Universiteit Leiden
Masters in International Relations
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Thesis

The UNHCR in the UK: Guardian of Refugee Protection?

Words: 14 985

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How effectively did the UNHCR fulfil its role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms by addressing anti-refugee sentiment in the United Kingdom from 2011 to 2016?

Introduction

"The Refugee Crisis" describes the plight of over 20 million refugees, primarily Syrian, 'forced to leave their country in order to escape war or persecution'.[1] Having taken only 3% of the Syrian refugee population, Europe's response to the crisis has been limited and uneven, reducing 'the greatest global humanitarian crisis of our time' to internal dispute and the "*European Migrant Crisis*".

As the second richest state in Europe, the United Kingdom (UK) has been particularly unresponsive. Its total refugee population reached a mere 168 978 in June 2017, having turned away 21 000 out of 39 000 applications for asylum the previous year.[2] In fact, for the past three decades, the UK, like much of Europe, has been implementing increasingly tight refugee policies which narrow eligibility criteria and 'erect barriers to those seeking refuge from war and persecution'.[3] This paper therefore defines refugees, as per the 1951 Refugee Convention, as people without nationality who have 'fled their country of former habitual residence' 'owing to a well-founded fear of persecution' – regardless of having been granted refugee status by the UK.[4]

The UK's escalating non-entrée[5] demonstrates an erosion of refugee protection norms and a weakening commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention[6] – the basis of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) mandate. As the only refugee-related

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[1] European Commission,2017
[2] Moloney,2017
[3] Loescher,p46
[4] UNHCR,2017
[5] **Non-entrée:** Regime and policies designed to prevent and/or deter asylum-seekers from finding and seeking refuge in a given territory
[6] **The 1951 Refugee Convention,** as amended by the 1967 Protocol, sets out the rights of refugees and the responsibilities of nations for granting asylum (UNHCR,2017)

intergovernmental organisation legitimised by the UN, UNHCR is the guardian of the global refugee protection regime. It is therefore the 'single most important actor in the regime's constant development and adaption'. This requires acknowledging itself, not only as an operational humanitarian agency, but as a protector of human rights and international norms concerning refugees. [7]

Norms are here defined as 'standards of appropriate behaviour for a group of actors', both state and non-state[8]. This paper takes a constructivist line, acknowledging UNHCR's role as an influential non-state actor. It recognises the social construction of the international arena and the mutually formative process through which international norms and states' identities and interests emerge and evolve. Constructivism argues that norms affect states' behaviour top-down through established institutions and the judgement of international society, but also bottom-up through domestic public opinion – critical to states' legitimacy and associated interests.[9] This paper thus advocates UNHCR's role as two-fold – challenging protectionist sentiment at both the state and societal level.

At the state level, without an enforcement mechanism or territory of its own, UNHCR must incentivise states to effectuate asylum.[10] This is the subject of the Literature Review, which challenges the assumption that UNHCR's donor-dependence makes non-entrée "outside of the organisations control". This section reveals the societal level as the pivotal space in which UNHCR has the capacity to challenge anti-refugee discourse through bottom-up norm creation.

The 2011 to 2016 interval has been selected for this study, marking the period between the start of the Syrian Civil War, responsible for mass displacement, and "Brexit" (23rd of June 2016). This period (referred to here as the 'Brexit build-up period') is characterised by cultural politics and hostile refugee framing by politicians and the media in which the Refugee Crisis was

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[7] Loescher,p30
[8] Finnemore & Sikkink,1998
[9] Amstutz,p19
[10] Hathaway,p291

presented as a primary reason to leave the European Union (EU)[11]. The Immigration Act, implemented in May 2016 by the Conservative government, imposed a final crack-down on asylum-seekers in a last minute attempt to garner public support for EU membership.[12] Paired with the implications of the escalating Syrian Crisis, the 2011 – 2016 period encompasses a critical moment in the UNHCR's dealings with the UK public.

The body of the paper is split into three sections. Section I establishes the history of anti-refugee sentiment in the UK, identifying four central anti-refugee discourses and the stereotypes that lie beneath them. It is concluded that these have been applied at different periods for different ends, sustaining a hierarchy of deservingness which works to delegitimise the refugee claim. Section II reveals the continuities between these historical discourses and those evident in 2011 – 2016, concluding that UNHCR had the capacity to pre-empt and respond. Finally, Section III evaluates UNHCR's discourse through its annual campaigns, identifying the instances in which it has offset, overlooked or encouraged public hostility and protectionism in the period. The paper concludes that UNHCR's campaigns before 2014 did not internalise local social and historical hierarchies and anti-refugee discourse. It was only with the 'I Belong' campaign of 2014 that UNHCR fulfilled its role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms, addressing UK anti-refugee sentiment directly and effectively.

As the first of its kind, this paper aims to fill the vacuum of systematic research into the implications of UNHCR's campaigns. Though focusing on the particular connection between UNHCR refugee framing and anti-refugee sentiment *in the UK,* this paper encourages similar studies in the contexts of other Western host states, where its conclusions may be adapted.

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[11] Mayblin,p29
[12] Gov.UK,2016

Literature Review

Within the literature, UNHCR's role at the public level has garnered little attention. Instead, evaluations of its role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms have focused on external factors or internal structural realities. The following review deals with these arguments, concluding that UNHCR – as an extension of the intergovernmental UN – enjoys most influence and autonomy on the public level through its thought leadership and information provision, especially in the populist environment. Evaluating UNHCR's effectiveness on the basis of factors outside the organisation's control is neither constructive nor exhaustive of the organisation's role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms.

In the majority of the literature, 'the extent of the Crisis' or 'the state of Europe' is cited to explain the European and UK non-entrée regime. These arguments are maintained by academics, politicians and UNHCR alike, and are framed as factors 'out of [the organisation's] control'.[13] However, even where these explanations do reveal important dynamics, these are dynamics that UNHCR can adapt to inform and improve its protection strategy.

According to the 'exceptional nature' argument, 'alarmed by the economic, environmental, social and security costs of hosting mass influxes of refugees', states take steps to exclude them.[14] However, the current refugee situation is less exceptional than politicians are ready to admit. Non-European refugees existed *en masse* outside Europe before the 1990s, though unable to reach Europe because of the impact of colonialism on mobility.[15] Perhaps then the crisis is 'exceptional' and 'new' in that refugees are trying to reach Europe. But in the years following WWII, Europe was swamped with between 12 and 14 million refugees from war-torn Germany.[16] This suggests that today's Refugee Crisis is more exceptional in nature than numbers. Refugees are different – they are from the Global South, they are non-white,

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[13] Fargues, p4; Loescher,p34
[14] Loescher,p46
[15] Mayblin,p30
[16] Douglas,2015

primarily Muslim and they are mobile enough to reach Europe. Ultimately, rather than diminishing UNHCR's responsibility during the Crisis, this argument suggests a need for further attention to and engagement with the social dynamics compromising international refugee norms and the UNHCR mandate.

'The state of Europe' is also advanced as an explanation for the recent denial of asylum in the UK and elsewhere. This may refer to the Economic Crisis, upsurge in terrorism, rise in populist nationalism and apparent erosion of international neoliberal values. The reality and influence of these factors can hardly be denied, but the non-entrée regime is the result of a lengthy process by which the UK has been tightening its refugee-policies for decades (see Section I, Chapter 3). The explanation is therefore far more complex than the recent 'state of Europe', indicating a need to interpret local and historical dynamics to counteract anti-refugee sentiment in pursuing the UNHCR mandate.

Another bulk of literature attributes UNHCR's shortcomings to the organisation's state-dependence. From its very birth, UNHCR was 'created by Western governments in such a way that it would neither pose a threat to their sovereignty nor impose any new financial obligations on them'.[17] The post-WWII period defined UNHCR's trajectory as an increasingly operational organisation – it could raise funds and deliver material assistance, but could not force states to effectuate asylum.[18] The Cold War's proxy wars and the decolonisation period saw an upsurge in displacement, forcing UNHCR into a corner of emergency-response prioritisation and dependence on Western donor states for resources. The organisation's donor-dependence and associated lack of autonomy is evident in the fact that 98% of UNHCR's funding comes from "championing liberal states", including the UK as one of its largest donors.[19]

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[17] Loescher,p35
[18] Ibid,p37-41
[19] Hathaway,p291

Over the course of UNHCR history, donor states' political interests and general unwillingness to provide asylum have resulted in three central consequences. The first, characteristic of the 1990s, was UNHCR's repatriation focus, which became central to the organisation's global strategy. Terms like "safe return" dominated the refugee discourse as UNHCR promoted repatriation, at the soonest opportunity, over a lifetime in a camp.[20] The second, resulting from donor states' interests in 'fixing the problems which cause refugee flows, rather than meeting the needs of the alienated victims themselves', has led to the over-extension of UNHCR's role into the political realm. [21] Root causes, which should have been addressed by the UN's underfunded Human Rights machinery fell into the lap of UNHCR in the 1990s.[22] Thirdly, and increasingly since the start of the Cold War, UNHCR has been pushed into the spiral of emergency-response prioritisation and increasing donor reliance. This has meant "in-country protection" and donor states' "externalisation of the problem" to the refugee camp. UNHCR cannot be transparent about the minimal life afforded by camps, protecting the donor confidence necessary to fund them and ensure the survival of millions of refugees.

Given the abovementioned issues, the argument follows that UNHCR has struggled to uphold refugee protection as a result of its overstretched mandate and state-dependence, which has led to external solutions favoured by powerful donor states. However, this statist line is rejected by constructivists who argue that UNHCR, despite its state-dependence and necessary focus on in-state solutions on a material level, remains an international actor – a thought-leader, information provider and international norm creator and defender. Accordingly, UNHCR's top-down norm creation is explored below, with reference to the organisation's norm creation process and state compliance strategies.

UNHCR's Executive Committee (ExCom) is the only specialised multilateral forum which contributes to the development of international guidance on refugee protection norms. ExCom conclusions are adopted by consensus by all ExCom member states, including the UK. In legal

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[20] Loescher,p47
[21] Hathaway,p291
[22] Ogata,1994

terms these conclusions are considered international soft law: 'norms which, in principle, are not legally binding but can nevertheless have concrete effects'.[23] UNHCR experts have autonomy in setting the ExCom agenda and drafting conclusions, whilst states have amendment and veto power. Marion Fresia, observer at the 2014 ExCom process, evidences the limits to UNHCR's role as a norm creator at this level by documenting growing mistrust and disagreement between member states and UNHCR experts.[24] Ultimately, ExCom conclusions, like the 2007 Children at Risk[25], degenerate into open-ended commitments and "ideals" rather than binding international agreements.[26]

Though these new norms might have some influence at the margins, UNHCR has a strong interest in upholding the established and explicit 1951 Refugee Convention as the 'key legal document that forms the basis of [its] work, ratified by 145 State parties'.[27] UNHCR does not have a public strategy to secure state compliance, but observers have noted the use of two primary methods – persuasion and acculturation – both posited by constructivism. Coercion (material rewards and punishments) is also mentioned, but its effectiveness is limited to poorer countries to which UNHCR makes large financial contributions.[28] The compliance tactic of persuasion holds that 'international law influences state behaviour through processes of social learning and other forms of information conveyance'.[29] As methods of persuasion, "framing" is used to convince states that refugee protection is aligned with their values, and "cuing" is used to compel states to re-examine their false beliefs about refugees and the Crisis. Acculturation refers to 'the general process of adopting the behavioural patterns of the surrounding culture', encouraged through methods of shunning and shaming or "back-patting".[30] This tactic was leveraged successfully during Central European states' EU accession phase.

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[23] Fresia,p515
[24] Fresia,p524
[25] UNHCR,2007
[26] Fresia,p530
[27] UNHCR,2017
[28] Stavrapoulou,p5
[29] Ibid,p6
[30] Ibid,p7

Applied to powerful donor states like the UK, particularly in the current global context, these tactics have limited success. Acculturation has proven remarkably undependable as EU states, once outwardly committed to burden-sharing and refugee protection norms, have reverted to non-entrée one by one. Whereas some authors argue that UNHCR should use the "shunning" or "shaming" methods more readily, others hold that public criticism is reasonably expected to alienate donor states.[31] Moreover, emphasising violations to protection commitments is likely to incite and institutionalise further non-compliance.[32] This is especially relevant in the current climate of the EU: If powerful states like the UK are shown up for refusing asylum, smaller ones are likely to follow.

Therefore, in evaluating UNHCR's effectiveness, the structural realities that have edged it into a passive and donor-dependent corner must be acknowledged; so must the domestic issues that have contributed to anti-refugee sentiment in the UK. However, where the former aspect leaves open the possibility of bottom-up norm creation, the latter presents an opportunity to interpret local dynamics in order to inform and adapt this strategy. This is the focus of the analysis which takes an overlooked and arguably more productive line, evaluating UNHCR in its window of opportunity. As the global guardian of refugee protection norms, UNHCR reaches millions of people each year through its annual campaigns. How it framed refugees to the 2011 – 2016 British public in response to local anti-refugee sentiment is thus the focus of the analysis.

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[31] Stavrapoulou,p10
[32] Stavrapoulou,p14

Methodology

This research paper comprises three sections. Sections I and II set out to define the proper nature of anti-refugee sentiment in the UK, against which UNHCR's response is evaluated in Section III.

Section I begins by laying out Integrated Threat Theory: A psychology and sociology theory first proposed in 2000 by Walter Stephan, which unpacks the components of *perceived* threat that lead to prejudice between social groups. The central role of negative stereotypes is demonstrated. After this theoretical thread is established, the paper takes the form of three sections of discourse analysis. Discourse is defined broadly as 'a system of representation' on refugees, with direct implications for bottom-up norm creation: If a discourse is how refugees are represented within a particular social space, a norm is how they are consequently and routinely responded to.[33] The Foucauldian conception of discourse (ways of constituting knowledge that interact with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and *power relations* which exist in such knowledges and relations between them) is embraced throughout. [34] The term 'framing' is used to denote how refugees are portrayed or positioned within a discourse.

In order to discern the historical (Section I) and then the 2011 – 2016 (Section II) UK anti-refugee discourse, both sections apply the revealing trinity of policies, politics (parliamentary debate, political statements, electioneering campaigns) and media (major newspapers and tabloids, the latter being accessible online and more widely read in the UK than the broadsheet). [35] Analysed together in Section I, this mutually reinforcing trinity identifies four predominant anti-refugee discourses in UK history (imperialist, economic burden, securitisation and community cohesion) within the broader anti-refugee regime, and the negative stereotypes that lie beneath them. Stereotypes are defined as the 'historical sedimentation of past legitimations for patterns of intergroup contact' and 'self-referential clusters of beliefs,

[33] Clark-Kazak,p304
[34] Adams,2017
[35] Innes,p466

values and behavioural dispositions capable of being strategically invoked in order to make sense of current intergroup relations'.[36] Accordingly, the historical perspective applied in this section is invaluable, uncovering patterns in the UK non-entrée regime and continuities in the stereotypes used to comprehend and confront the refugee "threat".

