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What's in a Frame? Cosmopolitan Morality, the Media and Interventionism

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by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the media-foreign policy nexus through a specific focus on the moral framing of conflict and interventionism within British media and policy discourses. While morality has been identified as a frequently used frame through which we may understand issues, there has been little extant discussion of the nature of morality embedded within media texts, or how it may shape understanding and policy-making. This research contributes to this void through forwarding cosmopolitan morality framing as a new theoretical framework. Consideration is given to how appeals to a cosmopolitan moral consciousness can resonate and build support for or legitimise particular foreign policies. The thesis further explores how cosmopolitan morality framing may work simultaneously to perpetuate uneven relations through constructed 'othering'. Ontologically, the research adopts a social constructivist foundation and hermeneutical methodology, utilising frame analysis from the broader interpretivist tradition of discourse analysis as well as a holistic conceptualisation of the media. Data collection is spread across both traditional 'mainstream' and 'new' media, comprising print, online and social media sources. The sources examined include the British daily newspapers, *The Guardian* and *The Times,* the digital news site *BBC News Online*, and the global social media outlet *Twitter*. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) provides a regional focus to the research, with three recent conflicts in Libya, Syria and Iraq utilised as empirical case studies. The research focuses on specific ten day periods within each conflict to produce a snapshot of media frames and policy reaction. These periods include; the advance of pro-Gaddafi forces on Benghazi, Libya (9-19 March 2011), the chemical weapons attack on Ghouta, Syria (21-31 August 2013), and the siege of Sinjar by Islamic State forces in Iraq (3-13 August 2014). The research finds that notions of cosmopolitan morality are embedded within media/policy discourses to varying degrees, but are extremely significant when coupled with the cognitive and temporal capacity to impede crisis escalation.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration or the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AQI: al-Qaeda in Iraq

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

BISA: British International Studies Association

CDA: Critical discourse analysis

CMF: Cosmopolitan morality framing

CWC: Chemical Weapons Convention (1993)

EU: European Union

FCO: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)

FSA: Free Syrian Army

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

GTD: Global Terrorism Database

GWoT: Global War on Terror

HRC: Human Rights Council

HRW: Human Rights Watch

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

ICRtoP: International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect

IS: Islamic State (also ISIL/ISIS/Da'ish: Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham/Dawlat al-Islamiyyah al-Sham)

JIC: Joint Intelligence Committee (UK)

JWT: Just war tradition

KRG: Kurdistan Regional Government

LCC: Local Coordination Committees

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

MENA: Middle East and North Africa

MoD: Ministry of Defence (UK)

MP: Member of British Parliament

NTC: National Transitional Council (Libya)

OPCW: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

R2P: Responsibility to protect doctrine

RTLMC: Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (Rwanda)

SAS: Special Air Service (British Army)

SNC: Syrian National Council

UGC: User generated content

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNGA: United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution

US: United States of America

WMD: weapons of mass destruction (including nuclear, chemical, biological, radiological)

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.' 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.' 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master – that's all.'

(Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*, 1871)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Words make worlds (Cornwall, 2010: 1)

Worlds are created and sustained by words, states Andrea Cornwall (2010: 1). Language has the potential capability to shape our understandings of issues in ways we do not often recognise or even realise, to define the world around us, and to make possible our consequent actions. It is both constituted by and constitutive of the social world (Wetherell et al, 2001: 16). The instrumental use of language therefore holds considerable agency. How language resonates with audiences holds the possibility to open up a multitude of different worlds. As Alice found in her curious conversations with Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's (1871) childhood classic, we have agency over the words we choose to use to describe, and how we use them may denote meaning and determine which 'looking-glass' world becomes our reality. Words are thus inherently effective; they are, as Richard Jackson states, "never neutral" and they do not "just describe the world", but instead help to make it (2005: 21).

The thesis forwards the concept of cosmopolitan morality framing (CMF), defined as a way of presenting an issue so as to highlight and make salient cosmopolitan moral concerns, such as; a universal consideration of humanity elevated above the local, the extension of hospitality or solidarity, the promotion of human rights and dignity, the alleviation of suffering and a sense of responsibility to others. It is argued that CMF is frequently utilised by the media to encourage audiences to be concerned about geographically or cognitively distant issues or people. It is argued that a salient cosmopolitan morality frame draws conflict events closer in our consciousness through an emphasis on the principles above, encouraging us to care about people like ourselves; to "save strangers". The research findings demonstrate that CMF was present in the media reporting of all three conflict events analysed, however this was evident in distinct ways and to varying degrees of salience, prompting different foreign policy consequences. It is argued that when CMF is salient alongside the capacity to halt an escalation of large-scale violence in the form of 'direct causation' (see Lakoff 2013a; 2013b), it legitimises the need for a robust foreign policy response. Overall, the inconsistent utilisation of CMF to present distant conflict sustains

hierarchical choices over where, when and whom to assist in times of crisis despite the commitments of cosmopolitanism otherwise.

The research makes an original contribution to the discipline of International Relations (IR), and specifically to the media-foreign policy nexus, by examining the evidence and potential effect of CMF of conflict. In analysing the presence of cosmopolitan morality as a frame through which political issues are presented, we can further understand how perceptions may be shaped that encourage particular foreign policies. The contribution to knowledge is foremost theoretical and empirical, and while presented here briefly, it is discussed in greater detail in the theoretical and methodological framework in Chapter 2.

Theoretically, the research contributes greater understanding to the established concept of morality framing from the frame theory literature. The extant conceptualisation of morality is ill-defined, and the characteristic evidence and consequences of morality framing are underexplored. This research addresses these two aspects by defining morality from a cosmopolitan conceptualisation and demonstrating its discursive characteristics, and then addressing the consequences of its usage for British foreign policy. The research synthesises cosmopolitanism with frame theory and an ecological consideration of the media to forward the concept of CMF, as defined above. The theoretical contribution is developed through this novel conceptualisation which enables the revelation of cosmopolitan morality as a way of presenting a specific view of the world. Furthermore, it permits consideration of how cosmopolitan morality may be utilised instrumentally to frame political issues such as conflict, so as to engender certain foreign policies. The conceptualisation of CMF is not tied solely to the research but may be applied to other political and social contexts, such as migration or crime, to illuminate how moral language may motivate us to care about others or other issues. Empirically, the research contributes to the emerging bodies of literature that address the three cases studies selected. It contributes new and timely analysis of the British media reporting of these three conflict events, and new consideration of the possible effects of CMF on the formation of British foreign policy in each instance.

This chapter continues by discussing the position of and justification for the research. In this section it is argued that the media holds a role as both agent and instrument of political communication, and that CMF provides a specific window on the social world that may be influential on foreign policy decision-making. The rationale for case study selection is also justified. The second section details the research problem, alongside the guiding framework

for analysis. Finally, the third section outlines the structure of the rest of the thesis, surmising the main arguments articulated in each chapter. The chapter now turns to consider the position and justification of the research.

Positioning and justifying the research

The increase in civil and ethnic conflict during the 1990s (the Gulf War 1991, Somalia 1993-1995, Rwanda 1994, Bosnia 1992, Kosovo, 1999) contributed much ground for academic scholarship over where, when and if the UK or its western allies should interfere in distant conflict; that is conflicts that appear remote geographically or politically. Particular scholarship has focussed upon the role of the mass media as a conduit for information while also holding a performative role in motivating publics and politics surrounding these humanitarian foreign policy engagements. Debates abounded over the scale and nature of this agency, between those who celebrated the media's *influencing* role, such as the 'CNN effect' (Balabanova, 2010, 2011; Freedman, 2000; Gilboa, 2001; 2005a; 2005b; Hoge, 1994; Livingston, 1997; 2011; Robinson, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2008a, 2008b, 2011; Wheeler, 2000) or agenda-setting, priming, and framing theories (Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon, 2005; Entman, 2003; 2004; Hamdy and Gomaa, 2012; McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Powlick and Katz, 1998; Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007), and those that felt that the media were *influenced* by elites be they political or financial, such as the 'manufacturing consent' (Herman and Chomsky, 1994; Klaehn, 2002; 2009), and 'indexing' models (Bennett, 1990; Bennett et al, 2006; Livingston and Bennett, 2003; Zaller and Chiu, 1996).

This thesis sits somewhere between these two stances, holding a foundational assumption that these two positions need not be mutually exclusive; that the media can be both agent and instrument. Daniel C. Hallin (1989: 117) advocated a similar position from his seminal work on the US media during the Vietnam War, finding that the media can operate in different spheres, that of consensus, controversy or deviance, reflecting the media's ability to index to elite opinion, reflect political fracture or provide contestation. It is not the focus of this thesis to provide validation of these positions one way or the other. Rather, what has been accentuated from these debates is the notion that language is inherently important and a significant site for scholarship. To publicise, argue, legitimise, critique, silence, or motivate; the way that we use language can shape our understandings of political issues and events. It is conceivable then that words may shape policy (Litwak, 2001: 376).

The use of military intervention is governed by legal and moral norms over the permissible use of force overriding the sanctity of state sovereignty. One of the lasting effects of UK engagements in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, has been to refocus the demand for clear and credible information and the genesis of the parliamentary prerogative (Strong, 2015: 604). This refocus is highly significant, as Jackson explains "the enactment of any large-scale project of political violence – such as war or counter-terrorism – requires a significant degree of political consensus and consensus is not possible without language" (2005: 1). Thus the media holds an important role; as information provider, arbiter, and possible legitimiser of military engagements abroad. The thesis is concerned with how this is enacted.

The media often revert to truisms when reporting on violence and atrocities; orating 'never again' or declaring that 'we must do something' sometimes appears to speak louder than any concerted action. It is as if Humpty Dumpty were uttering these words to Alice and they seem to mean different things in different instances (see Carroll, 1871). This research analyses the media's use of moral language to potentially motivate and legitimise UK foreign policy responses. This analysis is significant to our understanding of how appeals to morality can resonate, shape our understandings of instances of violent conflict, and thus frame a picture of the world that legitimises particular foreign policy responses. Gaye Tuchman (1978: 1) observes how media framing can engender different perceptions of political and social issues as "windows on the world" whereby;

> The view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or a backyard. The unfolding scene also depends upon where one stands, far or near, crane one's neck to the side, or gazing straight ahead, eyes parallel to the wall in which the window is encased (1978: 1)

This research focusses on the cosmopolitan morality window on the world. The research does not set out to determine the extent of media agency, indeed Charlie Beckett determines "it is always hard to pinpoint exact moments or to detail precise occasions when journalism has altered the course of events, rather than simply narrating them" (Beckett, 2008: 4). Instead it is with this narration that the research is concerned. Specifically, by understanding the role that morality plays in political communication we may find greater comprehension of why some conflicts resonate and generate public and political outcry and subsequent

demands for action over others, and how such linguistic tools may be used instrumentally for purposeful ends.

As stated, the research conceptualises CMF and then examines evidence for its presence across three cases studies of recent conflict. In order to manage the large amount of data these cases would generate an event-driven case selection homed in upon critical instances within each conflict.[1] These conflict events include; the advance of the Gaddafi government forces on the Libyan city of Benghazi and the threat of a civilian massacre there (March 2011); the large-scale chemical weapons attack in Ghouta during the Syrian civil war (August 2013); and the besiegement and persecution of the Yezidi community in Kurdistan by the militant Islamist group IS (August 2014).

These three cases have been selected due to their contemporaneity and interconnected nature. All have occurred over the course of a four year period in the aftermath of the UK's engagement in Iraq (2003), which has arguably reinvigorated the requirement for public consent in engagements of war, and the need for solid intelligence, credible and legitimate end goals and transparency. Here, the media communication of conflict plays an increasingly significant role. All three cases also took place under a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government led by Prime Minister David Cameron, ensuring a continuity of government representation in each instance. Although the uprisings in Libya and Syria were separate, they were considered in the British media as part of a series of protests under the 'Arab Spring'. In their aftermath, IS were able to capitalise on the fracture of Libya post-Gaddafi and the Syrian battleground, seizing territory in Syria and Iraq as part of their goal to establish a Caliphate. Therefore, while each case study is distinct, there is an interrelation between them that becomes increasingly patent throughout the thesis.

Finally, each case generated UK media and government discussion over the right response to be taken. The threat of violence in Libya was enough to compel a military intervention there, while the actual use of chemical weapons in Syria against civilians was not. The overrunning of Iraq by IS and the besiegement of the Yezidi community resulted in a limited humanitarian engagement focussed on the provision of aid and logistics. For varying reasons some violent conflicts garner widespread attention in policy and media circles, while others evade the cameras and spotlights as 'stealth' conflicts (Hawkins, 2011; 56). In each of the three cases

[1] The rationale behind this is discussed in greater detail in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods in Chapter 2.

the foreign policy response from the UK was different, providing interest and opportunity to consider why this might be through CMF.

Research problem

Having addressed the positionality and justification for the research, the research problem can be defined with more clarity. The problem that this research seeks to explore is three-fold. Firstly, what evidence is there of the presence of cosmopolitan morality framing within the media textual data analysed? Secondly, what role may this framing play in the communication of this conflict event? And thirdly, what effect may this framing have on foreign policy-making? The first of these questions permits the research to identify the evidence of CMF. This may be through the presentation of certain information or linguistic tools such as the use of; repetition, stereotyping, metaphor, analogy, emotional language or human interest reporting. Robert Entman's identification of four framing functions guides this aspect of analysis (2003: 417). According to Entman, frames will perform at least two of these functions when covering political issues or events;

(i) Defining effects of conditions as problematic
(ii) Identifying causes
(iii) Conveying a moral judgement of those involved in the framed matter
(iv) Endorsing remedies or improvements to the problematic situation (Entman, 2003: 417).

These functions form the guiding framework for the analysis of textual data and permit the uncovering of the possible presence of CMF. Therefore, developed from Entman's frame functions, analysis centres upon the descriptions and definitions of events, identification of the key protagonists and their constructed identities, and the presentation of foreign policy responses, alongside the actual policy statements emanating from the UK government. The textual data itself will also drive analysis forward, with notable aspects leading to case-specific coding. The second and third aspects of the research problem permits consideration of the possible effects of this way of viewing events. It is not sufficient to identify the presence or absence of CMF without considering what the consequences are of this presentation. As explained in the previous section, it is not the objective of the research to determine the extent of media influence, however the positionality of the research is that the

media can be both agent and instrument. It may be suggestible that CMF conceals, reveals, legitimises or delegitimises benign or self-interested foreign policy responses.

Outlining the thesis

This introductory chapter has highlighted the scope, position and justification of the research, as well as detailed the research problem to be addressed through the subsequent chapters. The chapter now provides more detail of the progression of the thesis argument through a chapter summary.

Chapter 2 presents and justifies the theoretical and methodological framework underpinning the research and the methods of data collation and analysis utilised. It does so by addressing three foundational aspects of the research. Firstly, the chapter discusses the extant theory underpinning the research; cosmopolitanism, framing theory as a theory of media effects, and the media ecology. It argues that the current attention to mediated cosmopolitanism does not consider the benefits of a frame theory approach to analysis, and that the extant recognition of morality framing fails to consider cosmopolitanism as a lens that may engender a particular view of the political and social world. It is also argued that an ecological consideration of the media is necessary to avoid methodological reductionism. Having identified the limitations of the extant scholarship, the second section forwards the conceptualisation of CMF as a way to address these gaps. It is argued that CMF is a way of presenting issues so as to make salient a cosmopolitan moral concern with distant others or issues. Analysis of this framing approach permits its discursive characteristics, as well as its salience and opposition from possible counter-frames. The third section of this chapter addresses the research methodology and methods. Here it is argued that in order to fulfil the research objective which focusses upon the interpretation of language, a constructivist ontology and hermeneutical methodology are appropriate to guide the selection of methods for the collation and analysis of textual data.

Analysis of textual data is concentrated upon three distinct case studies and these make up the focus of the next three chapters. Chapter 3 is centred upon the advance of Colonel Gaddafi's forces upon Benghazi, Libya, in March 2011. This chapter argues that CMF, alongside the capacity and opportunity to halt an impending atrocity provided legitimisation of the UK's interventionist response in Libya while simultaneously reproducing a sense of Western

(including UK) superiority as the liberators of Libya. It argues that the media data analysed projected a cosmopolitan morality framing of this conflict event by emphasising the humanitarian need to avert a large-scale atrocity. This is argued through the presentation of simplified identity constructions of the key actors which reduced events to a fairy-tale metaphor of 'good' versus 'evil', through the use of analogies of previous Western humanitarianism to highlight the potential foreign policy options available in response, and through the constructed sense of urgency which compressed the time-frame for decision-making, while also illustrating the capacity to be able to halt an impeding atrocity.

Chapter 4 analyses the media reporting of the large-scale use of chemical weapons in Ghouta, Syria in August 2013. The chapter argues that CMF was evident through an emphasis on what I term 'humanitarian deterrence', described as the need to uphold the normative taboo on chemical weapons in order to protect a future humanity, but that this frame competed for salience with one of 'intervention fatigue' in the aftermath of the UK's involvement in Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011). The effect of this frame competition was a cognitive distancing of the conflict event, the removal of victim agency through constructed othering, as well as the maintenance of hierarchical choices over foreign assistance. It is argued that the construction of humanitarian deterrence was undermined by a level of media contestation over the appropriate UK foreign policy response which created a sense of policy uncertainty. It was also weakened by a lack of human interest reporting and the emphasis of chemical weapons symptoms which contributed to an 'othering' of the attack victims, reducing them to 'anonymous bodies'. Finally, there existed no capacity to halt an impending atrocity, thus cognitively there was a temporal gulf between the attack and any potential interventionist response which relegated the latter to a punitive action due to the failure of systemic causation to resonate.

The final case study discussed in Chapter 5 is that of the targeted persecution of the Yezidi community in the Sinjar region of Kurdistan in northern Iraq. It is argued that a weak cosmopolitan morality frame in conjunction with cognitive distancing legitimised a limited response focussing upon the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid to alleviate the precariousness of those on Mount Sinjar. The chapter argues that while a cosmopolitan morality frame was exhibited through a media focus on alleviating an extreme humanitarian situation and potential genocide, this framing was not salient. The conflict event remained cognitively distant through a constructed 'othering' of the Yezidi community that emphasised them as culturally exceptional. It is further contended, that despite the humanitarian

presentation of this conflict event, British foreign policy was severely constrained by the recent experiences in Libya (2011) and Syria (2013) and therefore a limited humanitarian response remained as the UK government's apposite policy option which was supported by a perfunctory presence of CMF.

Chapter 6 forms the thesis conclusion, drawing analytical discussion of these three cases to a synthesis. The central arguments of the thesis are restated, namely that CMF was evident in all three of the cases analysed, however the findings suggest this was to varying degrees of salience, ultimately sustaining hierarchical choices over when, where and whom to assist during conflict or crisis. The chapter then details the main arguments of each of the case studies contributing to this conclusion. The limitations of the research are highlighted, specifically the need to balance the manageability of data with the desire for a holistic analysis of the media, and issues of interpretivist subjectivity surmounted through a mixed methods approach. Finally the chapter suggests how developments can be made in this area; specifically from the openings generated by this research, and also in term of related policy recommendations.

The thesis now progresses to Chapter 2, reviewing the existing theoretical scholarship which highlights the need for the forwarded conceptualisation of CMF, and then justifying the appropriate research methodology and methods to address this issue.

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Methodological Framework

> Each day we turn on the TV, open the paper and decide which new shards of information we will admit into our lives, what cruelties we will contemplate, for whom we will feel empathy (Elizabeth Kastor, *The Washington Post*, in Moeller, 1999: 225).

This chapter addresses the theoretical framework which underpins the research methodology. The research is concerned with the role that morality plays within the media framing of conflict and intervention. The three research questions outlined in the introduction are; firstly, what evidence is there of the presence of cosmopolitan morality framing within the media textual data analysed? Secondly, what role may this framing play in the communication of this conflict event? And thirdly, what effect may this framing have on foreign policy-making? To be able to address these questions the research needs to be grounded theoretically, philosophically, and methodologically, and these elements are dealt with in this chapter.

The chapter is split into three interrelated sections. Section 2.1 addresses the theoretical foundation of the study, addressing the existing scholarship on cosmopolitanism and frame theory and the current limitations of thinking in this area. Section 2.2 forwards a synthesis of cosmopolitanism's moral principles with the notion of media framing, to form CMF. Cosmopolitan morality framing is defined as a way of presenting an issue so as to highlight and make salient cosmopolitan moral concerns, such as; humanity as a universal concept, the extension of hospitality or solidarity, the promotion of human rights and dignity, the alleviation of suffering and a sense of responsibility to others. Cosmopolitan morality framing provides a novel framework that not only permits a detailed examination of how cosmopolitan morality may shape our understanding of events and encourage us to care about and for geographically or cognitively distant issues or people, but may also be transferable as a framework to other social phenomenon. Section 2.3 addresses the philosophical foundations of the research, the methodological approach and methods of data collation and analysis.

2.1: Review of extant theory and scholarship

This section of the chapter examines the theoretical foundations of the research. It begins by making distinct the interrelated concepts of ethics and morals and presenting the historical lineage of the theory, before drawing from the theoretical scholarship, the approach to morality from a cosmopolitan standpoint. Throughout, key scholarship on cosmopolitanism is drawn upon, and in particular the contemporary works of Lilie Chouliaraki (2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2010; 2015; 2016; with Blaagaard 2013), Luc Boltanski (1999) and Alexa Robertson (2010; 2012a; 2012b; 2013; 2015). Framing as a theory of media effects is also discussed, alongside alternative media effects theories. Key scholarship is drawn upon, in particular the work of Robert Entman (1993; 2003; 2004), and Gaye Tuchman (1978). The chapter will then address the conceptualisation of the media itself, as a broad 'ecology', comprising multiple interconnected media in constant flux. While providing the core theoretical assumptions underpinning the research, this review also highlights the limitations of the existing scholarship. It is argued that more recent scholarship of mediated cosmopolitanism has not taken into consideration the benefits of frame theory to present a window on the social world. Moreover, frame theory has identified morality as a frequently used frame through which issues are presented but fails to consider in more detail the nature or characteristic of this morality. The identification of these limitations leads to the theorisation of CMF which is then presented in section 2.2 Theorising Cosmopolitan Morality Framing.

Conceptualising cosmopolitanism: an historical lineage

In order to define cosmopolitanism and identify cosmopolitanism's moral principles we must first establish what is meant by morality. At this initial juncture a useful distinction is made between morality and ethics. The terms differentially derive from Greek (*ethos*, *ethikos*), and Latin (*mores*, *moralis*) (Walker and Lovat, 2014), and while both are concerned with right or just behaviour they also have nuanced differences. Morality is the concept of principled behaviour, concerning right behaviour on a broader level that involves societal norms; the "generality of principles, and … their justification" (Silverstone, 2007: 7). Ethics refers to the practice of principled behaviour in particular contexts such as the social, personal or professional (*ibid*). The thesis primarily refers to cosmopolitan 'morality' as the research

inquiry is concerned with more than the individualistic assessment of right and wrong, relocating this into a social space (Walker and Lovat, 2014) – the media. Silverstone forwards that the global media are "an increasingly significant site for the construction of a moral order" (*ibid*) and this is through the constructions of frameworks through which events are perceived and understandings shaped. Where the thesis refers to 'ethics' it is primarily in illustrating the practice of good or right conduct.

As iterated, cosmopolitan morality is central to the theoretical foundations of the research and warrants more detailed discussion. Cosmopolitanism is theoretically interesting in that it is, "both *pre*-national and *post*-national", simultaneously occupying the past and future through its "very old meaning and one that points to the future" (2007: 11). What is meant by this is that the theory is concerned with moving 'beyond the nation state', and yet derives from very ancient origins. Indeed the roots of the theory can be traced back to Ancient Greek and Roman thought, with the Cynic Diogenes of Sinope [b.412 BC] stating that he was a "citizen of the world" from the Greek *Kosmopolitês* (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2013). Throughout the evolution and development of cosmopolitanism certain moralistic principles have remained evident – such as openness to others – and these will be discussed further given their theoretical relevance to the research.

The historical line of development of cosmopolitanism places its origins within Ancient Greek philosophy, proceeding from the Cynics to the Greek and Roman Stoics (see Nussbaum, 1997). The theory found prominence with Immanuel Kant during the Enlightenment period, developing key thinking on right and just conduct during warfare through the just war tradition (JWT), later informing the principles of *jus ad bellum* (just reason for warfare) and *jus in bello* (right conduct during warfare) with the addition of *jus post bellum* (justice after war) (Orend, 2000: 51). Cosmopolitanism then entered a decline before, and rejuvenation after, World War II. It resurged theoretically in the post-cold war political climes, which saw a spate of ethnic conflict in the 1990s, post -9/11 western interventions and political and social upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (Beck and Grande, 2007: 11-12; Inglis, in Delanty, 12). While David Inglis cautions against a lack of interrogation with this historiography, it nevertheless provides some contextual relevance to the establishment of cosmopolitanism's moral contribution which may be traced back to the ancients.

Broadly speaking cosmopolitanism is concerned with consideration of a shared humanity and moral understanding, the extension of hospitality to the foreigner, and the avoidance of suffering in its various formations around the world. The research is informed by the characterisation provided by Skrbiš and Woodward who describe the cosmopolitan as advocating a "disposition of 'openness' toward others, displayed in cultural, political or aesthetic domains" (2005: 1). It is argued that such an attitude is expressed by an emotional and ethical commitment towards universalism, selflessness, worldliness and communitarianism" (*ibid*). While advocating moral and humanitarian principles, cosmopolitans point out our "vulnerability to social discrimination, poverty, and violence in global perspective" and support the possibilities that global institutions may bring in tackling such injustices (Brassett and Bulley, 2007: 3).

Having briefly addressed the lineage of cosmopolitan thinking, and also the distinctions between ethics and morality, it is necessary to consider what is meant more specifically by cosmopolitan morality. The principles of cosmopolitan morality will be traced throughout the extant lineage and scholarship.

One cosmos or two? The cosmopolitan notion of a universal humanity

Throughout the historical development of cosmopolitanism, certain moral principles have retained centrality and these warrant discussion. Firstly the concept of a global identity, as evident in the oft-cited retort of the Cynic Diogenes of Sinope [b.412 BC], that he was a "citizen of the world" from the Greek *Kosmopolitês* (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2013). This statement was a radical one given the cultural context of Ancient Greece, where one 'belonged' or identified with one's immediate locale, which at its broadest was the polis or Greece itself. To disregard this and reject local origins or group memberships was highly unconventional. Instead, Diogenes identified with a larger cosmos and with the ideals and affiliation to "rational humanity", which "above all, should define the purposes of her conduct" (Nussbaum, 1997: 5). This universalism was taken up and developed by the Stoics who argued that we reside within two communities. The first of these is the local community of our birth, and the second is a more global community, which provides us with elemental moral and social understandings and is most significant (Nussbaum, 1997: 6). Ulrich Beck elucidates on this Stoic idea, that we are at one and the same time living independently but co-existing under the umbrella of a universal humanity;

> We are all living by birth in two worlds, two communities – in the cosmos (that is *nature*) and in the *polis* (that is, the city/state). To be more precise: individuals are rooted in *one* cosmos but in *different* cities, territories, ethnicities, hierarchies, nations, religions – all at the same time. This creates not exclusivity but rather an inclusive plural membership. It means that all humans are equal in nature, yet belong to different states, organised in territorial units (polis) (Beck, 2003: 6).

The Stoics viewed the individual as fundamentally connected to a global humanity and emphasized our thoughts and actions as being on behalf of humankind as a whole (Nussbaum, 1997: 6). For Cicero, the laws of nature dictate that our very characteristics as human beings mean we should uphold the good of our fellow humankind, while for Marcus Aurelius [b.121 AD], we are all fellow citizens who share in an organised polity, the world as one city-state (Nussbaum, 1997: 7; Inglis, 2012: 13). The Stoic Hierocles however, claimed that we should not feel "devoid of local affiliations", but should instead consider our connectedness as concentric circles. The initial circle is around the individual, the innermost circle encompasses the individual's family, and the next circle is one's extended family and so forth. These circles continue to expand until the last and largest which is global humanity (Nussbaum, 1997: 9). From this idea we can understand how one can be, as Beck has described, "living in two worlds" (Beck, 2003: 6), simultaneously connected to the local, global and all the social layers in between, and free from "the trying and oppressive loyalties of the singular community" (Silverstone, 2007: 12).

Within the research it is possible to identify evidence of the 'local' world influencing our understanding or perception of the inclusivity of the 'global' world. Within the analysis of Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi (Chapter 3) recognition of the rebel opposition group as 'democracy-seeking' emphasised particular political values that may resonate with those of the UK, fostering a sense of universality through cultural resonance. Conversely, in the siege of Mount Sinjar (Chapter 5), the Yezidi were frequently differentiated by the particularities of their 'local' world. They were in a sense 'othered' and perceived as culturally exceptional, making problematic the perception of them as part of a universal world community.

The notion of universalism is key to the research inquiry. How the media report on conflict in particular ways may emphasise or de-emphasise this idea of a connected global humanity and actions carried out in aid of humankind. An 'openness' to humanity is therefore of particular significance, as is a sense of solidarity, which Entl has traced back to the universal

good and universal ethics of the Ancient Greeks (Entl, 2012: 76). Media reporting of distant conflict would likely seek to promote such a connectedness and universality in order to encourage us to care about others through the highlighting of mutual bonds. Furthermore, such identification would permit increased empathy which can serve to draw a conflict to one's moral consciousness. Empathy is distinguishable from sympathy by its capacity to foster a connected commitment rather than be detached or distanced (Boltanksi, 1999: 38). Appiah explains how consideration of others beyond our immediate locale allows us to "take them into account" (2006: 63). Such a global outlook then would allow us to conceive that we are part of a universal humanity, despite what geographical terrain may lie in between us. Instead the global is an extension of the local and we may identify with distant others through the fact that we belong to this one body of peoples we call humankind. In addressing the UN Human Rights Council in 2011 during the Libyan conflict, William Hague stressed such ties when describing the unanimous response to the crisis by the Council and the UN Security Council (UNSC);

> The international community came together in a way it has not done before, setting aside differences in the face of a challenge to the very notion of what we instinctively regard as the basic rights of humankind (Hague, 2011).[2]

Such statements highlight in the imaginary notions of solidarity, unanimity and a universal responsibility for a common humanity facing and responding to a grave crisis. Recourse to such notions may be evident through the presentation of the lives of 'distant others' as being like that of our own, to highlight if you like, that we are one and the same. This may be achieved through media reportage that describes the lives of others, presenting the 'routine' and how such routines can be disrupted rapidly by uncontrollable crisis, such as war. Thus illustrating the mundane 'everyday-ness' of personal accounts may induce a sense of shared humanity. It is also a way of presenting the cosmopolitan through communitarian understandings. Audiences may not respond in the same way to the global as they do if they imagine it is their local affiliations, or through the perception of some commonality that resonates, such as familial or cultural ties. This point is addressed in further detail within this section, in the discussion of frame theory and cultural resonance.

The Roman Cicero went further with regard to universalism, developing the idea of hospitality extended to the foreigner. This permits us to find, from our perception of a

[2] For further discussion on this please see Chapter 3 on the Libyan conflict.

common humanity, shared levels of understanding, to curate dignity and kindness in our relationship with the 'other' and to envisage "one common body with one set of purposes" (Nussbaum, 1997: 20), or "one human brotherhood" (Baldry in Inglis, 2012: 13). Martha Nussbaum argues that this way of thinking provides us with "powerful devices for the undoing of negative attitudes that frequently inform situations of national or ethnic conflict" and are "constructed by social evaluations" (1997: 20). It is through the discursive that we construct and exhibit such social evaluations. Therefore we can argue that the media are a significant site for the production of such constructions, be they negative social evaluations or moral judgements and understandings.

As explained, the concept of universalism is at the heart of cosmopolitan thinking, stemming from its early conceptualisations. The research takes forward from this discussion the notion of residing in two worlds: ones immediate locale and a wider humanity, with cosmopolitanism elevating attention on the latter.

Cosmopolitanism's development through Immanuel Kant

Kant was central to the development of these early conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism and was heavily influenced by the Stoic school of philosophy, attaching the notion of universal good to human rights and the pursuit of justice (Entl, 2012; 76). In his classic text *Perpetual Peace* first published in 1795 – described by Nussbaum as "a profound defense of cosmopolitan values" (1997: 4) – Kant laid down the possibilities for a league of nations, and emphasised the universality of dignity and human rights for all, including for 'foreigners'. He developed moral ideals about how citizens should live, with regard for equality and an understanding of shared humanity, and cosmopolitan law. Kant's *Perpetual Peace* outlaid the Stoic principle of a cosmopolitan political community, the Ciceronian notion of hospitality, as well as universal peace and respect for human dignity (Nussbaum, 1997: 3; Delanty, 2012: 3) with the right to be treated "without hostility" (Derrida, 2010: 417, in Skrbiš and Woodward, 2013: 46). Kant argues that it is through the principle of universal hospitality that the 'rights' of men are guaranteed (2010: 17), and it is through this condition that "the human race may be brought nearer to the realization of a cosmopolitan constitution" where the violation of rights in one place is felt across the world (Kant, 2010: 19-20).

As part of this extension of hospitality, cosmopolitanism seeks the alleviation and avoidance of suffering as well as rights promotion. Richard Vernon suggests two duties in this regard; 1) a duty to come to the aid of others, particularly in the case of political breakdown or tyranny; and 2) a duty not to harm others, which may otherwise be exhibited through economic policies or support for repressive regimes (Vernon, 2012: 323).

While the alleviation of suffering and a duty to aid are central to the conceptualisation of cosmopolitan morality, how to achieve this is a contested point in cosmopolitan scholarship. There exists no standard on the use of force in the alleviation of suffering. Arguments can plainly be made for and against this notion; a decisive show of force to end violence, or the contribution of further violence. These arguments become more evident in the examination of the chemical weapons attack in Syria in Chapter 4, where a sense of cosmopolitan arguments for military intervention to uphold norms governing right conduct, met counter-claims surrounding the use of force in an already violent arena. Caney suggests that the use of force (such as military intervention) is justifiable if it can be discerned that by taking this action suffering has been relieved (2005, in Sangha, 2012: 12).

We may also propose that a form of universal rights is part of the cosmopolitan condition, although it should also be recognised here that the concept of human rights is by no means universal, giving rise to allegations that the concept is culturally insensitive given the ignorance of specific cultural values (Sangha, 2012: 7). However Robert Fine suggests 'rights' are ineradicable, that they provide the starting point for notions of solidarity, and are relational based upon the social relation of others' rights; we are free to the extent that others are free (Fine, 2012: 380). The notion of universal 'rights' has been institutionalised through the development of international laws and norms that govern ethical social and political behaviour. Examples of this institutionalisation may be seen in the development of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and more latterly we could suggest the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P) doctrine (see Sangha, 2012).

The principles discussed here are part of the moral base of cosmopolitanism. To reiterate clearly these are: understandings of a universal humanity, the extension of hospitality to others, the respect and promotion of human rights and dignity, and the alleviation of suffering. Thus far this section has discussed the development of these principles from the Ancients and Enlightenment thinkers, up until the present day. In further defining

cosmopolitan morality the chapter turns to differentiating cosmopolitanism from the meta-theories of globalisation and transnationalism, as well as the counterpart position of communitarianism.

Cosmopolitanism's progression through the work of Kant placed emphasis on the principles of hospitality, dignity and human rights, some of which have become enshrined in international laws governing right conduct, such as the JWT, or UDHR or R2P. Having examined some of the core elements of cosmopolitanism, it is necessary to distinguish the theory from globalisation and transnationalism, with which it is often made synonymous.

Distinguishing cosmopolitanism from the tropes of globalisation and transnationalism

As discussed, cosmopolitanism is concerned with an appreciation of a world beyond one's immediate locale. It is often made synonymous with both physical worldliness or mobility (the notion of the traveller who is at home wherever he lays his hat) and globalisation through enhanced interconnections which serve to bind us together through finance, trade, technology, entrepreneurship, social media and so forth. I challenge both of these suppositions and am guided by Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande's (2007) understanding of cosmopolitanism whereby a global outlook is adopted but may be exhibited on different levels of analysis, and Gerard Delanty's (2012) appreciation of the distinction between cosmopolitanism and globalisation and transnational mobility.

Beck and Grande choose not to be limited in their definition of cosmopolitanism as being bound to the 'cosmos', but instead see it as taking place on different levels of analysis, permitting them to focus particularly on regional associations, such as Europe and a European society (Beck and Grande, 2007: 12). Similarly, my understanding and application of cosmopolitanism is approached from an understanding of cosmopolitanism as being related to Diogenes' earlier claim about being a 'global citizen', but is not confined by this. Instead, "The *principle* of cosmopolitanism… can be located and applied everywhere" (Beck and Grande, 2007: 12) and is not solely concerned with the global level. Within this research, analysis of the media remains focussed predominantly on the UK, and deals for the most part with British relations and cosmopolitan responsibilities to humanity, however at times it encounters the national, regional and institutional responses to specific conflicts. The

research is concerned with the way that a mediated cosmopolitan morality may shape our understandings of particular events, and construct or reproduce socio-political relationships.

Definitions of cosmopolitanism have often become blurred with other macro-level theoretical contributions that seek to explain the increase in interconnections around the world as well as the sharing and transference of cultural norms. It is a, "synonym for many things: globalization, globality, glocalism, globalism, universalism, multiculturalism, pluralism, imperialism" (Beck and Grande, 2007: 11). However, many scholars caution against this distortion (Appiah, 2006; Beck and Grande, 2007; Delanty, 2012). Appiah, like Delanty argues that globalisation has become the catch-all term that means everything and nothing (2006: xiii). While Delanty advises that increasing connectedness about the globe does not necessarily equate to an increase in cosmopolitan norms;

> The world may be becoming more and more globally linked by powerful global forces, but this does not make the world more cosmopolitan. If the normative underpinnings of cosmopolitanism are taken seriously, it must be apparent that it is not reducible to the condition of globalization (Delanty, 2012: 2).

While we can forward the idea that globalisation opens up social spaces (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2005: 4) and thus makes ripe the conditions within which a cosmopolitan critique could flourish, cosmopolitanism itself differs from globalisation due to its normative structure which the latter cannot claim to have (Delanty, 2012: 2). Dissatisfaction with globalisation's tropes has served to promote a cosmopolitan empathetic awareness of "perspectives of others beyond one's own immediate context" (Delanty, 2012: 2). This prevalence of openness in attitudes is characteristic of the cosmopolitan, but not necessarily globalisation itself. The research is influenced by the concept of globalisation only to the extent that the proliferation of communication technologies around the globe is permitted through such phenomenon. Similarly, such advancements in communications technology permit increasing connectedness about the globe and the sharing of norms and ideas. The mass media could certainly be considered as an example of this. Silverstone (2007) refers to this global mediated space as the 'mediapolis', while Marshall McLuhan previously termed it 'the global village' (Orgad, 2012: 51). The spread of ideas and interactions with others is greatly enhanced through the media, particularly through its instantaneous digital and social forms, as Silverstone highlights;

> It is within the media's framing, in image and narrative, home page and chat room, that increasingly the world is becoming global and liveable. It is at this interface, the interface of media and the life-world, where the media as a moral force becomes most relevant, where the world in its otherness is at its most visible (2007: 10).

Although, as Beck and Grande (2007) have argued, this does not necessarily equate to the spread of cosmopolitan moral values. Despite the ease and frequency with which we 'encounter humanity' through digital forms of connectivity, as Silverstone (2007) describes, we may still distance ourselves when it appears more desirable, for example when some form of social responsibility is required.

As well as differentiating cosmopolitanism with globalisation and transnationalism, it is important to make a distinction between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, which we may broadly understand as its contrary, in order to further clarify the understanding of cosmopolitan morality adopted within the thesis. This is also important given that communitarian conceptualisations may be evident in the absence of cosmopolitanism in attempts to shift moral responsibilities for others. Where cosmopolitanism is concerned with the wider 'cosmos' and the extension of a universalism that connects us within a common humanity about the globe, communitarianism highlights the importance of the community locale without this broader universal understanding of humankind. As has been explained, cosmopolitanism does not disregard this locale; the Stoics talked of 'two communities', Hierocles illustrated this with his notion of concentric circles that define our affiliations (Nussbaum, 1997: 9), and Beck has described how we can be both part of our immediate allegiances while also recognising and advancing our global ones, developing an "inclusive plural membership" (Beck, 2003: 6). However, communitarianism emphasises this immediate realm above the wider cosmos. Furthermore, the moral principles associated with a cosmopolitan outlook are similarly refocused to the proximate realm in a communitarian position. Etzioni *et al* illustrate the tie to the local through relations, affiliations and tradition that refocuses the micro above the macro universalism of cosmopolitanism:

> [Communitarians] see social institutions and policies as affected by tradition and hence by values passed from generation to generation. … In addition, communitarianism emphasises particularism, the special moral obligations people have to their families, kin, communities, and societies (Etzioni *et al*, 2004: 2).

In the projection of a cosmopolitan moral outlook, the principle of universalism would encourage us to feel moral obligations to others beyond our families, kin, communities, and societies, and towards a greater humanity. However it is through the perception of proximity that we often feel more acutely a sense of interest, empathy and responsibility to others.[3] Arguably the Rwandan genocide (1994) remained 'distanced' and 'differenced' from Western audiences sense of moral responsibility through the mediated description of this human suffering as "incomprehensible 'tribal' violence" (Hammond, 2007: 15; see also Moeller, 1999: 287). A significant aspect is the dialectical intertwining of cosmopolitan and communitarian sensibilities, with the former achieved sometimes through the projection of the latter.

As explained, cosmopolitanism is separable from the theoretical contributions of globalisation and transnationalism, but exists in a dialectical relationship with communitarianism. It has also been identified that universalism, hospitality, dignity and human rights are key elements of cosmopolitan theorising. It is significant to now place cosmopolitanism within the broader discipline of IR to highlight further the contemporary extant work in this area.

Cosmopolitanism within International Relations

Thus far this section has traced cosmopolitan morality through the extant theoretical scholarship. It has presented cosmopolitanism's historical lineage and the evolution of its core moral principles, including the idea of universalism, hospitality and solidarity and the alleviation of suffering. It has also differentiated cosmopolitanism from globalisation and transnationalism, as well as the dialectic relationship with communitarianism. Cosmopolitanism thought has contributed significantly to the discipline of IR, not least through the developments of international norms and laws that are associated with the liberal world order. Some of these core contributions will now be presented.

Richard Beardsworth has considered the role of cosmopolitanism broadly within global politics, arguing that the upturn of cosmopolitan thought within the discipline stems from the 1990s, with the triumph of liberalism, and rapid technological and economic interconnectedness, which encouraged a predilection for the "language of 'rights'" (2012)

[3] This idea is discussed further within the review of frame theory.

and discussions of power (2011). As such, he argues that IR has considered cosmopolitanism only through its contributions to normative theory (2011). Beardsworth argues that the political relevance of cosmopolitanism will increase during historical change, but that it needs "re-tuning" to move beyond theoretical discussion to more empirical challenges (Beardworth, 2012). Andrew Linklater (1998) explores the idea of an ethical transformation of the post-Westphalian state system. He argues for this ethical transformation to be a cosmopolitan one, whereby political communities project moral commitments to cultural sensitivities, rights, and global inequalities, as well as dialogue over force. Similarly, Daniele Archibugi and David Held (2011) (see also Beck 1998; 2003) have examined the many paths to cosmopolitan democracy, in the pursuit of accountability, transparency and legitimacy of global governance.

Cosmopolitan theorising is evident in the promotion of global equality and human rights. We can identify the structural formation of this in international institutions that foster and promote such principles globally, for example the United Nations, the normative concept of R2P (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4), or the CWC (as discussed in Chapter 5). R2P is an interesting normative illustration of a cosmopolitan moral disposition at work in global politics. It forwards that where a state fails to or cannot protect its civilians, other states have the moral and social duty to bear that responsibility. Karina Sangha explains that this responsibility to the "moral interests of human beings in other countries" is naturalised if we consider that the universality of morality transcends divides, including borders (2012, 5) and as Beardsworth states, "ethnic, religious, class or gender particularities" (2011: 20). Kwame, Anthony Appiah (2006) encourages a reappraisal away from a focus on what differentiates us, and on to a recognition of our universalism as part of a common humanity, and the fundamental values attached to this.

Much scholarship on cosmopolitanism in IR has focused upon human security elements, such as rights promotion, and issues surrounding conflict and intervention or migration. Michael Barnett states that the surest expression of cosmopolitan moral responsibilities is in humanitarianism, through foreign policies and duties across borders, and the giving of aid "to those whose lives are in danger" (Barnett, 2008: 191). The concept of humanitarianism is present, explicitly or implicitly, within the media analyses in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Justifications for humanitarian intervention from the cosmopolitan position have been tackled by Daniele Archibugi (2004), and, in addition to the JWT, by Aiden Hehir (2013: 83; 27). Richard Shapcott (2010) has also contributed in this area, discussing cosmopolitan and

communitarian responsibilities towards outsiders. Through analysis of issues of hospitality and intervention, migration and poverty, he suggests current cosmopolitan thinking needs to focus acutely on the nature of harm between peoples. The cosmopolitan principle of hospitality is at the focus of Dan Bulley's (2017) analysis of migration. In a contemporary analysis of refugee crisis, including coverage of the Syrian refugee crisis, Bulley explores the tensions between the boundaries of hospitality and power in the international system. Ekaterina Balabanova (2015) has looked specifically at mediated human rights through a cosmopolitan lens. In doing so she uses a number of diverse empirical cases to illustrate the problems inherent in this relationship, including issues of asylum, free speech, torture, and also humanitarian intervention and genocide.

Recent scholarship has flourished on the notion of mediated cosmopolitanism. In *Mediapolis*, Silverstone is concerned with a mediated moral space that has a significant influence on the way that citizens perceive the world. He covers perceptions of 'distance' which determine the bringing into humanity of others and the encouragement of moral responsibility. Distance is an issue also covered extensively by Lilie Chouliaraki (2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2010; 2013), Luc Boltanski (1999) and Maria Kyriakidou (2015), all of whom focus upon the presence of human suffering, and of the witnessing via media of such suffering.

Chouliaraki has examined the role of television to foster cosmopolitan sensibilities or a "fake proximity" (2006a) which gives rise to a "spectatorship of suffering" (2006b), while also considering the role of citizen witnessing as providing the 'ordinary voice' in convergent journalism that encourages a cosmopolitan disposition (2010; 2015; 2016). Boltanski (1999) has also examined the moral effects on the spectator witnessing the distant suffering of others through the media. Boltanski's work is a theoretical critique of denunciation, sentiment and aesthetic as the appropriate responses to witnessing distant suffering. Kyriakidou (2009; 2015) has looked at distant suffering from the perspective of the audience witnessing it. Through focus group discussion she is able to explore the engagement of audiences with mediated suffering, highlighting how cosmopolitan and nationalist discourses are not necessarily at odds, but that cosmopolitanism can be presented through the national.

Tine Ustad Figenschou (2011) and Johan Lindell (2014) make methodological contributions to the existing scholarship of mediated cosmopolitanism. Lindell (2014) argues for a semi-deductive methodology that theorises and applies cosmopolitanism empirically. While

Figenschou (2011) upends the analytical focus on the mediation of suffering by examining Al Jazeera, providing a welcome departure from the dominance of Western media perspectives in this area. Finally, Alexa Robertson (2010) challenges how cosmopolitanism may be understood in different cultures, and argues that national journalists could do more to further foster cosmopolitan sensibilities.

While the scholarship of mediated cosmopolitanism has much to contribute to the theoretical development of cosmopolitanism, and specifically the notions of empathy and moral responsibility to suffering witnessed via media, this area needs more empirical development. Robertson (2013; 2015) and Chouliaraki (2015; 2016) have both examined the 'Arab Spring', but real-world analysis remains slim. Furthermore, where there has been discursive analysis of empirical cases, these have tended to focus upon the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Frame theory has been underexplored in this area and is a limitation of the scholarship.

