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'A proud history of protecting refugees': Ambivalent Responses to Refugee Integration in Government Policy Documents

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Abstract

In recent years asylum seekers arriving in the United Kingdom have been subject to a 'hostile policy environment' (Zetter et al. 2005) initiated by the UK government consisting of dispersal, destitution and detention. At the same time, the UK government has also focussed on 'integrating' refugees. In this paper, Critical Discourse Analysis of seven policy documents is used to demonstrate how ambivalence is a feature of UK and devolved government refugee integration strategies. Analysis revealed that each strategy is predicated upon rhetorical devices which construct the governments as having a 'proud history' of offering protection to those fleeing persecution by drawing on long histories and traditions of welcoming refugees. Such rhetorical and commemorative devices may also function to dialogically repress (Billig 1997) the UK's history of not providing protection to refugees and of creating a 'hostile environment' for asylum seekers. It concludes that such devices construct refugee integration ambivalently, which is a result of an ideological dilemma (Billig et al. 1988) inherent in these strategies between the integration of refugees and deterrence of asylum seekers.

Key words: *Integration, refugees, asylum seekers, critical discourse analysis, ambivalence.*

1. Introduction

In April 2017 the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on refugees published a report entitled 'Refugees welcome?' in which it reflected on the debate around the UK's response to the current global 'refugee crisis'. This crisis saw over 1.2 million people make the journey to Europe during 2015 to apply for asylum in EU countries, more than double that of the previous year (Eurostat 2016). In the UK, asylum applications rose only slightly in the same period and were less than half of the numbers seen when UK asylum applications peaked in 2002 (Home Office 2017). Although immigration remains a key concern of the UK public (Duffy and Frere-Smith 2014), the APPG (2017: 5) report importantly recognises that 'very little time, if any, has been given to considering what happens to refugees once they have been

granted protection by the UK Government'. This is despite the fact that the UK Government published three refugee integration strategies during the New Labour years (2000, 2005 and 2009) and the governments in Scotland (2013) and Wales (2008) have also produced their own strategies for the devolved nations. In this paper, I apply a critical discourse analysis to the refugee integration strategy documents produced by the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments between 2000 and 2016. I argue that governments draw on the notion of the nation state as a 'proud protector' resulting in ambivalence being a key feature of such documents. Throughout the paper, I use the term 'asylum seeker' to refer to those who have 'crossed an international border in search of protection, but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been decided' (Castles *et al.* 2014: 222). I use the term 'refugee' for those who have been recognized by a national government as meeting the requirements of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and argue that such category distinctions are important because each has its own associated set of social and legal rights.

2. UK Asylum Policy

When the New Labour government assumed office in 1997 it inherited a growing backlog of asylum claims from the former Conservative government, with applications increasing from 44,840 (excluding dependants) in 1991 to a peak of 84,132 in 2002 (Home Office 2017). However, it was this peak at the beginning of the 21st century which not only made immigration one of the greatest concerns amongst the British public (Parekh 2000), but also made it a political priority for Prime Minister Tony Blair and led to immigration legislation and policy being introduced on an unprecedented scale (Somerville 2007). This change can be characterised in two ways: firstly, through managed migration, the New Labour government sought macroeconomic gain by allowing both highly skilled and unskilled workers to enter the UK labour market. Secondly, however, there also became a greater focus on border control and on reducing the numbers of those seeking asylum in the UK. Between 1997 and 2010 the New Labour government introduced a raft of legislation, beginning with the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, that created a 'hostile environment' for asylum seekers with the triple threat of enforced destitution, dispersal away from London and the South East and the threat of indefinite detention (Bloch and Schuster 2005). Such legislation was implemented to deter asylum seekers from coming to the UK and to encourage refused asylum seekers (those not granted refugee status or another form of protection) to leave the UK. At the same time as focusing on securing economic benefits from immigration, Blair's ideology also centred on strengthening race relations in all government policy. Similarly, a focus on integration was also followed, extending the multicultural model that had existed for many years. This model can be characterised as having a strong emphasis on community cohesion. As such, New Labour introduced three refugee integration strategies during the course of their governments (in 2000, 2005 and 2009), responding to not only public concern about immigration but also Blair's own ideology on race relations, community cohesion and the economic benefits of migration. Following the publication of *Full and Equal Citizens* in 2000, Ager and Strang (2004) were commissioned

to undertake research that would inform later strategies. Indeed, the *Indicators of Integration Framework* has influenced each of the refugee integration strategy documents discussed in this paper.

As greater powers were devolved to Scotland and Wales from 1997 onwards, they too have developed their own refugee integration strategies. The introduction of compulsory dispersal for asylum seekers, away from London and the South East, has seen towns and cities in Scotland and Wales become dispersal locations since 1999. Dispersal provided a significant trigger for the development of refugee integration strategies as the majority of new dispersal locations had little or no prior experience of accommodating the needs of asylum seekers and refugees. Although immigration and asylum powers have not been devolved, a number of key areas where law-making powers are now with the national governments do directly impact upon refugees and asylum seekers such as health, education and social services. The following analysis considers these strategies in addition to the three strategies published by the New Labour government and highlights differences between the Westminster and devolved governments.

