MIGRANT BELONGING IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: TRACING
THE REFLECTION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS’
AUTOCHTHONOUS FOUNDATIONS
IN BRITISH HOUSING DISCOURSE

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Humanities

2013

REBECCA KATE EHATA

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES/POLITICS
LIST OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................................... 5
DECLARATION ...................................................................................................................................................... 6
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT ................................................................................................................................. 7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................................................................... 8
THE AUTHOR .................................................................................................................................................... 9
INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................................ 10
  Background ....................................................................................................................................................... 10
  Research Questions ........................................................................................................................................ 14
  Methodology .................................................................................................................................................... 15
  Thesis Structure ............................................................................................................................................... 18
  Terminology ..................................................................................................................................................... 21
CHAPTER 1: Inside-Outside and the Puzzle of Migrant Belonging ................................................................. 23
  The Inside-Outside Ontology of Conventional IR ....................................................................................... 24
  IR, Belonging and the Figure of the Migrant ............................................................................................... 32
  Critical Interventions in the Discourse of IR ............................................................................................... 35
  Chapter Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................ 45
CHAPTER 2: The Concept and Discourse of Autochthony ............................................................................. 47
  Defining and Differentiating Autochthony ................................................................................................. 47
  What Makes a Discourse Autochthonous? Identifying Key Logics ............................................................ 50
    Genus and the Thread of History .............................................................................................................. 51
    The Presence of Others as Impurity ...................................................................................................... 57
    Claims of Entitlement ............................................................................................................................. 59
    Assertions of Victimhood ....................................................................................................................... 63
  Slippery Allochthony and the Impossibility of Closure .......................................................................... 69
    Who is the Allochthon? ........................................................................................................................... 70
    How Can the Border be Closed? ............................................................................................................ 73
  Autochthony as a British Discourse of Belonging .................................................................................... 77
  Chapter Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................ 80
CHAPTER 3: Unpacking the Logics of Discourse ......................................................................................... 83
  The Critical Theorist in Action .................................................................................................................. 84
  Ontology ....................................................................................................................................................... 85
  Epistemology ............................................................................................................................................... 86
Normativity .................................................................................................................................................87
Methodology ...............................................................................................................................................87
Essex School Discourse Theory ..................................................................................................................88
Critical Analysis Through the Framework of Logics ....................................................................................95
Applying Discourse Theory: Methods and Strategies ..............................................................................104
The Case Study as Method .......................................................................................................................105
Documentary Analysis ...............................................................................................................................108
Interviews ..................................................................................................................................................109
Defining the Kurdish and Turkish Community .........................................................................................111
Housing as an IR Study Context ...............................................................................................................117
Some Preliminary Concerns .....................................................................................................................119
Immigration as an Inflammatory Topic ....................................................................................................119
Potential for Misuse of Findings .............................................................................................................120
Raising Expectations .................................................................................................................................121
Chapter Conclusion .....................................................................................................................................121
CHAPTER 4: Belonging in British Housing Discourse ..............................................................................124
Housing in Britain: a General Picture ........................................................................................................125
British Attitudes to Housing and the Housing Crisis .............................................................................126
Housing and Migrants ................................................................................................................................129
Migrant Housing Rights and Public Perceptions .....................................................................................131
Identifying Autochthony in Housing Discourse, Tracing its Foundations .............................................136
Autochthonous Entitlement and the Hodge Intervention ........................................................................136
The Northern Riots and the Discourse of Self-Segregation ...................................................................145
Midsomer Murders: The Last Bastion of Englishness .............................................................................153
Chapter Conclusion .....................................................................................................................................158
CHAPTER 5: Housing and Belonging: A Response From the Margins .....................................................161
The Kurdish and Turkish Presence in London .........................................................................................162
Responding to the Discourse of Autochthony .........................................................................................166
Gripped by the Logics of Genus and Impurity? .....................................................................................167
Contesting the Logics of Entitlement and Victimhood? .........................................................................174
Articulating Other Communities of Belonging .......................................................................................181
The Fantasmatic Dangers of an Inside-Outside Ontology ....................................................................187
Chapter Conclusion .....................................................................................................................................191
ABSTRACT

The University of Manchester
Rebecca Kate Ehata
PhD: Politics
2013

Migrant Belonging in International Relations:
Tracing the Reflection of International Relations’
Autochthonous Foundations in British Housing Discourse

Why is International Relations (IR) silent on the issue of belonging? Conventional IR appears to be prevented from engaging with the concept of belonging by the inside-outside ontology on which it draws and its assumption of a foundational difference between inside and outside, which are understood to be neatly separated and mutually exclusive. Since belonging describes the relationship between individuals and the community and community is restricted to the inside sphere, it is beyond conventional IR’s remit. In its silence and relegation of belonging to the inside, however, we see the traces of what amounts to an implicit discourse of belonging.

The concept of autochthony appears to offer a mirror-image reflection of conventional IR’s assumptions about belonging. Autochthony discourse also sees belonging as strictly limited to the community located on the inside of the binary, and here too the demarcation of inside from outside is considered to be foundational. As such, autochthony seems to provide a credible approximation of what IR’s implicit discourse of belonging might look like, if made explicit.

The migrant represents a dislocatory figure for both of these accounts of belonging and the inside-outside ontology on which they are grounded. Where does she belong in an inside-outside configuration of the social? Moreover, as a marker of the outside but located on the inside, she contradicts the idea that the two spheres are separate and exclusive. Using British housing discourse as an example of an active discourse of autochthony, this thesis explores the puzzle of how migrants and the questions which they raise about the location of belonging are dealt with in an inside-outside discourse.

The thesis generates three key findings which have relevance for conventional IR theorising. Firstly, the account of belonging which autochthony discourse produces is partial, impoverished and highly exclusionary. In this account, migrants represent the ultimate outsider. Secondly, the analysis demonstrates the impossibility of finalising the separation of inside from outside. Attempts to differentiate between the two require ongoing political interventions, which refutes the notion of foundational difference. Finally, in the absence of a foundational difference between inside and outside, IR needs to engage with the concept of belonging, since its continued silence seems to endorse an autochthonous discourse and the exclusionary politics of belonging which that entails.
DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trade marks and other intellectual property (the “Intellectual Property”) and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/policies/intellectual-property.pdf), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library’s regulations (see http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations) and in The University’s policy on presentation of Theses.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester, for the award of a three-year Politics PhD Studentship, without which my studies would not have been possible. My supervisors, Dr Véronique Pin-Fat and Dr Peter Lawler, both were both instrumental in my decision to undertake doctoral research. Their unstinting faith in my ideas and my ability to complete has meant a lot to me, and they have remained a source of inspiration and support throughout my PhD journey. My fellow postgraduate students in the Politics department have provided me with the humour, sympathy and collegial spirit to keep me going at the low points. In particular, Fabiola Mieres and Guro Buchanon have been an invaluable source of wisdom, consolation and coffee over the past four years. Outside Manchester, Briony Jones first put me onto the literature on autochthony, and has given me sound advice on developing an academic career, not all of which I have followed. I also owe a large debt of gratitude to Sue Lukes, who has been generous in sharing her vast knowledge of migrant housing rights with me.

The courage and dignity of the many migrants I have met along the way have never failed to inspire me. Those who I worked with in the Northwest gave me the motivation to return to my studies. In London, the members of community centres Halkevi, Kurdish Community Centre, Cemevi, GIK-DER (Refugee Workers Cultural Association) and Day-Mer made me welcome and shared something of their experiences with me. Several community co-ordinators went out of their way to put me in touch with potential respondents, and of these Mine Doğan, Ibrahim, Ahmet Başturk, Taylan Sahbaz and Ali Aksoy deserve special thanks.

I am especially grateful to my extended family, who have offered the practical, financial and emotional support (not to mention free childcare) that have allowed me to follow my research dreams. Their relief to know that I have at last managed to ‘get the thing finished’ will be as great as mine. Above all, I owe my biggest and most heartfelt thanks to Maron and Rosie Ehata, who have survived four years of irregular timekeeping, deadline stress and culinary lows. Their love and understanding have given me the freedom to do what I needed to.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my uncle, Rod (William) Forwood, whose intellectual, cultural and geographical travels first inspired me to look beyond the horizon.
THE AUTHOR

I took my Honours degree in Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, emerging with a 2.1 and a specialization in the archaeology of prehistoric Greece, and spent the following 10 years utilising my native English speaker status in teaching, editing and communications posts in Europe (Turkey, Greece, France and Germany). On returning to the UK I enrolled on a Masters in International Relations at the University of Manchester, for which I earned a Distinction. Having volunteered for a refugee support organization as an MA student, I took a temporary job as Refugee Services Coordinator with the British Red Cross and from there moved to a grassroots organisation working with refugees and other vulnerable migrants in Wigan, Northwest England. Following this I became self-employed and undertook migrant-related freelance training and research projects with statutory and non-governmental organisations in the Northwest, continuing to undertake occasional pieces of research and training while enrolled as a PhD candidate. As a freelancer I wrote a number of reports on the research projects which I undertook (evaluations, needs assessments, strategy planning), and was involved in the creation of several training toolkits and course packages.
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

When I think back, it is hard to pinpoint a precise moment at which I became intellectually caught up in the puzzle of trying to understand the discursive problematisation of migrants and their belonging. Was it when I moved to Istanbul after completing my undergraduate studies, where my own presence as a migrant was tolerated and in some areas welcomed, in contrast to the reception of other migrants such as the group of ‘Russians’ that I encountered at the Aliens Police Station, herded like cattle by young policemen pointing loaded guns? Or was it when I left Istanbul to move to Athens, which, in contrast to my experience of living there several years earlier, appeared to have been engulfed by hostility towards its expanding Albanian community? A period of living and working in Paris in the 1990s coincided with large-scale political activism by France’s growing number of irregular migrants and a programme of regularisation by the newly elected Jospin government. Many of those undocumented migrants came originally from France’s former colonies and thus arguably had a better claim on the right to be in France than I did, documented or otherwise. At the same time, cracks were beginning to show in the relationship between the French state and its more established minority communities.

Even if I had managed to avoid engaging with the discourse at this stage, my next move was to Munich, where I arrived on the eve of Germany’s historic changes to its citizenship law. Here it was impossible to ignore the febrile public and elite discourse on many migrant-related issues, among them public opposition to the legalisation of dual citizenship, to the recruitment of highly-skilled migrants via a ‘Green Card’ programme, and concern over the ongoing presence of refugees who had arrived following the chaotic breakup of the former Republic of Yugoslavia. This last group, the refugees, represented the issue of individual migrants and migrant communities whose presence and non-belonging was being articulated as problematic based on their very recent arrival, as was the case of the Albanian presence in Greece. Others problematised by the discourse, however, (notably France’s North African communities and the Turkish communities in Germany) had been living in their current locations for two or three generations but were still deemed to be ‘migrants’, physically settled but politically held in abeyance, and differentiated on the basis that they didn’t truly or fully belong in the ‘host’ countries.
By the time I returned to Britain in 2002 I was fully alert to the rising problematisation of migrant belonging in several European states. Enrolling as a volunteer for a refugee support organisation gave me critical insight into the way in which migrants were being problematised in the British discourse of belonging. Clear differences between my own, privileged, experiences and those of many of the migrants that I encountered in Britain strengthened my desire to understand what lies behind the frequently hostile perception, portrayal and discursive exclusion of migrants in liberal democracies in general and which I was witnessing in Britain. As I had found abroad, here too some migrants are deemed more acceptable, normal or simply ‘like us’ (and thus by implication more easily absorbed into the community of belonging) than others. Importantly, which kinds of migrants are considered problematic was open to fluctuation. When I first studied the British discourse in 2002, the hostility was focused largely on asylum seekers. Following the accession of several East European states to the European Union in May 2004, however, attention rapidly swung to this group of migrants.

Starting a Masters in International Relations shortly after returning to Britain provided an opportunity to gain some of the theoretical and conceptual tools with which to think through the issue of migrant belonging. The concept of citizenship seemed to be a good starting place from which to try to make sense of the discourse. To an extent, it was possible that some hazy notion of (non)citizenship was functioning as a marker by which migrants were being discursively differentiated. Moreover, the IR literature on citizenship, limited as it is, offered a number of ways in which to conceptualise different aspects of being a citizen. These include the relationship between citizenship and political community under the rubric of the ‘communitarian-cosmopolitan debate’ (as represented by Beitz 1983; Walzer 1983; Carens 1987; Miller, D. 2000), work on the notion of world or global citizenship (for example Falk 1993; Heater 2002) and discussions on what might be construed as the content of citizenship (e.g. Linklater 1998; Bhabha 1999). On the other hand, as my work with refugees and migrants intensified following my Masters and I observed the discourse with ever greater personal connection, the concept of citizenship alone began to seem inadequate for an analysis. Some of the communities whose belonging in Britain was now being problematised as migrants in fact held formal citizenship status, or at least formal entitlement to access the social rights of citizenship such as education, welfare benefits, healthcare and employment. Some fulfilled the description of active citizens/civic citizenship, and were heavily involved in the lives
of their own communities and the wider community, or played an active part in some form of supra-ethnic community such as a religious or political community. What seemed to be emerging here was a gap between citizenship—formal or otherwise—and belonging, rendered as an apparent contradiction or discrepancy between people’s lived experience of being part of a community and their subjectification as a migrant or outsider.

The concept of belonging is often appended to that of citizenship as though it were some kind of subsidiary notion, useful only to expand certain dimensions of our understanding of the citizen. Yet while there is an undeniable relationship between the two concepts, a reading of belonging as effectively an extension of citizenship cannot account for the cases of conflict between the two forms of status. Consequently, this thesis treats belonging as its central concept in order to better tease out its political significance. My purpose here is not to arrive at any kind of definition of what belonging is or should be; from a discourse theory perspective there can be no correct or final definition, since belonging is in my understanding an empty concept, open to articulation in any political direction. Rather, I am interested in looking at how belonging functions as a political discourse. Clearly, belonging has positive as well as and negative connotations, and can be used to further political agendas which have both exclusive and inclusive objectives (Crowley 1999). However, as Adrian Favell points out, in relation to migrants and integration the notion of belonging has been most often put to rhetorical use as a tool of exclusion, or what John Crowley calls ‘the dirty work of boundary maintenance’ (Crowley 1999:30; Favell 1999:210). As the brief observations above suggest, anti-migrant discourse appears to deliberately sever the ties between citizenship and belonging for some migrants, while conversely reinforcing the same ties for those who are regarded as people who ‘really belong’.

It was with this apparently dysfunctional relationship in mind that I re-approached International Relations (IR) theory as a PhD student. I quickly discovered, however, that the conventional discourse of IR has almost nothing to say on the tricky issue of belonging. Based as it is upon a defining framework of the inside-outside binary, conventional IR appears to lack the conceptual space to reflect on the nature and politics of belonging. After all, since its formal inception in 1919,
the raison d’être for the discipline of IR has been the study of relations between states rather than relations between the individuals who inhabit those states. While the notion that IR has always been separate from the larger field of Politics is disputed (e.g. Schmidt 2002:116), the ‘foundational myths’ of its own birth out of the ashes of the First World War as a tool for reducing conflict between states (Smith, S. 2000:378) have helped to maintain the idea of IR as a distinct academic field rather than as a sub-field of a broader discipline. This conceptual separation between ‘Politics’ and ‘International Relations’ is both dependent upon and constitutive of the conventional IR worldview, that of a set of separate sovereign states between whom relations take place in a more or less anarchic global stage (Agnew 1994b:53). In this view, Politics deals with the concepts and practices which pertain to the inside of each separate state and the individuals who populate it (i.e. belonging), while IR looks at how those states interact externally. In turn, the success of this binary arrangement requires that the demarcation of internal from external, domestic from international, is complete, both in the sense that it has been finalised (there is full closure), and that the separation between the two realms is definitive. Without this ‘great divide’ (Clark 1998:479), the discipline of IR appears to be in jeopardy. If international politics were, after all, to be seen as a mere continuum of the politics of the internal state, then IR’s disciplinary foundations would be called into question, and much of the conventional IR theory which is built upon the idea of discontinuity between inside and outside would be liable to collapse.

In order to maintain disciplinary purpose and distinctiveness, therefore, conventional IR scholarship has focused overwhelmingly on issues which sit squarely within its own depiction of the international—anarchy, states-as-actors, balances of power and the resort to war—and has avoided areas of research which seem better aligned with the domestic. Hence, a discussion of belonging is largely absent, even by those IR scholars who approach the discipline from a critical perspective. Thus, while a growing volume of work has been done on tangential issues such as: immigration (Doty 1999b, a, 2003; Shapiro 1997); citizenship (Linklater 1996, 2007); borders (Vaughan-Williams 2009a); migration and diaspora (Adamson 2006; Heisler 2001); and identity (Dunn and Goff 2004), belonging remains vastly under-theorised within the discipline. At the same time, however, conventional IR’s foregrounding of the nation-state and the international system of states, which is made possible through the disciplinary maintenance of an inside-outside framework (discussed at greater length in Chapter 1 below), itself gives rise to the figure of the migrant, whose
very otherness stems from the primacy of the borders which divide inside from outside. So although conventional IR scholarship might continue to view belonging as beyond its scope, this view is problematic in that it appears to be IR’s own ontological assumptions which place belonging outside the discipline, just as they place migrants outside the nation-state. Moreover, the assumption that belonging is beyond IR’s remit may itself have significant consequences for the ways in which belonging is mobilised as political discourse.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Taking into consideration my interest in the problematisation of migrant belonging and the virtual absence of the concept of belonging from conventional IR scholarship, my thesis seeks to examine what underpins conventional IR’s silence on the question of belonging, to ask how this matters to the practice of international politics. These aims are encapsulated in my main research question, which asks:

**Why is the discipline of International Relations (IR) silent on the issue of belonging, and how does this matter?**

In order to structure the project and to operationalise the main research question, I developed a set of subsidiary questions. These are:

1. Does the ontological framework which structures conventional IR discourse work to exclude belonging from the discipline’s purview?
2. In what way does the figure of the migrant help to problematise conventional IR’s silence on the issue of belonging?
3. How can the concept of autochthony contribute to the study of the absence of belonging from conventional IR discourse?
4. What does a critical analysis of the autochthonous discourse of British housing reveal about the ontological framework that it shares with conventional IR?
5. Does the search for conventional IR’s missing account of belonging, and its findings, have broader relevance to the discipline?
METHODODOLOGY

My thesis uses discourse theory as an analytical framework. In particular I adopt the poststructuralist, post-Marxist discourse theory developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe and refined by recent scholarship in the Essex School. The term discourse is widely used in the social sciences and beyond. Louise Phillips and Marianne Jorgensen define a discourse as ‘a particular way of representing the world’ (Phillips, L. and Jørgensen 2002:143). Charlotte Epstein sees discourse as containing ‘a cohesive ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations about a specific object that frame that object in a certain way and, therefore, delimit the possibilities for action in relation to it’ (Epstein 2008:2). In other words, discourse is how we make sense of the world around us; how we decide which interpretation of events, actions and practices is the most plausible; and how the boundaries of our ability to conceptualise, understand and act in the social world are drawn. Thus it shapes what we cannot say and do in a given situation, as well as what we can say and do. Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory differs from other discourse approaches, such as critical discourse analysis, in that it doesn’t distinguish between discourse as speech/text and social and material practices. Rather, the social and material is considered to be integral to a given discourse, not outside it. The most pertinent aspects of Laclau and Mouffe’s theory for my thesis and my broader understanding of the politics of belonging which I explore here include the notion of the openness and contingency of all social relations, which results from the impossibility of closure. By this, I mean that every discourse, including the conventional discourse of IR and the discourse of autochthony examined in this thesis, is both constructed and incomplete, no matter how natural (or sedimented) it may seem, and therefore every discourse is also open to contestation and change. The fact that many discourses are maintained over time is not because they capture a natural or true ordering of the social, but rather because politics and power interact to maintain them.

To understand how this is so, I make use of the threefold set of social, political and fantasmatic logics developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007). The concept of logics denotes the rules or grammar of discursive practices and the conditions which make them possible. Social logics describe the sedimented practices of the hegemonic discourse, while political logics concern the dynamic aspects of a discourse: the contestations of sedimented practices and the

---

2 In Chapter 3 I elaborate on the notion of fantasmatic logics, along with political and social logics.
construction of new political frontiers in order to alter or deconstruct the dominant discourse. Finally, fantasmatic logics structure ‘a subject’s “lived reality”’ by covering over the inherent contingency of that reality and naturalising the political practices which produce and maintain the discourse (Howarth 2010:322). Through the logic of fantasy, contestations are absorbed or covered over, or are redirected towards an alternative antagonist so that the prevailing order is maintained and the political frontiers which demarcate the limits of the discourse are kept in place. At the same time, fantasy works to give direction to the formation of newly emerging discourses and responses to dislocations in existing discourses (Glynos and Howarth 2007:147).

Given that a successful discourse—that is, one which articulates a widely accepted interpretation of social relations—is always dependent upon the mobilisation of fantasmatic logics, whose purpose is to conceal contingency and thus make a particular instance of discourse seem ‘natural’, there is always a tension between the radical contingency of the social and the discourses which attempt to make sense of it by inscribing on the social a narrative of order and fixity. The task of the analyst who wishes to understand the durability of a discourse, then, is to unpack the relationship between a set of social practices, the political logics which act to produce or sustain those practices and the fantasmatic narratives which motivate and naturalise them. Building on Laclau and Mouffe’s work, a broad range of conceptual tools are utilised in Essex School discourse theory to unpack and critically analyse the social, political and fantasmatic dimensions of a discourse, the most pertinent of which in the context of this research project include the notions of hegemony, contingency, social antagonism, political frontiers, the logics of equivalence and difference, the impossible ideal, and the differentiation between the subject position and the political subjectivity of a social agent, all of which are discussed in further detail in Chapter 3 below.

My methodological engagement with discourse theory is driven by the nature of my enquiry and my early reading for this project. My own prior experience of small-scale empirical research projects indicated that qualitative research would produce the kind of meaningful responses that quantitative data missed. I also felt strongly that I needed to speak to the people and communities I was researching and not just about them, both as a means of giving them voice and to ensure that my interpretation of the discourse was adequately contextualised. Here, discourse theory’s reading of both text and practice as key elements of any discourse allowed me to use a range of ‘texts’ as data sources, including interviews and other
recordings. I was also keen to focus on the processes of drawing the borders which produce apparently sturdy categories of difference (such as those that produce migrants as outsiders) not only those around the nation-state, where there is a growing critical scholarship (see e.g. Albert et al. 2001; Amoore 2006; Weber 2008; Walters 2006), but also on a smaller scale.

