in Australia will be transferred to a regional processing centre; their claims for protection visas will be processed no faster than if they had used regular options; asylum seekers arriving by boat will no longer be able to propose their families through the Humanitarian Program (Australian Government Fact Sheet)\textsuperscript{14}. Another example of conditioned hospitality is

\textsuperscript{14} Australian Government Fact Sheet, \textit{Australia by Boat? No Advantage},
\texttt{www.immi.gov.au}
submitting asylum seekers to mandatory detention since they have not been detained for committing a crime. They are simply detained for not possessing a valid visa as they are described under this legislation as ‘unlawful non-citizens,’ a term that includes children. These and other similar measures create the conditions for increasingly unliveable lives for asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, as well as for Australian citizens whose national collectiveness is marked by retrograde and racial forms of a fixated nationalism. These measures inhibit the possibilities of living together and of experiencing solidarity and hospitality beyond national restrictions. Of course there are Australian citizens who have expressed and continue to express concern about Australia’s official stance towards asylum seekers, and have and continue to respond to the asylum seekers’ solicitation for recognition in an ethical manner. Such responses are also present in this study’s narratives. However, for citizens to ethically respond to asylum seekers in the context of relationality as explored in this study is not a matter of a ready-made subject. It requires a leap to the unknown, and grappling with the fear of the Other who is already in me. A previously difficult positioning is made excessively difficult by the official rhetoric aimed at persuading Australians that asylum seekers arriving by boat are criminals, and that we need protection from them (Burnside in Douglas & Wodak 2013, p. 62). Accordingly, the difficulty of an ethical stance is confirmed by what Derrida calls ‘undecidability’ as he says there can be no decision and no responsibility without experiencing some undecidability. In other words he says that when we are confronted with a solicitation, and/or a problem, if we know what to do then this is not a decision because to be a decision has to go through a process of ‘undecidability’. Derrida further says that this does not mean that we have to renounce to knowledge however, he emphasises that there is a point where a decision surpasses knowledge (Derrida in Kearney and Dooley 1999, p. 66). This is precisely the point illustrated by the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas examined in this study. Without exception these asylum seekers’ narratives reveal a sense of ethical responsibility towards Australian citizens, as they choose to be just in the face of hostility exercised by Australia as a nation as well as by some Australian citizens. That is to say, they strive for relationships of friendship, and care for the unknown Other, in this case Australian citizens.

The central task of this thesis has been to scrutinise language by examining specific instances of discursive articulation and speech acts such as those constructed through letters to editors, newspaper articles and interviews with asylum seekers on temporary
protection visas. These speech acts not only constitute an archive of what has been said regarding the arrival of asylum seekers at Australian shores twelve years ago, but also point to the sediments of a powerful institutionalised violent and racist linguistic context which continues to permeate and condition the dominant utterances emerging in response to the presence of asylum seekers today. As a mode of example of archival speech acts and of an aggressive institutionalised context, the conceptual chapter argues that Australia’s stand towards ‘outsiders’ is closely linked to the construction of its ‘insiders’ and that this process has its origin in the invasive, violent and dispossessing encounter with Aboriginal people where British colonisers produced a seemingly unified ‘Western inside’ declared Australia a *terra nullius*—a land of no people (Atkinson 2002, p. 25). Moreover, the origins of multiculturalism were marked by assimilation efforts where potential migrants were classified in accordance with their racial and cultural similarity with British Australians (Lopez 2000, p. 43) as well as the cultural differences from this institutionally-posited core white-Anglo group. Consequently, this study contributes to the understanding that Australia’s space and identity story has been shaped and named and continues to be produced and stated when its inhabitants encounter its foreigners in order to establish a sense of home and ownership (Davidson 1989, p. 127). Such identity stories underpin historical and contemporary forms of violence that exclude alternative worlds and modes of being in the world. For instance, Rutherford states that Australia’s fantasy is of being a place of equality and good neighbours, a fantasy she says is framed within a context of white Australia, and that anyone falling outside this homogeneous white community faces inequality and the aggression of Australian nationalism (Rutherford 2000, pp. 8-13).