3. Discourses of Refugees and Commemoration

This paper aims to extend recent discourse analytic work that has focused on the 'refugee crisis' by focusing on policy documents produced by the UK and devolved governments. A growing body of discursive research has focused on constructions of refugees and asylum seekers in the media (Lea and Lynn 2003; Baker and McEnery 2005; Gabrielatos and Baker 2008; Leudar et al. 2008; KhosraviNik 2009), in political speeches (Charteris-Black 2006; Capdevila and Callaghan 2008; Every and Augoustinos 2008a; Goodman and Johnson 2013) and in lay discourses (Goodman and Burke 2010; Kirkwood et al. 2014; Nightingale et al. 2017). However, there have been few discursive studies of policy documents relating to refugee and asylum seekers (cf. Millar 2013), which this paper aims to address. Much of this previous work has been described as 'critical' and thus it appears that the present paper fills a significant lacuna in this area if we are to better understand the connections between language, power and ideology.

One key finding of this previous research has been the ways in which the use of categorisation functions to exclude, de-legitimise and de-humanise 'asylum seekers'. Goodman and Speer (2007) analysed publically available data such as newspapers and TV interviews with politicians. They found that a range of categorizations were used in debates about asylum including 'asylum seeker', 'refugee', 'economic migrant' and 'illegal immigrant'. They suggest that in attempting to categorise asylum seekers as those genuinely fleeing persecution or who are 'economic migrants', the public debate becomes about legitimacy and illegitimacy. They argue that the construction of arguments based on legitimacy functions to construct all asylum seekers as dishonest and attempting to cheat the immigration system. However, Every (2008) has also shown how arguments seemingly grounded in humanitarianism can also function to justify the exclusion of refugees. In her analysis of Australian politicians' talk she found that Australia was presented as a generous and humanitarian nation that was being taken advantage of by those seeking

asylum there. She points to the way in which practical concerns and 'costs to self' were constructed as placing limits on Australia's humanitarianism. Andreouli and Dashtipour (2014) suggest that a similar construction was found in the talk of UK immigration officers. In this analysis they found that immigrants were constructed as 'good' and 'deserving' when Britain was constructed as humanitarian and tolerant, on the one hand, but as 'bad' or 'undeserving' when Britain was constructed as being under threat by the influx of immigration. As such, they suggest that there is a dilemma between hospitality/humanitarianism on the one hand and abuse/threat on the other which 'creates ambivalence within constructions of Britishness and constructions of 'others"(2014: 108).

In this paper, I highlight how each of the documents analysed relies upon a humanitarian and commemorative discourse of the nation state having a 'proud history' of protecting refugees. Misztal (2003: 127) has argued that the construction of 'a unitary and coherent version of the past' is the main objective of such commemoration. Tileagă (2008: 359) similarly argues, in the context of discourses of commemoration about the Romanian revolution, that the primary ideological function of drawing on such resources 'is that of framing/reframing, controlling the various interpretations [..] disconnecting it from its controversial particulars and delegitimizing criticism'. Dunmire (2005: 482) also suggests that the use of commemoration allows political actors 'to project their assumptions and visions [of the past] and of the future as universal and grounded in common sense'. Sara Ahmed's (2007: 601) work is also of relevance here as she points to the ways in which the diversity and anti-racism policies of UK universities function as a 'discourse of organizational pride'. She shows how this discourse of pride can be used by such organizations to deny that they are racist (or have a problem with racism) because they have such a policy. She further goes on to suggest that universities are constituted as if they have the qualities described in such documents, which functions to suggest that the problem has already been solved and there is nothing left to do. In the context of research into refugees and asylum seekers, Kushner (2003) and Kundnani (2001) suggest that the use of discourses, such as the 'proud history', hide the fact that Britain also has a history of not protecting refugees and that there are conflictual counter-histories. They suggest that there is a need to look to the past critically and not just accept the discourse of a 'proud nation'.

In the next section, I outline the methodology employed in this study. I then move on to present an analysis of the ways in which ambivalence is constructed in government refugee integration strategy documents, particularly through the use of a 'proud history' discourse.

4. Methods

For this study seven refugee integration strategy documents published by the UK, Welsh and Scottish governments between 2000 and 2016 were selected for analysis. The UK government launched its first refugee integration strategy, *Full and Equal Citizens*, in 2000 and, under the leadership of Tony Blair issued two further strategies in 2005 and 2009. Whilst no new UK-wide strategies or updates have been published since the New Labour government

left office in 2010, the devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland have both continued to issue either new strategies or strategy plan updates. The policy documents analysed are the following:

- Full and Equal Citizens – Home Office (2000)
- Integration Matters – Home Office (2005)
- Refugee Inclusion Strategy - Welsh Assembly Government (2008)
- Moving on Together - Home Office (2009)
- Refugee Inclusion Strategy Action Plan June 2014 Update – Welsh Assembly Government (2014)
- New Scots – Scottish Government (2013)
- Refugee and Asylum Seeker Delivery Plan - Welsh Assembly Government (2016)

The question this study sought to answer was: 'how is integration discursively constructed in UK and devolved government refugee integration strategy documents?' To answer this question, each of the documents was analysed following Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis, which views all instances of language use as communicative events consisting of three dimensions: as a text, as discursive practice and as social practice, suggesting that the relationship between texts and social practice is mediated by discursive practice.