Cosmopolitan principles do not apply only to issues of conflict or direct human suffering, although this is where my research is certainly positioned. Significant contributions have been made to the theoretical development of cosmopolitanism elsewhere within the discipline of IR. Within green politics, theorists have been concerned with the democratic pursuit of green 'justice', and the promotion of and solutions to ecological problems "at all levels of governance" (Daddow, 2013: 245), considering them to be globally affecting. Alan Dobson explains we are often cosmopolitans in theory but we find it difficult to put this into practice when it necessitates lifestyle changes (in Daddow, 2013: 249). This may be similarly true with cosmopolitanism more generally. We may find such ideals attractive but shun social and moral responsibilities in practice when they impinge on our local world.

Given the cosmopolitan values of equality and social justice, cosmopolitan morality is relevant to discussions of international political economy (IPE), particularly in considering the uneven distribution of wealth globally and the pursuit of exploitative structures that continue to preserve a hegemonic power/wealth balance. James Brasset (2010) approaches the notion of global financial reform via the pathway of cosmopolitan ethics. One of the key issues with a cosmopolitan outlook, particularly for realists, is that in emphasising the universal nature of humanity and the irrelevance of borders, we may see a weakening of the normative and legal foundations of state sovereignty. This may be through the promotion of global green ecological solutions, the pursuit of justice through the International Criminal

Court (ICC) or through finance, or via humanitarian interventions. However, what cosmopolitans argue, is that this interference is justified if it "promotes individual justice and human rights" (Nye, 2009: 170).

Finally it is important to note some of the observable critique of cosmopolitanism at this stage that may be of consequence to the research. Cosmopolitanism has been labelled as an "empty signifier lacking in substance" (Skrbiš et al, 2004: 132), "a utopian ideal" (Kyriakidou, 2009), an elitist theory that supports a Western-centric or Euro-centric perspective on the world (Beck, 1998; Miller, 2002; Tomlinson, 2002; van der Veer, 2002). It has also been argued that cosmopolitanism can be used as a façade (Beck, 1998) for more self-interested agendas (Ulas, 2016). Rajan Menon (2016) questions the real ethical commitments behind justifications for intervention, while Marchetti (2012) highlights accusations of Western domination under this guise. Thus while cosmopolitanism appears a benevolent goal in the face of human suffering, its utilisation may further perpetuate hierarchical relations.

Thus far the focus of this theoretical review has been to understand cosmopolitanism. The theory's moral principles have been drawn out of its historical lineage. At this stage it is useful to recap these elements as they contribute to the overall understanding of what is meant by cosmopolitan morality. These principles comprise: a sense of universalism or belonging to a greater humanity, hospitality or openness to others, the curation of human dignity and rights, and the alleviation of suffering. It was also recognised that much of the contemporary work on the mediation of cosmopolitanism has neglected the benefits of frame theory as a theoretical and methodological approach to analysing mediated cosmopolitanism. The section now turns to review framing as a theory of media effects that permits the presentation of particular views of the world.

What's in a frame? Understanding media framing and the role of language

Having examined the existing scholarship on cosmopolitanism, and drawing from it the moral principles which underpin the research, this section turns to discuss the role of media framing. Frame theory will be discussed as a media effects theory that may shape understandings of events through particular discursive constructions. It is also highlighted that the existing concept of morality framing lacks any detailed explanation or

characterisation. The section will then determine the conceptualisation of the media as a 'media ecology', and the relevance of this concept with regard to the thesis' aims.

The research inquiry is concerned with how the media utilises moral framings in the reporting of conflict and intervention, and what the consequence of this may be for projecting certain views of the world. Therefore, of crucial significance is how moral frames are constructed, for instance, what information is presented, language constructions utilised and metaphor or analogy employed that contributes to an overall presentation of events. The research is also concerned with more discrete observations, chiefly what purpose such moral framings may serve in terms of foreign policy formation, legitimisation or relationship dynamics. Initially then it is necessary to discuss what is meant by 'framing' and how framings may be utilised within media reporting.

Interest in the role of language in political affairs emerged from the linguistic turn in Western philosophy theory during the early twentieth century (see Lafont, 1999). This saw an interest in and scholarly recognition of the role of language and semiotics in the social sciences and increasingly in international politics. The role of political communication slots into this scholarly fracture, with research focus levied upon the functionality of the mass media in this position. There are varying understandings of the role the media may play in reflecting elite discourse, or setting the political agenda itself. The thesis avoids claims about the directional flow of agency but does concede that the media has some capacity to influence audiences, and by way of this, potential policies in the form of legitimisation or naturalisation of policy practices. As iterated, determining the extent of this is not the thesis' aim, but instead the focus is on understanding how recourse to the use of 'morality' in media reporting can present events in a certain way, and that this may serve particular ends.

Framing has received much critique for being a contested concept (Borah, 2011: 246-247; de Vreese, 2005: 51; Johnson-Cartee, 2005: 24); a "catchall that means slightly different things to each researcher" (Entman, 2004: 5); and a "fractured paradigm" (Entman, 1993: 51). Despite these accusations there is value in the multiplicity of approaches from which to draw a definition of the concept. The oft-cited definition of framing comes from Robert Entman (2003). Despite the regularity of its citation within the body of literature on framing, it remains a clear explanation of the concept. Framing is;

> [T]o select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition,

> causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993: 52).

What Entman describes is how frames will *present* events in particular ways and it is through this particularity, through highlighting certain aspects or information and not others, and through connecting events to other understandings or circumstances that a frame is able to hold cognitive influence and shape understanding. As Todd Gitlin further explains, this is achieved through "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion" (2003: 7), to present what Tuchman explains as "windows on the world" (1978: 1).

Frame theory is a theory of media process and effect that focusses on, primarily, the media's ability to present information in a particular way so as to elicit particular comprehensions. This process may be conscious or unconscious. For example, authors may be acutely aware of the way in which they are presenting or framing situations through the use of select narratives and be doing so purposefully in order to stimulate certain cognitive understandings. Conversely, is that this may be an unconscious process given that we are all products and agents of our social experience which inform the ways in which we see and make sense of the world. Our reality then, is a product of these social constructs (Gergen, 1999).[4] The human subject constantly interprets the world around them through interpretative frames. Language itself is connected to all social activity and experience, playing a constitutive role in the construction of the social and political realms (Chilton, 1997: 174-175; Jackson, 2005: 21; Wetherell et al, 2001: 16), and is thus both product and creator; instrument and agent. Further, because of its constitutive role of and in social experience, frames may be seen to hold the subjectivities of the agent, who in the case of this research is the journalist or user generating content.

As social constructions that contain subjectivities, frames may also carry latent power represented but concealed by the selection and select presentation of information. This may be achieved through the use of language that is "noticeable, understandable, memorable, and emotionally charged", to produce a 'cultural resonance', or through the repetition of words and themes which produces 'magnitude' (Entman, 2004: 6). Gamson and Modigliani suggest this may be practiced through the use of metaphor, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions and moral appeals (1989: 2), while Snow and Benford suggest similarly that frames 'strike a

[4] The ontological position of the research is dealt with in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods.

responsive chord' (1988: 207) in audiences, and the frames that do this most successfully have a greater influencing effect. It is therefore through the combined efforts of resonance and salience that such chords are cognitively struck (Ettema, 2005: 134). Frames may achieve this through the 'activation' of mental schema. Schema may be understood as pre-existing understandings of events which particular framings may trigger. It is here that the aforementioned relationship between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism is pertinent. It is logical to suggest that the local realm that Etzioni et al (2004: 2) speak of – family, kin, community, society – may hold more cognitive resonance to audiences than a wider cosmos. This is dues to one's social experience producing schema that are associated to this realm, which then act as a cognitive reference point (Kyriakidou, 2009: 490). In this sense, some emphasis on more familial schema may be intrinsic to the activation of a duty of care to wider humanity (see Shapcott, 2001; 2002).

A common example of this is the utilisation of presentations that evoke the Holocaust in discourses that speak of 'ethnic cleansing', 'pogrom', 'genocide' and so forth (Moeller, 1999: 221-227), or make resemblances between hard-line political figures and Adolf Hitler. In this way, frames may be utilised as a form of 'cognitive shortcut' in our comprehension of complex events. This is evident in the case studies examined; Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi, Libya (2011) (Chapter 3), the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta, Syria (2013) (Chapter 4), and the besiegement of the Yezidi people on Mount Sinjar, Iraq (2014) (Chapter 5). Each of the cases examined contain contextual complexities which are often substituted in media discourses for compact simplifications that allow the lay (and experienced) audience member to receive the information in a manageable and bitesize formulation. The danger with such simplification is a reductionist account of what are often (and certainly in the case of the empirical cases examined) obscure situations involving complex historical, social and political relationships and experiences. The intricacies and nuance are lost in a vulgarised presentation of 'goodies' and 'baddies' (Hammond, 2007: 3-4).

The impact that frames have upon the recipient is key. Frames are activated to the degree that the audience are convinced of a certain narrative or presentation of events. Just as their production may be an unconscious performance, so the audience remain unconscious of the frame. For this reason, frames have the ability to shape our understandings by acting as conduits for latent power and biases without audience cognisance. As de Vreese states, on an individual level the consequence of successful framing may result in changes of mind-set towards issues (or perhaps solidification of mind-set for frames that strengthen ones existing

attitude), while on a social level this may "contribute to shaping social level processes such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions" (de Vreese, 2005: 52). Kinder and Sanders highlight how frames may be considered as mechanisms that are rooted in political discourse, and that have the potential to be employed by political elites who wish to advance their own agendas and "make favourable interpretations prevail" (1990: 74).

As described, a frame may be constructed through the utilisation of particular information presented in a certain way, but it may also be through the absence of particular information or interpretations. In Chapter 3, I argue with regard to the conflict in Libya that there was an absence in the media of terms such as 'civil war' despite this being a conflict between two social groupings within the one Libyan state; one that allied with the governing Gaddafi regime, and one that stood in opposition to that grouping. I argue that it is partly through the *absence* of such terminology that the conflict was framed in a more acceptable way that would not dissuade possibilities for forms of intervention amongst public and policy opinion. Instead the conflict dynamics were 'neater' and to an extent more 'virtuous' through the depiction of 'pro-democracy' civilians pitched in an 'uprising' against the governing Gaddafi regime. These frame constructions are, essentially, ways of seeing the world, of cognitively organizing our everyday experience (Borah, 2011: 248). With regard to the example used, such cognitive organisation allows us to conceive of the Libyan conflict in ways that are potentially acceptable to policy and public opinion.

While we may understand frames as socially constructed 'packages' (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) or lenses through which to understand events, certain framings appear more frequently in usage than others. Some frames may be 'issue-specific' and thus not universally applicable, while others are more generic in characterisation and appropriation (de Vreese, 2005: 54). From analysis of extant studies, de Vreese has highlighted a common unanimity between Neuman *et al* (1992) and Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) in their highlighting 'moral values' and 'morality' as a commonly employed frame device or package,[5] alongside other framings such as 'human impact or interest', 'conflict', 'economics or economic consequences' (Neuman *et al*, 1992 and Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000, in de Vreese, 2005: 56). For both sets of authors the moral frame involves events considered

[5] Scholars regularly refer to 'frameworks', 'frame devices' and 'frame packages'. The research may use these terms interchangeably to refer to the presences of a frame.

through some form of moral judgement and social or moral prescription, with perhaps the addition of religious principles (de Vreese, 2005: 56).

While morality has been highlighted as a common framing device, detail is scant upon exactly how it is utilised and for what end. Discourse scholars have opened up this debate slightly more, (see previously Chouliaraki, 2006; 2008; Boltanski, 1999; Silverstone, 2007) considering the usage of morality in the media and the notion of bearing witness to distant suffering, however they do not engage with the framing literature as a theoretical basis for their works, nor do they significantly address the dynamics of the media ecology. The thesis contributes to these spheres of study by drawing together frame theory with understandings of cosmopolitan morality and an ecological consideration of the media.

The significance of frames as a conduit for latent subjectivities is that audience understanding may be unconsciously shaped in such a way as to naturalise particular outcomes and generate socially accepted narratives of events. In this way then a moral frame may contribute to the legitimation of particular policy responses in the case studies examined, or may render only certain responses as tenable. Consistent with the research aims of the role of morality in media reporting, analysis will consider such aspects as salience and resonance by exploring the usage of 'noticeable, memorable and emotional language', emotional and cultural proximity, and the exhibition of such linguistic constructions through emphasis, repetition, metaphor and analogy. In order to understand the utilisation of frames by the media we must first understand what is meant by media. The final part of this section discusses the conceptualisation of the media as a holistic space, or 'ecology', and highlights the methodological benefits of this position.

Understanding the media as an 'ecology'

In order to understand media frames, and specifically the analysis of framing within this research, it is important to clarify the overall structure of meaning concerning the media, and to clarify a definitional position on what is meant by a 'media ecology'. The research approaches the understanding of the media from a holistic perspective, seeing the media as an environment or 'ecology' encompassing mutable and dynamic influencing sources. This final part of the theoretical review will explain firstly the origins of the concept 'media ecology' and define the concept more fully. The methodological benefits of this approach are

presented, alongside methods to analyse the media ecology through what is termed 'nexus analysis'. Finally, it is explained how the research intends to move forward from this ecological perspective, and how it is utilised directly in this research.

This fresh approach to conceptualising the media is influenced directly by the work of Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin (Hoskins, 2013; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2007; 2010, as well as Chadwick, 2013; Cottle, 2006). Hoskins and O'Loughlin regularly refer the concept of a new 'media ecology' to Simon Cottle (2006) yet 'media ecology' as a term developed much earlier with the work of Marshall McLuhan (1964), Jacques Ellul (Strate, 2008: 130), and Neil Postman who developed 'media ecology' as an institutional field for study (Lum, 2000: 3).

For Hoskins and O'Loughlin, the 'new media ecology' embodies "connectivity, saturation, and immediacy" (2007: 2-3), the characteristics we may say that typify recent developments in communications technology: satellite television, rolling news, the digital internet revolution and social media. Cottle speaks of the new media ecology as flows and networks that "intermingle and reciprocally influence each other" (2006: 51) while providing greater scope for "dissenting voices" and "linking alternative and mainstream media and communication flows" (Cottle, 2006: 51-51). The benefits of considering the media in this way is the recognition that "new media technologies... add new communicative ingredients into the media ecology mix as well as the possibilities for new forms of politics" (Cottle, 2006: 52). The benefit of this approach to researching the media is that it enables a richer and more detailed probe with the inclusion of 'new' and 'old' media into the analytical mix.

In his article 'Death of a Single Medium', Hoskins (2013) argues that existing research on the media and foreign-policy relationship is in a condition of "serious stasis" (Hoskins, 2013: 5) with scholarly analysis of this nexus frequently compartmentalised along one of two research paradigms; emergent 'new' media, and established 'traditional'/'old' media (Hoskins, 2013: 3-4, see also Chadwick, 2013). The problem with this existing predilection is that media research is often reduced to analysis of a single media source or outlet to the exclusion of a wealth of possible sources that add diverse voices to media research. Hoskins claims that the Iraq War 2003 is the most often selected empirical case that scholars continue to re-analyse through the same established media lens (albeit from different states' press coverage). This is despite the fact that the Iraq War 2003 "was the most multimodal and multimedia war in history" (Hoskins, 2013: 4).

Research that focusses exclusively on 'old' media neglects the flourishing developments of new communication technologies and the inclusion of user generated content (UGC) as a source of diverse opinion and dynamism. Research that focusses exclusively upon 'new' media neglects the mainstay of traditional journalism as a primary source still for the communication of political information. By considering both elements of what Andrew Chadwick (2013) has termed a "hybrid media system", the research can avoid some of these more partial accounts, while also recognising the conflation between both areas to produce an analytical richness of the "reflexively connected fields of media and politics" (Chadwick, 2013: 4). Instead of a thin analysis across a single narrow medium, a media ecology approach may allow the research to probe deeper and in much more detail, harnessing "the interaction between uses of different media" which could "create and reveal new forms of information, discussion, and relationships" (Ampofo *et al*, 2011: 3).

Methodologically, Hoskins (2013: 5; see also Ampofo, Anstead and O'Loughlin, 2011; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2007; 2010; Gillespie and O'Loughlin, 2009) has suggested nexus analysis as an approach to bridge the gap between these two research paradigms and move the media-foreign policy academic field forward methodologically, away from a static, singular view of media analysis. Nexus analysis, stems originally from the work of Ron Scollon and Suzanne Wong Scollon (2001; 2004; 2007). Their work in linguistic ethnography left them perplexed as to what the central mode of analysis should be within their research. They concluded from this questioning that nothing occurred in a "political and social vacuum", and that there existed no "fulcrum point around which everything else rotated" (Scollon and Scollon, 2007: 615), but instead a 'nexus' of interconnections. Hoskins and O'Loughlin provide a useful definition of this concept;

> [A] nexus analysis maps the 'semiotic cycles (the circulation of symbols, including media content) generated by actions taken in response to a mediated event or in the formation of a social network or institution such as a military or terrorist organization. It explores the past, present and future trajectories of meaning implicated in the sum of communications around the phenomenon (2010: 189).

For Hoskins and O'Loughlin, the utilisation of nexus analysis in media and communications research is to look at the network of media outlets, the multiple discourses, framings and counter-framings and remediations emerging from such sources. The research, to a degree is

influenced by this position, however this is insofar as the project permits given its necessary limitations discussed in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods.

The intent of the research is to remain sympathetic to the conceptualisation of the media as a dynamic ecological system that is constantly evolving and adapting; a global mediated space, comprising mutable qualities;

> the mass, the globalized, the regional, the national, the local, the personal media; the broadcast and interactive media; the audio and audio-visual and the printed media; the electronic and the mechanical, the digital and the analogue media; the big screen and the small screen media; the dominant and alternative media; the fixed and the mobile, the convergent and the stand-alone media. … together, in the array of possible technologies, delivery systems, platforms, discourses, texts, modes of address, as well as in the patterns of our use of them, they define a space that is increasingly mutually referential and reinforcive, and increasingly integrated into the fabric of everyday life (Silverstone, 2007: 5).

What Silverstone presents above is an encompassing space within which evolving technologies and discursive sites and forms conflate, and furthermore should be seen as integral to our daily lives. It is through the examination of the media as a holistic and ecological site that light can be shone on such areas of integration. Central to this research then is the integrated relationship between the media and foreign policy-making.

The research attempts to avoid the pitfalls of concentrating analysis exclusively upon emergent or established media and therefore neglecting a wealth of alternative and valuable data sources. In the course of the research this is employed at an elemental level, and is discussed in more detail in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods. The aim is for an almost cross-sectional snapshot of the media ecology with regard to each of the case studies under examination.

This section has reviewed the extant theoretical scholarship on cosmopolitanism, frame theory and the media ecology. The moral principles of cosmopolitanism have been drawn out from this review as being concerned with a sense of universalism or belonging to a greater humanity, hospitality or openness to others, the curation of human dignity and rights, and the alleviation of suffering. Contemporary work in this area has overlooked the benefits of frame theory as a theoretical and methodological approach that permits the revelation of

constructed views on the world. It was highlighted that while morality has been identified by scholars as a frequently utilised frame through which issues are presented, contemporary scholarship fails to detail the characteristics of this morality or how it may be embedded within the textual data. Furthermore, while some scholars have looked at the mediation of cosmopolitanism as a way of persuading us to care for distant others, there has been a neglect of the inclusion of media framing across the media ecology. The chapter argues that there is a significant site between these bodies of work which could contribute further understanding of the nature of morality as a framing device, and the way in which we may be drawn discursively through framing to care for distant others. The thesis aims to bridge this gap and in doing so make a contribution to knowledge. The synthesis of cosmopolitanism, frame theory and the media ecology is presented in the next section 2.2 as a novel theoretical framework for revealing cosmopolitan morality as a framework through which issues can be presented by the media.

2.2: Theorising cosmopolitan morality framing

> [W]e know little about the role of the media in shaping an ethical sensibility that extends beyond our own 'neighbourhood' (Chouliaraki, 2006: 1).

The chapter has thus far established the existing scholarship of two key theoretical contributions that underpin the research, cosmopolitan morality, and frame theory. By synthesising these two theoretical concepts with a holistic consideration of the media ecology, we can conceive cosmopolitan morality – defined from the extant scholarship as comprising universalism, an openness to others, hospitality and solidarity, a respect for dignity and rights, and the alleviation of suffering – as a framework, creating a cosmopolitan morality frame (CMF). This second section will firstly recap upon the developed understanding of cosmopolitan morality, and highlight the limitations of the existing scholarship on cosmopolitanism and frame theory. It will then address more clearly the synthesis of these two theories by defining CMF, and explore what this framework may reveal. Also highlighted is the way in which such a frame may become the site for latent

agendas or subjectivities. Finally, the contribution to knowledge of the media-foreign policy nexus and wider discipline of IR is presented through theoretical and empirical constituents.

As elucidated above, cosmopolitan morality has a long history focussing upon three dominant considerations. Firstly, a sense of universalism, that encourages the identification with a greater humanity; exemplified by Diogenes' statement that he was a "citizen of the world" (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2013). By this it is meant that we belong to more than just our local allegiances but instead have allegiance to a universal humanity, and also a shared understanding of morality. Secondly, this universalism may be exhibited by and applied through the extension of hospitality and solidarity to the foreigner 'other'. This sees not only a recognition of the 'other' who shares the bonds of humankind, but also resorts to treat those distant 'others' with equal respect for human dignity and rights. Thirdly, this equality includes the alleviation of human suffering globally. To treat others as we would wish to be treated.

Extant scholarship has explored the mediation of cosmopolitanism (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2010; 2015; 2016; with Blaagaard 2013; Georgiou, 2012; Kyriakidou, 2009; 2014; 2015; Lindell, 2014; 2015; Robertson, 2010; 2012; 2013; 2015; Rogers, 2011; Silverstone, 2007) but has neglected to consider hinging cosmopolitan morality to the established field of frame theory. Furthermore, while frame theory has identified the notion of morality framing, it has failed to consider in any significant depth the characteristics of that theorisation. By synthesising the aforementioned understanding of cosmopolitan morality with frame theory this thesis forwards a new theoretical framework of CMF, through which to analyse political and social phenomenon. Influenced by the review of scholarship in 2.1, CMF is defined as a way of presenting an issue so as to highlight and make salient cosmopolitan moral concerns, such as a universal consideration of humanity elevated above the local, the extension of hospitality or solidarity, the promotion of human rights and dignity, the alleviation of suffering and a sense of responsibility to others.

As language is constituted by and constitutive of the social world (Wetherell, 2001: 16) we can understand that the use of cosmopolitan morality as a frame through which issues are presented, may shape understandings. This research is concerned with how CMF may be presented and what effects it may have. It therefore seeks firstly to identify CMF, asking what evidence is there of the presence of cosmopolitan morality framing within the media textual data analysed? This may be through particular language constructions, stereotypes,

metaphors, analogies, and may resonate through linguistic practices such as repetition, the use of emotionally charged language and certain depictions. Once the evidence of CMF has been identified, the research considers two consequent questions; what role may this framing play in the communication of this conflict event? And finally, what effect may this framing have on foreign policy-making?

Cosmopolitan morality framing of distant conflict may create a sense of moral obligation and social responsibility to those suffering through appeals to what Chouliaraki calls our 'ethical sensibilities' (2006:1). As such, this framing device may be a way of fostering genuine compassionate calls for assistance to alleviate the suffering of others. Moral calls to empathise with suffering people may exert influence over policy-making, encouraging diplomatic negotiation, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, or more coercive measures such as sanctions or interventionism. By drawing upon cosmopolitanism's universal commitments and drawing issues cognitively closer, audiences are encouraged to feel empathy and a moral commitment to otherwise distant issues or people (Boltanksi, 1999).

Such commitments can transcend into appeals for more robust policy commitments, either from the media realm directly, or via receptive audiences, public or political. Boltanski explains how the discursive construction of suffering may result in different emotional responses to an event;

> These proposals for action, admittedly rare but nonetheless present on our screens, capitalize on a set of civil dispositions that are historically available in our collective imaginary as resources for the public representation of suffering. They include, for example, indignant denunciation towards the perpetrators of suffering, charitable tender-heartedness towards its victims, or fear and shock at the sight of human misfortune (1999: 57-131).

Existing theorising suggests that media frames hold more influencing agency on political matters when the policy decision-making is uncertain, and when the media provide contestation, generating the space to influence (Balabanova, 2010; 2015; Hallin, 1989; Robinson, 2000; 2001; 2002; 2011). However, even when policies are certain, media framing can play a significant role in providing legitimacy or encouraging consensus.

As evident in the theoretical review in section 2.1, accusations have been levelled that cosmopolitanism is an elitist theory that extends a Eurocentric or Western-centric perspective

of the world (Beck, 1998; Marchetti, 2012; Menon, 2016; Miller, 2002; Tomlinson, 2002; van der Veer, 2002). Therefore, it is important to remain mindful that what in the first instance may be understood as benevolent calls to aid humankind based upon seemingly cosmopolitan moral frameworks, may in fact perpetuate a condescension towards the suffering 'other' and a passivity of voice. Cosmopolitanism has been critiqued for perpetuating a sense of Western superiority. The status of suffering or victimhood can silence human subjects, supposing an inherent lack of agency and establishing other human subjects (often in the West) as the agents who may shape fates and fortunes. As Beck and Grande elucidate, "one denies 'the others' the status of sameness and equality and perceives them in a relation of hierarchical subordination or inferiority" (2007: 12).

Furthermore, a lack of emotional proximity may establish what Hannah Arendt has called a 'politics of pity', whereby distance reinforces a "spectacle of suffering" (Arendt, 1958, in Halpern, 2002: 126). It is understood that frames have the potential to be 'distancing' or 'empathising' (Robinson, 2000), with the latter conforming to Arendt's idea of emotional distance (for a separation from sympathy see also Boltanksi, 1999: 38). What is meant by this is that by empathising, or drawing an event closer to us in emotional proximity, the event will be raised in our consciousness and resonate more with audiences. The use of sterile or unemotional language fosters Arendt's emotional distance, disconnecting audiences from experiencing empathy, and reducing a sense of moral responsibility.

In this sense then, it may also be argued that CMF can be utilised to serve particular political functions or denote, as Kastor illustrates in the opening quote of the chapter, whom we will consider worthy of empathy. What I mean by this and what Chouliaraki similarly investigates, is how the confrontation of certain media narratives, which I see as embedded in frames, "provides us with the resources to recognize the suffering of those distant others as a cause worthy of our attention, emotion and even action – a concern with a cosmopolitan outlook on the world" (2008: 831).

While cosmopolitan morality has at its core the principles of equality and the alleviation of suffering, such a positioning may in fact perpetuate hierarchical (perhaps existing) relationships that negate these very values. Instead, paradoxically, a cosmopolitan moral framing may be constitutive of the very social and political injustices it seeks to reject. This is through the utilisation of morality as a pretext for other political agendas, for example, utilising humanitarian objectives as an "ideological cover for the pursuit of hidden interests"

(Hammond, 2007: 8); what Beck calls a "cosmopolitan façade" (1998: 29). Cosmopolitan morality framing may be utilised instrumentally to disguise ulterior agendas that remain hidden behind the legitimacy that an overt moral frame provides. In this way, the promotion of certain policy decisions and perpetuation of hierarchical relationships may be justified through the use of CMF. In such instances the humanitarian, or the cosmopolitan moral concern may be seen as secondary to state self-interest, or the expansion of power and influence (Hammond: 2007: 8).

We may consider cosmopolitanism as inherently discursive providing us with a resource for connecting with "distant others" (Robertson, 2012: 179) or ways for actors to manage "emergent, everyday global agendas and issues, related to things like cultural diversity, the global, and otherness" (Woodward and Skrbiš, 2012: 136). It is also, as Woodward and Skrbiš argue, a discursive resource that is deployed discontinuously (2012: 136). Therefore, just as frames may illuminate the projection of a cosmopolitan moral outlook, similarly we may be able to highlight and comment upon where this does not occur; what is *not* present in the framing of events or what is presented in contradiction to this outlook. The research appreciates this contribution of Woodward and Skrbiš, viewing cosmopolitanism similarly, as discursive but not "fixed in location" (2012: 136).

In addition to the aspects that CMF may reveal above, this novel theorisation holds a significant pragmatic benefit to analysis of the media ecology. While existing scholarship has examined the mediation of cosmopolitanism by focussing on discourse analysis techniques (Chouliaraki, 2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2010; 2015; 2016; with Blaagaard 2013) quantitative analysis (Lindell, 2014), or focus groups (Kyriakidou, 2009; 2015) it has neglected the advantages of frame theory which permits a broader revelation of language constructs. It is argued that a detailed exploration of semiotics or critical discourse analysis (CDA) permits micro-level language analysis, however it does not permit the analysis and visualisation of broader patterns across the media ecology. It would not be possible to analyse the large amounts of data collated from this holistic conceptualisation of the media in such fine detail. Norman Fairclough's CDA approach is optimised for the analysis of a limited series of texts (Kasomo, 2011). Instead, frame analysis permits a step back to reveal the different lenses or frameworks across this fluctuating space. The analysis of frames nevertheless still explores some of the detail and latent meaning that CDA may, but it is instead guided by Entman's identification of four framing functions, discussed in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods. Cosmopolitan morality framing holds considerable benefit then

to the examination of discursive morality across the media ecology, and is a useful theoretical approach. It is through the forwarding of CMF that this research makes an original contribution to knowledge, theoretically and empirically.

Contribution to knowledge

As is demonstrated in greater depth within the review of extant theory in section 2.1, there is evident identification of the role of morality as a common framework through which political issues are mediated. Yet any detailed or explorative study of this has been limited, providing little understanding of the nature of morality framing, the way in which morality framing may be embedded within texts, or the possible consequences of its usage. Conversely there is more detailed scholarship of mediated cosmopolitanism and the way in which a discursive cosmopolitanism shapes our sensibilities to care about distant others. However, this research base has neglected scholarship on media framing as a mediator of latent meaning. This doctoral research draws these two bases together, forwarding the conception of cosmopolitan morality as a media framing device through which political events are presented and understandings may be shaped. It is through this symbiosis and generation of a new theoretical framework that the thesis makes a valid contribution to scholarship on the media-foreign policy nexus, and the discipline of IR. Through the introduction of cosmopolitan morality as a way of framing events, we may further understand how perceptions may be shaped and foreign policies created.

The research makes a valid contribution to International Relations (IR) scholarship, and specifically to the existing body of work concerned with the media-foreign policy nexus. In providing understanding of cosmopolitan morality as a frame through which political events and issues may be presented, we may deepen our understanding of the possible role that mediated cosmopolitanism has to shape understandings, and make possible foreign policy outcomes. The contribution to knowledge foremost spans theoretical and empirical spaces.

In forwarding a theoretical synthesis of cosmopolitanism, framing and an ecological view of the media, the research develops a new theoretical framework while also developing upon the existing frame analysis from the discourse analysis methodological toolkit. The promotion of CMF permits greater understanding of how institutions – like, but not limited to, the media – can present events or issues in ways that may shape understanding, and foster some kind of

moral commitment to a universal humanity. This cosmopolitan commitment may be evident through moral responsibilities to a greater humanity, through the alleviation of suffering, the promotion and maintenance of human rights, laws and norms, the extension of hospitality to strangers, and the cultivation of empathy, solidarity and a sense of universalism. While there is a flourishing body of work that addresses notions of discursive or mediated cosmopolitanism (Chouliaraki, 2006; 2008; 2015; 2016; Chouliaraki and Blaagaard, 2013; Georgiou, 2012; Kyriakidou, 2009; 2014; 2015; Lindell, 2014; 2015; Robertson, 2010; 2012; 2013; 2015; Rogers, 2011; Silverstone, 2007), its fusion with frame theory permits further exploration of how cosmopolitan morality may be utilised instrumentally as a way of presenting a particular view of the world. This framework is not tied solely to analysis of conflict but may offer fundamental understanding of the motivational aspects of language use in other political and social contexts, for example issues of migration, crime, or even in response to natural or environmental disasters.

What the framework allows for is a greater sense of how certain language constructs are significant sites for the shaping of understanding about political events. It is through these various 'windows on the world' that an element of discursive struggle takes place, which Ralph et al suggest is in fact a "a battle to control meaning" to "define events and identities", so as to "enable, shape and constrain policy outcomes"(2017: 7). When political elites need to generate support for foreign policy engagements the use of language can be understood as ever more pertinent to persuade or consolidate opinion. The forwarding of CMF as a way of revealing latent language constructs can contribute to the literature base on the media-foreign policy nexus, specifically the literature concerned with the justification for and legitimisation of foreign policy responses, including but not limited to forms of interventionism.

Cosmopolitan morality framing also includes a fresh consideration of the media system as an ecology, aiming to balance the limitations of the research project with a broad and holistic understanding of an ever-evolving media system by examining data from across different media outlets. As Alexa Robertson explains, "technological developments have made a world available to us in ways that were previously unimaginable" (Robertson, 2013: 328). As discussed in section 2.1, the research is influenced by the work of Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin (Hoskins, 2013; Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2007; 2010) who argue for the need to consider the media ecologically and call for analysis of a cross-sectional snapshot of the media system rather than a reductionist focus upon only one source. The study has focussed upon media data from newsprint, digital broadcast and social media sources to

ensure a spread from what has previously been considered the discrete strands of 'traditional/mainstream' and 'new/emergent' media. While analysis focusses upon the discursive content only emanating from these sources, traces of the networked relationship across sources is occasionally evident in the remediation of content. Through a broad ecological perspective of what constitutes 'media' the framework is applicable to more diverse discursive sites, beyond what may be considered as conventional media outlets.

The research develops in detail the existing understanding of morality framing from the media framing literature. Existing scholarship has identified 'morality' as a frequently constructed frame through which we are encouraged to view the political world (An and Gower, 2009; De Vreese, 2005; Hamdy and Gomaa, 2012; Hammond, 2000; Neuman et al, 1993; Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). However there is little discussion of the nature of this morality framing. The research presents an original development to understandings of the characteristics of morality framing by focussing on a cosmopolitan approach. Cosmopolitan morality holds significant interest to the political communication of conflict and foreign policy decision-making as a motivator for the generation of interest in and responsibility for distant others. By focussing on this particular conceptualisation of morality we are able to reveal what a specific morality frame may look like – for example its evident discursive characteristics – and what the consequences of its usage may be for foreign policy decision-making.

Empirically, the research makes a contribution to the existing commentary and scholarship of three recent instances of conflict that UK foreign policy has responded to in different ways; the uprising and conflict in Libya (2011), the civil war in Syria (2011-present), and the conflict and conquest in Iraq by IS (2014-present). Specifically the research executes a detailed analysis of the media reporting and UK government policy pertaining to identified critical events within each case and limiting analysis temporally to ten day periods. The specific instances examined include: the advance of the Gaddafi government forces on the Libyan city of Benghazi and the threat of a civilian massacre there (9-19 March 2011); the large-scale chemical weapons attack in Ghouta during the Syrian civil war (21-31 August 2013); and the besiegement and persecution of the Yezidi community in Kurdistan by the militant Islamist group IS (3-13 August 2014). These three cases have all generated a significant level of UK political debate and media coverage. The thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge through examining the evidence of CMF in the media reporting of these critical conflict events. The forwarding of this new theoretical framework through

which to examine these selected empirical events provides a novel and timely analysis that may assist in our understanding of the discursive role of morality in the reporting of conflict and justification of foreign policies.

2.3 Methodology and Methods

> [We must] appreciate the power of redescribing, the power of language to make new and different things possible and important – an appreciation which becomes possible only when one's aim becomes an expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than The One Right Description (Rorty, in Gergen, 1999: 62).

The final section of this chapter considers the philosophical grounding of the research. Given that the research is concerned with the identification of frames to present social reality, a social constructivist ontology and epistemology underpins the interpretation of the meso-theory. The positioning of the research guides a hermeneutical methodology and the selection of framing as an analytical method, in conjunction with a smaller content analysis, as the most appropriate methods for identifying evidence of CMF within the textual data. This section will begin by explaining the social constructivist ontological and epistemological stance of the research inquiry, before justifying a hermeneutical methodology as the appropriate research strategy, as well as an event-driven case study selection. Finally the modes of data collation, analysis and ethical considerations will be presented.

Ontology, epistemology and methodology

As has been explained in the introduction, the objective of the research is to gain further understanding of how the use of CMF presents a particular view of the world so as to encourage audiences to be concerned about geographically or cognitively distant issues or people. As such, frames are a product of social experience; of the 'framer' and the recipient audience. Social constructivism forms the ontological theory of knowledge underpinning the theoretical and methodological paths of the research. It is the perception of the researcher

that the world is constructed through social interactions by actors in a given situation. In the context of this research, the actors examined are from the mass media and policy-making realms. These are the actors that are reporting or constructing the communicative discursive frames that have the potential to influence or become 'normative' social conventions. It is the analysis of such frames that form the central focus of the thesis. The research also recognises that an analysis of CMF is "locally constructed" and therefore dependent upon the analyst conducting the research (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, in Howell, 2013: 29). According to Raymond Morrow and David Brown, we each produce reality according to our own perceptions of what that reality is, we therefore "cannot really know or represent "reality" directly because our understanding of it is mediated by the constructs of our consciousness" (1994: 54). Thus reality is relativist, changeable and subjective, not a tangible objective actuality. Kerry Howell explains how for constructivists then "humanity alone is responsible for knowledge development and understanding is a matter of interpretative construction on the active subject" (2013; 90). As frames are "windows on the world" (Tuchman, 1978), that are received and interpreted by the recipient audience, it is logical that there exist many possible windows with different outlooks or, in the constructivist sense, multiple realities.

This is a frequent critique of constructivist research that, if there exist multiple realities, then research fails to be generalisable or predictable and causality is unlikely (Howell, 2013: 90). However, what constructivist research contributes is a greater level of understanding of and reflection on social phenomenon (*ibid*). Despite the interpretation of the research itself being open to multiple realities, this way of opening up new thinking and consideration of those realities is one of the chief benefits of constructivist research. Gergen highlights this point eloquently;

> We gain most if we appreciate these analyses not as reports on objective truth, but as "frames" or "lenses" on our world – to shake us up, reconstruct, give further dimension, and open new vistas of action (1999: 86).

Furthermore, while in constructivist research the analyst's interpretations are bound by their social experience, with the provision of the same philosophical and methodological approach, theoretical understanding, and means of collating and analysing the same data, replicability is to a degree, still possible. To clarify this thesis is semi-deductive in that all researchers bring prior beliefs/assumptions (theory testing) to the research process, in addition to induction

(bottom-up theory building) (Williams and May, 2005: 196). This thesis emphasises the deductive dimension through interest in CMF and its potential implications.

Ontologically then, the research is distinct from naïve or critical realism which locate the existence of an external "apprehendable" reality driven by immutable laws (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 107) and the pursuit of an objective inquiry (Howell, 2013: 91). In describing the naturalistic positivist paradigm, Guba and Lincoln use the metaphor of a one-way mirror, behind which an inquirer views the natural world and objectively records it (1994: 107). The use of the mirror prevents the inquirer from influencing the phenomena under observation (1994: 107). However, in pursuing the objectives of this research the use of such a one-way mirror is not possible and thus positivist and post-positivist approaches are disregarded. As stated, the focus of the research is the analysis of cosmopolitan morality frames in the British media reporting of conflict and intervention and is therefore essentially discursive. As Alice found in her discussion with Humpty-Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's childhood classic cited at the beginning of the thesis, language is inherently value-laden, holding multiple meanings for different analysts. In interpreting media frames and the use of specific language I will be examining how CMF may engender a particular cosmopolitan outlook on the social world that encourages us to care about or for distant issues or people.

As the analyst I am tied to my interpretations, interacting with the language, ascribing meaning and revealing frames. The analysis of language appears unviable in a positivistic study that pursues objectivity and an epistemological detachment between researcher and research. As Raymond Geuss explains with regards to critical epistemologies, they are "claimed to be 'reflective', or 'self-referential': a critical theory is itself always a part of the object-domain which it describes" (Geuss, 1981: 55). It is through my interpretation of media discourses that frames are deconstructed and revealed and therefore I become involved with the research process itself – through Guba and Lincoln's two-way mirror (1994: 107). Given these influences, it is recognised that the social research is subjective, however we can be mindful of and account for subjectivity throughout the research process. By highlighting to the reader my positionality and the contingent nature of my analysis, the research can still strive to be objective. By bringing to light such biases it is possible to search for validity within a study that is subjective and interpretivist in nature. Furthermore, while the analysis of discourse may be subjective and the case studies examined context-bound, the research can still be repeated. It would be reasonable to suggest that a study echoing the theoretical and methodological approach and methods undertaken in this research, carried out by an analyst

of similar ontological positionality, would generate similar results and analysis towards equivalent case study data. Thus, despite constructivism's "relative ontology" or "relative realism" (Howell, 2013: 88), the research still retains external validity, and planes of understanding can be achieved despite constructivism's multiple realities (1985, in Howell, 2013: 90).

The research is not judgement-"neutral" due to the effects of myself as the researcher upon the research through the interpretation of the case study data (Gillham, 2000: 7). This is particularly true of the frame analysis aspect of the research, whereby my action upon the data in the form of interpreting cosmopolitan moral framings within media text and image renders this analysis fundamentally tied to my interpretations as the researcher. Therefore, the purpose of employing the framing analysis, as with other forms of qualitative interpretative research, is to support understanding rather than make claims of "an objective, universal truth" (Denscombe, 2010: 236).

I have been similarly mindful of the bias inherent within the policy documents analysed. While the use of official sources of information pertaining to my case studies offers credibility and authority to the analysis, they, as with other data sources, can reflect particular perspectives (Denscombe, 2010: 226) and should not be considered as "objective facts" (Denscombe, 2010: 224). The merits of the research are strengthened and validity is increased when triangulated with the other methods of data collation and analysis; included here are frame analysis, policy analysis and content analysis which are discussed in the methods section.

Case study justification

The case studies selected and reasons for their selection were discussed within the introduction to the thesis in Chapter 1. It was explained how the three cases are contemporaneous, all occurring post-Iraq (2003) and within a four year period. It was also explained that a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government was in power in the UK during this time period, and that all three cases generated a level of both UK government and media debate over the response of the UK, yet different foreign policies ensued. Finally there exists a degree of interrelation between these three cases, with the Libya and Syria case

studies originating under what has been popularly termed the 'Arab Spring', and that this regional instability contributed to the rise of IS.

The first section of this chapter has explained the guiding conceptualisation of the media as an holistic media ecology. In order to avoid what Hoskins (2013) claims as methodological reductionism, this research strives to analyse representative sources from across the media ecology. While nexus analysis was presented as a way of examining this holistic space, and to shine light on the dynamic interconnections between media, the primary aim of the research is to consider the presence, utilisation and effect of cosmopolitan morality in the media reporting of conflict. Although the relationship between media sources through remediation or the 'circulation of media content' is an interesting and timely aspect of study, it is beyond the current scope of the thesis, and remains an interesting future facet for examination as discussed in the conclusion to the thesis in Chapter 6.

It is not possible for the research project to examine the entirety of the three case studies selected for two reasons. The first reason is that in the case of the violence in Syria and Iraq, both are still ongoing at the time of writing which makes them unstable as units of analysis. Secondly, in light of the discussion about methodological reductionism in the theoretical review in 2.1, the research aims to analyse more than one media source, thus three very large cases would produce an unmanageable amount of data, far beyond the scope of the project. It is necessary then, to put in place a limitation on each case study. This could be achieved in different ways. It was considered that just news headlines could be analysed, however this would not provide much scope for CMF to be present. Furthermore, it is through the weight of the text that frames may become more resonate and magnified through particular language constructs like metaphor, stereotype, or repetition. Hoskins and O'Loughlin suggest an event-driven analysis as a way to successfully limit the size of the cases analysed.

Rather than focussing on the entirety of the case conflict, the objective is to produce a detailed 'snapshot' of the media ecology that centres on a particular point in time during each case, thus limiting the boundaries of the unit of analysis and permitting a deeper probe of each case. Intrinsic to the justifying criteria noted above then, has also been the contextual salience of each case. The objective is, "that a spotlight is focused on individual instances rather than a wide spectrum" (Denscombe, 2010: 53). Robert Yin defends the use of a "unique", "remarkable", or "revelatory event" to produce a piece of research that is significant and original (2012: 7). Thus, while an event-driven case selection permits the

successful organisation and execution of the research, it is also significant in aiding the selection of particular cases that warrant attention and investigation. Nicholas Valentino and David Sears broaden the benefits of an event-driven approach, suggesting that political events that are "highly salient" can generate the formation of attitudes because of "the information flow they stimulate" (1998: 129). In other words, the analysis of a snapshot of the media ecology during particular salient points within each case can produce significant understanding given the volume and flow of information during such critical moments.

Within each case study a particular event or temporal dimension has been selected for analysis. Research of each case study more broadly revealed three pertinent instances worthy of further examination. These instances comprise ten-day periods, during which each case has encompassed some form of violent episode or escalation of violence that generated significant media and UK government discussion over the appropriate foreign policy response to take. In the case of Libya, this was Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi (9-19 March 2011). This was a key event within the Libyan uprising as the newly instated Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) warned of thousands of civilian casualties if Benghazi were to be recaptured by Gaddafi loyalists (ICRtoP, 2014). In the case of Syria, the key event under analysis is the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta that led to the deaths of approximately 1,400 people, largely civilian (21-31 August 2013). This marked a critical point within the civil strife in Syria as US President Barack Obama had previously declared the use of chemical weapons to be a line that would result in some form of international action, however this was not to be the case. Rather, intervention in the form of airstrikes occurred only after France became the target of a terror attack in 2015. In the case of Iraq, the event examined will be the siege and persecution of a Yezidi community on Mount Sinjar in Iraq (3-13 August 2014). This persecution involved forced conversions, kidnapping and murder by the militant Islamist group IS.

Methods of data collation and analysis

Through the employment of framing analysis the research is able to examine the construction and evidence of a cosmopolitan morality frame within the media ecology. This is from a primarily British perspective given the focus on British foreign policy, and also the need to utilise English-language sources. It has been explained that rather than focusing solely upon the often discretely represented strands of 'new' or emergent media or 'traditional' or

established media sources (Hoskins, 2013), the research will attempt to cut across the media ecology to produce a snapshot of the communication network. The media analysed have been selected due to their representation of these discrete strands. They have also been represented due to their use of textual language as the communicating media, rather than visual or voice (although both of these would contribute additionally interesting elements to analysis of CMF).

The sample selected comprises British newsprint, a British online news site with global reach, and globally produced social media, the latter of which represents significant user generated content (UGC), while the previous two are representative of predominantly journalistic content. *The Guardian* and *The Times* were selected as the two most popular broadsheets in the UK from figures published in 2013 by the National Readership Survey (NRS). The survey results place *The Times* and *The Guardian* as the highest ranking broadsheets by print, excluding combined figures with sister or Sunday papers (NRS, 2013). These two papers were also selected as they provide a bi-partisan representation in terms of British political leanings; *The Guardian* being typically centre left and *The Times* centre right. *BBC News Online* was selected as the most popular news and information online source in the UK, used by 52% of people who go online according to an OFCOM report (*The Guardian*, 2013). Furthermore, it is necessary to examine the level of UK government response to each case study analysed, and juxtapose this with the media analysis.

Press releases, speech transcripts and briefing texts from the UK government are accessed via Gov.uk utilising key search terms, and then selected from the relevant date parameters. Much of the news content collated can be sourced directly via the media source's online archives, although other databases are also particularly valuable, such as Lexis Library for newspaper sourcing. Key search terms are utilised to generate textual data related to the three ten-day critical instances, with duplicated or irrelevant texts disregarded before a more in-depth analysis is permitted. Table 1 below illustrates the qualifying criteria for data collation in each case study.