My critique of IR’s lack of engagement with the concept of belonging is specifically concerned with what I refer to as conventional IR theory, as differentiated from critical IR theory, where I place my own research. By ‘conventional IR’ I refer to IR scholarship which works from a (neo)realist or (neo)liberal position. While constructivism is often understood to embrace a broad range of scholarship, my definition of conventional IR also included constructivist work by scholars such as Wendt and Adler, whose work retains many of the assumptions of realist and liberal scholarship. Despite its central focus on the socially constructed nature of interests and identities and the importance of ideas in international relations, this Wendtian constructivism maintains the position that social reality exists independently of our thoughts and can be uncovered through the application of scientific methods (Zehfuss 2004:13).

Here Robert Cox’s often-cited dichotomisation of theoretical approaches between ‘problem-solving’ and ‘critical’ theory is central to my own understanding. Following Cox, in the former category (‘conventional’ in my definition, ‘problem-solving’ in Cox’s terms) the theorist attempts to respond to problems within the prevailing system, which she takes as given and stable; in this way she can ‘arrive at statements of laws or regularities which appear to have general validity but which imply, of course, the institutional and relational parameters assumed’ (Cox 1981:129). In contrast, the work of the critical theorist ‘is directed towards an appraisal of the very framework for action, or problematic, which problem-solving theory accepts as its parameters’ (ibid.). In short, problem-solving thus takes the world-as-given as the ‘reality’ within which all solutions must exist, while critical theory takes the world-as-given as the starting point for enquiries as to how that world came about. Problem-solving theory, whether this is understood predominantly to be a feature of realist/neo-realist theorising (as Cox and Ashley do; Cox 1981; Ashley 1989) or include liberal/neo-liberal theories of IR, as RBJ Walker implies (Walker 1993), can be characterised by its scientific or positivist approach and its emphasis on pursuing value-free strategies in order to better theorise the given world (Rengger and Thirkell-White 2007:6). Thus, in relation to this research project, a problem-solving
approach to the concept of belonging and its absence from conventional IR would in fact class this as a ‘non-problem’, since it would accept the conventional view that the subject was beyond the scope of the discipline, given IR’s purpose as a field of study that examines relations between states and not relations inside them. In contrast, a critical theory approach begins with the assumption of beyondness and asks how it has come to pass that belonging is seen to be outside the set of concepts or problems which are appropriate for interrogation by IR scholars. The very nature of my project and the questions which I set out to answer is thus inherently aligned with a critical theory perspective, and further reflection on the epistemological and ontological grounding of this research is given in Chapter 3.

**Thesis Structure**

Chapter 1 makes the case for my claim that IR has an implicit discourse of belonging despite the disciplinary absence of discussion of that concept. I first discuss the central position of the inside-outside binary in the discipline and reflect on the ways in which the critical literature problematises this structuring of the discourse. The chapter then proceeds to identify five ontological assumptions which correlate to the inside-outside binary and demonstrate the effect that each of these has on how conventional IR discourse is able to limit its horizons. The five ontological assumptions are: the domestic-international dichotomy; the nation-state; territoriality; fixity; and exclusion. These overlapping assumptions work together to produce a demarcation of inside from outside that allows IR to set aside what it considers to be ‘domestic’ matters while busying itself with the international. What is problematic here is that in structuring its domain, IR simultaneously locks belonging inside the nation-states that populate its worldview, and which it assumes to be prior to the social. Consequently, the politics of belonging are actively shaped and delimited by conventional IR discourse, even though it may not consider itself to hold any position on belonging. This becomes clear when we think about the figure of the migrant, which demands some sort of response or positioning on the issue of belonging from IR theory, and for whom IR’s continued silence on the matter seems to indicate a theoretical and empirical rejection of belonging.

The concept of autochthony is introduced in Chapter 2 as an example of what IR’s implicit discourse of belonging might look like. The chapter presents an overview of the predominantly anthropological literature on current discourses of
autochthony around the world: it identifies genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood as four characteristics (logics) which structure those discourses, and suggests that these can be taken as indicative of an active discourse of autochthony regardless of the presence or absence of an explicitly autochthonous vocabulary. Since the autochthonous claim to belonging is fundamentally linked to a person’s ability to prove their ancestral rootedness, the figure of the migrant appears as the ultimate outsider in this discourse.

The discourse of autochthony works here because, as I show, it shares the same ontological framework as conventional IR discourse. Like IR discourse, autochthony is built on an inside-outside framework; where IR insists that its interests are only to be found outside the nation-state (i.e. in the relationships that occur between nation-states rather than inside them), autochthony restricts its zone of interest to the inside of the state, whose borders demarcate the outermost limits of belonging. In this light, the discourse of autochthony appears to offer a mirror-image conceptualisation of the social to that found in the conventional discourse of IR, whose line of reflection is located at the border between inside and outside which each discourse sees as its own point of demarcation, and there is a great deal of complementarity at work between the two discourses. On this basis, the chapter concludes that autochthony can be used as a reasonable surrogate for IR’s missing discourse of belonging, and the findings of a critical analysis of autochthony discourse will thus have bearings on IR’s implicit discourse and the ontological assumptions which underpin it.

Having built a theoretical case for the critique of IR’s implicit discourse of belonging in Chapters 1 and 2, Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the methodology with which I will construct my critique in Chapters 4 and 5. Here I give a more detailed consideration of the discourse theory approach which I use throughout the thesis. I also elaborate on the analytical typology of social, political and fantasmatic logics, noted above, which are central to my empirical analysis and unpacking of the discourse of autochthony. In my understanding, the fantasmatic logics correspond to the ontological assumptions of a discourse, and thus are a critical element of my analytical framework. This set of logics allows me to unpack the autochthonous discourse of the case study by looking first at the existing (social) practices by which it can be recognised and then identifying the political logics which have produced those practices. Finally, an examination of the fantasmatic (ontological) logics permits a closer analysis of the assumptions which motivate and
direct the discourse. In Chapter 3 I also set out the methodological parameters of my case study. I explain the thinking behind my decision to use British housing discourse as a site for an analysis of autochthony discourse, and I introduce the Kurdish and Turkish community with whom I carried out my empirical fieldwork.

Chapters 4 and 5 present a case study of housing discourse in Britain. The purpose of this empirical section of the thesis is twofold. Firstly it aims to explore the extent to which the discourse of autochthony—here, British housing discourse—draws on the same set of ontological assumptions as those identified in Chapter 1 by examining the assumptions which shape the British discourse. This discourse is identified as autochthonous on the basis that it is replete with the logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood that I noted as the defining characteristics of an autochthonous discourse in Chapter 2. These logics are uncovered through a specific focus on the ways in which the discourse treats the figure of the migrant. The second purpose of the case study is then to draw out the implications of those shared assumptions for our understanding of IR’s silence on the issue of migrant belonging. In the first part of the study (Chapter 4) I present a detailed analysis of the social, political and fantasmatic logics which structure British housing discourse through an engagement with three examples of dislocations. These concern the 2001 ‘Northern Riots’ in the towns of Oldham, Bradford and Burnley, the 2007 ‘Hodge Intervention’ (a newspaper article by then Cabinet minister Margaret Hodge and subsequent public debate on the housing rights of European migrant workers in particular) and the 2011 ‘Midsomer Murders crisis’, in which the producer of a TV series was sacked following comments on the show’s lack of ethnic characters. Although each of these three events represents a variation in the articulatory linking of migrants, housing and belonging, they all capture a notable shift in the way in which migrants are positioned within British housing discourse. The analysis emphasises the political shaping of the response to each dislocation and the contributions of the fantasmatic logics in determining the direction in which the discourse develops following the dislocatory moment.

Having elaborated on the dominant strands of autochthonous British housing discourse in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 looks to capture a response by some of those characterised as ‘migrants’, and thus outside belonging in the autochthonous sense, by presenting qualitative fieldwork undertaken within the Kurdish and Turkish community in London. The chapter has two aims: firstly it attempts to gauge the extent to which the autochthonous dimensions of British housing discourse
elaborated in Chapter 4 have become naturalised by analysing how members of this BME community respond to its logics. I find that the discourse appears to have a certain seductive appeal in that part of its content (specifically the logics of genus and impurity) is adopted by my respondents. On the other hand, the logics of entitlement and victimhood are contested.

The second aim of Chapter 5 is to highlight the fantasmatic dangers of the discourse of autochthony. Through the analysis of my fieldwork I demonstrate that a discourse predicated upon an inside-outside framework (which is itself constructed through the ontological assumptions of the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion) sustains a very narrow conception of belonging that excludes the most marginalised members of society in pursuit of an unachievable fantasy of fulfilment. Along the way, those who had achieved a precarious degree of inclusion find themselves subject to a discursive unbelonging which disregards the multidimensionality of their lived experience and reduces them to figures of blood and soil. If, as my thesis claims, the discourse of autochthony is an adequate surrogate for conventional IR’s missing discourse of autochthony, then this leaves a very bleak picture of the discourse of belonging which would be produced by IR’s ontological assumptions.

The concluding chapter pulls together the theoretical claims made in Chapters 1 and 2 with the findings of the empirical work described in Chapters 4 and 5. It makes explicit the linkages between autochthony discourse and conventional IR discourse and develops the notion of the fantasmatic dangers which are implicit in IR’s ontological assumptions. I answer the question of why IR’s silence on the concept of belonging matters by underlining the extent to which the silence masks a very unpleasant discourse. By refusing to make its discourse explicit, conventional IR discourse is able to ignore the autochthonous implications of its own inside-outside framework.

**TERMINOLOGY**

I use the term *migrant* here as an open-ended term to describe everyone who has moved across a prescribed international border. This may be a recent move or it may be one which occurred decades ago. While this may seem problematic in that it suggests that people thus described are forever suspended in motion and never allowed to settle, I prefer this to the term ‘immigrant’, which for me asserts precisely
the kind of fixity which my thesis tries to contest. ‘Immigrant’ ties a person to a
permanent relationship with the state in which she now resides, and yet at the same
time evokes a permanent inequality: to be an immigrant is to be forever the person
who is present but not really equal, not simply ‘one of us’. I also use the term ‘Black
and minority ethnic (BME) (interchangeably with ethnic minority) to describe those
communities which have a quasi-included status, though for me these groups also fit
within my larger term of migrant. There are of course substantial differences between
members of BME communities and the most recently arrived migrants. However,
both are subject to discursive unbelonging and thus can be seen to share a
vulnerability when faced with autochthony discourse’s privileging of origins over
place and length of residence. Alongside migrant I use the term ‘majority community’ to
denote everyone who isn’t held by the discourse to be a migrant, in preference to
problematic terms such as native or indigenous, which conjure up precisely the
autochthonous logics that I find troubling. As the thesis demonstrates, both ‘migrant’
and ‘majority community’ are slippery terms whose content is constantly subject to
change as they are rearticulated by successive proponents of the discourse of
belonging. In Chapter 4 I use the terms ‘white’, ‘Asian’ and ‘South Asian’ where these
are the terms given by the dominant discourse, so as to avoid the confusion of
introducing multiple terms with slight variations.
CHAPTER 1:  
INSIDE-OUTSIDE AND THE PUZZLE OF MIGRANT BELONGING

The inside-outside ontology that underpins conventional International Relations (IR) theory is made visible in the central IR concept of the inside-outside binary\(^3\). According to the binary model, politics and the social world are divided into two distinct spheres of full social relations and political community inside the boundaries of the nation-state and the virtual absence of community on the outside. This binary division appears to be inherently bound up with IR’s curious reluctance to engage with the concept of belonging, which constitutes the focal point of this thesis. The purpose of this chapter is to mark out the bounds of this puzzle, and to indicate where the puzzle and my research fit into the broader field of International Relations scholarship. I will do this by presenting the rationale behind my claim that the concept of belonging is largely absent from conventional IR scholarship and by outlining some initial thoughts on how their exclusion from the discipline has been rendered not only possible but also logical.

Below I will first briefly sketch an outline of the inside/outside binary as a key facet of conventional IR theory to illustrate how its constructs the social in such a way that ‘belonging’ is placed beyond conventional IR’s remit. I will then explore a set of ontological assumptions which reflect an underlying inside-outside ontology and thus work to maintain the sideline of belonging from conventional IR thought as a consequence of its positioning within the sphere of the ‘domestic’. The second section of the chapter will introduce the figure of the migrant as a problem for the conventional discourse of IR, and will explore the ways in which the discipline positions migrants as a result of its inside-outside ontology. This initiates a consideration of the concept of belonging, and asks whether belonging offers a useful perspective from which to critically analyse the othering of the migrant that results from the inside-outside discourse of IR. In the last part of the chapter I will reflect on the ways in which critical scholars of IR have already destabilised the inside-outside binary and its underlying ontology in order to identify the gaps in the critical project which this thesis seeks to fill.

---

\(^3\) In this thesis, ‘inside-outside’ binary refers to the model or device used to organise conventional IR theorising. In contrast, inside-outside ontology signals a deeper understanding that these two spheres of the social and political are inherently distinct.
THE INSIDE-OUTSIDE ONTOLOGY OF CONVENTIONAL IR

The following paragraphs will consider the presence and effects of an inside-outside ontology in conventional IR discourse. By ‘inside-outside ontology’ I refer to the ontological framework which has underpinned and traditionally enabled IR scholarship to construct theories and conduct empirical research on the understanding that there is a discernible difference between the kind of politics which takes place within the state (domestic politics) and between states (international politics). Traditionally, the discipline of IR has used the model of an inside-outside binary to organise its theorising of the social and the political. In this model, a clear difference exists between the possibilities for politics in the domestic context of the ‘inside’, and the very limited possibilities for politics in the ‘outside’ context of the international, which is largely constructed as ‘a negation of statist forms of political community’ (Walker 1991:448). Accordingly, the inside, domestic sphere is presented as a space in which order, justice and politics prevail, while the outside, international sphere is characterised by anarchy, danger and the absence of politics. The line of demarcation which holds these two spheres of politics apart is that of the border of the state, which marks the limits of both the state’s sovereignty and its territory (the model suggests that the two are contiguous). This border is imbued with a fixity and significance that have far-reaching consequences for the discipline.

According to Buzan (1996:53), the inside-outside binary ‘practically defines the discipline of International Relations’, and this logic has facilitated ‘a familiar spatial and temporal compartmentalisation of global politics into two supposedly distinct spheres of activity: history and progress inside, and timeless anarchy outside’ (Vaughan-Williams 2009a:2). Indeed, this definition has held enormous influence over IR scholarship. As Smith has argued, IR’s assumption that it is possible to distinguish between inside and outside has enabled the discipline to write many of the most pressing issues in world politics out of its remit by redefining them as domestic rather than international concerns (Smith 2004:510). Walker’s (1993) seminal volume, Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory, presented an astute analysis of the way in which the inside-outside binary had been naturalised within the discipline and ‘treated as the inevitable ground from which necessities and possibilities must be engaged’, thereby dressing up a very particular reading of global politics as one with universal relevance (Walker 1993:161).
By making explicit some of IR’s hitherto relatively unexplored assumptions and demonstrating the effect that those assumptions have had (and continue to have) on the possibilities for theorising international politics, *Inside/outside* can arguably be considered to have influenced a generation of critical IR scholars. In the twenty years that have passed since its publication, extensive work has been done to continue the critique that Walker started. This work has consisted of both identifying aspects of the discipline that are constituted through the inside-outside framework and expanding the critical analysis of the disciplinary foundations which produce this and other aspects of IR’s conventional discourse.

One problem associated with an inside-outside model of the social which has received critical attention, and which has direct relevance to my research project, is that it carries within it an inference of homogeneity or sameness on the inside, following which difference is relegated to the outside. Inayatullah and Blaney (2004) argue that the inside-outside binary functions as IR’s strategy for ‘solving’ the problem of difference, by defining and delimiting it strictly as difference *between* states. This, they note, allows conventional IR to sideline the whole question of difference *within* the political communities that constitute states. Yet that difference as Other cannot be kept wholly outside; it:

> also appears as difference within, vitiating the presumed but rarely, if ever, achieved “sameness.” The other within the boundaries of the political community is “managed” by some combination of hierarchy, eradication, assimilation or expulsion, and tolerance. (Inayatullah and Blaney 2004:6)

As Inayatullah and Blaney point out, one outcome of the inside-outside binary is that since difference is presumed not to exist on the inside, any traces of otherness which do emerge must be dealt with, either by annulment (by being removed or assimilated) or by being kept in quarantine, tolerated perhaps, but always marked by their threatening otherness. Coutin connects the homogenising effect of the inside-outside framework with a specifically Westphalian conception of national territory, in which for example the wholeness of the national territory can only be maintained by the legal exclusion of migrants, although this exclusion itself represents an inconsistency which negates the wholeness which it should restore (Coutin 2010:201). Equally significant here, however, is the fact that though these ‘alien’ traces bear the marks of the outside as difference, conventional IR struggles to acknowledge or theorise them since the inside-outside model permits the discipline to focus solely on the external realm. The linked problems of inferred homogeneity on the inside, and the inability
of inside-outside IR to engage with elements of the external which have been relocated to the internal, are crucial when we think about how conventional IR deals, or doesn’t deal, with migrants and belonging, as I show in the remainder of this chapter and indeed the wider thesis.

An exploration of the ontological foundations of the inside-outside framework elaborates on its limitations. As Agnew has noted, ‘[t]he problem of “foundations” is a crucial one for any field, particularly perhaps one with as varied a possible repertoire of elementary sources as the study of world politics’ (Agnew 2007:139). Several ontological assumptions appear to reflect and sustain conventional IR’ inside-outside ontology, and five of these, I argue, can be shown to have critical relevance in the project which this thesis advances. I identify these five as the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion. This set does not of course represent the sum of assumptions made by conventional IR discourse, and doubtless others could be added to the list. Nonetheless, the five identified here serve to enunciate what I see as the key dimensions of the inside-outside ontology as it pertains to my central problematic (the virtual absence of belonging from conventional IR), and thus they achieve the task of illustrating my claims within the strict confines of my thesis. All of these ontological assumptions have been problematised by critical scholars in the two decades since the publication of Inside/Outside, though the dual tasks of displacing them from the discipline’s core and routinising the critical questioning of their status within IR theorising remain incomplete and urgent.

To take these in order I will start by considering the assumption of the nation-state. Many IR scholars within the mainstream have noted that the ‘nation-state’ is neither a true representation of contemporary political communities nor of those past (see e.g. Bull, H. 2002 [1977]:78; Carr 1945:38-51). Nonetheless, it remains the case that this figure is ubiquitous in conventional IR discourse, and that for all the acknowledgements of its inadequacy, it is still assumed that the nation-state is central to our understanding of global politics. Walker suggests that the endurance of the concept signifies its role as a ‘regulative ideal’ of what meaningful political community should be (Walker 2006:59). For Ragazzi, the nation-state has been accepted as an ‘ahistorical given’ which has allowed IR to overlook its inherent conflation and ‘the processes through which populations and “nations” are being constituted as the legitimate inhabitants of a territory through state-formation processes’. Those processes have consequently been left outside the study of
international politics (Ragazzi 2009:380). Moreover, the assumed centrality of the nation-state has meant that, for most of the discipline’s existence, few questions were asked about how the nation-state system came to be, or whether the realm of the international might be differently formulated (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2003:580).

The neat division of the social and the political into discrete spheres of ‘domestic and international’ has likewise received critical attention, and one current strand of IR research which has actively worked to counter this assumption has focused on the notion of ‘borders’. Several scholars have shown that an uncritical assumption of the border as a marker of the edge of the state in conventional IR makes possible ‘a view of that order as being divided between domestic and international realms and, notwithstanding aberrations from time to time, largely settled and stable’ (Vaughan-Williams 2009a:132; see also Adamson 2006; Albert et al. 2001; Andreas 2003; Salter 2004). This view both conceals the political (rather than natural) origins of the inside-outside binary and fails to capture the discernible shift in the location of the demarcation between the two spheres, which now takes place at so many sites from offshore to its biopolitical enactment on the body of the individual. Consequently, the assumption that global politics, and the social more broadly, can be neatly separated into discrete categories of domestic and international, though still routine in conventional IR discourse, is shown to be both problematic and politically constituted. I will revisit the critical literature on borders in the third section of this chapter.

In a similar manner, the ontological assumption of a foundational link between the nation-state and its physical manifestation in the form of sovereignty over an exclusive territory (territoriality) has been questioned. Agnew’s (1994) insightful essay on the ‘territorial’ trap demonstrated that nation, state and territory are not intrinsically linked. In this essay and in subsequent work, he illustrates this point with reference to the hierarchical power structures of pre-modern Europe, to the structure of kinship or tribal systems which are territorially fixed but not territorially exclusive, as well as to non-territorial nomadic systems, such as that established the Mongolian empire, and power networks such as the Hanseatic League (Agnew 2003). Each of these alternative systems of political organisation refutes the idea that political sovereignty is inevitably fixed, territorial and mutually exclusive.

Other critical scholars have drawn attention to the profound effects of the assumption of territoriality on our reading of social relations. In McNevin's words,
‘[i]f the spatial basis of political belonging were to be constructed and naturalized in terms other than territorial ones then our understanding of citizens and outsiders, irregular migrants amongst them, would necessarily be cast in different terms as well’ (McNevin 2009b:70). If, as Agnew and McNevin claim, the nation-state model and the idea of exclusive political authority over a territorial state provide an impoverished account of politics in a globalising era, then we might reasonably expect theories of globalisation to offer a more fitting model which escapes the territorial trap. However, Shah contends that, far from overcoming the territorial limitations of the state, globalisation theories serve to underline territory as the basis of political order through their equivalence of sovereignty and impermeable borders (Shah 2012:58).

A number of students of the discipline have turned their attention to an assumption of fixity within conventional IR scholarship, and these critiques have once again illustrated the political effects of the inside-outside binary. Fixity essentially marks the foundational status of the difference between inside and outside in conventional IR’s ontology. The assumption of fixity is thus linked to the static image produced by the binary: this is simply how the social world is. As noted by Wimmer and Glick-Schiller above, fixity allows IR scholars to eschew in-depth studies into how that purportedly fixed system came to be, and hence the contingency of an inside-outside account of the social and the political remains obscured from view. By underlining the ‘inseparability of knowledge claims about the shape of the world and the shaping of it’, Pasha and Murphy draw attention to another set of effects of the static inside-outside ontology in conventional IR thinking (Pasha and Murphy 2002:2). Because of the fixity of conventional IR’s knowledge claims, they intimate, issues such as global inequality remain invisible in much of the literature despite their very real presence within global politics, on the understanding that they, too, are simply manifestations of how the world is (Pasha and Murphy 2002). Other scholars critique the way in which the inside-outside binary translates into the assumption of fixity with regard to the world’s human population. Darby contrasts conventional IR’s Westphalian heritage, with its notions of the territorially bounded state inhabited by static people, with the historic and contemporary significance of movement—both of people and of their output in the form of capital, labour, values and ideas—in the social realm (Darby 2004:14). However, no matter how dominant the static worldview, or how extreme the theoretical and administrative efforts to impose boundaries of demarcation at the
limits of the territorial state, the reality is that ‘human activities move across those lines’ (Dalby 2005:425). An article by Doty takes up this critical point. By considering migration and migrants as ‘flows’, Doty encapsulates the problematising of fixed categories of inside and outside and the static conception of territorial and political space which the inside-outside binary conjures up (Doty 1996a). The problematic status of migrants in IR is critical to my analysis of belonging in this thesis, and is returned to below.