Thus the process of analysis of the seven policy documents included an analysis of the discourses drawn on in producing the text (referred to as 'interdiscursivity' by Fairclough 2001), textual analysis of the linguistic features of the strategy documents (the text) and relating these to the wider social practice under consideration (here, asylum, migration and integration). The process of analysis began with a thorough reading and re-reading of each of the strategy documents, at which point initial ideas about discourses emerging from the data were noted. I subsequently imported each of the documents into the qualitative analysis software programme NVivo and coded sections of the documents according to the initial discourses identified and further discourses that became evident during the coding process. Following Fairclough (2001) I focused particularly on the ways in which 'the problem' (here, integration) was constructed in the documents and the solutions suggested for solving 'the problem'. The initial themes identified in the analysis were of obligation, proud traditions, safety and achieving full potential.

Following this initial analysis more detailed textual analysis of the linguistic features of the text was undertaken. Fairclough (2001) suggests that detailed analysis of the linguistic features of texts can show how discourses are activated textually and suggests a number of tools for such textual analysis. Thus this part of the analysis focussed on the way in which the texts were structured, the choice of vocabulary and the ways in which clauses were combined. This included a focus on the grammar used in clauses, modality, transitivity, nominalisations and the 'voice' (whether active or passive) used in the sentences to determine the level of authority given to the discourses used in each of the strategy documents.

The final stage of analysis considered the relationship between discursive practice and broader social practices. As such I considered whether there were political, ideological and social consequences of the discursive practice identified and whether this pointed to unequal power relations in society. Fairclough (2001) also suggests consideration should be given to the current social order and whether those in power have an interest in the problem not being solved, which is also considered in this paper.

The analysis reported in this article therefore begins by considering how 'integration' is discursively constructed and who is presented as being allowed to 'integrate'. The second section will then consider whether the current social order means that governments have an interest in not solving the problem. Here, I will argue that the strategies use ambivalent uses of the pronoun 'we' and that each are framed around a discourse of the nation having a 'proud history' of protecting refugees. In this article, I make particular use of Billig's (1997) work on 'dialogic repression', which argues for a focus on the absences as well as the presences in discourse. Indeed, Billig (1997), in making links between discursive psychology and psychoanalytic theory argues that repression is itself a discursive process. Zerubavel (2006: 1) similarly argues for a focus on 'what is not said', referring to such omissions as 'conspiracies of silence' and I identify use of the 'proud history' discourse as a significant example of this. Finally, I analyse the solutions that are presented in these strategy documents and conclude that these documents generate ambivalent responses to refugee integration through reliance on the 'proud history' discourse which leads to integration being constructed as a more one- than 'two-way' process, despite being informed by Ager and Strang's (2004) framework which advocates such a position.

5. Analysis

5.1 What is integration and who is it for?

Scholars have argued that there is a taken-for-granted assumption that the nation-state has the moral right to exclude (Billig 1995). Such an assumption can be seen in Extract 1, below, taken from New Labour's first refugee integration strategy, *Full and Equal Citizens* (Home Office 2000). Here there is an immediate ambiguity created in the foreword by Barbara Roche MP relating to who the strategy is for – refugees or all those who have fled persecution – and who the government is creating an obligation towards when implementing this strategy.

[Extract 1]

> Over the years, many families have come to the United Kingdom having fled persecution. Many have taken the opportunities offered to them to rebuild successful, safe and happy lives for themselves and their families. I want to make sure that these opportunities are available to all refugees. (2000: 1)

While research by Zetter (2007) has shown that use of the terms 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' has often been confused, it is significant here because of the ideological assumptions of the New Labour government around reducing the

numbers of those claiming asylum in the UK (Fekete 2005). Although a small note within the aims of the strategy (p.2) provides a definition of a refugee that is intended to be used for the purposes of this strategy, no explanation is given to why it is only those recognised as refugees who are the focus. Thus, Extract 1, which may appear to be constructing 'inclusion' needs to be considered within this context and may function to 'exclude' asylum seekers from this construction of integration. This lack of explanation causes particular problems for the strategy in its opening aims (p. 2-3) which focus on the asylum process and in particular how the dispersal of asylum seekers to different areas of the UK has generated the need for this strategy. Indeed, constructing integration as a process for refugees only fails to recognise the intimate linking of the categories 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' in a system in which most refugees will have initially spent some time in the UK as an asylum seeker whilst their case was being decided. Goodman and Speer (2007), in discussing categorisations such as 'refugee', 'asylum seeker' and 'migrant', have argued that use of the term 'asylum seeker' functions to de-legitimize and justify the harsh treatment of asylum seekers. Indeed, inconsistencies in category use are apparent throughout *Full and Equal Citizens* (Home Office 2000) and it becomes clear that rather than a fully formed policy document, in which the government is setting out its vision, the strategy is more a work in progress. Indeed it is noted that the strategy is intended as a starting point (Home Office 2000: 2). However, this is not to say that this policy document is constructed dialogically; it does mention wanting to hear from refugees (but not those seeking asylum) and members of local communities but it does not offer questions that they want answers to. Therefore integration is constructed in this initial document as something only for those who have a settled status in the UK and not something which is to be promoted for asylum seekers (even though this is not stated explicitly).