Case Study	Date Parameters	Search Engine and Source	Key search Terms	Qualifying Criteria
Libya: Gaddafi forces advance on Benghazi.	9-19 March 2011	• Lexis: *The Guardian*; *The Times* • BBC Advanced Search: *BBC News Online* • Twitter Advanced Search 'top' and 'most recent': *Twitter*	"Benghazi"	• Relevance • Where duplicated the larger text is utilised only • Retweets are included but not by the same user profile
Syria: Chemical weapon attack in Ghouta.	21-31 August 2013		"Syria" and "chemical attack"	
Iraq: Besiegement of Mount Sinjar by IS.	3-13 August 2014		"IS" and "Sinjar" "IS" and "Yazidi"	

Table 1: Means of media data collation for each case study.

Initial readings of the data corpus and a preliminary content count of specific words generates key contextual aspects for deeper discursive analysis, while also increasing validity through a cross quantitative-qualitative approach. These contextual aspects may include the use of certain language constructions, the presentation of certain information, the use of repetition, stereotypes, metaphor or analogy. The data is stored and managed using the software Nvivo. Coding of frame themes is conducted utilising Robert Entman's four framing functions as a guide for further exploration. Entman states how media frames have four fundamental functions, of which at least two will be evident; they define the situation (effects or conditions) as being problematic, they identify the causes of the problem, they express moral judgement of the actors involved/situation, and they provide and approve solutions/improvements (2003: 417). These four frame functions provide a guideline for the coding of the media data, in addition to initial word frequency counts and frequent readings of the data, therefore permitting the data itself to also generate new avenues for analysis.

Ethical considerations

The methodological stance and means of data collation are largely unobtrusive given the primary focus being the interpretation of secondary sources. By this it is meant that the

research is not invasive with regards to the privacy of documents, individuals or personal data, or with regards to the focus of the research which while politicised, is not of a particularly personal nature. Furthermore they do not involve the "direct elicitation of information" from research subjects (Webb *et al*, 1966, in Lee, 2000: 1). As Berg notes, newspapers form part of a public record "prepared for the express purpose of examination by others" (Berg, 2009: 271). With regard to textual information, attention will be paid to copyright and referencing, as well as to the intrinsic bias that is likely to exist within literature and newspaper texts as described previously.

Privacy

The principle of privacy becomes hazy when conducting research into the new media ecology. What I mean here is principally the use of research data obtained from social media sites where those contributing 'tweets' or to message boards are unaware that their express opinions may be seen and used as part of somebody's research without their knowledge. We can determine that if such information is 'out-there' in the public domain for all to access then it does not compromise ethical privacy or informed consent principles to use such information (Bryman, 2012: 149). However, the point is still significant and provides an interesting new dimension to conventional ethical issues (Bryman, 2012: 149).

Pace and Livingston (2005: 39, in Bryman, 2012: 149) further elaborate on this predicament and offer a set of guidelines for the usage of digital information; 1) The information is publicly archived and readily available; 2) No password is required to access the information; 3) The material is not sensitive in nature; 4) No stated site policy prohibits the use of the material. The research adopts Pace and Livingston's (2005: 39, in Bryman, 2012: 149) principles as a guiding framework for the utilisation of digital information such as that found on online social media sites like *Twitter*.

Summary

The first section of this chapter has reviewed the extant theory central to the research. The theoretical scholarship on cosmopolitanism has been discussed, drawing from this an understanding of cosmopolitanism's moral principles which it is argued encourage us to care

about and for others as part of a larger cosmos, or greater humanity. While mediated cosmopolitanism is a flourishing area of research, existing work has focused on critical discourse analysis, quantitative or focus group approaches to the identification of cosmopolitanism within media reporting. Frame theory has been discussed as part of the existing scholarship theorising media effects. The work of Robert Entman is identified as key to the definition of and identification of frames within media texts. This theoretical review also discussed what is meant by 'media', and how the research is guided by a conceptualisation of the media as an ecology. It is argued that this holistic consideration of the media necessitates a discursive approach that permits the identification of broader frameworks rather than the minutiae of semiotic or finer discourse analytic approaches. It was demonstrated from the review that current theorising has identified morality as a common frame through which issues are presented, however the existing scholarship does not address morality framing in detail. The concept, and the nature of morality are ill-defined, and its discursive characteristics are underexplored.

Having identified the limitations of the extant scholarship, the second section of this chapter forwarded the conceptualisation of CMF in order to remedy them. Cosmopolitan morality framing permits a more detailed consideration of what is meant by morality framing by locating it within cosmopolitan scholarship. CMF also permits the identification of cosmopolitan morality across the media ecology by conceptualising it as a framework through which issues are presented. These arguments were discussed fully in section 2.2, alongside the definition of CMF and its usefulness as a framework. Finally this chapter has presented the methodological approach and methods selected as most appropriate to meeting the objectives of the research. The ontological and epistemological foundations of the study are rooted in constructivism given that the research aims to reveal discursive frames as constructed views of reality. As the research is concerned with the interpretation of texts and message, a hermeneutical methodology is most appropriate and the mode of frame analysis incorporates both quantitative and qualitative elements with the aim of increased validity through triangulation (Berg, 2009; Howell, 2013).

The thesis now moves on to the application of this theoretical and methodological foundation to the empirical case studies justified in Chapter 1 and also in Chapter 2.3. The cases are presented in a chronological ordering of when the key events analysed took place. This is due to the contextual significance of each case holding potential bearing upon the next.

Chapter 3 then presents an analysis of the media reporting of Colonel Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi, the second largest city in Libya.

Chapter 3: Cosmopolitan Morality Framing of Gaddafi's Advance on Benghazi during the Libyan Uprising

> Do something, do anything, is not a military strategy…. RtoP may have made it harder to say no, but what happens next will clearly affect the likelihood of whether future leaders will say yes (Chesterman, 2011:284).

In February 2011 Libya found itself in the throes of what has been popularly described as the 'Arab Spring'.[6] These series of 'uprisings', beginning in Tunisia, have been widely depicted in positive terms as civil society movements striving for greater societal and political reforms. In Libya such political reforms were met with a strict government response which developed into violence and civil conflict. Libyan state authorities and opposition groups fought for control of key towns and cities within the country, including the city of Benghazi. A specific threat insinuated against Benghazi by the Libyan government forms the basis of this analysis. The fear of an impending massacre in the city provoked a reaction from the international community, leading to the initiation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, which authorized military intervention under "all necessary measures" (UNSC, 2011a: 3).

The potential threat to Benghazi was a critical point in the conflict and Western policy-making process. How this critical juncture was discursively constructed by the media provides significant understanding of how language can shape perceptions, and "make worlds" (Cornwall, 2010). This chapter argues that the British media presented the conflict in Libya through CMF, and that this frame was instrumental in shaping interpretations and legitimising the British foreign policy response. Given the arguable conceptual stretching of the R2P norm to involve the removal of the Gaddafi government, the chapter further suggests

[6] The 'Arab Spring' is a term used to describe the series of protests and uprisings that took place in 2010-11 in the MENA region, affecting in varying degrees, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria, Oman, Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia (Cottle, 2011: 647). In February 2011 Iran saw a reigniting of political protest that it had experienced more widely in 2009 with the 'Green Movement'. The re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad prompted large demonstrations in response to alleged electoral fraud (Holliday and Rivetti, 2016: 17). This uprising against the Iranian government occurred eighteen months before the initial 'Arab Spring' demonstrations were felt in Tunisia. It is therefore important to note that "it was not Arabs alone who have been protesting for political or social change" (Holliday and Leech, 2016: 2).

that CMF may have provided a rationale for more self-interested foreign policy goals. The chapter analyses the reporting of the conflict and subsequent initiation of intervention in Libya over a ten day period during which Benghazi was threatened. Textual data is acquired from across the media ecology (as discussed in Chapter 2) representing established and emergent media sources, comprising *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *BBC Online*, *Twitter*, and UK government policy is accessed from Gov.uk.[7] A basic content analysis is employed through the presentation of word frequency counts that prompt further discursive analysis. A selection of the most salient data is directly quoted within the chapter to illustrate the key constructions contributing to a cosmopolitan morality framing of the crisis. Further evidence of key constructions contributing to CMF can be found in the appendices.

The Libyan uprising featured heavily within the British media during 2011, receiving the most global media attention of all of the states that encountered some form of social protest under the 'Arab Spring' banner (Seo, 2013: 774), and receiving a larger share of the *BBC*'s airtime than any other Arab country during this period (BBC Trust, 2012: 24). It is argued that the media analysed employed a cosmopolitan moral framing of events in Libya through the utilisation of particular linguistic tools and the presentation of select information which contributed to a common 'humanitarian' theme. This theme was similarly carried forth within UK policy as well, evident through the responsibility to protect (R2P) rhetoric employed in the adoption of UNSCR 1973. As such, the actions of the UK in response to the advance on Benghazi by forces loyal to the Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi were legitimised through the media's use of CMF, and solidified through calls for assistance from the Libyan interim government. It is argued that while CMF may be instrumental in bestowing forms of legitimacy to foreign policies, such frames are employed to varying extents, and may therefore be utilised as a tool to further foreign policy interests. What I mean by this is that beneath this frame self-interests may work to determine which members and elements of global humanity are to be defended or saved, and which are not.

According to Robert Entman, how an issue is framed is central to "successful political communication", and may "promote perceptions and interpretations" that have tangible effects (2003: 417). Framing of issues occurs when words and images can be identified from the rest of a news-piece as having the ability to generate support for, or opposition to, a

[7] See section 2.3 of Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of the data collation process. Coding of the referenced data is employed throughout, with the reference key to each chapter contained in the thesis appendices.

particular stance during political conflict (*ibid*). These words and images are ones considered salient within the culture examined; they are "*noticeable, understandable, memorable* and *emotionally charged*" and include "*prominence* and *repetition*" [emphasis in original] (*ibid*). As discussed within the review of theory in Chapter 2, media frames have four fundamental functions, of which at least two of these functions will be performed; they define the situation (effects or conditions) as being problematic, they identify the causes of the problem, they express moral judgement of the actors involved/situation, and they provide and approve solutions/improvements (*ibid*). The expression of CMF is thus evident through these functions. This is firstly, through descriptions of the escalating events in Libya, and secondly, through the atrocities and suffering experienced (defining and identifying the problem). Thirdly, through particular identity constructions of the main actors involved which may express some level of culpability or innocence (moral judgment), and fourthly, through the promotion, legitimisation and naturalisation of particular policy responses (providing and approving solutions).

Informed by Entman's frame functions, the chapter argues that CMF is produced through the communication of particular identity constructions of the main protagonists in the crisis. These identity constructions reduced events to a simplistic metaphorical understanding of the opposition groups as 'victims' and 'heroes', the pro-Gaddafi forces as 'villains' and the international community as 'saviours'. This construction may also be understood through a democracy lens as pro-democracy or democracy seeking (victims/heroes), anti-democracy (villains), and agents of democracy (saviours). Such constructions encourage us to condemn culpability, or empathise with those suffering, who we may feel affinity for through the reduction of perceived distance (see Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006a; 2006b). This sentiment is strengthened by the identification with Libyans who are pursuing the democratic values upheld in the UK and wider western world, encouraging a sense of solidarity through political resonance.

A cosmopolitan morality frame is also constructed through the perception of events as revolutionary, which cast the existing government in opposition to the Libyan people and their political desires. It also contributed to the depiction of a more clear-cut and arguably more 'honourable' cause for political reform as championed by the people. The use of analogies of past interventionist experiences in the West, for example Iraq (2003), Bosnia (1992) and Rwanda (1994) also furthered this framing. In so doing particular foreign policy outcomes are highlighted, namely how this crisis was 'different from Iraq' but there existed a

shared moral responsibility to alleviate the suffering of the Libyan people, with Bosnia and Rwanda serving as a 'moral compass' directing the UK and others towards intervention. Finally, the construction of a sense of urgency opens up the opportunity (at least cognitively) to impede an imminent atrocity against the people in Benghazi through some form of external action. This way of presenting the crisis in Libya fosters CMF through which the crisis may be understood, promoting the principles of shared humanity, hospitality and the alleviation of the suffering of others. It also serves to imbue a sense of moral legitimacy on the part of the West and the opposition movement, naturalising the policy reaction from the UK, while simultaneously re-establishing relational hierarchies that play out through the choices of when and where to respond to humanitarian crises.

The chapter contributes to a developing body of literature that examines the political uprising and ensuing conflict in Libya from 2011. Existing analysis has considered the 'Arab Spring' broadly, examining the experiences of many states popularly collated under this rubric (Brownlee et al, 2015; Khatib and Lust, 2014; Sadiki, 2015). Larbi Sadiki's (2015) *Routledge Handbook of the Arab Spring*, also discusses the non-Arab world's experience of political protest. This edited text includes chapters from Anas Abubakr Buera (2015) and Anas El Gomati (2015), who both examine the political, social and religious factors that preconditioned the political uprising in Libya. The utilisation and agency of digital and social media as a mobiliser during the 'Arab Spring' political uprisings has been explored (Ali and Fahmy, 2013; Howard and Hussain, 2013), in addition to the notions of digital witnessing and citizen voice (Chouliaraki, 2015; Thorsen, 2016) as democratising forces.

The employment of, and impact upon, the R2P norm as a basis for intervention in Libya has been variously examined by many authors (Brockmeier et al, 2016; Dunne and Gifkins, 2011; Morris, 2013; Thakur, 2014). James Pattison (2011) further develops this through detailed consideration of the ethics of the intervention in Libya, while Alan Kuperman (2013) calls for a reassessment of the R2P norm following his interpretation of the Libyan intervention as perpetuating the conflict. Consideration has been given to the multilateral diplomatic process that led to the authorisation of the Libyan intervention (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, 2014). Alex Bellamy and Paul Williams (2011) have similarly looked at the diplomatic process through their discussion of the evolvement of a 'politics of protection'.

Analysis of the role of language in the media and/or policy reporting of the Libyan conflict is emerging but remains an under-explored area. In a presentation to the British International

Studies Association (BISA) Sam Maguire and Rhiannon Vickers (2013) employ critical discourse analysis (CDA) in a comparison of elite framing of the uprisings in Libya and Bahrain. Lilie Chouliaraki (2015, 2016) looks specifically at the use of empathy and the inclusion of citizen witnessing within the *BBC* reporting on Libya and Syria, highlighting the selective use of a 'politics of pity'. Jack Holland and Mike Aaronson (2014) examine the notion of strategic rhetorical balancing as a way of elites achieving policy dominance, assisting justifications for the intervention in Libya. It is between the junctures of these three works that this chapter makes a valid contribution to the literature on the Libyan conflict and intervention. In examining CMF within the British media reporting on Libya, I develop upon Chouliaraki's consideration of the selective use of empathy and Holland and Aaronson's elite justification for intervention. I argue that empathetic and humanitarian themes contribute to CMF, which shaped understanding of the conflict and assisted the justification and naturalisation of particular British foreign policy responses.

Initially the chapter briefly addresses the background and development of the political and social upheaval in Libya in order to provide a contextual locus for the subsequent framing analysis and discussion. Within this section the origins and development of the so-called 'Arab Spring' are briefly discussed up until the commencement of the political uprising in Libya. While many other states experienced simultaneous or subsequent upheaval, the chapter remains focussed upon the Libyan experience. During this section the term 'Arab Spring' is discussed as the popularly utilised catch-all for many of the separate experiences of political uprising in the region at this time. The chapter argues that the term itself denotes a sense of political rebirth, partly aided in this construction by historical usages of the term 'spring', and similarly that the metaphorical descriptions of unrest suggested an inevitability and naturalness to the proceeding events.

The British policy reaction is then discussed, allowing comprehension of the position and attention that the crisis was being afforded within British policy-making during the ten day period under analysis. The chapter argues that the British government emphasised a cosmopolitan global responsibility to alleviate suffering and spearheaded this responsibility through the drafting of UN legislature and advocating the international community. The chapter progresses to a discussion of the specific language constructions within the texts. As alluded to previously these include, the identity of the protagonists in the conflict, the description of the unfolding conflict, the reference to past Western interventionism, and the

capacity, or presentation of an opportunity, to implement decisive action to influence the trajectory of events and alleviate potential large-scale suffering.

Finally, the chapter draws these interpretations together into a broader discussion, arguing that a humanitarian theme is presented within the media and policy reports, contributing to CMF. The chapter claims that CMF, alongside the capacity and opportunity to halt an impending atrocity provided legitimisation of the ensuing UK interventionist response. In utilising CMF, justification is provided for UK foreign policy responses, however this universal moral framework may also be utilised to justify self-interested foreign policy goals, and preserve relational hierarchies that determine who is and is not worthy of external assistance.

Contextual background: Deconstructing the 'Arab Spring' moniker

The term 'Arab Spring' itself holds particular connotations. As Maguire and Vickers note, it is reminiscent of earlier defining periods of "political liberalisation", such as the Prague Spring (2013: 4). Simultaneously it also denotes a sense of positivity and political rebirth (Gelvin, 2012: 32-33; Maguire and Vickers, 2013: 4) that will bring about a transformative change for the better. Tim Markham suggests the term, perhaps inappropriately, constructs a sense of an "emergence from darkness", or similarly the overthrowing of winter (Maguire and Vickers: 2013: 4); suggestive that this will also necessarily involve a transition to a more modern and enlightened political system, which we can assume is equated to a 'Western-style democracy' (Markham, 2014: 89-90). The realisation of such metaphors remains to be seen in Libya, and their pursuit is arguably contested. The post-Gaddafi and post-intervention situation remains fractured and violent, while any aspirations for political reform have yet to come into fruition[8] (Amnesty International, 2013; HRW, 2013). There has been no 'emergence from darkness', or seasonal transformation, only a resulting power vacuum and state fracture (Esposito et al, 2016: 3).

Throughout the thesis the term 'uprising' has been utilised to denote the varied events, levels of protest and unrest that have been readily organised under the 'Arab Spring'. Popularly, terms such as 'revolution', 'protest', and 'crisis' have all been used to describe the series of

[8] As described, other experiences of the 'Arab Spring' elsewhere may have engendered alternative political outcomes and levels of reform or concession by the incumbent government.

events (Dalacoura, 2012: 63). The term 'uprising' feels most appropriate due to the distinctions in the motivations, scale and organisation of political dissent, as well as the political outcome in the form of government response and potential reform, yet it is still suggestive of a form of civil-political discord. Each 'Arab Spring' state had its own dissatisfaction with the political status quo and its own revolutionary motivations. Lisa Anderson points out that while there was, to a degree, a "common call" for personal rights and government accountability, there were differences economically, socially, historically and politically under such "unique regimes" (2011: 2; See also Holliday and Leech, 2016: 2). As such, there was arguably no unified, or "Pan-Arab revolutionary movement", but rather these were separate instances of political protest (Bowen, 2012: 9; Dalacoura, 2012: 63). Some states have seen fledgling elements of political reform, such as Tunisia. Egypt saw its democratically elected government overthrown by a popularly supported military coup (Esposito et al, 2016: 3), while Bahrain arguably remains under autocratic rule. At the time of writing, there is a continuing civil war in both Syria and Yemen, while Libya has been plunged into a ruptured political environment where competing factions vie for control (*ibid*). Journalist Jeremy Bowen suggests the term 'revolution' is appropriate to describe the protests and uprisings experienced during the 'Arab Spring' as "there is no going back to what there was before" (2012: 9); it appears in many cases however, to be a premature descriptor.

The 'Arab Spring': Temporal development and metaphorical wave

The first state to encounter the strength of civil protest during late 2010 was Tunisia, in response to the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi on 17 December. Bouazizi was a market trader who had been involved in a confrontation with the Tunisian authorities, and in response to this set himself alight outside the governor's office in Sidi Bouzid.[9] Bouazizi represented a sense of disenfranchisement with the current political and social order, which encouraged the development of a wider protest movement. By 14 January, the Tunisian leader Zinedine Ben Ali had abdicated and fled to Saudi Arabia.

The social and political uprising against Ben Ali's regime in Tunisia was witnessed closely be neighbouring states in the region. Egyptians referred to this tide of civil unrest against the

[9] Leading to the popular *Twitter* hashtag *#sidibouzid* in reference to this action, and the greater Tunisian experience.

political status quo as a "*Tunis*ami" (Chorin, 2012: 188), a tidal wave. There has been popular usage of such metaphorical language in reference to the sudden and overwhelming force and reach of these political events. Often, a 'natural force' metaphor has been used, such as a 'wave' of revolutions or uprisings, or a 'tide' of unrest which 'sweeps', 'crashes' or 'floods' over the region. In part this is a reference to calls for political liberalisation driving elements of the protest movements. Samuel Huntington established that such political reforms occur in 'waves' involving "liberalization or partial democratization in political systems that do not become fully democratic" (1993: 15). Huntington forwards three waves of democratisation,[10] and many envisioned that the 'Arab Spring' would become the fourth (Esposito et al, 2016: 3).

While the usage of tidal metaphors may well stem from Huntington's work, they also create a sense of force, and power transference, or to use another water allegory, a ripple effect. Bowen utilises a meteorological metaphor referring to events as a "political storm" that went "howling through the Arab world" (2012: 7). Such descriptions suggest an unpredictable force that cannot be controlled, while also constructing a powerful force in opposition to the governing regimes of the region. The effect of using the tide or weather as metaphors suggests a certain naturalisation of the occurring events or inevitability, and thus rightfulness or legitimisation.

Egypt held a 'Day of Rage' on 25 January 2011, a week after Ben Ali had fled Tunisia. Approximately eighty thousand people took part in the protests against the autocratic Egyptian government, and while many Egyptian cities held fierce protests it was Tahrir Square in Cairo that became synonymous with the civil uprising. Tunisia had shown that "broad-based movements such as those who brought down the Tunisian government were viable" (Gelvin, 2012: 44). On 11 February Hosni Mubarak resigned from his presidential position spanning 30 years (1981-2011).

The fall of the Mubarak government in Egypt, considered in the Arab imaginary as the "mother of the world" (Castells, 2012: 95) and the "traditional centre of gravity", reenergised

[10] The first wave of democratisation occurred in the early 19th-20th century and saw the implementation of some minimal democratic mechanisms in over 30 countries. The second wave commenced in the post-World War II environment, assisted by the transition from Western colonial rule. The third wave commenced from the 1970s and involved instances of democratic transformation in Latin America, Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. It should also be noted that at times these waves have receded, involving a reversal of democratic reform (Huntington, 1993: 13-31).

the protest movement in the region (Bowen, 2012: 3). On 15 February, four days after the ousting of Mubarak, protests began in Libya's second largest city of Benghazi and were met with live fire from the Libyan government. Within the first week reports suggested there were already a thousand dead (Ensor and Laing, 2013). Events in Libya did not play out like those in Tunisia and Egypt. The Libyan people eventually witnessed 'the fall of the regime'[11] but it came after a more protracted and violent struggle as Colonel Muammar Gaddafi fought to retain political control of his 42-year regime.

From uprising to intervention, and the 'fall of the regime'

By 25 February 2011 the Libyan opposition movement had assumed control of a number of key cities, including Misrata, Ajdabiya, Tobruk, Zawiya and Gaddafi's home town of Sirte (Ensor and Laing, 2013). In the first week of March Gaddafi's forces launched a counter-offensive to regain these areas (Hilsum, 2012: 36) and pushed towards the East and the opposition stronghold of Benghazi – also the bastion of the National Transitional Council (NTC). The NTC were an assembled leadership that purported to represent the Libyan opposition, offering some semblance of legitimacy to their movement and "a political face for the revolution" (Hilsum, 2012: 36). The gains made by the Gaddafi forces and the threats of violence levelled towards Benghazi led to calls from the NTC for international community assistance. This intervention was eventually authorised under Resolution 1973 on 17 March by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Action consisted of the imposition of a no-fly zone, air strikes and "all necessary measures… to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi" (UNSC, 2011a: 3). Fighting continued between the Gaddafi forces and the opposition movement, later assisted by the international community, until Gaddafi was captured and killed on 20 October 2011. Three days later the NTC announced the liberation of the country (UN News Centre, 2011). The multilateral coalition was initially carried out under US coordination as Operation Odyssey Dawn, before being handed over to NATO command under Operation Unified Protector. The other participants in the coalition used their own code names for their

[11] "The people want the fall of the regime" became the chant of the protest movement in Tunisia. The words had resonance and were adopted across the 'Arab Spring' uprisings (Bowen, 2012: ix).

contribution to the mission; the United Kingdom (Operation Ellamy), Canada (Operation Mobile), France (Opération Harmattan).

The international coalition intervention ceased at the end of October 2011 after eight months, and has generated some controversy due to the murder of Gaddafi and the removal of his regime. The NATO coalition was authorised to protect civilians, not engage in regime removal, thus many have argued that the initial mandate for intervention has been stretched, and the normative concept of R2P undermined (Brockmeier et al, 2016; Dunne and Gifkins, 2011; Kuperman, 2013; Morris, 2013; Thakur, 2014). In a joint statement in April 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and US President Barack Obama stated that while the objective of the mission was not to remove Gaddafi by force, "it is impossible to imagine a future for Libya with Qaddafi in power" (Jakobsen, 2016: 283). Furthermore, the mission to protect began to involve active support for the Libyan opposition through the supply of armaments and military training (*ibid*). While NATO forces were not responsible for the killing of Gaddafi, there has been no subsequent investigation into this act, and NATO operations in the country halted swiftly after his death. Brockmeier et al (2016: 125) and Eyal (2012) have considered this to suggest that NATO were more interested in the removal of Gaddafi from power than the humanitarian objective of civilian protection.

Despite the ousting of the Gaddafi regime, Libya post-intervention remains tumultuous. The major success in the post-conflict (and post-Gaddafi) period has been the holding of democratic elections in July 2012, described as bringing to power "a moderate, secular coalition government" (Kuperman, 2013a: 125). However, as Kuperman goes on to explain, the first democratically elected Prime Minister was removed through a vote of no confidence, there have been violent reprisals against alleged Gaddafi supporters and mercenaries, as well as allegations of further human rights abuses (2013a: 125). A failure to adequately address disarmament has led to violent clashes as rival factions and militias grapple for power and regional controls (Esposito et al, 2016: 3; Kuperman, 2013a: 126).

The British government response: The pursuit of accountability and emergence of R2P rhetoric

The British government were swift in their condemnation of the actions of the Libyan government and the degeneration of the country into violence. On 21 February 2011 British Secretary of State William Hague described the situation as "deplorable" and gave "absolute condemnation" of the Libyan government's use of violence against protesters (LGov.1). Hague's rhetorical judgement established culpability with Gaddafi for perpetrating aggression, and established support for the 'protesters' who were the victims of appalling violence and rights abuses. A further comment by Hague critiqued the Gaddafi government's attempts to conceal escalating events by preventing foreign media access into the country, stating that the; "absence of TV cameras does not mean the attention of the world should not be focussed on the actions of the Libyan government" (LGov.10). In so doing, he is also imploring that the international community should be alert to the ongoing situation, and by extension, their possible moral responsibility in responding to it.

Within his statement, Hague also warned that the actions of the Libyan government will determine the extent of future relations with the EU and that they would be held accountable by the international community (LGov.1). This statement of holding the Libyan government to 'account' for their actions suggests a more formal legal basis for judgement and the issuing of culpability. This legal-justice theme continues within the British government's rhetoric on Libya. It again, implicates the wider international community as unanimous in their condemnation, clearly establishing the Libyan government as the malefactor within this conflict and the international community as the purveyors of justice.

Britain and France led calls for a firm stance from the international community and the involvement of the United Nations (UN). On 22 February, Hague called for the UNSC to influence the circumstances in Libya. The policy focus in the following days saw a push to ensure the safe evacuation of British nationals from the country as it descended into a "breakdown of law and order" (LGov.2). Three days later David Cameron stated that the UK was pressing for a number of measures to be employed through the UN, including the seizure of assets, travel bans and sanctions against those committing violence. He also threatened, as had Hague, the pursuit of accountability, this time with the mention of investigations for possible crimes against humanity, crimes against the people, and war crimes (LGov.6). It is the primary responsibility of the State to protect its population from these atrocity crimes

(alongside genocide and ethnic cleansing), and where this is not fulfilled the international community are compelled to assume a 'responsibility to protect' (R2P) (ICRtoP, 2014a). In mentioning this possibility, Cameron is creating the beginning of a humanitarian frame, through which events may be understood and actions rationalised under the emerging international norm of R2P. Two days later on 26 February, the UNSC approved Resolution 1970 at the instigation of the UK, which called for a travel ban and asset freeze on Libyan government elites, an end to violence, access for human rights monitors and the media, and also the referral of Libya to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the pursuit of justice (Hehir, 2013b: 5).

While being resolute in condemnation throughout the crisis, Britain also sought to influence the policy stance of the international community. In the convention of a special session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the UK was vocal in calling for the suspension of Libya's seat. The recommendations were acted upon by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 1 March, making it the first time that a member has been suspended since the body was formed (UNGA, 2011). Speaking at the UNHRC, Hague asserted that the international community would work together to pursue justice stating that:

> [T]he unanimous response to the crisis in Libya here in the Human Rights Council and at the United Nations Security Council is nothing short of remarkable. The international community came together in a way it has not done before, setting aside differences in the face of a challenge to the very notion of what we instinctively regard as the basic rights of humankind... there will be a day of reckoning and the reach of international justice can be long (LGov.4).

The statement by Hague reaffirms the universalism of the international community, and that this is evident through a concerted response via the institutions of the UN and the UNHRC. Hague explicitly links this stance to the defence of human rights, and in so doing is emphasising solidarity with those suffering from such abuses, and also solidarity between members of the international community itself. A sense of universal humanity is presented, along with a moral commitment on behalf of the international community to challenge the perpetration of violence and rights abuses.

Hague's pursuit of 'justice' again reasserts a legal-justice theme within which the actions of the Libyan government are being understood. His use of the term 'reckoning' is almost Biblical, conjuring imagery of a judgement day. Further, his suggestion that justice has a

long reach suggests that the British government, alongside the international community, are prepared to pursue legal and moral accountability regardless of temporal or geographical distance. It also suggests an inevitability that justice will be served to those perpetrating abuses no matter what. Establishing a legal-justice theme can work to provide credibility and legality to the subsequent policies undertaken by the British government towards the escalating situation in Libya. By establishing a level of 'criminality' on the part of the Gaddafi regime, the British government begin to implicate that some formal judgement and responsive action is morally and legally required.

Interventionist dialogue: Regional legitimacy, and the UK national interest

Events on the ground in Libya continued to worsen, with claims that Gaddafi's forces were using air power to attack the opposition movement. On 2 March, Hague conversed with one of the senior figures of the opposition movement about the implementation of a no-fly zone, asserting that Britain was "contingency planning" with allies for all eventualities (LGov.3). Dialogue with the opposition movement was extended with the sending of a diplomatic team consisting of members of the British SAS and MI6 into Benghazi in order to make contact with senior members of the opposition. The mission was heavily criticised, with the team attempting to make an unannounced covert arrival at night which resulted in their detention by opposition forces. The British government were left embarrassed by what they described as a "serious misunderstanding" about the role of the team (LGov.5).

As Gaddafi's government appeared to them to continue to be in breach of UNSCR 1970, Britain and France made plans for international action. In a joint letter to the President of the European Council, Cameron and Sarkozy called on European neighbours and Arab and African allies to condemn the Gaddafi regime and to be prepared to support contingency plans, including a no-fly zone where there is "demonstrable need, a clear legal basis and firm regional support" (LGov.8). Such preconditions work to provide a moral boundary and legal legitimacy to the possibility of breaching Libyan territorial sovereignty and initiating intervention. Both Cameron and Sarkozy highlighted to their potential allies and Libya's regional neighbours that any military intervention would depend upon the severity of the situation on the ground, with international norms and laws being broken, and would require the backing of a wider circle of actors than just Britain and France. Simultaneously, Cameron's use of "humanitarian reasoning" on Libya contributed to what Holland and

Aaronson have called "strategic rhetorical balancing", ensuring that any challenge to the rhetoric/policy was problematic and "helping to ensure the support and/or acquiescence of potential opponents" (2014: 14)

On 12 March, the Arab League joined the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in calling on the UNSC to establish a no-fly zone, providing some much-needed regional legitimacy to the proposed contingency plans of Britain and France (Hilsum, 2012: 197). Domestically, Cameron addressed the British Parliament on 14 March and emphasised how Britain's involvement in the Libyan crisis was important for UK national security interests:

> Do we want a situation where a failed pariah state festers on Europe's southern border, potentially threatening our security, pushing people across the Mediterranean and creating a more dangerous and uncertain world for Britain and for all our allies as well as for the people of Libya? My answer is clear: this is not in Britain's interests. And that is why Britain will remain at the forefront of Europe in leading the response to this crisis (LGov.9).

Holland and Aaronson (2014) argue that this reference to national security interests was an attempt to balance humanitarian reasoning by impeding any potential critique of UK involvement in 'distant conflict'. In this sense Cameron was solidifying the rationale for external intervention by drawing the crisis closer in geographical proximity through the emphasis on UK interests. However the counter-claim to this is that cosmopolitan moral calls to alleviate the suffering of others may be utilised as a way of justifying more primary self-interested foreign policy goals (Beck, 1998; Marchetti, 2012; Menon, 2016; Ulas, 2016). Paradoxically, cosmopolitan sentiments may be strengthened when presented and projected through more communitarian narratives that resonate or provide a reference point for more distant suffering (Kyriakidou, 2009; 490; Shapcott, 2001), as explained in section 2.1 of Chapter 2.

'We are coming tonight': The creation of threat, opportunity, and the authorisation of UNSCR 1973

Gaddafi's forces began a counteroffensive, moving to reclaim ground held by opposition forces. The oil port of Ras Lanuf was shelled and towns including, Brega (situated on the coastal road towards the opposition strong-hold of Benghazi) as well as Zawiyah west of

Tripoli were retaken. Ajdabiya, also on the route to Benghazi, came under attack and was occupied by Gaddafi's forces by 16 March (Hilsum, 2012: 198). The threat towards Benghazi was exacerbated by vocal intimidation from the Gaddafi regime. Saif al-Islam Gaddafi claimed that "everything will be over in 48 hours" (Hilsum, 2012: 198), while Gaddafi warned Benghazi directly of an imminent attack, "We are coming tonight… You will come out from inside. Prepare yourselves from tonight. We will find you in your closets" (in Kirkpatrick and Fahim, 2013). Such vitriolic statements were eerily reminiscent of the hate broadcasts from Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLMC) during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The Rwandan radio station was used by Hutu extremists to dehumanise and to incite hate and violence towards the minority Tutsi Rwandans. While the Tutsis were dehumanised and referred to as 'cockroaches' by Hutu extremists, the Gaddafi regime referred to the Libyan opposition movement as 'rats' that should be 'cleansed house by house (Adams, 2012: 5). The use of language that echoed the Rwandan experience served to align this potential atrocity with that genocidal experience. This will be discussed in greater detail subsequently. The threat to the people in Benghazi made more explicit the potential escalation of the level of violence in Libya. In reporting this threat, the media created a sense of urgency that compressed the UK foreign policy-making timeframe within which to act, but opened up the opportunity to act to impede an impending atrocity.

The following day on 17 March the UNSC authorised resolution 1973 with a vote of 10 in favour, to one against, with five abstentions.[12] The resolution imposed a no-fly zone over the country and specifically cited the threat to the city of Benghazi, authorising that "all necessary measures" were taken to protect civilians under threat of attack (UNSC, 2011b). Significantly, it made explicit the point that this action would not involve the foreign occupation of Libyan territory, in a bid to allay concerns of another Iraq (2003) intervention. After the passing of UNSCR 1973 the French military began bombing targets in Libya, joined shortly after by the UK, US and other NATO forces.

Having presented and analysed the narrative emanating from the UK government, the chapter turns to examine the evidence of CMF within the media reporting of this conflict event.

[12] From Brazil, China, Germany, India, Russian Federation.

Responding to the conflict event through newsprint, digital and social media

As described in Chapter 2, the thesis is influenced by the concept of a 'media ecology', taking a view of the media as an environment that infuses all aspects of society. As such the research takes a more holistic approach to media analysis, examining texts from various sources in an attempt to snapshot the media environment at one event point in time. These sources include broadsheet newsprint, online news and social media, while attempting to retain a primarily (but not exclusive) British perspective. Table 2 illustrates the texts that have been retrieved and analysed from each of the media sources considered. Not all of the retrieved texts were deemed relevant to the critical point of investigation, and after initial readings rendered them irrelevant they were made redundant at this stage of the analytical process.[13] Furthermore, it is not possible to cite from every text analysed, thus direct quotations are selected on the basis that they are prominent illustrations or encapsulations of the points articulated.

Media Source	**Texts Retrieved 9-19 March 2011**	**Relevant Texts Analysed**
The Times	47	**24**
The Guardian	22	**15**
BBC News Online	85	**51**
Twitter	220	**200**

Table 2: Media texts retrieved for analysis of Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi.

The construction of conflict protagonists within the British media

As iterated at the outset of this chapter, one of the four functions of framing is to present a moral judgement of the actors involved in the issue/event framed. It is therefore of interest to examine how the media contributed to identity constructions of the main protagonists within the unfolding conflict event, and how such judgements may be embedded within these constructions. Analysis of the British government response to the escalating violence

[13] More detail regarding the data collation and criteria for inclusion in the research can be found in section 2.3 Methodology and Methods.

presented constructions of Gaddafi and his supporters as the perpetrators of violence and human rights abuses, establishing a level of culpability. The Libyan people and opposition movement were cast as the victims of these abuses. They also become allied to the UK and wider international community through the rhetorical linking of universal rights values; for example Hague suggesting that these were abuses of the "basic rights of humankind" that warranted defence from a unified international community. As established in section 2.1 of Chapter 2, the protection of human rights and dignity is key to the definition of cosmopolitan morality adopted by the research. Through this statement, Hague is projecting a core cosmopolitan sentiment. Not only were rights seen as important, but it was the responsibility of the international community to defend them.

The opposition movement as 'democracy-seeking unified rebels'

Across all four of the media outlets examined, the common construction of the identity of the opposition movement was as 'rebels'. Over the ten day period examined the term was used 81 times by *The Times* and 74 times by *The Guardian*. The *BBC* also predominantly used this construction, with it occurring 149 times within the 56 articles analysed. As tweets are only a maximum of 140 characters, lexical frequency counts of the sample were more difficult. However, as with the findings of the newsprint and online sources, the term 'rebels' (15 times) appeared as the most commonly used descriptor to construct the opposition movement. The use of the term 'rebels' aids the construction of the identities of the opposition movement in two different ways. Firstly, we can interpret that 'the rebels' are a collective and unified force with the same base objectives and means of achieving them; they are in a sense homogenised. Secondly, the term 'rebels' constructs an almost 'Robin Hood' identity, whereby the rebels become a group of 'everyday heroes', rebelling against political monopoly and oppression by the Libyan state, and fighting for a greater cause on behalf of the people.

The use of the term 'revolutionaries' constructs similar visions of a suppressed and marginalised people striving for positive and progressive change, against the Libyan government. The term 'revolutionaries' was used 15 times across *The Guardian* texts, whereas *The Times* only used the term twice, despite the corpus of texts containing 26 articles from *The Times*, and only 15 from *The Guardian*. This differentiation perhaps reflects the traditionally divergent political leanings of the two broadsheets, with *The Times* being the

more right-leaning and perhaps prone to use of more conservative language. Similarly, the term 'revolutionaries' was used only twice across the 200 tweets analysed. However, as stipulated previously, due to the limitations in characters *Twitter* users must be efficient with the use of specific words that are longer in length. The *BBC* also did not favour the term 'revolutionaries', preferring instead 'opposition' which was used 58 times. The term 'opposition' constructs a more neutral but unified image of a body of people who oppose the current status quo.

Frequently the opposition movement were presented in more military terms, as a 'force', 'troop' or 'army'. Similarly, on occasion they were described in more traditional strategic terms as 'insurgents' (*The Guardian*: 2, *The Times*: 8, *BBC*: 4). This term was particularly prevalent in a cogent article in *The Times* by the Conservative MP Sir Malcolm Rifkind. This description perhaps reflects the political and security experiences of the author who served as British Secretary of State for Defence under the John Major government during the Bosnian War, and later as Foreign Secretary (1995-1997).

More negative constructions of the opposition movement occurred primarily when the Libyan government perspective was being presented. In such instances the opposition movement were described as 'terrorists'. The term occurred twice within *The Times* and *The Guardian*, and three times within the *BBC* texts. However a more detailed reading found that while the term was used by the Libyan government to construct the identity of the opposition movement, it was used twice within the newsprint texts to describe Colonel Gaddafi himself as illustrated by the extracts below. This is due to his historical associations with terror attacks against the West, including the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, as well as his support of various terrorist groups, such as Black September and the German Red Army Faction (Hehir, 2013b; O'Kane, 2012: 68).

> Gaddafi is an international terrorist on a grand scale and his crimes are legion; no one is more deserving of international justice (LTT.2).

> A man who has learned a trick or two during 42 years in power that have seen him move from terrorist pariah to Tony Blair's embrace (LTG.8).

The terrorist construction was further utilised by the Libyan government through connecting the opposition movement to Al-Qaeda. This construction occurred on 19 occasions across the newsprint and online news texts. By linking the opposition movement to a known radical

militant group, the Libyan government and Gaddafi attempted to present themselves and their actions as being legitimate in the fight against global terrorism. This construction plays on the post-9/11 relationship between the UK, US and the Libyan state. Colonel Gaddafi was 'brought in from the cold' during the Bush-Blair pursuit of a global war on terror (GWoT), in part on the proviso that Libya would compensate the victims of the 1988 Lockerbie terror attack, give up attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and play a role in combatting global terrorism (Bowen, 2012: 15). Gaddafi complied, sharing intelligence (Chorin, 2012: 2), and permitting the use of Libyan prisons for extraordinary-rendition of terror suspects (Bowen, 2012: 15). By constructing the opposition movement as agents of Al-Qaeda, Gaddafi crafts them as enemies of the West and himself as an ally. Comparisons to Al-Qaeda in order to construct identities are visible again in the analysis of the besiegement of Mount Sinjar, Iraq (see Chapter 5). However in this instance the terrorist group are utilised as a scale of reference against which the violence of Islamic State (IS) is measured.

Media constructions of the Gaddafi government: 'merciless' villain and vilified 'other'

Both newspapers analysed used constructions of Gaddafi as a 'dictator' (*The Times*: 18, *The Guardian*: 7), while the *BBC* used the term only four times within the 56 articles examined. Similarly, the use of terms such as 'tyrant' (*The Times*: 2, *The Guardian*: 1), and 'pariah' (*The Times*: 2, *The Guardian*: 3, *BBC*: 1) were used relatively lightly in reference to Gaddafi. The role of lexical choices such as 'dictator' and 'tyrant' categorises Gaddafi alongside historically hated dictator figures, such as Adolf Hitler (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 62; see also Hammond, 2007: 19) or Saddam Hussein. Similar evocations of Hitler were propagated during the 1991 Gulf War, which Chilton suggests contributed to the construction of an 'enemy image', necessary in producing a discourse of justification for the war that did not rely upon a Cold War framework (Chilton, 2010: 180). Such categories work cognitively in two ways. Firstly, as Entman suggests, an audience is often more receptive to frames that contain cultural resonance or familiar symbols (Entman, 2003: 417). Both Hitler and Saddam Hussein have become emblematic of the 'evil dictator' characterisation. Secondly, categories help to simplify the understanding of a given situation though eliminating obfuscating alternative interpretations and policy possibilities, thereby presenting a convincing construction (Dorman and Livingston, 1994: 73). In their article on strategic rhetorical

balancing, Holland and Aaronson (2014) discuss how political elites seek to close down the discursive space within which alternative interpretations of foreign policy may compete for rhetorical dominance. By placing Colonel Gaddafi within the same category as erstwhile dictators, we are determining that he is equally deplorable and that he should be dealt with in a similar fashion by the international community, thereby foreclosing alternative options.

While the use of strong lexical descriptors such as 'tyrant' or 'dictator' are not as prevalent as perhaps anticipated, the linguistic constructions of Gaddafi have been powerful and persuasive in vilifying him, demonstrated in the extracts below. The media examined assisted this vilification through frequent reference to Gaddafi's character traits, as being; 'defiant and menacing', 'untrustworthy', 'unpredictable' and a 'nightmare for Libya', as demonstrated by the selected extracts below:

> In a defiant and menacing radio address, the Libyan leader sought to pre-empt the UN. "No more fear, no more hesitation, the moment of truth has come," he declared. "There will be no mercy. Our troops will be coming to Benghazi tonight" (LTG.9).
>
> This from Reuters: "#Gaddafi forces continuing to advance toward #Benghazi despite proclaimed ceasefire." Wait...so we can't trust his word? (LTW.3).
>
> [He] will be only remembered as the worst and longest nightmare in Libyan history (Baset Ezzawi via email, LBBC.5).

Appendix 1.1 contains further examples of the vilification of Gaddafi. These extracts are grouped together into sections that present different characteristics aiding this constructed vilification, for example, Gaddafi as; 'untrustworthy', 'violent', as a 'megalomaniac', and 'belligerent'. Similarly, this vilification was facilitated through frequent reference to his actions, as 'brutally repressing' and as a 'merciless killer':

> Col Gaddafi's claims of al-Qaeda involvement in the unrest are seen by others as an outrageous effort to undermine rebels fighting for their freedom against a ruler who has brutally repressed all political opposition in Libya for more than four decades (LBBC.5)
>
> As Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's troops bomb and blast their way through desert towns towards Benghazi, the people of the rebels' eastern stronghold know what

awaits them: a merciless killer who will exact vengeance on a city that dared to defy his brutal thugs (LTT.12).

[T]he man who will become known as the Butcher of Benghazi (LTT.1).

Presentations of the unfolding situation in Libya, which detailed acts of violence committed by those in support of the Gaddafi government further shaped this perception. The vilification of Gaddafi served to present him as the stereotypical 'villain' of the crisis, bolstering similar constructions emanating from the British government. Gaddafi and his supporters are in a sense distanced through their vilification, while those in opposition to the Libyan government are considered empathetically given their victimhood, and their pursuit of the values associated with democratic reform which resonates with UK audiences. By establishing Gaddafi and his supporters in this way, moral judgements and parameters are established through which particular policy responses come to be seen as naturalised.

Media constructions of UK leadership and US paralysis

External actors were referred to frequently throughout all of the texts examined. The state actor most frequently referred to was the UK, with 288 references across the body of texts examined, comprising of the terms 'UK', 'United Kingdom', 'Britain' and 'British'. The second most cited state actor was 'France' or 'French' (225 times), while Barack Obama was the most cited Western statesman with 111 references to him, compared with 73 for David Cameron. Appendix 1.2 presents frequency counts of the references to external actors, demonstrating the presented dominance of the UK, US and France.

The construction of Britain and British policy towards the situation in Libya within *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *BBC* was one of strength, resolve and proactive leadership. Britain and France were often cited as 'pushing' for a no-fly zone and taking the lead in drafting the UN resolution for a no-fly zone. Furthermore, they were described as pressing members of the international community for policy support. The use of words and phrases such as 'pushing' or 'forcing the pace' creates an image of 'confident leadership' from Britain, often alongside France. The effect of this is the illustration of a firm policy stance and commitment from the UK. This can be identified in the extracts below:

> Cameron won wide praise in the Commons, including support from the Labour leader, Ed Miliband, for his role in securing support for a no-fly zone after it looked as if Britain and France were going to be left isolated (LTG.2).
>
> Nick Robinson said he understood that the US had not yet agreed to the plan - but Britain and France were tabling it anyway, to "force the pace" (LBBC.6).