In Section II, the same trinity is analysed for the 2011 – 2016 period, with reference to the discourses and stereotypes established in Section I. The media analysis is given prominence, affording an accurate and systematic account of the strength of each anti-refugee discourse in the period under study. The UK's most widely-read newspaper – *The Daily Mail* – is the focus of this analysis. Its content is compared with results from the *Telegraph* and *Guardian* to give a sense of the reality and strength of each discourse across the class and political spectrums.

By revealing the true character and historical consistency of anti-refugee discourse in the UK, Sections I and II conclude with a set of stereotypes. UNHCR's four most far-reaching campaigns in the UK in the 2011 – 2016 period ("One", Unsung Heroes, 1 Family and 'I Belong') are evaluated according to their responsiveness to these stereotypes. Because UNHCR campaign strategies are not available to the public and campaign videos, events and speeches tend only to reach a small audience, it is the campaign posters (often displayed in tube stations), digital banners and media materials that are the focus of the final analysis. Text, image, colour, symbol and campaign message are examined according to how they frame the refugee subject, and UNHCR's role as a bottom-up norm creator is determined on the basis of whether this offsets, neglects or encourages anti-refugee sentiment (according to underlying discourse and stereotypes) in the UK public.

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[36] Alam & Husband,p239

Section I: UK Anti-Refugee Sentiment – historical context and stereotypes

This paper's assessment of UNHCR's role requires an evaluation of its internalisation of the UK's discourse of deservingness. For this purpose, Section I reveals the historical hierarchies and negative stereotypes that lie beneath UK anti-refugee sentiment, bridging existing arguments that highlight the UK's colonial history; the nature of British nationalism; political party competition and electioneering; the politics-policy spiral; and the role of the British media.

This section is organised in chapters: Chapter 1 provides an overview of the reality and pervasiveness of anti-refugee sentiment in the UK in its various phases and addresses the relationship between anti-immigration sentiment and anti-refugee sentiment; The second chapter lays out Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) with reference to the UK, demonstrating the UK's predisposition to perceiving threat and the role of stereotypes therein; Chapter 3 defines four discourses of UK anti-refugee sentiment through the policy-politics-media trinity, highlighting recurring stereotypes that both construct the refugee threat and inform the UK's response. At the end of the Section, a set of historically consistent stereotypes is tabulated, ready to be confirmed or refuted for the Brexit build-up period and with which to evaluate UNHCR framing (Section III).

Chapter 1: Anti-Refugee Sentiment Realities

The British response to refugees is severe. Clothed in tones of detachment, a new piece of restrictive legislation is ratified almost yearly, while in media and political debate, refugees are framed as a threat to national security, on par with traditional issues of high politics like war and the national economy.[37] "Ownership" of the refugee "problem" has changed hands from the Conservatives to the BNP, Labour to UKIP, and is evoked in pre-election campaigns to garner public attention and support. Refugees are held in prison-like detention centres and are

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[37] Doyle,p123

widely perceived as something other than victims.[38] Instead, the perception of refugees has changed over the years in accordance with political interests, events and associated discourses at the national and global level.

Like many states of the Global North, Britain has long been suspicious of refugees (Cohen 1994; Cole 2003; Mayblin 2017). This is reflected in anti-refugee sentiment and policy that spans back decades before the violence of 9/11 in 2001 and the London bombings of 2005. Suspicion, resentment and indeed, fear, has seen the development of some distinctive phases of anti-refugee discourse, to be explored further in Chapter 3. The first identifiable discourse, prevalent in both the colonial and decolonial period, is that of imperialism: This discourse separates the "undeserving" Global Southern refugee from the "deserving" European refugee fleeing communism. The second discourse points to changes underlying economic migration, equating the refugee with the "bogus" economic migrant and thus "illegal" entrant. Finally, the securitisation discourse of the 21st century links asylum, crime and terrorism, while the community cohesion discourse expands this focus to long-settled Muslim communities inside Britain. Seen together, these discourses reveal deep anxieties about 'risk, mobility and the nature of the British identity', expanded on in Chapter 2.[39] However, underlying and legitimising each is a set of deeply embedded stereotypes, explored and collated in the following chapters to reveal the UK public's discourse of deservingness.

Given its salience during the Brexit build-up period, the relationship between anti-refugee and anti-immigration sentiment must first be established. During the 1990s, the UK government was firmly in favour of migration in a competition for the world's 'brightest and best talents'.[40] During this phase, politicians deliberately emphasised the distinction between refugees and migrants, evident in Home Secretary Charles Clarke's statement that 'we need to ensure that we let in migrants with skills and talents to benefit Britain, while stopping those trying to abuse

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[38] Doyle,p122

[39] Bosworth & Guild,p704

[40] Triandafyllidou,2017

our hospitality and place a burden on our society' [41]. However, according to Mulvey, the presentation of asylum as a threat 'questioned the legitimacy of the overall immigration system as the Government lost control of the parameters of the debate'.[42] Certainly during the government-fuelled "bogus" discourse, refugees were likened to low-skilled migrants, such that in an analysis of the six most widely read newspapers in 2002, the Global Campaign for Free Expression found 'a significant degree of confusion' over the distinction between the two, 'in terms of their legal status and reasons for being in Britain'.[43] This conflation extended after the 2004 EU enlargement, as low-skilled migrants from Eastern Europe flooded the UK job market and the ensuing financial crisis heightened anxieties surrounding jobs and wages. In addition, the recent securitisation and border control discourse spills into the governance of *all* non-citizens, further blurring the distinction between migrant groups.[44]

As a result, many studies have pointed to the "category slippage" between refugees and migrants in the recent decade, particularly evident in UK media and public debate (Buchanan & Grillo 2002, Lewis 2006, Mulvey 2010). One argument goes further by stating that 'the issue of asylum is indivisible in public debate from race, and therefore immigration more generally'[45]. This alludes to the argument, examined in Chapter 3, of enduring imperial stereotypes as the actual bridging factor between anti-refugee and anti-immigration sentiment. What is clear, however, is that category slippage in the 21st century, especially during the populist Brexit build-up period, has conflated anti-refugee and anti-immigration sentiment within a general attitude against an undesirable other. This paper therefore deals exclusively with anti-refugee sentiment where possible, while conceding that the two cannot always naturally be separated given anti-immigration's use as an umbrella category in the public debate.

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[41] Doyle,p125

[42] Mulvey,p456

[43] Buchanan & Grillo,p1

[44] Bosworth & Guild,p705

[45] Lewis,p5

Chapter 2: Integrated Threat Theory

Evidenced by 2014 Ipsos MORI opinion polls, the public overestimates the level and negative effect of immigration.[46] For example, only about 26 000 refugees seek asylum in the UK per year, where the number of refugees has fallen by 76 439 since 2011.[47] Contrary to popular assumption, refugees who become permanent immigrants are unlikely to become terrorists, have a lower crime rate than locals and put more into the welfare system than they take out.[48]

This section is concerned with the reasons for this overestimation and aggressive anti-refugee response. I argue that this response can be best explained using Integrated Threat Theory. ITT is valuable in its encouragement of 'a critical perspective that enables disaggregation of the elements of [anti-refugee] sentiment' that can be related to distinct features of the "in" or "out" group.[49] Although criticised by some on the grounds of its 'circularity' (the perception of a threat evokes a response which evokes an increased perception of threat), this aspect of the theory internalises and gives credence to policies, party politics and the media as both symptoms and sources of UK anti-refugee sentiment.

ITT is based on the premise that we live in a world polarised by social groups that inform our identities and shape our lives. Social groups consist of constellations of people who have identified similar values, beliefs or interests. These are often demarcated using constructed categories like ethnicity, class, religion, race or nationality. According to these strict categories, which serve simultaneously as membership criteria, groups embrace some (the "ingroup") and exclude others (the "outgroup").[50] Tension between groups is a response to the incredible value that they confer on members. Psychological benefits include acceptance, social support, belonging, meaning and a system of roles, norms, beliefs and values to guide conduct and provide stability and certainty. As a result of the human needs they fill, group members fear

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[46] Deacon & Smith,p2

[47] Kingsley,2015

[48] Zunes,p6

[49] Alam & Husband,p241

[50] Stephan,p1

their groups' destruction and respond by hostility to other groups, particularly in precarious periods. This also evokes the imagination or overestimation of threat – a tendency consistent with the general bias people display towards avoiding costly errors, and which ITT aims to unravel.[51]

ITT accepts that 'an intergroup threat is experienced when members of one group perceive that another group is in a position to cause them harm'.[52] If that harm is physical, like a security breach or loss of resources or jobs, the threat is categorised as 'realistic'. If the harm affects the validity or integrity of a group's system of meaning (norms, values), then the threat is considered 'symbolic'.[53] Importantly, Stephan's original version of ITT, theorised in 2000, also included negative stereotypes in its threat typology. Subsequently, negative stereotypes have proven significant predictors of both realistic and symbolic threat, caused by assumed characteristics of the outgroup that might have harmful effects on the ingroup (e.g. aggressiveness).[54] Unveiling the negative stereotypes of the UK nation (ingroup) towards refugees (outgroup) and UNHCR's failure to interpret and respond to them adequately, is central to this study and the object of the following chapters.

However, stereotypes are not the only 'antecedents of intergroup threat' theorised by ITT. ITT argues that cultures that emphasise ingroup ties, rules, hierarchy, uncertainty avoidance, paranoid worldviews and a high need for security are particularly susceptible to threat perception.[55] As a nation which values its monarchy and social order, and which is regarded as one of the most regulated nations in the world caught in the neurosis of a "risk society", these antecedents ring true. [56,57]

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[51] Stephan,p2

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Stephan,p3

[55] Stephan,p11

[56] YouGov,2015

[57] Alam & Husband,p241

Furthermore, ITT predicts that low power groups are more likely to perceive threat than high, but that if a high power group perceives threat, it is likely to respond more assertively.[58] This theory is explanatory both with reference to the UK nation as a single ingroup and, importantly, in distinguishing the different anti-refugee stances assumed by low and high power subgroups. Looking at the UK nation as a whole, as a leading global power with a history of wealth and prosperity, Britain has a great deal to lose when confronted with an outgroup perceived to threaten its unity, and possesses the resources to respond assertively. Moving to national subgroups, the elite (6% of population); middle class (31%); working class (48% including emergent service sector); and precariat (15%) are loose but viable social groups, according to the Great British Class Survey of 2013. These groups are demarcated by different levels of economic and cultural capital, the latter referring to assets like education, intellect, style of speech and other factors that promote social mobility.[59]

According to the British Social Attitudes Survey, between 1988 and 2011, class difference became increasingly indicative of anti-immigration attitudes: Prejudice declined from 33% to 20% among the elite and middle class, and increased from 20% to 30% among the working class in the same period.[60] These results give strong ground for appealing to a class centric interpretation of threat perception and anti-refugee sentiment in the UK, as those who have lost ground in recent years through the economic crisis and immigration appear to be articulating a racist and nationalist response.[61] This conclusion (that loss of power incites threat perception and nationalism) is supported by the common argument that the working class's alienation from mainstream politics, through increasing cosmopolitanism and the decline of class politics in Britain, has been replaced by cultural nationalism (populist, racist and anti-immigration) harnessed by parties like the BNP and UKIP (Deacon & Smith 2017, Evans 2017, Flemmen & Savage 2017). However, the results also reveal an awareness among groups with *high* cultural capital that expressing prejudice is no longer acceptable. In fact, according to

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[58] Stephan,p6

[59] Savage et al,2013

[60] Flemmen & Savage,p234

[61] Ibid,p234

Flemmen and Savage, a close study of the interviews reveals an air of "imperial nationalism" amongst responders in the elite class, who often reasserted Britain's "greatness" and demonstrated ambivalence to racist questions.[62] In response, a body of literature demonstrates the congruence between the "English nationalism" (British exceptionalism grounded in myths of the British empire) of the middle and elite classes, and right-wing populism of the working class, which materialised in the cross-class Eurosceptic and anti-immigration alliance that led to Brexit.[63] In sum, ITT's prediction that low power groups are more likely to perceive threat is true to the UK case. However, this should not distract from the more general anti-immigration stance, unattached to a specific class or articulation of nationalism in the UK.

Ultimately, according to the predictors theorised by ITT, the UK nation is particularly threat perception-prone. This is exacerbated by the realities of the nation-state system and the nature of British nationalism. Though overlooked by ITT there is something exceptional about the type of boundary that demarcates a national, rather than ethnic or other group. The nation-state system is traditionally assumed to be all-encompassing and sovereign, sustained by the trinity of nation, state and territory. By their very existence, asylum-seekers draw attention to the fragility of this trinity. They enter the territory of the state while being prevented from entering the nation. By demanding entry into the nation by right, they act as sovereign bodies within a territory presumed to belong to a sovereign state.[64] In response, the state institutes immigration controls, which work to heighten anxieties about citizenship and re-inscribe its importance in managing the border between the British and other identities.[65]

In present-day Europe, realities of the nation-state system have combined with manifestations of globalisation – rapid flows of capital, the porousness of national borders, the increasing vulnerability of the state to external realities – to incite a reassertion of nationalism, often essentialist in nature. Nationalism, is arguably a grand response to intergroup threat

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[62] Ibid,p250

[63] Corbett,p12

[64] Doyle,p123

[65] Bosworth & Guild,p714

perception: 'a crisis of identity', 'the response to the irregularities of modernity' through the reinforcement of the essence and boundaries of the ingroup.[66]

In Britain, this response is only intensified by the historical interconnection between the nation and migrants. Without a codified constitution, the question of British citizenship has developed in opposition to migration policies, further essentialising the boundary between the national ingroup and foreign outgroup. In Andrew Nicol's words, the British 'lack a clear-cut nationality or citizenship' 'because […] nationality law since 1962 has been entangled with, and at last come to be based upon, the law of immigration'.[67] In a historical account of British national identity, Cesarani tracks the development of British immigration policy from the 1905 Aliens Act to the 1981 Nationality Act. He evidences the increasingly exclusive nature of the British national identity, developing in opposition to the non-white Commonwealth subject while simultaneously preventing such subjects from accessing Britain as their mobility increased.[68] He concludes that the same stereotypes that legitimised imperial domination were used to justify the regulation of migration, and served as an antithesis for British national identity as a fragile mixture of 'superiority', 'civilisation' and 'modernity'.