The presence of exclusion as one of conventional IR’s ontological constructs overlaps with some of the assumptions identified above. Most powerfully, it works in tandem with the assumption that the social can be divided into discrete spheres of domestic and international, which both requires and reproduces the notion of mutual exclusion. Logically, the borders which demarcate inside/domestic from outside/international can be understood as ‘procedures of exclusion [which] separate and differentiate’ (Bigo and Walker 2001:734). Exclusion is thus also attached to the notion of the delineated nation-state, whose integrity rests upon the idea that it possesses the sovereignty to enact and enforce the borders which mark out its uniqueness. Taking up Pasha and Murphy’s critique (above) of the way in which knowledge is implicated in the static underpinnings of the inside-outside binary, Chowdhry and Rai (2009) document the exclusion of the concept of race, and consequently of categories of people such as indigenous nations, from conventional IR theorising. Similarly, Gruffydd Jones calls attention to the exclusion of aspects of international politics such as the discipline’s own connections with imperialism and the colonial past (Gruffydd Jones 2006:2). Such exclusions are highly significant, as she points out,

> because the silences and omissions of IR do not arise from mere oversight or forgetfulness. It is not that IR knowledge is incomplete, and what is required is to fill in the gaps. Rather, there are systematic absences that are the product ... of a wilful amnesia. (Gruffydd Jones 2006:10)

In other words, the static nature of conventional IR’s inside-outside binary, together with its exclusionary tendencies, allow the blocking out of entire swathes of knowledge and the people who bear witness to them. In excluding certain aspects of its past in a ‘wilful amnesia’, it is also able to disregard any challenges with regard to its inside-outside reading of the social. The exclusionary tendency is critical for my project here, and in Chapters 2, 4 and 5 I explore its implications in the context of an autochthonous discourse of belonging.
In the cursory overview contained in the preceding paragraphs I have set out my understanding of how conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology, and the assumptions which reflect that ontology, underpin conventional IR’s concept of an inside-outside binary, and I have also shown how the binary has been contested by critical students of the discipline. I have given a few brief examples of contemporary issues in world politics (for example global inequality, migration and race) which expose the limitations imposed by this model on the discipline’s ability to engage with a broad conception of world politics, rather than the more narrowly defined arena which constitutes the conventional discourse of International Relations. None of these observations is new. I pointed out above, with reference to Bull’s (2002 [1977]) contemplation of the problematic nature of territoriality and the nation-state in theories of world politics, that conventional scholarship has long recognised at least some of these critiques regarding the discipline’s ontological assumptions.

In spite of the increasing voice of critical scholarship, however, a cursory glance at the current work of prominent conventional IR scholars, particularly those working on issues such as security, gives evidence that the ontological assumptions which sustain the inside-outside dichotomy are still prevalent. For example, a recent article by Robert Jervis exemplifies the continued reification of the nation-state in mainstream scholarship. Assessing the evidence on the use of force in contemporary politics, the author is able to conclude that the world is currently experiencing a ‘remarkably benign’ security environment only by dismissing non-state sources of violence (climate change, economic recession) and their effects on non-state actors (Jervis 2011:411). Mearsheimer’s recent publication on ‘lying’, which makes the case that it is acceptable (if regrettable) for leaders to lie in the anarchic realm of international politics yet unacceptable in the realm of domestic politics, shows that assumptions of a domestic-international dichotomy remain similarly entrenched (Mearsheimer 2011). The persistence of assumptions of fixity in conventional IR is similarly notable in a recent article by Walt. In considering a range of configurations of balance of power alliances which might develop within the context of the current unipolar system, he insists that alliances ‘are always a key feature of the international landscape’ (Walt 2009:86, italics added). It is clear that for Walt, change may only occur within the system; the system itself is static, a motionless container in which states manoeuvre in the endless process of making and breaking alliances.

Assumptions of territoriality have also continued to shape contemporary IR scholarship. In a co-authored study of the links between interstate territorial disputes
and full-scale war, Vasquez readily accepts that territoriality has a biological basis, stating merely that an examination of its biological foundation is ‘beyond the scope of political science (Vasquez and Sene 2003:277). This completely ignores the work of scholars, such as Agnew (1994), who have illustrated empirically the political origins of territoriality. Finally, a recent book by Acharya and Buzan on non-Western IR inadvertently illustrates the persistence of exclusion in IR, contrary to its own best intentions. While stressing lack of expertise as the reason why their volume doesn’t address the contributions of Middle Eastern and African scholarship to IR, the authors then attempt to justify this absence by suggesting that the latter’s ‘non-state history’ is of less relevance to the discipline than the Asian scholarship on which the volume focuses (Acharya and Buzan 2010:2). Despite their own ready acknowledgement of the problematic nature of such an assumption, their statement effectively excludes an entire continent from having anything to contribute to the field of IR.

What these brief examples demonstrate is that acknowledging the problematic status of the inside-outside model and the assumptions that sustain it is not the same as displacing them from their position of dominance in the study of world politics, hence the ongoing critique by critical students of the discipline. Explaining the durability of the conventional assumptions in the face of both the acknowledgement of their flaws and the expanding critical endeavour is beyond the scope of the thesis, but two contributory factors merit brief consideration. These concern the discipline’s pedagogical practices and the ways in which critical scholars situate themselves in the field. With regard to the first of these points, many introductory textbooks present the development of the discipline in a linear fashion, beginning with realism, liberalism and their variations first and then introduce critical perspectives as challenges to those pre-established theories (see e.g. Baylis et al. 2011, Brown and Ainley 2009, Burchill et al. 2013, Jackson and Sorensen 2010, Kegley and Blanton 2011, for examples). This ordering arguably has the effect of establishing those theoretical perspectives presented first (realism and liberalism) as the both the standard and the most important theories, while critical approaches are presented almost as afterthoughts, or as deviations from the standard. As de Carvalho et al note, though student textbooks are not usually considered as significant publications; they do much to perpetuate key assumptions of the discipline and often fail to incorporate research which challenges the accepted accounts (De Carvalho et al 2011).
The second point concerns the fact that critical scholars may themselves contribute unwittingly to the continued dominance of the mainstream by defining their work in relation to those theories. To remain with the previous example of the student textbook, the seductive nature of the linear account of IR theory is evident in Weber’s (2009) introductory textbook, *International Relations Theory: a Critical Introduction*. As an established critical scholar, Weber’s express intent in designing her textbook was to make students aware of the myths, or ‘apparent truths’, on which conventional IR theories are founded (2009:2). Nonetheless, she too follows the linear approach which presents first realism, then idealism, then constructivism, etc., thus effectively reinforcing the primacy of those theoretical approaches even whilst presenting a thorough critique of their foundations. On the other hand, Edkins and Zehfuss (2009) have demonstrated that it is possible to introduce students to critical perspectives on IR without passing through the linear trajectory in their textbook *Global Politics: a New Introduction*. Taking as one of its starting points the critical point of the inseparability of theory and practice, *Global Politics* eschews any ordering of IR theory by basing chapters on leading questions about international politics and amalgamating contemporary issues with a range of theoretical responses.

Having outlined the persistence of an inside-outside ontology and the assumptions which underpin it in the preceding paragraphs, this last example of Edkins and Zehfuss’ textbook demonstrates the efficacy of using new points of departure (in this case, issues-based questions), not merely to circumvent the dominant linear trajectory of IR theory, but also to present critical scholarship on its own merits. In the following sections of this chapter, and indeed the remainder of this thesis, I hope to show that asking questions about IR’s silence on the issue of belonging offers an equally fruitful point from which to call into question the continued presence of both model and assumptions in conventional IR scholarship.

**IR, Belonging and the Figure of the Migrant**

The preceding section of this chapter has sketched an outline of conventional IR discourse in which the ontological assumptions of the territorially manifested nation-state, a division between domestic and international realms and a fixed, exclusionary line of demarcation between the two, reflect an inside-outside ontology that produces a particular account of global politics and the social relations contained in it. This section now turns to take an initial look at my second sub-question, which
asks how the figure of the migrant helps to problematise conventional IR’s silence on
the issue of belonging. Where does the migrant fit into the inside-outside framework
outlined above? The short answer to this question appears to be ‘nowhere’. In the
following paragraphs I will show how I understand the migrant as a dislocatory
figure for conventional IR discourse.

Through its prevailing inside-outside framework, conventional IR discourse
starts out from a conception of the world in which territorially defined nation-states
(qua inside) and the international system of states (qua outside) are its primary
structures. People—as individuals or communities—thus necessarily appear as pre-
constituted members of one or other of those nation-states; since the international is
understood as a sphere which is devoid of community, there is literally nowhere else
for them to be. Moreover, the static ontology identified above means that they
(individuals, communities) are expected to remain in place (Hindess 2000:1494). At
least, the discourse offers no obvious account of movement which might facilitate
their dispersal beyond the nation-state borders, although border-crossing activities
such as war, trade or diplomacy feature extensively in IR theorising.

The figure of the migrant stands somewhat at odds in relation to an inside-
outside configuration of the social. Where does she belong? Huysmans agrees that
migrants ‘are a conundrum because they are both inside and outside of the political
communities where they live their lives’ (Huysmans 2006:107). Doty similarly notes
that the presence of strangers ‘defies the easy expedient of spatial segregation’ and as
such represents a challenge to the established order, both on the ground and within
IR theory (Doty 2003:26). While the inside-outside model assigns people to the
inside sphere, the assumption of fixity implies that those people inside have always
been there; they are not migrants. As a concrete body on the ground, the migrant
must belong somewhere, but there is no obvious place or analytical ground for the
migrant in the inside-outside model. The figure of the migrant thus represents a
dislocation for the inside-outside discourse of conventional IR.

Here I am referring specifically to the ‘international’ migrant who has crossed state borders and thus
appears, albeit fleetingly, within IR’s range of vision. Internal migration is certainly a growing
phenomenon, which accounts for a greater number of people than international migration (King and
Skeldon 2010). However, movement inside the nation-state is even more distant from the
conventional IR discourse than movement between states, and an investigation into how and why this
is so, is beyond the remit of this thesis. For our purposes here, a person only becomes a migrant once
she has left one nation-state and entered another, at which point she becomes problematic for an
inside-outside discourse, whose static logic she contradicts by traversing the border between the two.
If migrants and the questions that they raise about belonging are discursively construed as dislocations, then their arrival requires some kind of response, either to absorb, or explain, their presence within the terms of the dominant discourse, or as a counter-discourse, to contest the validity of the existing modes of accounting for the prevailing order and put forward alternative interpretations. Inayatullah and Blaney pointed out above that the ‘other’ which manages to enter the boundaries of the political community must be somehow managed so that the presumed homogeneity can be restored (Inayatullah and Blaney 2004:6). One way in which the dislocation might be absorbed is by underlining the ‘international’ qualities of the migrant. After all, on entering the second nation-state she comes to embody the outside, since she is extraneous to the community inside. However, as a marker of the international, she ought then to be the focus of IR scholarship, and yet her presence within the context of the inside/domestic makes the migrant an awkward subject for a discipline intent on studying only the outside/international.

Another way in which the dislocation might be covered over by the inside-outside framework would be to drop the status of ‘migrant’ altogether, thereby regarding anyone inside a nation-state as part of the community. But the assumptions of fixity and exclusion would appear to make that impossible. In fact, the question of when a person who has moved stops being a migrant and comes to be a part of the community in which she lives—in other words, comes to belong—is central to my research. As subsequent chapters of this thesis will make clear, the process of transformation from the status of migrant to that of insider is always unpredictable, uneven and subject to undoing, and that fact that this is so, is the result of a pervasive inside-outside framing of the social in which the difference between insiders and outsiders is foundational.

What, then, does conventional IR discourse do to resolve the challenge issued by the figure of the migrant and respond to its questions about belonging? It seems that where they cannot be ignored, migrants may be bracketed off as an economic issue and thereby removed from the realm of politics and the social (Aradau and Huysmans 2009). Alternatively, they may be consigned to a security discourse (Huysmans 1995; Vaughan-Williams 2008; Adamson 2006). For the most part, though, the conventional discourse simply resists engagement with the figure of the migrant, and the questions which migrants raise about belonging in IR remain unanswered. From this failure to engage with belonging we can conclude that conventional IR scholarship prioritises the division between inside and outside, and
the technical placement of migrants within the inside (therefore ‘beyond-IR’) that this division entails, over the international characteristics of those migrants. Yet in its silence on belonging we shouldn’t assume that IR has absolutely nothing to say. Rather than concluding that this is an empty silence, I want to suggest that it can be understood as an implicit discourse of belonging, which says only that belonging happens in the domestic sphere and doesn’t cross the territorial borders of the state, and nothing more.

The progressively migratory realities of a globalising world, and the challenges which these pose to an inside-outside conception of the social, indicate that a disciplinary position of non-engagement with the concept of belonging is unsustainable. If IR is to have something to contribute to contemporary discourses of global politics, it must recognise and account for the increasingly critical role played by migrants and migration (Castles and Miller 2009:3), and here belonging cannot be avoided. It therefore seems imperative that IR scholars should not only confront the limitations of the discipline’s conventional logic and the ontological assumptions which underpin this, but should also acknowledge the empirical impact that its discourse has on the subjects which it chooses to theorise, or in this case, not to theorise. As the preceding paragraphs demonstrate, the figure of the migrant represents a dislocation for conventional IR, which problematises the inside-outside discourse and demands a response to the question of where migrants might belong in IR theory. In order to find that response, we need to uncover IR’s implicit discourse of belonging.

CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS IN THE DISCOURSE OF IR

Though conventional IR discourse, and the notion of the inside-outside binary in particular, still have considerable influence in contemporary IR scholarship, since the early 1980s the ‘critical turn’ in International Relations theorising has facilitated the asking of a whole new range of questions. The critical stance has also allowed students of the discipline to turn their attention to the way in which IR has constructed itself as a field and the problems contained in the resulting knowledge structures. In the following paragraphs I will attempt to show how critical scholarship has worked to destabilise the inside-outside ontology and to denaturalise its ontological assumptions by looking at critical approaches which can be loosely grouped around the topics of borders, security and citizenship. I will then identify
what I see as gaps in this body of work, and finally I will demonstrate the ways in which this project hopes to make contributions to critical scholarship in this area.

Rengger and Thirkell-White point out that much of the early critical literature drew on scholarship from outside the field of International Relations (2007:6). Today, while the ties with academic schools beyond the borders of the discipline are still strong (and, it should be added, these should be regarded as a positive rather than a negative state of affairs), it is possible to discern several distinctly ‘IR’ strands of critical thought which have contested the discipline’s dominant inside-outside discourse. Of particular relevance to this thesis is the growing literature concerning the conception and role of borders in IR, mentioned briefly in the previous section of this chapter. Here, work by scholars such as Vaughan-Williams, Walters and Williams has reconfigured our conceptualisation of borders in general and destabilised the notion of state borders as unproblematic delineators of the end of the domestic and the start of the international, as well as unmasking the ‘politically and ethically charged’ nature of the concept of the state border. Vaughan-Williams has explored Balibar’s claim that borders ‘are no longer at the border’ (1998, cited in Vaughan-Williams 2009b:729) and has introduced the concept of the ‘generalised biopolitical border’ to emphasise the extent to which the functions of the border are now ‘intimately linked to the bodies of those in transit, as mobile as the subjects they seek to control, and not merely confined to the outer edges of sovereign territory’ (2009a:166; see also Vaughan-Williams 2007; 2008, 2009b).

Like Vaughan-Williams, Walters tracks the ‘delocalization’ of border control functions, which are dispersed away from the territorial border and embedded into other, often private/non-state sites such as that of transportation (Walters 2006:189). He also acknowledges the significance of the technological and surveillance developments which have contributed to the securitization of borders. At the same time, he cautions against a critical research agenda which focuses solely on such biometric or digital developments, which tend to produce ‘a rather linear and developmentalist narrative about borders’ (Walters 2011:146). This risks diverting attention from other forms of border which are materialising, both separately from and in response to such hi-tech border systems. Here Walters gives the example of the humanitarian border, which emerges not as a straightforward response to the increased securitisation of the border, but rather at times also embodies and endorses aspects of securitization. The point is illustrated with the example of an Italian humanitarian NGO’s co-operation with demands by local police that they deliver
their humanitarian assistance to undocumented migrants at a single site, where they could be more easily managed and monitored for security purposes, rather than in the homes of local families, which would have the effect of dispersing them (Walters 2011:148). Walters’ work clearly shows how bordering practices can be incorporated into the sites of everyday life, and he also demonstrates the difficulties in discerning the degree to which members of civil society can be complicit in upholding and advancing such practices.

Williams brings an ethical engagement with the subject of borders to the critical literature (Williams 2006, 2003). The ‘invisibility’ of territorial borders in a large part of IR scholarship, evidenced by the lack of critical attention that has been paid to them, indicates that they have been treated simply as material facts, as ‘part of the fixtures and fittings of the international system’ (2006:20). As a result, it has been possible to ignore the human agency involved in their creation and maintenance. To counter this tendency, thinking of borders as social practices and institutions allows the student of international relations to consider their ethical and normative implications. This, Williams stresses, need not lead to a negative view of borders as inherently unethical. Rather, he points out that viewing them as social practices means that borders can be evaluated, and the ethical and unethical practices associated with them can be differentiated and held up for scrutiny (Williams 2003).

The inside-outside framework posits the crossing of the nation-state border as both the trigger for migrant status and the point at which migrants seem to enter and disappear from IR’s range of vision. Consequently, efforts by these scholars and others to dispel assumptions of borders as natural, static ‘facts’ potentially herald dramatic changes to the discursive treatment of the migrant in IR. At the same time, however, this line of enquiry remains focused on what might be termed a conventional (albeit under-researched) locus of IR theorising. In other words, critical border studies, though powerful, largely adhere to a framework which critiques the concept of the border within the terms of the conventional inside-outside binary. The point is conceded by Vaughan-Williams, who acknowledges that in proposing the generalized biopolitical border as a way of reconceptualising borders he risks merely substituting a new framework for the conventional model whilst failing to escape its underlying logic (Vaughan-Williams 2009a:156-7).

Before moving on to look briefly at the critical security and citizenship scholarship, I want to pay closer attention to the point about inside-outside and its
conventional sites of demarcation, because it is one which will return frequently in this thesis. As I have explained, an inside-outside ontology sets up a model of the social in which the point of demarcation between the two spheres of inside and outside is the territorial border of the nation-state. Thus, an individual becomes a migrant when she crosses any such line of demarcation. Conventional IR assumes therefore that it is at those same points of demarcation—and only at those points—that the sorting out of inside from inside occurs. As the figure of the migrant insists, however, this model is inadequate in contemporary world politics (even setting aside the issue of whether indeed it has ever been adequate). The largely ubiquitous presence of migrants around the globe demonstrates that it is no longer realistic, or sufficient, to insist that inside and outside are separate domains that can be neatly demarcated from each other. Nor can we assume that the acts of demarcation are limited to the places that the conventional discourse points to as sites of demarcation (borders, immigration, security). Rather, as the overview of Walters’ work above shows, the inside-outside ontology permeates all aspects of social reality, so that even discourses that are ostensibly unconcerned with the demarcation of domestic from international (for example the arts, health, education) may come implicitly to incorporate line-drawing techniques and processes. This matters to IR, in that it invalidates the notion that only select areas of politics should be of interest to IR scholarship, and that others, such as belonging, are beyond its remit. The point is one that I will return to below.

A second, and closely linked, strand of critical discourse explores the inside-outside model through an engagement with established notions of security. Adamson (2006) notes that migrants feature prominently on the international security agenda, where they are frequently constructed as ‘vectors of threat’ (Salter 2004:72). The critical scholarship examines the way in which this rendering as security threat takes place, and highlights the impact that this has on the lives of migrants, especially those in the West. Huysmans writes that the securitization of migrants ‘depends on instituting credible claims that they are an important factor endangering the survival of political units’ (2006:47). Consequently, the security of the national community can only be assured by stressing migrants as a threat to its existence, in other words by placing that community in the discursive context of existential insecurity (ibid.).

---

5 Salter uses this terms to refer to the dangers of mobility, but it has equal resonance here.
These security-oriented interventions have shown that although the conventional discourse still behaves as though it is constituted to defend inside from outside, its technologies operate at the heart of the domestic rather than at the nominal border of the state. So, for example, following 9/11 Bigo writes that the US government increased surveillance of and suspicion towards some of the many migrants residing in its territory, which indicates a ‘structural indistinction between internal and external’ which is at odds with inside-outside ontology (Bigo 2005:71). Bigo’s work repeatedly stresses the blurring of the line between internal and external security (Bigo 2001, 2002, 2005). These can now be seen to be converging, with significant implications for the migrant and who gets to count as a migrant (Bigo 2002:63). Moreover, this blurring or convergence is occurring not because terrorism, illegal immigration and such security challenges are themselves converging, but rather through a combination of transformations in the social world and in the way in which security actors/experts construct such changes in the language of threats (Bigo 2001:122). Thus, agents of security can be understood as having a direct interest in the discursive blurring of the boundaries and the resulting problematisation of migrants and migration that it infers.

Despite the blurring of the boundaries, the securitization of migrants still appears to have internal and external dimensions, as can be seen in Huysmans and Buonfino’s (2008) study of the securitization of migrants in the context of the British discourse on immigration. The authors identify two kinds of discursive problematisation of immigration. The first of these, which appears to embody an external dimension, is a ‘politics of exception’. This concerns existential threats to the community and the ‘exceptional’ strategies, justified and deployed by the state on the grounds of that threat, as well as the new compromises between security and freedom, which result from the exceptional strategies. A second, more internally oriented dimension, the ‘politics of unease’, concerns ‘less pronounced’ responses to the more mundane security threats posed by migrants, such as the introduction of compulsory biometric identity cards for many migrants. Huysmans and Buonfino stress that the importance of the more mundane ‘politics of unease’ should not be underplayed, since although it appears to operate within the confines of ‘normal, routine governmental practice’ (2008:782) it nonetheless reproduces an understanding of migrants as a risk to the community and thus as fitting targets for security measures.
Though this strand of critical scholarship provides some much-needed illumination of the problematic association of migrants with security discourse and the apparent normalisation of the association which ensues, we might here too point out that this research programme remains largely within the definitional framework of an inside-outside discourse. From this perspective, we can see how ‘security’ and ‘securitization’ fall in line with mainstream expectations of where we might look for the demarcation of outside from inside. Such sites are put forward by the binary as the points of demarcation. By way of contrast, what I argue in this thesis is that the politics of marking off inside from outside, as demonstrated here with reference to the discourse of belonging, takes place right across the social, both at those sites conventionally construed as points of demarcation and those which may appear initially to be anything but. So while the critical security literature makes significant contributions to the work of problematising traditional notions of security, it, too, remains within the parameters set by the conventional inside-outside view of politics.