Both of these extracts demonstrate that the UK was prepared to take the lead in responding to events in Libya, even if the rest of the international community felt less compelled. The result of this is a sense that the UK's role in the world is one of championing cosmopolitan moral values such as human rights, dignity and the alleviation of suffering.

As discussed, both Cameron and Hague referred frequently to the pursuit of justice and accountability for crimes committed by the Gaddafi government, adopting a 'legal-justice' theme. In doing so they construct themselves in a morally superior position; as being not only in a position to judge the Gaddafi government for failing to uphold humanitarian norms, but also being in a position to uphold and pursue that justice. Both make reference to the "long-reach" of justice (LGov.4), suggesting they are resolved and willing to persevere in bringing perpetrators to justice over the long-term.

Conversely, US decision-making was constructed more critically throughout the media texts, with President Obama's "wait-and-see policy" (LTT.3) seen as stalling the green light for action from the UK and France who were still keen to garner Western and regional support. In an article for *The Times*, Lord Ken MacDonald QC the Liberal Democrat peer, described Washington as being "gripped by a peculiar paralysis of mind" (LTT.2). He went on to evoke the premature proclamation of President Bush on Iraq (2003) as the cause of policy slowness on behalf of the US:

> "[M]ission accomplished" remains a potent sore and President Obama can't seem to get beyond it (LTT.2).

MacDonald's statement implies the US were blighted psychologically from their involvement in Iraq (2003) and Bush's speech in front of a 'Mission Accomplished' banner aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln. In reality, the mission in Iraq was far from accomplished despite Bush declaring the end of combat operations and that the US had prevailed (Bush, 2003). The damage to the credibility of that presidency is something that Obama was keen to avoid.

However, this more cautious policy approach was conversely accused of being drawn-out, indecisive and weak.

The US was somewhat reluctant to commit anything more than condemnation of the Gaddafi regime until Arab regional support had been obtained. After the GCC and Arab League confirmed support, the US still remained hesitant. This hesitation was a prominent theme, constructed as weakness and as perpetuating the crisis:

> Worth remembering that US hedging on no-fly zone allowed Qaddafi to continue East all the way to Benghazi #Libya (LTW.2).

> But now, as the protesters rise against the despots, the President hovers and havers, unsure what to say, unsure what to do. Instead of being a great leader, he has been a so-so follower. This should be his moment. He is missing it (LTT.3).

Both extracts suggest Obama is in part responsible for how events have played out during the crisis, through his lingering and indecision. The extract from *Twitter* places culpability with the President for Gaddafi's ability to advance on Benghazi itself. The second extract suggests that how Obama reacts to the humanitarian crisis in Libya could be the making of his presidency, and that essentially he is not fulfilling his leadership role. This negligible role arguably links with the low salience of the 'US', evident in Appendix 1.2. Although it could also be suggested that this low salience was perhaps due to the personalisation of the US to the head of state, in this case Obama.

The constructed role of the US as 'leaders of the free world' means that they are often sought to provide assistance and legitimacy to interventionist policies. Such support is often valuable in garnering and solidifying international community agreement, thereby fostering a sense of universal consensus and responsibility. The second extract above attaches foreign policy leadership qualities and career aspirations and advantage to the policy decision-making over Libya. In doing so, the statement makes visible the personal benefits attached to the promotion of a more decisive and forceful policy response; 'this should be his moment'. Thereby, any CMF through which to justify interventionist policy may also be viewed as potentially advantageous on a personal level. Instead, it is the UK that takes a strong leadership position on the Libya crisis. Alongside France, the UK fosters international community condemnation of the Libyan government, and garners policy support and legitimacy.

The 'fairy-tale of just war' metaphor as moral justification for war

The use of particular lexical terms in the reporting of the British newsprint and online media can be seen to link to what George Lakoff (1991; 2001) has described as a 'fairy tale of just war' metaphor. According to Lakoff, this metaphor is the "most natural way to justify a war on moral grounds" through constructing the identities of a victim, villain, hero, crime and victory (2001: 23). Through the construction of this metaphor, certain parameters are assembled that enable a cosmopolitan framing of the crisis. For example, by establishing who are the perpetrators of violence and who are victims of violence, this metaphor constructs moral judgements of the actors involved in the crisis and subsequently makes possible cosmopolitan moral calls for empathy for others, dignity, charity and the alleviation of suffering.

This narrative sees the Libyan opposition movement constructed as the 'victims', striving for greater political reforms, in relation to Gaddafi's construction as the 'villain' perpetuating violence, human rights abuses and political and social repression. This narrative is completed with the construction of a 'hero' who is "moral and courageous" and seeks to rescue the victims and defeat the villain (Lakoff, 2001: 23). In this instance, this character role is fulfilled by the international community, with Britain and France taking the lead.

This metaphorical narrative reduces the Libyan conflict to a more simplistic representation, frequently seen in traditional children's fairy-tales. Essentially, it presents a 'good versus evil' construction, often portrayed ideologically, such as 'democracies versus dictators'. In this sense then, the Libyan opposition would be constructed as 'democracy-seeking', whereas Gaddafi is 'anti-democracy', and the international community represented by the UK, US and France are 'agents of democracy', who sought to restore the Libyan moral balance by assisting the characterised democracy-seeking opposition movement (Lakoff, 2001: 23). As Hilsum has described with reference to Libya, it is a tempting narrative but also a reductive one, the "evil old dictator versus seemingly modern, often English speaking, democracy-seeking rebels" (Hilsum 2011, 5). While this can aid the basic comprehension of complex situations, such rudimentary comparisons can also result in misrepresentation as the more nuanced aspects of what is often a complex event, steeped in historical context, perception and relations, are omitted or abridged. Furthermore the presentation of a complex crisis in this reductive way permits, as argued, a clear construction of culpability, villainy and

oppressor, against innocence, victimhood, oppressed, and this perception may be utilised to bring legitimacy to interventionism by establishing an 'enemy other'.

Despite the negative consequences of cognitive simplification, in this instance the media sources analysed, in varying degrees, have generally subscribed to the fairy-tale metaphor. This has been compounded through reference to past atrocities and their characterisations, for example, referring to the Bosnian experience brings to the fore the villainous characterisation of Slobodan Milošević. The effect of this narrative is to legitimise interventionist foreign policy in order to ensure that 'good/democracy' triumphs over 'evil/dictator'.

The use of cognitive simplification benefits British policy-making in two ways. Firstly, framing the conflict through a simplistic narrative results in increased levels of broad comprehension and interest from the wider public who are able to cognitively access and process the information quickly, despite varying education and interest in domestic politics. Much of our understanding of complex situations comes through "conceptual metaphors", which help to simplify concepts through the use of more familiar ones (Lakoff, 2001: 3). Secondly, the actions of British policymakers have been legitimised by this narrative which has depicted events in such a way that the number of possible policy responses available has been limited. Thus, through this construction of events, a complex situation has been simplified, and so too have the available responses to it.

In this instance, in order to act to preserve and foster the struggle for greater political freedoms, to protect human rights and uphold global humanitarian norms, the international community (led by the UK and France) were compelled to some form of action. This humanitarianism contributed to and reinforced a cosmopolitan moral framing of events, discussed further. A Western preference with "ethical engagement" may actually contribute to the tendency to present conflicts in simplistic terms (Hammond: 2007: 6), or humanitarian ones. For example, the presentation of the Bosnian war as involving acts of ethnic cleansing and genocide was made analogous to the Holocaust thus aiding the identification of "clear villains and victims for whom the Western powers can intervene, to punish or protect" (*ibid*).

Presenting the Libyan conflict in this way creates a simplified moral understanding that works to support the subsequent humanitarian rationale for involvement. Events may be portrayed in this manner due to the conscious or subconscious desire to present an 'ethical' basis to any involvement. The desire to appeal to ethical norms works to legitimise subsequent policy reactions for domestic opinion. This idea of presenting a simplified

'ethical engagement' may be increasingly important as public support for Western intervention recovers from the controversy and moral and legal ambiguity that shrouded the intervention in Iraq 2003. Thus with Libya, there was presented a clear demarcation between culpability and innocence, a legal normative basis for intervention (subsequently provided under R2P) and a cosmopolitan moral framing that engendered empathy towards those suffering, a universal responsibility to humanity and a well-established 'enemy other'.

Media constructions of the ensuing conflict: Revolution, civil war or genocide?

According to Entman's framing functions, a frame will help to define a problem, provide judgement of a situation and also approve solutions. Thus the employment of CMF assisted in constructing events so as to enable the perception and approval of a humanitarian response. Events were thereby constructed as grave and threatening, but favourable enough for successful external involvement.

Events on the ground in Libya were constructed using particular terms across all of the media sources examined. Primarily events were described as a 'revolution', which occurred 54 times across the body of texts (*The Guardian*: 25, *The Times*: 16, *BBC*: 10, *Twitter*: 3), or an 'uprising' which occurred 50 times, 30 of which were within *The Guardian* alone (*The Times*: 3, *BBC*: 17). The use of these terms constructs the crisis as being a unified, civilian-led grassroots movement that due to legitimate grievances is rising up against the governing regime. The inference may be that the conduct of the regime is a legitimate grievance of the people. Conversely, *The Times* only used the term 'uprising' three times within the texts analysed. The disparities between the language each newspaper used to construct events may in part be due to the traditional political leanings of each newspaper. With *The Guardian* being the more left-leaning, we may see the use of language constructions that support and legitimise this grassroots interpretation, whereas *The Times* is traditionally the more conservative of the two. References to 'protests' were also frequent, particularly within the *BBC* and *Twitter* (*The Guardian*: 4, *The Times*: 4, *BBC*: 34, *Twitter*: 9). Similarly, this term suggests that the civilian population have an injustice for which they are protesting. Such terms lend legitimacy to the cause of the opposition movement by constructing events as justifiable.

Used less frequently was the term 'civil war' (*The Guardian*: 2, *The Times*: 7, *BBC*: 9, *Twitter*: 1). The term suggests conflict amongst warring factions, which promotes a frame of disarray and disorder without clear boundaries between protagonists – something Britain would perhaps be wary of becoming involved in after the Iraq (2003) experience. In reality, the opposition movement consisted of combatants who were somewhat unified under the interim NTC, and in their desire to oust Gaddafi from power,[14] but also contained many disparate factions. Anderson has gone so far as to describe the opposition as "ragtag bands of armed rebels" (2011), however this narrative was not overt within the media texts analysed. Despite its usage within *The Times* and *BBC*, Ethan Chorin has suggested that the term 'civil war' was generally avoided within the policy-language of the West as it "detracted from the cleaner notion of a unified popular rebellion" (2012: 210). The term 'civil war' also suggests this to be an 'internal' matter (Chilton, 2010: 182). External intervention would arguably require more concerted justification if events had been overtly portrayed in this way, as a result of the legacy of the UK's involvement in the internationalised internecine conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Constructing an impending threat to the city of Benghazi

Gaddafi's counter-offensive in March involved a push eastwards to reclaim the rebel-held cities, including Libya's second largest city Benghazi. Many of the media texts analysed made specific reference to the potential consequences of Gaddafi reaching Benghazi, home to approximately 700,000 people, and considered a 'rebellious' city[15] (Pommier, 2011: 1074). This was compounded by explicit threats made by Gaddafi himself who warned Benghazi residents that his forces "were coming" and "would find them in their closets" (Kirkpatrick and Fahim, 2011). The British media made many references to the direct threat to Benghazi. This was accentuated through frequent referral to the towns along the coastal route towards Benghazi that were being retaken, contributing to a feeling of time running out and impending atrocity.

While the British media made frequent reference to the Benghazi threat and the peril of an imminent massacre in the city, there were relatively few references to Gaddafi's clarification

[14] Although geographic pockets of support for the regime remained, such as the town of Tawergha which has since been targeted for revenge attacks in the post-Gaddafi Libya (HRW, 2013).
[15] Benghazi was at the centre of the initial sparks of protest at the beginning of the uprising.

that civilians would not be targeted nor rebels who laid down arms; a point that is substantiated by Kuperman (2013a):

> Throw away your weapons, exactly like your brothers in Ajdabiya and other places did. They laid down their arms and they are safe. We never pursued them at all… Whoever joins us, we the people, the liberator; whoever hands over his weapons, stays at home without any weapons, whatever he did previously, he will be pardoned, protected (Gaddafi, 2011, in Kuperman, 2013a: 113).

This point is substantiated through the media sources examined. There were few references to Gaddafi's offers of amnesty to those rebels who laid down their arms, including two within *The Guardian*, and three within the *BBC*, however the latter were not explicit, instead comprising a small bulleted section at the end of the report. Instead, all of the media sources perpetuated the notion of an imminent massacre, and of potential violent repercussions against a city that has been traditionally hostile to the Gaddafi regime. Kuperman goes so far as to argue that the West misperceived the threat to Benghazi, and that had there been no intervention the conflict would have lasted for only six weeks and resulted in only 1,100 deaths (2013b: 204). The construction of an imminent threat to Benghazi is illustrated in Appendix 1.3, and by the selected extracts below;

> Our correspondent says the situation in Benghazi is getting more tense by the hour, and the calls for a no-fly zone more desperate. Jalal al-Gallal of the Transitional National Council said there would be a "massacre" if the international community did not intervene. "He [Gaddafi] will kill civilians, he will kill dreams, he will destroy us," he told the BBC. "It will be on the international community's conscience" (LBBC.7).

> Libya rebels face last stand as Gaddafi forces zero in on Benghazi (LTW.4).

> So what is unfolding in the desert in North Africa is full-scale military assault on liberty. Planned and executed by tyrants, it is a serious and deeply destructive war that, when it reaches the free streets of Benghazi, will surely result in a ghastly enjoyment of killing. If Gaddafi's forces reach that city, it is beyond doubt that the most appalling crimes against humanity will be committed. And when the work is complete, it will be carefully hidden away from the scrutiny of a shifty and hesitant world. The murderers will aim for impunity (LTT.2).

> Rebels in Benghazi celebrated in the streets after the no-fly vote was announced. Gaddafi called the vote "flagrant colonisation" and warned of dire consequences. "This is craziness, madness, arrogance," he told the Portuguese TV channel. RTP. "If the world gets crazy with us, we will get crazy too. We will respond" (LTG.9).

By reproducing the perception of threat to Benghazi within the media and policy narratives the situation on the ground is presented as imminently dangerous. The potential suffering of citizens by the Libyan government forces is made cognitively visible as we conceive of this threat coming into fruition. Also made visible is the chance and capacity to alter this vista, to halt an impending atrocity, and to protect those threatened. This perception supports the recommendation and approval of a robust foreign policy in order to halt violence, alleviate suffering and protect the lives of Libyan civilians. As the descriptions above, and also those below illustrate, the perceived threat of a 'massacre', 'bloodbath' and 'genocide' was stark:

> As the fighting gets closer to the major city of Benghazi, there is the potential for many more civilian casualties, particularly if Col Gaddafi's aircraft can operate unchecked, our correspondent says (LBBC.8).

> Without action of this kind, Benghazi would have been a bloodbath (Sir Malcolm Rifkind, Former Foreign Secretary, LTG.5).

> Forces loyal to Col Gaddafi are taking ground from rebels, who say they fear "genocide" without swift UN action (LBBC.9).

The manifestation of such violence would constitute crimes against humanity, compelling an international community response. The call upon the world's conscience and responsibility to respond to this potential atrocity was made clear. In the extract above, the NTC member Jalal al-Gallal firmly placed the responsibility to deter a massacre in Benghazi upon the international community (LBBC.7). President Obama evoked cosmopolitan universal responsibilities when he talked of the world having an 'obligation' and drew upon previous atrocities in Rwanda and Bosnia to highlight his point. While both *The Guardian* and *The Times* talked about the UK's responsibility to respond to the crisis escalation:

> President Obama said the world had an obligation to prevent any massacre of civilians in Libya similar to those that took place in Rwanda and Bosnia during the 1990s (LBBC.12).

> Some feel that the west's involvement is not only necessary but also a moral responsibility given its support for Gaddafi in recent years, including the British training of parts of his army (LTG.8).
>
> William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, added: "This places a responsibility on the members of the United Nations and that is a responsibility to which the United Kingdom will now respond" (LTT.13)
>
> #Benghazi "calls for the world to help, to provide all possible support, as quickly as possible". #febr17 (LTW.1).

In so doing, the media sources drew upon cosmopolitan notions of shared humanity and a moral responsibility to alleviate the suffering of the Libyan people. Rather than this being a localised issue within a fracturing state, or part of regional attempts to quell instability, this is an issue for the world, and the UK (and allies) are placed in a representational role given their capacity, through NATO, for decisive action. Possible responses to this event were presented through the historical lenses of previous Western interventionism as a way of illustrating potential foreign policy outcomes, and in doing so helped to solidify the construction of a humanitarian obligation to protect.

Recall Bosnia: Evoking historical Western interventionism to construct policy options

Both newsprint and online news drew on analogies of past Western interventions during humanitarian crises. They did this primarily to illustrate particular policy consequences, and thus push for a certain line of action. The use of analogies can be "vivid shorthand" in explaining complex situations through a "known quantity" (Moeller, 1999b: 4). As such, analogies may activate frames through cultural resonance, making the information presented more salient (Entman, 2003: 417). Both newsprint and online media evoked particular memories through their symbolic use of previous Western experiences in Bosnia, Rwanda and Iraq (2003).[16] Bosnia (*The Times* also referred to 'the Balkans' twice) was commonly referred to in order to demonstrate the potential result of inaction and slow and ineffective response towards Libya (*The Times*: 9, *BBC*: 6, and *The Guardian*: 1). Similarly, Rwanda

[16] Susan Moeller suggests that policy discussions during the Rwandan crisis in 1994, were split between similar competing analogies. Those campaigning for US action "recollected the Nazis and the Holocaust, and those who counselled minding "our" own business brought up Somalia" (1999a: 300).

was mentioned three times (*The Times*: 1, *The Guardian*: 1, *BBC*, 1); twice in order to illustrate the consequences of inaction towards the humanitarian crisis in Libya.

Interestingly, the Rwanda analogy was used in a rather different way within a cogent article by journalist David Aaronovitch in *The Times*. Rather than draw similarities between the Rwandan genocide and the potential massacre that may befall Benghazi, Aaronovitch uses this case as a means of distinguishing events in Libya *from* both Rwanda and Darfur. Instead, and perhaps more realistically, he suggests that the situation is more akin to that of Bosnia, where not only were our consciences pricked, but our political interests also lay:

> This isn't Rwanda, or Darfur, where we could allow hundreds of thousands of people to be killed, and the only impact on us would be on our consciences. This is closer, in many ways, to Bosnia where our interests turned out very much to be at stake (LTT.1).

By implication, Aaronovitch suggests that Western inaction in Rwanda and Darfur stemmed from a lack of strategic interests in the region which outweighed the humanitarian crisis in each case. Conversely, Libya, Aaronovitch implies, was at this point strategically significant due to the high numbers of refugees that were likely to head towards Europe, the prospect that seeming inaction may embolden other autocrats in the region, and the potential implication that many young Libyans may be co-opted by Islamist jihadists (LTT.1). Therefore, despite CMF there may still be strategic interests driving forward humanitarian calls.

The memory of Iraq (2003) was used to illustrate the adverse consequences of intervention; of becoming embroiled in a conflict with ground troops that did not have concrete regional or legal support (*The Times*: 17, *BBC*: 11, and *The Guardian*: 4). These two narratives are prominent in the extracts below:

> The wait-and-see school of international relations has led to massacres in Bosnia, Iraq and Rwanda in the last 20 years. And, thanks to western dithering and inertia on the part of nations like Germany, Russia and the United States, it will result in the death of the rebellion in Libya too. If Benghazi falls, the blood of martyrs will stain not only Gaddafi's hands, but all of those who watched the revolution's failure with indifference (LTG.1).

> The President and David Cameron sought to allay fears about the legacy of Iraq, insisting that no ground troops would be involved and that Libyans be (sic) free to choose their own leader (LTT.5).

Not only do these two statements utilise Iraq as a frame of reference, but they also emphasise the democratic aspirations of the Libyan people and the sense of urgency with which to respond. The first statement suggests that a lack of decisive assistance would render the international community as culpable as Gaddafi in stifling political revolution. The second statement promotes a vision of political freedom that would result from external intervention. Furthermore, frames of reference to Iraq (2003) were also used in order to construct the Libyan conflict as distinct from this experience:

> The Conservatives' Lib Dem coalition partners are supporting the action, saying it is a wholly different situation from the 2003 Iraq war which they opposed (LBBC.1).

It is logical that the current British government would want to separate their policy paths from the Iraq (2003) experience under the Labour government, which generated much negative controversy since its inception. Instead, Libya was compared more directly to the experience of Bosnia, furthering the sentiment that inaction or indecision could result similarly – in a massacre akin to Srebrenica or a violent siege like Sarajevo (1995). This symbolic representation was used strongly within *The Times* article by MacDonald, who implored that the results of Western inaction in Bosnia were remembered when considering the crisis in Libya:

> So it is not Iraq that this Libyan tragedy should reflect in us, but the Balkans. We should recall Bosnia in the 1990s, when Europe looked away as Sarajevo was placed under siege by the Serbs, its shoppers felled by shells and snipers, and a terrible slaughter rained over the countryside (LTT.2).

The evocation of past intervention experiences was perhaps arguably also present within the policy-making realms of Britain and the US. In Britain, key advisors to the government included Arminka Helic, a British politician who fled the Bosnian conflict, and Ed Llewellyn, the Chief of Staff to Lord Paddy Ashdown during his role as High Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina (2001-2005), both of whom had significant experiences of Bosnia (The Economist, 2011). In the US, Samantha Power and Susan Rice had first-hand experiences of

the decision-making process and subsequent inefficient Western reaction to Bosnia and Rwanda (Bowen, 2012: 138-139; Heinze and Steele, 2013: 150; The Economist, 2011). Power was a journalist during the Bosnian conflict, who later critiqued the US ineffectiveness of responding to atrocities and of avoiding the term 'genocide' so as to evade moral responsibilities to respond (Power, 2007). Power later served on the National Security Council (NSC) as the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights (2009-2013), and was a leading advocate of US intervention in Libya. Rice served on the US NSC during Bosnia and the genocide in Rwanda, and her experiences with policy-making at this time arguably led to her being a clear advocate of a robust US approach to the potential atrocity in Benghazi. Eric Heinze and Brent Steele (2013) argue that this 'Bosnian generation' defined their response to Libya in reaction to the realist worldview that characterised these past experiences, that the US did not want to get involved in "squishy, humanitarian "social work"" (Power, 2002, in Heinze and Steele, 2013: 151).

The utilisation of analogy serves to illustrate the policy options available to the UK and wider international community. Comparisons to Iraq (2003) were utilised to dissuade fears of entrenchment, while Bosnia and Rwanda were utilised to illustrate the heavy price of inaction, or policy slowness. These historical lenses bolster a CMF of the Libyan crisis by illustrating the potential human costs of policy inaction, while simultaneously opening up and reassuring the possibilities for action – without the complexities and opacities of the Iraq experience.

The media construction of R2P through humanitarianism

Through a humanitarian reading of the threat towards Benghazi, and with reference to previous Western interventions – particularly Bosnia to which the crisis was likened– the media texts analysed contributed to a cosmopolitan morality framing of the crisis in Libya which bolstered the notion of R2P. Libya presented a case where human rights abuses and crimes against humanity were occurring (ICRtoP, 2014b), with Benghazi a conceivable genocide on the Euro-Mediterranean border. The idea that without external intervention there would be an imminent massacre of a large population in Benghazi played directly to the evocation of a cosmopolitan moral obligation, and consequently as events worsened, R2P. David Campbell details the effects of a cosmopolitan 'humanitarian' frame:

> '[H]umanitarianism' – conceived of as an unchallenged good characterised by impartial charity for a common humanity, and something which transgresses the confines of state sovereignty – which commonly provides the moral economy and discursive practices that seek to address the dilemma of enacting responsibility in the context of crisis (Campbell, 1998: 498).

In this sense, Campbell, similarly to Hammond (2007: 6), is activating the notion that a humanitarian framing of events can provide a form of legitimisation, or "moral economy" for the breaching of a state's sovereignty in order to address a crisis.

According to the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), Libya was a "clear case for when timely and decisive response to uphold RtoP in the face of an imminent threat of mass atrocities should occur" (ICRtoP, 2014c). This frame established cosmopolitan moral grounds for the British government's condemnation of the Gaddafi regime, and of its ensuing campaign for interventionist action. As Chorin notes, Gaddafi's threats against Benghazi were "almost ready-made to play to the R2P case-in-waiting" (2012: 222).

The construction of events as a 'revolution' or 'uprising', and of the identities of the protagonists involved, contributed to CMF. Not only were crimes against humanity being committed, but the media texts were firm in their construction of Gaddafi as a 'tyrant', despite not using the term itself often. This was achieved through the reference to Gaddafi's actions and threats in relation to the opposition movement. The construction of the opposition movement as 'people-led' and 'democracy-seeking', struggling for greater political and social freedoms, aided this humanitarian framing by placing them as being on the correct side of moral judgement, as the 'innocent' players, and with a justifiable cause. Establishing clear perpetrators (villains) who were committing abuses against a 'civilian-led' movement (victims) aided the justification for invoking R2P under the rubric of humanitarianism. Scheffer suggests that it is the prevalent concern with "oppressed and devastated peoples" that constructs people as incapable victims requiring aid in the form of external intervention under 'humanitarianism' (Scheffer, 1992: 259, in Campbell, 1998: 506).

The UNSC mentioned Libya's 'responsibility to protect' within Resolution 1970, re-establishing that it was the state's responsibility to protect its civilians rather than commit acts of violence against them. This was the first time that the R2P framework had been referred to by the UNSC since 2006 (in reference to Darfur) (ICRtoP, 2014c). It was UNSCR

1973 that established the international community's decision to assume a responsibility to protect, in lieu of the Libyan state after the government failed to stop perpetrating violence. UNSCR 1973 authorised "all necessary measures" in order "to protect civilians and civilian populated areas" (UNSCR 1973). This responsibility was affirmed by Ban Ki-moon who stated that 1973 upheld, "clearly and unequivocally, the international community's determination to fulfil its responsibility to protect civilians from violence perpetrated upon them by their own government" (Ban Ki-moon, in ICRtoP, 2014c).

The instrumental use of cosmopolitan morality to provide foreign policy justification

The analysis has illustrated that the four media outlets (across newsprint, online, and social media) presented the Libyan crisis, and threat to Benghazi, in empathetic and humanitarian terms through a CMF. Not only were events constructed in a way that villainised Gaddafi as the 'enemy', but both the British government and the media drew the conflict closer in cultural and cognitive proximity by highlighting the opposition movement as both 'democracy-seeking', thus promoting accepted Western values, and also 'victims' of abuses, thus promoting empathy and calls to alleviate suffering. The crisis was also presented as a regional problem by the UK government, and this was reproduced within the media reporting. Benghazi was a potential massacre on the Euro-Mediterranean border, and Libya was a "failed pariah state" that was "festering" at the edge of Europe, creating regional insecurity and driving a regional refugee crisis (Cameron, LGov.9).

The use of such language from both the UK government and media sources analysed constructed this as a humanitarian crisis that was threatening UK and regional interests, as well as Libyans themselves, and therefore must be dealt with accordingly. There were no references throughout the texts in support of Gaddafi, and while the alternative perspective and narrative of those in support of the Gaddafi regime was occasionally presented within texts (generally through direct quotes from the Libyan regime), these were minimal and often used in a fashion that bolstered the anti-Gaddafi stance of the overall text. Furthermore, the construction of a potential massacre in Benghazi and the repetition used in highlighting the towns along the coastal route that had fallen in the counter-offensive, created a sense of urgency that compressed the timeframe within which policy decisions could be made and thus encouraged the swift authorisation of UNSCR 1973.

The overall frames presented from the newsprint and online media texts legitimised the policy stance and actions taken by the British government. Analysis of the *Twitter* sample, which represented more diverse voices (and only hosts tweets of a maximum of 140 characters), was not as explicit in the legitimatisation of specifically British policy, but did support the notion of international community action. All four of the sources studied produced narratives that fit within the broader body of pro-interventionist discourses, using language that made a form of external policy action, from Britain and the international community, appear inevitable.

Cosmopolitan morality framing of conflict events may bestow legitimacy for interventionist policy reactions in order to protect humanity, uphold human rights and dignity and alleviate suffering, but the stated reinforcement of UK interests suggests additional outcomes. What is meant by this is that framing the uprising in Libya in a way that draws upon a universal morality may provide forms of justification for the pursuit of more self-interested foreign policy goals (see Gaskarth and Leech, 2015). These goals may be the defence of state or regional security and stability, or perhaps more ambiguous ends. This notion is further supported by the reality of UNSCR 1973 being stretched beyond its initial concern for the protection of Libyan civilians, to include the removal of the Gaddafi government from power. In so doing the concept of R2P as a normative justification for intervention 'to protect' is undermined (Brockmeier et al, 2016: 123; Thakur, 2014: 75-76), as is any cosmopolitan moral reasoning. The removal of Gaddafi from power occurred outside of the temporal scope of this analysis, however we may utilise this actuality to question the intent of CMF within both policy and media texts. If indeed CMF was employed instrumentally in order to provide legitimacy for alternative foreign policy goals, then true calls for humanitarianism are undermined and the concept of CMF is open to the critiques made by Skrbiš et al (2004: 132). Furthermore, hierarchies of worth may be perpetuated whereby some people are worth saving and others are not.

Conclusion

In February 2011 the 'Arab Spring' uprisings took hold in Libya. The Libyan regime responded to the uprisings with violence and the situation on the ground degenerated quickly. The initial British policy reaction to the crisis was to condemn the Gaddafi government and call for a cessation of hostilities. Events in Libya escalated with the advance of Gaddafi's

forces towards Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, in a bid to reclaim opposition-held towns. This proved to be a point of strategic escalation. The British policy narrative was resolute in condemning the actions of the pro-Gaddafi forces, and alongside France, began to push heavily for the implementation of a no-fly zone. This was authorised under UNSCR 1973 on 17 March.

Through the use of particular language, the British media were able to frame the conflict in Libya as a humanitarian crisis, thus shaping the political reality and rendering the subsequent action taken under UNSCR 1973 as rightful under the pillars of R2P, and thus to a degree, inevitable. Both British newsprint and online media legitimised the policy stance and actions taken by the British government towards the conflict. British policy was reported favourably through emphasising the strong leadership role that was taken alongside France, as well as Britain's role in seeking international community consensus on action. Legitimisation was also achieved through the use of particular constructions and themes within the policy and media discourses. For instance, the construction of the identities of the opposition movement and of events on the ground as a popular uprising that required international community action to ensure victory, aided what Lakoff (1991; 2001) has termed the fairy tale just war narrative. The evocation of previous experiences of Western-led interventions in Bosnia and Iraq (2003) also served to appropriate the action taken by illustrating the potential results of ineffective responses, and in alleviating public and policy fears of the involvement of ground troops. These elements contributed to a humanitarian framing of the crisis which led to calls for the invocation of R2P in order to avoid what was considered to be an imminent massacre in Benghazi.

The subsequent stretching of UNSCR 1973 beyond its initial terms to 'protect civilians'; to permit the removal of the Gaddafi government from power undermines both the R2P norm to protect, and also cosmopolitan moral reasoning. Instead we may conceive that this framing could be utilised as a way of garnering legitimacy for more self-interested foreign policy goals of the UK and allies. It is not within the remit of the thesis to make causational claims, however considering the framing of the Libyan conflict in such a way opens up new analysis of the justification for foreign policy actions. The consequences of this conceptual stretching of the R2P norm may be more overt in successive conflict events in the MENA. The devastating chemical weapons attack on citizens in the Ghouta region of Syria in 2013 did not engender the same policy response form the UK government despite its severity. Chapter

4 considers the utilisation of cosmopolitan morality to frame this conflict event, and the reasons for divergent UK policy response.

Chapter 4: Framing the Chemical Weapons Attack in Syria: Cosmopolitan Morality versus Intervention Fatigue

"The Syrian people have long dubbed theirs a revolution of orphans because of the lack of robust foreign support" (Abouzeid, 2013).

In 2011 Syria experienced a series of political uprisings against the ruling government of President Bashar al-Assad. As with the Libyan experience (see Chapter 3), the civilian-led protests in the country were met by heavy crack-downs by the state, and this resulted in an escalation to civil war between the Assad government and opposition groups. At the time of writing, the civil and regional war in Syria continues, with the political and conflict environment further complicated by the involvement of the militant Islamist group Islamic State (IS), as well as the different policy goals of external actors, including the UK, US, and Russia. While the Libyan uprising may have attracted the most global media attention in 2011 (Seo, 2013: 774), the civilian uprising in Syria, which began on 19 March has led to arguably the most bloodshed and most protracted conflict out of all of the political changes under the so-called 'Arab Spring'[17] (Bhardwaj, 2012: 84), including casualty rates ten times higher than in Libya (Chouliaraki, 2015: 110). By May 2017, over 470,500 people had been killed in the conflict so far, including 55,000 children, and over 9 million people had fled their homes (I Am Syria, 2017).[18] Despite attempts at brokering ceasefires, including most recently in December 2016, these were not sustained and violence and insecurity in Syria continues.

Within this chapter, analysis is focussed upon a chemical weapon attack in the Damascus Suburb of Ghouta (2013), which resulted in the deaths of approximately 1,400 Syrian civilians. The chapter analyses the British media reporting of the conflict and subsequent UK

[17] Although Yemen also continues to experience violence and insecurity following its 2011 uprisings. Since March 2015 there has been an exacerbation in conflict between the Houthi rebel movement and those loyal to the incumbent government. The consequence of this has been the death or injury of approximately 44,000 people, displacement of more than 3 million people, and a precarious humanitarian situation meaning 18.8 million people require some form of aid and protection assistance (OCHA, 2016).

[18] I Am Syria is a non-profit media based campaign that seeks to educate people about the Syrian conflict. It is run by Ammar Abdulhamid, a Syrian human rights activist now based in the US, and Professor David Crane, law professor at Syracuse University, and former international war crimes prosecutor (I Am Syria, 2017) and provides up-to-date information on casualty and refugee rates.

policy reaction over ten days from the Ghouta attack on 21 August 2013.[19] This incident led to international condemnation, and a UK parliamentary vote on intervention which ultimately failed to garner enough political support for authorisation, despite the large-scale loss of life and controversial nature by which this was achieved.

This chapter argues that the media analysed employed a CMF of the conflict in Syria through the presentation of particular information and the use of particular linguistic choices and historical analogies which contributed to a 'humanitarian deterrence' theme. This theme was similarly explicit within UK policy through reference to the necessity to uphold international normative conventions on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. UK policy attempted to construct this act as a war crime and crime against humanity, establishing R2P rhetoric which was similarly seen in the Libyan case. Unlike the Libyan conflict event which was presented through a humanitarian theme contributing to CMF, the Syrian case did not engender the same perception or response. The humanitarian deterrence theme was not as salient, and ultimately the drive for foreign policy intervention failed to muster enough parliamentary support for authorisation. My argument for why this may have occurred is five-fold.

Firstly, CMF was constructed through the presentation of a humanitarian deterrence framing of the chemical weapons attack. In highlighting the breach of international law and the customary principles on the use of chemical weapons, the media promoted the necessity of some form of international condemnation and response. Secondly, while UK policy attempted to use this framing as a rhetorical basis for intervention, it did not resonate as any interventionist response was considered punitive. The reason for this was the temporal distancing of interventionist reasoning (what Lakoff [2013a; 2013b] has termed systemic causation). There was no opportunity to halt an impending atrocity and thus no "imperative to act" (Strong, 2015: 615). Thirdly, in addition to the humanitarian deterrence presentation, all the media sources presented a level of contestation over culpability for the attack, and the legality and legitimacy of the proposed UK response, presenting an element of policy uncertainty. Fourthly, the prevalence of human-interest or empathy framing was lacking in both policy and media reporting, and those that perished in the attack were 'othered'; reduced to 'anonymous bodies' through the representation of their symptoms. Fifthly, in the wake of

[19] Section 2.3 of Chapter 2 presents the method and rationale behind data collation. Table 3 illustrates the number of media articles analysed pertinent to this case study.

the recent interventions in Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011), considering the ambiguous stretching of the R2P basis for intervention and the resulting fracture of the state after the removal of Gaddafi, UK foreign policy needed a robust rationale for further interventionist engagement and Syria was constructed as the "wrong war" (Trombetta, 2014: 35). The defence of normative principles so as not to incur future atrocities was not persuasive enough to consolidate parliamentary support when pitched against a frame of intervention fatigue.

The chapter forwards this argument through reference to the functions that frames play in defining a situation, identifying its cause, expressing moral judgement of the actors involved and providing solutions (Entman, 2003: 471). Thus, it is claimed that CMF is produced through policy and media reports constructing the conflict event through a humanitarian deterrence understanding, by highlighting the breaking of international norms governing right conduct and the international moral responsibility to respond to this. This was further consolidated by the consistent referral to US President Barack Obama's metaphorical 'red line' which provided a tipping point, beyond which international action must be taken in order to defend and protect a future humanity. This framing was weakened by reference to previous Western interventionism in Kosovo and Iraq to highlight issues of legality and legitimacy. Through the presentation of the Ghouta attack in this way, the situation in Syria is defined, and constructed solutions are emergent; namely foreign policy intervention as a humanitarian deterrent, or conversely intervention as punitive and illegitimate.

While the Assad government was constructed through policy reports as the perpetrators of this attack the media constructions of the main protagonists were more ill-defined. As such there was no solid construction of an aggressor or 'villain', against which moral support could be raised. Similarly, the Syrian opposition movement were constructed as more disparate than the movement in Libya, with competing aims and motivations. Their construction was in opposition to the Assad government, but the moral judgement of both of these groups was at times ambiguous. The clear victims in this conflict event were those injured or killed in the Ghouta attack, however while their constructed victimhood was clear in the media reports, and a cosmopolitan moral sentiment to react to this was engendered, they were reduced to 'anonymous bodies' through relatively scarce utilisation of human interest or empathy framing which is "designed to engage, humanize, "sense-ize" and "bring home" the plight of distant others – strangers still – but people not so unlike ourselves" (Cottle, 2013: 244).

This chapter contributes to the emerging literature that addresses the Syrian uprising in 2011 and the protracted civil war that now continues in its wake, by shining light on the way that the UK media framed this conflict and the possible effect of this framing on foreign policy-making.

Existing scholarship has focussed upon the foreign policy responses to Syrian chemical weapons possession, including the failure of US deterrence in the lead up to the Ghouta attacks (Sterner, 2014), and the post-attack effectiveness of the joint policy framework for Syria to surrender and destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles (Fitzpatrick, 2013; Trapp, 2014). Amir Taheri (2013) considers the debate for and against military intervention in Syria, as well as the broader repercussions of such policy-making on the regional balance of power. Other scholars have addressed the legality and legitimacy of military intervention in Syria (Anderson, 2013; Henderson, 2015; Stahn, 2013a), the differing perspectives on R2P, between Russia and the West (Averre and Davies, 2015) and the Libyan precedent as a model for Syria (Kildron, 2012; Thakur, 2013). James Strong (2014; 2015) considers the significance of Syria on Britain's global role, including the effect of the failure to garner parliamentary support on the 'special relationship' with the US, as well as a constrained political will for interventionism post-Iraq 2003.

The discursive representation of the Syrian conflict, as with the Libyan experience, remains an underexplored body of work and one where this chapter makes a valid contribution. Carsten Stahn (2013b) has discussed how criminal justifications were implicit within the discourses calling for intervention in Syria. As discussed in Chapter 3, Chouliaraki (2015) examines empathy and morality through civilian testimony in the conflicts in both Libya and Syria. While a recent collaborative article by Ralph et al (2017) examines UK policy discourses towards Syria between March 2011 (during which time the UK was engaged in Libya, see Chapter 3), and the Ghouta attacks in August 2013, and argues that two discourses were evident: firstly a liberal notion that the UK should 'support the Arab Spring', and secondly a conservative notion that 'Syria was not Libya' and thus military intervention was improvident.

This chapter makes a contribution to this body of literature discursively analysing the Syrian uprising and conflict, and is situated between the contributions from Stahn (2013b), Chouliaraki (2015; 2016) and Ralph et al (2017). The chapter considers the CMF of the chemical weapon attack in 2013. In so doing it builds upon Chouliaraki's (2015; 2016)

discussion of empathy and pity for those suffering. I juxtapose this against a propensity within the media and policy texts with a humanitarian deterrence theme and intervention fatigue theme, whereby concern to uphold norms and avoid suffering clashed with an uncertainty over the merits of intervention. Here I develop upon Stahn's (2013b) work, arguing that the use of chemical weapons was represented as punitive deterrence due to a breach of the normative conventions on the use of chemical weapons which was a 'criminal' act. I also consider the implications of the intervention in Libya (2011), as well as previous UK interventionism (Iraq 2003; Kosovo 1998) as contributing to perceptions of 'right response' in Syria, expanding upon the work of Ralph et al (2017). I argue that these positions competed for salience within the media.

Initially, this chapter addresses the contextual background to the conflict in Syria and its development up until the chemical attack on 21 August 2013. Syria's experience with political protest during the 'Arab Spring' is discussed in relation to the Libyan experience and the aftermath of the UK's involvement in the intervention there. The British policy reaction is then examined, developing understanding of the attention paid to this conflict event within the British government. It is argued that the British government established a clear level of culpability for the chemical attack early on, despite responsibility not being taken by the Syrian government. The chapter argues that the British government, by emphasising a pursuit of humanitarian deterrence, forwarded a cosmopolitan universal moral responsibility to respond to the attacks.

The chapter then turns to discuss the media presentation of the crisis event, highlighting the presentation of CMF through the emphasis on humanitarian deterrence. It is argued, as stated above, that this framing competed for salience with one of intervention fatigue as the media consistently debated the culpability of the attacks, as well as the legality and legitimacy of any interventionist response. Aspects of these framings will be presented, including the media construction of the main actors within the crisis, the emphasis on the need to respond to a breach of normative conventions, the 'red line' metaphor as a tipping point for response, the presentation of debate and contestation over 'right response', the use of past UK experiences in Iraq and Kosovo to consolidate positions of 'right response', and a lack of human interest framing which contributed to a distancing of the crisis event. Finally the chapter draws these discursive elements together, arguing that CMF was evident but not as salient as it had been within the Libyan example in Chapter 3 due to the five-fold reasons

presented above, and that this ultimately resulted in a failure to consolidate parliamentary support for intervention.

Contextual background: Syria's civilian uprising

The protests in Syria contributed to the series of civilian-led uprisings that occurred in the MENA region from December 2010 that have come to be known under the term 'Arab Spring'. This was not Syria's first experience with calls for political reform. In 2000-2001 the so-called 'Damascus Spring' took place, during which time a number of intellectuals and politicians called for greater political reforms, including an end to the state of emergency that had been in place by the Baath party since 1963, and maintained under the rule of Hafez al-Assad (Hinnebusch, 2012: 103; Sawah and Kawakibi, 2014: 139). Forums for debate and discussion, known as 'salons', emerged where civilians discussed political and legal issues. While there was a swift reversal of this opening up of political space by incumbent President Bashar al-Assad (Hokayem, 2013: 22), the experience was a valuable one, leading to a "new expression", that of a Syrian "civil society" (Sawah and Kawakibi, 2014: 139).

The political turmoil in Syria commenced less than a month after the start of the Libyan uprising. Protests began in the Southern city of Deraa on 6 March 2011 in response to the brutal arrest and torture of a group of children, charged with vandalising their school building with anti-government pro-revolution graffiti. Up until this point Syria – "so confidently authoritarian" (Abouzeid, 2011) – had in part both endured and enjoyed stability under the Assad government, but the severity of the security forces in dealing with the children became the catalyst for the country's own discontent with the political status quo. For many reasons there had been a prevailing belief that no domestic challenge to the government could be mounted from within Syria and thus the ensuing uprisings were surprising to many (Hokayem, 2013: 13). This was due to many reasons, including the perceived success of the Assad government in suppressing earlier contestation and the strength of the state security apparatus in achieving this, the perceived lack of a coherent and united opposition group and weakness of the Muslim Brotherhood, alongside supposed growth, economic reform and a sense (on the surface at least) of progress (Hokayem, 2013: 13-14).

The March 2011 protests, which started as peaceful and spread swiftly across swathes of the country, were met by heavy crack-downs by Assad's security forces resulting in a swift

escalation to civil war. A diverse opposition movement grew, consisting of traditional political opposition parties and new opposition groups, as well as Syrians in exile forming the Syrian National Council (SNC) and the formation of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) by defectors from the state military. New *tanseeqiat* groups which were locally organised committees of friends or colleagues who organised resistance in their communities and were consolidated under Local Coordination Committees (LCC), different Islamist activists, Kurdish youth groups, sectarian groups (including the Alawi, to whom the ruling Assad family identified with), and various civil society groups (Sawah and Kawakibi, 2014: 148-149). The Syrian government attempted to break civilian dissent through the creation of sectarianism, exploiting the heterogeneity of the civilian population and diversity of the opposition, and responding to the peaceful protests with violence (Phillips, 2012: 40; 2015: 359).

A cycle of protest and violent repression was created (ICG, 2011: 6) as the uprising became militarized on both sides and by 2012 had descended into civil war (Brownlee et al, 2015: 93-94). Accusations emerged later that year of chemical weapons use – after President Obama made his August 2012 declarations that they would constitute a 'red line' (Kawashima and Sanders-Zakre, 2017; Bentley, 2016: 58). As these allegations intensified,[20] a UN team of weapons inspectors was dispatched to investigate at the request of the Syrian government who accused the opposition movement of culpability. Unsurprisingly the opposition movement accused the Syrian regime.

On 21 August 2013, one year and one day to Obama's rhetorical 'red line', a large-scale chemical attack took place in Ghouta, East Damascus, leading to approximately 1,400 deaths, and 4,000 casualties, including many civilians (Bentley, 2016: 66). While initially there were discussions over the authenticity of the claims, persuasive documented evidence corroborated that a nerve gas had likely been used given the consistent symptoms experience by those injured. International outrage followed, including from the UK government and media, and this is examined in more detail in the succession of the chapter. Noted exceptions to this include China, Iran and Russia, the latter of whom had been a longstanding strategic ally of the Assad government (Phillips, 2012: 41), and who eventually assisted in brokering an amnesty framework. The UK held a parliamentary vote on the principle of whether to take

[20] The use of chemical weapons in Syria has been reported numerous times before and after the Ghouta attacks, including: December 2012, March, April and August 2013 (Ghouta), April 2014, November 2015, August, September and December 2016, and April 2017 (Idlib) (Kawashima and Sanders-Zakre, 2017).

action in response to the breach of the chemical weapons taboo. The vote ultimately failed to pass and David Cameron acknowledged this, committing the UK to the supply of humanitarian aid assistance only at this point in the conflict. On 9 September 2013, in response to a comment made by US Secretary of State John Kerry that a US military response could be averted by an immediate chemical weapons amnesty, Russia proposed a deal for the Syrian government to surrender any stockpiles by mid-2014 under the 'Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons' (Kawashima and Sanders-Zakre, 2017).

The situation post-Ghouta has also become increasingly fraught. The tumultuous and violent political situation in the country, coupled with the turn to religiosity has led to the proliferation of Islamist factions, such as Jabhat al-Nusra, and Islamic State (IS) among others, within the disparate opposition grouping (Fares, 2015: 149). IS have established an Islamist stronghold in Iraq and Syria in an attempt to create a new Caliphate and are renowned for their exercise of violence and brutal repression, including of the Yezidi people in Northern Kurdistan which is the central issue in Chapter 5, and the spate of decapitations of hostages that were publicised on social media. The consequence of this for the Syrian civilian population is violence perpetrated towards them by the Assad regime, and violence perpetrated towards them from IS. Consequently there has been an enormous number of Syrian civilians who are internally displaced, and an overwhelmingly large influx of refugees fleeing the state by perilous means over land or sea. As of April 2017 the number of registered Syrian refugees totalled 5,057,986, with 937,718 making asylum application in Europe between April 2011 and March 2017 (Syrian Regional Refugee Response, 2017). This total can be expected to steadily increase given the continuing conflict and regional instability, as well as the ongoing involvement from Russia and Iran in supporting the Assad regime.