In summary, ITT combined with a more detailed look at the British national ingroup and class-based subgroups demonstrates the UK's predisposition to threat perception. A cross-European study dealing with the 'Determinants of Attitudes towards Migration' shows that the greatest predictors of intolerance are related to deeply rooted cultural issues and local historical idiosyncrasies.[69] Having dealt briefly with other predictors of British anti-refugee sentiment, the following paragraphs explore the negative stereotypes against which British national identity has been defined and anti-refugee sentiment legitimised. The UNHCR's role is evaluated in Section III, responding to and dismantling these stereotypes.

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[66] Postelnicescu,p204

[67] Cesarani,p57

[68] Cesarani,p61-68

[69] Garcia-Faroldi,p10

Chapter 3: Anti-Refugee Stereotypes in UK History

This chapter outlines four anti-refugee discourses in the UK, and the negative stereotypes that lie beneath them. The discourses overlap and all have in common the overarching discourse of deservingness, as refugees are increasingly stripped of their right to equal humanity. This chapter acknowledges that increasing bureaucratisation and deracialised language should not distract from continuities through all four discourses. [70]

As described in the methodology, the discourses will be determined and evidenced using the policy-politics-media trinity. This trinity has two important features. First, each pillar (policy, party politics, media) is both a symptom of existing anti-refugee sentiment and a source of more, and second, the pillars reinforce one another: 'Policy creates politics' by problematizing immigration and institutionalising intergroup anxieties in a 'ratcheting effect'.[71] Meanwhile, politicians present themselves as 'managers of unease', simultaneously attempting and appearing to protect the ingroup by adding further salience to the threat of the immigrant through public debate and policy creation. All of this is disseminated by the coverage of the media, a largely homogenous and repetitive 'socialising force' responsible for 'chronically activating threat-based emotions'.[72] The result is an upward spiral of chronic threat perception and a strong discourse of deservingness from which negative stereotypes about the outgroup can be determined.

1 – Imperialist Discourse

The imperialist discourse is difficult to delineate, spanning back centuries in support of conquest, colonialism and slavery. Edward Said tracks it broadly in *Orientalism*, revealing the cultural representations and indeed, negative stereotypes, constructed by the West to define

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[70] Alam & Husband,p251

[71] Mulvey,p450

[72] Seate & Mastro,p209

and 'other' the non-West, in both its process of self-definition and path to power and domination.[73] Drawing from Walter Mignolo and Homi Bhaba, Lucy Mayblin's *Asylum after Empire* criticises refugee studies for failing to incorporate postcolonial analyses and connect colonial histories decades ago.[74] Mayblin demonstrates that through the orientalising process, Europeans constructed the "modern" and the "unmodern" – the theoretical rights bearing individual and the underserving "other", fighting for entry into the modern world. The "other" (or outgroup) was demarcated first using race and later culture. The following paragraphs track the 'othering' and imperialist stereotypes beneath the UK refugee regime, which began formally in 1951 with the Refugee Convention.

The 1951 UN Geneva Convention on human rights, including the right to asylum, were rights never intended to apply to all human beings. Non-European bodies of the Global South were not recognised under the international legal framework of humanity or victimhood, and to protect its national interests and allies in the Commonwealth the UK was active in ensuring this omission. This marks a significant departure point as the inception of the discourse of deservingness and hierarchical ordering of human beings, on which elements of the UK refugee regime has since been based.

The 1967 Protocol removed the temporal (events associated with WWII) and geographic (Europe) restrictions to the Refugee Convention, and in the decades between then and the 1990s, Britain was relatively open to refugees. This coincided with the Cold War and its associated interest in reinforcing a liberal, democratic identity and providing refuge to escapers of communism.[75] However, in the fourteen years to 2007, seven Acts of Parliament collectively established what is known today as the UK non-entrée regime.[76] This coincided with the fact that, for the first time in British history, 'the majority of asylum seekers making applications for refuge come from outside Europe. They are, in fact, by and large people who originate from

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[73] Said,1978

[74] Mayblin,p11

[75] Innes,p471

[76] Mayblin,p25

countries which until thirty to sixty years ago were under British colonial rule.'[77] Although asylum-seekers always existed in great numbers in the Global South, often as a result of bloody decolonial struggles and legacies of colonialism, they did not have the mobility to reach Europe until the liberation and globalization of the late 20th century. In light of this, the common argument that UK non-entrée is a result of a global "upsurge" in refugees could be interpreted better as a result of the *nature* of those refugees, coupled with their ability to reach Europe.

Notably, the same human hierarchies being drawn out in the asylum regime were at work in policies of citizenship. During the 1960s, MP Enoch Powell popularized the notion of Englishness as ethnic and heredity, paving the way to the 1971 Immigration Act effectively barring non-white Commonwealth citizens from entering Britain on work or study visas, and the 1981 Nationality Act which swept away all previous rights of the British subject.[78] In the asylum regime, the 1998 White Paper 'Fairer, Faster, Firmer' dispelled any notion that the new Labour Government would diverge from the restrictive track established by the Conservatives, deepening asylum controls and instating controversial white lists of "safe countries", primarily in the Global South, from which asylum-seekers would not be accepted.[79] Meanwhile, only six years earlier, 10 000 "European" refugees from Bosnia had been embraced by the British public.[80] Ultimately, UK policy history demonstrates a tendency to apply 'scales of desirability regarding potential migrants that refer to skill levels, migration types and countries of origin'.[81]

What then are the negative stereotypes that can be drawn from the imperialist discourse? Refugees are non-white and non-Western, but what stereotypes do these biological and geographical indicators contain? The Runnymede Trust Report of 1997 constituted a list of 'modern social imaginaries' – 'a repertoire of beliefs, feelings and behavioural dispositions that

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[77] Mayblin,p12

[78] Cesarini,p66

[79] Bosworth & Guild,p706

[80] BHUN,n.d.

[81] Mulvey,p445

could be readily mobilized to foster hostility towards Muslims living in Britain'.[82] The report found four groups of stereotypes associated with Muslims: Islam as separate and other; Islam as a monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities; Muslims as barbaric, irrational and primitive, united by tribal loyalties; Muslims as violent, aggressive, engaged in a 'clash of civilisations' and supportive of terrorism.[83]

Revealingly, many of these stereotypes are antitheses of Western Enlightenment values. The Enlightenment advocated a range of values centred on reason as the primary source of authority and legitimacy, including individual liberty, tolerance, progress, civility, morality and separation of church and state.[84] Parallels can be drawn between these values and values ascribed to British nationalism by the Home Office in 2007, where Britishness was defined as a commitment to 'liberty, democracy, tolerance, free speech, pluralism, fair-play'[85]. The Islamic other is therefore defined not only in opposition to Enlightenment values, but as the very antithesis of Britishness – inferior and threatening to the ingroup through his **intolerance, backwardness, irrationality, immorality and primitiveness**.

Therefore, the Runnymede Report argues that the anti-Muslimism found in the UK, as a component of anti-refugee sentiment, must be located within a detailed and explicit historical context of British imperialism and Orientalism. The historical stereotypes of Islam abovementioned provide taken-for-granted-knowledge still applied in policies and discourse today.[86] Continuities will be traced through subsequent anti-refugee discourses.

2 – "Bogus" Discourse

The "bogus" refugee discourse further clarified the terms of deservingness to embrace "wanted" migrants and exclude "unwanted" asylum seekers from Britain. The discourse was

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[82] Alam & Husband,p237

[83] Ibid.

[84] Encyclopaedia Britannica,2018

[85] Bosworth & Guild,p713

[86] Alam & Husband,p250

government-led, revealing the belief that 'there existed a majority anti-immigration feeling among the public, which if not assuaged, threatened the legitimacy of their overall migration regime'. [87] This regime relied on the development of new economic immigration routes into the UK through the enlargement of the EU, with other immigration routes effectively banned.[88] The discourse also reflected party politics, as Labour attempted to overturn the historic lead of the Conservatives as the "best" (i.e. harshest) party on immigration since the 1970s.[89]

The 1998 White Paper marked this shift, as the government pointed to existing policies 'facilitating the genuine traveller but also creating opportunities for those who seek to evade immigration control'.[90] Home Secretary Jack Straw promised to institute measures that would 'ensure that genuine asylum-seekers were not left destitute, but which minimise the attractions of the UK to economic migrants'.[91] The policies that ensued followed a strict logic of deterrence, reducing welfare benefits to below-poverty levels and denying welfare for asylum-seekers who did not apply for refugee status immediately on arrival.[92]

According to a media analysis by Mulvey, the same message was disseminated there, 'that most asylum seekers were "bogus", that there were too many of them, and that therefore their numbers had to be restricted'.[93] Newspaper articles emulated the Government's use of pejorative language, such as the addition of the adjective 'bogus' to asylum-seekers and Blunkett's use of 'clandestines' to describe spontaneous arrivals (Hansard 24 April 2002 Col 342).[94] Headlines between 1998 and 2002 included 'Asylum Seekers' €300 Handouts' (*Daily*

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[87] Mulvey,p449

[88] Bosworth & Guild,p707

[89] Dunstan,1996

[90] Bosworth & Guild,p707

[91] Ibid.

[92] Dunstan,1996

[93] Mulvey,p445

[94] Mulvey,p443

Mail), 'Cheeky Buggars; Refugees Arrested Scrounging' (*Daily Record*), 'Asylum Seekers are Out for Cash' (*This is Lancashire*), 'Boycott Lottery as Funds Assist Asylum Seekers' (*The Express*).[95]

This dominant voice reveals the negative stereotypes underlying the "bogus" discourse, of refugees categorised by "want" (wanting to take something from the UK nation that is not theirs), and as **poor**, **idle, immoral** and **criminal** – the antithesis of British values of 'self-discipline and fair-play'.[96] This discourse is supported by the argument made in ITT, that low power groups are more likely to perceive threat: By competing for jobs and welfare and devaluing their already precarious citizenship rights, refugees are constructed as a realistic threat to the British working class. This discourse contains continuities with the imperialist one, in which colonialism and former slavery were justified on the basis of a 'civilising mission' of poor and primitive people, dependent on European "guidance" to "progress". Ultimately, in this discourse, negative stereotypes legitimise a threat to the British nation, and thus the exclusion of some human bodies in a historically consistent hierarchy of deservingness.

3 – Securitisation Discourse

The securitisation discourse is arguably the most current in UK anti-refugee sentiment and policy. Growing evidence suggests that immigrants and especially asylum-seekers, 'are subject to criminalisation in government policy and legislation, in the media and community discussions' (Calavita 2005, Malloch & Stanley 2005, Pickering & Weber 2006). By defining refugees as a bloc of criminals, the government securitises migration in response to its threat to the trinity of territory, nation and state. Securitisation re-establishes the boundaries between the ingroup and refugees, while criminalisation reasserts their realistic threat.

In the decade leading up to 2007, the Labour Government introduced nine main pieces of legislation bridging asylum and terrorism, under the ready pretexts of 9/11, the London

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[95] Innes,p468

[96] Kushner,p137

Bombings and the War on Terror.[97] The 2001 Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) 'established firm legislative links between asylum and terrorism', affording power to detain and deny asylum to suspected terrorists.[98] Legislation enacted in 2002 and 2004 severely restricted benefits to 'failed' asylum seekers, extended the use of detention centres, strengthened policing powers of immigration officers, sped-up processes of deportation and deterred asylum-seekers through reporting-in requirements, ID cards, electronic tagging and de facto criminalisation.[99] Constant linkage between asylum and terrorism was made by politicians, like George Osborne in 2001: 'We are undermining the rights of our citizens because we have given so many rights to people, including suspected international terrorists, who come to this country and claim asylum'.[100]

In the media, of all election issues, asylum was the most associated with crime between 2001 and 2005.[101] In the six most widely read newspapers in 2002, there showed an almost complete absence of refugee women (4 women in 82 images). Instead, newspapers repeated stock images of male refugees with their faces partially covered "breaking into Britain".[102] In this way, the media supported the powerful thesis of invasion and the mounting discourse of criminalisation and securitisation, most associated with *male* refugees.

Strikingly, in the securitisation discourse, perpetrators of terrorism are framed as outsiders although almost all European-born, demonstrating the ready exclusion of British people from the British nation on the basis of colour, culture or religion.[103] Ultimately, the securitisation discourse is based on and legitimises the negative stereotypes of refugees as a threat to the nation as **criminals and terrorists**. These reflect historical stereotypes posited by the

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[97] Bosworth & Guild,p706

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid,p709

[100] Buonfino & Huysmans,p774

[101] Deacon & Smith,p16

[102] Buchanan & Grillo,p1

[103] Zunes,p1

Runnymede trust in 1997, of Muslims as 'violent, aggressive, engaged in a 'clash of civilisations' and supportive of terrorism'. [104]

4 – Community Cohesion Discourse

Finally, the community cohesion discourse, closely linked with the securitisation one, expands the existing trajectory of counter-terrorism and asylum to long settled Muslim communities.[105] The 2001 Castle Report challenged the British version of multiculturalism, arguing that it was leading to segregated communities.[106] Long-settled Muslim communities were accused of self-segregating, living in parallel cultures and not possessing the values of the British population.[107]

Touched on in Chapter 2, the political backdrop to this and the securitisation discourse is significant. Leading into the 21st century, New Labour had effectively marginalised any considerations of class inequality from front-line politics.[108] This led to the growing alienation of the working class which, together with widespread anti-immigration sentiment, was exploited by the BNP in 2008 as it reconfigured politics away from class and towards a new form of solidarity built on cultural nationalism.[109] The relative success of the BNP motivated a reactive form of policymaking by Labour, in which politicians frequently argued the need to address cultural cleavages on the basis that if they did not, then racists would.[110]

These political undercurrents saw the realisation of the 2002 White Paper and Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, which in an increasingly bureaucratised and depersonalised discourse set out a tougher stance on asylum. Home Secretary David Blunkett argued that this, including an English language and 'Life in the UK' test, was a necessary precondition for social

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[104] Alam & Husband,p237
[105] Mulvey,p448
[106] Mulvey,p448
[107] Mulvey,p452
[108] Alam & Husband,p244
[109] Evans,p218
[110] Mulvey,p452

cohesion.[111] In 2007, the Green Paper's major line was that although 'there is room to celebrate multiple and different identities', 'none of these should take precedence over the core democratic values that define what it means to be British'.[112] Intense surveillance, effectively criminalising "non-British" communities, has been blamed for increased alienation in a self-fulfilling prophecy. Meanwhile, a major symbolic development terminated English lessons for asylum seekers, excluding them from the national ingroup the government purported to strengthen.[113] The media reinforced this exclusion and the value of Britishness, reiterating politicians' stances and declaring 'England for the English' (*The Times*, 2001).