By contrast, in both *Integration Matters* (Home Office 2005) and *Moving on Together* (Home Office 2009), it is explicitly stated that the strategies are for refugees only, based on the assumption that integration only begins from the day that refugee status in the UK is granted. In *Integration Matters* (Home Office 2005) the government acknowledges that integration experiences do occur for asylum seekers whist their cases are being decided, but with the caveat seen in Extract 2, below.

[Extract 2]

> integration in the full sense of the word can take place only when a person has been confirmed as a refugee and can make plans on the basis of a long-term future in the UK (2005: 10).

This conceptualisation not only creates a discourse which positions refugees as being 'deserving' of the chance to integrate and asylum seekers as 'undeserving' (Sales 2002), but also reaffirms the New Labour government's commitment to deterring asylum seekers from entering the country (Fekete 2005). Thus, it also supports Goodman and Speer's (2007) argument that use of the categorisation 'asylum seeker' functions to justify the harsh treatment of asylum seekers.

In Extract 2 we see the justification for this conceptualisation of integration resting upon the refugee's ability to 'make plans on the basis of a long-term future in the UK'. However, it should also be noted that the ability of refugees to plan a long-term future in the UK was also undermined in 2005 with the removal of indefinite leave to remain for those recognised as refugees in the UK. At this time, temporary, 5 years limited leave to remain for all new refugees was introduced making it more difficult for refugees to plan for a long-term future because indefinite leave could only be applied for at the end of the 5-year period. Again this may confirm the ideological beliefs of the Labour government that the asylum system was being abused and needed to be reformed in order to curtail the number of asylum applicants (Fekete 2005). Similarly, if the strategies were to include asylum seekers it would be counter to many of the asylum reforms introduced by the Labour government (and previous Conservative government), such as the prohibiting of asylum seekers from entering paid employment. There is therefore an apparent dilemma inherent in these strategies between deterrence (of people applying for asylum) and integration of refugees.

In both the Welsh Assembly Government (2008) and Scottish Government (2013) refugee integration strategies a different approach is taken which avoids some of the ambiguity created in the Westminster strategies and avoids the creation of a deserving/undeserving dichotomy between refugees and asylum seekers. Whilst, the Welsh and Scottish government's strategies are predicated on the notion that integration begins from the first day of arrival in the host nation, it is interesting to note the use of differing terms here and the discursive effects that each may have. In contrast to the UK and Scottish governments, the Welsh Government use the term 'inclusion' within their strategy document, which has the rhetorical effect of being open and inclusive to everyone, regardless of immigration status. However, as the strategy develops it becomes clear that the Welsh Government construct refugee inclusion and refugee integration as two separate processes and make a number of disclaimers as to their ability to integrate asylum seekers when immigration policy remains a non-devolved matter:

[Extract 3]

> The Welsh Assembly Government recognises immigration and asylum matters are not devolved matters. There are, however, a wide range of ways in which asylum seekers come into contact with services which are devolved such as health, housing, social services and education. (2008: 2)

The title of the Scottish strategy, *New Scots*, through its national positioning category also creates a discourse of integration that is quite distinct from the Welsh and Westminster strategies in being both more welcoming and inclusive with a focus on citizenship.

In response to their initial strategy (Home Office 2000) the Home Office commissioned research into refugee integration, in order to inform further strategies. In their *Indicators of Integration* report, which informed *Integration Matters* (Home Office 2005), Ager and Strang (2004) offered a comprehensive definition of integration which drew on all ten indicators in their framework. However, the definition offered by the Westminster government in *Integration Matters* (Home Office 2005: 11) is more selective:

[Extract 4]

> Integration takes place when refugees are empowered to: achieve their full potential as members of British society; contribute fully to the community; and access the public services to which they are entitled.

Whilst Ager and Strang's (2004) definition of integration listed the areas in which refugees should achieve their full potential (health, education, employment and housing), these are noticeably absent from the Home Office definition. Missing too is the important caveat that these outcomes should be equivalent to the outcomes and opportunities of the wider British public. The reason for this omission may lie in New Labour's strategy of attempting to reduce asylum applications but may also relate to the opening up of the UK's labour markets to Eastern European workers from Accession countries in 2004 which was attracting a great deal of media and public attention at the time *Integration Matters* was published. Similarly Ager and Strang's (2004) definition also includes greater specificity around community relations suggesting that a key initial element of integration is for refugees to feel a part of *a* community, whether that be national, religious or ethnic, as well as a part of the wider community in which they live.

Interestingly, The Welsh Assembly Government (2008: 1) also offer a similar definition of refugee inclusion in their strategy, shown below in Extract 5:

[Extract 5]

> Refugee inclusion takes place when a refugee becomes a fully active member of society, participating in and contributing to the economic, social, cultural, civil and political life of the country.