The UK government response to Ghouta: "Dave's just rarin' to go but Ed's at the wheel with a faulty sat-nav"[21]

In the immediate aftermath of the Ghouta chemical attack the UK government responded with firm condemnation towards those responsible. They were swift in placing culpability for the attacks with the Assad regime despite official investigations having not yet

[21] STT.1.

commenced, although there were frequent calls from the UK and also internationally for UN weapons inspectors working locally to be permitted access to the attack site for investigation. They also referred to the chemical attack as a crime against humanity. In so doing, they began to construct the potential basis for another R2P-justified response, as was articulated in the Libyan conflict in Chapter 3, although this assertion was not made explicit.

A further theme was one of accountability which reaffirmed the need to hold to account those responsible for this crime, and to deter the use of chemical weapons in the future through a legal, proportionate but "serious response". Together, as shall be demonstrated, these constructions made it necessary to respond to the attack in Ghouta. This stance remained unwavering throughout the ten day period analysed, with rhetoric and policy gathering pace to include a legal position that sought a UNSCR under Chapter VII of the UN Charter but also permitted unilateral action if the Security Council was blocked. An eight-hour parliamentary debate on 29 August failed to garner enough support for any interventionist response from the UK, beyond the provision of aid. Instead Russia and the US forwarded a diplomatic framework for the Assad government to relinquish and destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles and adhere to international conventions on such weapons. Since this time, the UK has participated in air strikes in Syria against IS, but this policy action came in the aftermath of coordinated terror attacks in Paris in 2015. This policy difference is addressed in the conclusion to the thesis, where it is argued that the cultural and geographic proximity of the attacks arguably carried more resonance for British audiences. There have also been further instances of chemical weapons usage within Syria, including in Idlib, northern Syria on 4 April 2017, where at least 86 people were killed by a chemical nerve agent. On 6 April, the US Trump administration initiated targeted air strikes against the Syrian government in response to the Idlib attacks.

UK government condemns Assad and assigns culpability

On 21 August 2013 William Hague described the chemical weapons attack in the Ghouta area of Damascus that day as a "terrible act" and called immediately for the UN chemical weapons team that were already in the country investigating earlier allegations, to be able to inspect the site at Ghouta. This emphasis on the UN inspectors being permitted access to investigate was a frequent one as the international community tried to make sense of the nature, scale and liability for the attack. Despite not having official confirmation of

culpability, Hague was vehement in his referral to the Syrian government as "murderous and barbaric", and "a government that cares so little for the lives of the people of its own country" (Hague, SGov.12). From the outset the UK government established a negative and violent construction of the ruling Assad government. In doing so they are associating the Assad government as culpable for the attack. This theme of culpability for the chemical attack becomes bolstered throughout the rest of the ten day period under analysis. Through the repetition of such statements, the UK government are establishing blame and making judgements of the ruling Syrian government and their role within this atrocity.

Hague made a strong statement on 23 August, openly questioning why the Syrian government had not yet allowed the UN inspectors to investigate the site, and suggesting that their noncompliance was due to a need to conceal the facts of the event, suggesting an indication of guilt and complicity (SGov.15). Hague asserted the time-sensitive nature of investigating the site and made clear that if necessary evidence were to deteriorate then the UK would be prepared to get a stronger mandate from the Security Council, and that "the world" must "speak together more forcefully on this so that there can be access" (Hague, SGov.15). Through this statement, Hague is establishing a level of universal responsibility in responding to the crisis and attaining access for the UN inspectors. In further press releases on 25 and 28 August, Hague firmly restated the stance of the government:

> We are clear in the British Government that it was the Assad regime that carried out the chemical attack, large scale chemical attack, last Wednesday that has led to the deaths, the agonising deaths, of so many hundreds of people including, tragically, so many children. All of the evidence points in that direction, in that one direction (Hague, SGov.16).

> We already have our own very strong view about who is to blame: that is the Assad regime. In fact there is no plausible explanation for anybody else being to blame (Hague, SGov.17).

These statements disregard emerging conspiracies that the attack was committed by the Syrian opposition movement, and firmly establishes that the UK government believes this to be a large scale attack by the Syrian government. As demonstrated, from the immediate days after the attack and continuing forward, UK rhetoric sought to establish culpability for the attack with the Assad government, and through this an emerging enemy identity began to be constructed. This identity is further compounded by the choice of linguistic descriptors in the

statement above. Rather than deaths, these were "agonising deaths", and these deaths were even more heinous due to the tragic involvement of many children. The Assad regime then, was not only responsible for a "large scale chemical attack", but was responsible for the "agonising deaths of many children", and this warranted a "serious response from the international community" (Hague, SGov.16).

A report released by the UK Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) on 29 August confirmed with "the highest possible level of certainty" that the Syrian government was responsible for the chemical attack, although motivation for doing so remained unclear (SGov.20). While alternative theories abounded, including that the opposition movement were trying to provoke Western intervention, the JIC could find no plausible alternative scenario (*ibid*). In assigning responsibility for the attacks to the Syrian government, the UK established clear parameters of fault, which would arguably make clearer, and thus more justifiable, some form of strong foreign policy response.

UK government emphasis on the 'red-line' of deterrence and international law

The notion of a collaborated response by the international community was something that the UK frequently emphasised. Hague's statement on 25 August argued the need for a "strong response" to the use of chemical weapons, which constituted a red-line beyond which "the world will respond":

> We can not [sic] in the twenty first century allow the idea that chemical weapons can be used with impunity, that people can be killed in this way and that there are no consequences for it. And so we believe it's very important that there is a strong response and that dictators, whether they are Assad or other people who might slaughter their own people or attack the people of any other country know that the use of chemical weapons is to cross a red line and that the world will respond when that line is crossed (Hague, SGov.16).

The notion of a 'red-line' constructs a tipping point or limit, beyond which said action would be deemed unacceptable, or become a 'game-changer'. As such, it is a metaphorical statement of deterrence, establishing the threshold on a given issue which should not be crossed for fear of repercussions (Tertrais, 2014). The use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) that can inflict widespread death and destruction are frequently visualised as a 'red

line' threshold, or normative taboo, as seen in the quote above by Hague.[22] The use of chemical weapons in the prosecution of violence has been prohibited under international law since the 1925 Geneva Protocol in response to the use of chlorine, phosgene and mustard gas during World War I (UNODA, nd). The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) entered into force in 1997, extending the ground laid by Geneva on the use of biological and chemical weapons during warfare. The CWC provides a multilateral framework for the elimination of chemical weapons, and addresses their production, stockpiling, transfer and destruction (ICRC, 2013).

Hague's reference to the use of chemical weapons in the "21st century" accentuates the establishment of international measures on prohibition, and provides a normative legal framework through which the event may be viewed and judged. The breach of the normative convention on the use of chemical weapons is not something that can be ignored or international law appears ineffective or redundant. Furthermore Hague emphasises a global responsibility to respond to the crisis, and Cameron does so again on 27 August, stating "the world cannot stand idly by in the light of such a significant chemical weapons attack" (Cameron, SGov.6). The UK government frequently stressed the need for a "firm response" or "serious response" from the international community to the chemical attacks, in order to uphold the normative frameworks governing *jus in bello*; thus raising "the idea of cosmopolitan duties" through codification in humanitarian law (Shapcott, 2010: 168; see also van Hooft, 2009:130-140). This is exemplified by Cameron in the interview extract below;

> [W]e shouldn't stand by when we see this massive use of chemical weapons, the appalling levels of suffering, morally reprehensible, something the world came together almost a hundred years ago and said, "These weapons shouldn't be used", and they are being used here in Syria. And that is why, in my view, we need to discuss the need to act (Cameron, SGov.5).

Here, Cameron is highlighting the global decision-making and decrees on the prohibition of chemical weapons use, including the Geneva Protocol and the CWC. Significantly, at the time of the Ghouta attacks Syria was not a signatory to the CWC. Nevertheless, the convention has been signed by 192 nations (OPCW, 2015), representing some establishment

[22] The use of chemical weapons as a 'red line' is a pronounced metaphor in this case and is explored in further detail within the chapter with regard to Obama's 2012 statement, and the media remediation of this metaphor.

of universal moral values on the usage of such weapons to which Syria was not conforming; breaking the taboo (see Bentley, 2016).

Crime and punishment: UK rhetoric of criminality, justice and R2P

A frequent theme emanating within UK policy rhetoric was one of 'criminality', related to the breach of international law as discussed. The language used consistently refers to this contravention in criminal terms, constituting by proxy President Assad as a 'criminal', assisting his constructed identity as the culpable 'villain'. Again, this not only highlights the violation of internationally agreed norms, but also begins to pave the way for a foreign policy response based upon international legal and normative terms to deliver proportionate 'punishment' to the 'crime' (see Stahn, 2013b). Cameron, Hague, and the coalition Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg all describe the chemical weapons attack as a war crime and a crime against humanity as illustrated in the statements below.

> So we will be clear that we are determined to take action against war crimes, against crimes against humanity – and that is what the use of chemical weapons constitutes (Hague, SGov.21).

> "This is the first use of chemical warfare in the 21st century. It has to be unacceptable, we have to confront something that is a war crime something that is a crime against humanity. If we don't do so, then we will have to confront even bigger war crimes in the future" (Hague, SGov.17).

> The murder of innocent men, women and children through the use of chemical weapons is a repugnant crime and a flagrant abuse of international law (Clegg, SGov.10).

This terminology is significant for evoking the terms of the three pillars of R2P. By using such language, and highlighting immediately that this act is a crime against humanity, the UK begins to set a 'humanitarian' framework context within which they could argue for an intervention response. By describing events in this way, any collaborative action on the part of the UK can possibly be justified legally and morally under the banner of R2P and humanitarian need. This was a 'crime' against 'humanity'; an attack on the human rights of innocent civilians, and therefore there was a cosmopolitan duty to respond to that suffering,

and a requirement for justice and accountability in order to uphold the universal values that underpin multilateral frameworks on the prohibition of chemical weapons. By emphasising a pursuit of humanitarian deterrence, UK policy forwards a cosmopolitan notion of shared moral responsibility to respond to the attacks; "This is, after all, something on which the world should be able to unite: that the use of chemical weapons in the twenty-first century is unacceptable" (Hague, SGov.21).

Humanitarian interventionist policy: Deterring *future* suffering

As there was no capacity to halt a potential atrocity as the atrocity (the chemical attack) had already occurred, attempting to view the attacks through a humanitarian/R2P frame appears problematic. From a cosmopolitan moral perspective the suffering of the Syrian people could be alleviated through the provision of aid, medical and diplomatic assistance, but arguably military intervention would not appear to make the *immediate* humanitarian situation in Syria any less violent. However, a humanitarian frame could justify that there was a necessity for a firm military response to ensure deterrence from the use of such weapons, impeding their use and further suffering *in the future.* It is argued that a CMF of the event was therefore utilised by the UK government, but that any emphasis on humanitarian protection and the alleviation of suffering operated on a different temporal scale than was cognitively recognised. Instead this was perceived as an issue of humanitarian deterrence, to protect humanity from future human rights abuses and suffering.

The UK stressed the pursuit of 'accountability', necessary to solidify the metaphorical 'red-line' and sustain deterrence on the use of chemical weapons. It became a central part of the UK policy rhetoric to highlight that a "strong response" now would deter the use of chemical weapons in the future, and dissuade 'dictators' from believing they can act with impunity, as illustrated below:

> [W]e continue to look for a strong response from the international community that is legal, that is proportionate and that is designed to deter further and future use of chemical weapons (Hague, SGov.17).

> [I]f we stand idly by we set a very dangerous precedent indeed, where brutal dictators and brutal rulers will feel they can get away with using chemical weapons on a larger and larger scale in the future (Clegg, SGov.10).

> The question now for us is, are we more likely to deter the future use of chemical weapons by acting or not acting? … This is not about wars in the Middle East. This is not even about the Syrian conflict. It is about the use of chemical weapons and making sure, as a world, we deter their use and we deter the appalling scenes that we've all seen on our television screens (Cameron, SGov.5).

The extracts above demonstrate the emphasis placed on a response to sustain a deterrent on the use of these weapons and uphold the taboo. Significantly, Cameron tries to distance any potential UK response from previous interventionist experiences in the Middle East, likely the interventions in Iraq (2003) and the experience in Afghanistan, both of which have been contentious with the British public. In so doing he explicitly distances any response from the situation in Syria itself, stating, "this is not even about the Syrian conflict" (SGov.5). The problem with this statement is in the cognitive association of the terrible suffering experienced in Ghouta and witnessed by media audiences, and the rationale for responding to that suffering. By this statement, Cameron disassociates any UK foreign policy response from the wider Syrian conflict, making it 'not about Syria' and just about deterrence. The deterrence rationale prioritises the defence of a 'future humanity' by ensuring that the use of chemical weapons does not take place again, causing widespread suffering. Thus while the objective is still a cosmopolitan alleviation of suffering, there is a temporal gulf in justifying a policy response with such foresight, and an element of 'imaginary suffering' which is juxtaposed against the very real images of death and distress, that as Cameron points out, we have seen on the television.

UK policy gained momentum on 28 August with the forwarding of a draft resolution to the UNSC, condemning the chemical weapons attack by the Assad government and arguing, as with Libya, for "all necessary measures" under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to "protect civilians from chemical weapons" (SGov.7). The UK government's legal position was disseminated the following day which explicitly linked a legal basis for military action under a humanitarian justification to relieve suffering of "overwhelming human catastrophe" by deterring "further use of chemical weapons" (SGov.23). The UK justified its proposal of a military response under the doctrine of humanitarian intervention, on the proviso that the following three conditions had been met within this instance;

(i) There is convincing evidence, generally accepted by the international community as a whole, of extreme humanitarian distress on a large scale, requiring immediate and urgent relief;

(ii) It must be objectively clear that there is no practicable alternative to the use of force if lives are to be saved; and

(iii) The proposed use of force must be necessary and proportionate to the aim of relief of humanitarian need and must be strictly limited in time and scope to this aim (i.e. the minimum necessary to achieve that end and for no other purpose) (SGov.23).

UK policy framed their call for an international response through a cosmopolitan morality lens of pursuing humanitarian deterrence, and alleviating the potential for human suffering through the *future* use of chemical weapons. The rhetoric emanating from the government was one of humanitarian necessity, although how salient the latter framing became within the media is an issue discussed further within this chapter.

Responding to the Ghouta attacks; this is 'not about regime change'

In response to the attacks the UK frequently stressed that action would be "legal" and "proportionate" in order to alleviate any misconceptions that this would be a 'gung-ho' attempt at regime change or solidifying more self-centred interests in the region. Both Hague and Clegg explicitly refer to this assumption in order to clarify what this response would *not* be, chiefly Iraq (2003).

> It is quite a different situation from Iraq, an entirely different situation and our Government is going about it in an entirely different way with a National Security Council, with clear legal advice from the Attorney General and going to Parliament with the maximum information (Hague, SGov.17).

> What we are not considering is regime change, trying to topple the Assad regime, trying to settle the civil war in Syria one way or another. …What is being considered are measures which are legal, which are proportionate and which are specific to discouraging and sending out a clear signal that use of chemical weapons in this day and age is simply intolerable (Clegg, SGov.10).

In highlighting these aspects of the proposed response, the UK government is pre-empting possible avenues for contestation from those against the proposal, and engaging in a form of strategic rhetorical balancing to block these avenues (See Holland and Aaronson, 2014). What is stressed is the deterrent objective and the legality of the proposed military action. This is so as to ensure clarity over intentions, something which was arguably obfuscated during the UK intervention in Iraq (2003). In the statement above, Hague implores that transparency and due legal process will be followed with the maximum in information sharing, while Clegg makes clear that regime change is not the motivation; both comments attempt to render this as a case distinct from the experience in Iraq (2003), and thus intervention would be 'acceptable'. The UK government attempted to distance itself from previous unfavourable interventions in the nation's memory, however the success of this is debatable. Ralph et al highlight how prior to the Ghouta attack Syria was constructed as "not 'Libya'", yet through metaphorical reasoning the implicated sub-discourse of this is that Syria "was probably 'Iraq' (a failure not to be repeated)" (2017: 11). The realisation of a post-intervention Libya that was fractured and unstable provided further reason to avoid repeating interventionist mistakes (Ralph et al, 2017: 25).

Despite attempts to make distinct the need for intervention in Syria, a Parliamentary vote on 29 August failed to corroborate support for a UK military response. The proposal for a limited strike to reduce and deter Assad's capacity to utilise chemical weapons was seen as questionable in effectiveness. Many still interpreted this as a 'rush to war' as a likely result of the swift engagement in Libya two years previously which in its aftermath had created further instability. In the end MPs voted against the motion 285-272, with many questioning whether air strikes would make what Cameron described as an "overwhelming human catastrophe" better or worse.

In sum, UK policy constructed the chemical weapons incident through CMF, through a humanitarian deterrence emphasis. By constructing the Assad government as guilty, UK policy made the situation on the ground more certain, and constructed enemy-identity clearer. This is bolstered through perceptions of the incident as a crime against humanity, evoking Assad as the criminal, and uniting the international community to respond in defence of humanity. Finally, UK policy stressed the necessity to respond to the breaking of the chemical weapon taboo, re-establishing normative conventions on chemical weapons use, and alleviating the suffering of a *future* humanity through the maintenance of deterrence.

Responding to the Ghouta chemical weapons attack through newsprint, digital and social media

The chapter now turns to the presentation of the chemical attack in the media, addressing how CMF was utilised through an emphasis on a pursuit of humanitarian deterrence. The salience of this framing attempt was diminished by a competing frame of contestation. This was evident through consistent deliberation over the culpability for the attacks, compounded by uncertain identity constructions of the main protagonists and a lack of human interest framing, as well as debate surrounding what the right response should be from the UK. This section will consider the construction of the main actors within the crisis, including the Syrian government, the opposition and the victims of the attacks; a lack of human interest framing contributing to a distancing of the crisis event; the emphasis on the need to respond to a breach of normative conventions; Obama's 'red line' metaphor as a tipping point for response; the presentation of debate and contestation over 'right response'; and the use of past UK experiences in Iraq and Kosovo to consolidate positions of 'right response'.

As explained in Chapter 2, the thesis examines data collated from both 'old' and 'new' media outlets, comprising *The Times* and *The Guardian*, *BBC Online*, and *Twitter*. Table 3 illustrates the number of texts that were retrieved from the data collation, and the number of texts that were relevant to the analysis. Duplicated or irrelevant textual data was dismissed. Pertinent illustrative extracts are presented in the text and the appendix to this chapter.

Media Source	**Texts Retrieved 21-31 August 2013**	**Relevant Texts Analysed**
The Times	93	**29**
The Guardian	95	**60**
BBC News Online	122	**90**
Twitter	220	**167**

Table 3: Media texts retrieved for analysis on the chemical attack in Syria.

UK media identity constructions: Assad the ill-defined enemy and an ambiguous opposition

The construction of the Syrian government was in some ways less clear than was projected through the UK government statements analysed. The UK government constructed the ruling

Assad administration as the clear perpetrator of the Ghouta chemical weapons attack, and as such a 'criminal' who had caused 'agonising deaths'. The UK media texts analysed conformed to this construction to some degree, although there was more disjuncture when it came to the assignment of culpability for the chemical weapons attacks.

Overtly negative identity constructions of the Assad government were extremely slight across the broader media corpus. This is somewhat unexpected given the UK government's clear condemnation of the Assad administration, and also given the powerful role of elite discourse to "sell intervention" (see Holland, 2012), and to create an enemy identity in order to make clearer and cleaner the parameters of the conflict. Despite Syria being clearly authoritarian, with the Assad family ruling Syria for more than four decades (Quilliam, 2015), President Bashar Assad was referred to as a 'dictator' only six times (*The Guardian*: 2, *BBC*: 4), a 'tyrant', or ruling with 'tyranny' six times (*The Guardian*: 1, *The Times*: 4, *BBC*: 1) and exhibiting 'brutal', 'horrific' or 'remorseless' 'repression' three times within *The Times*. The constraining political structures of the government were not frequently represented within the media texts, and instead were referred more neutrally as the Syrian government or regime.

In terms of the identity of Assad himself, he was constructed vehemently within the newsprint analysed. He was described as 'foolish and reckless', and 'reckless and irrational' (*The Guardian*: 1), 'murderous' (*The Times*: 1, *BBC*: 1), 'psychopathic' (*The Times*: 1), 'barbaric' (*The Guardian*: 2, *The Times*: 6), an 'evil dictator' comparable to Saddam Hussein (*The Times*: 1) and 'the face of evil' (SBBC.1). The Conservative MP John Redwood described Assad as a 'mad and bad ruler', and this was remediated twice within *The Guardian* (STG.18; STG.19), while then US Secretary of State John Kerry described him as a 'thug and a murderer' which was remediated three times within the *BBC* articles analysed. Assad was constructed in criminal terms 49 times across the body of media data, including as a 'criminal' (*The Guardian*: 1, *The Times*: 2, *BBC*: 2), perpetrating 'crime' (*The Guardian*: 6, *The Times*: 6, *BBC*: 6), a 'war crime' or 'crime against humanity', a total of 26 times (*The Guardian*: 10, *The Times*: 4, *BBC*: 12).

While overtly negative identity constructions of Assad were on the whole marginal considering the numbers of media texts analysed (see Table 3), and furthermore in light of the heinous nature of the chemical attack, his construction in more favourable terms was non-existent. The one instant where Assad was described as a 'saviour' is on closer reading a cynical statement within an email from 'A Syrian in Dubai' to the *BBC* and remediated

through a ‘live update’ article that examined the outcome of the UK parliamentary vote (SBBC.1). Largely Assad was described in more neutral terms (as was Gaddafi in Chapter 3), perhaps reflective of journalistic objectivity. Aside from overt descriptors, the identity of Assad and the Syrian government more broadly was often constructed through direct reference to their culpability for the chemical weapons attack. By assigning guilt to Assad for such an abominable act, he embodies the descriptors discussed above, for example being ‘murderous’ and ‘reckless’. This was similar to the construction of Gaddafi through his actions, as seen in Chapter 3. The statements below illustrate examples of blame attributed to Assad which contributed to his negative identity construction. This construction was prevalent across all of the media sources analysed to varying degrees as demonstrated below:

> Although we do not have independent information as to whether Bashar al-Assad’s regime fired chemical weapons on the eastern suburbs of Damascus and killed hundreds of civilians, as the opposition claims, the burden of proof, morally and legally, lies squarely on the shoulders of the Syrian president (STG.3).

> I hope this will wake up some who have supported the Assad regime to realise its murderous and barbaric nature (Hague, STT.2).

> Assad is gassing children to death in #Syria. 1200+ killed by chemical attack on Aug 21. Will we sit back and watch? (STW.1).

> Speaking in a televised statement on Monday, he [John Kerry] said the evidence was "screaming at us" that such weapons had been used in Syria, and that the government was responsible. "With our own eyes, we have all of us become witnesses" (SBBC.2).

As demonstrated in the representative examples above, the newsprint media analysed were most critical in their construction of Assad, *Twitter* presented the most diversity and extreme opinion, while the *BBC* appeared more reserved and balanced, levelling culpability largely through the select use of elite voice from the UK, France or US governments. By holding Assad responsible for the chemical attacks, the media contribute to constructing him as the enemy figure in this scenario. Such constructions assist in making clearer moral judgement of the conflict; to whom we should feel empathy and whom derision, and in what capacity we should respond. The UK government were clear in their condemnation of the Assad

government, assigning blame to them for the chemical attack from the outset. UK media largely conformed to this as evidenced, although there was some disjuncture where responsibility for the attacks was assigned elsewhere, or openly questioned. This is illustrated in the statements below. Reporting alternative perspectives increases media plurality, important for British democratic values and quality journalistic content (Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2013). However, it may also weaken the dominant narrative of culpability emanating from within UK government by opening up the space for contestation. In so doing the media illustrate a situation that is less than certain, undermining the frank rhetoric from the UK government.

The most frequently mediated alternative perspective surrounding culpability for the chemical attack was that the Syrian opposition launched the attack as provocation in order to draw western powers into the conflict against Assad. It was also asserted that the Syrian opposition would have something to gain from this, whereas a motive for the Syrian government was less discernible, particularly given that UN weapons inspectors were already investigating in the country, thus overt use of chemical weapons at this time appears imprudent. This alternative viewpoint was evident across all four of the media sources analysed and is demonstrated by the extracts below.

> On Thursday Moscow had suggested that rebels may have staged the chemical attack themselves, killing hundreds of people in areas under their control to provoke international intervention (STG.4).

> Syrian opposition is only beneficiary of chemical attack…A good account of the sorts of questions we must be asking (STW.2).

> The international community is split on the issue. Russia and Iran, both allies of Damascus, have separately accused the rebels of using chemical weapons (SBBC.3).

> Respect's George Galloway, eclectic as ever, said that there wasn't enough evidence to say the Assad regime was behind the chemical attacks. "The truth is this - the Syrian rebels have got plenty of access to sarin," he insisted. "It's not rocket science - a group of Shinto-obscurantists in Japan, living on Mount FuJi, poisoned the Tokyo underground with sarin gas less than 20 years ago (STT.1).

Further opinion on culpability was evident in the textual data from *Twitter*. Here UGC reflected an even more diverse array of opinion over who was to blame, demonstrating that the dominant policy-line espoused from the UK, and US and Europe was not to be blindly accepted. Accusations were levelled at the US, UK, Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia, Saudi-backed opposition forces, Assad's brother General Maher (commander of the Republican Guard and elite Fourth Armoured Division), and a 'rogue commander'. Appendix 2.1 demonstrates the diversity of alternative viewpoints on this issue, with arguably varying degrees of credibility.

Unlike the more traditional newsprint media, both the *BBC's* digital platform and *Twitter* were less concrete in their discernment of guilt for the chemical attacks. The *BBC* at times attributed blame to Assad but also openly questioned this position, inviting consideration that the Syrian opposition may have been responsible. This was even more visible in the UGC emanating from *Twitter*, with diverse attributions of culpability espoused. Through the establishment of culpability for the chemical attack, the media constructs moral judgements of the actors involved.

What is significant about this deconstruction of identity is how the opposition to Assad was portrayed. In Chapter 3 it was discussed that the Libyan opposition were constructed as a unified group of 'democracy-seeking' rebels, fighting against Gaddafi who was a violent dictator; a simplistic reduction of 'goodies' and 'baddies' or 'heroes' and 'villains'. It was argued that this simplification assisted in legitimising the UK response to the conflict event. This was constructed in the media through a humanitarian theme contributing to CMF, whereby protection of Libyan civilians and support of the rebels was paramount in order to alleviate suffering, protect human rights and avert a potential massacre in Benghazi.

In the Syrian case the construction of the opposition resistant to the Assad government was somewhat different. Rather than a unified group of rebels the opposition were constructed as a diverse and disjointed group containing possible militant Islamist elements. The consequence of these identity constructions was that events in Syria appeared far more complex than in Libya. While Assad was likely to blame for the chemical attack in Ghouta, this was debated within the media. Furthermore, unlike in Libya, the opposition group did not conform to the unified, democracy-seeking mould that was argued in Chapter 3. Thus, rather than reducing events in Syria to the simplistic metaphorical fairy-tale of just war, with the primary actors constructed in the roles of victims, heroes and villains, the identity

constructs in this case were far muddier, rendering justifications for UK military involvement more problematic.

As explained the media texts contained some implication that the Syrian opposition may have been responsible for the chemical attacks. Across the corpus of media texts analysed references to the opposition as being culpable totalled 132, and these were most frequent in the texts from the *BBC*, comprising 75 references compared to 31 from newsprint. Through this presentation, the media are making moral judgements of the Syrian opposition. If the opposition were to be responsible for the chemical attacks as a provocation for Western involvement against Assad, then not only would they have committed a war crime against civilians, but they would have used surreptitious means to attempt to present a different version of events to coerce Western reaction. While it appears unlikely that this is the scenario that played out, acknowledgement of this version of events reinforces its possibility. As Lakoff exemplifies when he asks his students not to think of an elephant, "[t]he word is defined relative to that frame. When we negate a frame, we evoke the frame" (2014: 1). Thus when the media report the possibility that the opposition were to blame for the Ghouta attacks, a version of events popular with both the Syrian and Russian governments, they make possible this scenario, and contribute to constructing the opposition movement as being of questionable moralities.

This characterisation was compounded by the reality that there were elements of militant Islam linked with the opposition movement. These elements had become increasingly visible throughout the duration of the conflict up until the point of Ghouta, two years later. In part, the more secular side of the opposition movement required the religiously ideological groups to bolster the resistance against Assad. Rania Abouzeid describes this requirement as a necessary pragmatism in order for the opposition to gain the practical and tactical support, including accessible weapons, funding, and fighting manpower (2013). In 2012 Jabhat al-Nusra, a group linked to transnational jihadi networks and to al-Qaeda, announced its existence in Syria (Abouzeid, 2013; Fares, 2015: 153; Ziadeh, 2016: 105). In 2013 they became directly linked to the FSA in supporting a video statement – Communiqué No. 1 – issued by eleven armed rebel groups who called for the revolution to unify under an Islamic framework with Sharia law as the source of legislation (Abouzeid, 2013). Furthermore, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood had come to dominate the Syrian National Council (SNC); the closest resemblance of political leadership of the opposition (Rosen, 2012; Saleh, 2017). The growing minority of Islamist ideologues co-opted within the opposition movement was

strategically exploited by the Syrian government. In conflating the Syrian opposition with political Islamist groups like the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, a tough state response was legitimised (Rosen, 2012). Furthermore, it made it increasingly difficult for the UK and western allies to intervene against the Assad government, without siding with the opposition in all its semblances, as exemplified in the extract below from the pro-interventionist think-tank the Henry Jackson Society in the *BBC*:

> There's a large and growing Islamist component within the rebel camp and that's obviously not a set of people we wish to be arming (Alan Mendoza, founder of the Henry Jackson Society, SBBC.4).

Within the media texts analysed the groups resisting the Assad government were predominantly referred to as the Syrian 'opposition' (*The Guardian*: 60, *The Times*: 32, *BBC*: 206, *Twitter*: 2). Less frequently they were referred to as 'rebels' (*The Guardian*: 46, *The Times*: 27, *BBC*: 76, *Twitter*: 28), which was popularly used to describe the resistance to Gaddafi in Chapter 3. The anomaly in this regard was the representation of the opposition on *Twitter* where the term 'rebels' was more frequent, perhaps reflective of the diversity of UGC via that media. The difference in this word selection is that the term 'opposition' as a collective noun appears to describe anybody who was resistant to or did not conform to the ruling Syrian government, demarcating them 'in opposition to' Assad. As described, this was a diverse collective and the term 'opposition' appears as an umbrella for many different elements with the only commonality being resistance to the regime. The term 'rebels', on the other hand, insinuates a specific grouping who are united in their opposition and political rebellion. Thus a large difference between the discursive representation of the Libyan and Syrian uprisings is that those resisting the state were portrayed differently, and in so doing their identities were established as being either acceptable or problematic for the 'West'. The Libyan opposition were constructed in a way that rendered them acceptable, they were unified, democracy-seeking, honourable and morally acceptable, while the Syrian opposition were more problematic, they were diverse, containing militant Islamist elements, morally ambiguous, and possibly even culpable of initiating the chemical attack in the first place. This perception of a fragmented opposition is highlighted in the extract below from *The Independent* cited within a press analysis by *The Guardian*:

> The rebels are united only in detesting Mr Assad. Beyond that, they remain hopelessly split between jihadist warriors who view supportive westerners as

> useful idiots and mainstream Sunni opponents of the Alawite-dominated regime, all of which raises the question of how the US, Britain and France intend to help the rebels they prefer over those they fear (STG.5).

This perception was even more overt when elite opinion was quoted from the Syrian or Russian governments. Both contributed rhetorical attacks to besmirch the identity and motivations of the opposition movement and to construe them as 'terrorists':

> Syrian state television said on Saturday that government soldiers had found chemical agents in rebel tunnels in the Damascus suburb of Jobar. "Army heroes are entering the tunnels of the terrorists and saw chemical agents," state television quoted a source as saying. "In some cases, soldiers are suffocating while entering Jobar." The report said an army unit was preparing to storm the suburb (STG.6).
>
> These are lies that serve the propaganda of the terrorists," a Syrian official said, referring to the armed opposition. "We would not use such weapons (STG.7).
>
> Whose side would [intervention] be on? Because Assad is now fighting al-Qaida and al-Nusra (Sergei Markov, pro-Kremlin analyst and deputy head of the Plekhanov Economic University, STG.8).

In constructing the Assad government and the opposition movement in this way the media made moral judgements of the actors involved and establishing the parameters of the conflict event and response. While the analysis of Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi found such judgements defined Gaddafi as the archetypal villain and the Libyan opposition as the 'rebellious heroes', erecting the legitimising boundaries to the ensuing UK foreign policy intervention, the situation in Syria was more blurred. Assad was assumed to be the perpetrator of the chemical attacks, but this was by no means an established opinion. The reproduction of different interpretations of the event worked to marginalise condemnation in favour of journalistic balance (Chouliaraki, 2015: 11).

The Syrian opposition movement were perceived as fragmented, containing hard-line Islamist elements, and not 'democracy-seeking'; something which UK audiences may have found cultural familiarity with. Furthermore they were morally ambiguous, constructed as potentially capable of initiating the chemical attack. There was, as Layla Saleh states, a lack of "a clearly framed and discursively articulated ideological 'enemy'" (2014: 173), or 'problem' from whom humanity must be safeguarded if CMF was to be persuasive. The UK

media, through what Silverstone has termed "mediated judgements of good and evil" established identity constructions which made possible "practices of inclusion and exclusion", erecting not only the parameters within which the UK government determined their response, but also the boundaries of "what it is to be human" (2007: 57). It is via these judgements that we connect or disconnect to others distant in time and/or space (*ibid*), choose to empathise or distance their experience (see Boltanksi, 1999), and select whether to safeguard them as human beings.

How the UK media distanced the victims of Ghouta as 'anonymous bodies'

Throughout all of the media sources examined there was a noticeable reduction in the use of emotive human interest frames. As discussed previously, human interest framing involves putting a human spin on news coverage and often involves the use of emotional language, or the highlighting of personal experience (Boukes et al, 2015: 122). Broader social and political issues communicated through personal experience may resonate more strongly with audiences as they generalise from the exemplars provided (Boukes et al, 2015: 123). The consequences of this kind of reporting is that we come to understand a particular issue as "serious, urgent or dangerous" (Cho and Gower, 2006: 420). Further, the use of direct human experience adds an element of authenticity to media and policy reports, providing credence and a cognitive point of reference. Our perception that a horrific conflict event could occur that disrupts the lives of ordinary people makes us consider our own lives, and how this could happen to us. An empathetic response is engendered through this connection to the ordinary, and with that, the drive to alleviate the suffering experienced by others.

Human interest framing is not a new phenomenon, and has been utilised frequently by journalists to bring home the severity of the human experience of war and conflict, from both civilian and military perspectives. More latterly human interest may be communicated directly through the rise in UGC via digital and social media. Chouliaraki (2015) describes this as "citizen voice" or "witnessing", and this may be remediated through other media outlets. This direct engagement with personal experience not only authenticates, but can provide a direct means of communicating an issue from sites where journalists do not necessarily have access (*ibid*).

Analysis of the media reports in the direct aftermath of the Ghouta attack revealed a lack of human interest framing. This is surprising for the two reasons above. In order to convey the scale of the distant suffering of others to audiences in the UK one would expect to see the use of personal stories which generate feelings of moral outrage and empathy for those suffering and which may also transform into a feeling of humanitarian responsibility. Furthermore, on-the-ground access for Western journalists was difficult due to restrictions by the Syrian government. Since the outset of the conflict in Syria the Assad government had imposed a blackout on foreign media, preventing them from entering the country and reporting freely (Freedom House, 2017). Freedom House (2017) reports that while 70 visas were granted to foreign journalists in 2012, this admittance involved state escorts who determined the nature of reporting. Consequently, evidence of UGC through *Twitter*, which may be remediated by the *BBC* and newsprint was expected. Out of the 167 tweets analysed, only two provided any human interest element, and in both of these cases this was through the secondary voice of the tweeter, rather direct experience. Similarly, *The Guardian* utilised human interest framing five times out of the 60 articles analysed, and *The Times* three times out of a total of 29 respective articles. This occurred primarily through the eyewitness accounts describing the physical symptoms of those suffering from the chemical weapons attack, and describing the chaos of the early morning of 21 August. The *BBC* utilised this angle marginally more frequently across the ten days analysed, producing a total of seven instances of human interest framing, although this was from a larger corpus of 90 articles. The example below illustrates the presence of human interest framing within an article by Martin Chulov et al for *The Guardian*. It provides an account of the chemical weapons attack from the direct experience of a Free Syrian Army (FSA) captain, told as a first-person narrative, rather than repackaged by the journalist:

> The FSA members were asking for more forces to evacuate the civilians as the shells were coming in at around five per minute. As soon as I and my team arrived at the scene, I saw bodies scattered in the streets. I saw whole houses - none of their residents were alive. When I got there, I could smell what seemed to be burning sulphur and something like cooked eggs. The smoke was not pure white. Most of the victims were shivering and they turned yellow. I saw a woman who was tearing at her clothes as she could not breathe. … Most of the victims did not appear to be injured but died out of suffocation. I held a young

> boy whose body was like a piece of wood and his colour was very blue. He did not have any wound (Captain Alla'a al-Basha of the FSA, STG.7).

Negligible human interest framing resulted in a lack of personal experience with which to illustrate the scale of the suffering experienced. Where suffering was evident it was through descriptions of the events from eyewitnesses or video evidence remediated through journalist narrative as in the examples below. It is argued that the presentation of such horrific symptoms experienced by victims has the converse effect of human interest framing. Such symptoms were not familiar or 'normal' for UK audiences, and therefore the conflict event is cognitively distanced through this presentation rather than made proximate or empathised. Instead, descriptions such as those below are redolent of an apocalyptic Hollywood movie rather than lived experience. Such scenes and descriptions are, in a sense, too fantastical for reality, appearing to belong to the realm of the imagined:

> One little boy in a red shirt, abandoned in the chaos during his last moments of life, makes repetitive twitching movements with his left hand as he lies alone on the floor. A dead infant is hoisted into the air by a hysterical medic. In the background, frantic doctors and medics scream for atropine antidotes, while volunteers hose the corpses with Jets of water in an effort to limit contamination. Amid the appalling scenes emerging from the video footage shot inside makeshift clinics in the suburbs of Damascus yesterday morning, one chilling detail transcends all others: none of the corpses shows signs of trauma (STT.3).

> One man twisting and shivering on the floor seems to be having convulsions. Several are in such distress, they seem to be foaming at the mouth or nose. One man whose stark, glazed eyes stand out from his ashen face looks almost frozen, his pupils apparently contracted - a telling indication of possible nerve gas (SBBC.5).

> "Their mouths were foaming, their pupils were constricted, and those who were brought in while still alive could not draw their breaths and died subsequently… The skin around their eyes and noses was greyish" (Abu Ahmad, opposition activist and pharmacist, STG.9).

The descriptions of the symptoms experienced by the casualties of the chemical attacks like those above, alongside the lack of significant human interest framing simultaneously

constructed those suffering as victims yet also distant. What is meant by this is that they were the innocent sufferers of a repugnant crime, yet we are encouraged to view them not as fellow humans, but as a collection of abhorrent symptoms; writhing (*The Times*: 1; *The Guardian*: 1), convulsing (*The Times*: 1; *BBC*: 20), constricting (*The Guardian*: 1; BBC: 3), distressed (*The Times*: 1; *BBC*: 16), struggling to breathe (*The Times*: 3; *The Guardian*: 3; *BBC*: 1), jumping like a bird (*The Guardian*: 1), blue, grey, black or ashen (*The Times*: 1; *The Guardian*: 5; *BBC*: 2) skin, foaming at the mouth (*The Times*: 2; *The Guardian*: 6), with cold limbs (*The Times*: 1; *The Guardian*: 1), eyes rolling or glazed (*The Guardian*: 1; *BBC*: 2), or with unusually small pupils (*The Times*: 4; *The Guardian*: 5; *BBC*: 10). Instead of ordinary people, they are constructed as 'anonymous bodies'. Through a negligible engagement with human interest framing the media do not tell us anything about who these victims are, the personal or even mundane that draws humanity together and encourages resonance and empathy. Instead they were simply 'scores of', 'lines of', 'heaps of', and 'dozens of' bodies, 'scattered', 'row upon row'. The result is a distancing of the event and of the suffering of the Syrian victims, and also a reduction in their agency. While there is moral outrage at this event, the descriptions and images of the victims are shocking to the degree that they become the 'alien other', outside Silverstone's boundaries of inclusion (2007: 57) and thus outside of the limitations of a robust UK foreign policy response.

Media constructions of the ensuing conflict: Obama's 'red line' on the use of chemical weapons

Exactly one year before the Ghouta chemical attack, President Barack Obama made a speech instigating that any use of chemical weapons in Syria would constitute his 'red line' for military action. This statement was in response to allegations of smaller chemical weapons deployed in Syria prior to the August 2013 attacks. As can be seen in the extract below, Obama made clear that the further use of chemical weapons, or even their transportation, would change his 'calculus' or 'equation' on this situation. The utilisation of mathematical metaphors by Obama reinforces a logicalness and rationality of his reasoning, exploiting the traditionally held conception of the value of positivist natural sciences:

> We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical

> weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus. That would change my equation (Obama, 2012).

Reference to this 'red line' rhetoric was a common theme within all the media sources analysed. Michelle Bentley explains how the use of a metaphorical 'red line' provides "the rhetorical tools for the deliberate and manipulative shaping of international debate" (2016: 3). While this was a US President declaring his 'trigger point' for intervention in Syria, the statement was also significant for the UK. Any US action within Syria was likely to draw in the UK in conjunction given the special relationship between them. Furthermore, any use of chemical weapons would break guiding international norms, something which the UK would find similarly difficult to tolerate. As such, many of the sources analysed referred to Obama's 'red line' and how failure to follow through on this statement would show US, and by extension UK and Western, weakness. As discussed previously, there were many references within the UK statements analysed illustrating that this was an established international legal threshold not to be crossed:

> It's very important for a regime like the Assad regime to know that there is a clear response when they cross such an important line (Hague, SGov.17).

The metaphorical use of the 'red line' was strengthened through consistent repetition within the media texts. This was not limited to the statement by Obama but included other rhetorical utilisation of this metaphor from international actors commenting on developing events, as seen in the following extracts:

> Iran warned of the "severe consequences for the White House" if it crossed a "red line" on Syria. "America knows the limitation of the red line," (Massoud Jazayeri, deputy chief of staff of Iran's Armed Forces, STT.4).

> Israel had two red lines, said Steinitz. One was the delivery of chemical or strategic weapons to militant or jihadist organisations, including Hezbollah; the other was "if someone tries to attack Israel or threaten our citizens" (Yuval Steinitz, STG.8).

> The Turkish foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, declared that the apparent gas attack crossed "all red lines" and criticised international inaction. He said the UN Security Council "has not even been able to take a decision" (STG.10).

> "Syria is an existential issue for Hezbollah," argues Nicholas Noe, an expert on the Lebanese Shia militia. "They are very clear that, for them, the Assad regime is a red line that cannot be crossed. And they are the ones who have the capability to turn this into a regional confrontation." (STG.11).

In repeating the 'red line' metaphor, Obama's earlier statement is reaffirmed through repetition, solidifying the notion of a tipping point. There are two ramifications of this way of perceiving the use of chemical weapons. The first is that 'crossing the line' denotes a threshold on the legitimate use of violence that suggests any violence that took place up until the point of the 'red line' was permissible. Of course, one of the key arguments in this regard, and one utilised in debates over the right response to the attack, is that the use of so-called conventional weapons have proved far more destructive in terms of civilian casualties than the more isolated use of chemical weapons (Bentley, 2016: 2). In establishing the 'red line', Obama and by extension the UK, give license to 'conventional' violence, delimiting the use of chemical weapons as the point to evoke a cosmopolitan moralist call to humanitarianism. In so doing an assessment is made that determines the lives lost to more conventional forms of warfare as not sufficiently worthy of such a response; their suffering is diminished in what may be conceived as a hierarchy of violence (Bentley, 2016: 105-109).

Secondly, by establishing this limitation line, any action that breaches the threshold merits some form of punishment. It is akin to a child that has carried out what his/her parents asked them not to do, and evokes what Lakoff has described as a strict father metaphor. This metaphor sees a child (Assad) as disobedient, and a father (US, UK and allies) who is the moral authority determining right from wrong. This metaphor insinuates that the only way for the child to learn right from wrong and ensure they will not break the rules again is through punishment by the father (2014: 4-5). Interestingly, Lakoff suggests there is an alternative family value metaphor, that of the nurturing parent. In contrast to the strict father whose emphasis is on punishment, the nurturing parent stresses the importance of raising a child with empathy, responsibility to oneself and to others, and a commitment to do your best for yourself, community and the world (2014: 10-13), values more associated with CMF.

By emphasising the 'red line' threshold, UK policy and media stressed the need for a 'strict father' response, which included the proposal of air strikes in Syria. The notion of punishing states for bad behaviour holds little support in modern theorising on 'Just War' which instead emphasises self-defence justifications (Stahn, 2013: 959). Moreover, the cosmopolitan, van

Hooft argues, would envisage this act, outside of the forum of the UN, as a potential extension of hegemonic rights over another state (2009: 132, 138). This was, however, constructed as necessary in order to deter Assad and others who may consider using chemical weapons. UK government rhetoric tried to couch this in terms of 'humanitarian need', in order to protect Syrians and others from future attacks, employing a humanitarian deterrence frame. Ralph et al suggest that the real motivation for the West was the removal of the Assad regime, and thus the 'red line' rhetoric provided an opportunity for engagement that might make possible this end goal (2017: 29). The UK media seemed to provide a space for exchange between the 'strict father' response and 'nurturing parent'. Within this space, the right response of the UK and its allies was debated and contested, and a salient frame of 'intervention fatigue' competed for dominance with one of humanitarian deterrence.

Making possible foreign policies in a 'bitter and protracted civil war'[23]

The uprising in Libya was constructed as unified, people-led and in the pursuit of greater political liberalisation against the tyranny of the Gaddafi regime. The situation in Syria was somewhat different. Conflict between Assad and the opposition grouping had been ongoing for over two years before the chemical attack, during which time the UK media and policy were already formulating perceptions of this crisis. While Libya provided a seemingly 'cleaner' conflict, Syria was perceived as a civil war (*The Guardian*: 22; *The Times*: 4, *BBC*: 24, *Twitter*: 1), and an altogether more complex and chaotic situation that was 'bitter and protracted' (STG.12). This is corroborated by analysis of the constructed identities of Assad and the opposition movement. Still the UK government made the case for a military response to Ghouta as one of humanitarian need, to deter future attacks and thus prevent further suffering. Appendix 2.2 illustrates the UK media debate surrounding deterrence. The UK media deliberated extensively on this issue and utilised four empirical reference points to make the case for or against UK intervention. These analogies were used specifically to add weight to particular policy options, placing certain responses on the foreign policy agenda while simultaneously silencing others in an attempt at achieving "interpretative dominance" (Paris, 2002: 425). Halabja (1998), Iraq (2003), Libya (2011) and to a lesser extent Kosovo

[23] STG.12.

(1998) were referred to most frequently in order to bolster arguments for or against UK military involvement.