Clearly some of the narratives read through the scrutiny of letters to the editor and newspaper articles emerge as potentially and sometimes persistently injurious, utilising subordinating discourses and conformative practices of exclusion. Similarly these narratives reveal that the normativity of space from which they are drawn is grounded in the hostility of territorialised identities. Consequently, the task of examining language intended to identify the powers at work in producing a particular structure of intelligibility regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as outsiders, has the purpose of intruding and challenging resident meanings and forms of knowledge by bringing into view what is silenced or unseen. Importantly, this analysis brings to consideration an ethical responsiveness towards asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.
The utilisation of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as postulated by Fairclough, accompanied by a post-structuralist stance informed by writers such as Butler, Arendt, Foucault, Derrida, Levinas, Said, Mignolo, Lingis, Spivak, Pugliese, has been valuable in scrutinising and impinging on in some of the resident meanings and workings of language with the intent of opening the possibilities of a politics and ethics of discourse (Shapiro 1997, p. 172). This study has examined prevailing positions regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas at three levels, from the most heavily mediated such as newspaper articles to the least mediated such as personal narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Seeing that CDA sees language as a social practice and considers the context of language usage as vital, CDA and the post-structuralist stance have allowed a linguistic pilgrimage from discourses universalising truths about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the emancipative individual narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas.

In methodological terms, this thesis contributes to the field of CDA. In contrast to a number of CDA studies concerned with the treatment of the printed media of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia, this investigation offers an analytical and epistemological intersection of CDA with Foucauldian ‘governmentality’ supported by post-structuralist philosophers. Some of whom were previously mentioned and who have studied the materialisation of the body in and through language, knowledge that has significantly influenced the area of humanities and social sciences. These’ authors’ position towards language have sustained this thesis examination of language beyond its linguistic elements, drawing attention to the ways in which the subject is discursively created, and interrogating the way in which matters pertaining to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been framed and investigated through the technologies that were used to produce the lived experience of subjection of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Nonetheless, this subjection is, of course, always unstable and embodied with tensions due to the awareness that the body exceeds discourse and that it always stay exposed and implicated in the Other.

The methodology used in this thesis claims that CDA positioned within post-structuralism allows a critical posture toward grand narratives such as ‘illegal entrants’, ‘genuine refugees’ and ‘flows of illegal immigrants’. The utilisation of CDA has permitted a meticulous scrutiny of the narratives about asylum seekers on temporary protection visas which has assisted in identifying dominant objectifying and categorising narratives about them. It has also allowed a critical reflection about how
these narratives have constituted a regime of truth regarding the nature and the causes of the refugee experience. Moreover, CDA has facilitated the scrutiny of texts and made possible the identification of the connections between the properties of the text and the social processes through which the conditions of inequality affecting asylum seekers under temporary protection are constituted.

This thesis has worked with Foucault, Butler and Derrida’s perspective that detecting practices of exclusion is a necessary task for the emergence of ethical sensibility. Consequently the analysis of LTE, newspaper articles and interviews has focused on discourses about the Other, and the discursive patterns that reference both the negation and acceptance of the Other. This thesis has demonstrated that the importance of scrutinising the discursive narratives of exclusion regarding asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in providing a glance at the constitutive, totalising and encompassing nature of the narratives of the same, that is, narratives of self-construction by Australian citizens including showing sedimentations of prior institutionalised racism. Once the practices of exclusion affecting asylum seekers on temporary protection visas were exposed the task undertaken by this thesis was to revolve around ethical considerations including reflections about border, statelessness as the bareness of asylum seekers’ bodies stripped from a national identity, and from a chance of living liveable lives. This was supported by the analysis of some ‘dissenting’ [my use of the term dissenting is aligned with Ranciere (Ranciere 2004, p. 304) as a quarrel over what is given, namely a disagreement with the indisputable truths (common sense) which are assumed to be part of a society] newspaper articles and the totality of the narratives generated by the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ interviews. The analysis illustrates stances which defend ‘all’ lives having equal rights to be sheltered from harm and violence, given that some of the ‘dissenting’ newspaper articles’ narratives, and all of the interviewees did not renounce their susceptibility to the Other (Australian citizens in the case of the interviewees and asylum seekers on temporary protection visas in the case of the newspaper articles’ writers.) These dissenting stances not only disrupted the totalising function of official discourses of subsuming the Other into the same. These dissenting positions constituted an example of a resource for being responsive towards the Other and also provided the opportunity to observe the Levinasian position that proclaims un-freedom at the heart of our relations with others, (Butler 2012, p. 43) at work in these narratives. For instance the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas showed this ethical stance in the lack of reprisal and in their responsive
stance toward Australian citizens despite the interviewees’ acknowledgement of the suffering caused to them. And in the case of some of the newspaper articles, this ethical stand was shown by these writers’ recognition that when faced with an ethical solicitation there is an obligation to respond.