As previously noted, the Welsh Government explicitly states that they believe inclusion begins from the first day of arrival in the country (as an asylum seeker or as a refugee), but that they see refugee inclusion and integration as two separate processes. This therefore causes a number of problems for the definition which they posit because of the restrictions placed on those applying for asylum by the current asylum system. For example the Westminster government's changes to the immigration system between 1993 and 2006 restricted the ability of asylum seekers to work and reduced the welfare support given to them, reducing their ability to contribute to the economic and cultural life of the country. This may therefore represent a problem for the Welsh Government's 'vision' of refugee inclusion that may remain unresolved unless powers relating to immigration are devolved to the National Assembly. Further complications for this definition are also to be found in the Welsh Government's (2016) Refugee and Asylum Seeker Delivery Plan which included, for the first time, a number of measures aimed at failed asylum seekers, a group who have had their rights curtailed further than those in the initial process of applying for asylum. For example, failed asylum seekers who are able to claim Section 4 support receive support in the form of a payment card only, with no cash given at all. This further restricts their ability to become a fully active member of society that is the aim of the inclusion strategy.

The Scottish Government (2013: 9) offer a very different conception of integration in *New Scots* that is shown in Extract 6, below.

[Extract 6]

> We see integration as being a two-way process that involves positive change in both the individuals and the host communities and which leads to cohesive, multi-cultural communities.

In this definition it is less clear what elements the Scottish Government sees as making up integration (although in the sentence which follows a similar concept of integration to the Westminster government is espoused). Similarly, while this definition may appear to place the Scottish Government as the active agent in defining integration, the 'we' here is not the Scottish Government. Rather the 'we' in this statement are a consortium of interested parties, including Scottish Government but also refugee community representatives and organisations which work closely with refugees and asylum seekers. By agreeing this definition in conjunction with refugees themselves refugees are given greater agency. This is in contrast to the definitions used in the Westminster strategy which took Ager and Strang's (2004) definition (developed following extensive research with refugees) and adapted it to suit their own ideological assumptions.

Through analysing how the 'problem' is defined, it has been shown that the UK government face an ideological dilemma (Billig et al. 1988) between the deterrence of asylum seekers and integration of refugees which plays out within these strategy documents. These constructions reflect the importance of category memberships but fail to take account of the linking between the categories 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker', in that most 'refugees' are awarded this status within the UK, having been in the country whilst their asylum case was decided. In the next section, I analyse how each of the strategies are framed using commemorative discourses of a 'proud history' of protecting refugees that represses both this dilemma and, in particular, the UK government's creation of a 'hostile environment' for asylum seekers.

5.2 'A proud history of providing refuge'

Whilst there are differences between the devolved governments and Westminster in their definitions of integration and when it should begin, analysis of their integration strategies reveals a common discursive construction used (mostly) in the introductions to each strategy. That is, the UK, Wales or Scotland is constructed as being a proud protector of those fleeing persecution and is created through the repeated commemorative discourse of a 'proud history'. For example Extracts 7, 8 and 9 are taken from the UK, Welsh and Scottish government strategies.

[Extract 7]

> The UK has a heritage of welcoming refugees in which it can take pride. (Home Office 2005: 6)

[Extract 8]

Wales has a proud history of providing refuge to people fleeing persecution. (Welsh Government 2008: Ministerial Foreword)

[Extract 9]

Scotland has had a long history of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world, which we celebrate. (Scottish Government 2013: 1)

This construction functions to show how the governments acknowledge their commitments to refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention through the country itself being the active agent providing the protection or welcoming refugees. However, in the case of the Westminster strategy this 'commemoration' was constructed against a backdrop of changes to the asylum system which were intended to reduce the number of asylum applicants coming to the UK, meaning that pride, here, may be used as a rhetoric for limitation and may create 'fantasy images' (Ahmed 2007: 607). Kushner (2003) and Kundnani (2001) suggest that the use of such 'commemoration' discourses may repress other histories of not offering protection to refugees and point to the need to critically examine the use of such discourses. Use of the 'proud history' discourse here, may, as Sara Ahmed (2007) has suggested, function to imply that the problem ('integration') has already been solved (by having this 'proud history' and being welcoming) and that there is therefore nothing left to do. Darling (2013) has argued that it is through the discourses in such policy documents that perceptual fields in relation to asylum are shaped which allow citizens to position their own views and actions. Darling (2013: 1791) talks of the 'proud record' serving as a 'moral technology' in this regard which also produces 'particular forms of moral subjectivity'. His focus on hospitality, like Kushner (2003) and Kundnani (2001) points to the duality inherent within the discourse of the 'proud history', stating that it represents 'hospitality infused with seemingly necessary hostility' (Darling 2013: 1795). This construction also serves to reinforce the deserving/undeserving binary between those recognised as refugees and those whose cases have yet to be decided. The examples shown above also highlight the ideological difference between the Westminster and devolved governments in who should be allowed to integrate. Here, by contrast, it is constructed as who each of the governments have a proud history of protecting; with the Westminster government (Extract 7) stating that this proud history has only been for 'refugees' while the Welsh government (Extract 8) promote themselves as proud protectors of 'people fleeing persecution' and the Scottish government (Extract 9) as protectors of 'refugees *and* asylum seekers'. Particularly in the case of the Westminster government, this discourse functions to deny integration to asylum seekers and justifies the UK Government's 'hostile environment' approach.