The 'spectre' of Iraq and the 'chaos' of Libya: constructing non-intervention

References to Iraq (2003) were frequent throughout the media texts, and particularly dominant in the articles analysed from *The Guardian* and the *BBC*. Across the corpus of texts analysed 'Iraq' was mentioned 228 times, in relation to the recent 2003 intervention (*The Guardian*: 85; *The Times*: 34; *BBC*: 109), and referral to the conflict was implicit in two of the tweets from *Twitter*. As with the analysis of Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi in Chapter 3, Iraq was used as the benchmark, invoked to dissuade from a military response in Syria. The UK media spoke frequently of the legacy of Iraq blighting decision-making over Syria, as they did during the Libyan conflict. Iraq also became the standard by which evidence, intelligence and justification for military involvement became measured. Despite the UK government's statement issuing its legal position and supported by the JIC report which established culpability with Assad for the chemical attacks, the UK media questioned the authority of evidence, as well as any legal basis for intervention. It utilised the example of Iraq (2003) to illustrate the necessity of rigorous intelligence to support assertions and provide credibility to military engagements, as demonstrated by the extracts below:

> Here again, the shadow of Iraq over our politics looms large. There can be no disputing the seriousness of any use of heinous and internationally outlawed chemical weapons. Yet tomorrow's debate will only even begin to carry public credibility if it is based on clear and persuasive information about their alleged use by the Syrian government. That information may well exist - much of the evidence points in that direction. Yet the case has not yet been made authoritatively to the public. This explains, in part, why the public remains so strongly opposed to British intervention or military aid to the Syrian rebels, even after the chemical attacks in Damascus. Ten years on from Iraq, the public is rightly sceptical. David Cameron began making his case for targeted retaliatory and deterrent action last night. But he should be under no illusions that a post-Iraq public will be easily persuaded that another UK military engagement in the Middle East is necessary (STG.13).

> Another former Labour Cabinet minister said that the party was "so deeply scarred" by its past, it would find it difficult to back a Syrian operation. "What happens if after this deterrence operation there is another chemical attack the following week?" In seeking to turn opinion in its favour, the Government faces the same problems Tony Blair confronted in the run-up to the Iraq war a decade ago: having to make a public case with secret material (STT.5).
>
> "If the government has legal advice it is absolutely incumbent on them to publish it before [the] debate." The decision not to publish was "deeply unacceptable", she added: "It suggests we've learnt nothing from the lessons of Iraq" (Caroline Lucas MP, SBBC.6).
>
> For my British political friends, wasn't yesterday's Parliament vote a referendum on Tony Blair more than anyone else? (Gary, via email, SBBC.1).

The legacy of Iraq was so prominent within the media texts that its consistent repetition reinforced its status as the touchstone model for anti-interventionism. Iraq was variably anthropomorphised as an 'elephant in the room', a 'ghost', 'phantom' or 'spectre' haunting, or a 'shadow' or 'legacy' hanging over deliberations over the response to the Ghouta attacks. In this way Iraq is constructed as an invisible force influencing perceptions of the current crisis, encouraging us to view with scepticism CMF and to remember the vestige of the intervention based on insufficient evidence; a sense of discursive déjà vu (Ralph et al, 2017: 29). In the extract below, Hoggart names this spectre as former Prime Minister Tony Blair, spiritually present during a speech by Cameron as a reminder of the failures of UK interventionism in the MENA:

> A spectre hung over the prime minister's speech. Like most phantoms, the spectre wasn't corporeally present - it has been holidaying on a millionaire's yacht - but Tony Blair was there in spirit all right. Cameron said carefully over and over again that this was different from Iraq. "I am deeply mindful of previous interventions," he said. Thanks to Iraq and Afghanistan, the well of public confidence had been poisoned (STG.14).

Alongside Iraq, the more recent UK participation in military airstrikes to protect civilians from a potential massacre in Benghazi, provided a significant blight to decision-making over Syria. While this was framed through a cosmopolitan moralist call to humanitarianism, the

intervention was later critiqued as stretching the conceptualisation of R2P beyond its original cosmopolitan inception to include the removal of Gaddafi (Strong 2014; 2015; Thakur, 2013). The ensuing political instability that filled the void after Gaddafi's death heightened a negative retrospection of that military involvement. In that case there was a direct threat levelled at the city of Benghazi (as discussed in detail in Chapter 3), creating a cognitive capacity for UK action to halt the suffering of others before it imminently could transpire. In the case of Syria, the humanitarian deterrence theme was evoked to protect a *future* humanity from a conjectural attack and so was perceived less as a humanitarian motivation and more as a punitive action, constituting a "prohibited peacetime reprisal" (Stahn, 2013: 969). The extracts below illustrate how the UK media utilised negative constructions of the engagement in Libya to frame the potential for action in Syria:

> Many questioned Mr Cameron's decision to send the RAF into action against Gaddafi and the continuing chaos in Libya serves as a warning that we cannot control the legacy of such actions (*The Daily Mail*, STG.5).
>
> The conflicts in Iraq and Libya will limit David Cameron's room for manoeuvre as he seeks to build parliamentary and public consensus over intervening in Syria (STT.6).
>
> However, the three party leaders will have to convince sceptical MPs that there will be no repeat of events in Libya, when a UN motion authorising a "no-fly zone" was used as cover for a widespread bombing campaign designed to unseat Colonel Gaddafi (STT.6).
>
> As someone of part-Arab descent, I am completely against military intervention. As our involvement in Libya has shown, the place is no safer now than it was under Gadhafi... The smart move is to stay out of it (James, via email, SBBC.8).

The first extract from *The Daily Mail*, cited within a press analysis by *The Guardian* stresses the continuing chaos in Libya as reason not to get involved in the complexities of Syria. The two extracts by Coates et al illustrate not only the arguable conceptual stretching of the UN mandate in Libya from protecting civilians to regime change, but also that the contestation surrounding this perceived issue, as well as Iraq (2003) before that, will restrict support for

involvement in Syria, and constrain the Prime Minister in his decision-making. While the UK media did utilise analogous examples that defended the call for intervention, discussed below, both Iraq and Libya were extremely prominent as points of reference for non-intervention and arguably overrode attempts to recall in the collective memory critical periods of UK inaction, such as Bosnia, Rwanda, or Halabja.

Halabja and Kosovo redux: Making intervention legitimate in the absence of UN support

Parallels were drawn to Halabja (1988), as the last large scale chemical attack against civilians, which took place towards the end of the Iran-Iraq war and involved the deliberate massacre of approximately 5,000 people by Saddam Hussein as part of his Anfal campaign to eradicate the Kurds. Referencing Halabja draws from memory the horrific scenes of devastation and loss of life that were experienced in that event and situates Ghouta in this context. The effect is one of cognitive association, rendering the Syrian civilians as innocent victims, and reducing the Assad regime to that of Hussein, despite the initiators of the chemical attack at this stage remaining unconfirmed. Many have recognised the Halabja massacre as a genocide, including Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2017), the Iraqi Parliament, and a land-mark tribunal at The Hague in 2005 (KRG, 2011). Ghouta subsequently becomes cognitively and implicitly linked to the notion of genocide, despite it not being explicitly referred to using this specific term. As discussed in the analysis of the Libyan case in Chapter 3, explicit recognition of genocide constitutes a defensible reason for petitioning external action under R2P, and is a legal obligation under the Genocide Convention (Pattison, 2012: 48). This was not the case in Syria. Despite associations made through the likening of the event to Halabja, and allegations that this was a crime against humanity, any genocidal connotations were implicit by association.

Furthermore, there were differences in the way that this previous case was drawn upon. On occasion, the Halabja case was used to illustrate the consequences of inaction, for example, that dictators would continue to utilise such methods with impunity. This can be seen in the statements below;

> The consequences of no action, military or non-military, would be to allow whoever committed the attack to go unpunished and give the

> signal that the supporters of the world-wide ban on chemical weapons do not care about the law and the meaning of the law. It also again means - twenty-five years after the Halabja atrocity - that the people who were gassed will not be protected and defended (STG.15).
>
> If the Western democracies do not respond to this atrocious crime, they will be tacitly indicating that a tyrant will meet no impediment to absolute rule if only he is sufficiently brutal. The Kurds of Halabja, in Iraq, were attacked with chemical weapons 25 years ago in Saddam Hussein's campaign of genocide. Meeting no rebuff but rhetoric, he assumed that his annexation of Kuwait two years later would be accepted by the West (STT.4).

The extract from *The Guardian* highlights how indifference from the international community on the breach of a key international norm sets a dangerous precedent. It also suggests that the international community are apathetic towards international law. The extract from *The Times* suggests that the Assad regime is not being challenged as it has not acted with sufficient brutality, and furthermore, that this action will permit Assad to extend both confidence and political objective if he feels he can act with impunity.

Where Iraq was utilised predominantly as a stark reminder of the perils of a messy and protracted interventionist engagement, the UK's experience in the Balkans was used to illustrate the moral necessity and legitimacy of military engagement to deter the use of chemical weapons, with or without UN authorisation. Kosovo exemplified concern over whether military action without the UN would be legitimate, and is demonstrated in the extracts below. The legal statement from the UK government stated that this was the case given the need to alleviate a humanitarian catastrophe.

> The US and its allies cannot allow Russia to stymie a response, Just as Nato rightly resolved to counter Slobodan Milosevic's genocidal aggression in Kosovo in 1999. The Times has argued for two years that the US and its allies need to establish and defend safe zones on the borders of Syria with neighbouring states to alleviate this humanitarian catastrophe. It is too late now to prevent Syria's suffering and refugee crisis. It may be possible, however, to stay Assad's hand from further murderousness by direct attacks on his forces (STT.4).

> Good background: Air War in Kosovo Seen as Precedent in Possible Response to Syria Chemical Attack (SWT.8).
>
> The two are intricately linked. The military intervention to stop the attacks on ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in 1999 was legally questionable because there was no Security Council resolution permitting it. But at the same time, its legitimacy was widely acknowledged (SBBC.8).
>
> The New York Times has reported that Obama's team is looking at the 1999 Kosovo conflict for precedents, as that involved air strikes without a UN mandate against Russian ally Serbia, which was committing atrocities (STG.16).

In utilising the previous instances of UK interventionism in Iraq and Kosovo, like those above, the UK media have established the parameters of any potential military response as fitting one of these pre-existing moulds. In doing so, the scope of response is limited to being either illegal or illegitimate without the tacit support of the UN. In establishing possible foreign policy responses for the UK, 11 *BBC* articles contained a sub-section entitled 'Models for possible intervention' which presented the available moulds which could determine the manner of intervention – Iraq (1991), the Balkans, Somalia and Libya – thus limiting the scope of credible policy options available, and emphasising a military response above any more diplomatic involvement.

Competing frames: Cosmopolitan morality Vs intervention fatigue

As previously discussed the UK government framed the Ghouta attack through CMF emphasising 'humanitarian deterrence'. This is the notion that it was necessary to respond militarily to the attacks in order to deter the future use of chemical weapons, thus preventing further crimes against humanity and civilian suffering. This frame emphasised that the breaking of international norms governing the use of chemical weapons was important to respond to, less rules governing right conduct in the international system be undermined. Despite Syria not being a signatory to the CWC, the use of chemical weapons is considered taboo under the norm of *jus in bello*. There was therefore a legal emphasis to the UK government construction of Ghouta, elucidating that this was a breach of international law and a criminal act, aiding the perception that a military response would therefore be lawful.

The UK media also projected a sense that something must be done in response to a war crime. However there was a noticeable level of divergence and debate that did not consolidate the UK government position. Assad was largely portrayed as culpable for the attacks, and this view was strongly evident from the beginning of the UK government statements analysed. However while evident within the media texts analysed, this was far from a concrete assumption and the UK media opened up space to debate culpability for this act. The opposition movement were constructed as having the potential agency and motivation to instigate the attacks in order to draw the UK and its western allies into the civil war against Assad. They were also considered to be fragmented, containing diverse elements including militant Islamist groups. Such constructions made complex the dynamics of the situation in Syria, and made morally ambiguous the identities of Assad and the Syrian opposition. Unlike the construction of the advance on Benghazi, there were no clear 'villains' or 'heroes'. As such the media constructed the perception, rightly or wrongly, that it was problematic for the UK to get involved in a conflict with such blurry parameters, and least of all, another involvement in the Middle East.

This latter perception was evident within the UK media who presented debate over the proposal for military involvement during the ten day period up until the UK parliamentary vote on the issue. Through this debate an alternative frame was presented that stressed non-intervention and undermined the conception that the UK could have a transitory, legal and morally legitimate engagement that would successfully reassert the chemical weapons taboo, protecting civilians in Syria and elsewhere. This frame of 'intervention fatigue' reasserted the concerns generated by recent UK engagements, constructing the on the ground realities as complex, distancing the victims of the attacks through a lack of human interest reporting, questioning the robustness of the UK government's intelligence, evidence and legal position, and drawing repeatedly and almost habitually on the experiences of Iraq (2003) and to a lesser extent Libya (2011) to promote a position of non-intervention.

This frame of intervention fatigue competed with the cosmopolitan notion of humanitarian deterrence for salience. An article by Roy Greenslade within *The Guardian* highlighted the anti-interventionist sentiment evident within the UK national press. Under the headline "Will we bomb Syria? Yes, say press stories as they urge Cameron not to do it" Greenslade brings to attention the circulating frame of intervention fatigue within UK newsprint, with only *The Sun* appearing to support Cameron's proposal for air strikes:

> The Mail's editorial urges Cameron – said to be is [sic] "at the top of the most slippery of slopes" – not to repeat the errors of intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan. … The Mirror agrees, arguing that attacking Syria "would risk a wider, potentially disastrous conflict felt far beyond the Middle East… Mr Cameron would be guilty of a fatal mistake if he thinks war is the easy option." And the Telegraph is similarly exercised, contending that armed intervention would be a step into the unknown (STG.5).

A further article within *The Times* presented similar sentiments from the British public in a 'Letters to the Editor' section entitled "Case for military intervention in Syria is weak". This piece consisted of four letters to the editor of *The Times* warning against any military involvement from the UK, and illustrating that the failures of Iraq weigh on the public consciousness, as well as allegations of Western moral self-righteousness and the complexities of the greater civil war in Syria. There was no representation of the humanitarian deterrence frame, reflecting a choice selection of the letters to be published. Of the four letters two were from academics at established universities and one was a Christian reverend. While this may reflect the readership base of *The Times*, the selection of letters from academic and religious authorities has perhaps been made in an attempt to give credence to the intervention fatigue frame of view:

> Sir, … Our failure to achieve real stability in Iraq is a warning against quasi-moralistic interventions on the international stage. And do we really want to turn over the governance of Syria to the current "opposition", some factions of which are already conducting systematic persecution of the Christian minority? (Dr Philip Barber, STT.8).

> Sir, The apparent rush by Britain and the US to respond militarily, without the backing of the Security Council, to the shocking events in Syria, will deeply concern those who believe that Western intervention in Iraq caused far more misery than existed before (Stephen Porter, STT.8).

> Sir, … Does self-righteousness constitute the right motive for British foreign policy? Why don't the premiers of Canada and Australia feel obliged to attack Syria? There are many questions for the Prime Minister to answer before he acts (Professor Alan Sked, LSE, STT.8).

> Sir, … We cannot interfere in a civil and religious war, but in the name of humanity and with the yardstick of Christian values acceptable worldwide we can eventually bring the perpetrators of massacres to justice (Rev Toddy Hoare, STT.8).

When UK Parliament was recalled on 30 August to debate the possibility of military action in Syria, rhetoric from the media and MPs conformed to a notion of 'war-weariness' and questioned whether 'lessons had been learned' from previous experience. Cameron was said to have a 'battle' to persuade MPs to support his proposal, including from within the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties (STT.4). *The Guardian* stated that senior officials at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) were 'cautioning' against intervention in favour of a 'strategy of containment' (STG.17). The reality of such divergence played out through the parliamentary vote, with the coalition government failing to consolidate support from Labour, and from large segments of their own parliamentarians, with 30 Conservative and nine Liberal Democrat MPs voting against Cameron, and many more offering only reluctant support (M.J.S, 2013). Cameron was said to have 'lost control' of foreign policy and was a diminished figure (SBBC.6).

The combination of a strong counter-frame of intervention fatigue, coupled with the aforementioned elements of ill-defined judgements of the main protagonists in the conflict, the constructed complexities of a civil war, and a lack of human-interest framing to engender empathy, weakened the humanitarian deterrence understanding that necessitated involvement to protect a future humanity. In the analysis of the Libyan case study it was argued that there needs to be a visible capacity to halt an impending atrocity to consolidate a strong foreign policy reaction on the basis of cosmopolitan morality. In this instance the chemical attack had already taken place and there was no capacity to stop an act of extreme violence. The proposed response of the UK government was thus seen as punitive and reactionary and it was difficult for many to perceive how the addition of more violence through UK military involvement would assist the humanitarian plight of Syrian civilians. While the UK government made their case on the basis that upholding the chemical weapons taboo would prevent *future* atrocities and human suffering, this temporal disjuncture took considerable foresight for cognitive resonance. Lakoff has termed this a case of 'systemic causation'. While 'direct causation' may explain the "daily horrors" in the form of direct violence such as bombing or shooting, systemic causation is not experienced directly, is not cognitively or viscerally understood, and affects the global community beyond the regional locale (Lakoff

2013a; 2013b). Thus while cosmopolitan morality played a key role in the British government's humanitarian deterrence framing of the crisis, the inability for audiences to perceive the capacity to alleviate a *direct* humanitarian catastrophe resulted in this frame succumbing to the more salient perception of humanitarian fatigue as the two contested for space within the UK media.

Conclusion

In 2011 civilian protests began in Syria under the 'Arab Spring'. The originally peaceful protests were met with state repression as the ruling Assad government attempted to quash public dissent and calls for political reform. While in Libya the descent into violence quickly entailed the involvement of the international community, in Syria hostilities ravaged on for two years before the UK considered more robust involvement; hence Abouzeid's remark that this was a revolution of orphans (2013). This consideration came as a result of a large scale chemical weapon attack in Ghouta in 2013. While the Assad government did not accept responsibility for the act, the UK and other western allies conducted independent reports and eventually found the government to be culpable.

The UK government condemned the use of chemical weapons in Ghouta and made clear that it considered the Assad government responsible for the attacks. A CMF of humanitarian deterrence was utilised to construct Ghouta and make clear that it was imperative that the event was responded to in order to protect the taboo on the use of chemical weapons; a keystone of cosmopolitan moralist thinking on right conduct or *jus in bello*. The British government strengthened this notion by promoting the notion of a 'red line' that determined the limits of acceptable behaviour, establishing clear rhetoric that attached the incident to the Assad government and criminalised both the act and the perpetrator, thus evoking a strict father metaphor of necessary punishment for wrongdoing, and couching this as an incident of humanitarian need. It was claimed that if there was no response from the UK and the rest of the international community then Assad would continue to use chemical weapons with impunity. It was therefore necessary to deter him through military action in order to protect civilians, in Syria and globally, from future suffering through the use of chemical warfare. The media adopted elements of this framing, however it also established a counter-frame of intervention fatigue which was arguably more salient.

The salience of the intervention fatigue frame was projected through the constructions of the identities of Assad, the opposition and the victims of the Ghouta attacks. It is argued that there was a lack of a clearly defined 'enemy' and opposition movement and thus the conflict appeared unclear. A lack of human interest reportage resulted in a distancing of the victims of the attack. Although portrayed sympathetically as innocent victims, they were reduced to 'anonymous bodies' through identity constructions that focussed on abhorrent symptoms rather than their inclusion as human beings. Furthermore, unlike Libya which was reduced to a more simplistic conceptualisation, Syria was considered a civil war involving many disparate actors, something altogether more complex. The cognitive disjuncture of systemic causation rendered any form of military response to Ghouta as punitive and as unable to alleviate the direct suffering that had been experienced. Finally, the theme of intervention fatigue was made all the more persuasive through the constant reference to Iraq and Libya as the keystone examples of recent interventions in the MENA, that arguably led to more harm than good.

The weakness of CMF resulted in the salience of the counter-frame of intervention fatigue. When the UK government recalled parliament on 30 August to debate the principle of a limited military response, the notion of intervention fatigue endured and the motion was lost. The UK government attempted to couch their proposal for intervention through a frame of cosmopolitan morality as they had done in Libya. Breaching the chemical taboo and rhetorical 'red line' permitted the pursuit of perhaps more self-interested objectives by the UK and its western allies, such as the removal of the Assad regime, under the guise of a cosmopolitan moral call for humanitarian deterrence (see Bentley, 2016; Ralph et al, 2017: 29). Ultimately this frame was not accepted, and the coalition government was restrained by the counter-framing of past experiences espoused through an intervention fatigue from the UK media. Having examined the evidence of CMF in relation to the cases of Libya and Syria, the thesis now turns to examine the besiegement of Iraqi civilians by IS in 2014. The UK responded in this instance with a humanitarian relief operation, and it is worthwhile to examine how this conflict event was presented by the media.

Chapter 5: The Siege of Sinjar by Islamic State Forces

You don't need to be yezidi to stand for yezidis you just need to be human (YTW.3).

This chapter focusses upon the British media reporting of the persecution of the Yezidi community in northern Iraq in 2014 by Islamic State (IS) forces.[24] In August 2014 this persecution came to an apex and many of the local Yezidi community fled to Mount Sinjar where they became trapped by IS and also a dire humanitarian situation. The ensuing international community involvement in the situation came in the wake of intervention in Libya (2011) and the lack of intervention in Syria (2013) after a British parliamentary vote against the proposal. This particular case study is thus additionally interesting to examine when considering why we might intervene in some conflicts or humanitarian emergencies and not others given the very recent precedents set in these erstwhile cases. The chapter argues that CMF was exhibited through the focus of the UK media of the dire humanitarian situation, however, the event remained cognitively distant through the presentation of the Yezidi community as culturally exceptional, and thus not part of the cosmopolitan world community. Furthermore, British foreign policy was severely constrained by the recent experiences in Libya (2011) and Syria (2013) (see Chapters 3 and 4). Thus the nature of the media reporting (a weakened CMF through cognitive distancing) gave support to the initiation of a limited and strictly humanitarian supporting role, rather than anything more robust.

As discussed within the theoretical and methodological framework in Chapter 2, CMF is a way of presenting an issue so as to highlight and make salient cosmopolitan moral concerns, such as a universal consideration of humanity elevated above the local, the extension of hospitality, solidarity and the alleviation of the suffering of humanity. The chapter explores how such sentiments were embedded within the media texts reporting events in Sinjar in the Nineveh province of Iraq. By employing a framing analysis of media data we can reveal how

[24] IS have been known by a variation of different titles throughout their evolution. Throughout the chapter I utilise the label IS as this is their current identifying name.

the use of particular language constructions may shape our understanding of events and normalise certain policy responses.[25]

Given the foundational assumptions of CMF, it would be anticipated that media texts employing such a frame of understanding would construct events so as to encourage a view of universal humanity, empathy towards others and a responsibility and ethical commitment to alleviate the suffering of others and promote human rights and dignity. These characteristics may be evident through the identity constructions of the main protagonists, and whether they and the crisis itself are 'distanced' or 'proximate' in terms of cognitive distance. It may also be evident in the condemnation of violence and abuses of human rights and dignity, or through the promotion of some form of responsibility to alleviate such suffering. Finally, analogous examples may be utilised to illustrate the ramifications of making or not making a policy response that promotes some commitment or responsibility to others.

Such linguistic tools and constructs were evident in the previous two case studies analysed; Chapter 3 – Libya and Chapter 4 – Syria. In addition to this, these two chapters revealed a significant additional principle that made possible the ability to envisage certain policy reactions; the capacity to be able to prevent or cease an escalation in the given crisis. Thus far, a cosmopolitan moral framing was clearly evident in the British media reporting on the conflict in Libya, as was the capacity for UK foreign policy to act to *prevent* Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi and avert an anticipated atrocity crime there. Thus the deployment of CMF and the presentation of the capacity to be able to halt an escalation in violence, may have shaped understanding not only of the crisis but also of the policy reaction taken. In the case of Syria however, a difference was visible. Despite the media employment of CMF that encouraged the perception of the chemical weapons attack on Ghouta through a humanitarian deterrence lens, it was argued that the capacity to *prevent* the chemical weapons attack was not possible as it had already occurred. Thus the capacity to act on this issue was confined to reaction rather than prevention. The discursive consideration of an interventionist response was viewed punitively, with a view to upholding international conventions on the use of chemical weapons, and to dissuade future attacks rather than alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people that was visible within the media texts.

[25] For more on this please see Chapter 2 detailing the theoretical and methodological framework.

As with the previous case studies that examined conflicts in Libya and Syria, the chapter is underpinned by Entman's identification of four frame functions which; define a situation as being problematic, identify the causes of the problem, express moral judgement of the actors involved, and approve solutions (2003: 417). It is argued through the chapter that a cosmopolitan moral frame is evident within the textual data through the presentation of events as a dire humanitarian emergency, through highlighting the precariousness of those affected, and through calls for an international community response to this.

The situation is constructed as being 'problematic' in the sense that there was a large-scale assault on a community in northern Iraq, that involved widespread human rights abuses, persecution, murder and besiegement on a mountainside contributing to a security and humanitarian crisis. In terms of the actors involved, IS were constructed as the perpetrators of 'medieval' violence, and as being 'brutal' and 'merciless', and as such there was exhibited a moral judgement condemning their actions. The construction of the Yezidi community saw them as the innocent victims of this persecution; however they were frequently typecast by references to their religious and cultural difference. While this was a key rationale behind their persecution by IS, it rendered the Yezidi as mysterious and different, and as a closed community, and for this reason they became 'othered' through a construction of cultural exceptionalism, rather than emphasising their membership of any cosmopolitan universal humanity. As a result, while there were, as stated, calls to respond to this suffering, the crisis remained cognitively distant and there was little emphasis upon the common ties that would constructively elevate membership of the universal world above the local world. A sense of shared moral responsibility and empathy was thus lost through this presentation.

Both UK media and policy texts presented this as a humanitarian crisis, and approved solutions in the form of humanitarian assistance to alleviate the immediate suffering. Although there was discussion of a more robust response with military involvement this did not come to pass and instead the UK provided logistical and intelligence support to the US as they engaged with air strikes against IS positions. Through a distancing of the crisis, it is argued that it became something that was happening 'to others'. In conjunction with the constraints of the previous experiences in Libya and Syria, this resulted in a weak CMF that validated the provision of humanitarian assistance to the 'suffering others' but no UK military engagement.

The research provides a detailed analysis of how the UK media reported the unfolding events in Sinjar in August 2014, and how UK foreign policy reacted. At the time of writing, there is a serious lack of academic scholarship that deals exclusively with the persecution of the Yezidi community by IS, the media coverage of this, or the international community response. There is some existing coverage of the history of the Yezidi religion and culture. Key in this regard are texts by Christine Allison (2001) and Philip Kreyenbroeck (2005; 2009). Allison (2001) attempts to map the oral tradition of Yezidism through the three identified themes of love, war and death, providing a detailed exhibition of the history, folklore and religious practices of this community. In an edited text by Weber and MacKenzie, Kreyenbroeck (2005) focusses upon Eastern and Western perceptions of the religious literature of Yezidism. He offers further examination of Yezidism in Europe, using first-hand interviews to generate an inter-generational insight into the Yezidi diaspora (2009).

The recent oppression of the Yezidi community has tended to be overlooked, or forms an aside to wider texts that address the formation, organisation and strategies of IS. Weiss and Hassan (2016) discuss the organisation and motivations of IS, utilising first-hand interviews with jihadists in Iraq and Syria. Within their text, the persecution of the Yezidi community in 2014 is detailed as an illustration of IS brutality, and strategic operations within Iraq (Weiss and Hassan, 2016: 228-232). Benjamin Hall (2015) and Malcom Nance (2016; 246-258) devote more discussion to the persecution of the Yezidi community and particularly the events of August 2014; Hall also includes first-hand testimony of the persecution experienced. Gareth Stansfield (2014) provides an examination of IS' assault on the Kurdistan Region, forwarding three possible UK foreign policy options available for engagement. Stansfield focuses primarily upon the situation post-September 2014, after the US had already engaged in air strikes to establish a safe corridor for those stranded to escape from Mount Sinjar.

This research fits in the chasm between more recent discussion of Yezidi persecution as part of a larger discussion of the development of IS, and Stansfield's consideration of the UK foreign policy reaction to the overrunning of the Kurdistan region. There is no existing scholarly work that focusses upon the media coverage of this event, or any discernible discursive analysis. My research thus develops upon descriptive contributions of the Yezidi religion and historical persecution, while contributing an original framing analysis of UK media coverage of this event, and consideration of the link between this and the British

foreign policy response initiated. It therefore makes a significant contribution to the media-foreign policy nexus, and also the literature detailing the persecution of Yezidism.

The chapter begins with a contextual introduction which addresses the unfolding events in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq between IS and the local Yezidi, and also wider Kurdish community and Iraqi Kurdistan Peshmerga forces. This element of the chapter will also illustrate the longstanding marginalisation of the Yezidi community and the particular grievances held by IS towards this, largely Kurdish population (Del Re, 2015: 280). The chapter will then consider the immediate British policy reaction to the besiegement of Mount Sinjar. Understanding the stance of the British government is important in garnering a sense of the weight, scale and presentation of the events on the British political agenda, as well as the mediation of such policy reactions within the media. Consideration is then given to the reaction to the besiegement within British print, digital, and also social media.

Firstly, identity constructions of the main protagonists are analysed. It is argued that the dominant identity constructions of the Yezidi and IS contribute to shape our understandings of their legitimacy, decency, and role in the world, while also reinforcing in our imaginary, their performative statuses of victim or villain within the unfolding scenario. The chapter argues that to an extent both IS and the Yezidi community were 'othered' and thus 'distanced' cognitively rather than constructed as part of an inclusive humanity as would be expected within the cosmopolitan morality framework. Secondly the notion of genocide is discussed, with the chapter claiming, as in the preceding two chapters, that the use of particular past experiences act as reference points from which we come to understand and measure the scale of the current humanitarian crisis and its potential escalation. The chapter argues that there is a lack of detailed human-interest reporting which usually promotes empathy, and possibly calls for action or justice. It also finds that there was a growing understanding of this crisis as a potential genocide, yet the British policy reaction remained limited to the delivery of humanitarian aid and the provision of logistical support to the US rather than any more robust action to halt a potential atrocity, as was visible in the Libyan case (see Chapter 3). Thirdly, the chapter argues that the legacy of the parliamentary vote in Syria constrained the capacity of British foreign policy to react to the crisis, for fear again of not garnering enough political support.

Contextual background: Understanding Yezidism, the "exotic 'Devil-worshippers of Kurdistan'"[26]

The political instability precipitated by the civil war in Syria, the political collapse and vacuum in Libya, and the withdrawal of western troop presence from Iraq have contributed fertile ground that has facilitated the continued rise of IS (Weiss and Hassan, 2016: xiv). In 2014 IS had capitulated on these fractures and extended the group's territorial reach between Syria and Iraq, overrunning many towns in Iraq in swift succession. By August IS were advancing towards the towns in the Nineveh province of northern Iraq, and Sinjar was seen as a strategic midway point between Raqqa and Mosul, IS' regional strongholds (*ibid*: 229). During their advance IS prolifically targeted non-Sunni Muslims and non-Muslim communities, including Chaldean Christians in towns such as Qaraqosh and the Yezidi community in and around Sinjar. The rationale for this is the overarching aim to establish an Islamic Caliphate. In order for this to be authentic, IS believes that Islamic lands need to be free from apostasy and heresy (Gerges, 2016: 30). As such, IS targets 'non-believers' for conversion and persecution.

IS considers Yezidism to be a heretical faith. This is due in part to a belief in reincarnation, and the practice of polytheism, given the faith in the seven Holy Beings led by Tawûsî Melek, the peacock angel (Kreyenbroeck, 2009: 18). Yezidism follows that the seven Holy Beings and Tawûsî Melek give credence to all that happens in the world, whether 'good' or 'evil'. Tawûsî Melek is considered to be the embodiment of Satan by many Muslims and Christians in the Middle East, the incarnation of the fallen angel who was expelled from Paradise for defying God (Allison, 2001: 74). However, as Christine Allison points out, Yezidism does not share the same understanding of Satan as other religions, instead believing him to be an angel who redeemed himself in the eyes of God, and is therefore considered good[27] (2001: 75). It is due to a misreading of this belief-system that Yezidis are considered by IS as devil-worshippers and Satanists (see *Dabiq*, 2014: 14). Such accusations have not always been fervently refuted given the lack of information regarding Yezidism, and the reliance upon prevailing oral traditions which has enhanced an air of secrecy surrounding the faith and produced "closed communities" (Del Re, 2015: 269; also Salome, 2010: 45). This is in addition to the preconceptions of scholars who have been "conditioned" as Allison

[26] Allison, 2001: 3.
[27] For a detailed discussion of the misrepresentation of Yezidism see Allison, 2001.

states, by "religions of the Book", and therefore do not quite know what to make of this "exotic" religious community (2001: 3). Aeons of misinterpretation have produced "cycles of persecution" and discrimination against the Yezidi communities (HRC, 2016: 6), leading, in part, to the continuation of decades of human rights abuses and atrocities (Kikoler, 2015: 6).

The legacy of discrimination and abuses against minorities in the Nineveh province could have served as an early indication of the possible threat facing the Yezidi community by IS. Kikoler states that there were warnings of "dire threats" facing such communities in Iraq over the last ten years, particularly from Sunni extremist groups, yet there was little interest in addressing the foundations of such discrimination (2015: 6-8). In 2013, a year before the Sinjar siege, the main Yezidi religious festival was cancelled over security concerns (Del Re, 2015: 277). The targeted persecution by IS is the seventy-fourth form of ethnic-religious persecution against the Yezidi in their history (Del Re, 2015: 274) and involved the besiegement of thousands of civilians on Mount Sinjar, a range of mountains considered sacred near the border with Syria in north western Iraq. Prior to this documented event and stimulated international reaction, little was (popularly) known about Yezidism or the decades of discrimination felt by those who practice it. As Emanuela Del Re purports, it is only through the mediation of such persecution or atrocities, that "the world discovers" the existence of other people in the world; "when outrageous events in which they are prominent actors hit the headlines" (2015: 269).

In 2007, an attack in the Nineveh region by al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) killed over 500 Yezidi civilians and injured approximately 1,500 when two fuel tankers were detonated simultaneously by jihadists in Kahtaniya and al-Jazeera (Cave and Glanz, 2007). This incident appeared as just another in a catalogue of 'Middle East suicide bombings' and Western media did not report on the story to the extent of the Sinjar siege despite the combined attacks being the second most deadly act of terrorism after the attacks on the world trade centres in New York on 11 September 2001[28] (GTD, 2016b). Despite the events of 2007, the Yezidi community were not 'discovered by the world'. This may in part be due to two factors. Firstly this may be related to the point evident in the previous case studies discussed, whereby the capacity to halt or stop an atrocity is not present. Secondly, this may

[28] This is taking into consideration *known* casualty and fatality numbers. An attack in 2014 on Camp Speicher in Tikrit by IS may surpass this claim but is based upon reliable estimates by the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) only.

be due to other actors present in the case. In the Sinjar siege, the perpetrators of the atrocities, IS, bask in huge media attention due to their brutality, apparent organisation and financial capacity, large territorial gains, and ability to court and utilise new media technologies to advance their aims. The 2007 attacks were perpetrated by al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), a branch of al-Qaeda which would serve as the predecessor to Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), and later Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) (Council on Foreign Relations, 2016). In light of this angle, the 'discovery' of the Yezidi and their historical persecution is arguably a by-product of the media attention on IS.

The seventy-fourth persecution: the events of August 2014 in Sinjar

On 3 August 2014, IS initiated a well-coordinated attack on the Sinjar region. The towns and villages on all sides of Mount Sinjar were seized by IS forces who faced little resistance from the Kurdish Peshmerga (HRC, 2016: 6). Indeed, a report by Naomi Kikoler for the Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide highlights that for many there was confusion over the provision of security in this area, as the result of broader political and territorial disputes between the Kurdish and Iraqi governments (Kikoler, 2015: 10). Some local resistance delayed the advance which permitted thousands of families to flee to the uplands of Mount Sinjar, however this place of refuge swiftly became equally precarious. IS forces besieged the mountain, essentially trapping approximately 50,000 Yezidi civilians in an escalating humanitarian crisis as temperatures soared and food, water, shelter, medical care and lines of communication ran out or remained inaccessible (HRC, 2014: 7; Kikoler, 2015: 15). The Yezidi civilians faced the unbearable situation of remaining on the mountainside to face dehydration, starvation and exposure or retreating back down to face IS forces who had the mountain under siege. While the exact numbers of those who perished from exposure and dehydration have not been established, the number is reportedly in the hundreds, with the elderly and young especially vulnerable. A report by the Institute for International Law and Human Rights (IILHR) *et al* states at least 40 children died as a result of dehydration (IILHR, 2015) while UNICEF reported around 25,000 people required urgent assistance, including food and clean water (IILHR, 2015: 13). Others, seeing no way out of this perilous situation took their own lives (Yazda, 2016).

On 7 August 2014 the US announced that they would commence support at the request of the Iraqi government (HRC, 2014: 7). This support took the form of humanitarian aid assistance

for those trapped on the mountain, and targeted air strikes to break the IS siege and provide an evacuation route off the mountainside. The UK also provided humanitarian aid drops with RAF transportation, and supported the US with additional surveillance "to better understand the situation on the ground", and logistics such as refuelling (MOD, 2014). The UK also utilised transport aircraft to deliver ammunition and equipment to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) from other nations and to gift "non-lethal" equipment in the form of body armour, helmets and so forth (MOD, 2014). Despite some members of the UK government and military calling for greater involvement in the face of what was being increasingly described as genocide, including the former Labour Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and the former Chief of Staff of the British Army Lord Dannatt, the UK in this instance, remained set on a limited humanitarian intervention only.

The UK took part in seven humanitarian aid drops during the period under analysis (3-13 August 2014), delivering 75 tonnes of humanitarian aid from the 9 -14 August 2014 (MOD, 2014). This aid, in conjunction with US targeted air strikes of IS positions and the assistance of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces, resulted in the establishment of a 'safe corridor' from which those Yezidi still trapped on Mount Sinjar were able to safely cross into Syria and avoid the besieging IS forces. This safe passage was established on 14 August (IILHR, 2015: 13). Despite the evacuation of many of those trapped on Mount Sinjar, the situation remained critical, and this led to an escalation in the policy reaction of the UK on 26 September 2014 to include air strikes against IS.

Those who had been captured in the early stages of IS' advance, or while trying to flee to Mount Sinjar faced continued abuses by IS. These Yezidi families and communities were systematically separated into particular groupings – women and children, men and boys over twelve years old, and boys aged over seven years old (HRC, 2016: 8). The placing of Yezidi civilians within these demographic groupings determined the fate they faced at the hands of IS. Yezidi men and boys over twelve were separated from their families and were forced to convert to Islam (UN News Centre, 2016). Those who did not convert were killed and often female family members bore witness to such executions before being forcibly taken away themselves (*ibid*). The separated boys over seven years old were forcibly transferred to training camps where they were taught to pray, recite the Quran, fight, and were forced to watch IS jihadi propaganda material (HRC, 2016: 19). These boys were deemed to be at an age where they were malleable and could learn to become members of IS. In so doing, IS

were complicit in "destroying their religious identity as Yazidis and recasting them as followers of Islam… and through indoctrination and violence, into IS" (HRC, 2016: 19).

IS specifically targeted those of Yezidi faith, and made such claims overt in their *Dabiq* magazine, where it is stated that Yezidis should be captured and killed unless they repent, and also legitimises the targeted persecution and enslavement of Yezidi women as 'spoils of war' (*Dabiq*, 2014: 14). By forcing something of a 'Hobson's choice' of conversion or execution, IS were specifically targeting the identity of the Yezidi community whom they considered heretical. These acts of persecution served to eradicate the Yezidi faith-based cultural identity by force. Fawaz Gerges describes IS' actions as a "systematic cultural cleansing" (2016: 31). The UN described the persecution of the Yezidi alongside many other minority communities in Iraq as "deliberate and systematic", whereby the targeting is to "suppress, permanently cleanse or expel, or in some instances, destroy those communities within areas of its [ISIS] control" (UNAMI/OHCRH, 2014: 11).

Female Yezidi captives were further separated according to marital status with girls under eight years old permitted to remain with their mothers (HRC, 2016: 10). Many women attempted to protect themselves by claiming their siblings, or younger relatives were in fact their own children, the purpose of which was to avoid being found to be unmarried and sold on (*ibid*). Instances of suicide amongst female hostages were not unknown in the face of fear and instability (HRC, 2016: 12). The Human Rights Council (HRC) reports rescued interviewees as describing an "abject terror" (HRC, 2016: 11). Most women and children were forcibly transferred numerous times after their capture and provided little in the way of food, water and medical care. Instances of sexual violence were primarily on an individual basis given the propensity of IS to treat female Yezidi hostages as personal property (*ibid*). As such, sexual violence and slavery was "tightly controlled", and prevailed in a way that is, "prescribed and authorised, and is respectful of the property rights of those who "own" the women and girls" (HRC, 2016: 12). However, Yezidi women and girls were still frequently traded at markets or gifted to other IS members in Iraq or Syria (UN News Centre, 2016), with many of those involved being 'foreign fighters' from Belgium and Australia among others[29] (HRC, 2016: 13). As well as incidents of suicide, stringent measures were in place to prevent the Yezidi hostages, both male and female from escaping. On a first attempt at

[29] The Human Rights Council report states IS members from Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Kazakhstan were involved in the trade of Yezidi women and girls. However members from Sudan, Belgium, Uzbekistan and Australia may also have been in some way complicit (HRC, 2016: 13).

escape the hostage was beaten, on a second attempt the hostage was executed, and if the hostage was successful in escaping, his/her family were beaten instead (HRC, 2016: 9) Other forms of deterrence against escape included sexual violence, beatings or harming the children of captive women (HRC, 2016: 16).

Although IS' rules do not authorise it, there are large financial incentives for members to sell the Yezidi women back to their families, often receiving payments upwards of $10,000, while the trade of the hostages between IS fighters is much lower at $200-1500 (*ibid*). The result of this is that some hostages are released and go back to their relatives, often to find numerous other family members are still in captivity, and a huge financial burden is placed upon the family in making payments to IS, reducing the capacity to rescue other relatives (HRC, 2016: 16). Despite this, some hostages have been returned, either through their extended family making payments directly to IS, or through local networks that organise to attempt repatriations.

At the time of writing, approximately 4,000 Yezidi men and women remain missing, and many families remain in precarious living situations around Mount Sinjar (Collard, 2016; Hall, 2017). IS still retains large swathes of territory in Syria and Iraq within their control, including Mosul where it is estimated that approximately 700 Yezidi women are still held captive (Collard, 2016). A joint campaign by Iraqi government forces and Peshmerga forces has advanced to retake the city from IS. In April 2017 36 Yezidis were rescued from IS enslavement and were receiving support at a specialist centre in Dohuk from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the support of the US and Canada (UNFPA, 2017). UNFPA anticipated that with the retaking of Mosul from IS, more Yezidis would be found and rescued (*ibid*).

The British government reaction: a limited humanitarian response restrained by Libya and Syria

The UK government presented the persecution of the Yezidi community in Sinjar through CMF. They did this through the establishment of a universal level of condemnation of the flagrant human rights abuses that were being carried out by IS. There was made clear a need to take action in order to avoid an escalation of this situation. Cameron made overt statements that this was the responsibility of the international community, and implored

assistance through the utilisation of rhetoric reminiscent of Kofi Annan's statement on the failure to respond to Rwanda. Despite making strong expressions of the need to avert an escalation in events, the UK remained committed to the provision of financial, aid and logistical support to the US only and it is argued that the reason for this was due to the constraining effect of the recent experiences in responding to Libya (2011) and Syria (2011) (see chapters 3 and 4). Thus, while the UK appeared to view this event through a cosmopolitan moral lens, and offered a genuine commitment to alleviate the suffering experienced, any more forceful response was held back by the legacy of the engagement in Libya, and by the desire to avoid another parliamentary vote on military action so soon after the failure to consolidate support for intervention in Syria. Appendix 3.2 details the numerous references made to the vote on Syria the previous year, and Cameron's desire to avoid a similar outcome.

The British government response to the unfolding events in northern Iraq was to offer condemnation in the first instance. On 7 August Toby Ellwood the UK Minister for the Middle East condemned the brutality of IS and drew attention to the intolerance and victimisation of minority groups in the region (YGov.1). The UK also committed at this point to providing £5 million to Iraq as part of a humanitarian appeal to provide assistance. The next day Justine Greening, UK Secretary of State for International Development stated,

> [T]he world has been horrified by the persecution of vulnerable minority groups by ISIL extremists in Iraq. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes and we are extremely concerned for their safety. This aid from the British people will help the Yazidi community (Greening, YGov.2).

These two ministerial positions highlight the discrimination and persecution faced by minority groups, including the Yezidi community. Simultaneously the statement by Greening places this condemnation alongside the rest of the world, whom she states as being collectively "horrified". This statement also suggests a world that is united in their opposition to the actions of IS and thus supportive of Yezidi and other minority communities. In this vein a sense of universal humanity is beginning to emerge, with IS positioned outside of this collective.

Financially, the UK pledged to release another £8 million in addition to the sum already committed bringing the total assistance to £13 million. In addition to the comments by Greening, the UK government detailed the breakdown of these funds, specifying that £2

million was for emergency humanitarian supplies for 75,000 people, including those trapped on Mount Sinjar (YGov.2). These supplies included tents and tarpaulins for shelter, solar lights that can recharge mobile phones, and reusable water filtration containers. Of the funds allocated, £3 million was 'fast-tracked' to various charities and NGOs on the ground through the Department for International Development's (DFID) Rapid Response Facility. Two and a half million was provided to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide immediate emergency medical care and humanitarian assistance, and £500,000 was provided to support efficient workable relations between the UN and the Kurdistan political systems (YGov.2).

It was not until 8 August 2014, five days after the initial besiegement of Sinjar by IS that David Cameron made a public comment on the unfolding situation (YGov.3). The UK media recognised this absence and mocked the prime minister for being on holiday while Iraqis were dying, as illustrated in the extract from the *BBC* below:

> Times cartoonist Morten Morland sums things up in eight sections, seven filled by the corpses of Iraqis and the last containing a ruddy-cheeked Mr Cameron supine on a beach towel (YBBC.5).

Cameron stated that he was "concerned by the appalling situation" and referred with condemnation to the actions of IS in the region as "barbaric attacks" (YGov.3). Cameron highlighted specifically the predicament of the Yezidi people trapped on Mount Sinjar; "they fear slaughter if they descend back down the slopes but face starvation and dehydration if they remain on the mountain" (YGov.3). Cameron goes on to state that "the world must help them in their hour of desperate need" (YGov.3). In this statement Cameron begins by condemning the brutality of IS. In doing so, he distinguishes them as "terrorists" and simultaneously places vulnerability within this situation upon the Yezidi community. By highlighting the negative consequences of civilians either staying on the mountainside or returning home, Cameron reveals the 'Hobsons's choice' and the physical insecurity and precariousness of those who have fled to Mount Sinjar. The final comment, like that of Greening the previous day, calls collectively to the world to help the Yezidi people. This statement clearly advocates a sense of cosmopolitan moral universalism by accentuating the shared responsibility of humanity to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable people.