The ‘new’ language inscribed in the narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as well as in the utterances of some Australian citizens, attests the desire of cohabitation, that Butler conceives as “internally complicated modalities of space and time” (Butler 2012, p. 127). For some of the Australian citizens writing LTE and newspaper articles, as well as for asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, to recognise each other requires these writers’ movement. An exit of communitarian ways of belonging, a dispossession that brings about a new narrative marked by the language of cohabitation which rejects self-referential modes of belonging, shows that these writers’ posture avows the violence of the Australian rejection of nationalist discourses, also challenging stories of national Australian identity coherence, comprising a movement towards the disruption of unitary modes of collective and individual self-hood. Nevertheless, as the utterances of this ethical language have documented their capacity to fully avoid the subjectification of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas experiences has been limited given that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been subjects of conditioned hospitality.

However, these narratives still mark the proximity of the writers to the Other, namely asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and the writers’ vulnerability towards alterity as well as asserting asylum seekers’ rights to hospitality and liveable lives. The narratives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas have been pronounced from an exteriority that is to say from the bareness of people without a nation, and of a homely place. People’s embodied dispossession and vulnerability have literally exposes them to the language of the Other, namely the English language of the Australian nation also a migrant language that has put them in question. Asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ narratives exemplify the extent to which they are prepared to exercise their ethical responsibilities towards Australian citizens and to assert the interdependency of our lives—this is despite the duress, the injuries inflicted on them by the Australian nation and its citizens. The asylum seekers on temporary protection visas’ narratives proclaim their rights for cohabitation and justice by insisting on the need to be treated as equal human beings, and by offering the individual stories of their embodied experiences as abject Others, and to do this they inhabit the English language
(a foreign language that has been mostly hostile to them), in the realisation that there is no home without adjacency.

Lastly, I conclude with the understanding that to live ethically requires a movement towards an Other. In the case concerning this study, what is required of me is a movement to welcome and to offer hospitality to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas and this movement is necessarily a leap towards the unknown as I cannot possibly reduce the Other (here: asylum seekers on temporary protection visas) to a theme, narrative or purely to that which is uttered and utterable. I am obliged to respond ethically to asylum seekers on temporary protection visas since to live ethically is to realise that I cannot disavow my implication in the lives of asylum seekers on temporary protection visas. Since I am sharing the earth with them and I am dependent and exposed to them and others, consequently I must strive for a liveable life for the other. In order to do this, I must struggle against the existing norms that violently reject and position asylum seekers on temporary protection visas as non-human and make a choice for communication and generosity. This is, regardless of the fact that I may never fully know who the Other is, in this case I may never fully know who asylum seekers on temporary protection visas are.