In sum, the community cohesion discourse demonstrates the scapegoating of immigrants and especially Muslims in British society, as an alien wedge with an uncompromising resistance to "the British way of life".[114] During this discourse, negative stereotypes of refugee Muslims as **self-segregating** and **living in parallel, irreconcilable cultures** drew on both the government's political interests and society's taken-for-granted cultural repertoire.[115] That repertoire shares its essence with 20th century imperialist stereotypes of Islam as inherently separate and other, unresponsive to new realities, primitive and united by tribal loyalties.[116]

Conclusion

Through the imperialist, "bogus", securitisation and community cohesion discourses, the policy-politics-media trinity promoted negative stereotypes which bolstered the refugee threat. This contributed to a grand discourse of deservingness upholding a dehumanising regime in which refugees were stripped of their basic rights (citizenship, fair trial, non-refoulement, movement) and basic welfare, in an apparent effort to 'starve them out' (Amnesty International 2005).

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[111] Bosworth & Guild,p708
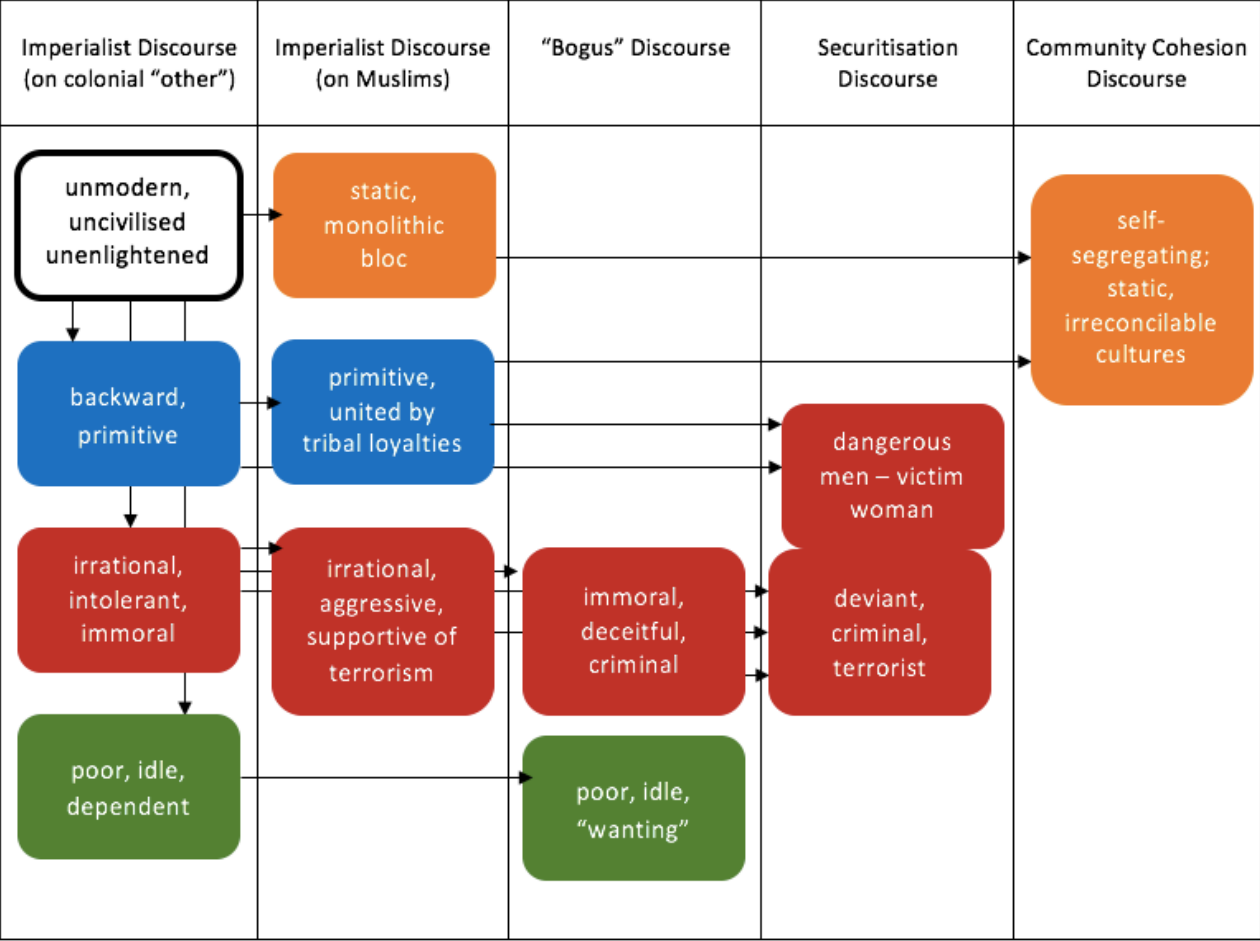
[112] Ibid,p709

[113] Mulvey,p454

[114] Alam & Husband,p235

[115] Ibid,p236

[116] Ibid,p237

Strategies of constructing and reinforcing "Britishness" via migration policy follow a predictable and well-worn path.[117] Meanwhile, negative stereotypes from the imperialist era are cloaked in impartial language and reaffirmed in the present, legitimising a historically consistent discourse of deservingness against the perceived refugee threat.

The table below concludes the pervasive negative stereotypes identified:

Imperialist Discourse (on colonial "other")	Imperialist Discourse (on Muslims)	"Bogus" Discourse	Securitisation Discourse	Community Cohesion Discourse
unmodern, uncivilised unenlightened	static, monolithic bloc			self-segregating; static, irreconcilable cultures
backward, primitive	primitive, united by tribal loyalties		dangerous men – victim woman	
irrational, intolerant, immoral	irrational, aggressive, supportive of terrorism	immoral, deceitful, criminal	deviant, criminal, terrorist	
poor, idle, dependent		poor, idle, "wanting"		

In the following section, the Brexit build-up discourse will be examined for continuities, against which UNHCR framing will be evaluated in Section III.

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[117] Bosworth & Guild,p714

Section II: UK Anti-Refugee Sentiment 2011 – 2016

The 15th of March 2011 to the 23rd of June 2016 marks the period between the start of the Syrian Crisis and the Brexit Referendum – a critical chapter for anti-refugee sentiment in Britain and the fate of the British and global refugee regimes. In policy, the period is categorised by increasingly careful legal language concealing dehumanisation and consolidating an already almost 'impenetrable' asylum regime.[118] In the media and politics, the period is categorised by emotive language and crisis terms, connecting refugees with 'illegality, fraud, abuse of the welfare system, a flood of un-British values, organised international crime, terrorism – a threat to the population'.[119]

To expose the proper nature of anti-refugee sentiment between 2011 and 2016, it is important to acknowledge some key events and inconsistencies. These include the escalation of the Syrian and "European Migrant Crisis"; the rise of UKIP; the UK general election and Paris terror attack of 2015; the announcement of the Brexit Referendum on the 22nd of February 2016 and the growing linkage between Britain, immigration and Europe. Despite these events and fluctuations, this section concludes that UK anti-refugee sentiment was present throughout the period and was not restricted to one class or side of the political spectrum.

Although Brexit is not the focus of this study, the following chapters provide a partial account of the interaction between anti-refugee sentiment, anti-immigration sentiment and Euroscepticism in the Brexit build-up period. Importantly, during this time, the terms "refugee" and "immigrant" were frequently confused and conflated.[120] A dominant narrative was sustained by both sides of the Brexit campaign, of the Eastern European migrant stealing British jobs and the non-European asylum-seeker (from Syria and Northern Africa, often also labelled "migrant") taking money from the British tax payer, whilst threatening national culture and security. Both types of migrant were framed as entering a desirable "soft touch" Britain through

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[118] Mayblin,p171
[119] Doyle,p125
[120] Cardiff School of Journalism,p28

a lax Europe via Greece or Calais. Brexit serves as an important context in which 80% of leave voters opposed immigration and multiculturalism, and in which anti-refugee sentiment became increasingly acceptable in the public sphere.[121] According to the National Police Council, a 42% increase in hate crimes was recorded in the weeks before and after the Brexit vote, including the emblematic murder of Jo Cox, indicating that '[s]ome people felt [Brexit] gave them license to vent racist views or behaviour'.[122]

Using the policy-politics-media trinity, this section draws on threads of the discourse of deservingness from Section I, revealing elements of the imperialist; "bogus"; securitisation and community cohesion discourses. Through a systematic media analysis of one of Britain's leading tabloids – *The Daily Mail* – from 2011 to 2016, and with reference to the *Telegraph* and *Guardian* in the same period, this section demonstrates the overwhelming anti-refugee discourse, legitimised on the basis of reinforceable imperialist assumptions (refugees' violent, primitive or irrational nature) and their constructed threat to the security and stability of the British national ingroup. The section asserts the essential role of historical sensibility in coming to understand contemporary manifestations of anti-refugee sentiment, inviting an evaluation of UNHCR on that basis.

Chapter 1: Party Politics and Policy

As argued in Section I, politicians present themselves as 'managers of unease', simultaneously attempting and appearing to protect the ingroup by adding further salience to the threat of immigration through public debate and policy creation. According to Corbett, this salience is amplified in the right-wing populist environment, which is a '"twofold vertical structure" that is antagonistic upward towards the intellectual, political and economic elites, and downward towards those at the bottom of society: criminals, foreigners, profiteers who threaten the

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[121] Corbett,p23
[122] Corbett,p21

purity of the people'.[123] Populist leaders and parties embed these structures by articulating and reshaping popular grievances.

In Britain, Nigel Farage's UKIP filled the vacuum of class politics with cultural politics, contributing to and capitalising on the salience of immigration to voters (Deacon & Smith 2017, Evans 2017, Flemmen & Savage 2017). Between 2010 and 2015, UKIP went from capturing 3.1% to 12.6% of the overall vote, with their promise of a 'crackdown' on all forms of immigration through Britain's withdrawal from the EU.[124] At the European Parliament in 2015, Farage argued that the majority of refugees 'are economic migrants', that there is 'evidence that ISIS are now using this route to put their jihadists on European soil' and that '[w]e must be mad to take this risk with the cohesion of our societies', thus drawing on all four historical anti-refugee discourses in one speech.[125] UKIP's cross-class appeal merged elite-based Euroscepticism and widespread anti-immigration sentiment, evident throughout their Brexit campaign.

Nigel Farage posing with UKIP Brexit poster in London, June 16[126]

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[123] Corbett,p10

[124] BBC,2015

[125] BBC,2015(2)

[126] The Guardian,2016

However, in the UK case, it is also the mainstream parties (Conservatives and Labour) that have essentialised the refugee threat. In 2015, both mainstream parties, who won 37% and 30% of the vote respectively, had restrictive reforms at the centre of their campaigns.[127] The Conservatives, historically 'best on migration', promised to cut net migration to 'tens of thousands', while Labour, having lost the public's trust on the issue in previous decades, promised to strengthen the 'system of controls' against illegal and low skilled migration and deprive migrants of benefits for their first two years on UK soil.[128] David Cameron's statements in the period emulated elements of each discourse (see Elgot 2016), including the stereotype of the 'submissiveness of Muslim women', to argue that they may not speak out when they see radicals influencing their family members.

As a source and outcome of politics, the same themes were evident in government policy. The Conservatives, led by David Cameron with Theresa May as Home Secretary, won both the 2010 and 2015 general elections. In line with their manifesto, 2011 to 2016 saw a decrease of asylum support rates to below-poverty levels, the establishment of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme and the extension of the counter-terrorism framework – each drawing on a discourse outlined in Section I.

Looking first at the government's role in consolidating non-entrée and extending the "bogus" discourse, Home Secretary Theresa May was an outspoken supporter of the continuation of the Dublin Regulation. Accordingly refugees must claim asylum in the first EU country in which they arrive, allowing Britain's deportation of secondary claimants.[129] Meanwhile, Britain refused to sign onto the EU's relocation and resettlement scheme, composed of mandatory refugee quotas designed to ensure EU "burden-sharing".[130] However, the UK went further than simply

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[127] UK Political Info,2015

[128] Wilkinson,2015

[129] Travis,2017

[130] Home Office,2016

"sitting out" of the European refugee crisis.[131] In 2014, the Conservatives introduced the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme, proposed by Theresa May on the basis that the asylum system 'rewarded the wealthiest, the luckiest and the strongest' while failing 'the most vulnerable'.[132] This two-tiered system, which imposed differential treatment of refugees, was costly and ineffective, resettling 2659 of the promised 8000 refugees by June 2016.[133] The Programme was argued legally unsound by UNHCR, framing genuine refugees as undeserving or "bogus" economic migrants, whose alleged "wealth", "luck" and "strength" delegitimised their appeal for refuge from persecution.

In the face of mounting pressure from the EU in 2015, David Cameron agreed to bring a further 3000 lone children from the Middle East through the Programme. That number was quickly reduced to 350. [134] However, the constant differentiation in policy and political statements between "innocent" refugee children and undeserving (and potentially dangerous) refugee men must be seen in the context of the securitisation discourse. The seventh major counter-terrorism law introduced in Britain since 9/11 was the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015, preceded by the revision of CONTEST (UK counter-terrorism strategy) in 2011. The 'prevent' pillar of CONTEST was criticised for alienating Muslim communities contra community cohesion, legitimising and reinforcing Islamophobia and restricting Muslims' freedom of expression.[135] The Muslim Council of Britain further criticised the 2015 Act on the grounds that it linked immigrant Muslim communities with terrorism by decreasing funding and increasing surveillance (with both overt and covert cameras) in Muslim neighbourhoods.[136] Ultimately, though the words "Muslim" and "immigrant" were meticulously avoided in 2011 to 2016 securitisation policy, the linkage between adult male refugees, crime and terror was implicit and, as argued in the following chapter, reaffirmed by the media.

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[131] Travis,2017
[132] Ibid.
[133] Home Office,2016
[134] Travis,2017
[135] Dodd,2009
[136] Muslim Council of Britain,2015

It is thus clear that political forces in the period under study added impetus to anti-refugee sentiment and built on previous anti-refugee discourses. In order to collate an accurate account of the strength of each discourse and associated stereotypes, the following paragraphs turn to the media.