A third strand of enquiry which challenges the conventional discourse of IR concerns the developing ‘critical citizenship’ literature. Doty’s extensive work on immigration illustrates the connections between the three loose categorisations given here of borders, security and citizenship, with a relentless focus on the way in which IR theory, as activated through Western statecraft, both produces and sanctions specific practices of exclusion in relation to immigrants of all statuses (see for example Doty 1996b, a, 1999b, a, 2003, 2011). Her work has consistently argued that racist and exclusionary discourses of identity, of the national community and of the immigration and securitization practices which delineate both, must be seen as integral to conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology. Like Doty’s work (and in fact a significant part of the critical citizenship literature), Squire has looked at the way in which particular categories of migrants ask new questions of the conventional understandings of citizenship. The categories of migrant examined in this strand of the critical citizenship literature are predominantly those which might be considered ‘exceptional’; the asylum seeker, refugee and undocumented migrants, who can rightly be considered to be the most marginal of an already marginal section of society. Squire has focused on the ambiguous figure of the asylum seeker to demonstrate how the discursive problematisation of certain kinds of migrant relies on an exclusionary politics which ‘becomes caught in a self-fulfilling cycle’, first securitising the asylum seeker as a ‘threat’ and then criminalising her in response to that perceived threat (Squire 2009; see also Squire 2011). She underlines the point
that figures such as the threatening foreigner play ‘a constitutive role in defining the limits of citizenship and political community’ (2009:4).

The seemingly natural relationship between citizenship and the state has been problematised by scholars who consider citizenship from a technological perspective. Nyers builds on the notion that ‘any technology can be assessed based on the accidents it produces’ to interrogate the concept of birthright citizenship which, he avers, constitutes a border technology which facilitates the sorting of populations (Nyers 2006:23,35). Accidental birthright citizenship refers to the assignation of citizenship to those who are not ‘really’ entitled to assume the link between birth and belonging (here particularly those whose parents are migrants). The potential for accidental citizenship to be problematised or removed calls into question both the arbitrariness of the supposedly essential connection between birthplace and the rights which it embodies, and the very binary nature of a system constructed through the citizen/non-citizen dichotomy (2006:37-8). Using a similarly technological approach, Weber uses the idea of ‘safe citizenship’, by which she refers to the ‘practical packaging of citizenship as part of a design for safe living’ to examine how citizenship functions as a design in contemporary state-civil society relations in the USA (Weber 2008:126). In this way, Weber illustrates the symbiotic relationship between safe citizenship design and state/society relations. She identifies three current designs, which correspond to the organisation of social relations under conditions of sovereignty, discipline and networks (2008:128). If, as Weber suggests, a successful design is one which becomes invisible, then the current proliferation of public debates and scholarly work on citizenship indicates that all three of the citizenship designs currently in circulation is failing. By confronting citizenship from an angle which denaturalises not so much its content but how it functions in contemporary society, these technological critiques expose to contestation the sedimented practices which uphold the exclusionary powers of citizenship in an inside-outside framing of the social.

Of the critical literature on citizenship, a series of articles by McNevin is most closely related to the arguments put forward this thesis, in that she is one of the few scholars currently looking at belonging. Her work conceives of citizenship as a facet of ‘political belonging’, which she defines as capturing ‘the connections between political community, political identity and political practice’ (2006:135), but which in her usage seems to represent formal or otherwise legitimated membership of a political community. McNevin’s work shares Squire’s focus on the way in which
irregular migrants contest the institution of citizenship as an embedded mode of political ordering, and through their contestations invoke alternative accounts of citizenship/modes of belonging (McNevin 2006, 2009a, b).

These two (technological and exceptional categories) strands of critical scholarship on citizenship offer much food for thought. Such work has significantly opened up new perspectives on the concept and has revealed the contingency of the structures which define the mainstream approach to citizenship. There seem to be two related absences from the critical citizenship literature, however. These concern a sustained consideration of the concept of belonging, and work which looks at the figure of the legal migrant, who fits neither the ‘exceptional’ category of the undocumented or asylum-seeking migrant (as in the work by Squire, McNevin and Doty, to name but a few) nor the birthright citizen who features in the work by Nyers and Weber, for example. The point is returned to below.

Given the range of scholarship already dedicated to the critique of conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology, what can my project hope to add to the critical literature? There are, I suggest, three ways in which my thesis will make a modest contribution. The first of these concerns the research site. Although the critical IR research identified in this chapter is aimed at dispelling or dislodging the logic of inside-outside and thereby dismantling the strict demarcation of domestic issues from international issues, it largely conducts its critique through an engagement with sites of politics such as borders and security. As I discussed above, these are arguably the places at which the discipline’s conventional, inside-outside framework tells us we should expect the demarcation of outside from inside to take place. Wæver makes the point that much poststructuralist and constructivist IR scholarship, though intent on displacing a worldview which conceives of domestic and international as discrete spheres of politics by revealing the interconnectedness of the two, still begins ‘from without’ (Wæver 2005:34); i.e. what might be conceived as the conventional locus of IR scholarship. He argues that ‘it is in line with poststructuralism and other forms of radical constructivism to study how worlds are constructed from within as well as from without’ (ibid.).

In contrast to the work on borders and security, the critical citizenship literature may seem to offer an approach that is more in line with Wæver’s idea of
studying ‘how worlds are constructed from within’. What this still misses, however, is that the terms ‘within’ and ‘without’ maintain the very distinction between the two categories of inside and outside, or domestic and international, that critical scholarship seeks to problematise. To avoid this, my thesis steps away from the expected sites of analysis to examine belonging and the treatment of migrants in British housing discourse, which conventional IR would suggest to be a site of exclusively ‘domestic’ politics. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate that ‘inside’, ‘outside’ and efforts to draw the line between the two spheres are products of discourse built on a particular set of ontological assumptions, and as such they can be—and are—found in all aspects of the social and the political.

My second contribution is one of empathy. Murphy expresses his disappointment over the fact that so few contemporary critical IR scholars inhabit the same social worlds as the disadvantaged groups that their work purports to both theorise and to ‘emancipate’ in the loose sense of the word (2007:125). He sees it as regrettable ‘that many of us have not chosen to pursue life experiences that might link us more closely to the world’s least advantaged and, therefore, to their politics’ (p128), and urges that in future the critical IR academy should ‘learn to speak to more audiences, and to learn from them, to commit ourselves . . . deeply to empathetic understanding of the larger world’ (Murphy 2007:130-1). My research responds in a small way to Murphy’s plea. My own (privileged and entirely voluntary) experiences of becoming and being a migrant led directly to my subsequent decision to work ‘back at home’ with migrants from ‘elsewhere’ whose experience of (im)migration was almost invariably less privileged and more problematic than mine. That work has given me an acute awareness of the ways in which the politics of belonging are played out through everyday, domestic discourses. I have never experienced the physical, emotional, economic or structural violence which compels many migrants to make their way to the increasingly hostile shores of Britain, and thus I can never know exactly how it is to be a migrant in 21st century Britain. However, I have had enough glimpses of that world to understand that it is seldom the kind of existence that I would wish for myself. First as a volunteer support worker, then refugee services co-ordinator and subsequently project manager of a migrant support project, I have observed the workings of the British discourse of belonging at close quarters. I have advocated for seriously ill individuals denied

---

* Hindess makes the point that citizenship has an external function as a marker which facilitates the governance of people in an international system as well as its inward-facing, rights-incurring function (Hindess 2000).
medical attention for their treatable conditions on the basis that their immigration status (i.e. their non-belonging) disqualified them from assistance. I have tried to assist migrants workers caught out by the complexities of a bureaucratic system, seemingly designed to prevent them from accessing resources to which they were legally entitled. I have supported families made destitute by ‘the system’, too frightened to protest in case they should be deported back to an even worse fate in the country to which they nominally belong.

At the same time, my own comparatively positive encounters with migration demonstrate that is not just the mere fact of ‘migrantness’—of being out of place, according to an inside-outside framework—which triggers a hostile discourse of belonging, but rather the inherently political rendering of migrants in specific ways which follows from a particular set of assumptions (or fantasies) about how the world is/should be ordered. My experiences bear witness that the ‘othering’ of migrants is not a ‘natural’ phenomenon, though I have been told often enough by public officials in Britain that this is the case. By drawing on my own experience, limited though it may be, and by ensuring that my theoretical constructs are applied to the ‘concrete analysis’ of an everyday context which also tries to incorporate the voices of those who have first-hand experience of the British politics of belonging, my thesis aims at the ‘empathetic understanding of the larger world’ that Murphy calls for.

The final way in which this thesis hopes to add to the literature is its focus on the concept of belonging. As discussed above, McNevin’s papers are a rare example of scholarship which takes belonging as a central concept, though others mention belonging almost in passing (McNevin 2006, 2009a, b; Doty 2003; Weber 2008). My contribution to the work that has been started is to consider belonging as separate from, and often contradictory towards, citizenship. I will try to demonstrate in this thesis that treating citizenship and belonging as if they are either isomorphic or two aspects of the same phenomenon masks the politics at work in discourses which conflate the two or disentangle them. Importantly I think—and here too my thesis differentiates itself from much of the critical citizenship work—I will illustrate the problematic politics of belonging by focusing on migrants who have some level of formal status and thus a degree of citizenship rights (legal and social), rather than those who have either exceptional status or are majority community citizens. In doing so I hope to prompt some new questions on the relationship between political community and the politics of belonging.
CHAPTER CONCLUSION

How far does this chapter take us towards the objective of unravelling the puzzle of belonging in IR? In the first section of this chapter I discussed the significance of conventional IR’s ‘inside-outside’ ontology and identified a set of ontological assumptions which seem to promote and underpin an inside-outside reading of the social. According to this reading, the concept of belonging belongs on the inside, and thus conventional IR, which looks only at the outside, can produce no explicit account of it. I also pointed out the apparently foundational status of the difference between inside and outside, which is manifest in the static model of the inside-outside binary. Consequently, I claimed that the ontological assumptions which structure the conventional discourse of IR act to exclude belonging from the discipline’s remit.

In the second section I claimed that the figure of the migrant, as marker of the international, effects a dislocation in the inside-outside model, and thus a study of this figure offers a good opportunity to analyse how IR deals with belonging in practice. While the conventional discourse of IR may have no explicit discourse of belonging, I suggested that its silence on the issue is not empty but can rather be construed as the traces of an implicit discourse of belonging. Consequently, by focusing on migrants and observing the way in which they are placed in and through discourses of belonging and in relation to an inside-outside ontology, the social and political practices that emerge from the discipline’s formal silence to shape its implicit discourse can be uncovered. I finally offered an overview of some of the contemporary critical scholarship which is working to problematise the unquestioning acceptance of the conventional IR model of politics and society. In this body of work, however, I noted that the issue of belonging has not yet been tackled in depth, and consequently this thesis takes up the challenge.

With these conclusions in mind, the next chapter will introduce the concept of autochthony and its discourse of belonging. As I will demonstrate, this discourse, which is mobilised via everyday resource claims, appears to draw on similar ontological assumptions to those which structure conventional IR’s inside-outside discourse. Like conventional IR, autochthony also restricts belonging to the inside of the binary. Thus it seems possible that the autochthonous discourse of belonging might offer some kind of ‘mirror image’ or reflection of IR’s implicit discourse of belonging. Moreover, the figure of the migrant is clearly positioned in autochthonous
discourse as the ultimate outsider, which makes it interesting here given my identification of the migrant as a dislocatory figure for conventional IR discourse.

Chapter 2 will look at the literature on autochthony and will identify the key characteristics of an autochthonous discourse. Here I will suggest that where an inside-outside ontology prevails, as it does in autochthony discourse, efforts to draw the line between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ are not restricted to the conventional points of demarcation between the two spheres, but rather come to affect and condition all aspects of the social. This is underlined by the centrality of resource claims in autochthony discourse. Consequently, autochthony discourse offers the opportunity to use a non-traditional site for examining the effects of an inside-outside ontology on the politics of belonging. Subsequent chapters will then provide a critical analysis of British housing as an example of autochthonous discourse in order to tease out its implications for conventional IR discourse. As the following chapters and the case study will show, if IR fails to investigate the matter of belonging and consequently leaves unexamined the ontological assumptions which underpin its silence, the discipline risks accepting—or even endorsing—an autochthonous account of belonging.
CHAPTER 2:  
THE CONCEPT AND DISCOURSE OF AUTOCHTHONY

This chapter provides an introduction to the concept and discourse of autochthony. In the preceding chapter I argued that conventional IR discourse draws on an inside-outside ontology, and an underlying set of ontological assumptions, in which the distinction between inside and outside is foundational and the two spheres represent separate domains that can be neatly demarcated from each other. This ontology precludes conventional IR from producing an explicit discourse of belonging, since belonging is considered to exist on the ‘inside’. Locating belonging in this way, however, suggests the traces of an implicit discourse of belonging. I claimed that the international migrant is a dislocatory figure for conventional IR, since she problematises the notion that inside and outside can be separated in this way, and that consequently this figure offers a useful focal point for exploring conventional IR’s implicit discourse of belonging.

Having made those claims, the purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that the discourse of autochthony constitutes a credible approximation of what that implicit discourse might look like, if it were to be made explicit. To do this, in the following sections I will show that, like conventional IR discourse, autochthony discourse draws on an inside-outside ontology in which the difference between the two spheres is understood to be foundational. I will demonstrate that migrants also represent a dislocatory figure in this discourse, and that attempts to resolve the problem of the migrant within autochthony discourse demonstrate the impossibility of its inside-outside ontology. That impossibility is however largely concealed by the presence of a fantasy of the fulfilled and harmonious community, which I will call the Elysian fantasy. First, however, I will introduce the concept of autochthony, which is largely unexplored in disciplinary IR. I will identify its key characteristics and its mode of operationalisation in preparation for the case study which I will present in Chapters 4 and 5.

DEFINING AND DIFFERENTIATING AUTOCHTHONY

In this section I will give a summarised definition of the concept of autochthony. In order to clarify why I am using this term and not any related term, I will also briefly describe how autochthony differs from the similar concepts of
nativism and indigeneity. An extended consideration of the concept will be given in subsequent sections of this chapter.

What is autochthony? The term comes from the Greek autos (‘self’) and khthon (‘earth’) (Zenker 2009:704). Meaning ‘from the soil itself’, it evokes an intimate, aboriginal connection with the land, such that autochthons are sometimes described as sons of the soil (Jackson 2006:97). The term autochthon was expressly coined by the Athenians of classical Greece as a means of distinguishing themselves from the citizens of other city-states through the claim to be the only city-state in the Greek realm whose citizens had always occupied the lands on which they now lived (Loraux 2000).

Following that illustrious birth, in contemporary usage the concept of autochthony has come to signify belonging which is acquired through ancestral links to, or rootedness in, the land, where that land is considered to constitute the space of the autochthonous community. Importantly, this rootedness must be originary, in the sense that the true autochthon’s ancestors were the first inhabitants or possessors of the land, and that they had never lived anywhere else. Thus, an autochthon is someone who can prove that they are living in the land which has always been their ancestral home. The antonym to autochthon, which is allochthon, describes someone who is not living in their ancestral homeland, or who cannot prove their ancestral roots in the place where they are currently living. There is, however, a second part to the contemporary usage of autochthony, and that concerns the right to resources. Resources are reserved for autochthons. If a person can prove their status and ancestral rootedness, then they are entitled to make resource claims on the land. Conversely, the allochthon has no right to make such resource claims.

In the following sections I will expand on a number of points which emerge from this cursory overview. I will also identify its key characteristics and show how it is operationalised. Here, however, it is already apparent that from the time of its Athenian coining, the autochthonous concept of belonging has been essentially formed by an inside-outside ontology which assumes a foundational difference between the two spheres. In classical Athens, the Athenians were differentiated from all others by the claim to foundational rootedness and difference. The same holds in the present usage. In both cases, ‘inside’ is understood as the territorial expanse in relation to which claims to autochthony can be made, while ‘outside’ is anything beyond that. The concept combines fixity with exclusion; you are either an
autochthon (and thus an insider) or an allochthon (and consequently an outsider). There is no in-between category and no hybrid position. Since the link between land and people was formed and fixed in the past, the difference between inside and outside can be seen as perpetual and thus foundational.

Before moving on to a closer inspection of the concept of autochthony, the similarities between autochthony, nativism and indigeneity merit some consideration. The concept of nativism is frequently used in the literature on autochthony (see for example Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Mbembe 2001). It has been described as a combination of nationalism’s idea of the nation as a distinct group attached to a common homeland, history, language, religion, values, traditions and national symbols, with xenophobia’s conception that people from outside this group represent a threat to the nation (Mudde 2007:19; Guibernau 1996:43). While there appears to be a large overlap between autochthony and nativism, nativism lacks a specific requirement of exclusive resource rights. Moreover, there is a slight, but significant, difference regarding the historical dimension. While historical connections between land and people appear to be essential to the definition of nativism, the requirement of being the first inhabitants or possessors of the land, i.e. having absolute priority in time, isn’t evident.

Separating indigeneity from autochthony is more problematic. The two terms share the notion of historical rootedness going right back to the first inhabitants of the land, as well as the idea of being ethnically and culturally distinct from all other groups, and of having resource rights based on that rootedness (Pelican 2009:52). The concepts of indigeneity and autochthony do thus appear to have the same content. What differentiates the two, however, is their application and current discursive usage. Indigeneity is generally used to describe groups which, having been marginalised and dispossessed in their own lands, are pursuing a discourse based on claims for inclusion to reclaim some recognition of their status and rights, as is the case for example with the Aborigines in Australia or Canada’s First Nations. In contrast, discourses of autochthony are largely advanced by dominant groups who fear that they may become marginalised in the future and are pursuing a discourse of

---

7 The issue is further complicated in the Francophone world by the fact that although both ‘allogène’ and ‘allochtone’ are used as antonyms to ‘autochtone’, the term ‘indigène’ (which suggests itself as the logical antonym for allogène) is avoided since it still bears negative connotations as result of its colonial use (Pelican 2009:54). The French-language version of the United Nations (UN) Declaration uses the term ‘autochtone’ to refer to the peoples that its English-language version are termed ‘indigenous’ (Bellier 2009).
exclusion in order to protect their dominant status (Bellier 2011:205; Gausset et al. 2011:139; Pelican 2009).

From the above comparison we can see that while autochthony and indigeneity may be very similar conceptually, the discourses which emerge from the two terms are very different, with the latter based on a politics of inclusion and the former based on a politics of exclusion. The distinction is important, not just because it clarifies the two terms and the difference between them, but also because it illustrates that a given set of factors—here land, ancestry and resource rights—can be articulated and politicised in many different ways. It is not the factors themselves which dictate how a discourse will be constructed and developed, but rather the politics of those who exploit the discourse and fantasies which motivate them. This point will be returned to below and in subsequent chapters.

The brief description of autochthony given in this section has elucidated three key aspects of the concept, namely its inside-outside ontology based on an assumption of foundational difference between the two spheres, the importance of land and ancestry as markers of belonging, and the link between autochthonous belonging and resource rights. The following sections will elaborate on the concept’s characteristics and the ways in which it is mobilised in an exclusionary discourse.

**WHAT MAKES A DISCOURSE AUTOCHTHONOUS? IDENTIFYING KEY LOGICS**

Based on my reading of the literature, I will show in this section that the concept of autochthony contains four interlinked ideas, which I name as the *logics of genus, impurity, entitlement* and *victimhood*. In brief, the *logic of genus* defines ‘us’ via the fundamental principle of ancestral rootedness. Moreover, since the autochthonous community has always been rooted there and has never moved, genus implies that the community is fixed, distinct and pure. Because of its fixed and pure nature, the autochthonous community is vulnerable to contamination and corruption, and this vulnerability is captured by the *logic of impurity*. Impurity results from the presence of allochthons, whose absolute otherness inevitably contaminates the community, and thus threatens its survival. The *logic of entitlement* assigns all resource rights to those who properly belong to the community (the autochthons), while the *logic of victimhood* conveys the suffering of the community when allochthons arrive and exploit resources to which they are not entitled.
In the following sub-sections I will argue that the four logics are always present to some degree in autochthonous discourse, though one or more may predominate at a given time. Using examples from contemporary discourses of autochthony I will demonstrate how these logics are activated to convey the politics of autochthony. The sub-sections will conclude that genus is probably the least visible of the four, being largely ‘taken as given’, and is most easily recognised through references to history, to being ‘born and bred’, or perhaps through the collective ‘we’. Conversely, statements about perceived impurity will be shown to be closer to the surface in expressions of unwelcome change and deterioration, as well as the need for rectification. The paragraphs will demonstrate that entitlement is closely aligned with claims of genus, which it follows as a logical outcome, since being a member of the community of belonging gives rise to an automatic entitlement to a share of resources. Likewise, I will show that victimhood is expressed as a logical consequence of impurity (the threat of contamination by allochthons), which automatically results in a loss for those who belong.

I hope to show in what follows that, both separately and together, these logics embody autochthony’s inside-outside definition of belonging, since each is premised upon the notion of a foundational difference between insider (the autochthon) and outsider (the allochthon). As will become apparent, autochthony’s outsider or allochthon is always the migrant, since to be a migrant is to hail from, and thus be rooted, elsewhere. Consequently, migrants can never belong in the discourse of autochthony, and are always subject to its politics of exclusion.

**Genus and the Thread of History**

The first logic that I will introduce here is that of genus. Genus constitutes ‘an irreducible difference’ between members of the autochthonous community and all others (Lópız Caballero 2009:175). I will show how this logic involves claims of historical fixity and communal purity, and thus establishes the boundaries that mark off autochthonous insiders from everyone else. I will suggest that it provides the foundations for the concept of autochthony, on the basis of which the rather more forceful claims of impurity, entitlement and victimhood can be pursued.

The autochthonous struggles of the present are ‘deeply entrenched in history’, and securing a valid connection to territory through history is critical to any claim to autochthony (Boås 2009:21). The attempt to make that connection takes on
many forms. In Côte d’Ivoire, the formal introduction of the concept of ‘Ivoirité’ (being genuinely Ivoirian) in the 1990s meant that proof of autochthony required the possession of an identity card that had been authorised by the elders of a person’s ancestral village. Those unable to prove their links to a village would have to be considered an outsider, since “whoever claims to be Ivoirian must have a village”, as one official put it (Geschière 2009:98). For the Rwandophone communities in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), the matter of historically proving claims to autochthony has been particularly hard. Coming from the edge of the vast territory that now constitutes the Congolese state and sharing cross-border ethnic ties, their status as autochthons—and thus their derived rights to Congolese citizenship—has fluctuated as successive governments have changed the cut-off point at which a group had to be able to prove its presence on Congolese territory to qualify as autochthonous. As this date has changed (from 1960 to 1908 to 1885, then back to 1960), so too has the ability of Rwandophones to produce historical ‘proof’ in the form of maps or colonial documentation with which to avoid the charge of allocchthony (Jackson 2006, 2007).