The phraseology of "in their hour of desperate need" is reminiscent of remarks made by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the Rwandan genocide. In a statement to the

Kigali government in Rwanda four years after the genocide that occurred, Annan apologised for the failings of the international community in not acting more swiftly and whole-heartedly to combat the atrocities that had been taking place. Within the statement he comments that "in their greatest hour of need, the world failed the people of Rwanda" (UN, 1998). Cameron's statement is redolent of this and attaches the precarious situation in Iraq to that which was experienced in Rwanda. By using similar phraseology he constructs the potential escalation of this religious-ethnic persecution and also of how the international community failed to generate the political will to assist in Rwanda; "Rwanda's tragedy was the world's tragedy" as Annan stated (UN, 1998). By connecting to the comment of Annan, Cameron opens up the space within which to instigate policy action so that Sinjar must not also become "the world's tragedy". Cameron went on to reaffirm that there will be a strong international response to the crisis in defence of the values "we believe in", freedom and dignity (YGov.3). The concepts of universal rights and dignity are central to the understanding of cosmopolitan morality adopted by the research, and informed by the review of scholarship in Chapter 2 (Nussbaum, 1997: 3; Delanty, 2012; Fine: 2012: 380). The use of such rhetoric is arguably an attempt to differentiate the British policy reaction in this case from a case where apathy led to a large-scale genocide, and to illustrate that the UK government is *not* failing the people of Sinjar, but instead is recognising these events and taking a proactive response.

On 9 August, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) reiterated that the British priority in this crisis remained the humanitarian predicament of the people trapped on Mount Sinjar and that "there will be a steady drumbeat of air drops in the coming days to ensure that we help to keep these people alive" (YGov.4). This comment suggests a humanitarian aim to ensure the preservation of life through aid drops, however the statement itself may present a different understanding. The phraseology of a "steady drumbeat" may refer to the continued aid assistance or advocacy on behalf of the Yezidi people, however it is at the same time militaristic. A drumbeat in battle could be used as a cadence to rally troops or demoralize the enemy; "a show of bravado… and invincibility" (Ouditt, 2003: 185). Furthermore, to 'sound/bang the drums' is a metaphor for war itself. This is accentuated by the combination of the terms "steady drumbeat" with "air drops" which itself is reminiscent of the dropping of ordnance and does not differentiate that these drops are of aid supplies. Thus, this statement describes the humanitarian objectives of preserving life by using militaristic language. This gives the illusion of a stronger policy line than perhaps is being actioned, and thus a show of power and force. We may also argue that it perhaps goes some way to alleviate calls for

another military intervention into Iraq. The action overall is intended to "keep these people alive", espousing cosmopolitan moral intent utilising militaristic language. As Barnett states, the giving of aid "to those whose lives are in danger" is the indubitable expression of cosmopolitan moral responsibility (Barnett, 2008: 19).

The humanitarian predicament of the Yezidi people was also reiterated by restating their besiegement by IS and also by dehydration and starvation. In this way, the Yezidi people become 'victims' twice, once by IS persecution and once through the increasing insecurity on Mount Sinjar. It is proclaimed that the humanitarianism of the UK and others will sustain the Yezidi people. A statement from Downing Street reiterated the support the UK will provide to the US in the delivery of aid. On 9 August, it also revealed that both Cameron and Obama did not consider the aid assistance as a long-term solution to the crisis. Instead the need for safety is promoted in order "to avert a genocide" (YGov.5). This is the first time that the British government have referred directly to the unfolding situation in Sinjar and the surrounding area as a potential genocide. The significant aspect of this comment is the "need to avert". This suggests that genocide is not already taking place in Nineveh and that the UK, US and other members of the international community can prevent it from doing so. This statement places the agency to change the on-the-ground situation with the UK and other international community actors, and simultaneously highlights the cosmopolitan moral imperative to avert mass atrocities through such collaboration. Greening promoted the contribution that Britain was making by detailing the concurrent delivery of aid by the RAF to the Yezidi civilians trapped on Sinjar, explicitly connecting the "help from Britain" reaching "thousands of people" (YGov.6).

On 10 August, a spokesperson from 10 Downing Street emphasised the international partners that were collaborating to address the insecurity of those trapped on Mount Sinjar (YGov.7). This cosmopolitan response to the crisis was almost in counterpart to the next sentence which urged a more communitarian perspective through the election of a new political leader in Iraq who could lead an inclusive government and allow Iraq to take responsibility for responding to IS. The final part of the statement sees the espousal of a cosmopolitan sentiment on a smaller national scale by emphasising that a new Iraqi leader could "unite all Iraqi communities against these evil terrorists" (YGov.7). By uniting all communities, the statement includes those people that live in Iraq but may hold different identities – Kurdish, Yezidi, and Turkmen – building bridges that unite disparate communities against a common

foe. As Beck and Grande argue, cosmopolitanism does not have to refer to a 'global-ness', rather the principles of uniting humanity can occur on smaller levels of analysis, such as the EU (2007: 12), and perhaps, Iraq's disparate populations. The next day, a similar statement was reiterated by a Downing Street spokesperson, who also highlighted the role that the UK was taking to "lead efforts" at the UNSC for a "strong international response to the broader threat posed by ISIL" (YGov.8). This comment illustrates the UK as taking a strong policy-led approach to the humanitarian situation, albeit one that is attempting to involve the international community in tackling the broader security threat beyond Sinjar. On 12 August, a cosmopolitan moral response was evident in a statement that highlighted the "shared determination of the international community" to respond to the security issue of IS (YGov.9).

Further statements on behalf of the UK government stressed the financial assistance that was being fast-tracked to various charities on the ground in Iraq so that they could continue to provide humanitarian and medical assistance. Greening emphasised again the benefits of the support provided by the UK, stating that it was "helping hundreds of thousands of Iraqis get the food, water and sanitation they desperately need" (YGov.12). This statement places the UK in a position of care, upon which the Iraqi people are dependent.

A UK government spokesperson highlighted the proactive role of the UK by detailing the telephone conversations between Cameron and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, French President François Hollande, and President Masoud Barzani of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) as they consulted over the unfolding situation in Sinjar and the commitment of humanitarian assistance (YGov.11). The scale of the humanitarian crisis was reinforced by detailing that the UN had declared it a "level 3 emergency", and that the UK would be dispatching a "humanitarian expert" to the KRG to assist with the local response while remaining focussed on getting help to those in need (YGov.10). By detailing the UN categorisation of the situation in northern Iraq this statement helps to clarify the severity of the humanitarian crisis through a scaling system, which many people will associate with those used by meteorologists as they rank the severity of natural disasters. In doing so, a certain level of inevitability of events is constructed, as we connect the crisis to the force and unpredictability of nature.

While the situation in Nineveh province was garnering UK government attention, the primary focus was on providing information on what the UK was supplying in terms of financial

contributions to the humanitarian effort and the details of the content of aid supplies and how this might be delivered. There was condemnation of the actions of IS, however given the scale of events on the ground and the manner of violence committed by this militant group, the level of condemnation in UK government press releases was rather thin, instead emphasising the continued concern and humanitarian focus of UK efforts. This is particularly stark given that IS were forcibly attempting to change the ethnic-religious demographic of the province by targeting minority communities, including predominantly the Yezidi people. On 12 August, Adama Dieng Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and Jennifer Welsh, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect issued a statement that referred to IS atrocities as violations of human rights and humanitarian law and as constituting "war crimes and crimes against humanity" that may "point to the risk of genocide" (UN, 2014a). Despite this evidence, the British policy reaction, which itself highlighted the need to "avert a genocide" (YGov.5) simply reiterated the humanitarian focus of efforts in Iraq and the need for the formation of an inclusive Iraqi government, rather than any more robust measures to prevent genocide, such as the evocation of military action under R2P. This was, of course, the rationale for a military engagement in Libya in order to avert a massacre in Benghazi, as discussed in Chapter 3. However, as has been discussed in that chapter, scholarly critique has suggested a conceptual stretching of R2P in this case, to include regime removal. The political turmoil left in the wake of Gaddafi's removal is a likely reason for not making too explicit any references to genocide, so as not to compel a moral response.

UK Government reference to actual events on the ground in Nineveh province were scant despite the precariousness of those besieged on Sinjar, mass executions, forcible kidnap of many women and children and large-scale human rights abuses openly committed by IS. Furthermore, while recognising that aid drops only brought limited relief and did not solve the protracted besiegement and insecurity of the Yezidi people, the UK did not at this point establish alternative forms of assistance that may contribute to the objective of averting an escalation in violence. The persecution of the Yezidi people was highlighted in UK government announcements. However, the systematic targeting of this community, that as Dieng and Welsh stated, was tantamount to crimes against humanity, was not convincingly communicated, nor was the specific intent by IS to alter the ethnic-religious demographic as per the normative definition of ethnic cleansing. The concept of ethnic cleansing emerged from the ethnic conflicts experienced in the Balkans during the breakup of the former

Yugoslavia. The *United Nations Final Report of the Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 780 (1992)* details ethnic cleansing to be the "rendering an area ethnically homogenous by using force or intimidation to remove persons of given groups from the area", and this may be through:

> murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, extra-judicial executions, rape and sexual assaults, confinement of civilian population in ghetto areas, forcible removal, displacement and deportation of civilian population, deliberate military attacks or threats of attacks on civilians and civilian areas, and wanton destruction of property (UNSC, 1994).

Thus, despite IS' clear attempt to ethnically cleanse members of the Yezidi community from the Sinjar region, there was little overt address to this.

The UK policy reaction in this case appeared to make all the correct noises regarding this humanitarian crisis. There was some level of condemnation of IS, alongside a need to avert an escalation in events. There was rhetoric that attempted to differentiate the UK foreign policy reaction from the apathy that greeted Rwanda and to promote a proactive response from the UK and the rest of the international community. As such, CMF of events was evident, and the commitment to assist remained focussed upon the provision of humanitarian aid assistance, which went some way to alleviate the precariousness and suffering of those trapped on Mount Sinjar. However, it is interesting to consider why a more robust reaction to this escalating crisis was not taken, and which was evident in the Libyan case with the fear that Gaddafi's forces may overrun Benghazi. While in this instance the assault on the town of Sinjar had occurred, there was still a capacity to assist this situation by creating a 'safe corridor' to evacuate those people trapped on the mountain. The UK assisted in this through the provision of logistical support to the US. The articulation of R2P as a rationale was not something to be repeated in this case, arguably as a result of the fracture of Libya in the sudden absence of the Gaddafi government. Furthermore, risking another failed parliamentary vote on military action was not something that Cameron would want to do for fear of further undermining his political credibility. Thus, in suggesting that the UK government appeared to 'make all the right noises', they really did. A cosmopolitan moral imperative to alleviate suffering in this case was clearly evident, but it remained reined in by the precedents set in Libya and Syria.

Responding to the siege through newsprint, digital and social media

The media analysis of the siege of Sinjar encompasses textual data from both mainstream and emergent media sources, comprising the British daily broadsheet newspapers, *The Times* and *The Guardian*, the digital broadcaster *BBC News* Online, and the global social media outlet *Twitter*. The number of texts retrieved and analysed from each of these sources is demonstrated in Table 4. The overall narrative emanating focussed upon what the UK was doing to help the situation in Iraq and in leading the negotiations for a UNSC resolution on the broader security implications of IS, rather than in-depth commentary on the atrocities committed through human-interest reporting. Much of the coverage, particularly from the *BBC* focussed on the perspective of UK assistance and the content of aid that was being supplied. Overall, reduced human-interest reporting and forms of identity 'othering' limited cultural resonance and cognitive proximity which encourages empathy (see Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006a; 2015). While the suffering of the Yezidi at the hands of IS was recognised and discussed, the crisis was only brought so far into the audience consciousness, as will be explained.

Guided by Entman's four frame functions, the chapter goes on to explore the constructed identities of the Yezidi people, and IS as the main protagonists within this case, finding that both were 'othered' to a degree through perceptions of the former as 'mysterious' and culturally exceptional, and IS as 'medieval'. Such judgements served to distance the conflict from the cognitive consciousness rather than draw it nearer through CMF. Events on the ground however, were constructed as potentially genocidal and thus solutions were legitimised to address this persecution and suffering as would be expected through a CMF. Through this presentation there was created a capacity to halt a potential escalation of events, as mandated in the 1948 Genocide Convention. However it is argued that through reference to the recent experiences in Libya and Syria the policy options open to Cameron were severely limited, juxtaposing the need to be seen to respond to this violence, and the need to avoid another parliamentary vote on military action.

Media Source	Texts Retrieved 3-13 August 2014	Relevant Texts Analysed
The Times	93	**22**
The Guardian	95	**21**
BBC News Online	122	**60**
Twitter	220	**184**

Table 4: Media texts retrieved for analysis on the besiegement of Mount Sinjar.

'Discovering' the Yezidi: UK media constructions of cultural exceptionalism

Throughout the media reports of the siege and persecution against the Yezidi people the main protagonists in the crisis were constructed in ways that culturally distanced their victimhood from audience perceptions; they were understood as a 'mysterious', 'minority', 'sect'. As Del Re (2015: 269) noted, until this point the wider world had not 'discovered' the Yezidi people, and this likely had a role in their 'othering'. As non-Muslim Kurds based primarily in Iraq, they were a community that was culturally, ethnically, geographically and religiously distinct from much of the UK.[30] The cultivation of a cosmopolitan moral framing of this crisis would emphasise the universality of humanity and this may be achieved through particular language constructions and tools. To some degree this was achieved through the occasional human-interest story which highlighted the 'ordinary' of the people under persecution, enabling us to envisage that they are like ourselves, enhancing resonance and empathy. However, primarily the Yezidi people were constructed in ways that also cast them as 'ancient' and 'little-known'. These terms served to establish this community as distinct but also intriguing. In this way they were a 'mysterious other' and also a 'victim other', not familiar to UK audiences, but benign and curious at the same time.

The Yezidi were almost always referred to as an 'ancient' community or minority. This is due to the ethnic group being one of the oldest in Mesopotamia (Yazda, 2016), dating from approximately 4,000BC (Kikoler, 2014: 4; IILHR, 2015: 9) and thus pre-dating Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Yezidism also posits that the Yezidi people were the first people to be created by Adam (without the help of Eve) (Allison, 2001: 40) in the Garden of Eden, which is considered to be the area of contemporary Lalish in northern Iraq, and a sacred place

[30] Although diaspora communities exist in Germany, the USA and Canada.

(Hafez, 2014). By referring to the Yezidi people as ancient, all the media sources established two discursive constructs in the audience imaginary. Firstly, that the Yezidi people were in some way legitimate due to their early historical origins. This has the ramification of providing some form of symbolic authenticity and rightfulness to the community and their existence on the geographical lands in northern Iraq. Thus their persecution by IS becomes a wrongful act, given their symbolic inviolability. This is illustrated by the following excerpts:

> Ancient communities of Christians and Yazidis, who have been there for millennia, are being persecuted and ejected from their homes (YTG.13).
>
> The past week has uprooted Yazidis, Christians, Turkmen and Shabak Shias from lands in which they had lived for several thousand years, in a near-fatal blow to Iraq's pluralist past (YTG.17).
>
> The dilemma of the Yazidis, Iraq's most ancient sect, is not a mere misfortune of war (YTT.9).
>
> Yazidis follow a faith born more than 4,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, an ancient land that corresponds geographically to parts of Syria, Iraq, Iran and Turkey (YTT.2).

Secondly, establishing this community as 'ancient' provides a sense of historical esteem. Thus, much like ancient artefacts in museums or architectural heritage, the Yezidi community is something that should be sustained and preserved, and perhaps even studied as an insight into an ancient civilisation. Yet simultaneously it projected an Orientalist othering through what Allison describes as a "dismissal of people as quaint, unchanging and left behind by modernity" (2001: 38). This 'ancient' construction was extremely prevalent within the media data analysed, with the *BBC*, *The Guardian* and *The Times* seeking to educate British audiences about who the Yezidi people were through short descriptions of their ancient origins or religious beliefs. The *BBC* in particular ended 21 of the 60 articles analysed with a section that sought to enlighten readers about who the Yezidi people actually were. Variably entitled "Iraq's minorities", or "Who are the Yazidis?" was a bulleted section containing 'key points' of interest, as illustrated by the two extracts below:

- Secretive group whose origins and ethnicity are subject to continuing debate
- Religion incorporates elements of many faiths, including Zoroastrianism
- Many Muslims and other groups view Yazidis as devil worshippers
- There are estimated to be around 500,000 Yazidis worldwide, most living in Iraq's Nineveh plains (YBBC.2).

- 40,000 Yazidis are believed to be trapped on Mount Sinjar
- At least 130,000 have escaped to the Kurdish north
- The Yazidis are a religious sect located in northern Iraq, Syria and the Caucasus
- Their faith is rooted in ancient Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam
- The principal divine figure, Malak Taus [sic](Peacock Angel), is the supreme of seven angels who ruled the universe after God created it
- Yazidis are regarded as devil worshippers by many Muslims and other groups
- There are an estimated 500,000 Yazidis, mostly living on Iraq's Nineveh plains
- In August 2007 jihadists attacked Yazidi villages in Nineveh, killing between 400 and 700 people (YBBC.4).

It is important that media audiences are informed of the facts of the persecution experienced, and thus some discussion of the Yezidi community is necessary. Indeed, their persecution by IS forces is on the basis of their cultural and religious identity, and thus it is important to identify this aspect. However, repeated presentations of them as a ‘secretive group’, with disputed ethnicity, as ‘devil-worshippers’ or ‘religious sect’, and as worshipping a ‘peacock angel’ created a construction that defined these people by their cultural and religious exceptionalism, rather than by any membership to a universal community. They immediately appear as peculiar ‘others’.

The Yezidi community were frequently described as an ancient or religious 'sect'. While establishing that the Yezidi people have a strong faith-base to their community, the term 'sect' also conjures in the imaginary ideas of cultism. This in one respect provides a challenge to the legitimacy created through descriptions of the religion's ancient origins. It also parallels another oft-cited description of the Yezidi people that occurred throughout the texts analysed, that they were misinterpreted as devil-worshippers or Satanists.

All of the media sources analysed (particularly the digital and print news given that *Twitter* is limited to 140 characters) restated and then refuted that Yezidism's worship of the archangel peacock Tawûsî Melek was misinterpreted as the Devil of Islam, and that this resulted in their long persecution by Muslims, and specifically latterly IS (Kreyenbroeck, 2009: 36). This was compounded by Islamic consideration of Yezidism as not being a religion "of the book" such as Christianity, Islam or Judaism (Kreyenbroeck, 2009: 36; IILHR, 2015: 9). Thus the descriptions of Yezidism as a 'sect' alongside explanations of the accusations of 'devil-worship' result in delegitimising Yezidism as a religion or at the very least places it outside of the mainstream understandings of organised faith. As both Allison and Kreyenbroeck have noted, scholarly understanding has been preconditioned by our traditional comprehension of scripture-based religions; thus Yezidism presents a challenge to Western orthodoxy (Allison, 2001: 3; Kreyenbroeck, 2005). Furthermore, by restating the accusation of devil-worship, even to refute this allegation, re-establishes such ties with the Yezidi faith. Lakoff (2014) explains this by asking 'not to think of an elephant', and yet immediately we do. Thus, it is more helpful to avoid restating inaccurate depictions using the same language constructions as it merely serves to reinforce the original inaccurate presentation (Lakoff, 2014).

The Yezidi community is on the one hand 'distanced' cognitively through unfamiliarity with cultural and religious beliefs, yet on the other hand the mysteriousness of Yezidism provokes a curiosity with this community that was previously unrecognised. Indeed, as Kreyenbroeck suggests, it is the "mistaken epithet" of 'devil-worshippers' that has resulted in the intrigue of the Western academic communities with Yezidism (2005: 70). The widespread media dissemination of such identity constructions has generated a similar curiosity with this community. However, this is arguably at a voyeuristic level, and is not produced through the

construction of the Yezidi people as being part of a universal humanity, but through their identification as historically 'ancient' and culturally exceptional.

Finally, the community were frequently referred to as a religious or ethnic 'minority'. The Yezidi people are a community of approximately 500,000 people, living predominantly in the north west of Iraq near to Kurdistan. Ethnically they are largely Kurdish but not all Kurds practice Yezidism. While it is fair to suggest Yezidism is a minority faith, the prevalence of this description within the media texts has the result of constructing the Yezidi people as marginal, alternative and in some ways an 'underdog', particularly in relation to more prevalent ethno-religious communities, or more visible and more powerful actors such as IS. The 'minority' or 'underdog' construction serves to reassert the Yezidi people as non-threatening or benign in their 'othering' but it also constructs a lack of agency and voice. This construction is reaffirmed by the historical persecution the community has suffered from, and compounded by their status as victims in the latest incarnation of persecution by IS, the 74th in their history according to Del Re (2015: 274). The British media analysed, and to a latter degree *Twitter*, reinforced this identity construction through the reiteration of the Yezidi community as a minority, establishing an element of passivity, weakness and victimhood. This opened the space for other actors to advocate on behalf of the community under a sense of cosmopolitan moral responsibility, to champion human rights and to halt the suffering of others. This is illustrated by the extracts below which accentuate the Yezidi community as being small, self-contained, tight-knit, and vulnerable:

> [T]he small, self-contained community has been especially vulnerable (YTG.3).
>
> The leaders of the small minority, who practise a 4,000-year-old faith rooted in Zoroastrianism, have said that their entire community is at risk of being massacred or starved into extinction (YTT.2).
>
> The Yazidi communities in the loop of Eden-like villages around the Sinjar mountains were small and tight-knit (YTT.7).

In highlighting the Yezidi as a 'minority', the community are linked to other minorities within the region who have also experienced persecution by IS. The most cited community used relationally to support this construction were Iraqi and Kurdish Christians. While Christian communities in the region were similarly persecuted by IS and were forced to renounce their religion or face execution, they were not besieged in large numbers like the

Yezidi community on Mount Sinjar. Furthermore, while IS in their religious zeal reject Christianity, they consider it a 'religion of the book' unlike Yezidism which is a religion based on oral tradition and folklore, and which they consider heretical. All of the media sources analysed, particularly within the newsprint and *BBC* linked the persecution of the Yezidi with that of Christians in the region. In so doing, an attempt was made to make this persecution resonate through a more familial faith. As a traditionally Christian country, domestic audiences may feel a closer proximity to the plight of the Yezidi community when they are viewed through the persecution of Christians. Such a cognitive link may narrow the cultural/religious dissimilarity between Western British audiences and the 'mysterious' and distant Yezidi. However, this link was implicit, and not as salient as the perception of this as a distant event happening to culturally dissimilar 'others'.

Discussion of religious zealotry between Christian and Muslim faiths, and the drive to establish a Caliphate are further resonant of the time of the Crusades when both Christendom and Islam competed for territorial control of the Holy Lands. While both sides committed violence and atrocities against the other, Western historical narratives of the Crusades have tended to reproduce a construction that established the crusading knights of Christendom as morally superior, virtuous and noble, fighting for what was good and true against Muslim aggression and expansion. As Jonathan Lyons describes, during the Crusades this was "the image of the holy Christian warrior who would battle heretics and schismatics and protect the weak and downtrodden among the pious" (Lyons, 2012: 45). Thus by referring to the Yezidi community – persecuted by IS in their pursuit of the Caliphate – alongside persecuted Christians, the media sources are recalling and re-establishing 'crusade' constructions that place the Yezidi as 'weak' and in need of protection by the side of Christian virtue, morality and innocence, with IS on the side of Muslim aggression and expansionism. The Yezidi's status as victims in this crisis is reinforced by this construction.

"Jihadis with MBAs"[31]: Media constructions of IS as both modern and medieval

The constructed identity of IS was also significant, and established them as 'brutal' and perpetrating 'medieval' violence, permitting a judgement of them as morally abhorrent. At times IS were referred to using neutral constructions such as the Islamic State 'group'. Such terms approach the identity of this actor in judgement or value-neutral terms that do not

[31] Dodge, YTG.9.

contain or represent their actions as persecutors in the crisis. Conversely, at times all of the media outlets portrayed IS in more loaded terminology that clearly reflected their actions carried out on the ground or made use of emotion, through descriptions of them as 'brutal' or 'maniacs'. Moreover, while IS were at times described as 'terrorists' often this was not the case and terminology such as 'jihadists' or 'Islamist extremists' was used instead. This may in part be due to an attempt to censor the performative nature of this construction. For example, the projection of terrorism in the media may play to the objectives of terrorism itself through the incitement of fear and sensationalism. In 2013 the *BBC* revised its editorial guidelines to avoid using the term 'terrorist' or 'terrorism' suggesting that such words can be problematic to understanding, stating:

> Terrorism is a difficult and emotive subject with significant political overtones and care is required in the use of language that carries value judgements. We try to avoid the use of the term "terrorist" without attribution. When we do use the term we should strive to do so with consistency in the stories we report across all our services and in a way that does not undermine our reputation for objectivity and accuracy.
>
> The word "terrorist" itself can be a barrier rather than an aid to understanding. We should convey to our audience the full consequences of the act by describing what happened. We should use words which specifically describe the perpetrator such as "bomber", "attacker", "gunman", "kidnapper", "insurgent", and "militant". We should not adopt other people's language as our own; our responsibility is to remain objective and report in ways that enable our audiences to make their own assessments about who is doing what to whom (*BBC*, 2016).

In the data gathered from the *BBC* news online the terms terrorist/terrorism were only used when quoting the words of someone else, for example a government spokesperson. When such instances occurred the *BBC* utilised the original language. The only other instance of the word terrorist within the dataset was in relation to an article that diverged into discussion of President George W. Bush and the GWoT. The single use of the term 'terrorism' in direct relation to the case examined appeared in a *BBC* piece by the former US Assistant Secretary of State Philip J. Crowley in an analysis of President Obama's response to the crisis. Thus, in a bid to preserve objectivity, the *BBC* utilises other ways to describe IS whereas other media outlets find the terms terrorist and terrorism appropriate to use. It is significant to keep such

editorial guidelines in mind when considering the construction of IS and the depiction of atrocities. It is particularly interesting to consider that certain framings can be communicated despite the omittance of the use of particular terms. For instance, in the Libyan case study discussed in Chapter 3, Colonel Gaddafi was constructed as a tyrannical leader despite such loaded terms being used infrequently, if at all. This construction could be achieved through the inclusion of particular information, such as references to human rights abuses and his misuse of power.

Further complexities are added to the construction of IS given the numerous incarnations of their name. Throughout various stages of their evolution (as described prior) they have been known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and Dawlat al-Islamiyyah al-Sham (Da'ish), as well as the Islamic State (IS). Throughout this research the term 'Islamic State' has been utilised to reflect the current moniker of the group itself. In some instances international policy and media actors have insisted on utilising the Arabic term Da'ish, either through familiarity with the language, or in attempts to be pejorative given that IS reject the name (Siniver and Lucas, 2016: 65). By referring to IS by this designation, it could be argued that recognition is provided to the group's strategic goals of establishing an Islamic state or Caliphate. Recognition of such objectives serves to bestow legitimacy, and as Siniver and Lucas suggest, "engagement" with the group which demands a response to their actions (2016: 64). Thus the selection of the terms with which the media and policymakers choose to describe IS is a political one that "has significant consequences" (Siniver and Lucas, 2016: 63). Asaf Siniver and Scott Lucas also draw upon the critique offered against Obama's continued utilisation of the name ISIL. The suggestion is that by continuing to use ISIL rather than IS Obama has made a conscious effort to de-link the instability in Iraq with that in Syria, and also the notion that his policy weakness in the latter has produced the former (Siniver and Lucas, 2016; 66).

Two of the most loaded constructions of IS were firstly, that of the group as 'medieval', and secondly, weighing their brutality through frequent comparisons to al-Qaeda. As can be seen in the extracts below, IS were frequently constructed as primordial or instinctive in behaviour. This was achieved through explicit statements referring to the actor in this way, or through allusion to specific instances of violence which were used to engender this construction. *The Guardian* described IS as 'brutal and laden with treasure, conquering one city or stronghold after another'. References to lawlessness and conquering with impunity are redolent of the violence and societal upheaval during the early-middle ages, sometimes

referred to as the ‘dark ages’, thus perpetuating a further construct of an era of ‘lightness’ or ‘darkness’, which may be further associated to generalised constructions of ‘good’ or ‘evil’.

> IS - brutal and laden with treasure, conquering one city or stronghold after another (YTG.9).

The Guardian further describes this ‘medievalism’ by quoting Kamil Amin, spokesperson for Iraq’s Human Rights Ministry regarding the enslavement of women by IS ‘to satisfy their animalistic urges’. The use of the term ‘animalistic’ is suggestive of an inherent human nature that is primal. Both *The Guardian* and the *BBC* quote former Labour Foreign Secretary Jack Straw describing IS as ‘medieval maniacs’. *The Times* describes them as ‘savage jihadists’, ‘barbarians’, ‘maniacal followers of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’ and describes their actions as ‘butchery’. The *BBC* promulgated similar constructions through the selected use of quotes from Downing Street, Australian PM Tony Abbott and a discussion of the UK press reporting on the crisis, all of whom make reference to IS as barbaric or exhibiting barbarous practices. *Twitter*, provides a more limited analysis given the character limits of tweets, however similar constructions were still evident, such as the reference to ‘#ISIS cavemen’ and ‘crucified by caliphate monsters’, as illustrated below:

> [T]he jihadists who have vowed to purge all "non-believers" and are reported to be carrying out crucifixions and beheadings (YTT.5).

> MT @OneLadyLibra #Iraq #ISIS cavemen removed cross from #church #Sinjar & citizens fled in masses 2 escape death? (YTW.4).

> Crucified by the Caliphate monsters: Iraq descends into apocalypse as Islamic State fanatics ... http://dailym.ai/1oRcMxZ (YTW.5).

> Isis was "setting a new standard for brutality and mayhem: there is not a single principle of international, Iraqi or human rights law by which they abide" (Tom Watson, MP for West Bromwich East, YTG.16).

Frequent references to the actions of IS across all of the media sources aided an arguable ‘medieval’ construction given the tendency of IS to utilise rudimentary and extreme forms of violence. References to besiegement, beheadings, crucifixions and enslavement play to this notion that IS are from a pre-enlightenment era of pugnacity and lawlessness. Together the construction that is produced by such descriptions is one of IS as wild and barbarous through

their perpetration of a brutal and medievalist violence. The overall effect is to render them as an 'uncivilised other' or 'pre-civilised' against Western development and notions of human rights, the epitome of the core Orientalist argument and the antithesis of the cosmopolitan moral regard for human rights and dignity.

Conversely, simultaneous to the construction of IS as barbarous and medieval is an evident modernity. For example, it is known that this group has well-harnessed the tools of digital and social media technologies to proselytise and disseminate their objectives or evidence their violence to global audiences (Lesaca, 2015; Weiss and Hassan, 2016: xvi). Despite being constructed in a seemingly archaic way, the antithesis is that they were well funded, organised and equipped. Toby Dodge describes IS as 'jihadis with MBAs' and being 'so modern it has its own gift shop' (YTG.9). It is, as Jonathan Freedland remarks within the same piece, 'a story that is both ancient and very modern' (YTG.9). Appendix 3.1 illustrates the varying constructions of IS in this regard. Technologically IS were always described as well-outfitted, with 'a huge arsenal of modern US weaponry' (YTT.5), 'well-equipped' (YTT.9), and enjoying a military advantage due to 'substantial war coffers, filled by bank raids and illicit oil deals' (YTT.9).

In adding weight to the construction of IS as exercising extreme violence and brutality, there were interesting instances where their identity was constructed through comparison to al-Qaeda (*The Guardian*: 1; *The Times*: 6; *BBC*: 4) (see Smith *et al*, 2016). Given the global mediation of the terror attacks on the World Trade Centres in New York on 11 September 2001, there is widespread audience knowledge or recognition of the perpetrating militant Islamist organisation al-Qaeda. By constructing IS in relation to this group, audiences may align the two in motivational tendencies, or action. Cognitively, IS must therefore be similarly capable of the kind of attacks al-Qaeda instigated. In fact, where al-Qaeda were referenced it was in order to provide a form of 'violence benchmark' whereby IS were constructed as more extreme. This analogous depiction can be seen in the following excerpts:

> The root cause is the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, the insurgent force that has swept through Iraq and Syria, laying claim to being an even more fearsome terrorist franchise than al-Qaeda (YTT.9).
>
> [A] group so brutal that it has been denounced by al-Qaeda (YTT.3).

> Isis is now in a position that Osama bin Laden could only have dreamt of for al-Qaeda (YTT.12).
>
> The New York representative said that Isis was more powerful now than al-Qaeda had been in the run-up to the 9/11 attacks and he predicted attacks in the US unless the president acted (YTT.8).
>
> The signs are that the Islamic State is more ruthless even than al-Qaeda, and much better organised (YTT.10).
>
> "It's Darwinian," he adds, describing IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his inner circle as those strong enough to have survived the US hammering of al-Qaida in Iraq between 2007 and 2009 (YTG.9).
>
> Now, with the threat more complex and diffuse, including affiliates, sympathisers and competitors across the Middle East and North Africa (YBBC.1).

By constructing IS in relation to a known terrorist group, the scale of their brutality is constructed. The al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Centres killed over 3000 citizens, yet IS are presented as 'more powerful', 'more ruthless', 'even more fearsome', 'much better organised' and 'denounced by' its Islamist terrorist predecessor.

From this construction we may envisage IS to be a larger threat to the UK than al-Qaeda, a thought all the more powerful when remembering that al-Qaeda were responsible for the terrorist attacks in the US on 9/11, and also in London on 7/7, which are so ingrained on the national consciousness. The violence perpetrated by IS is seen as more extreme than our previous understandings.

"My daughter means more than anything to me"[32]: minimal human-interest reporting

Similarly to the identity constructions of cultural exceptionalism, a lack of human-interest reporting worked to create a cognitive distancing of the violent persecution in Sinjar. We could presume that CMF would seek to draw the event closer, encouraging empathy through shared human bonds, and a drive to alleviate suffering by drawing attention to the plight of civilians through a focus on human-interest stories and personal experience. As the opening

[32] Wadhah Jowla, YTG.7.

quoted tweet states, you don't need to be a Yezidi to be able to advocate on their behalf, but you do need to be part of humanity to find empathy and solidarity.

As described previously in Chapter 2 and also Chapter 3, human-interest frames work to personalise or 'emotionalise' the news; news with a "human face… or emotional angle" (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000: 95-96). Human-interest reportage also contributes to the creation of CMF. By highlighting lived experience and the personal suffering within such crisis situations, audience attention is drawn to the everyday normality of 'others' around the world. We may find resonance in the ordinariness of lives otherwise assumed to be different. When the personal experience of suffering is reported, cognitive distance is reduced and we may find empathy for others and appeal to relieve their suffering. Human-interest reporting is therefore of great significance to the espousal of cosmopolitan moral framing and subsequent ethical or policy commitments.

Primarily, the media sources analysed presented the persecution of the Yezidi people in a way that did not espouse a significant emotional engagement. While it was evident throughout all of the media sources that this community was suffering violence and atrocities, the specifics of this experience have not received detailed attention, and the use of human-interest framing as a point of audience connectivity is limited. The besiegement of the Yezidi community is made clear, as is the precariousness of the situation on Mount Sinjar and the threat by IS to renounce Yezidism and convert to Islam or face execution. Media representations presented the threat toward Yezidi women from enslavement and made reference to reports of mass executions of up to 500 Yezidi people. However, specific personal experience was drawn upon infrequently to illustrate the scale of the crisis.

Despite human-interest reporting being relatively limited, there were instances where it was utilised to produce an emotional and empathetic response to the unfolding crisis. An article by Chulov for *The Guardian* highlighted the 'stories of the lucky ones' who had escaped from Mount Sinjar with the assistance of the Yekîneyên Parastina Gel or People's Defense Units (YPG), a primarily Kurdish rebel group based in Syria (YTG.6). A further article highlighted the experience of Yezidi women and girls who faced enslavement, and the effect of this on their male relatives:

> "We didn't know what hit us," said one man. "We were asleep one minute, and running for our lives the next." Some Yazidi men say they had phoned their daughter or wife's phone number only to be told tersely by strange male voices

> not to call again. "It's more than our heritage," said Wadhah Jowla, another father. "It's our heart and soul. My daughter means more than anything to me" (YTG.7).

These two reports by Chulov were the only pieces from *The Guardian* data (21 articles) which focussed predominantly on highlighting the personal aspect of the tragedy. Despite being the more conservative paper, there were three identifiable human-interest articles from *The Times* dataset (22 articles), and similarly from the *BBC* analysis. It was through *Twitter* that this human interest angle was communicated slightly more frequently, although still minimally, with 8 of the tweets analysed promoting some form of personal experience of the crisis, such as the example below which implores for humanitarian assistance:

> RT @fqadi:"send helicopters with food, water by tomorrow, or hear about a mass grave"-SMS from a stranded #Yezidi (YTW.6).

Many tweets chose to focus on Iraq's only female Yezidi MP Vian Dakhil who gave an impassioned speech to Iraqi parliament and implored for help and 'humanitarian solidarity'. Often these tweets, like the example below, linked directly to the YouTube video of Dakhil who collapsed while describing the persecution of the Yezidi people:

> So emotive: Vian Dakhil - Iraqi Yazidi MP Breaks Down in Parliament: ISIL is Exterminating my People (YTW.7).

Tweets described how quickly lives were being turned upside down in northern Iraq for the Yezidi people, prompting us to think that this could happen to anyone. Other tweets focussed on acts of human kindness with the provision of slippers for refugees from Mount Sinjar, or requoted pleas for help alongside links to articles or videos online.

> How life got turned upside down overnight for the people of Sinjar: http://www.baghdadinvest.com/life-got-turned-upside-overnight-people-sinjar/ … #Sinjar #Shengal (YTW.8).

> #Iraq Acts of kindness. People wait on the bridge with slippers for Yezidis arriving barefoot from Sinjar Mountain (YTW.1).

> RT @TwitchyTeam: 'We are being slaughtered': #Yazidi #Kurds face genocide [video] http://bit.ly/1AYOh7i (YTW.2).

By highlighting the personal suffering and experience through media reporting, we can draw 'distant others' closer in our consciousness, thus reducing the psychological space in terms of cultural or ethnic proximity, emphasising notions of a universal humanity and responsibility to others. We can also gain visibility of forms of suffering around the globe, which cosmopolitanism seeks to alleviate. As Linklater highlights "human vulnerabilities are much the same everywhere… [a] sense of responsibility for endangering these universal pre-requisites can be developed from emotional dispositions regarding harm to others" (Linklater, 2007).

While human interest reporting was somewhat limited, there were frequent explicit calls from UK policy and media sources for a greater involvement of the UK militarily in support of the US to break the siege of the Yezidi on Sinjar. References were made of the need to avert genocide in northern Iraq, with many UK MPs advocating for a recall of parliament to vote on military support. *The Guardian* quoted Lord Dannatt, who called for targeted air strikes and some ground support in the region, claiming it would be our responsibility to respond to genocide;

> "It is difficult for us to say that this is not our problem. We have to look at ourselves and say, 'do we do nothing in the face of a possible genocide?'" (Dannatt, YTT.13).

A large number of the references to genocide in the Nineveh province were examples of the media directly citing policy. In addition to Lord Dannatt and Labour MP Mike Gapes, there were statements from US Secretary of State John Kerry, Iraqi Kurdistan President Barzani, Australian PM Tony Abbott, and a spokesperson from Downing Street on behalf of the British conservative government. On the back of this claim that a genocide may be being committed, Obama initiated US military intervention in the form of airstrikes against IS positions. In the statement below Kikoler illustrates what has been described as the necessary capacity for foreign policy to act to impede an impending human rights atrocity;

> This was a rare and explicit recognition that potential future mass atrocities had motivated a shift in US policy. The president was clear that, "the United States cannot and should not intervene every time there's a crisis in the world." Rather the situation atop Mount Sinjar was one where the United States had "unique capabilities to help avert a massacre"—and the Iraqi government had formally asked for assistance (Kikoler, 2015: 17).

Through a news analysis on 11 August, the *BBC* draws together the main commentary emanating from the British daily news print; however it also contributes to framing the crisis in particular ways, despite the pursuit of objectivity. The article highlights the most extreme sentiments from the press, making it easier to understand calls for a more forceful policy reaction, as seen in the remediated extract from *The Daily Mirror* below;

> The Daily Mirror is equally critical: "Unless the world acts, there is a dreadful possibility we will witness a genocide on a scale not seen since the slaughter in Rwanda 20 years ago." The Independent says Baghdad said there was "striking evidence" that at least 500 Yazidis were murdered in recent days and hundreds of women enslaved. Women and children have been buried alive in mass graves by the fanatics terrorising Iraq, says the Daily Mail (YBBC.3).

By reiterating such statements, the *BBC* contributes to advocating and strengthening claims of a grave humanitarian situation, with the possibility of escalation to genocide. As Lakoff explains, "the more it [a frame] is activated, the stronger it gets" (2014: xii). Thus the *BBC's* objective analysis of the print news is not value-neutral but actually contributes to the embedding of constructions of the crisis.

The official line from the British government acknowledged that the situation was on a precipice and that a solution needed to be found in order to halt potential genocide. In so doing the British government have avoided direct admission that the situation in Iraq *was* a genocide, thus responsibility to act under the 1948 Genocide Convention was forestalled. However, the UK government *did* acknowledge that it was necessary to act to 'avert' this outcome, and thus their commitment to relieve the crisis was to provide humanitarian support in the form of aid relief drops by the RAF, and logistical and surveillance contributions.

The need to 'avert genocide': making possible potential foreign policy responses

In their endeavour to 'avert genocide' the capacity was created for UK policy to engage more forcefully and halt or impact upon the events unfolding in Sinjar. Unlike in Syria, whereby any reaction to the chemical weapons attack was seen as largely punitive, there was in theory, a capacity, capability, and cosmopolitan responsibility to intervene in some manner and ease

the suffering of those trapped in Sinjar and the surrounding region. Thus in combination with the cosmopolitan moral *sentiment* to alleviate suffering and promote human rights and dignity, there was also the capacity to *enact* this sentiment, particularly following the invitation of President Barzani for intervention assistance. While the British conservative-led government did participate in the military delivery of humanitarian aid, such actions would not be considered sufficient in halting the escalation of this situation to potential genocide. The delivery of humanitarian aid is utilised to bring much needed sustenance and relief, rather than impact upon the provision of security of the local area. Thus it is interesting to try to understand why the UK policy reaction was not more forceful in this instance, particularly given the admission of the need to avert an escalation of atrocities.

There are two reasons that may have limited the scope of UK intervention in response to the ethnic persecution and besiegement of the Yezidi people in northern Iraq. The first is the construction of the protagonists and events on the ground. While admitting that such atrocities were occurring, the UK fell short of constructing this as 'genocide', only stating that they must try to avert this potential. The situation was also constructed as one between types of 'ethnic other'. As discussed, IS were presented as 'medievalist', 'barbaric' and 'uncivilised', they were also Islamic ideologues. They were constructed as persecuting Christians, thus constructing them further through a 'crusades' lens as aggressors and the villains of the conflict. They were also committing widespread persecution of the Yezidi minority. The Yezidi were a religious minority community, constructed as 'underdogs', 'passive' and the 'mysterious other'. Thus, while their construction rendered them as the victims of atrocities, they were distanced somewhat from media audiences through their cultural and religious exceptionalism, and rendered passive through the removal of their agency.

Human-interest framing to overcome this cognitive distance was limited, and the community's persecution was frequently aligned to that of the Christian groups in the region in order to try to overcome this gulf in resonance. The first reason therefore is that the Yezidi community, while cast as victims of abuses that warranted a cosmopolitan response, were 'other victims' and thus the sentiment of a universal humanity was not robust enough within the media texts. The drive for a more military engagement to support them was ineffectual, partly due to this 'othering' and distancing which rendered the situation as not worthy of a more forceful policy response.

The second, and likely primary reason for this negligence was the legacy of the engagement

in Libya in 2011, and the lack of engagement in the aftermath of the chemical weapons attacks in Syria the year previous. As discussed in Chapter 4 the effect of the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta, Syria in 2013 led Cameron to recall parliament for a vote on a military interventionist response. This response was cast as necessary to uphold international norms on the prohibition of the use of chemical and biological weapons. However, this narrative did not transcend and resonate with public audiences. In the face of abject Syrian suffering it was difficult for many to see how a military engagement by the UK would provide relief without escalating an already violent situation. Military action was therefore largely seen as punitive and the vote in the House of Commons failed to garner enough parliamentary support for Cameron to intervene militarily. Lakoff describes this problematic as 'systemic causation', whereby a direct causation for military intervention was not present. Instead this was about "preventing the proliferation of poison gas use and nuclear weapons. It is about the keeping and enforcement of treaties on these matters" (Lakoff, 2013b). However, as Lakoff goes on to suggest, most people do not react to systemic causation or even understand it, which would, in part, explain the failure of the parliamentary vote. The ripples of this 'failed' vote has impacted upon subsequent debates over the use of force abroad, including during the siege of Sinjar in 2014. Thus the most likely reason that the British government did not react more forcefully when facing the precipice of genocide was that to do so would require another vote in parliament, given the precedent set with Syria. It is highly likely that Cameron did not feel confident that he could engender the support needed for the vote to pass, given the battle-scarred domestic opinion to recent expeditions in Libya (2011), Iraq (2003) and Afghanistan (2001).

In light of this, the British policy reaction was as forceful as it could be while under the constraints of the Syria precedent. This was to deliver humanitarian relief via UK military aircraft, and to provide logistical and surveillance support to the US in their air strikes against IS. The British response was thus limited, and this was made justifiable by media reports that retained the victims of the religious persecution at a distance, casting them as the 'mysterious other' and avoiding dominant human-interest reporting.

While there is evidence of CMF through the media's construction of this as a humanitarian emergency, and through presenting calls for a response to overt human rights abuses and suffering, the construction and judgements of the actors involved (the Yezidi community and IS) served to distance this violence through the projection of cultural exceptionalism and medieval brutality. Furthermore, it is argued that the past UK foreign policies in response to

conflict in Libya (2011) and Syria (2013) constrained the possible outcomes in response to the persecution in Sinjar. In reflection of these restraints placed upon the capacity to react, the tension between the media's CMF and distancing of the event legitimised a more limited engagement through the delivery of humanitarian assistance only.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the media portrayal of the oppression of the Yezidi community in northern Iraq by IS forces through an exploration of CMF. Western intervention in the form of humanitarian aid and aerial surveillance were initiated following the violent persecution of the Yezidi community that resulted in their besiegement on Mount Sinjar in August 2014. This humanitarian intervention came on the heels of British involvement in Libya in 2011, and the rejection of proposed British involvement in Syria after the use of chemical weapons against civilians in 2013. In this instance, the Yezidi were deemed worthy of humanitarian support in the form of humanitarian aid intervention and some limited military assistance and support to the US airstrikes. The aim of the latter was to target IS areas in order to create a 'safe corridor' where the Yezidi could evacuate from the mountain. British involvement was restricted to the provision of essential supplies via aid drops, the provision of financial support to leading NGOs in the region and supporting the US where necessary with refuelling, logistics and surveillance. Despite calls for more robust military action, including a potential recall of parliament, the British role was primarily humanitarian at this point. It was subsequently increased to include military airstrikes alongside the US on 26 September 2014.

The chapter argues that a cosmopolitan moral framing was exhibited within the media discourses analysed but in a limited way so as not to create tension with UK policy capabilities. Jason Ralph *et al* (2017), discuss with regard to the Syrian conflict, how the UK engaged in a discursive strategy that legitimised its foreign policy approach following an inability to match foreign policy ends with means. In a similar vein, the UK media made possible only a limited humanitarian involvement in this case through tempering CMF and the capacity to halt an escalation of violence, with a cognitive distancing of this violent persecution. This CMF, while calling for the alleviation of suffering, was not robust. Instead the Yezidi community were constructed as the 'mysterious' and 'victim' other through an emphasis on their cultural and religious difference. While this was significant to explaining

the years of persecution the community has suffered, it effectively confined them to membership of a specific local world rather than emphasising their membership as part of a universal understanding of humanity. As such they were culturally dissimilar, different and distant. The ramification of this was not to construct familiar bonds of humankind that may encourage us to view with empathy and engender some sentiment of moral responsibility. The identity construction of IS included constructions of 'medievalism' against modern capabilities. They were constructed as perpetrating atrocities and as the 'villains' of the unfolding event. There was presented a clear parameter between the perpetrators and victims of atrocities, and this was sometimes couched in 'Crusade' constructions.