Extract 8, taken from the Welsh Government's *Refugee Inclusion Strategy*, does further rhetorical work by seeking to define who exactly protection will be offered to, and in this case it is those fleeing persecution, in line with the United Nations Convention definition. Whilst such a construction does not draw on a deserving/undeserving binary it could be argued that such rhetorical work creates a binary between who is 'genuine' and who is 'bogus'

(Zetter 2007) and also works to reaffirm the notion of Wales being the 'tolerant nation' (Williams 2015). Williams suggests that the idea of the 'tolerant nation', although initially stemming from Welsh-English relations, has been called into question more recently as the ethnic minority population of Wales has expanded, particularly in the areas of Wales which have hosted dispersed asylum seekers. She shows that discourses of tolerance and inclusion have been a central part of the language of the Welsh Government since devolution and in their *Refugee Inclusion Strategy* (2008), it can be seen particularly through drawing on the idea of a 'proud', 'historical', 'tradition' of protecting those fleeing persecution. However, Evans (2015) draws attention to the fact that whilst Wales does have a long history of migration, when the UK as a whole accepted large numbers of refugees (from Bosnia or Rwanda for example in the 1990s), Wales was largely unaffected by such migration until the beginning of the 21st century when asylum seekers were first dispersed to Wales.

Whilst the government, or country, are seen as the active agent in providing the welcome or protection to refugees in each of the examples above, it is also of note to analyse the sentences which follow the initial construction of the UK as a proud protector.

> [Extract 10]
>
> The contribution of our refugee communities over successive generations has helped make Scotland the proud, successful and diverse country it is today. (Scottish Government 2013: 1)
>
> [Extract 11]
> And refugees can make a huge contribution to the enrichment of our national life. (Home Office 2005: 6)

In *New Scots* (Extract 10) refugees themselves are the active agent, shown through the use of the verb 'help', which constructs refugees as actively contributing to the diversity and success in Scotland. This is also achieved through a nominalisation 'the contribution', which importantly does not hide refugees as the active agent in the sentence. By contrast, in the Westminster strategy (Extract 11), use of the modal verb 'can' constructs an account of possibility, rather than the certainty expressed in the Scottish strategy. This construction can also be seen as hedging (Hodge and Kress 1988) the possible benefits that refugees bring to the UK. This hedging is representative of the ideologies that the Labour government had at the time and the dilemma they faced between seeking economic benefits from migration to the UK whilst also curtailing asylum applications. Indeed, it appears that integration may be constructed by the Westminster government as a neoliberal paternalistic relationship concerned with what refugees can contribute to the nation. This therefore suggests that whilst the strategies may initially work up a moral community through use of the 'proud history' discourse, it is not expressed as a human rights obligation but rather as a form of paternalistic benevolence.

In the examples discussed in this section the 'proud history' discourse is used to construct integration as a process that the current social order has little interest in solving. Whilst it presents the government as caring and welcoming, the reliance on the 'proud history' discourse leads to little being

offered in policy terms that will aid integration. At the same time it represses more recent histories of a 'hostile environment' for asylum seekers who are constructed as unwelcome, meaning that these strategies may fail to consider the relationship between the categories 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' and that most refugees arriving in the UK have to spend often considerable periods of time within the asylum system before receiving a grant of refugee status.

5.3 Who is the 'we' in the strategy?

A common discursive feature of each of the strategy documents analysed was the use of the pronoun 'we'. Fairclough (2000) has shown that in the language of New Labour 'we' can be used to refer 'exclusively' to the government or 'inclusively' to refer to Britain and the British people but that this distinction is not clear cut because there is often ambivalence and vagueness within statements which makes it difficult to ascertain whether an inclusive or exclusive 'we' is being used. This was found to be the case in the three New Labour refugee integration strategies analysed here, and although in most cases 'we' could be seen as referring exclusively to the government and their attempt to create a discourse of integration, the more ambiguous inclusive 'we' was also used particularly in the strategy introductions, for example:

> [Extract 12]
>
> A strategy based on a proud reaffirmation of Britain's heritage of providing a haven for the oppressed, and on the strong interest we all have in ensuring that refugees can contribute to British society to the full extent of their ability. (Home Office 2005: 3)
>
> [Extract 13]
>
> In welcoming and supporting refugees it is essential that we do all we can to optimise that contribution. (Home Office 2009: 6)

In Extracts 12 and 13 it is not clear who the inclusive 'we' is referring to; whether it is 'all of us' who live in the UK, just British people who live in the UK, or perhaps only those with an interest in refugee integration. Indeed, Fairclough (2000: 36) suggests that 'the apparent inclusiveness of the language is at the expense of a vagueness that obfuscates difference'. This vagueness may be in part due to the competing ideologies discussed previously of reducing asylum applications whilst maintaining an international commitment to refugee protection. In these extracts the neoliberal paternalism discussed previously is once again present ('refugees can contribute to British society to the full extent of their ability', 'optimise that contribution') and it is not clear whether contributing to 'the full extent of their ability' is for the refugees benefit or 'ours'.