From the latter example we can already see that claims to originary ancestral rootedness, whilst fixed in theory, are open to manipulation, both on the part of those directing the discourse and on the part of those trying to prove their status as autochthons. Who can prove that their ancestors have always and forever lived in the same place? Even in the time of the Athenians, the claim to originary ancestral rootedness was political rather than factual. Both Thucydides and Herodotus repeated the Athenian claims of distinction because of their autochthonous status, but both of these writers also mentioned the Athenian policy of integrating foreigners, the presence of refugees of war in other city-states, and the boasts of Athens’ noble families who prided themselves on their foreign origins (Loraux 2000:22, Herodotus 1959:Book 7.161; Thucydides 1956:5). For a study of the politics of autochthony this foundational fabrication is critical. The realisation that the concept has always been based on false claims underscores both the impossibility of autochthony’s fundamental precept of static rootedness and the very political motivations for resorting to such falsehoods that have characterised the discourse from its inception.

---

8 To claim Ivoirité a person had to be born on Ivoirian territory to parents who both belonged to an ‘autochthonous’ ethnic group.

9 Peoples of Rwandan or Burundese heritage, which includes Hutu and Tutsi, many of whom have lived for generations on Congolese territory. Rwandophones are sometimes called Banyamulenge, although the two are slightly different (Jackson 2007).
Geschiere notes that while autochthony needs history, it can be difficult to ‘fix the flow that emerges from any historical narrative’ (Geschiere 2009:103). The problem of fixing the flow appears to be most frequently resolved by the simple assertion of the dominant configuration of the past, or else history is simply bracketed off and unvoiced to prevent inconsistencies and divergent threads from coming to light. López Caballero’s study of the discourse of belonging in Mexico demonstrates how current discourses of autochthony discard prior interpretations of either Indianness or mixedness (mestizaje) as primary discourses of belonging in Mexico so that these characteristics no longer give access to claims of originary locatedness, which now depends instead on geographical fixity (López Caballero 2009:181). That doesn’t mean, however, that the ‘we’ of autochthony is parochial. Though the imagined community of genus in this example may be a sub-national one, the claims which emanate through the logic of genus play out at the level of the nation-state. Thus, belonging locally is seen as the key to obtaining resource rights from the nation-state, as I will demonstrate below.

Where history cannot be bracketed or discarded, then it may need to be reshaped to meet autochthony’s requirements. Historicity pervades the discourse of autochthony and is a central component of the logic of genus, bringing with it questions of which and whose history is being recounted as definitive. As Will Kymlicka points out, a ‘reliance on history often requires a very selective, even manipulative, retelling of that history’ (Kymlicka 1995:189). The difficulty of achieving a reading of history which is acceptable to all those who are affected by its consequences was made evident in the Dutch discourse of autochthony. In response to a growing despondency regarding the willingness and ability of the Netherlands’ immigrant communities to integrate, as well as concerns about the contaminating effect of alien cultures on Dutchness, attempts began in the 1990s to produce a definitive ‘historical canon’. The canon was to contain the history of the country and its people, in order to allow allochthons to better understand and integrate with their host culture, and by implication also to know their place in it. The advocates of such a canon anticipated that it would provide ‘a better knowledge of central events in Dutch history’, as well as ‘access to common stories’ that would provide common points of reference and thus promote cultural integration’ (Geschiere 2009:160-161). They had wanted a singular narrative which fixed history to a definitive national identity. Those same advocates were extremely disappointed by the canon which was finally published in 2006. Written by professional historians, it refused to define a
singular, coherent narrative of specific dates and events which could be linked to the Dutch identity. Instead the historians produced a canon comprising fifty ‘windows’ on history, each opening onto a range of stories and interpretations, which carried much of the ambiguity and flux that characterise the past (ibid.). This version, which offered history instead of historicity, didn’t offer the singular, linear narrative that autochthony needs. Appeals to history, then, only seem to produce the anticipated results in cases where alternative interpretations, or ambiguities, can be suppressed.

A final aspect which problematises the recourse to history is the ‘myth of origin’. While the Athenians chose to conceal those parts of their citizenry who had originated elsewhere beneath the claim of pure autochthony, in the African context in particular, the relationship between proclaiming a migratory history and yet still being able to count as autochthonous is complex. Here, two different examples from Cameroon are instructive. The first concerns the Bakweris, a group who are considered to be the autochthonous community of the Mount Cameroon area. Despite their acknowledged claims to autochthony, in fieldwork conducted since the 1950s Bakweri elders have invariably begun accounts of their ethnic histories ‘with an account of a migration’ (Geschiere 2009:61).

This contrasts with the second example, which concerns the Baka people in southeast Cameroon. Fieldwork here records how, despite the uncontested evidence that the tribe’s presence in Cameroon predates that of almost all other tribes, and the broad acknowledgement by other Cameroonians of this fact, the Baka are not regarded as autochthons (Leonhardt 2006:73). Leonhardt recounts the example of a group of sedentarised Baka who asked for assistance from a local Catholic mission with the process of making an application to the national community forest programme10. The local Nzime tribe were outraged that the Baka should dare to claim a right to the forest. Such a claim challenged their own perceived claim to be the autochthons of that particular area, and at the same time disrupted the widespread understanding that, despite the sedentary status of this particular group of Baka, the Baka people were in general mobile hunter-gatherers who could not claim connections to the soil, since they had never farmed or settled it. Baka people also ‘fail’ as autochthons in that they ‘have little genealogical recollection beyond the living generations’ (Leonhardt 2006:74). The two examples illustrate both the

---

10 The community forest programme consists of a government initiative to increase the profitability of the country’s extensive forests by giving up small parcels of it to community ownership (Geschiere 2009).
importance of being able to make recourse to history (hence the Baka disqualification because their historical recollection is limited) and yet the malleability of history when recourse is made. The lack of history was used to discount the publicly accepted fact of Baka priority despite this being the critical component of autochthony, but also to support the Bakweri claim to be both autochthons and migrants. Moreover, the examples indicate that for the logic of genus it is not enough simply to be the first. Rather, the autochthon must proclaim her priority and produce a version of history which supports the claim. This suggests that the historical basis of autochthony might better be understood as being the first to claim possession of the land, rather than the first to inhabit it.

The examples above show something of the complexity of the appeals to historical validation which underpin the logic of genus. Where a definitive history can be achieved, however, then genus can establish the purity and fixity of the community of autochthons. The first manifesto produced by France’s far-right Front National implied that a Frenchman who is ‘Français de souche’, which translates as ‘of true French stock’, ‘can trace his lineage back to the hunter-gatherers of the Dordogne in a direct line’ (Détienne 2001:48). Claims such as this rarely stand up if subjected to scrutiny or testing. The problems inherent in the Front National’s concept of ‘Français de souche’ were highlighted by the subsequent discovery that more than half of the inhabitants of metropolitan France could not meet its stipulation of having four fully French grandparents, thereby drastically reducing the desired effect of producing divisions between the ‘real French’ majority and the immigrant minority (Geschière 2009:131). Nonetheless, what this example shows is a clear attempt to fix genus by establishing the existence of the French as a ‘pure’ community, which had only recently been forced to live among immigrant others.

Fixity and purity of the community require boundedness and exclusion if they are to be maintained. A person or community cannot become autochthonous, regardless of how long they stay in the place to which they have migrated. In order to maintain the strict demarcation of autochthony, it is imperative for the autochthon to be able to identify the allochthon so that she can be exposed, excluded and thus the purity of the community protected. In fieldwork in Côte d’Ivoire one respondent gave the following statement:
[Take the case of our Dioula\textsuperscript{11} brothers, when they arrive, as soon as they find a city like Yamoussoukro and they settle there, have children there, do everything there, they don’t return to their country of origin. And then they say they are Ivorians. We saw that it isn’t right, that we have to be able to tell who is Ivorian, who isn’t Ivorian. (Interview response, cited in Marshall-Fratani 2006:26)]

The speaker emphasises the absolute difference between the allochthonous Dioula and the ‘Ivorian’. The Dioula claim to be Ivorians ‘isn’t right’. Despite the fact that the Dioula have settled, had families, clearly intend to stay and might thus be considered integrated, they cannot—and will never—count as autochthons. Their otherness is fixed and permanent. Furthermore, the difference is critical, in the eyes of the speaker: he has to able to tell who is who, on principle. The same simple, and yet apparently irreducible, statement of genus circulates in Cameroon, as the following declaration produced by an agricultural association which represents ‘indigenous’ farmers illustrates:

The Mbororo’en\textsuperscript{12} will never be looked on as natives in the Northwest. With a Grassfielder\textsuperscript{13} who moves here from another part of the Province, we know that he is a native somewhere, that he came from somewhere. The Mbororo’en pay taxes and are permanent—they have corrugated iron roofs—but that idea of them as settlers will remain.

(Hickey 2007:86)

Here, too, the logic of genus can be seen to direct the understanding of the fixity and exclusivity of autochthonous belonging, and 100 years of being in Cameroon is not enough. The Mbororo cannot change the fact that their historical ties lie in another place, and that they will always remain ‘settlers’ and thus outside the Grassfields community of autochthons.

In the preceding paragraphs I have illustrated what I call the logic of genus. I have shown that this logic depends upon an assumption that belonging is historically fixed by ancestral roots in territory, such that a person either is, or is not, an autochthon, and that the difference is perpetual. The notion of fixity and purity has also been illustrated. These elements, I suggest, all require an underpinning by the concept of foundational difference, which corresponds to an inside-outside logic. What has also become apparent in the paragraphs on history, however, is the virtual

---

\textsuperscript{11} Dioula are understood to be migrants from the north. What is problematic here is that Dioula ethnic groups lie on both sides of the border between Côte d’Ivoire and its northern neighbours, Mali and Burkina Faso, and as a result southern Ivorians frequently treat Ivorian Dioula as immigrants too (Marshall-Fratani 2006).

\textsuperscript{12} A traditionally nomadic pastoral group which migrated to the Grassfields region at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. The group is found in many countries of West Africa but is thought to come originally from the Sahara region (African Union 2008).

\textsuperscript{13} Person from the Grassfields region of northwest Cameroon (Pelican 2009).
impossibility of establishing the foundational difference on which the other logics of autochthony depend. Even the Athenians had to manipulate or misrepresent history to support their claim of difference, and even in the well-documented context of the Netherlands, agreeing on what constitutes history and producing a single narrative is impossible. This finding is critical to recognising the politics of autochthony and the fantasies which motivate them, as I will show later in the chapter.

The Presence of Others as Impurity

This section will expand on my description above of the second logic of autochthony, which is the logic of impurity. In this section I will show how the presence of allochthonous others gives rise to the construction of those others as bearers of pollution, disease and contamination of the purity of the autochthonous community.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas famously described dirt as ‘matter out of place’, and argued that the ascription of matter as dirt implied both ‘a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order’ (Douglas 1966:36). In a similar way, in autochthony, the natural order is that people remain in their communities, the places where they are rooted and belong. Those who enter the autochthonous community but are not themselves autochthons have contravened the natural order. They are perceived as being ‘out of place’ and consequently associated with notions of impurity. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh point to the connection made between allochthonous others/immigrants and physical pollution in Cameroon, where immigrants are blamed for polluting urban areas with their organic refuse, and the strand of discourse in France by which immigrants are accused of bringing in illnesses that put the health of French people at risk (2000:440-1). The same connection is present in the comparison between Belgian autochthons, who are construed as ‘taking pride in their homes’, and Muslim economic migrants, who live on the streets in imputed conditions of dirtiness (Ceuppens 2006:164). It is also present in DR Congo, in a dated (but still circulating) description of Tutsi migrants as termites (Jackson 2006:109). It is there, too, in survey responses in South Africa which reveal that 45% of respondents support mandatory HIV testing of all foreigners, thereby reflecting a strong association between disease and foreignness (Crush et al. 2013:36).

Where allochthonous impurity has already been brought into the community, it must be removed so that purity can be restored. A 1994 law prescribing who could
stand for election to the office of president in Côte d’Ivoire effectively created ‘two
types of Ivoirian citizen, those of “pure” Ivoirian origin and those of “mixed
heritage” ’ (Marshall-Fratani 2006:23). The contrasting of ‘pure’ against ‘mixed’
constructs the latter as ‘impure’. In Côte d’Ivoire’s inflammatory discourse this made
them suitable targets for actions to repurify the community. One political tract called
for such repurifying action with the assertion that ‘[t]he hour has come to clean our
villages and towns of the Dioulas (Mossi) and the Akans’ (cited in Marshall-Fratani
2006:10). While that example may be extreme in its condoning of what amounts to
ethnic cleansing, the sentiment is echoed in the subtler discourses elsewhere.
Comparing two examples of autochthony struggles in Assam, India, Vandekerckhove
observes that in both cases,

[T]hose regarded as the “most autochthonous,” meaning those with the
strongest historic-cultural roots in a particular place, were charged with
protecting and purifying their homeland against “outsiders” who were
seen to be contaminating it. (Vandekerckhove 2009:526)

In this example, those ‘outsiders’ themselves, rather than anything that they might
do, are construed as the contamination: their mere bodily presence is all that is
required for the damage to occur. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh note the French
discourse on purity and defilement in relation to allochthons. With reference to
Taguieff’s work on the treatment of immigrants in contemporary France, they record
the ideological obsession of former Front National leader Jean-Marie Le Pen and his
followers with preventing ‘mixing’ and decontaminating sites of mixing. In Taguieff’s
summary, the ‘purification of the national body’ demands a cleaning operation since
‘clean France is supposed to be defiled by the presence of elements that are
heterogeneous to its specific essence’ (Taguieff 1985:179, cited in Geschiere and
Nyamnjoh 2000:441). Both Jackson (2006) and Geschiere (2009) see the obsession
with ‘purifying the community’ as critical to the instability of autochthony, since the
drive to identify and uncover ‘fakes’ in order to enact the purification means that all
autochthons are constantly under suspicion. The problem is that the idealised notion
of the wholly pure community—and perhaps more importantly the fantasy of
completeness and fulfilment of all needs which motivate it—can never be realised.
Consequently, the hunt for the allochthon as source of impurity and community
strife can never be concluded, but rather moves in ever-decreasing circles.

Finally, the allochthon need not even be present in the community to be
conceived of as a danger and threat to the community of autochthons. It is enough
that she may potentially enter. In the complex politics of the Kivu region of Eastern
DR Congo, amidst the tensions between those groups whose autochthonous status is assured and the Rwandophones, who are subject to continual revision of their status, the dividing line between autochthon and allochthon is never clear, but the latter is always portrayed as a threat to the autochthonous community. In one example it is the Tutsi who are singled out as the allochthonous threat, in a tract by a group calling itself the ‘Eye of the people’. The tract warns that ‘“the purity of the Bantu Congolese population is threatened by massive implantation and demographic inundation by Tutsi sponsored by a colonial administration and a Bank for Tutsi Implantation” ’ (Jackson 2003:199, cited in Geschiere 2009:119). Implantation and inundation are threatened; that is enough to provoke retaliations against those who may already be inside the country. When we come to look at British housing discourse in Chapter 4, we will see that the same construction of those who may potentially enter but haven’t yet done so as a threat in relation to the possible arrival of Romanians and Bulgarians in 2014.

The examples above have demonstrated that people who are regarded as allochthons are associated with impurity and dirt, and that their presence comes to be constituted as a threat to the community. It has also shown again the clear demarcation between inside and outside which runs through the discourse of autochthony. Since the simple fact of being ‘out of order’, in the wrong community, is enough to contaminate the community, then the logic of impurity also confirms the notion of absolute purity of the autochthonous community, and the absolute otherness of the allochthon.

**Claims of Entitlement**

The third logic that I identified from my reading of the autochthony literature concerns the logic of entitlement. This logic embodies the notion that their proven ancestral connection to the land entitles autochthons to a share in its resources. In the following paragraphs I will underline the critical importance of resource entitlement in autochthony discourse, and I will argue that autochthony discourse is almost invariably triggered by and conducted through contestations over resource rights. I will also show that although autochthony discourse has most frequently framed ‘land’ as the resource in question, it is by no means the only resource which motivates the politics of autochthony.

---

14 See section ‘Genus and the Thread of History, p50, for an explanation.
At the heart of the classical concept of autochthony, an intimate connection with land was the primary marker of the autochthon, since the Athenian claim to autochthony rested on the myth of uninterrupted occupation of the territory of Attica. In this period, however, the ancestral link to the soil was a declaration of superiority over all other city-states in general. It was not a claim to priority over other groups with regard to access to the land. When the concept of autochthony reappeared, after lying dormant for a long period, as a bureaucratic tool of colonial administration in Africa, the concept was used to draw distinctions between local tribes, to fix them to specific tracts of colonial territory, and to demarcate the autochthonous from the migrants who were imported to work on agricultural plantations. Here again, the link between autochthons and land was clear, but this didn’t yet constitute a resource claim on the land (Geuppens and Geschiere 2005; Jackson 2006; Marshall-Fratani 2006; Geschiere 2009). It was not until the post-colonial period that autochthony took on the notion of primacy as an expression of rights to access, farm or own land.

One well-documented example of the logic of entitlement as a right to land is provided by the violent discourse of autochthony in Côte d'Ivoire. There, a decline in the profitability of cocoa, the main export crop, in the late 1980s signalled the end of many years of economic prosperity for the country and simultaneously unleashed the tensions which had been mounting between ‘indigenous’ farmers and those who had originally been moved onto the land under colonial processes. Migrant farmers, who had been particularly successful in the boom years and had arguably contributed greatly to the country’s economic success, came to be held responsible for its woes in the downturn. They turned from being viewed as ‘unwelcome competition by struggling local farmers’ to being construed as ‘unlawful and illegitimate foreign occupiers of the land’ (Mitchell 2012:275-276). Here it is apparent that the upsurge in the politics of autochthony was specifically related to the perception that the land belongs inalienably to those who are its autochthons, who are the only people entitled to occupy it.

Nonetheless, the land itself is not always the resource being claimed by the autochthon. Geschiere has observed that ‘[t]he preoccupation with purifying the community of alien elements leads people to redefine autochthony at ever closer range, especially when certain “spoils”—resources, political posts—have to be divided’ (Geschiere 2009:27, italics added). His statement implies that the call for purification comes first, and that the involvement of resources is more or less supplementary. However, I
argue that the obverse is true. Although the logics of genus and impurity may come first in the narrative of autochthons being dispossessed of their natural entitlements, the claim itself is triggered by that perceived dispossession. My argument is supported by several other scholars. Boás asserts the primacy of the question of entitlement to rights in a statement that ‘the protection of rights is argued through tales of origin in the form of story-telling about a collective “we” ’ (Boás 2009:21). Hickey states that the resurgence of the discourse of autochthony in Africa in particular is frequently used by political elites ‘in ways that assure “natives” privileged access to reproductive resources and political power ahead of “strangers” ’ (Hickey 2007:83). Leonhardt suggests that autochthony is ‘not a coherent body of principles on which rights are based. It is a mystification of ancestry, a method used for the purpose of magically extracting wealth from the state’ (Leonhardt 2006). In other words, the claim to autochthony uses the notion of rootedness specifically as a means of validating claims on the resources of the state. The point is essential to the case study that I will present in Chapter 4 and 5. In my understanding, the discourse of autochthony is always mobilised by and conducted through the medium of resources claims. Consequently, my decision to study autochthony through British housing discourse results from this understanding.

In Ghana the resource that is contested through the logic of entitlement is that of political influence. A dispute in one region of Ghana provides an example. The dispute concerned the right of ‘settlers’ to join a local association that was known to have influence over the local leaders involved in making development decisions. Those who regarded themselves as autochthons perceived that giving settlers the right to join the association was ‘inimical to their interests’ (Lentz 2006). Put differently, they wanted to ensure that political influence was retained by those who ‘really’ belonged there. A similar conflict over political and cultural influence (especially with regard to the promotion of ethnic languages) has been mobilised through the politics of autochthony in Botswana. Concerns that the national constitution, which mentioned only Setswana-speaking tribes (thereby constituting the speakers of 20 other languages as ‘minorities’) was giving Setswana speakers undue advantage in terms of access to land rights, education and political influence have resulted in the inflammation of inter-ethnic tensions (Nyamnjoh 2002).

The same logic operates in autochthony discourse in the European context, though here the nature of the resource to which entitlement is claimed differs. In Belgium ‘autochthonous movements make claims on the state in order to gain
control over economic resources’ (Ceuppens 2006:148). Flemish nationalist party Vlaams Blok (VB)’s slogan ‘Our people first’ encapsulates their view that ‘the welfare state should be restricted to ‘real’ Flemings’, while VB advocates separatism from Francophone Wallonia on the basis that Flemish prosperity is subsidising the indolence of Belgium’s Francophone Walloons, again reinforcing the autochthonous logic of entitlement over the resources of the land (Ceuppens 2001, 2011).

Meanwhile in the Dutch context, the resource which the autochthonous movement is trying to reconsolidate its influence is that of cultural space. Immigrants are depicted as exploiting the multitude of opportunities available to them in the Netherlands while maintaining their own culture and refusing to integrate (assimilate) culturally and thereby somehow stifling or threatening the cultural resources left over for the autochthonous community (Geschiere 2009). Here, the logic of entitlement is understood to mean that autochthonous Dutch people should be the ones who define Dutch culture. To uphold this exclusively perceived Dutch culture, immigrants who wish to become Dutch citizens are now required to take a citizenship course and pass a citizenship exam. They are also obliged to participate in a citizenship ceremony at which they should be reminded who the Dutch are, what their history is, what the rights and obligations of Dutch citizenship are. Finally the ceremony ‘should promote social manners (omgangsvormen) and underscore that “we should treat each other with respect, and if we disagree, we should do so in a civilized manner” ’ (Verkaai 2010:73-74). In this way, fears about the cultural influence of Muslim immigrants in particular can be allayed and the cultural entitlement of autochthons safeguarded.

I have shown in the preceding paragraphs that the logic of entitlement starts with the presumption that resources belong to those who can prove their autochthonous belonging. It thus builds on to the logics of genus and impurity, which effectively populate the division of the community and the nature of the ‘threat’ on which the mobilised logic of entitlement can draw. Moreover, it takes as given the foundational difference between autochthons and allochthons. For claims of entitlement to make sense, identity and difference must be pre-established. The final logic, that of victimhood, is even more closely associated with entitlement, and it is to victimhood that the next sub-section turns.
Assertions of Victimhood

This final subsection will deal the last of the four logics, that of victimhood. In the following paragraphs I will show that this logic emphasises the notion that autochthons suffer at the hands of allochthons in relation to resource allocation. I will argue that victimhood portrays resource rights as a zero-sum equation, in which the allocation of resources to allochthons inevitably causes deprivation for autochthons.