Despite additional factors, the chapter has illustrated that the British media emphasised the cosmopolitan need to alleviate the suffering of others, although constructed those others as culturally dissimilar/exceptional. By constructing this ethnic persecution as a potential genocide, the media underscored the capacity of the UK to be able to act to impede such an escalation. The chapter questions why this opportunity was not seized upon more vehemently by UK policy. Despite calls for the need to 'avert a genocide' the policy reaction of the UK remained focussed on the delivery of humanitarian assistance only, with some logistical and surveillance support. The chapter argues that there was a primary reason for this reluctance to escalate UK intervention to a military one, and this reason was the legacy and precedent set by the UK response to the conflict in Libya in 2011, and the chemical weapons attack in Syria in 2013. In this case, as discussed in Chapter 4, Cameron put the decision to intervene militarily in Syria into the hands of a parliamentary vote which failed to pass. In doing so, he set a precedent with the way in which interventions are authorised and legitimised. This case also had a consequence for subsequent crises such as the Sinjar siege. In order to avoid having to recall parliament and the prospect of another unconvincing call and failed vote for intervention in Iraq, Cameron at this stage limited the British response to more benign forms of aid assistance.

Chapter 6: Research Conclusions

> Media discourse on distant suffering …operates as a strategy of power in so far as it selectively offers the option of emotional and practical engagement with certain sufferers and leaves others outside the scope of such engagement (Chouliaraki, 2006: 157).

This thesis has advanced understanding of the media-foreign policy nexus through the forwarding of CMF. By drawing attention to how cosmopolitan morality can frame issues we can gain a deeper comprehension of how understanding may be shaped and foreign policies made possible. Cosmopolitan morality framing is defined as a way of presenting an issue so as to highlight or make salient cosmopolitan moral concerns such as a universal consideration of humanity elevated above the local; the extension of hospitality or solidarity; the promotion of human rights and dignity; the alleviation of suffering and a sense of responsibility to others. The contributions of the research are foremost theoretical and empirical. Firstly it progresses the existing theoretical scholarship of morality framing by conceptualising this from a cosmopolitan standpoint. Secondly, by synthesising cosmopolitanism, frame theory and the media ecology into CMF, the research contributes to the revelation of cosmopolitan morality within the textual data. It also permits consideration of how cosmopolitan morality may be utilised instrumentally to denote meaning and to present a particular view of the world that may serve purposeful ends. Thirdly, the research makes an original contribution to the emerging scholarship concerning the three cases studies by providing analysis of the British media framing of each conflict event, and consideration of the effect of CMF on British foreign policy-making in each case. This is particularly pertinent with regard to Chapter 5, given the limited scholarship on the persecution of the Yezidi community in Iraq.

Research findings

Approaching the research from a constructivist ontology, the purpose of the introductory research questions has been to inform and guide the research process but not constrain it. The research problem was three-fold. Firstly, what evidence is there of the presence of

cosmopolitan morality framing within the media textual data analysed? Secondly, what role may this framing play in the communication of this conflict event? And thirdly, what effect may this framing have on foreign policy-making? The proceeding section presents the summative findings, addressing each case study, and with bearing on the contribution to knowledge.

The central finding demonstrated by the research is that while each of the conflict events analysed was presented through CMF, this framing was manifest in different ways (through specific language constructs), to varying degrees of salience (as a dominant frame or competing frame), and yielded different foreign policy consequences. It is argued that when a CMF is dominant it draws conflict events cognitively closer to us despite the conflict event appearing politically and geographically remote. It is contended that when CMF is a salient frame within the communicating text, and there exists alongside this frame an evident capacity to halt an escalation in violence or an impending atrocity, a more robust foreign policy response is legitimised. Together the findings illustrate an inconsistent presence of CMF within the case studies analysed, which it is argued contribute to the maintenance of hierarchical choices over assistance and intervention.

Chapter 3 presented an analysis of the media coverage of Colonel Gaddafi's advance on Benghazi and the threat of a civilian massacre there in March 2011. It is within this case that CMF was most dominant and evident within the textual data. This was through an emphasis upon humanitarianism and the need to take some form of action to prevent a large-scale atrocity in Libya's second largest city. CMF in this case legitimised the UK's foreign policy decision to take part in air strikes under UNSCR 1973 to "protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack" (UNSC, 2011a: 3).

Cosmopolitan morality framing was evident in the analysed textual data through the projection of particular identity constructions of the main actors. These identity constructions presented the Libyan civilians as 'victims' of the conflict, the Libyan opposition as 'heroes', the pro-Gaddafi forces as 'villains' and the international community as 'saviours'. This simplified construction of the conflict reduced events to a traditional fairy-tale metaphor of perceived 'good' versus 'evil'. In so doing, these constructs passed moral judgements of the main protagonists, establishing culpability with the Gaddafi loyalists, and encouraging empathy and solidarity for the Libyan civilians and opposition. There was also an implicit link between this construction and the pursuit of democratic values. The Libyan rebels were

seen to be democracy-seeking while Gaddafi was authoritarian. Such a simplification of events acted as a cognitive short cut to audience comprehension, and this arguably resonated further through a culturally familiar democracy lens. However, it also permitted a neglect of the dynamics of the uprising and the complexities of relations between the UK (and others in the international community) and Libya. This reduction also established agency with the international community including the UK, and reduced the agency of both the Libyan civilians and the opposition groups to successfully achieve their goals. The metaphorical reduction of the Libyan civilians as the 'victims' and the UK (and international community) as the 'saviours' reinforced this construction.

Cosmopolitan morality framing was also evident through references to previous experiences of Western interventionism which served to highlight the foreign policy options available in response to this conflict event. The UK's experience in Iraq (2003) was utilised frequently as a way of differentiating the proposed Libyan intervention with this heavily critiqued UK military engagement, to alleviate fears of repeating past mistakes. Analogous references to ineffective or absent interventionism on the part of the international community in Bosnia (1992) and Rwanda (1994) served as examples of the atrocities that could occur if a robust foreign policy response was not taken. In this way a cosmopolitan moral responsibility was projected, and these analogous examples encouraged a limited military intervention in order to avoid another Iraq, Bosnia or Rwanda.

Finally, a sense of urgency was constructed through the reporting of the coastal towns being retaken by pro-Gaddafi forces en route to Benghazi. This sense of urgency created a cognitive capacity to be able to halt an impending atrocity, while also compressing the timeframe for UK decision-making, and thus encouraging some form of robust foreign policy response while it was still possible to prevent further civilian suffering. This presentation of the conflict event in Libya fostered cosmopolitan moral sensibilities of a universal humanity, feelings of empathy and solidarity for Libyan civilians, and a sense of responsibility to alleviate their suffering, and protect their rights and dignity. This sense of moral responsibility legitimised the UK's foreign policy response to intervene militarily with air strikes to "protect civilians and civilian populated areas" (UNSCR 1973), while simultaneously assisting in the removal of Libyan agency and the maintenance of hierarchical relationships regarding when, where and who to assist. It may be suggested that the use of R2P as a justification for intervention resulted in a conceptual stretching to encompass the removal from power of the Gaddafi government (see Brockmeier et al, 2016; Dunne and

Gifkins, 2011; Kuperman, 2013; Morris, 2013; Thakur, 2014). This did not take place during the period of analysis, however the utilisation of CMF may be perceived as a means of pursuing more vested policy agendas.

In Chapter 4 analysis centred upon the large-scale use of chemical weapons in Ghouta, Syria in August 2013. This attack resulted in the deaths of 1,400 people, predominantly civilians, and led the UK to vote on the principle of intervening militarily in the country. The findings of the textual analysis show that while a cosmopolitan morality frame was evident through the projection of what I term 'humanitarian deterrence' to uphold the normative chemical weapons taboo and prevent future suffering, this frame competed for salience within the communicating texts with one of 'intervention fatigue' as a result of the UK's involvement in Iraq (2003) and Libya (2011), both of which had come to be seen negatively, with Libya descending into further political instability in Gaddafi's absence. Additionally, the emphasis on the need to maintain normative principles to safeguard humanity was undermined by a level of media contestation over the appropriate foreign policy response of the UK which established a sense of policy uncertainty.

The identity constructs of the key actors in this case were far less established than in the analysis of the Libyan conflict event. Whereas the Libyan opposition movement appeared as 'unified rebels', the opposition movement in Syria were constructed as a disparate grouping that contained militant Islamist elements which made it difficult for the UK to provide them overt support. Frequent debate surrounded the culpability for the attacks, and while UK policy places this squarely with the Assad government, the media suggested alternative scenarios or remained tentative without clearer evidence from the site investigation. A lack of human-interest reportage assisted a constructed 'othering' of the victims of the chemical attack. It was demonstrated that the frequent presentation of the abhorrent and alien symptoms experienced by the victims reduced them to 'anonymous bodies' rather than human beings for whom we should feel empathy and solidarity. Instead these people came to be identified by their symptoms, as convulsing, foaming at the mouth, with grey skin, small pupils and so forth. Such descriptions fostered a sense of voyeuristic detachment, as if this were a macabre disaster movie rather than real-life.

As with the Libyan case, analogies of previous interventionism assisted in the construction of the possible foreign policy responses of the UK as well as a sense of 'intervention fatigue'. Finally, there existed no capacity to be able to impede an escalation of violence or possible

atrocity. This was key in the Libyan case to illustrate the capacity to be able to enact fostered cosmopolitan sensibilities. In the Syrian case the atrocity had already been committed and thus any proposed interventionist response on the part of the UK was seen as punitive due to the cognitive failure of systemic causation reasoning. There was thus a perceived gulf between the attack and any potential response, and this played out through a failure of the government to consolidate parliamentary support for military intervention.

On 2 December 2015 the UK held a second parliamentary vote on military action in Syria. This time the motion was passed 397 to 223 and air strikes against IS commenced just hours later (BBC, 2015). While not the temporal period under analysis in this chapter, it is interesting to consider why there was such an overwhelming difference in the outcome of decision-making. I suggest that on the back of a coordinated terrorist attack in Paris in November that killed 129 people, the complexities of the conflict in Syria were brought much closer to home and simplified. Rather than 'anonymous bodies', the victims of the Parisian attacks were European, and were enjoying a rock concert and restaurant culture in the French capital at the time of the attacks. Thus in terms of geographical and cultural proximity the event was drawn closer in the British consciousness through an emphasis on the communitarian. Furthermore, unlike the construction of Assad, in IS there resided a clear ideological enemy.

The third case study analysed in Chapter 5 concerned the persecution and besiegement of a Yezidi community in the Sinjar region of Kurdistan by the militant Islamist group IS in August 2014. Members of the community were forced to convert to Islam, kidnapped or killed, and in an attempt to flee approximately 50,000 civilians became trapped on Mount Sinjar. Analysis of the media texts demonstrate that a CMF was evident through calls to alleviate what was a dire humanitarian situation, however it was not as dominant as in the Libyan case and the conflict remained cognitively distanced through the constructed identities of the key protagonists. As with the construction of the victims of the Ghouta attack, the besieged community were distanced through a constructed 'othering'. This was as a result of the frequent references to the identity of the Yezidi community, which while significant to the rationale behind their persecution, reproduced a constructed cultural exceptionalism within the media texts. This perceived difference undermined the cosmopolitan moral principle of a universal community, and a sense of shared moral responsibility and empathy was thus lost through this presentation.

The UK responded to this conflict event through the provision of humanitarian assistance and logistical support to the US. While there were calls for a more robust response, and an emerging consideration of this event as genocide, it is argued that UK foreign policy was at this time constrained by the previous experiences in Libya (2011) which had since devolved into further instability with the removal of Gaddafi, and Syria (2013) which perpetuated the precedent of a parliamentary prerogative on military force, and in the process undermined the Cameron government's desire to respond militarily. In this instance a weaker cosmopolitan framing in conjunction with constructed cultural exceptionalism and distancing legitimised a non-military foreign policy response that concentrated upon the delivery of humanitarian aid to alleviate the precariousness of those trapped on Mount Sinjar, and the provision of logistical support to the US.

Analysis suggests that a dominant cosmopolitan morality frame that is unchallenged by counter-framings, alongside the capacity to assist in impeding an escalation of violence is likely to correspond with more robust foreign policy responses. Whereas, when CMF is weak, when it competes with other salient frames such as 'intervention fatigue', or when there is no discernible capacity to be able to achieve a de-escalation in violence, foreign policy responses are more limited or focus upon the provision of aid and logistical or intelligence support above direct military involvement. The findings suggest that despite cosmopolitan morality's commitment to universalism, its discursive presence in media texts is disproportionate, as is this constructed social reality; as a result there is a sustained hierarchy over which distant crises the UK chooses to get involved in, who to assist and when.

While existing scholarship has already identified the role of framing to present "windows on the world" (Tuchman, 1978: 1), this research develops extant understanding towards a more detailed consideration of the nature of morality framing from a cosmopolitan foundation, to promote a window on the world that encourages us to be concerned with and responsible for distant others. This is of particular significance for the political communication of government policy, and even more so when attempting to consolidate opinion for particular foreign policies such as intervention. Cosmopolitan morality framing assists in the identification of latent language constructs, contributing understanding to the role of strategic discourse in justifying and legitimising foreign policy responses, including forms of interventionism. This framework may be applicable to other scenarios beyond violent conflict, and offer understandings of the role of language to shape and motivate in other

contexts, such as issues of migration, crime, racism, or even in response to natural or environmental disasters. We can also begin to suggest what the consequences may be of presenting issues and shaping understanding in this way, in fostering cosmopolitan 'ethical sensibilities' towards different issues.

Theoretically the research findings have illustrated the disproportionate utilisation of CMF. While in Chapter 3 CMF was the dominant frame through which the Libyan conflict event was presented, in Chapter 4 it was less salient through the presence of a counter-frame, and in Chapter 5 it was weakened by a simultaneous distancing. The effect of an uneven presence of CMF is that the salience of cosmopolitan moral concerns are also uneven. Given that CMF may legitimise the provision of foreign policy assistance to distant others through the encouragement of a cosmopolitan concern and sense of responsibility, its uneven presence may impact upon the foreign policy assistance provided.

An instrumental utilisation of CMF may actually maintain latent hierarchical choices over when, where and who to assist during times of crisis despite its commitments to universalism and benevolence. Choices over assistance or interventionism may be determined by other factors, with CMF the legitimising frame through which these foreign policy goals are strategically justified. In this way, more self-interested policy goals may be justified through the pretext of CMF, and in such cases, the essence of CMF would be undermined. Furthermore, such hierarchical choices, may contribute to a sense that some issues or events are more newsworthy, and some people are more worthy of assistance. Both Chouliaraki (2006) and Herman and Chomsky (1994) have dealt with this issue, suggesting that there exists a subjectivity to feel empathy, solidarity and responsibility for some people above others. The findings of the research suggest that the instrumental use of CMF is the result of a journalistic choice to try to make us care about distant issues or people. Its uneven presence may then reflect these subjectivities; a "hierarchy of human place and human life" (Chouliaraki, 2006: 110).

Following on from this point, it is recognised that the promotion of a sense of universal humanity resounds to a greater extent when it is presented in a way that culturally resonates with audiences, or through the use of human-interest and emotional reportage. It is established that a frame is successful to the extent that it passes audiences unnoticed, and the greater likelihood of this occurs when a frame is already cognitively familiar and acceptable (Entman, 2003: 417; Levin, 2003: 29; Powlick and Katz, 1998). Therefore it can be

suggested that we care about and for distant others only insofar that this sense of distance is collapsed through an emphasis on cultural or communitarian resonance, a communitarian path to cosmopolitanism (see Shapcott, 2001: 31).

This paradoxical point is evident in Chapter 5 where it is argued that while a cosmopolitan morality frame was evident it was weakened through the identity constructions of the Yezidi community. While the identity of this community was central to the reasoning behind their persecution by IS, the constant reproduction of this cultural difference within the media data analysed led to a constructed 'othering' and sense of cultural exceptionalism. This created a cognitive distance between the lived experience of the community suffering and audience perception through media, cultivating detachment rather than a sense of universalism. That is not to say that cosmopolitanism need engender homogeneity, but rather that there should be a sense of inclusivity of a broader cosmos, rather than a promotion of difference, passivity and/or inferiority.

It is argued by the findings that alongside the salience of CMF is a necessary capacity for proposed foreign policies to be able to impede atrocities or the escalation of large-scale violence, and that this is comprehended by audiences through direct rather than systemic causation. When in union with a dominant CMF there is likely to be a projection of more robust foreign policy responses, such as the military intervention in Libya (2011) discussed in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 this notion became increasingly apparent through analysis of the framing of the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta, Syria. It is argued here that the lack of a capacity to halt an atrocity (as in this case it had already occurred) led to a disconnection between the conflict event and any proposed policy response, with the latter perceived as a punitive act rather than a preventative one. This is the result of systemic causation rather than direct causation (see Lakoff 2013a; 2013b). Systemic causation links issues to a broader normative goal and is not experienced directly, for example the upholding of the chemical weapons taboo to prevent future usage and thus future suffering. Direct causation permits a more direct association between a conflict event and response, for example in Libya violence was incited directly against Benghazi and there was a direct response to halt this. While direct causation is more salient for audiences, systemic causation is more difficult to comprehend and thus resonates to a lesser degree.

Avenues for further research

As explained previously the research has taken a holistic consideration to the conceptualisation of the media ecology. Influenced by the identification made by Andrew Hoskins (2013; with Ben O'Loughlin, 2007; 2010) that extant scholarship has tended to reduce analysis to a single medium, to the neglect of a vast array of valuable other media. This research has taken this methodological reductionism into consideration, permitting the incorporation of three different media types across four outlets. A limitation to this has been the necessity of balancing the manageability of data against this desire to consider a plurality of media. The data has been limited in two ways. Firstly, as infinite media could not be analysed, a data limit had to be established. This resulted in the decision to focus analysis upon three different types of media, but to attempt a representation from across the ecology by selecting media from what have previously been distinguished as 'old' and 'new' formats, and to encompass both journalist-generated and user-generated content. Newsprint, digital broadcast, and social media were selected and represented by *The Times* and *The Guardian*, *BBC News Online* and *Twitter* respectively. Secondly, an event-driven case selection permitted the analysis of the specific conflict events described which necessarily limited the analysis to ten day periods during which time there was both media and government attention over the UK's foreign policy response. While the wider conflict case study has not been analysed, the research has been able to produce a detailed snapshot of the media ecology during these specific critical contexts, and to examine the evidence and consequence of CMF in the media reporting of each case.

Additional research would complement this study by examining the possible evidence of CMF across different or additional media and by examining the networked relations between media. This latter element was at times visible within the research through the remediation of policy across media sources and the remediation between media sources but it was not the crux of the analysis. Further exploration in this area would enable a greater consideration of the way information, and significantly media frames, traverse the ecology and how so-called 'old' and 'new' media are interconnected in this ecology rather than discrete strands.

As has been established, the research is concerned with the role of language to shape understanding of political issues, for words to "make worlds" as Cornwall states at the outset of the thesis (2010: 1). The research has examined the presence of cosmopolitan morality as a constructed frame of reference through which conflict events are presented, with the

consequence that we may be encouraged to care about and for distant others and see this through foreign policy implementation. As such the research has been approached from a constructivist ontology underpinning a hermeneutical methodology focussing upon the interpretation of textual data (for more on this see Chapter 2). The study considers discursive frames to be conscious or unconscious constructs, as a way of presenting issues that cognitively resonates with audiences existing knowledge and social experience. The media then hold some capacity to determine and shape social reality through the use of particular discursive frames. The analysis of textual data to reveal evidence of CMF and alternative counter-frames is based upon my interpretations of this as the sole researcher and analyst. Undoubtedly, then, this is a study that is interpretative in nature and there exists no separation between the research and researcher.

Despite this acknowledged subjectivity the research and findings hold validity. The decision to include both content and discursive frame analysis has strengthened the validity of findings through the cross-checking of a mixed methods approach. The theoretical and methodological framework in Chapter 2 details the media outlets analysed, the relevant search criteria utilised and the parameters set for data inclusion within the research. In combination with the established definition of CMF and Entman's four frame functions that guide the analysis, the research findings are reasonable, valid, and also to a degree replicable. Furthermore, the work is grounded in the existing scholarship of media framing of conflict, and mediated cosmopolitanism, which if further research were similarly attuned to, would likely yield comparable results.

There are three key sites where it is established further research could develop upon the findings presented within this study. As previously alluded to, the study has provided for replicability through the provision of the data collection criteria and broad coding framework based upon Entman's four frame functions (2003: 417). It would be interesting to shed light on additional cases utilising the same framework, for example the ongoing conflict in Yemen would perhaps provide a pertinent new angle. Given that this case has received marginal attention from the international community until recently, it may be that evidence of CMF is either negligible, or less salient in comparison to alternative framings. More diverse cases would add additional profundity to the research area. Cosmopolitan morality framing as a theoretical framework is not tied to the study of conflict and interventionism. Further research should be curious to explore the role of CMF in other social or political contexts. Of particular contemporary interest would be the perception and treatment of migrants and

refugees. Is a cosmopolitan morality frame evident and salient within the British media reporting of the European migrant crisis, for instance through commitments to alleviate suffering and extend hospitality? Or is it counter-framed by perceptions of fear and threat? The author has extended study briefly into this area through the contribution of a book chapter to a publication from *E-International Relations*, however it remains a site worthy of more expansion and systematic analysis.

In addition to further case studies for analysis, it would be noteworthy to explore more fully the dynamics of the media ecology by including additional media sources for analysis, and exploring the observable relationships both between media, and between policy and media spheres. This study has focussed upon linguistic framing as a site for the cultivation of the imaginary, however from this experience stems a new curiosity to extend analysis beyond this position. For example further analysis of *BBC News Online* may extend beyond textual reports to include the accompanying photographs, radio and video segments embedded within the articles into the analysis. Similarly, much newspaper coverage includes photographic or cartoon accompaniment which would add new nuances to the understanding of how CMF may be evident through image. *Twitter* includes the mediation of links, video, photograph and retweets, all of which would provide significant new analysis of the media ecology. Expansion to consider non-British publications would be of great value, providing evidence and use of CMF in other domestic media systems, and permitting examination between systems.

The research has found benefit from the inclusion of *Twitter* to provide representation of UGC within the media ecology. While the tweets utilised for this study were readily available via the 'Twitter Advanced Search' function, this involved the inputting of data collation parameters and the manual retrieval of data according to the data scope of the project. A larger data sample from *Twitter*, while providing additional data points of potential value was extremely difficult to collate without large-scale data mining. There are many third-party sites that can mine the data stream of *Twitter* to retrieve tweets in their hundreds. Unfortunately this is beyond the scope, manageability and financial constraints of the current project. That being said, the study has managed to gain considerable facets of interest from the incorporation of a smaller corpus of tweets, and given the short temporal time span of each conflict event studied, this was sufficient for the needs of the analysis carried out.

Finally, given that the research was concerned with the evidence and possible consequences of CMF, it has avoided ascertaining the extent to which it could be said such framings influenced foreign policy responses, only that we may, from a constructivist standpoint understand that this is possible. Additional research in this area may be able to provide greater awareness of this, although it is, as Charlie Beckett has noted, difficult to establish when and where the media have altered the course of events (2008: 4). It may be that through process tracing the formation of foreign policy responses directional flows can be suggested where the media has led or followed policy agendas. Interviews with key decision-makers within both policy and media spheres may add credence to this process tracing element by providing unique institutional opinion on the extent of media agency and the broader media-foreign policy relationship.

Policy recommendations

The implications of this research lie in the professional conduct and relationships between the media and government spheres. The thesis has shed light on the manner in which instances of conflict that may appear geographically and politically distant are communicated through the media in a manner that makes them more cognitively proximate. The thesis has revealed how cosmopolitan morality is a frequent frame which may shape audience perception of highly politicised issues such as conflict and interventionism and generate certain outcomes. It is therefore recommended that policy-makers are aware of the significance of the media coverage of conflict and how CMF can draw distant events closer in our consciousness. It is thus possible in such instances that public and political opinion may be influenced towards policy responses that promote a moral responsibility to assist in some way. It is suggested from the findings that this is likely to be stronger when it is comprehended that there is a possibility to halt an escalation in violence or a potential atrocity. It is also recommended that policy-makers and media elites understand that CMF may, in this way, be utilised instrumentally to consolidate support for pre-existing or self-interested policies that promote some form of assistance or interventionism. It is necessary however, for interventionist reasoning to be comprehensible to audiences in order to be successful. It should be recognised that systemic causation (see Lakoff 2013a; 2013b) tends not to resonate cognitively and thus any strategic framing in this way may not be salient. Instead strategic

framing should be couched through the reasoning of direct causation which has been identified as resonating more convincingly with audiences.

For journalists writing reports on highly pertinent social and political issues like conflict and interventionism it is recommended that attention to language use is considered more closely. While CMF may engender a disposition to care about and for distant others, it is possible that policy-makers will promote this frame of reference to gain legitimacy for more self-interested motivations, with the media facilitating this as a key institution for the dissemination of political information. Therefore a mindfulness over the frames of reference promoted within reports is key. Furthermore, CMF can sustain hierarchical suffering when it is forwarded disparately, encouraging us to care about some people or conflict events more than others. There is also a danger that when the UK, and others in the international community feel compelled to assist suffering others, a fairy-tale metaphor is reproduced which can entail a removal of agency on the part of those who are being assisted. Therein lies the danger that CMF may perpetuate hierarchical relations and that journalists will unwittingly sustain this latent asymmetry.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Referencing of primary data- Chapter 3

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Appendix 1.1: Identity constructions of Gaddafi

Untrustworthy
a liability to his country and people (LBBC.2).
“a man who can't be trusted” Essam Gheriani, spokesman for the NTC (LTG.8).
“does not speak any truth . . . is a liar " Khalifa Heftir, rebel commander (LTG.2).
So we can't trust his word (LTW.3).
a man who has learned a trick or two during 42 years in power (LTG.8).
Leadership
the Libyan dictator (LTG.8; LTG.10).
an unstable pariah dictator (LTT.3).
a manpower-poor dictator (LTT.1).
a ruler who has brutally repressed all political opposition in Libya for more than four decades (LBBC.5).
“a dictator whose people have rejected him” David Cameron (LBBC.13).
the man who has ruled this country with an iron grip for the past 42 years (LBBC.15).
mad dictator (LTT.13).
Violent/criminal
portrayed as a bloodthirsty murderer, a common criminal and a dog (LTG.10).
posters denouncing Gaddafi as the devil and imagining him choking on his money or listing his many bloody crimes (LTG.10).
a merciless killer who will exact vengeance on a city that dared to defy his brutal thugs (LTT.12).
the man who will become known as the Butcher of Benghazi (LTT.1).
prepared to be much bloodier (when compared with the Egyptian ex-President Mubarak) (LTT.1).
an international terrorist on a grand scale and his crimes are legion (LTT.2).
Unpredictable/eccentric
this clownish buffoon was also a bloodthirsty tyrant (LTT.14).
a leader who had regarded himself as a cult figure for the past 42 years (LTG.6).
the most unfathomable of leaders to predict (LBBC.15).
[Gaddafi’s] history of insults, megalomania and readiness to fund terrorism (LTT.14).
preparing psychologically for his next move (LTT.15).
the "murderous madness" of Col Gaddafi, President Sarkozy (LBBC.16).
Defiant/belligerent
defiant and menacing (LTG.9).
a defiant Gaddafi (LTG.11).
increasingly confident and belligerent, showing no willingness to compromise (LBBC.17).
unrepentant and defiant (LBBC.5).
"The problem has a name: Gaddafi” European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso (LBBC.12).
isolated and ignoring the will of the international community (LTG.3).
Description in relation to international community
adept at portraying himself as the defender of Libya from rapacious superpowers (LBBC.18).
the defender against the foreign aggressor (LTG.12).
Most of the Arab world despises him (LTT.16).
from terrorist pariah to Tony Blair's embrace (LTG.8).
so recently Britain's best new friend in his tent in North Africa (LTT.2).
he will be only remembered as the worst and longest nightmare in Libyan history Baset Ezzawi, via email (LBBC.5).

Appendix 1.2: Frequency count of references made to external actors

External Actor	*The Guardian*	*The Times*	*BBC News Online*	*Twitter*	Total
Britain/British	35	46	72	0	**153**
United Kingdom/UK	5	8	121	1	**135**
Cameron	6	16	51	0	**73**
America/American	5	18	19	0	**42**
United States/US	3	1	1	3	**8**
Obama	18	34	59	0	**111**
Clinton	12	5	19	1	**37**
Hague	4	7	17	0	**28**
France/French	50	27	142	6	**225**
Sarkozy	2	12	30	1	**45**
Europe/European Union/EU	11	18	83	1	**113**
NATO	7	22	51	0	**80**
United Nations/UN	60	74	215	6	**355**
Security Council	26	18	66	2	**112**
Arab League	13	7	32	0	**52**
GCC	0	0	1	0	**1**
International Community	4	11	47	0	**62**

Appendix 1.3: Descriptions of the anticipated threat to Benghazi

Potential massacre/atrocities
there would be a "massacre" if the international community did not intervene. "He [Gaddafi] will kill civilians, he will kill dreams, he will destroy us," he told the BBC. "It will be on the international community's conscience" Jalal al-Gallal, NTC (LBBC.7).
the big question now is whether Col Gaddafi has the forces and the back-up to try and recapture the rest of the country. A battle for Benghazi would be far bloodier than anything seen so far, he adds (LBBC.19).
As the fighting gets closer to the major city of Benghazi, there is the potential for many more civilian casualties, particularly if Col Gaddafi's aircraft can operate unchecked, our correspondent says (LBBC.8).
The secretary general says bombardment of the city by government forces would massively place civilian lives at risk, and is calling for an immediate ceasefire (LBBC.20).
"In the coming hours we will see a real genocide if the international community does not act quickly," he said on Wednesday Ibrahim Dabbashi, Libya's ambassador to the UN (LBBC.20).
Forces loyal to Col Gaddafi are taking ground from rebels, who say they fear "genocide" without swift UN action (LBBC.9).
He insisted the UN resolution was "very clear" in its aims to bring hostilities in Libya to an end and to protect civilians from a possible "bloodbath" in Benghazi Moussa Koussa (LBBC.1).
if foreign forces act Gaddafi says 'no mercy' will be shown in Benghazi (LTG.9).
"People are being killed and if Gaddafi succeeds then many many many innocent people will be murdered by him - we've already seen this in Tripoli and it will happen in Benghazi if he succeeds." David Davis MP (LTT.1).
there is no quick or easy military way to reconquer the rebel stronghold, a city of a million people, without a bloodbath (LTG.9).
Gaddafi called the vote "flagrant colonisation" and warned of dire consequences. He also threatened that no mercy would be shown to residents of Benghazi who resisted him (LTG.5).
"Without action of this kind, Benghazi would have been a bloodbath" Sir Malcolm Rifkind (LTG.5).
If Benghazi falls, the blood of martyrs will stain not only Gaddafi's hands, but all of those who watched the revolution's failure with indifference (LTG.1).
Planned and executed by tyrants, it is a serious and deeply destructive war that, when it reaches the free streets of Benghazi, will surely result in a ghastly enjoyment of killing. If Gaddafi's forces reach that city, it is beyond doubt that the most appalling crimes against humanity will be committed Lord Ken Macdonald (LTT.2).
[Human Rights Watch] warned of the risk of "atrocities" and a terrible retribution on residents of Benghazi if the rebel stronghold was recaptured by Gaddafi's troops. "He [Gaddafi] won't hesitate to use violence against this rebellious city... we're simply saying that Benghazi and the eastern cities face the risk of serious violations, perhaps even atrocities." (LTT.7).
Sir Mark said Libya's Col Gaddafi had launched air strikes "in anticipation of what we expect to be a brutal attack using air, land and sea forces" on Benghazi" British ambassador to the UN (LBBC.4).
"Gaddafi's forces are very near to Benghazi and there is a real danger that he will push on... and he will try and get in as close as he can with his forces before we can even possibly consider striking. "I think that we have to consider very carefully, and I hope it's already been done by military planners, what is the best course to halt Gaddafi before Benghazi Lord Owen (LBBC.4).
Threat/fear of Benghazi recaptured
an eruption of defiance and fear as Benghazi, the principal stronghold of Libya's revolution, faced up to the prospect of fighting to preserve its new freedom as claim and counter claim swirled as to the course of a war that has crept closer by the day (LTG.10).
Some in Benghazi have fallen back on a grim fatalism… "If he wins, we're dead. He will kill us. Before is nothing compared to what he would do now. The whole of the east side of the country is dead. I would get out. I'm still young. I've got to live" (LTG.6).
Exactly the fear: Benghazi, etc. RT @matthewteller: Hama was one city. Expand Hama's 20K dead to a country (LTW.5).
Nerves on edge in Benghazi as Libyan army advances on Al-Brega. #Libya (LTW.6).
"Sad people of Benghazi," the texts read. "Be joyous because the day of freedom is approaching (Libyan Government) (LTT.15).
Our correspondent says the situation in Benghazi is getting more tense by the hour, and the calls for a no-fly zone more desperate (LBBC.7).

"He has publicly promised no mercy and no pity" British ambassador to the UN (LBBC.4).
Gaddafi repeated an earlier offer of an amnesty for those who had taken up arms, while insisting that unarmed people would have nothing to fear
#AJE's Tony Birtley in Benghazi, "Rebels here have 2 plans, Plan A -what will happen if Gaddafi goes, Plan B is run." #Libya [Alan Fisher @AlanFisher]
people in Benghazi are fearful that if pro- Gaddafi forces continue their offensive, the eastern, rebel-controlled city could itself come under attack from the air.
…a week of sinking into a swamp of fear at what might befall it at the hands of Muammar Gaddafi's forces

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Appendix 2.1: Contestation surrounding culpability for the chemical attack

Saudis as culpable
EXCLUSIVE: Syrians In Ghouta Claim Saudi-Supplied Rebels Carried Out Chemical Attack (STW.4).
'Syrian rebels take responsibility for the chemical attack admitting the weapons were provided by Saudis' (STW.3).
US as culpable
@Official_SEA16 TheU.S planned the chemical attack to start war w/h Syria &get Iran involved.When involved the U.S wil go in&steal their oil (STW.6).
Syria: US Aided Terrorists in Chemical Attack, Europe Next (STW.9).
UK as culpable
So in town people protested saying that the UK launched the chemical attack on Syria. I'm a bit confused, news states al-Assad initiated it (STW.5).
Assad as culpable
While there have been caveats about exactly what was used, it seems clear that something terrible did occur in Ghouta and that the most likely candidate must be the regime of Bashar al-Assad (STG.20).
George Sabra, the head of the main Syrian opposition group, laid the blame squarely at the Assad regime, saying the scenes "constitute a turning point in the regime's operations" (STG.21).
On Assad's shoulders: If the toxic gas claims are true it would defy logic. But only Syria's president can prove they are false (STG.3).
Although we do not have independent information as to whether Bashar al-Assad's regime fired chemical weapons on the eastern suburbs of Damascus and killed hundreds of civilians, as the opposition claims, the burden of proof, morally and legally, lies squarely on the shoulders of the Syrian president (STG.3).
Nor is there much doubt about who committed the atrocity. The Syrian government acknowledged it had launched a major offensive in the area and they are the only combatant with the capability to use chemical weapons on this scale (STG.22).
William Hague dismissed such suggestions and, for the first time, directly accused the regime of responsibility for the attack in the Ghouta area of Damascus. "I know that some people would like to say that this is some kind of conspiracy brought about by the opposition in Syria," the British foreign secretary said, after phone consultations with Kerry and Lavrov, pictured. "I think the chances of that are vanishingly small and so we do believe that this is a chemical attack by the Assad regime," Hague said, adding it was "not something that a civilised world can ignore" (STG.4).
Pressing for immediate access to the Ghouta site for Sellstrom's team, Hague said: "It seems the Assad regime has something to hide. Why else have they not allowed the UN team to go there?" (STG.4).
A senior US official said that there was "very little doubt" a chemical weapon had been used by the Syrian regime, but added that any decision to open the site to UN inspectors was "too late to be credible" (STG.12).
In a 40-minute phone call , the two leaders are understood to have concluded that the regime of Bashar al-Assad was almost certainly responsible for the assault (STG.12).
François Hollande said there was "a stack of evidence" suggesting there had been an "attack of a chemical nature" in Syria. He added that "everything leads us to think" the Syrian regime is responsible (STG.12).
Britain has firmly identified the Government of President Assad as the most likely perpetrator of this week's devastating chemical attack (STT.9).
Assad unleashed a chemical attack on Syrians to test the world's reaction. After today, he knows that know one will stop him. #Syria (STW.10).
Assad is gassing children to death in #Syria. 1200+ killed by chemical attack on Aug 21. Will we sit back and watch? (STW.1).
Syrian opposition as culpable
The rebels accused government forces of the attack, while Syrian state media blamed "terrorists" (SBBC.9).
Russia has suggested rebel fighters may have launched the attack themselves to provoke international action (STG.6).

Again, it was the Syrian "rebels" who claimed responsibility for the chemical attack...NOT ASSAD!!! (STW.11).
Uncertainty
Obama says Assad carried out chemical attack while intel officials work furiously to find evidence to back up claim (STW.12).
US State Dept : Admits US Doesn't Know if Assad Ordered Chemical Attack: "I don't know the answer to that." (STW.13).

Appendix 2.2: Constructing deterrence

Downing Street said any military action would be designed to act as a deterrent against the future use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime and by others around the world. The prime minister's spokesman said any action would be fully in line with international law (STG.23).
"In terms of end game, this is about looking at how we deter the use of chemical weapons because this is something that is completely abhorrent and against all international law. This is about deterring the use of chemical weapons." (YTG.24).
Obama's intention is currently for a "limited, tailored . . . clear, decisive shot across the bows" of the Syrian government. The tactical basis for this is obscure. It can hardly claim to deter a chemical attack, since the red line speech tried and failed in that respect. While Assad seems unlikely to repeat the outrage, the idea that he will roll over if bombed and stop killing his people is naive. As for "degrading" his arsenals, if this releases chemical clouds how stupid is that? The likelihood is now of a single burst of destruction by US forces if only to assuage the do-something lobby (STG.24).
Andrew Mitchell, a former development secretary, said he strongly supported military action to deter the use of chemical weapons by "human rights abusers" (STG.2).
Yesterday the Government published legal advice that the use of force to deter future Syrian chemical attacks would be legally Justifiable, even without UN endorsement, to prevent a "humanitarian catastrophe" (STT.10).
Mr Cameron says while he agrees with the need to get the United Nations Security Council to approve military action in Syria, he said that could not be the only legal base for action. Any action has to be taken by countries with the capability to deter and degrade any further use of chemical weapons by Syria, he argues, and it is in Britain's interest to maintain the international taboo against chemical weapons being used (SBBC.6).
"What is the purpose of military action?" Sir Malcolm asks. "To deter further acts of chemical weapons being used." He argues that members of the Assad regime are watching very carefully to see whether they "will get away with what they have done" (SBBC.6).
"If they get away with what they have done, if there is no significant international response of any kind, then we can be absolutely certain that the forces within Damascus will be successful in saying we must continue to use these whenever there is a military rationale for doing so. "There is no guarantee that a military strike against military targets will work, but there is every certainty that if we don't make that effort to punish and deter, then these actions will indeed continue." (Sir Malcolm Rifkind, SBBC.10).
The Obama administration believes that it is necessary to punish and deter Assad - the only question is whether Europe, represented by France, will be with them (SBBC.11).

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Appendix 3.1: Identity constructions of Islamic State

Medieval
IS - brutal and laden with treasure, conquering one city or stronghold after another (YTG.9).
its success owes more to medieval lawlessness than medieval religious enmity (YTG.9).
The irony of it seems so rich: that just as technology is accelerating, making once impossible feats of connection routine, so the clock is turning backward, towards a new dark age of beheadings and enslavement, a fearsome army threatening a tiny sect with that ancient ultimatum - bow to our god or die (YTG.9).
terrorists who have been crucifying, summarily executing, decapitating, people who have been dealing in a hideous way with women and children (YTG.10).
murdered at the hands of savage jihadists (YTT.3).
the jihadists who have vowed to purge all "non-believers" and are reported to be carrying out crucifixions and beheadings (YTT.5).
Isis butchery (YTT.2).
the Barbarians (YTT.10).
the jihadists' "barbaric" campaign (YTT.14).
Militants have conducted a brutal push forward in recent weeks, apparently carrying out beheadings and crucifixions (YTT.15).
the image showed "just how barbaric" IS militants were (YBBC.11).
"And we see more and more evidence of just how barbaric this particular entity is." (YBBC.11).
"barbaric extremists who have invaded northern Iraq" (YBBC.10).
One way or another, these maniacs, these medieval maniacs in the so-called Islamic State have got to be defeated (YTG.18; YTG.15).
These people are being beheaded by people from IS (YBBC.9).
He said: "By all accounts, these are pretty brutal, barbaric people who are murdering, slaughtering, beheading, crucifying people in their path apparently (YBBC.9).
#ISIS cavemen (YTW.4).
Crucified by the Caliphate monsters (YTW.5).
Modern/Equipped
"Islamic State are jihadis with MBAs," says Dodge, speaking of a movement so modern it has its own gift shop (YTG.9).
the better-armed Isis (YTG.19).
On its official Twitter feed, Isis claimed to have taken 15 towns across the Ninevah province of northern Iraq (YTT.2).
Isis has territory, sophisticated weaponry, money and, until now, a free pass from the west (YTT.12).
The jihadists, thought to number at least 15,000, possess a huge arsenal of modern US weaponry stolen from Iraqi army bases in northern Iraq (YTT.5).

They have humiliated Iraq's armed forces, massacred civilians with stolen weapons and filled their war chests from looted banks and oil fields (YTT.10).
The weapons they possess are more advanced than what the Peshmerga have (YBBC.8).
the Islamic State fighters' proficiency - they are said to be well armed and well trained (YBBC.7).
Forceful/Threat
Isis has proved itself a formidable force (YTG.4).
Isis was "setting a new standard for brutality and mayhem: there is not a single principle of international, Iraqi or human rights law by which they abide" (YTG.16).
Isis remains potent (YTG.6).
the biggest threat to Iraqi Kurdish society since the collapse of the Ottoman empire The jihadists, who now call themselves only the Islamic State, enjoy momentum (YTG.8).
the Islamic State, the greatest threat to stability in the region (YTT.9).
Isis, the ultra-violent Islamist group (YTT.3; YTT.5).
merciless Isis fighters (YTT.11).
heavily armed and aggressive (YTT.7).
"very aggressive and brutal" IS militants (YBBC.6).
terrifying threat to global security (YBBC.3).
Fanatical/Extremists
hardline extremists (YTG.3).
as many as 20,000 battle-hardened ideologues (YTG.8).
the murderous zealotry of the Islamic State (YTG.10).
Islamic extremists (YTG.1; YTT.16; YTT.2).
Muslim hardliners (YTT.17).
maniacal followers of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, of the Islamic State (YTT.10).
the fanatics terrorising Iraq (YBBC.3).

Appendix 3.2: References to the Syrian Parliamentary vote

Burns said he did not know whether the Commons would support military action, but it was worth trying - adding that some Conservative colleagues who opposed intervention in Syria last August took a different position this time. "Some of this was created by us in the first place, and I do not think it is right just to say we cannot do this or public opinion doesn't support it (YTG.12).
"I think the Syria thing and this are very different. If parliament decides we do not want to have anything to do with that, then let them say so." (YTG.12).
In a letter to Cameron, the Tory MPs Nick de Bois and David Burrowes joined the requests for a recall of Parliament. They said the persecution in Iraq imposed "a moral obligation and a duty to our constituents to reconvene so that the escalating crisis can be properly debated. It is vital that the House of Commons debate an appropriate response to this emergency (YTG.12).
Mike Gapes, the Labour MP for Ilford South and former chair of the foreign affairs select committee, has also demanded a recall of parliament so that military action can be authorised to aid minorities under threat. "The prime minister may feel unable to act now following his defeat and mishandling of the Syria debate last August. He should get over it and urgently recall parliament," he wrote in an article for the New Statesman. (YTG.12).
But Cameron failed to persuade his own MPs to support military action against President Bashar al-Assad of Syria last year in response to chemical attacks, and appears to have concluded that the British public has little appetite for sectarian disputes it struggles to fathom (YTG.16).
Last night one of Britain's most senior generals accused the government of being "terrified" of intervening before next year's general election. "If you are going to do anything, if you are serious about avoiding a humanitarian disaster, you have to do it properly," General Sir Richard Shirreff told the Times. "We have politicians who want to posture, who make a lot of noise but do not have any stick. What we have got is this commitment-phobic government that is terrified . . . of any form of intervention involving boots on the ground before an election next year." (YTG.15).
Cameron was bruised when he recalled parliament during last summer's recess to approve action against Bashar al-Assad after the Syrian regime's chemical weapons attacks on a Damascus suburb. The PM was defeated after a Tory rebellion and the refusal of Ed Miliband to agree to an amended government motion. Cameron decided it would be all but impossible to secure the support of MPs for military action in this parliament (YTG.15).
MPs said that a vote on action in Syria last year had set a precedent on military intervention and parliament would have to be recalled to approve airstrikes or other combat measures (YTT.6).
"The prime minister may feel unable to act now following his defeat and mishandling of the Syria debate last August," Mike Gapes, a Labour MP, and member of the foreign affairs select committee, said in the New Statesman. "He should get over it and urgently recall Parliament." (YTT.6).
There is no discussion under way on a British role in the air strikes, a spokeswoman said. Recalling parliament to debate such strikes is "not on the cards". It ought to be. Mr Cameron may fear a repeat of the debacle in which his bid to lead a military response to Syria's use of chemical weapons last year was voted down in the House of Commons, but as MPs from both main parties have noted, this is a crisis of a different order. Furthermore, US air strikes appear to be working. Islamic State fighters have already been driven back from forward positions near Irbil and Mount Sinjar (YTT.10).
the Independent's Steve Richards says Mr Cameron may be reluctant to recall MPs following his previous defeat in a vote on military action in Syria: "He would need to... be wholly confident he could win a vote on taking military action. He could not lose a second vote and be taken seriously as a leader (YBBC.5).
Some critics have complained the response has been sluggish, others want direct military intervention, and a growing number of MPs are urging the recall of Parliament. So far, the prime minister has been reluctant to encourage the speaker of the Commons to initiate such a debate. That may be because ministers fear they could not predict the outcome of any eventual vote, after losing last summer's vote over intervention in Syria (YBBC.12).
A year ago, the president did just that in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, only to confront significant opposition to aggressive action, particularly within the UN and the US Congress. This time, even though Mr Obama suggested IS's efforts to eliminate the Yazidi people could potentially constitute genocide, he simply announced the limited military response while engaging the UN and Congress (YBBC.1).

But to critics it is too limited an operation that will do little to diminish the power of the Islamic State jihadists (YBBC.13).
He was narrowly defeated on the key parliamentary motion by just 13 votes, but just as there was no political consensus then for direct military intervention on a tight timescale, Downing Street sources believe that political support cannot be guaranteed for direct participation in air strikes against the Islamic State (IS) militants in northern Iraq (YBBC.14).
The prime minister could exercise the royal prerogative and authorise action. But with a "consultative" vote by MPs on the last Iraq conflict, and votes on Libyan air strikes as well as on Syria, it is inconceivable that any major escalation of the current conflict in Iraq - and any UK military response to it - would not be debated and voted upon at Westminster (YBBC.14).