Chapter 2: The Media

In the UK in 2011 over 12.6 million newspapers were sold every day, meaning that around 25% of the adult population read a daily newspaper.[137] This high penetration is compounded by the fact that most copies are read by two or three people. Circulation of newspapers has since declined, but only to be replaced by online news platforms. According to the National Readership Survey, *The Daily Mail/ MailOnline* became the highest performing newspaper brand in the UK in 2015, with a monthly reach of over 23 million in 2015 and 29 million in 2016. [138] *The Daily Mail* is a right-wing tabloid with primarily working and lower-middle class readership.[139] Its main competitor, *The Sun*, is well-known for its populist political leanings, but was relegated to the fifth most circulated newspaper with the upsurge of PC and Mobile news.[140] Previous studies have demonstrated the media's persuasive effect on public sentiment in the UK, particularly before Brexit and during pre-election periods (Innes 2010, Deacon & Smith 2017). Seate and Mastro, through the ITT lens, conclude that exposure to threatening news stories about immigrants affect attitudes about their human rights and immigration policy.[141]

The following chapter is based on the premise that anti-refugee sentiment in the media is both an outcome of threat perception and a source of more. It provides a systematic analysis of refugee framing in UK's most widely read paper – *The Daily Mail* – between 2011 and 2016, categorising refugee-related headlines according to the established discourses. These results

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[137] Greenslade,2010

[138] Ponsford,2015

[139] Oxford Royal Academy,2016

[140] Ibid.

[141] Seate & Mastro,p194

are contrasted with a previous study by the Cardiff School of Journalism on anti-refugee sentiment in *The Guardian* (left-wing, upper-class) and *The Telegraph* (right-wing, middle-class).[142] The conclusion is a sketch of the pervasiveness and varying faces of anti-refugee discourse in the UK, fluctuating according to significant events and what is regarded "acceptable" at the time. It is concluded that each discourse is clearly visible and firmly rooted in UK history, and could therefore be pre-empted and responded to by UNHCR in their own framing.

Approach

The keyword 'refugee' was plugged into *The Daily Mail* archives for the years 2011 to 2016, generating all articles with one or more mention of the term, including a vast majority of the articles which used 'migrant' and 'refugee' interchangeably.[143] All relevant headlines were tabulated according to their linkage – refugees associated with terror; crime; benefit fraud or economic burden; community cohesion or national identity threat; volumes; imperial discourse (irrationality; violence; sexism/ sexual violence); blaming another state or agency; blaming the British elite; Europe; sympathy or positivity (general; mothers and children; celebrity visits or statements; refugees as human). The years 2011 (after the start of the Syrian Crisis) to 2016 (before the Referendum) were set as independent variables. The pervasiveness of each discourse was determined per year, mapping fluctuations with reference to significant events and societal dynamics. 2016 was an exception, split into two time periods: the week after the Referendum announcement and the week before the Brexit vote. This was to determine potentially unique changes in the media's anti-refugee discourse driven by Brexit.

Repeated headlines on the same event were excluded, like the 8 headlines on the Boston Bomber in 2013, so as not to overestimate one particular discourse in a given year. Seemingly positive or neutral headlines which emphasised the volumes of refugees trying to enter the UK

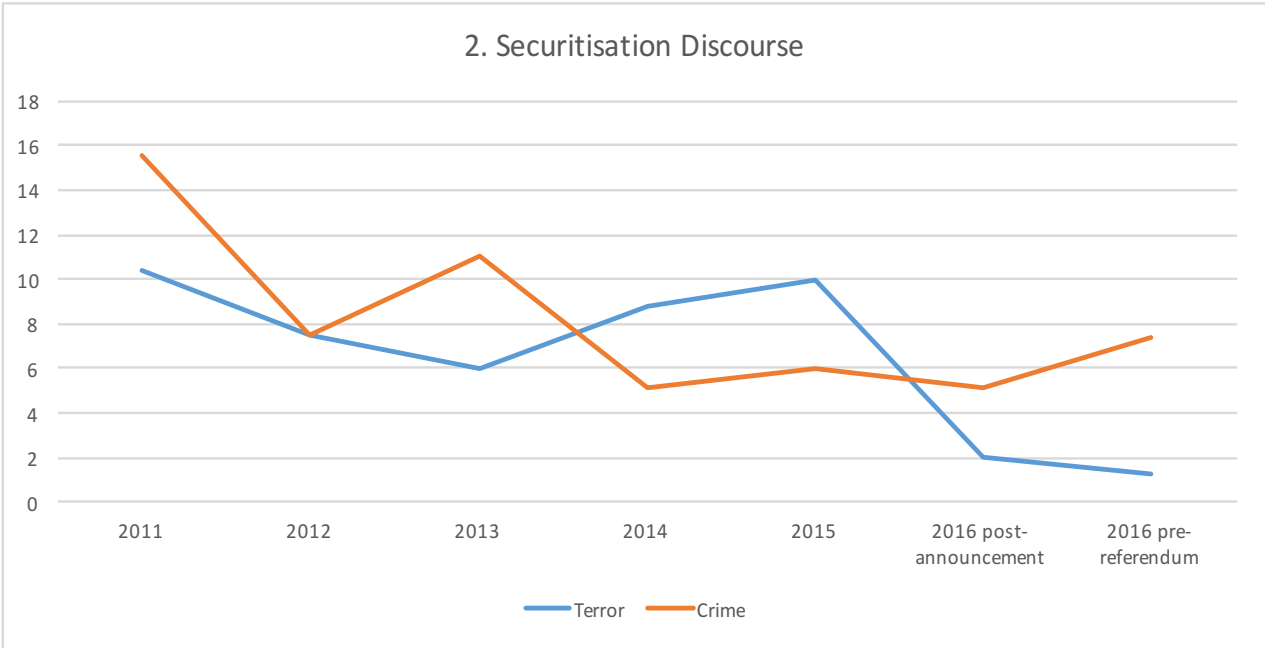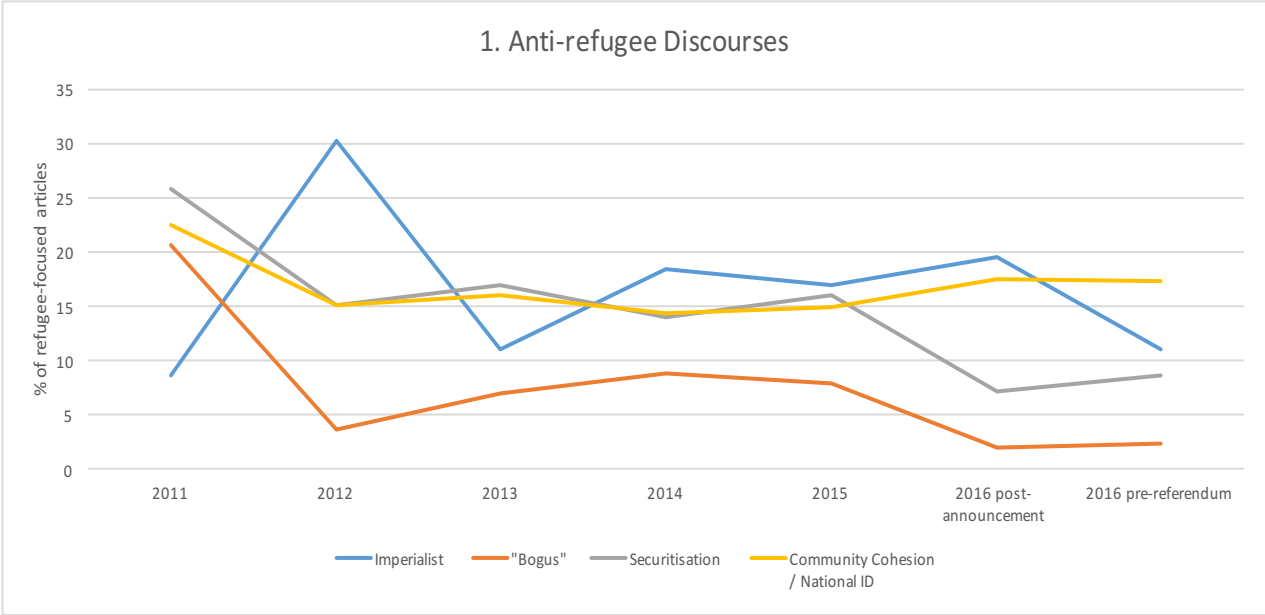[142] Oxford Royal Academy,2016

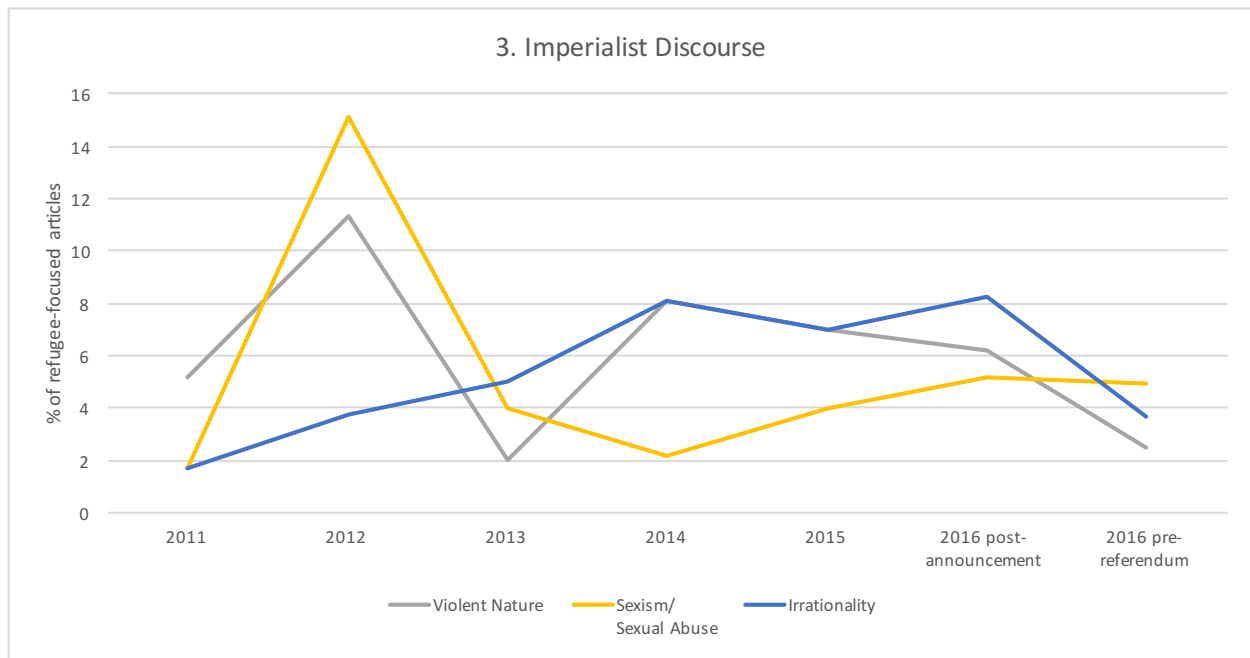[143] Cardiff School of Journalism,p28

or Europe were categorised under 'Volumes'. However, in special cases where a headline had clear elements of more than one discourse, it was counted under each.

Limitations, such as the huge increase in online articles in 2013 when *MailOnline* linked up with the Australian and U.S. Daily papers, were overcome by calculating each linkage as a percentage of overall refugee-focused articles. It is conceded that the search term 'refugee' partially skewed results by omitting articles in which refugees are described singularly as 'migrants'. The following results therefore overestimate sympathetic discourses in which refugee status is acknowledged, and underestimate negative ones in which refugees are represented only as illegal or economic migrants.

Results and Analysis

Appendix A provides a comprehensive account of how the discourses were demarcated and how they played out in *The Daily Mail*, giving examples of each type of headline. The results are documented in the graphs below. The first three graphs track the *anti*-refugee discourse of the 2011 – 2016 period. It is evident that all four discourses determined in Section I, with associated negative stereotypes about refugees, continue to carry weight in the review period. This is despite the anticipated underestimation of anti-refugee sentiment resulting from the narrow search term.

1. Anti-refugee Discourses

2. Securitisation Discourse

3. Imperialist Discourse

Legend: Violent Nature — Sexism/Sexual Abuse — Irrationality

The first three graphs demonstrate that, in moments where one anti-refugee discourse is no longer popular, legitimate or acceptable to the public another rises to replace it. This is especially evident for the securitisation discourse in Graph 2, where refugees have been linked with terror and crime interchangeably over the period. At the same time, and clear in Graphs 1 and 2, the securitisation discourse has declined gradually over the years and especially in 2012, only to be replaced by the community cohesion and imperialist ones. For example, more and more attention was drawn to the 'Calais Jungle' after 2014, contributing to the national identity discourse with the idea of Britain under siege. This is in line with the UK's increasingly populist environment, in which cultural nationalism has been re-essentialised and the realistic threat of refugees has been replaced by a less tangible and refutable symbolic one to the national ingroup. This explains the increase in headlines emphasising refugees' "inherently" violent and irrational nature (Graph 3) against the overall decrease in direct connections (especially after 2011) between refugees and terrorism or crime (Graph 2).