I believe that the asylum seekers on temporary protection visas interviewed in this study offer an example of the type of vigilance that we must exercise against the violence of language. These asylum seekers on temporary protection visas had shown that to live ethically requires being prepared to build relationships and to avoid exercising violence and causing injury to others. What is more, these asylum seekers’ stance derives from a subordinated position where they have little room to manoeuvre, demonstrating a significant capacity to regulate their behaviour, to exercise their power to live ethically. To live ethically is a creative process of being for the Other, given that asylum seekers on temporary protection visas ground their struggle against rejection and exile focusing on the need to belong, and to live inclusive liveable lives. Furthermore, they do this not from a theoretical view; asylum seekers on temporary protection visas claim for liveable lives originates from the concrete condition of their experiences of exile and oppression. Consequently, the perspective offered by asylum seekers on temporary protection visas is emancipative as it emancipates from imposed worldviews that refuse heterogeneity. Their posture also constitutes a rebellion against the centralising power effects of universal discourses against asylum seekers.
This study aimed to contribute to the ethical and political understanding of Australia’s identity defined by its relation to alterity, namely asylum seekers on temporary protection visas: as put by Butler a relationship to alterity that interrupts identity (Butler 2012, p. 5), an interruption that requires paying attention to the Other, and ethical and political responsibility to hospitably respond to the Other. These asylum seekers put the need to politically think from their histories and experiences this requires a re-inscription of the totalising knowledge that subordinates them. From this position emerges a petition to the Australian nation and its citizens, that is, an ethical reconsideration and response to the ethical solicitation of recognition and hospitality posed by asylum seekers who come by boat.
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SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

(Mis) representation: Responses to media representation of refugees on temporary protection visas

About the Newspaper Representation of Refugees granted TPV subclass 785

1. What is your understanding or knowledge about the way in which newspapers such as the Courier Mail (Queensland paper) and or the Australian (National paper) portrayed or represented the experiences of refugees granted temporary protection visas?

2. Are you aware of any particular ways that the newspaper used to describe you and other refugees in the same situation? If so can you share them with me?

In case there is no understanding and or knowledge of the above I shall provide some background like; according to existing studies and current research, during the year 2001 most of the language used in newspapers to refer to refugees arriving in Australia by boat since the year 1999, initially referred to “illegals”, “boat people”, “hordes of people invading Australian shores”

3. What do you think about this way of representing you and others in a similar situation?

4. Do you feel represented by the stories in the newspapers? (If so) in which way?

5. Do you think that “queue jumper” “illegal immigrant” represents you and your situation? Why?

About the Effects of this type of representation

1. Have the newspaper’s portrayal of your experiences affected you? If so, can you explain in your own words the effect this has had on your life?

2. Has this also affected your views about Australia and Australian people?

3. Do you think that the newspaper’s representation of you have influenced other Australians so that they rejected you?

About challenging these representations

1. Was there anything that you or other people that you know did in response to the newspaper’s representation? If so can you explain what was done and why this was important?

2. What were the types of things that you had to carefully consider before responding to the newspaper’s representation?

3. Was there anything that made difficult and or helpful for you to challenge and or accept these representations?
To: Anna Maria Alimanto Holme
c/O School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences
The University of Queensland, 4072.

2nd November 2007

Re: Ethical Clearance for your PhD Project.

Clearance Number: SWAHS2007/8

The School Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved your application for ethical clearance for your PhD Project: "Emerging Stories: Temporary Protection Visa Holders and the Creation of Discursive Spaces."

Please note that:

- Clearance will normally be for the duration of the project unless otherwise stated;
- Adverse reaction or any other incident affecting the welfare and/or health of subjects attributable to the research should be promptly reported to the Head of School and the School Research Ethics Committee;
- Amendments to any part of the approved protocol, documents or questionnaires attached to this clearance are to be submitted to the School Research Ethics Committee for approval.

Students and supervisors are also encouraged to contact either the University Ethics Officer (3365 3924) or Chair/members of the School Research Ethics Committee on ethical issues concerning the conduct of the research throughout the course of the study. We wish you all the best with your research.

Yours Sincerely,

Karen Healy PhD
Chair, Research Ethics Committee SWAHS
Phone: 07 3365 1847
Emerging Stories: Temporary Protection Visa Holders and the Creation of Discursive Spaces

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences has approved a study into exploring media representation of refugees that were granted temporary protection visas in Australia. This study will also explore your responses to this media representation. The study is being undertaken by Ana Maria Allimant Holas, a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, the University of Queensland. Supervisors of this study are Dr. Greg Marston the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences and Dr. Susan McKay School of English and Media Studies.