In times of crisis it is easy to relate to the idea that ‘somebody’ must be responsible for the resulting hardship, and in the politics of autochthony that somebody is of course the allochthon. Following on from my argument above concerning the role of entitlement as a motivating factor for the mobilisation of claims to autochthony, the logic of victimhood, which can be viewed as the obverse of entitlement, also plays a critical role in prompting the turn to autochthonous discourse. If the logic of entitlement embodies the idea that resources belong to the community of autochthons, then the realisation that unentitled others are benefitting from resources prompts the turn to the pursuit of a politics of autochthony as a means of exposing and redressing the injustice. In her study of the development of a politics of autochthony in Côte d’Ivoire, Marshall-Fratani suggests that:

[I]t is through the ongoing presence of strangers and their demands for land that the autochthon not only comes to consciousness of himself as such and reclaims rights (notably, land) conferred by this identity, but also becomes aware of his relatively disadvantaged position, both in his own “home” and also in emerging national politics. (Marshall-Fratani 2006:16)

While this statement conveys the relationship between the elements of strangers, resources and victimhood, it requires qualification regarding its apparent assumption that the ‘presence of strangers’ is necessarily one in which the strangers are actually in a strong position vis-à-vis the autochthon, who is relatively disadvantaged. This may be true in the context of Côte d’Ivoire, which was the subject of Marshall-Fratani’s article, and where (as noted in the previous sub-section) migrant farmers had been particularly successful15, but it is questionable whether this holds in the majority of cases. The literature shows that the notion of being in a ‘relatively disadvantaged

15 Mitchell notes that the success of the migrant community was a major contributing factor in the ‘Ivoirian miracle’ (the development of a world-class agricultural export market in the country). However, their success was seen to have come at the expense of the indigenous since the migrant farmers were given fertile land in order to stimulate production under the a controversial policy passed by Félix Houphouët-Boigny, founding father of post-Independence Côte d’Ivoire, which stated that which stated that the ‘land belongs to those who make it productive’(Mitchell 2012).
position”—i.e. being the victim through the presence of others—is a highly subjective one, not least because the communities which pursue autochthonous discourses are on the whole dominant communities who are already in a position of comparative strength. As I suggested in my discussion of the difference between the politics of indigeneity and that of autochthony, the latter is usually pursued by groups who are in a dominant position but who fear losing their dominance, and who for that reason opt for a politics of exclusion. If we think, for instance, of the example of the Dutch discourse of autochthony vis-à-vis its allochthonous immigrants, then it would be hard to sustain the claim that the Dutch community is disadvantaged by its ‘foreign’ population. That idea is undermined by the sheer numerical superiority of those who are classed as Dutch compared to the numbers of foreign-born, who amounted to 11.2% of the total population of the Netherlands in 2011 (Vasileva 2012:2). Being perceived to be disadvantaged through the presence of others appears to be a more accurate summary here.

According to Geschiere, autochthony discourse builds on a ‘politics of resentment’, by which he means the ‘celebration of feeling oneself victimized, betrayed by guests once hospitably received, and misunderstood by an incomprehending world’ (Geschiere 2009:105). Mbeumbe likewise identifies ‘a cult of victimization’ in many African political discourses (Mbeumbe 2002:244), and the literature provides ample evidence of the notion of victimhood as a powerful motivation for discourses of autochthony. In South Africa it is surely this logic which accounts for the fact that in a 2006 survey, 67% of respondents agreed that migrants use up resources and 62% agreed that they take jobs from South Africans (Crush et al. 2008:30). The point is corroborated by a South African interview respondent, who declared that ‘the community is tired of migrants and it looks like they are receiving from our government more than us, some of them have houses we still don’t have houses’ (Hayem 2013:85). In her Mexican case study, López Caballero reports a stand-off between local residents and the government officials who were inaugurating a new swimming pool in the village of San Francisco Tecoxpa, on the outskirts of the capital city. The residents set up a blockade and demanded that all the pool’s ‘foreign’ employees be sacked on the grounds that ‘they don’t come from

16 See section ‘Defining and Differentiating Autochthony’, p47, above.
17 With regard to the Dutch context it must be taken into account that the term ‘allochtoon’ is used in national statistics to refer to anyone who has at least one foreign-born parent. As a result, second-generation immigrants born in the Netherlands also count as allochthonous (Geschiere 2009) meaning that national statistics for ‘allochthons’ report higher numbers than might be suggested by other sources.
[are not born in] Tıcoxpa and thıir salariıs should go to thı original [autochthonous] members of the community’ (López Caballero 2009:171). In other words, by taking jobs, the ‘foreigners’ were depriving proper locals of jobs which should rightly be theirs simply on the basis that they are autochthonous.

The same sense of victimhood is evident in a statement by Côte d’Ivoire’s Economic and Social Council, reported in a 1999 newspaper article, which claimed that:

[I]mmigrants, despite their generally weak qualifications, have a stranglehold over business in this country, and occupy the majority of jobs in the trade, transport, agro-industry, butchery etc, to the detriment of those autochthonous Ivoirians who have been hit by unemployment (Le Jour n°1251, 8th April 1999, cited in Emma 2012:39, my translation).

This excerpt clearly demonstrates that in discourses of autochthony, the allocation of resources to allochthons is construed as a zero-sum equation in which the autochthonous always lose out. In the example, the fact that immigrants have jobs is portrayed as the immediate cause of autochthon unemployment. Similar sentiments are reflected in a media discussion over a new development agency set up by the Botswanan government to expand the autochthonous presence in the country’s business sector. Here, detractors declared that the agency was really operating in favour of the rich and powerful while ‘individual property owners in low cost areas continue to see their houses being bought by Indians, Chinese and Zimbabweans … Such foreign land-grabbers have invaded low cost areas in Gaborone’ (Mmegi, 9 February 2001, cited in Nyamnjoh 2002:772). Although the intention of this writer was to reveal the bias in favour of rich autochthons and against the poor, the portrayal of migrants as ‘foreign land-grabbers’ is consistent with an ongoing narrative of ‘ungrateful foreigners’ who exploit the country’s opportunities and thereby disadvantage the long-suffering locals (Nyamnjoh 2002:769-70).

Narratives of victimhood are not limited to African discourses of autochthony, but rather appear in the European arena too. Ceuppens’ study of Belgium documents the ways in which the far-right Flemish party Vlaams Blok (VB) portrays ‘foreigners’ (including Francophone Belgians) as sponging off the state, milking social security, causing urban deterioration, engaging in street crime and ‘threatening “one’s own people” ’ (Ceuppens 2006:166-167). Fixated by the idea that the Dutch-speaking Flemings are being deprived of the profits of their labour in this way, and especially by the ‘lazy’ francophone inhabitants of Flanders, the Flemish government has introduced a policy of restricting social housing to those who could
demonstrate that they were intending to learn (or could speak) Dutch (Ceuppens 2011:168). A similar logic motivates claims by Northern Italy’s Lega Nord that the region’s economic success has attracted too many immigrants (including those from southern Italy), who are perceived as ‘threatening and ultimately undermining the well being and security of a community’ (Albertazzi 2006:23). Measures to prevent the ‘victimisation’ have included the criminalisation of illegal immigration, punishable by either a fine of up to €10,000 or expulsion, fines for landlords who rent properties to foreigners not in possession of a residence permit, and new restrictions on family reunion18 19 (Bull, A. C. 2010:420).

The preceding paragraphs have outlined the content of the logic of victimhood and have furnished clear examples of this logic in operation in several contemporary discourses of autochthony from around the world. I have indicated that victimhood is closely entangled with the logic of entitlement, but that it also draws heavily on supposedly pre-existing logics of genus and impurity, which mark off autochthons as a discrete and fixed group whose purity is threatened by the resource demands of others. A subsequent section of this chapter examines how the four logics are mobilised.

In the four sections above I have fleshed out my reading of the key logics of autochthony discourse. The four logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood overlap and reproduce each other to a certain extent, but this doesn’t diminish my claim that all four are usually present—whether foregrounded or in the background—in all discourses of autochthony. I have suggested that each of the four has indicated the presence of an underlying inside-outside ontology by accepting the clear and absolute demarcation between autochthon as insider and allochthon as outsider. In the logics of genus and impurity the distinction was made apparent through statements of the need to know ‘who is Ivorian, who isn’t Ivorian’, as well as in the idea that the presence of allochthons on the inside contaminates the community, which must then be cleansed, which indicates that allochthons are seen as being out of place and in contravention of the natural order. With regard to the

18 The system for allowing foreign nationals already resident in Italy to apply for permission to have other family members join them in Italy.
19 While those measures were introduced in national law and are thus not solely the work of the Lega Nord, the Lega Nord was part of the coalition government at that time and the interior minister who presided over their introduction was one of the party’s leading members. Moreover, a number of its provisions had already been demanded by the party (Bull, A. C. 2010:420).
logics of entitlement and victimhood the distinction between insider and outsider is less explicit, but nonetheless is manifest in the notion that resource rights can be allocated according to belonging in the autochthonous community, so that an autochthon has full entitlement while the allochthon has none, which assumes a pre-established differentiation. This position, along with the notion of the zero-sum equation in which autochthons are automatically deprived by the allochthonous use of resources, shows a simplistic either/or binary organised along the dividing line of belonging.

Where these four identified logics can be seen to be present in a discourse of belonging, I have suggested, we can interpret that discourse as an autochthonous one. This is important for my case study given the absence of the explicit terminology of autochthony from Britain. By showing that the logics of autochthony are present in British housing discourse I will justify my claim that it does represent an autochthonous discourse of belonging. The implications of this assertion will be explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

What I also want to draw attention to here is the correlation between the concept and logics of autochthony and the ontological assumptions of the conventional discourse of IR identified in Chapter 1. These were the assumptions of the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion. All of these are demonstrated in the preceding sections. Thus, the nation-state is the space in which autochthonous resource claims are made. Its boundaries also mark the limits of the community of autochthons, and the territorial dimensions of the nation-state constitute the land or soil in which ancestral roots grow. Territory has great significance in autochthony discourse. While the autochthon may claim to be ancestrally rooted in territory on a minutely local scale, such as the ancestral village, such claims are still made in reference to the entire territorial expanse of the nation-state. This is evident from the claims of autochthony that resulted in Côte d’Ivoire’s civil war. Although individuals there were required to prove their belonging in the ancestral village, the need to do so was related to politics on the national scale. Thus one interviewee stated that ‘we have to be able to tell who is Ivorian, who isn’t Ivorian’ (Marshall-Fratani 2006:26).

Autochthony discourse relates to the domestic-international dichotomy in a way that is similar to conventional IR. That is, it divides the social into the safe,
‘domestic’ space inside the nation-state, which is properly the locus of genus (the community of autochthons) and the threatening outside space of the international. It is the migrant as marker of the international or outside who must be excluded in autochthony discourse, since harm in the form of impurity and pollution comes from there. This gives the link to the assumption of exclusion. The need to exclude outsiders is paramount to autochthony, and this is because the community of autochthons is vulnerable to the impurifying effects of otherness. Moreover, the status of autochthony in its absolute form of genus is a fixed, inherent characteristic. You either are, or aren’t, an autochthon, and according to a strict interpretation of autochthony you cannot become an autochthon. Autochthony requires ancestral roots, and since these must be in place before an individual is born, there is no way they can be acquired once the individual is alive.

Before I move on to look at the operationalisation of autochthony a final point remains to be made. I have suggested in the preceding sections that the conscious perception of being dispossessed of your legitimate entitlement or of suffering as a direct result of the presence of allochthons provides the critical impetus for the turn to the politics of autochthony. Here, I want lay down a marker in relation to how the discourse of autochthony is motivated which will be taken up again in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. I want to suggest that together, the logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood can be understood as producing a fantasy of the ordering of social relations in which there is a perfect (isomorphic) fit between community and bounded territory, as well as a match between available resources and the needs of the community’s members (autochthons). I will refer to this as the Elysian fantasy\(^{21}\). I contend that this fantasy is one which mobilises many autochthony discourses, though the precise form and content of the desired Elysium will inevitably vary. What will remain constant, however, is the idea of the fixed and bounded community as an ideal configuration which contrasts starkly with the threats and contamination which proliferate on the other side of the border. As such, there is a visible correlation between this fantasy and the demarcation of the safe and

\(^{21}\) The concept of Elysium, or the Elysian Fields, was generally used by early Greek writers such as Homer and Hesiod to denote a paradise to which the blessed would be delivered in the afterlife. While the descriptions of Elysium varied, they generally contain references to bounty, idyllic landscape and perfect weather, where the lucky inhabitants live lives ‘untouched by sorrow’. Spence describes it as ‘A fabled land of bliss in the Western parts of the Earth, where the elect and heroes of unusual prowess were translated without dying. … The inhabitants dwelt in beautiful meadows, rich with flowers and sunshine which never failed, where they disported themselves with music and games’ (Spence n.d.:77).
ordered inside from the dangerous, anarchic outside that characterises conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology 22.

The identification of the logics of autochthony matters, because it offers a means by which certain discourses can be recognised as autochthonous even in the absence of autochthony’s explicit terminology. An understanding of the logics also matters for the purposes of this thesis because, I argue, it offers a way of thinking about IR’s implicit discourse of belonging. Identifying the fantasy which those logics produce matters too, and in the next chapter I will be emphasising the role of fantasy in constructing and sustaining autochthony discourses. The next task is to show how the four logics are mobilised as a discourse, and thus the following section looks at the process of enacting autochthonous logics.

**SLIPPERY ALLOCHTHONY AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF CLOSURE**

My conclusion to the previous section of this chapter presented the claim that the four logics of autochthony produce an Elysian fantasy of the social in which there is a perfect (isomorphic) fit between community, bounded territory, available resources and the needs of the community. The perfect fit is disrupted by the presence of others from outside the community, which is consequently damaged in some way.

Viewed in this way, it becomes clear that the objective of the politics of autochthony is to restore the lost Elysium and regain the imagined isomorphism of community, territory, resources and need. Restating the connection between the logics of autochthony and the concept of fantasy, or an idealised vision of social relations, is apt, because as the paragraphs in this section will show, in reality this kind of neatly bounded, perfectly contained community doesn’t exist, and arguably never has existed. It endures solely in the form of fantasy, or what Walker calls the ‘regulative ideal’ of what meaningful political community should be (Walker 2006:59), as I noted in Chapter 1 23. In the two sections below, I will argue that the politics of autochthony provide strong evidence of the impossibility of achieving a clean division between inside and outside. The first section will show this by revealing the impossibility of fixing the definition of the allochthon, and the second section will

---

22 I am not suggesting here that conventional IR is motivated by the same fantasy, I merely wish to point out the similarities in the division of the social into a safe and a threatening part.

23 See Chapter 1, p26, for the discussion of how this applies to conventional IR.
demonstrate the impossibility of achieving the closure of the autochthonous community by political means.

**Who is the Allochthon?**

In this section I will examine the composition of the allochthon, which corresponds to the figure of the migrant which I identified in Chapter 1 as a useful focal point for exploring inside-outside discourses. I will show here that the allochthon is effectively what Dunn refers to as ‘a trope, without any substance of its own’ (Dunn 2009:115). Put differently, I will advance the claim that the substance-free term allochthon can be filled with a vast combination of people and communities. This mutability has clear implications for the ability of the discourse to fix difference, which I will tease out below.

The concept of autochthony consists of a set of absolute distinctions: you are either ancestrally rooted or you are not; you are either an autochthon or you are an allochthon; you are either inside the community or outside it; you are either entitled to resources or you are not. Above I have noted that such clear-cut boundaries draw on the notion of foundational difference. My discussion of the logic of genus above, however, noted that even the fundamental principle of historical rootedness is open to manipulation, and therefore cannot be foundational. Moreover, rootedness isn’t the only principle which is open to manipulation. Marshall-Fratani argues that the ‘plasticity’ of the entire concept of autochthony is what makes it so effective as a discourse of exclusion, in that it can easily be moulded to fit new groups or new circumstances (Marshall-Fratani 2006:22). The notion of plasticity provides a helpful way of thinking about attempts to distinguish outsiders from insiders and to draw the line between them, as it captures the malleability of the terms and of the underlying conception of who ‘the other’ is.

The autochthonous discourse in contemporary Belgium provides a clear example of that plasticity. In the autochthony discourse of the Flemish nationalist party VB, the group identified as allochthonous varies. Sometimes the focus is on Francophone Walloons, at other times it is non-Belgians or non-Europeans, Anglophones and Eurocrats24 in Brussels, refugees, illegal immigrants or Muslims (Ceuppens 2006). Ceuppens points out that Muslims are generally constructed as a considerable cultural threat to Flanders and the Flemish, and that VB has

---

24 Defined as those working for the European Union in its Brussels offices.
vociferously opposed Turkey’s entry to the European Union on the basis of its alien Muslim culture. Nonetheless, it has also courted the vote of Turks resident in Brussels to build support for the party’s opposition to proposals for new traffic regulations by publishing and distributing leaflets in Turkish (Ceuppens 2006:167). Hence, it appears that Turks can be construed as both allochthons and autochthons when the occasion suits. In the South African discourse a similar malleability is apparent. There, the ‘other’ is generally composed of migrants from other parts of the continent, with a particular focus on Zimbabweans, Mozambicans, Angolans, Somalis and Nigerians; migrants from Europe and North America are viewed relatively favourably but still generally not welcomed (Crush et al. 2008:4). On the other hand, ‘South Africans whose skin is too dark or who cannot speak a “local” language may find themselves lumped together with the undifferentiated, foreign “Other”’ (Landau 2006:135). In both cases, the line between insider and outsider is adjusted to suit specific contexts and fluctuating criteria.

This plasticity in the definition of the allochthon demonstrates the emptiness of the concept, its lack of substance, as Dunn put it above. The allochthon has no fixed identity, and a broad range of individuals and groups can be made to align with the idea of the migrant, depending on what is required in the context, or which group seems to be getting something that others aren’t. This implies two things. Firstly, it once again reiterates the point that the difference between inside and outside in the discourse of autochthony cannot be foundational, since the border between the two is always subject to variation. Secondly, it clearly demonstrates that decisions about which individuals or groups are to be considered as allochthons are political. That is, the definition of the allochthon is the result of a choice made from a range of possibilities. In Chapter 3 this will be linked to the concepts of radical contingency and the non-necessary character of social structures, but in the present chapter I will continue to discuss this in terms of political choice.

The explicitly political nature of ascribing someone as allochthonous is evident in Côte d’Ivoire. Here the term politics can be seen to refer to both electoral politics and political choice, or what Edkins distinguishes as politics and the political (Edkins 1999). Much of the political violence in Côte d’Ivoire’s recent civil war can be attributed to the desire of former President, Laurent Gbagbo, to prove that his opponent, Alassane Ouattara, was not properly Ivoirian but was rather an allochthon from Burkina Faso, and was thus not eligible to stand for election. Ouattara was portrayed as one of the ‘northern immigrants’ whose presence was allegedly
damaging the position of the country’s autochthons. As part of the same effort to
‘allochthonise’ his opposition, Gbagbo insisted that all real Ivoirians must prove their
status as autochthons through their ties in their ‘village of origin’ (understood as the
village in which their ancestors were buried), whose elders would certify their
belonging. This enabled the government to engineer the deliberate exclusion of a
considerable portion of its own people from official recognition of their national
identity and citizenship (see Emma 2012; Marshall-Fratani 2006; Mitchell 2012).
However, deciding where to draw the line between Ivoirian and allochthon proved
extremely difficult, given the amount of internal migration that had occurred both
during the colonial period and afterwards, as well as the fact that some ethnic groups
were attached to territory which straddled both sides of the borders between Côte
d’Ivoire and the neighbouring states of Ghana, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Liberia, and
Mali. Banégas observes that as a result of politics of ‘ivoirité’, ‘the category of
“stranger” consists not only of immigrants but also of Ivoirians considered to be
“Dioula” and virtually anyone with an identity as a northerner or a Muslim’

Jackson states that ‘because the categories always slip, blur and slide, there
always seems to be some scale at which anyone might be measured for authenticity
and found wanting’ (Jackson 2006:115). The inhabitants of one village in Cameroon
demonstrate his claim. Having received payments from a logging company in return
for the right to exploit the village’s communal forest, the villagers deployed all
manner of strategies to denounce other villagers as allochthons and thereby prevent
them from taking a share of the earnings (Geschiere 2009:90-92). Long-hidden
secrets of illegitimate births, of men not living in their father’s village (as the
patrimonial order suggests they should), of people who had lived all their lives in the
village but weren’t physically born there, were all brought out as a means of revealing
other villagers as ‘allochthons’ who should therefore not qualify for a share of the
wealth. It is apparent here that the divisive nature of autochthony discourse and the
lack of substance in its terms ‘leads to ever finer distinctions between “us” and
“others”’ (ibid.). So, while the plasticity of the term appears to assist the discourse by
making it adaptable to a broad range of contexts, it also means that the definition of
the allochthon, and thus ultimately the discourse, can never be closed.

25 As noted above: see Footnote, p50.
26 See footnote p54.
In the paragraphs above I have demonstrated that while the recognition of perceived dispossession may be the trigger for the activation of autochthony discourse, the identity of the allochthonous other is frequently ill-defined and subject to change. This allows the discourse to be moulded to fit differing contexts. I have also pointed out that there can never be certainty as to who is ‘other’, and thus the tantalising prospect of drawing the line once and for all between insider and outsider, so that the lost Elysium of the community of autochthons can be restored, can never be realised. The following section continues the point.

**How Can the Border be Closed?**

In this section I will look at how the instability and lack of foundations that are evident from the discussion of the definition of the allochthon above can also be traced in the discursive practices which attempt to realise the Elysian fantasy by erasing the presence of allochthons from the community. I will show that here too, the task cannot be completed.

As the preceding subsection shows, providing a stable definition for the allochthon is highly problematic and ultimately impossible. In consequence this can be seen as both a strength and a weakness for the concept, in that it allows the term to be remoulded to meet a range of contexts, but on the other hand it also prevents the finalisation of the distinction between the allochthon and the autochthon. Consequently, even those who consider themselves to be wholly autochthonous can never relax, since there is always the possibility that the definition could be reshaped to include them. As one Cameroonian fieldwork respondent declared, ‘This autochthony thing is terrible; you can go to bed as an autochthon and wake up to find that you have become an allogène’ (Geschiere 2009:96). For that reason, and especially in those places where the politics of autochthony are most vigorously pursued, it becomes important to prove your autochthonous status, but even more important to prove that your resource rivals are allochthons, and then to enact the political practices which will remove them from the community and install a fixed line of demarcation between the two spheres of inside and outside.