Clear in Graph 1, the "bogus" discourse has been given less attention than others in the period. This is explained, in part, by the use of the search term 'refugees', which excludes all "bogus" articles that refer to refugees singularly as *economic* migrants. However, it is telling that

exceptionally accusatory headlines (see Appendix A: Benefit Fraud) continue to feature, even in articles and headlines where refugee status is conceded. This demonstrates the rootedness of stereotypes of refugees as scheming, wanting and undeserving.
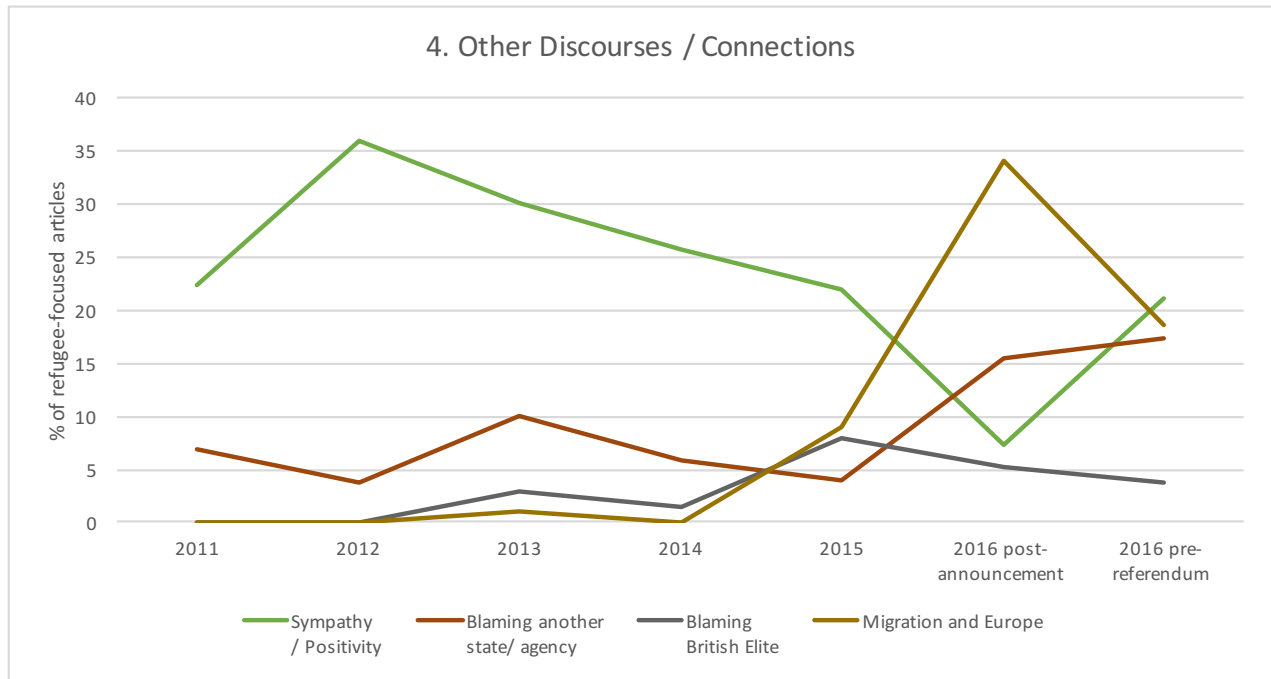
Turning then to other discourses, articles before 2014 were especially polarised – either clearly positive or negative (see Graphs 1 and 4). This indicates that neutral headlines increased significantly after 2013, as *The Daily Mail* expanded to include more and more UN and other non-British positions on the European Migrant Crisis. The relative decline of the imperialist and securitisation discourses over the period is partly accounted for by the fact that, in the run up to the 2015 election and after the Referendum announcement, headlines turned their focus to the connection between refugees and the British elite or Europe (see Appendix A: 'Blaming British Elite' and 'Europe'). As clear in Graphs 4 and 5, the proportion of sympathetic articles also declined, only to be replaced by populist and Europe-focused ones.

Having said that, in the time between the Referendum announcement and the Brexit vote, an interesting deflection occurred (see Graphs 4 and 5), whereby *The Daily Mail* reoriented its

discourse. Headlines became markedly more positive, suggesting a possible attempt by the newspaper to save face after the vote; deny responsibility for the dramatic increase in hate crimes in Britain; and retain its endorsement from the Conservatives, who were primarily anti-Brexit in the period.[144]
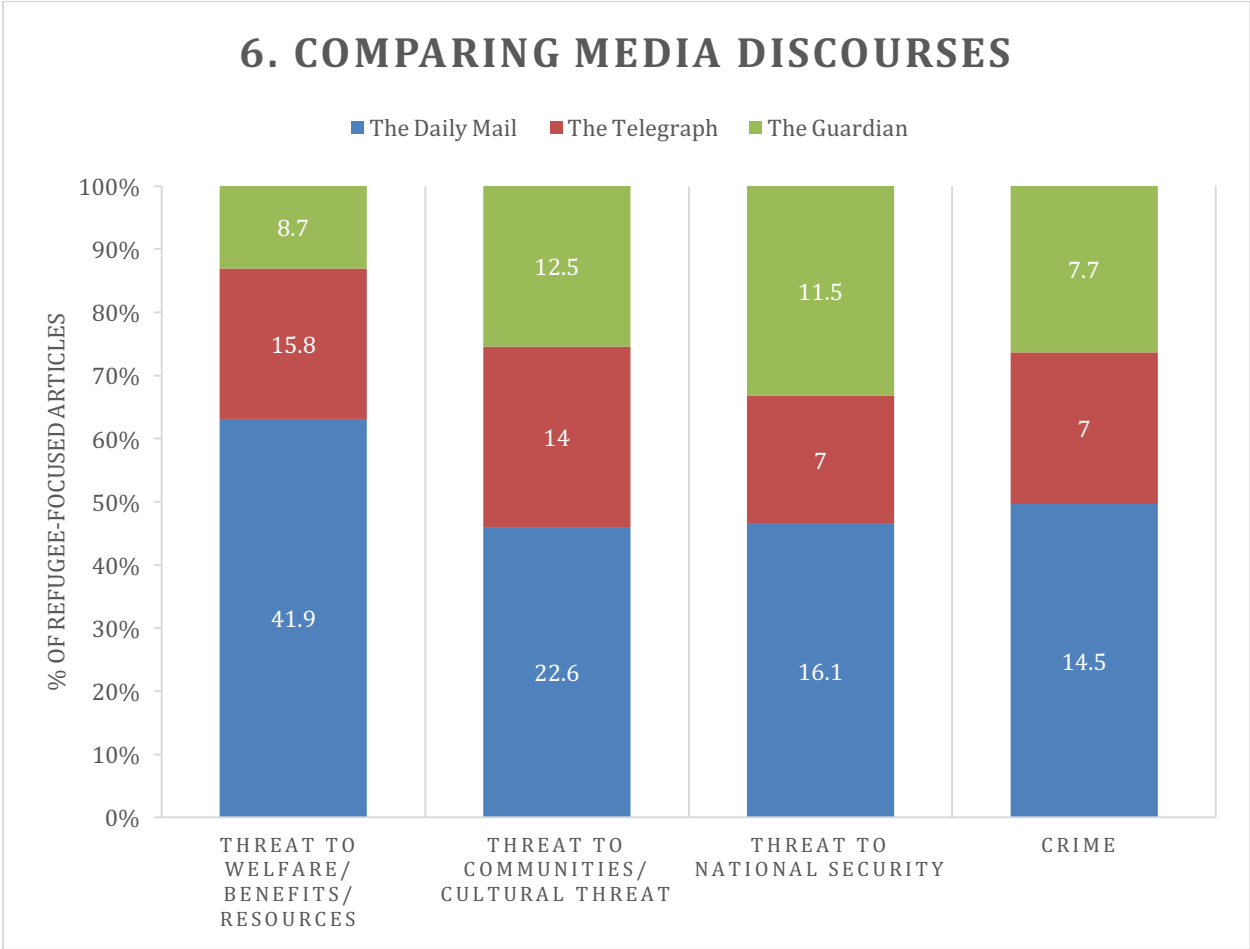

5. Pro-Refugee Sentiment/ Sympathy
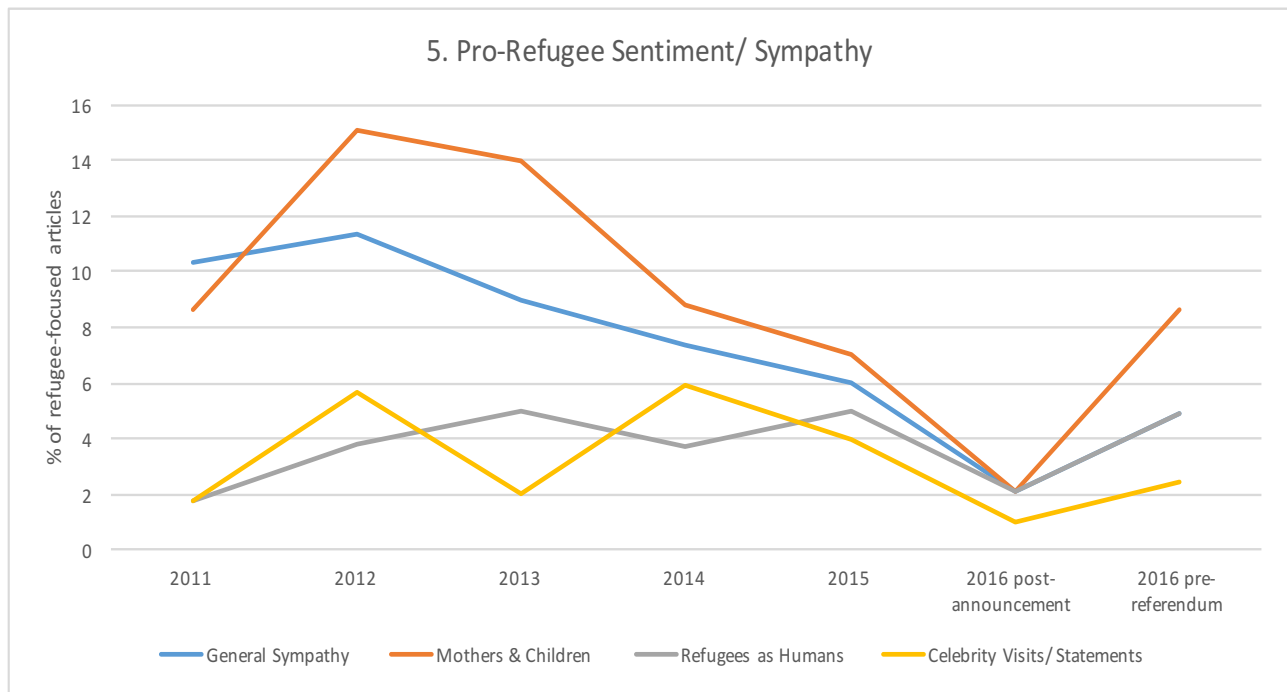
Looking finally at pro-refugee sentiment in Graph 5, mothers and children have received the most sympathy throughout the period, in line with the securitisation and imperialist discourse and associated negative stereotypes of refugee men as dangerous, criminal and predatory. Notably, at the start of the period, many sympathetic headlines still focused on African rather than Middle Eastern refugees. However, as the Syrian Crisis took hold, this focus shifted and sympathy decreased. In 2013, *The Daily Mail* wrote '*Syrian refugee crisis: A topic for the holiday dinner table?*', symbolic of the public's increasing ambivalence towards the Crisis and refugees. This, together with the populist and Brexit climate, is responsible for the declining levels of sympathy seen above, which culminated in the Referendum announcement. Finally, refugees have not been strongly linked with their humanness or equal humanity at any stage of the

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[144] Oxford Royal Academy, 2016

period. As a result of the weakness of this discourse, negative stereotypes (of refugees as violent, irrational, backward and irreconcilably foreign) continue to thrive.

A similar study by the Cardiff School of Journalism found that *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* demonstrated the same anti-refugee discourses. The study focused only on 2014 – 2015, and searched entire articles for, among other themes, the anti-refugee discourses developed above.

6. COMPARING MEDIA DISCOURSES

Legend: ■ The Daily Mail ■ The Telegraph ■ The Guardian

Y-axis: % OF REFUGEE-FOCUSED ARTICLES (0% to 100%)

	THREAT TO WELFARE/ BENEFITS/ RESOURCES	THREAT TO COMMUNITIES/ CULTURAL THREAT	THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY	CRIME
The Guardian	8.7	12.5	11.5	7.7
The Telegraph	15.8	14	7	7
The Daily Mail	41.9	22.6	16.1	14.5

Data sourced from Media Report by the Cardiff School of Journalism[145]

Graph 6 demonstrates that *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* draw comparative anti-refugee discourses between 30% and 60% less frequently than *The Daily Mail*, with the exception of the "bogus" discourse. This is explained partly by their higher class readership, assumedly less

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[145] Cardiff School of Journalism,p39

interested in and threatened by refugees' impact on the welfare system. Still, the graph demonstrates that newspapers of higher reputation draw similar discourse patterns as those described for *The Daily Mail*. It confirms the argument made in Section I, that across the media landscape and class and political spectrums, the same negative stereotypes exist, undermining refugees' right to equal humanity.

Conclusion

The policy-politics-media trinity in the Brexit build-up period exposes the nature of anti-refugee sentiment in the UK, which holds remarkable continuities with that of former periods.

Ultimately, in its responding framing of refugees, the UNHCR should respond to 1) the idea of refugees as violent, terrorists and criminals ; 2) the idea of refugee *men* as dangerous, sexist, predatory and strong, and therefore less deserving; 3) the idea of refugees as poor and wanting, coming to Britain to take welfare and resources from British society; 4) the belief in refugees' inferiority coming from primitive and irreconcilably foreign cultures; 5) the overarching lack of representation of refugees as equal human beings deserving of equal rights; 6) the perception of refugees as part of a depersonalised and uninhibited "mass". Finally, UNHCR campaigns need to address UK society's immunity to the plight of refugees and constant mother and children victim framing. The latter has become ineffective as a result of its overuse and by positioning refugees in a vastly different space – a poor, "uncivilised" and "unmodern" one, that is not relatable and, in fact, threatening to the British ingroup.

The final section evaluates four UNHCR campaigns in the UK between 2011 and 2016, with reference to these conclusions and established discourses.

Section III: UNHCR Response

In answering the research question 'how effectively did the UNHCR fulfil its role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms by addressing anti-refugee sentiment in the UK from 2011 to 2016?', this final section evaluates UNHCR's role as a norm creator through its annual campaigns. Given the real nature of anti-refugee sentiment in the UK and underlying discourses and negative stereotypes, this section determines whether UNHCR's discourse has offset, overlooked or encouraged public hostility and protectionism in the period.

As defined by Foucault, discourse refers to ways of constituting knowledge that interact with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which exist in such knowledges and relations between them.[146] Through its campaigns, the UNHCR has to contend with subjective threat perceptions and deep-rooted stereotypes ("knowledge") informing powerful anti-refugee sentiment in the UK. As a result of the power of anti-refugee "knowledge", negative stereotypes about refugees are more easily strengthened than challenged. This both adds to the difficulty of UNHCR's role and makes each instance of refugee framing significant and necessarily cautious.

This section examines the four central campaigns launched in the UK between the start of the Syrian Crisis and the Brexit Referendum. Those are the Problems; "One", Unsung Heroes; 1 Family, and 'I Belong' campaigns. Each is evaluated on the grounds of its reach and interaction with UK anti-refugee sentiment. It is concluded that, especially when compared to campaigns of former years, UNHCR's approach has become increasingly responsive. Whereas the "One" and '1 Family' campaigns feed into the "bogus" discourse and fail to challenge stereotypes of refugees as dangerous, wanting or irreconcilably different, the 2014 'I Belong' campaign skilfully avoids the traditional victim frame and confronts all four discourses.