By contrast, and perhaps surprisingly, the Welsh Assembly Government use the pronoun 'we' less overall than the New Labour strategies and it is used almost always as the exclusive 'we'. Indeed, in their *Refugee Inclusion strategy* (2008), solutions to the identified problems were constructed in the form 'the Welsh Assembly Government will…' (discussed further in section 5.4). The main use of 'we' in this strategy is in each of the chapters which has a section headed 'where are we now?' which, whilst ambiguous, also appears to

point to an exclusive rather than inclusive 'we'. This is due to the style of the strategy document and its corporate style structure which identifies problems and offers solutions which the Welsh Assembly Government are positioned as being responsible for ensuring the success of such measures. Whilst Williams (2015) has suggested that the Welsh Assembly Government have attempted to promote themselves as inclusive and tolerant the use of the 'we' in this policy document does not appear to follow this.

As with the Welsh strategy, In *New Scots* (2013) the pronoun 'we' is not used as frequently as in the strategies issued by the New Labour government and is predominantly found in the strategy's introduction and its intended outcomes. However, and in contrast to the Welsh strategy, where 'we' is used, it is most often the inclusive 'we' referring to everyone in Scotland.

[Extract 14]

> This strategy represents one subject-specific contribution to realising the wider, shared vision of a Scotland in which we are all able to live with human dignity and where we can all enjoy our human rights and fundamental freedoms in full. (Scottish Government 2013: 16).

[Extract 15]

> We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. (Scottish Government 2013: 22)

Use of the pronoun 'we' in Extracts 14 and 15 creates a discourse of an inclusive Scotland which is indeed inclusive for all and does not exclude forced migrants from the discourses of integration which are constructed particularly by the New Labour strategies, and to an extent by the Welsh Government strategies.

5.4 The language of government: What the government *will* do

Whilst on its own use of the 'proud history' discourse begins to create an ambivalent response, it is also of importance to analyse how the governments discursively construct their responses to the perceived 'problem'. Indeed, it is here that we see differences in the construction of ambivalence between the UK and devolved governments.

The Welsh Assembly Government's initial inclusion strategy (2008), and its updates (2014, 2016), each have a very clear focus on responsibility and what they, as a government, will do to achieve the aims of the strategy. In familiar, corporate language this is constructed in such a way as to show who the active agent is in addressing the problem (Extract 16).

[Extract 16]

> To achieve the objective of ensuring refugees are able to gain English Language skills the Welsh Assembly Government will: … (Welsh Government 2008: 45)

Use of the modal verb 'will' places the Welsh Assembly Government as actively working to achieve the objectives that it had laid out within the strategy. However, these discursive formations also show that it is the Welsh Government who have the power to decide how to solve these problems, it is non-dialogical and suggests that they are in control of a process that is clear-cut. Despite this, as analysis revealed previously, a tension still exists relating to the extent with which the Welsh Assembly Government can act when immigration is not a devolved matter. In this way, the strategy is structured around the areas of which it does have devolved powers and can therefore say what they will do. However, it also creates a welcoming and inclusive discourse, which as discussed previously, has been at the heart of Welsh Government policy following the creation of the National Assembly.

In *New Scots* (2013), the Scottish Government follow a different format consisting of the current policy context, refugee's experiences of the policy area, areas for development and outcomes for the policy area. In addition to featuring a section detailing refugee's recent experience of the policy area, each of the outcomes is constructed in a way which places emphasis on what the refugee will be able to do if the strategy is a success.

[Extract 17]

> Refugees and asylum seekers are able to achieve the English language skills they need to successfully integrate with Scotland's communities. (Scottish Government 2013: 55)

[Extract 18]

> Refugees and asylum seekers access appropriate education opportunities and increase their qualifications/knowledge/experience as a result. (Scottish Government 2013: 55)

Extracts 17 and 18 demonstrate a very different construction from the Welsh strategy, which places emphasis on what the government will do, instead giving agency to the refugees themselves and what they should be able to do themselves if the strategy is successful. The Westminster Government too constructs it's response to how it will solve the problem in a different way:

[Extract 19]

> That help must be provided in a timely way, and particularly during the critical period after receipt of a positive decision on asylum. (Home Office 2005: 25)

[Extract 20]

> Another important tool in assisting new refugees to establish themselves in the UK will be the new Refugee Integration Loan, should the refugee wish to take advantage of this opportunity. (Home Office 2005: 65)

In Extracts 19 and 20, neither the government nor the refugees themselves are the active agents, instead what the government will do is constructed in passive sentences using nouns such as 'help' and 'tool'. In this second example, and in other places, hedging (Hodge and Kress 1988) is used by the

government and gives the impression that the Government does not know all of the answers to this 'problem' and that they may not wish to fully commit to some of the policies in the strategy:

> [Extract 21]
>
> Following further mapping of a cross-section of existing good practice, the Government intends to pilot the new system during 2005. (Home Office 2005: 64)

In Extract 21, through use of the verb 'intend', commitment to policies is hedged and is therefore in direct contrast to the Welsh Government strategy which uses the much more active 'we will' construction. In general, analysis of the three Westminster strategies revealed a less clear solution to the 'problem' than in the Scottish and Welsh examples. The use of hedged constructions and passivity are perhaps indicative of the dilemma faced by the Westminster government between the integration of refugees and the deterrence of asylum seekers, with the result being one in which such deterrence dominates and the response to refugee integration becomes an ambivalent one.