Contemporary discourses of autochthony adopt a number of strategies to achieve their goal of restoring the purity and primacy of the autochthonous community. That may be done on an individual basis by making efforts to expose

---

27 Allogène is the Cameroonian equivalent of allochthon; see footnote , p54.
and deport allochthons. A 2010 survey conducted in South Africa found not only
that nearly 80% of its citizens ‘either support prohibition on the entry of migrants or
would like to place strict limits on it’, but also that a sizeable number of those who
oppose immigration are prepared to take concrete measures themselves in order to
‘deal with’ the issue (Crush et al. 2013:4). The same survey records that 36% of
respondents said they would report someone who they suspected to be an illegal
immigrant to the police; 27% said they would report a suspected illegal immigrant to
their employer or a community association; 15% said they would combine with
others to force migrants out of their area; and 11% admitted that they would be
ready to use violence against migrants (Crush et al. 2013:38-9).

In other countries, efforts to recoup lost entitlements from those perceived
to be allochthons is frequently less dramatic, but can be equally effective. In fact, in
line with its resource rights focus, one of the notable qualities of much autochthony
discourse is its activation through mundane, everyday politics, such as through
contestations over access to jobs, welfare, health services and housing. The example
of the Flanders government restricting access to social housing to those who are
committed to speaking or learning Dutch has been noted above28 (Ceuppens 2011).
Those who cannot prove their status as autochthons in some parts of Mexico find
themselves barred from owning plots of arable land and they are not permitted to
take part in village decision-making processes (López Caballero 2009:174), which
makes it extremely difficult for them to protect their interests in the community.

In Botswana, measures taken in response to growing public concern about
the advantageous position of foreigners in the country have included the
introduction of fees for foreign students attending state-run schools, the scrapping of
some of the benefits that had previously been paid to attract foreigners to the
country, as well as the introduction of charges for foreigners using state healthcare
facilities (Nyamnjoh 2002). A more dramatic strategy has been adopted in parts of
DR Congo. The province of Katanga, which is famed for its mineral resource wealth,
has repeatedly carried out the forced expulsion of Congolese nationals from other
provinces who had migrated to work in Katanga’s mines and connected service
industries. The expulsions have been motivated by the desire to reserve Katanga’s
considerable wealth for the province’s ‘autochthons’, although one large group of
expelled migrants, who had travelled to Katanga from the province of Kasai, in fact

28 See section on ‘Assertions of Victimhood, p64, above.
had their ancestral origins in Katanga, and had only moved to Kasaï in recent years (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2007:76-77).

Even where such stark measures as forced expulsion are implemented, there is always the possibility that those expelled, or others like them, may re-enter the community. Hence, the discourse of autochthony frequently advances calls for stricter immigration rules, better application of the rules or a complete halt to all immigration. Calls for tougher immigration laws in Italy as a strategy for reducing immigration have resulted in the introduction of fines for illegal immigration (Bull, A. C. 2010:420). However, how can such rules of exclusion be imposed when the identity of those to be excluded has not been resolved? The evidence presented here and above has repeatedly shown that the foundations which are presumed to underpin the distinction between allochthon and autochthon, outside and inside, are not there, and thus the drive to achieve closure is in vain, since difference will always reappear, it cannot be resolved ‘once and for all’.

If the ultimate aim of the politics of autochthony is to restore the rights and primacy of the community of autochthons, that is, to restore genus, then that implies that the line between insiders and outsiders must at last be firmly placed. The problem with the autochthonous call for better, more impermeable borders, Jackson contends, is that while they might be ‘designed to ring-fence and protect the purity of those living within them, . . . they always turn out to be porous, permitting impurities to leak through (Jackson 2006:109). However, even if the expulsion practices and the creation of tighter borders that are implemented in response to the politics of autochthony were to be totally effective, the process of distinguishing between insiders and outsiders can never be finalised due to the presence of ‘remainders’. Jackson asserts that there is always ‘a stubborn, unexplainable, analytical “remainder” which refuses to disappear, a population that confounds the too-easy binary between ‘in’ and ‘out’ and that appears to disrupt the formal schema’ (Jackson 2006:112). These remainders may be understood as the groups which seem to belong on both sides of the autochthon/allogène territorial border, such as the Congolese Hutu, ‘sometimes hailed as ‘brothers’ of the other Congolese because of common affinity within a larger population bloc known as ‘Bantu’, sometimes lumped with the Tutsi as the common “Rwandan enemy” ’ (Jackson 2007:488). It may equally be applied to those constituted as remainders by the fact that they belong in more than one community—those of dual heritage, the second generations and so on. In the Netherlands and also in Flanders, the term ‘allochoon’ has the specific meaning of a
person at least one of whose grandparents was not originally Dutch (Geschiere 2009:150; Ceuppens 2011:162). This suggests that a person becomes a full autochthon at the fourth generation. Elsewhere, however, the point at which the transfer between outsider and insider is completed is vague and, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, always subject to revision. I will discuss the problem of migrant generations and ‘remainders’ further in Chapters 4 and 5.

To summarise, in the paragraphs above I have presented evidence to demonstrate that the operationalisation of autochthony discourse in pursuit of the restoration of the pure and fixed community of autochthony is problematic due to the impossibility of closing the community. Despite that apparent impossibility, the examples used have shown that a number of strategies are used to attempt to impose a finalised boundary. In addition to the absence of the foundations required to separate inside from outside, the unresolved identity of the allochthon and the presence of ‘remainders’ thwart all efforts to produce the boundary. Nonetheless, rather than prompting a reconsideration of the discourse by those who are pursuing their autochthonous goals, the continued presence of potential allochthons which results from the failure to fix the border between inside and outside may instead spur it on to new heights. This effect of galvanization in the face of apparent failure will be explained in Chapter 3 by the concept of the fantasmatic obstacle. In the meantime, it is clear that where political leaders are reluctant to denounce the political and social practices of the discourse of autochthony, as was apparent in the wave of anti-immigrant violence in South Africa in 2008 (Hayem 2013:87-90), or even connive with the perpetrators, as was evident in the case of Côte d’Ivoire’s virulent discourse (Mitchell 2012), the outcome can be extremely violent.

The two subsections above have given clear evidence that despite the motivational force of the Elysian fantasy, the discourse of autochthony cannot achieve the clean division between inside and outside to which it aspires. Driven by the fantasy of an ideal community to replace the current one, which has been damaged by the presence of outsiders, autochthony discourses attempt to achieve restitution of the lost Elysium by deploying a number of strategies. Those strategies begin with the marking off of insider from outsider by identifying the allochthon, and continue with the call for and implementation of a range of actions, from forced

---

29 See section ‘IR, Belonging and the Figure of the Migrant’, p32.
expulsion to the imposition of charges, bans on ownership of land, exclusion from community decision-making and increased efforts to prevent others from entering in the first place. However, as I have shown, the presence of remainders and the impossibility of arriving at a fixed definition of the allochthon mean that the line between autochthon and allochthon can never be drawn ‘once and for all’.

Autochthony’s slipperiness or plasticity, which allows it to flourish in a range of contexts, simultaneously prevents the fixity which is its ultimate objective (Geschiere 2009:34).

In addition, the plasticity visible in the mobilisation of the concept of autochthony provides evidence of the political choices involved in these discourses, despite their attempts to call on ‘natural’ differences between those construed as insiders and outsiders. The impossibility of achieving closure in spite of the plasticity of the terms underlines the fact that the inside-outside ontology and the linked notion of foundational difference are themselves impossible. This clearly has significant implications for conventional IR and its implicit discourse of belonging, and I shall discuss these in the conclusion to this chapter.

AUTOCHTHONY AS A BRITISH DISCOURSE OF BELONGING

The preceding sections of this chapter have introduced the concept of autochthony and given some consideration to its defining characteristics and its modes of operationalisation. In this section I will clarify why I have decided to carry out my case study of autochthony discourse in Britain, in spite of the absence of the explicit terminology of autochthony. I will advance the argument that the literature which I have presented thus far in the chapter demonstrates the ability of the concept to move around the globe and to appear in places where it wasn’t previously seen. Moreover, I will repeat my argument that the discourse of autochthony can be recognised by the defining logics which I have identified above, even where the terminology is absent.

It is evident that the contemporary discourse of autochthony is most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa. The case studies which appear most frequently in the literature come from Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire and DR Congo, and these take the form of either countrywide studies or else studies of a particular tribe or region. Cameroon’s prominence is unsurprising, given that the foremost writer on autochthony discourses, anthropologist Peter Geschiere, has spent several decades
undertaking fieldwork in that country. In these countries, the political exploitation of autochthony discourses is explicit. In Côte d’Ivoire, President Laurent Gbagbo insisted that attacks on people deemed to be ‘foreigners’ as a direct result of his programme of national identification by his militiamen were simply ‘the work of “local farmers” chasing rebels off the ‘lands of their ancestors’’ (Marshall-Fratani 2006:33). DR Congo’s President Mobutu Sese Seko used autochthonous logic when he insisted that delegates at a conference on the country’s future as a multiparty state could only represent provinces in which they were considered autochthons, thereby setting off intense inter-regional squabbling and effectively stymieing what should have been a unique opportunity to redemocratise the country (Jackson 2006:102).

South Africa, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Liberia and Ghana are also the subject of specific studies of autochthony, though here the literature is thinner (see for example Landau 2006; Wa Kabwe-Sigatti 2008; Lentz 2006; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Nyamnjoh 2002; Hayem 2013; Hilgers 2011; Bøås 2009).

Despite the apparent Afro-centrism of the concept, however, the examples used above have illustrated its presence around the globe. Two studies presented above have looked at Indian and Mexican discourses of autochthony (López Caballero 2009; Vandekerckhove 2009). The most clear-cut cases of autochthony discourse in Europe are found in the Netherlands and Belgium (Ceuppens 2001, 2006; Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005; Geschiere 2009), where the terms autochthony and allochthon are established. However, the autochthonous discourse of the Lega Nord (Northern League) in Northern Italy adds a fascinating example. The Lega Nord is both a political party and a movement to unite the wealthy regions of the north of Italy into the newly coined region of ‘Padania’ which excludes the country’s poorer south. This wholly new discourse of autochthony—which has only existed since the mid-1990s—was manufactured as the medium for a politically motivated claim for independence from the Italian state. No prior conceptualisation of the people of the north as autochthonous existed, and the party has had to both ‘reclaim’ and invent cultural and historical elements for Padania and its native ‘Padan’ inhabitants, whose existence can only be conjured in opposition to archetypal ‘southerners’ and non-European immigrants (Machiavelli 2001:131; see also Albertazzi 2006; Bull, A. C. 2003).

---

30 While Gbagbo was not the first leader to use the concept of autochthony in postcolonial Côte d’Ivoire, he was responsible for introducing the national programme of identification which claimed that every Ivoirian must have an ancestral village of origin, to which they must return and be authenticated by village elders in order to qualify for an identity card (Marshall-Fratani 2006).
The discourses of autochthony circulating in Belgium, Italy, and the Netherlands are the most prominent but not the only European examples of autochthonous logics. These can also be seen to motivate ‘nativist’ discourse in Corsica, where the farms of Breton farmers have been destroyed on the basis that ‘allogènes’ can’t be the owners of Corsican land (Bayart et al. 2001:188), as well as in the far-right anti-immigrant mobilisations of contemporary French and Austrian politics (Bayart et al. 2001:189; Geschière and Nyamnjoh 2000:424; Detienne 2001; Geschière 2009). Kosovo, the Caucasus, and Switzerland are likewise mentioned as sites of autochthonous discourse by some scholars, although no details are given as to how political claims in those places are to be read as autochthonous (Bayart et al. 2001).

Thus, the documented presence of the concept in Europe indicates that it might also be valid in the British context. What is notable in the British case, and in some of these examples given above, is the absence of an explicit vocabulary of autochthony. Can autochthony discourses operate in contexts where the terminology of ‘autochthon’ and ‘allochthon’ is virtually unknown? I hope to show in the remainder of the thesis that it can. Geschière notes that, in contrast to the explicit use of allochthon and autochthon in the Netherlands and Belgium,

[E]lsewhere in Europe the terms themselves are less current, but the discourse of belonging is very much present, particularly for expressing both the feeling that new immigrants should adapt themselves to the culture of the national groups that do belong and the rising fear that especially the ‘second generation’ of immigrants will refuse to do so. (Geschière 2009:130)

For this leading scholar of the concept, then, the absence of the terminology need not indicate the absence of the discourse. Of course, not all discourses of belonging are autochthonous. However, earlier in the chapter I identified four defining logics of autochthony—genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood—and I claimed that where these logics are present, the discourse can be identified as autochthonous31. Accordingly, the proof as to whether or not an autochthonous discourse of belonging can be identified in Britain will depend upon my ability to identify those defining logics within the context of a relevant discourse. I am confident that Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate that this is the case.

---

31 See section ‘What makes a Discourse Autochthonous?’, p49, above.
CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have introduced autochthony as a concept and developed an analytical understanding of the ways in which discourses of autochthony are both motivated and activated. I have identified four key logics of autochthony—genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood—and showed that the presence of those logics identifies a discourse as autochthonous. I have examined the way in which autochthony discourses are operationalised. Finally I have explained why Britain is a valid site for a case study of autochthony discourse, despite the absence of autochthony’s explicit vocabulary in British discourses of belonging.

The chapter set out to demonstrate that the discourse of autochthony constitutes a credible approximation of what conventional IR’s implicit discourse might look like, if it were to be made explicit. A number of significant points can be drawn from the findings of each section in order to show how I have achieved that aim. The first of these is that I have demonstrated that autochthony discourse appears to be underpinned by the same inside-outside ontology as conventional IR discourse. From my initial overview of the concept, and during my discussions of each of its defining logics, it became apparent that autochthony is characterised by a foundational view of the social as a realm which can be neatly and persuasively divided into the two spheres of inside and outside. The foundational status of the differentiation is perpetual, since the basis of the claim to belong—ancestral rootedness—is located in the past and therefore is not open to change. A person is either a rooted autochthon or a migrant allochthon; there is no in-between or hybrid third category.

Secondly, my discussions of the concept have also revealed that the ontological assumptions of the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion are likewise present. The nation-state constitutes the ultimate reference point for the claim to autochthony, and the domestic-international dichotomy divides the safe and ordered community of autochthons in the domestic sphere from the threat of the impure allochthons who pervade the international sphere. Territoriality is critical to autochthony as the ground in which ancestral rootedness grows, while fixity and exclusion work together to produce a static and pure community and to protect it from contamination by the infiltration of allochthonous others.
In my opinion, these two findings present sufficient evidence to demonstrate that autochthony may indeed be viewed as a credible approximation of conventional IR’s implicit discourse of belonging. Two further points remain to be made, however. The first of these is that in my exploration of the concept, logics and mobilisation of the discourse, it has become clear that the foundational distinction between inside and outside which characterises and motivates the discourse of autochthony is an unachievable one. As a result of the emptiness and plasticity of the terms, the definition of the allochthon can be refined ad infinitum, and thus a fixed definition can never be achieved. Without a clear definition of the allochthon, and in the presence of groups of ‘stubborn remainders’ who defy classification, there is no possibility of fixing the border between inside and outside and thus reinstating the pure community of the autochthon. This has significant implications not only for the concept and discourse of autochthony, but also for conventional IR discourse, which maintains a silence on the concept of belonging on the basis that it is a subject of domestic politics and not fitting for a discipline focused on the international. If domestic and international are in fact not separate spheres, but rather part of the unending realm of the social, then that silence needs to be rethought. The point will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

The second point is related to my claim that the four logics of autochthony together amount to a fantasy of the ideal community, which I have called the Elysian fantasy, in which there is a perfect (isomorphic) fit between community and bounded territory, as well as a match between available resources and the needs of the community’s members (autochthons). The realisation of the Elysian fantasy is thwarted by the presence of allochthons, who destroy the community’s harmony and put autochthons at a disadvantage. I have claimed that it is this fantasy which gives autochthony discourse its motivational force and which directs its political practices. Identifying this fantasy, together with the recognition that there are no foundational differences between inside and outside, alerts us to the very political nature of the discourse of autochthony and the politics of belonging which it entails. The ‘political’ nature of autochthony is not only its collocation of identity and place, but also its (often implicit rather than explicit) insistence that this collocation signifies a natural difference in status between those who qualify as belonging and those who don’t.

Following on from this finding, the purpose of the rest of the thesis is to show how the discourse of autochthony, which in essence claims to focus solely on the domestic and to have no interest in the discrete social realm that lies beyond its
borders, in fact consists in a conversation with and of the international. In other words, the crucial division of the social between inside and outside which structures these two discourses is in essence illusory, as the analysis of my British case study seeks to show. So when we consider the absence of belonging from conventional IR discourse, we will see that its exclusion from the discipline is based on a political, inside-outside structuring rather than a ‘natural’ ordering of the social.

Chapter 3 will lay out the methodological tools that will be used in the rest of the thesis. In the chapter I will expand on my use of discourse theory and the logics framework that I will use in my critical analysis of autochthonous discourse. I will also present the parameters of my case study of British housing discourse. The chapter will explain that I have chosen to focus on housing as the subject of resource claims through which an autochthonous discourse is delivered, the analysis of which comprises Chapter 4. I will also provide an introduction to the Kurdish and Turkish community in London, which was the site of my empirical explorations into how migrants respond to the autochthonous content of British housing discourse, and which I will present in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 3: unpacking the logics of discourse

In the first chapter of this thesis I set out the way in which the concept of belonging is made external to IR’s field of concern through the construction of an inside-outside framework which balances on five key ontological assumptions about the nature of the social world. That conceptualisation, I suggested, both draws on and produces a finalised line of demarcation between internal matters, which do not concern the discipline, and external (international) matters, which do. I also noted that though conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology thus precludes an explicit discourse of belonging, its ontological foundations may nonetheless produce a silent or implicit one. I argued that the figure of the migrant problematises conventional IR’s unwillingness to theorise belonging and brings urgency to the task of identifying and unmasking any implicit discourse of belonging that the discipline may be concealing. Chapter 2 examined the concept of autochthony as an account of belonging. Here I argued that the logics of autochthony draw on the same set of ontological assumptions as conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology. Given the shared foundations, I concluded that the autochthonous discourse of belonging may in fact provide a credible approximation of what IR’s implicit account of belonging would look like, if it were to be made explicit.

Having thus explored the problematic that impels this research project, the task for this chapter is to show how the predominantly theoretical claims made in Chapters 1 and 2 can best be augmented by an engagement with the empirical case study which I will be presenting in Chapters 4 and 5. This will be done in three main sections. In the first section I will describe the methodological underpinnings, foreshadowed in my self-identification as a critical theorist in the introductory chapter, which have shaped my research project and my broader critical approach to the social sciences. This methodological positioning paves the way for my elaboration on Essex School discourse theory in the second section of the chapter. Here I will pay particular attention to the notion of social, political and fantasmatic logics that I introduced briefly at the beginning of the thesis. The logics framework is crucial to my understanding of discourse and provides the analytical framework for my empirical research. As I will argue, taking the fantasmatic as the level of the ontological, the concept of fantasmatic logics shows how ontological assumptions give rise to and direct political (and thus ultimately social) practices. Consequently, it
provides the key for understanding how the ontological assumptions that structure conventional IR’s inside-outside discourse are not neutral, disinterested factors in terms of the discipline’s silence on the issue of belonging but are instead political constructs which are motivated by specific fantasies about how the social should be structured. The final section of the chapter will set out the basic parameters and introductory material for the case study of British housing discourse which will be presented in Chapters 4 and 5. It will also indicate how this case study contributes to my aim of answering my overarching research question concerning conventional IR’s silence on the matter of belonging and the significance of that silence to the discipline.

THE CRITICAL THEORIST IN ACTION

In the Introduction I briefly noted the critical theory credentials of my research question and the centrality of discourse theory as my analytical framework. Before embarking on a closer look at discourse theory and the methodological tools from that theoretical toolbox that I will use to analyse the empirical study in Chapters 4 and 5, in this present section I will reflect on the connections between this approach and critical theory. I acknowledge here that my own theoretical perspective has developed significantly over the course of—and specifically through an ongoing reflection over—my research into the case study. It is true to say that I began the project with a quite different set of philosophical ideas to the ones that I now hold. The transformation has been an iterative process that has allowed me to clarify and revise my thoughts about how the social world is to be understood and how meaning is attached to the people, places, concepts and events that populate it. In the following paragraphs I will try to convey the point at which I have arrived in this process of philosophical reflexivity and the ways in which that point of arrival is conditioned by the questions that I set out to answer.

Price and Reus-Smit identify four ‘common intellectual orientations’ shared by critical theorists: these are their ontological, epistemological, normative and methodological orientations (1998:261). While not necessarily agreeing with all of the claims made in their article, this set of concerns provides a useful guide to the theoretical structuring of any piece of social science research, and so I use it here to situate my thesis within the broader range of theoretical perspectives which characterise the contemporary field of IR.
Ontology

Though Smith is critical of the tendency to view ontology as prior to epistemology, preferring instead to see the two as of equal order and ‘mutually and inextricably related’, I want to start here with ontology since in the context of this project it does appear to be the more central of the two dimensions (Smith, S. 1996:18). Zalwiski describes ontology as the matter of ‘what issues are deemed important and relevant to the study of international politics’ (1996:349). For Cox, ontology is the starting point for any line of IR enquiry: ‘[w]e cannot define a problem in global politics without presupposing a certain basic structure consisting of the significant kinds of entities involved and the form of significant relationships among them’ (Cox 1992:132). He illustrates the claim by noting that ontological assumptions of states as basic units and the balance of power as a mechanism for interpreting relationships between those units comprise the ‘ontological starting point’ from which theories can be constructed (ibid.). In this illustration, ‘states’ and the ‘balance of power’ figure as pre-existing features of global politics which constitute the structure from which a particular theory may proceed; alternative ontologies necessarily permit the development of contrasting theories.

Cox and other critical theorists who discuss the role and nature of ontology in international politics do not suggest that ontological assumptions are in themselves problematic. On the contrary, every theorist makes ontological assumptions, but some theorists (in Cox’s view, this is particularly the case for neo-realists) fail to acknowledge those assumptions and instead take them as immutable, ‘given’ features of the world which they study. For my own research project, the ‘givenness’ of a world organised according to a system of states in which the social world is preconfigured into sets of relations that exist within but not across state borders, is at the root of the ‘problem’ of both IR’s non-interest in issues of belonging and of the autochthonous underpinnings of the prevailing discourses of belonging that my literature review and case study identify. Consequently, in carrying out an enquiry into the concept of belonging it becomes evident that the borders which separate belonging from non-belonging are neither fixed nor natural, but rather are constructed and reproduced through discourse in order to achieve political aims. Hence, this investigation is explicitly concerned with the ontological assumptions of discourses of IR and autochthony, and it seeks to show how such assumptions lead to current configurations of the social which manifest through our ideas about what it means to belong. My investigation is thus based on an ontology which sees the
dominant structures (here, the division of the world into a system of states) not as ‘natural’ or as an inevitable or logical outcome of the trajectory of human development, but rather as contingent entities which have evolved through the historical workings of power, and which remain dominant through the ongoing play of politics and because this particular configuration suits those who hold power. In my understanding, the international system of states—and the accompanying bracketing of the social within the units of this system—can be equated with Cox’s description of socially constructed structures which ‘become a part of the objective world by virtue of their existence in the intersubjectivity of relevant groups of people’ (Cox 1992:138).