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[146] Adams,2017

In terms of dissemination, each campaign is communicated to the British public through a central theme, a slogan and a series of images. These are used on posters (often in tube stations), bus panels, pamphlets, digital banners and social media posts, amongst other mediums. Often, a campaign will include a video and celebrity endorsements, however, these are not a focus given their relatively low viewership (see www.youtube.com/unhcr). UNHCR Head Office rolls out each annual campaign close to Refugee Week (mid-June), which is adapted by the UK office and adopted by local NGOs. Each campaign has its own website from which individuals or organisations can download promotional materials (information, posters, banners, slideshows, user guides) to publicise it independently. UK Refugee Week is particularly active in this regard, hosting over 100 000 attendees each year and reaching millions (over 17 million in 2012) through website traffic and the media.[147] Although precise statistics are often not available, the media (print, online and broadcast) are critical to campaign reach, and UNHCR UK's communications team keep all media platforms up to date with campaign content and events.[148] In a number of the campaigns, extensive networks of posters in UK train and tube stations are the most far-reaching medium. Though each will be discussed in more detail below, this reach makes UNHCR's choice of framing vital in its interaction and competition with local anti-refugee discourse.

2011: "One"

In 2011, UNHCR rolled out the multimedia "One" campaign. The campaign slogan read 'One Refugee Without Hope is One too Many' and was disseminated primarily through Refugee Week events, media coverage, posters, T-shirts and pamphlets around London.[149] Digital materials for partner organisations and third parties were available on the campaign page.[150] The primary campaign posters and images are presented below.

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[147] Refugee Week,2017
[148] UNHCR UK,2006
[149] Refugee Week,2018
[150] UNHCR,2011

There are over 10 million refugees who have lost everything.

1 refugee without hope **is too many.**

Support World Refugee Day June 20. Do 1 thing - visit www.unhcr.org

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Core Poster for "One", UNHCR June 2012[151]

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[151] Flickr,2011

Every year many asylum seekers are forced back into deadly situations.

1 refugee returned to danger
is too many.

Support World Refugee Day June 20. Do 1 thing - visit www.unhcr.org

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Supporting Poster for "One", UNHCR June 2012[152]

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[152] Ibid.

Over 37 million people have been forced to flee war zones.

Over 10 million refugees want nothing more than to go home.

1 family forced to flee is too many.

1 refugee longing for home is too many.

Support World Refugee Day June 20. Do 1 thing - visit www.unhcr.org

Support World Refugee Day June 20. Do 1 thing - visit www.unhcr.org

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Supporting Posters for "One", UNHCR June 2012[153]

Analysis

The "One" campaign responds in part to the 'volumes' discourse prevalent in the period, which frames refugees in "swathes", "masses" and "millions". It does so by picturing refugees individually and with variations of the slogan '*1* refugee without hope is too many'. Still, the values 'over 10 million' and 'over 37 million' are introduced in the smaller text. The framing of each refugee pictured, as one out of millions of others seeking protection, is counterproductive in the UK context, feeding into the 'volumes' discourse and associated symbolic threat to British national unity and identity.

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[153] Ibid.

Turning then to the dehumanisation discourse, the campaign appears to respond to issues of former UNHCR campaigns by zooming in on the faces of individual refugees. This emphasises the human element of the image, while de-emphasising a potentially alien and non-relatable context. In contrast, the UNHCR campaigns of 2007 and 2010 pictured below feed markedly into the "bogus" and community cohesion discourses by framing refugees as secondary to their impoverished contexts. The refugees are pictured off-centre with their faces unclear and obscured, thus lacking the same identifying human emphasis.

Core Poster for "Problems", UNHCR 2010[154]

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[154] Podesta,2010

In the early campaigns pictured above, by constructing refugees as, first and foremost, poor, the UNHCR contributes to the stereotype of refugees as economic migrants – wanting, undeserving and posing a threat to the UK welfare system. In particular, the 2010 campaign's focus on the difference between refugee problems and "first world problems"[156] drives the perception of insurmountable cultural differences, entrenching the community cohesion discourse and unfamiliarity of the refugee. Although the absurdity of the situation (the subject finding her colour washing has run into her whites) is engaging, it is extended to the refugee in frame, feeding into the imperial irrationality discourse. Both campaigns emphasise the need for a "shock factor" to motivate action, but the sarcastic tone of the 2007 slogan 'refugees are so lucky' conveys bitterness and instils a familiar sense of guilt, as opposed to empathy or a positive call to action.

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[155] Champassak,2007

[156] **First World Problems:** Slang term which gained social media popularity in the latter 2000s, emphasising the incomparability between "third" and "first" world problems and the relatively frivolous nature of the latter

Like the 2007 and 2010 campaigns, the majority of the images used in "One" frame children as innocent victims, seeming to respond to the influential securitisation discourse. However, this framing feeds into the UK discourse which differentiates the deserving mother or child refugee from the dangerous and undeserving adult male – portrayed by Nigel Farage in his Brexit campaign poster as the *real* nature of the Crisis. In addition, the only refugee man pictured in the campaign appears "locked up". Regardless of its reality, seen against the influential crime discourse, this image is loaded with subliminal messaging counterproductive to UNHCR interests. Similarly, although the "One" campaign marks an improvement on former campaigns by focusing on the human element, the tribal print in the core poster and dusty faces of the children imply the foreignness of the space.

Therefore, through its focus on human faces, the "One" campaign marks a significant improvement from former years. However, through small but symbolic details, the campaign feeds into the stereotypes of refugee *men,* as opposed to children, as dangerous and less deserving, and of refugees as coming from disparate cultures and circumstances for an improved lifestyle in the UK. This campaign is not a departure from the recurrent victim framing of women and children, to which the public has become largely immune. In sum, UNHCR could do better in its role as the guardian of refugee protection norms in the UK by responding to the pressing and historically consistent anti-refugee discourses prevalent in 2011.

2012: Unsung Heroes

In 2012, before the London Olympics on July 27th, UNHCR ran 'a poster campaign in the London Underground system highlighting the contributions of refugees towards the Olympic Games'.[157] Unsung Heroes took advantage of the positive publicity and national pride and unity surrounding the current event of the London Olympics. Through Refugee Week alone, 1500 posters were sent to organisations, 10 500 flyers were handed out in public spaces and 60 posters were put up in the London Underground. According to Refugee Week data, the

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[157] UNHCR,2012

Underground Campaign reached almost 1.5 million people in the two week period, while media coverage reached over 17 million.[158]

Core poster for Unsung Heroes, UNHCR June 2012[159]

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[158] Refugee Week,2017
[159] Refugee Week,2012

Analysis

Pictured above is the core poster for the campaign. Supporting posters focused on each of the subjects individually: Tea – a Bosnian musician playing at the Olympics opening ceremony; Luka – a Zimbabwean civil engineer involved in the Olympic support team; Cynthia – a Zimbabwean activist leading the Olympics catering staff; and Kolbassia – an "African" working for Freedom from Torture who served as a volunteer at the basketball arena.[160] Although their countries of origin are available in Refugee Week interviews and third party articles, only their names and roles are represented on the posters.

Seen grouped together in the core poster, an initial criticism of the campaign is its striking lack of Syrian and Middle Eastern refugees. Given the anti-Muslim dimensions of the imperial and securitisation discourses, the greater sympathy for African than Middle Eastern refugees revealed in *The Daily Mail* analysis and the public knowledge that Syrians make up the majority of refugees wanting to enter Europe, the positive framing of only European and African refugees appears an oversight. In addition, although the human element of the campaign is clearly present (through the faces, names and roles of the subjects), black and white shading and lack of eye contact detracts partially from the subjects' relatability. The choice of black and white photographs is also problematic, given their potential to cue deep-rooted stereotypes of refugees as unmodern and backward.

Nevertheless, this campaign effectively frames refugees as heroes contributing to the British nation. The subjects look forward into the future and are pictured with bold colours and the Olympic theme. This portrayal challenges the "bogus" discourse, framing refugees as contributing to rather taking from Britain. However, in associating refugees with strength and success, the hero frame is effective against xenophobia *in* Britain but less so in denoting the deservingness of asylum-seekers outside. Like the Vulnerable Person's Resettlement

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[160] Ibid.

Programme, by extension, the campaign places refugees in a frame of wealth, luck and success, delegitimising asylum-seekers' appeal for refuge.

Finally, the campaign has strong implications against the imperial and community cohesion discourses. It counteracts imperial stereotypes by framing refugees as national heroes, rather than inferior subjects or outsiders. Moreover, having been extracted from their former contexts and presented as citizens contributing directly to the strength of the nation, refugees are framed as augmenting rather than impeding national identity.

Ultimately, the campaign is positive and current and is a marked improvement from the victim framing of former decades. However, though it touches on the securitisation discourse by portraying refugees (male and female) as upstanding moral citizens, this impact is indirect and leaves the anti-Muslim and terror thread of the discourse intact. The campaign is also problematic in its construction of all refugees as heroic and successful, and lacks a strong and relatable human element. In sum, through Unsung Heroes, UNHCR falls short in its role as the guardian of refugee protection norms – especially as they relate to Syrian asylum-seekers.

2013: 1 Family

On the 13th of June 2013, a week ahead of World Refugee Day, the 1 Family campaign was launched to highlight the impact of war on families. The campaign reminded the global audience that victims of war are family members – sons, daughters, mothers and fathers.[161] The campaign was inspired by a UNHCR-commissioned photo series by photographer Brian Sokol called 'The Most Important Thing', which exposes the difficult decisions refugee families are forced to make when fleeing.[162] The campaign page featured the photos of refugees holding their chosen item, along with an interactive exercise which asked readers to fill in and share

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[161] UNHCR,2013
[162] Ibid.

what they would choose.[163] Fifty-two states, including the UK, ensured dissemination of the campaign using the available materials of a PSA, PowerPoint, posters and the digital banner below. The media and public were cited by UNHCR employee survey responders as the primary audience for the campaign.[164] UK newspapers, including *The Daily Mail*, wrote articles featuring the photo series and campaign message.[165]

Core image for 1 Family , UNHCR June 2013[166]

The banner above was featured on the campaign site and Refugee Week article, with the words 'What would you take?' and a caption explaining Sudanese refugee Magbola Alhadi's choice to

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[163] Radio Free Europe,2013; Malm,2013
[164] UNHCR,2013(2)
[165] Malm,2013
[166] UNHCR,2013

flee with a pot so that she could cook for her daughters. Other common choices included family photographs, sentimental objects, clothes and Korans.[167]

Analysis

Taken as a whole, the family and human aspect of this campaign is very present. The hard journey and emotional struggle of each refugee is expressed in his/her face, positioned against a cloth or neutral backdrop. Refugee men are often represented as fathers, working implicitly against the stereotype of their dangerousness, and men, women and children are equally represented. Family members hold their single item, often of low monetary value (jeans, pot, keys etc.), evoking sympathy without an overpowering victim frame.

However, the 1 Family campaign is counterproductive seen against the "bogus" and community cohesion discourses. Although many of the objects carry sentimental value and thus reflect refugees' humanness, the campaign theme is inherently problematic. It encourages refugees to choose a 'thing' – a material object – so that many of their items and explanations translate as superficial. This is especially salient in the contrast between refugee parents who chose their children as their 'most important thing' (two out of eight pictured with their children) and those who chose objects like a pot, ring, dress, jacket or bracelet. Through this framing, such as that evident in the core subject's choice of a simple pot, UNHCR reminds the British reader of the dramatic difference between their lifestyle and the lifestyle of a refugee, sustaining imperial assumptions and the perception of threat to the welfare system.

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[167] Malm,2013

'My dress' – Image from the 'Most Important Thing' photo series, UNHCR 2013[168]

'My wife' – Image from 'Most Important Thing' photo series, UNHCR 2013[169]

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[168] Radio Free Europe,2013
[169] Malm,2013

Furthermore, the campaign stresses cultural differences between refugees and the British ingroup. A Yemeni woman pictured with her children explains that she chose a scarf both because she has to cover her head and because she 'like[s] the colours of this scarf'. Another says, 'This dress reminds me of my mother, who said that a real African woman should know how to wear a traditional dress to promote our culture and values', and a Somalian man explains that he chose a Koran because he knew it would help him find his family. A Syrian man states that the most important thing he would bring is his wife. Seen independently, these representations convey sentimentality and humanness. However, against UK anti-refugee discourses, this campaign proves counterproductive to refugee protection norms. It conjures imperial stereotypes which pin sexism, irrationality, superficiality and irreconcilable cultural values onto refugees, leaving the discourse of deservingness largely intact.

2014: 'I Belong'

In November 2014, the UNHCR partnered with the United Colours of Benetton, launching its 10-year campaign to end statelessness. The hashtag '#IBelong' was used with the call to 'Join us in our campaign to end statelessness' and the message that '10 million people in the world have no nationality'.[170] The campaign has two focal levels – state and civil society. At the state level, governments are encouraged to take on one or more of ten actions, which include 'Grant protection status to stateless migrants and facilitate their naturalisation' and 'Accede to the UN statelessness conventions'[171] As concluded in the Literature Review, UNHCR has limited leverage at the state level but can apply refugee framing to encourage bottom-up refugee protection norms. As such, the campaign includes an Open Letter signed and published by 30 celebrities and world opinion leaders and an 'I Belong' microsite which contains a petition against statelessness.[172] The microsite encourages sharing on Twitter, Facebook and email and includes a Dropbox link to all campaign materials, including leaflets, a PowerPoint, posters,

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[170] Divers,2014
[171] Ibid.
[172] UNHCR,2014

banners, postcards, social media materials and a User Guide, to ensure coherent and UNHCR-endorsed third-party dissemination.[173] The materials are variations of the following posters:

Core poster for 'I Belong', UNHCR November 2014[174]

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[173] Ibid.

Supporting posters for 'I Belong', UNHCR November 2014[175]

At the time of writing, the Open Letter had almost 100 000 signatures. However, the majority of the campaign has taken place over social media and through events and celebrity advocacy. For example, a group of UK celebrities gave the campaign traction by writing their own version of

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[174] UNHCR,2014

[175] Ibid.

the Open Letter to David Cameron in January 2015, as conveyed by the *Telegraph*.[176] The campaign was also reported in *The Daily Mail* and *Guardian* on the 4th of November 2014.[177] Given the millions of UK citizens expected to be exposed to the campaign in its 10-year duration, the Paris Terror Attack and UK Elections of 2015 and the mounting Syrian Crisis, UNHCR's effective framing of refugees through 'I Belong' is vital.