6. Discussion

> We allude to the history the UK has of welcoming refugees in this report, and politicians of all colours often invoke that history. But the conclusion we draw from our inquiry is that we cannot rest on our laurels. The UK has legal, and moral, obligations to provide refugees with protection, but protection must be more than a piece of paper declaring someone to be a refugee. (APPG on Refugees 2017: 54)

The above quotation, from a report by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Refugees, highlights many of the themes raised in this paper regarding ambivalent approaches to refugee and asylum seeker integration in the UK. In particular it acknowledges that there has been a tendency to employ the 'proud history' discourse without giving due consideration to what 'protection' fully means. In this paper I have highlighted how each of the strategy documents are framed around the liberal and humanitarian discourse of the nation state having a 'proud history' of protecting refugees, with this discourse appearing prominently within the opening pages of each of the strategies analysed. However, I have also outlined the ways in which UK asylum and immigration policy has become a 'hostile environment', which simultaneously aims to deter individuals from coming to the UK to claim asylum and encourages those who have been refused asylum to leave the UK. I have shown how this policy, aimed at asylum seekers, simultaneously plays out within these refugee integration policies and at the same time contributes to this 'hostile environment' for asylum seekers. In this sense drawing on the 'proud history' discourse functions to repress the UK's history of not protecting asylum seekers *and* refugees and supports Darling's (2013: 1795) claims that it is 'hospitality infused with seemingly necessary hostility'. It also does further work, in the Westminster examples, in generating ambivalence by suggesting that the problem has already been solved (by being welcoming) and that there is nothing left to do if 'we' have the qualities described in such

documents (Ahmed 2007). Indeed, the Westminster strategies had little to offer on concrete measures to aid integration reflected in the language used to describe what the government would do to address the 'problem'. Where this was discussed in the strategy documents it was constructed as a form of ambivalent and neoliberal paternalism (Nightingale et al. 2017), where the focus was on what the refugee could contribute to the host nation. The main measure introduced by the Westminster Government as a result of these strategies, the Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES), was scrapped in 2011 as part of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government's austerity measures. More recently, however the Scottish government have introduced their own holistic integration service for refugees and the Welsh government have introduced a refugee, asylum seeker and migrant inclusion service. This demonstrates that the active language used by the Scottish and Welsh Government's in their refugee integration strategies has translated into positive policy responses. However, the Westminster government's reliance on the 'proud history' discourse and ambivalent approach to what they will do means that there is currently no UK-wide dedicated refugee integration service. However, if we were to believe that the UK is constituted in the ways that the 'proud history' commemoration discourse suggests, then such a service would not be necessary of course.

The findings of this analysis support previous discursive research that has focussed on the ways in which refugees and asylum seekers are constructed in political, media and public discourse. In particular this paper supports the findings of Every (2008) in showing that liberal discourses of tolerance and humanitarianism can be used to construct refugees as 'deserving' of support (and to integrate) and asylum seekers as being 'undeserving'. The notion of the United Kingdom having a 'proud history' of welcoming refugees, as it is constructed in the strategy documents analysed in this paper, is not reflected in either the talk of advocates of asylum seekers or refugees and asylum seekers themselves. Every and Augoustinos 2008b), for example, point to the difficulties for asylum advocates to challenge negative discourses around asylum seekers using such liberal and humanitarian discourses. Similarly, Nightingale et al. (2017: 138) similarly suggest that the positive constructions of the hospitable nation leads to 'sanitized exclusion' and constrains the discourse of asylum advocates to one of 'ambivalent paternalism'. The use of such paternalistic discourses were also found within the documents analysed in the present paper which framed refugee integration in terms of what the refugee could contribute to the nation rather than through a human rights obligation. Indeed, recent discursive research that focusses on the talk of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK has begun to suggest that far from feelings of welcome and hospitality, in a 'hostile policy environment' refugees instead go to rhetorical lengths to avoid making direct accusations of racism and may trivialise or play down their experiences of racism (Parker 2018) and racist violence (Kirkwood et al. 2013).

7. Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated an on-going dilemma that exists within government refugee integration strategies between the integration of refugees

and the deterrence of asylum seekers. The strategies analysed were found to construct ambivalent responses to refugee integration that relied on commemoration discourses of a 'proud history' of providing welcome to refugees in all parts of the UK. Such a 'proud history' does not sit easily with the UK's 'hostile policy environment' (Bloch and Schuster 2005) for asylum seekers and suggests that a different approach is needed to ensure that refugees can achieve the aim, stated in the strategies, of 'achieving their full potential'.

More widely this research contributes to existing debates around the use of categories in migration discourses (e.g. Goodman et al. 2017; Crawley and Skleparis 2018). Such category use is of importance in the context of refugee integration discussed here and demonstrates the ways in which the categories of 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' are intimately linked and that through excluding asylum seekers from integration, as the UK government has done in order to pursue its 'hostile environment' policy, leads to an ambivalent response towards integration. Whilst the Welsh and Scottish governments avoid some of this conceptual ambiguity by offering a more inclusive approach to integration, this approach is itself constrained by immigration and asylum remaining a matter reserved to the UK government.

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