Existing studies about refugees have noted that the media largely portrayed asylum seekers as 'illegal immigrants', 'queue jumpers' and 'masses of people invading Australian shores'. However, some of the later stories in the newspapers seem to challenge these negative representations through more personal refugee experiences. This study is focusing in the newspapers' representations of refugees in the year 2001 as during this year important events related to refugees of TPV backgrounds occurred I would like to talk to you about how you perceived and responded to the media representation.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

I am interested in hearing your views about;

- The media’s representation of your experiences as asylum seekers and refugees in Australia.
- The impact of the media’s representation on your everyday life.
- How you might have challenged these representations.

The School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences offer programs at St Lucia and Ipswich campuses
ABOUT THE INTERVIEW

I will arrange a face to face interview at the Romero Centre or if you prefer your home or any other location that suits you. The interview will take around 1 hour. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not wish to, and may withdraw at any time during the interview. To ensure that your views and responses are accurately recorded, it is preferred that interviews are audio-recorded.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I offer assurance of confidentiality. The same principle applies to the professional interpreter/bilingual worker. Anonymity will be guaranteed throughout project activities and in the project report and in any other written materials. Personal contact details will only be necessary for the purpose of recruitment. We will uphold your right to confidentiality and protection of your privacy throughout the conduct of the research during both the interviews and reporting stages.

APPROVAL THAT THE RESEARCH IS ETHICAL

This study has been cleared by one of the human ethics committees of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council’s guidelines. You are welcome to discuss your participation in this study with the principal researcher Ana Maria Alliman Holas, if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study you may contact the Ethics Officer on (07) 3365 5924.

OBTAINING YOUR CONSENT

When I meet with you I will go over the aims of the study and you can ask any questions you have. I will then ask you to sign a consent form saying that you agree to talk to me confidentially and that you understand the information provided in this information sheet.

FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS

All participants taking part in the study will be contacted via an interpreter (if necessary) with a transcript of the interview (that will be read via telephone if an interpreter is needed) to correct it if necessary. If no interpreter is required you will receive a copy of the transcript to correct it if necessary. All participants will be kept informed of the research themes that emerge from the interview analysis.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

Ana Maria Alliman Holas
s3100801@student.uq.edu.au
Tcl. 38122990 (h)

Dr. Greg Marston
g.marston@socsci.uq.edu.au
Tcl. 33633024
CONSENT FORM

I have read the participant information sheet for the project, "Emerging Stories: Temporary Protection Visa Holders and the Creation of Discursive Spaces" and hereby consent to be interviewed as part of this research project.

1. I have been given clear information, both written and verbal, about the study, and understand what is required of me.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to answer any question and I remain free to withdraw from the study at any time without explanation.

3. I am aware that the interview in which I participate will be audiotape recorded and transcribed.

4. I understand that the information I provide will be confidential and stored securely.

5. I understand that none of the information that I provide will be described or portrayed in any way that will identify me in any report on the study.

6. I am aware that I may ask any further questions about the research study at any time.

Participant Name: ..........................................................

Participant signature: .................................................. Date: ...............

Interviewer Name: ..........................................................

Interviewer signature: .................................................. Date: ...............

Researcher: Ana Maria Alimant Holas
PhD student
(07) 38122990

The School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences offer programs at St Lucia and Ipswich campuses.
3rd Sept. 2007

The Ethical Clearance Research Committee
School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences
The University of Queensland
Brisbane Queensland 4072

Dear Committee members,

Re: (Mis)Representation: Responses to media representation of refugees on temporary protection visas

I am writing to confirm the Romero Centre’s participation in the above study, I have met with Ana Maria Allieman Holas and discussed about the study’s aims and interview process.

The Romero Centre has agreed to support this study and will collaborate in the recruitment and interview process of participants. The Centre has also offered the use of the Romero Centre’s premises and staff.

The Romero Centre has extensive experience in working with temporary protection visa holders. The Centre offers practical support, hospitality, settlement support, friendship and emotional support.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

Dermot Doogan
Coordinator