Analysis

The 'I Belong' campaign is a strong counter to both the terrorism and crime pillars of the securitisation discourse, launched fortuitously before a new escalation of the terror pillar. It positions refugees – no matter their age, race, religion or gender – as harmless, crouched in the foetal position with kind and open expressions. Only the core image of the campaign is a child, while supporting posters represent adult men and women equally. Against the words '10 million people in the world have no nationality', the subjects' compassionate smiles communicate a sense of acceptance, while their self-embrace communicates their need for protection. This serves as a stark contrast to the portrayal of refugees as dangerous or as victims – hopeless, desperate and wanting.

The human element is emphasised by the blank background and the closeness of the subjects' body language and compassion. Each is pictured individually – not as a "sea" or "mass" but as an individual with a story and struggle. By representing all ages and cultures, the message that 'we are all human' and equally deserving is strengthened. The lack of context provided by the blank background (taken a step further than "One" and 1 Family) allows UNHCR to extract the refugee from any circumstances responsible for approving negative stereotypes in a given national context. This enhances relatability and closeness, rather than highlighting differences or feeding into the conflation between refugees and (poor, "bogus", undeserving) economic migrants.

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[176] The Telegraph,2015
[177] MailOnline,2014; The Guardian,2014

Moreover, the hashtag '#IBelong' and the subjects' positioning on the axis of the world encourages their relatability as "people of the world" – not refugees or foreigners – challenging the community cohesion discourse and the legitimacy of the boundaries denoting the national ingroup. In this sense, 'I Belong' is responsive to the mounting populist climate of 2015 – 2016. Indeed, the focal text emphasises the volumes of people in the world without nationality ('10 million'). However, these volumes are framed simply as having 'no nationality', rather than being 'forced to flee' their country ("One" campaign) or being associated with mobility ('another ONE MILLION refugees will arrive in Europe this year' – *The Daily Mail, 2016).* This challenges the perception of the refugee "crisis" and associated symbolic and realistic threats. To this end, the neutral and passive terms 'stateless' or having 'no nationality' are used, as opposed to the loaded and active terms 'refugee' and 'migrant'.

Though deemphasised compared with the subject and larger text, the small text adds to the message of statelessness with a reinforcing "sympathy" element, such as the plight of mothers and children or female exploitation. However, in a direct challenge to the discourse of male undeservingness, 'Discrimination is the biggest cause of statelessness' is repeated in two of the posters with male subjects. One is seemingly North African and the other Muslim, thus compelling the audience to address their stereotypes: in particular, the association between Muslim males and terrorism and non-European males and crime.

In a sense, this campaign responds to the cold and detached policies and political discourse applied to refugees by positioning the vivid and colourful human form against the scientific backdrop of blue and metal. Though the victim frame is hinted at through the smaller text, it is not the focus of the campaign. The hashtag #IBelong, paired with these images, evokes a sense of hope and positivity in contrast with the negative emotions of guilt and despondency instilled by former campaigns. Ultimately, 'I Belong' challenges effectively the securitisation and community cohesion discourses and frames refugees as equal human beings deserving of equal

life. The campaign internalises historically consistent anti-refugee discourse and is an example of UNHCR's successful counter-framing in their role as guardian of refugee protection.

Conclusion

Given the state of the UK and Europe, UNHCR's role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms is at a critical point. This paper has demonstrated the profound constraints of its limited budget and emergency response prioritisation, its donor-dependence and the difficulty of securing international norm compliance at the state level. More than that, however, UNHCR is constrained by the high threat perception and aggressive anti-refugee sentiment of the British public, reinforced by policies, politics and the media, and legitimised by deep-rooted historical stereotypes.

Despite these overwhelming constraints, UNHCR's annual campaigns are a window through which it can interpret and respond to local anti-refugee sentiment and historical hierarchies of deservingness. This paper has revealed that UNHCR's campaigns before 2014 failed to address these, often fuelling rather than placating anti-refugee discourse in an upward spiral of threat perception. It was only through 'I Belong' in 2014 that UNHCR responded directly to the real nature of UK anti-refugee discourse, while abandoning the traditional victim frame. Here, it constructed refugees as deserving and challenged the legitimacy of the borders of the national ingroup heightened by populism. 'I Belong' is an instance in which UNHCR fulfilled its role as the global guardian of refugee protection norms in the UK, through public-level norm creation – its window of opportunity.

This paper concludes that to fulfil its global role, UNHCR should confront national threat perceptions directly and distinctively by interpreting local and historical discourses and stereotypes. To respond effectively to anti-refugee sentiment, it should extract refugees from any unfamiliar context or victim frame that might work to validate deep-rooted negative stereotypes. Instead, it should frame refugees as human (equal and deserving of life and protection), not defined by their race, age or gender. Moreover, it should acknowledge that imperial stereotypes did not disappear with decolonisation. Drawn out by English nationalism, populism and a context of high threat perception, assumptions of refugees from the Global

South as violent, criminal, irrational, sexist, inferior and therefore less deserving of rights and refuge, are continually evoked to validate and inform other anti-refugee discourses and undermine the UNHCR mandate.

Appendix A

Linkage/ Discourse: *Refugees associated with ___*	Description and Examples *In these headlines, refugees are ___*
Terror	Labelled "militant extremists", "suspected terrorists" or "suicide bombers". This discourse is typically antagonistic both downward towards refugees and upwards towards the government, for allowing suspected terrorists into the UK: - *The joke of 'secure Britain': Vile banned militant extremist strolls through Heathrow immigration as Somalian criminals are allowed to stay due to human rights (2011)* - *Terrorist we've tried to kick out for 12 years: MPs condemn ruling that allows Algerian to stay because his 'life and liberty' are in jeopardy if he is sent home (2013)*
Crime	Labelled not as merely "failed" asylum-seekers but "illegal" having "smuggled", "faked" or "tricked" their way into Britain. Negative stereotypes of refugees as "criminals" or "crooks" are disseminated through this discourse, which is often linked to the inadequacy of British immigration legislation or policing: - *'Undesirable and dangerous' immigrant criminals cannot be deported from Britain, say Euro judges (2011)* - *Afghan in his 20s caught out by teachers after claiming to be a teenager to gain child immigration status (2012)* - *Jude Law's security team was attacked and mugged by migrants when the cameras stopped after the Hollywood star left the jungle camp in Calais (2016)*
"Bogus" (Benefit fraud/ Economic burden)	Framed as receiving special benefits or treatment "paid for by you" or "funded by the taxpayer", or coming to Britain for economic benefits or to abuse the welfare system. Negative stereotypes of refugees as wanting and undeserving characterise this discourse, which frames Britain as desirable and overly-generous. - *Lampedusa tragedy survivors flee Italy a DAY after being given free accommodation in Rome. Thought to be heading for countries with generous benefits (now where could that be…?)* (2012) - *The 'destitute' asylum seekers with luxury TVs and iPads: Checks at taxpayer-funded properties find 10% have 'signs of wealth'(2014)*

	- *Is this the most farcical use of taxpayers' money ever: Ethiopian gets legal aid from UK - to sue us for giving aid to... Ethiopia (2014)*
Community Cohesion/ National Identity Threat	Linked to compromising the British identity, expanding existing Muslim neighbourhoods and flooding British neighbourhoods – constituting a symbolic threat to Britain. This discourse is therefore strongly associated with the 'Volumes' one below. It also has elements of the imperial discourse, through which refugees are framed as holding different values to their Western hosts: - *The tiny Italian fishing island which now has MORE migrants fleeing Tunisia and Libya than inhabitants (2011)* - *A mega mosque in a suburb that was 90 per cent white 30 years ago (2013)* - *Across Europe, gay migrants face abuse in asylum shelters (2016)* - *Members of 111-year-old German naturist club have been banned from skinny dipping in lake in case they offend residents of new refugee centre (2016)*
Volumes	Labelled with water metaphors like "tides" or "waves", or as a "mass", "influx", "biblical exodus" or even 'biblical flood of despair' (2016). Often seemingly neutral headlines perpetuate this discourse, by including and emphasising figures like '*another ONE MILLION refugees will arrive in Europe this year*' (2016). Importantly, for the sake of this study, volumes headlines were recorded under 'National Identity Threat', as a result of their associated threat to the ingroup's dominance, unity and values.
Imperial: Irrationality	Linked with primitiveness and irrationality, often in the form of mental illness ("psychotic") or harming themselves or the people who have come to help them. Often, and characteristic of imperialism, this discourse links refugees' irrationality with a lack of education or Islam, and is strongly associated with the other imperial discourses below: - *'Psychotic' Afghan asylum seeker adult had to be forcibly removed from foster family after lying about being a child (2011)* - *Migrants threaten to sew lips together as they go on hunger strike in Calais demanding to*

	be allowed into Britain (2014)
	- *Islamic group shoot dead Syrian 14-year-old boy in front of his parents for blasphemy after saying 'he wouldn't even give the Prophet a free coffee' (2013)*
	- *'We want to talk with David Cameron': Syrians desperate to reach Britain are flocking to Calais and threatening to kill themselves unless they are allowed in (2013)*
	- *Starving Syrians butcher a zoo's LION to eat in worst sign yet of how desperate civilians are for food (2013)*
	- *British volunteer at Calais Jungle urges Cameron to take in thousands more migrants – but has to move after they start pelting him with ROCKS (2016)*
Imperial: Violence	Framed, not simply as involved in crime or terror, but as violent by nature. This is often presented in contrast with the innocence of the Westerner and communicated through animal references, like '*Get this creature out of our country*' (2012). This discourse is strongly associated with the other imperial discourses, as violence, irrationality, Islam, sexual assault (often extreme crimes of passion) and ungratefulness, are seen in the same headline: - *Sadistic Afghan asylum seeker made ex-girlfriend watch him stab her sister and friend to death because she wouldn't take him back (2012)* - *Thirteen years for illegal immigrant who broke the neck of a young ballet star in a violent street mugging (2013)* - *Neurosurgeon feels no anger towards mentally-ill Iranian refugee patient, 49, who stabbed him 13 times in frenzied knife attack at a hospital (2016)*
Imperial: Sexism/ Sexual Violence	Linked with sexism, sexual violence and frequently rape, often contrasted against innocent victim Europeans in an assertion of unsurmountable cultural differences (linked with community cohesion). Sometimes these headlines are sympathetic towards refugee women and children, simultaneously framing men as violent and predatory. - *Afghan refugee who said raping woman was part of 'cultural differences' is jailed for 14 years (2012)* - *Syrian refugees forced to let Lebanese landlord marry their 14-year old daughter because they cannot afford the rent (2014)* - *One in four sex offenders in Norway last year had a migrant background, study finds (2016)*

	- *EXCLUSIVE: Meet the all-girl bikini-clad 'Groping Guard' vigilantes who patrol swimming pools in Sweden against migrants molesting female bathers (2016)*
Blaming another State/ Agency	Constructed as a problem that other states or organisations are evading (e.g. Australia 'tough' on immigration, Italy 'leave stranded immigrants to die', Turkish 'crackdown' on refugees). Britain is simultaneously framed as either "soft touch", doing all it can, or a hero in comparison to other uncaring or accusatory international actors. In the run up to Brexit, European states were often the target of this discourse. - *Now U.N. meddlers lecture Britain on migrants: Millions in peril in Syria, yet refugee chief finds time to condemn Cameron's reforms (2013)*
Blaming British Elite	Constructed as a problem that the British elite is not addressing appropriately. The elite are framed as making decisions from ivory towers, and a gap between societal interests and a decadent, liberal and pro-refugee elite is created: - SamCam's Syrian lobbying: PM's wife 'is behind Cameron's sympathy for the rebels (2013) - *Furious neighbours called noise protection officers to Jude Law's £15 million north London mansion at 2am as her held a 'major festival' in his garden the night before he visited the Calais jungle (2016)* - *Hungary defends referendum on EU migrant quotas, raps Brussels "ivory tower" (2016)*
Europe	Linked to an insolvable conflict between European states and an escalating crisis worsened by EU insufficiencies. Often, external actors are presented calling for EU unity and denouncing EU states' behaviour. Britain's aspiration to control its own migration without external criticism is communicated. This discourse only picked up in 2015 with the rise of UKIP, particularly after the announcement of the referendum: - *The EU's migration system is TEN DAYS from 'completely breaking down' if the number of people arriving in Europe is not curbed, Brussels migration chief warns (2016)* - *Dissent, squabbles: migrant crisis takes toll on EU evermore (2016)* - *UK setting "dangerous precedent" on human rights – Amnesty International (2016)* - *We control our OWN migration: Soaring migrant numbers but independent Norway says*

	it's still better off without EU meddling (2016)
Pro-Refugee Sentiment/ Sympathy:	Linked with victimhood and desperation, sometimes drawing attention to backlash from host populations (hypocrisy, xenophobic attacks). This discourse is often ambiguous, stressing the dire circumstances refugees face at home (poverty, violence etc.), suggesting that refugees will arrive bearing resulting negative traits. Sometimes it is not clear who is perpetrating the violence at home – are the refugees also the militants? - *Man who blamed neighbourhood crime on minorities robs bank and found hiding in the same neighbourhood (2013)* - *The shocking moment a refugee from war-torn Eritrea was viciously attacked on a NSW street for $60 and a set of headphones (2014)* - *UN refugee chief urges Pakistanis not to label Afghan refugees terrorists (2016)*
Pro: Mothers and Children	Defined as victims on the basis of their supposed innocence as pregnant women, mothers and children. This discourse is aligned to the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme, having negative consequences for refugee men. Children are often framed as uneducated and suffering sexual abuse, drawing on the imperial discourses: - *Pregnant refugee's horrific flight from war-torn Syria to Turkey… only to be sent straight back after giving birth to twins (2012)* - *Innocent victims: Scarred faces of Syrian children highlight horrors of war as refugees pour across border into Jordan (2012)* - *PICTURED: Syrian refugee children lose education (2014)* - *Stranded in France, migrant children forced into crime, prostitution every day: UNICEF (2016)*
Pro: Celebrity Visits	Linked with celebrities who visit and sympathise with them. This discourse has a double implication of fostering public sympathy and deepening the linkage between the elite and support of refugees, particularly salient in the populist climate. - *Angelina Jolie's tears as she visits Syrian refugees at camp and hears their 'horrific and*

	heartbreaking' stories (2012)
Pro: Refugees as Human	Framed as equal humans with their own stories, families, careers and dreams. Often they are presented as giving back to their host or home communities, or making the most of difficult circumstances: - *Heart-warming video shows Congolese families driven apart by war given mobile phones to finally speak with their long-lost relatives for the first time in years (2015)* - *Extraordinary pictures reveal life inside the cosy homes (and even a classroom) that migrants have managed to create out of the squalor of the Calais Jungle - which are now set to be bulldozed (2016)*

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