**Epistemology**

Discussions about epistemology in IR seem to fall largely into the pattern of what Lapid called the Third Debate, which asserts a deep divide between ‘positivist’ and ‘post-positivist’ approaches to epistemological issues. There is a general perception that what Cox regards as ‘problem-solving theories’ have a largely positivist orientation while post-positivist positions are held by critical theorists, who reject the positivist’s ‘deeply rooted urges for firm foundations, invariant truths, and unities of knowledge’ (Lapid 1989:250) and the perspective’s belief that ‘generalisations about the social world’ are possible (Nicholson 1996). Smith’s analysis of positivism’s main features warns against the conflation of the terms ‘positivism’ and ‘empiricism’, but states nonetheless that positivism in international relations has been ‘tied to an empiricist epistemology’ which has placed enormous emphasis on empirical validation as the only grounds for knowledge. At the same time, he argues, positivism in IR has drawn upon a distinction between facts and values (Smith, S. 1996:16-17).

An alternative to positivist theorising comes in the form of interpretive theory. Bevir and Rhodes state that epistemology: ‘poses the question of “how do we know what we know about political science”’. Interpretive theories constitute one set of answers to that question’ (Bevir and Rhodes 2002:2). In discussing the epistemological approach of my project it is once again critical to state that this is largely dictated by my reading of the problematic to which my attentions are directed. The very malleability of a concept such as autochthony, or more broadly speaking that of belonging, militates against the possibility of finding out a singular ‘truth’ about what belonging might mean; moreover, the many ways in which this has been
interpreted and politicised across time and space denies the possibility of a foundational truth.

**Normativity**

An unashamed normativity motivates my interest in how IR deals with migrants and the concept of belonging. I am greatly concerned that at an international level, discourses about migrants and migration are increasingly duplicitous, by which I mean that while there seems to be general support for the individual right to migrate, most states actively discourage many kinds of migrants and migration routes into their own state: migration is a right that should happen elsewhere. The discourse is also hierarchical. Westerners who migrate tend to be depicted as cosmopolitan expatriates gifting their skills, knowledge and experience to the world, in contrast to the scrounging unskilled hordes emanating from ‘failed’ or ‘underdeveloped’ southern states who are referred to as ‘immigrants’ and usually cast as ‘problems’. A desire to expose the foundations of those biased positions in order to show how they might be denaturalised, challenged and resisted is central to my research.

**Methodology**

Price and Reus-Smit assert that critical theorists ‘reject the hegemony of a single scientific method, advocating a plurality of approaches to the generation of knowledge while highlighting the importance of interpretive strategies’ (Price and Reus-Smit 1998:261). That of course doesn’t mean that every piece of research should include several approaches but rather serves to underline the extent to which critical theorists’ rejection of positivism as the only way of doing ‘proper’ research has opened disciplinary eyes as to the value of other modes of research. Furthermore, the freeing of International Relations from the need to generate generalisable laws means that research methods geared towards the analysis of meaning, rather than pure causality, are viewed more favourably. This is not to say, however, that all IR scholars, including those who maintain a positivist or problem-solving orientation, would necessarily give credence to the work of others who use alternative research strategies.

In line with the ontological and epistemological stance set out above, my research is situated under the broad umbrella of qualitative research. According to Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative research has two essential parts: ‘a commitment to
some version of the naturalistic, interpretive approach to its subject matter and an ongoing critique of the politics and methods of positivism’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:13). Qualitative research is:

> a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:4-5).32

In other words, qualitative research does not aim to elicit clean data from controlled studies which have statistical significance in order that wider generalizations can be made. Rather, it embraces the necessarily subjective nature of its findings as evidence of a particular set of meanings, which have significance to those who experience them. It is precisely those individual and personal experiences which have value for the qualitative researcher as she attempts ‘to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (ibid.).

The preceding subsections have outlined the critical nature of my approach to IR and to the problem of the discipline’s failure to engage with the concept of belonging. They explain why I am unable to accept the explanation that belonging is simply ‘not an IR subject’, and why I am committed to exploring the ontological assumptions which work uphold the idea that belonging doesn’t belong in IR theorising. Finally I have shown that my interest in how social reality is constructed and interpreted matches a qualitative research methodology. The qualitative methods that I use in my case study will be presented later in the chapter. Conditioning the selection of any methods, however, is my chosen methodological framework of Essex School discourse theory, and it is to this that the following section now turns.

**ESSEX SCHOOL DISCOURSE THEORY**

This section will present a brief sketch of the key concepts of discourse theory that are most pertinent for this thesis, following which I will pay closer attention to the typology of social, political and fantasmatic logics. A quick review of the literature on discourse demonstrates that academics have employed the concept

32 The linking of qualitative methods with an interpretive stance is not universal. Lin notes that qualitative methods can be used in both positivist and interpretive research strategies, but most authors align qualitative with interpretive projects, while Hansen and Sorensen advocate the use of quantitative methods in discourse theoretical research, although they note that discourse theory privileges qualitative data (Lin 1998; Hansen and Sorensen 2005).
in a wide array of frameworks ‘ranging from natural language, speech, and writing, to almost anything that acts as a carrier of signification, including social and political practices, to discourse as an ontological horizon’ (Glynos et al. 2009:5). Thus while it may be possible to issue generic statements about what ‘discourse’ is, the meaning invested in the term clearly depends upon the methodological position of the researcher making use of term, as well as ‘the conceptual resources they draw upon’ (Howarth 2010:311). I do not have the space here to draw comparisons between the different versions of discourse theory, besides which this has already been done by others (see for example Howarth et al. 2000; Phillips, L. and Jørgensen 2002). Each of the many social science approaches which make use of this concept, such as critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, or linguistic analysis, undoubtedly has its merits. However, the approach which I make use of in this thesis is the discourse theory based on the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in their seminal volume, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, and the ‘Essex School’ which has developed out of their work (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985]). This version of discourse theory is referred to as both poststructuralist discourse theory (Howarth 2010:311) and political discourse theory (Glynos et al. 2009:7); henceforth I simply use ‘discourse theory’.

A discourse can be understood as a system of meaningful practice. Discursive systems are ‘finite and contingent constructions, which are constituted politically by the construction of social antagonisms and the creation of political frontiers’ (Howarth 2010:313). Laclau and Mouffe’s rejection of what they call the discursive/extra-discursive dichotomy and the consequent ‘abandonment of the thought/reality opposition’ constitutes the major difference between their discourse theory and other discourse methodologies (2001 [1985]:110). This theoretical stance argues that ‘every object is constituted as an object of discourse’ (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985]:107). In the context of this research project, an inclusive reading of discourse has been critical for my attempts to make sense of the wide array of practices that constitute both autochthonous discourses in general and British housing discourse in particular. These practices include the passing and enactment of laws and the use of regulations which articulate a hegemonic differentiation between those ‘born of the soil’ and those not, as well as media portrayals of (certain) ‘foreigners’ as inherently ‘other’. Likewise, ‘events’ such as riots or instances of social unrest, which tend to be drawn into discourses of belonging as evidence of the ‘alienness’ of those caught up in them, can be understood as integral to the discourse. Institutions which
further autochthonous practices of redistribution and resource allocation, and the verbal outrage of ordinary people in response to the perceived favouring of ‘immigrants’ and consequential injustice against the ‘born and bred’, are also to be considered as part of the discourse. From a discourse theory perspective, all of these types of empirical data comprise the ‘sets of signifying practices that constitute a “discourse” and its “reality”’, and it is this range of practices that shapes the ways in which individuals experience the social (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:4).

The main elements of Essex School discourse theory which I will use in this thesis can be summarised as follows (Torfing 2005:14-17). In discourse all meaning is contingent: that is, unfixed/unfixable and open to change, because the field of discursivity is unlimited, and elements can be repositioned within a discourse limitlessly. It is the articulation (enactment/mobilisation) of a discourse through its practices which construct meaning in any given instance. Articulation consists in the discursive linking of disparate elements in a pattern that can be described as ‘regularity in dispersion’ (Glynos and Howarth 2007:139). Meaning is thus always relational, in that an element has its meaning conferred not through its essence but rather through its relation to other elements in the structure of the discourse. In order to create (and dominate) a social order, a discourse tries to achieve the partial fixation of meaning. In other words it tries to establish its own preferred meanings and interpretations to make these permanent and incontestable, and at the same time it must suppress alternative interpretations. Partial fixation allows the discourse to conceal the radical contingency of its own foundations, and in this way it becomes hegemonic. All discursive structures are conditioned by their radical contingency, which describes their fundamental lack or incompleteness (Howarth 2010:312). Sedimentation describes ‘a stable discursive system in which meaning is relatively fixed’ (Hansen and Sørensen 2005:96). Once a discourse becomes so sedimented that it appears to give an obvious or self-evident interpretation of social relations, then it can be regarded as depoliticised. At this point, all traces of the prior contestations which produced that particular discourse are concealed, and the meanings and identities that it articulates appear as fixed and beyond reinterpretation (Epstein 2008:10; Hansen and Sørensen 2005:96).

A degree of depoliticisation appears to have occurred in the case of autochthony discourse in Côte d’Ivoire, for example, where the issue of autochthony has become pervasive (Geschière 2009:101). As I noted in Chapter 2, the politics of autochthony in Côte d’Ivoire have been closely entangled with the civil war which
engulfed the country for at least a decade\textsuperscript{33}. Here, the contestation that has driven the discourse has focused exclusively on \textit{who} should be counted as an autochthon (with Northern Ivorians who had migrated internally to the south especially vulnerable to accusations of allochthony), or how a person should prove his status as an autochthon (i.e. through the village of ‘origin’, through national records, or through identity cards). Much less seems to have been said about whether autochthony is an appropriate means of identifying those who should count as citizens, or whether a different measure would be preferable. In other words, it seems that the possibility for contesting autochthony’s very basis of ancestral rootedness as a means of delimiting belonging and identifying alternative interpretations of belonging cannot be imagined, and that the contingency of autochthony discourse has been successfully concealed.

Nonetheless, the impossibility of total closure means that even the most sedimented discourse cannot fully overcome its own contingency, and as such every discourse is open to contestation by those who see the possibility of alternative formations of the social. Events which expose the contingency of the hegemonic discourse are said to be \textit{dislocatory}, and it is here that social antagonisms arise. Dislocations can be thought of as ‘a moment when a sense emerges, however localized or diffuse this may be, that “things are not quite right” ’ (Glynos and Howarth 2007:143). Smaller dislocations may be explained away or otherwise absorbed into the hegemonic discourse, but larger dislocations generally provoke a wider contestation of the hegemonic discourse, which is now deemed to have failed to account for all possibilities. Another, more suitable discourse must be produced, and yet the direction which this new discourse will take is completely open at the point of dislocation, thanks to the radical contingency of the social. In Chapter 1 I suggested that the figure of the migrant can be understood as a dislocatory moment for the conventional discourse of IR, in that she challenges the inside-outside ontology which underpins that discourse by posing questions about belonging that the discourse cannot fully absorb or explain away\textsuperscript{34}. Though conventional IR theory tries to suggest that belonging is beyond its ‘international’ remit, the migrant’s embodiment of the international obstructs this attempt to explain away the dislocation and demands an alternative interpretation of the social. On the other hand, dislocation isn’t the only way in which discourses are transformed. Articulation

\textsuperscript{33} See section ‘Assertions of Victimhood’, p65, above.
\textsuperscript{34} Se section ‘IR, Belonging and the Figure of the Migrant’, p31, above.
is an iterative process, and yet no articulation can ever be an exact copy of an earlier articulation: with each new instance of social practice there is a ‘dimension of construction’ or reconstruction (Laclau 1994:3). In this respect a discourse might be thought of as resembling a glacier: while changes are constantly taking place and the glacier is always on the move, for the most part those changes are so minute that they are imperceptible to the viewer. Only the large-scale, dramatic changes are visible, and yet the glacier is never stationary, always in the process of transformation.

*Political frontiers* are an essential component of the social since they ‘organise political space through the simultaneous operation of the logics of equivalence and difference’ (Norval 2000:220). Norval describes a political frontier as a mechanism for distinguishing insiders from outsiders through the institution of social divisions. The frontier also ‘makes it seem that the institution of social division is not itself a social fact’ (Norval 1996:4-5). In the context of autochthony discourse, we can understand the act of marking off autochthon from allochthon in terms of ancestral rootedness as the key political frontier. Political frontiers arise following the emergence of *social antagonisms*. In turn, social antagonisms result from the inability of social agents to achieve full identity because of the radical contingency which pervades all social identity and structures. When the social agent recognises her own failure to achieve a full identity she perceives this as the fault of some ‘Other’. The act of identifying and blaming an ‘Other’ creates a social antagonism, and builds a frontier between the agent and her ‘Other’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:10).

This can be illustrated with reference to the autochthonous discourse of the Lega Nord in northern Italy, as discussed in Chapter 2. Here, ‘others’ in the form of southern Italians and ‘immigrants’ are blamed for the perceived failure of the Northern regions to achieve the economic, political and cultural heights to which they (or at least their political leaders) aspire. In the Lega Nord’s ‘Padanian’ discourse it is impoverished southerners and backward foreigners who function as the obstacle to greatness, and who must therefore take the blame and bear the brunt of the autochthon’s hostility. The instigation of this antagonism leads to the creation of a political frontier which separates the two identities of autochthon and allochthon. However, as the autochthony literature repeatedly shows, this line or political frontier cannot be finalised since closure is impossible, and it is ‘[t]he struggle over what and

35 See section ‘ Assertions of Victimhood’, p64, above.
who are included and excluded from the hegemonic discourse’ which drives politics (Torfing 2005:16).

In my discussion of the Flemish discourse of autochthony in Chapter 2 above I noted that Flemings categorise a range of seemingly dissimilar people—including Francophone Belgian citizens as well as asylum seekers, Eurocrats, Muslims and economic migrants—as allochthons (Ceuppens 2006). This can be understood with reference to Laclau and Mouffe’s terms of the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference. The logic of equivalence acts to simplify political space by ‘creating equivalential identities that express a pure negation of a discursive system’ (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:11; Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985]:130). A wholly negative identity is required because mere difference (here, the fact of being simply ‘not like’ the Flemings) can simply be accepted as ‘one more difference’ inside the discourse (Torfing 2005:15). To render difference as something which is beyond the discourse, then, so as to constitute its ‘other’, it is necessary to reduce it to a pure negativity which ‘has no common measure with the discourse in question’ (ibid.). This is done through the workings of social antagonism, which allows a political frontier to be drawn up between identity and this new, wholly negative figure. Chains of equivalence link all identities which can be construed as representing the negative quality. Thus, in the Flemish discourse, the logic of equivalence links up all those subject positions which can be construed as the negative of the autochthon—the economic migrant, the asylum seeker, the Muslim, the African—into a chain of equivalence. These identities are subsequently reduced to that negative quality of ‘being allochthonous’, while other aspects of their identity—woman, graduate, parent, Christian etc—which they may share with those who are now identified as autochthons, are suppressed.

The logic of equivalence effectively divides social space into two polarised camps with no common ground between them (Norval 2000:221). Where it prevails, however, the focus of attention is uniquely on the common factor which denotes the ‘otherness’ on which the equivalence is drawn (in other words on ‘migrantness’ in the discourse of autochthony), and not on any common factors which might link those who remain ‘inside’ (Griggs 2005:119; Glynos and Howarth 2007:144). This is significant because it facilitates the masking of internal difference as well as characteristics which might be shared by actors on both sides of the political frontier.

---

36 See section ‘Who is the allochthon’, p69, above.
To return to the example of the Flemish discourse, it is the identification of individuals as allochthons and the linking of that identity as the cause of problems, rather than the notion of characteristics shared by ‘Flemings’, which drives the discourse.

In contrast to the logic of equivalence, the logic of difference works to foster ‘the expansion and increasing complexity’ of political space by dissolving those chains of equivalence and absorbing the previously excluded identities into a developing order (Laclau and Mouffe 2001 [1985]:130; Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:11). Unlike the polarising effect of the logic of equivalence, in discourses where the logic of difference predominates ‘a more complex articulation of elements, militating against such dichotomisation, is facilitated’ (Norval 2000:221). Under this logic, contrasting identities can exist within a discourse by highlighting the similarities and differences between them (Howarth 2006:113-4). Thinking about discourses of belonging, I would argue that multiculturalism could be construed as a discourse of belonging in which the logic of difference predominates, although to clarify that would require attention that is beyond the scope of this thesis. Howarth notes that the logic of difference doesn’t necessarily produce an even or harmonious rendering of the social, since it contains modalities which, as well as taming the particularities, play differences off against one another or forestall the likelihood of conflict which would turn to antagonism (ibid.). It is also important to note here that discourses are not structured by either the logic of equivalence or the logic of difference alone. Rather, as Norval stresses, the presence and operation of both is required for the formation of political identities, though one or the other may appear to dominate a given discourse (Norval 2000:221).

The paragraphs above have introduced some of discourse theory’s key concepts, and I have shown how these relate to the autochthony discourses that we encountered in Chapter 2 above. The notions of political frontier, social antagonisms, articulation, contingency, dislocation, and the logics of equivalence and difference will play a prominent role in illustrating how the ontological assumptions that structure autochthony discourse effect a particular version of social relations, and that is one which has no space for migrant belonging. Before moving on to outline the analytical framework that I will use to conduct my analysis, however, I wish to clarify the relationship between autochthony, British housing discourse and my wider thesis. The discourse that I will critique in the following chapters is that of autochthony, and because the discourse of autochthony is invariably mobilised
through the medium of resource claims, I will do that via a critical analysis of British housing discourse. Since demonstrating the relevance of this for IR requires more than one step, it is worth reiterating here. I first claimed in Chapter 1 that conventional IR is silent on belonging, other than that it implies that belonging is to be found in the domestic/inside sphere, since this is where social relations are located. In Chapter 2 I then advanced the argument that since the discourse of autochthony asserts the claim that belonging is limited to the inside/domestic sphere, which seems to be a direct reflection of conventional IR’s position on belonging, autochthony can be understood to function as an implicit discourse of belonging for conventional IR. In other words, autochthony reveals what conventional IR’s account of belonging would look like, if it were to express one. Following this line of thought, the critical analysis of autochthony discourse and its inside-outside ontology has relevance for my enquiry into IR’s silence on belonging and the inside-outside ontology which structures it. By revealing the contingency of autochthony discourse and the impossibility of its foundations, I will thus be doing the same for conventional IR’s silent account of belonging, at one remove.

Critical Analysis Through the Framework of Logics

Armed with an understanding of the discourse theory concepts elucidated above, this section will describe the analytical framework that I will use in my case study, which is Jason Glynos and David Howarth’s framework of social, political and fantasmatic logics. I will describe how these analytical categories will assist in my analysis of British housing discourse, paying special attention to the notion of fantasmatic logics, and I will introduce one further concept, that of ‘non-necessity’, which the authors exploit and which will feature in my case study. I will finally discuss the relationship between a logics framework and an ontological framework.

According to Glynos and Howarth, the purpose of discourse theory is to produce a ‘descriptive, explanatory and critical’ account of a given discourse (Glynos and Howarth 2007:152). In Logics of Critical Explanation in Social and Political Theory they develop a detailed and sophisticated framework with which to conduct social science enquiry with the aim of achieving all three of those objectives (description, explanation and critique). Their framework builds on Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory as expounded in Hegemony and Socialist Strategy and elsewhere, with the

37 See section ‘IR, Belonging and the Figure of the Migrant’, p32, above.
38 See section ‘The Concept and Discourse of Auochthony, p45, above.
intention of formulating a methodologically coherent framework with which Laclau and Mouffe’s insights can be applied. It is far beyond the capacity of this thesis to provide a comprehensive overview of their Glynos and Howarth’s methodology. Rather, my presentation is necessarily limited to a focus on my interpretation of their ‘three-fold typology of logics’, which contains the three interrelated aspects of social, political and fantasmatic logics (Glynos and Howarth 2007:106). The concept of logics is not easily summarised. Glynos and Howarth describe the logic of a practice or discourse as having two aspects. Firstly it aims ‘to capture the ‘patterning’ of social practices’, and their ‘rules or grammar’ (Glynos and Howarth 2007:136,140). The second aspect concerns ‘the conditions which make the practice both possible and vulnerable’ (ibid.). What logics try to ‘capture and name’ is the ‘relational network’ of a discourse; the way that meaning and subject are linked and understood within a specific context. This is illustrated with reference to how the ‘logic of the market’ might be differentially understood depending on whether it was used in relation to a supermarket, energy supply market, jobs market etc (ibid.).

The three categories of social, political and fantasmatic logics are used to explain, interpret and critique different dimensions of a discourse, and all three are central to generating a full understanding and critical explanation of the discursive phenomenon being studied. Put simply, they assist in exploring the what (social logics), how (political logics) and why (fantasmatic logics) aspects of a given discourse (Glynos and Howarth 2007:108). These logics are used as analytical categories with which to separate out different aspects of a discourse. They allow the analyst to move from the commonsense and naturalised ‘facts’ of the social, back to the political dynamics which caused those social facts to become sedimented, and to link these two aspects with the fantasmatic elements which sustain them. The three types of logic were presented briefly in the introduction, but here I restate my understanding and usage, and give more detail about how each functions analytically.

Firstly, social logics describe the practices which characterise and define a discourse: these practices might be documents, speeches, buildings, rituals, institutions, gestures, acts, systems and so on. They are the sedimented forms of those past political logics which constructed or maintain the discourse, and they appear as more or less naturalised ‘facts’. To take the example of the logics of autochthony in contemporary South Africa, a range of contemporary social practices aimed at makwere kwere (foreigners) can be identified. These include: blaming migrants for HIV/AIDS, unemployment and ‘all forms of illegality’; the refusal of schools to
enrol foreign children; denying foreigners access to healthcare; arbitrary arrest and detention; the non-recognition and confiscation of work permits as well as the extraction of bribes by police officers and other officials (Landau 2006; Crush et al. 2008). Together these practices form the kind of relational network mentioned above: that is, they articulate the elements and subject positions (healthcare, illegality, foreigners) in a way which is specific to that discourse. Importantly, the same elements might be discursively configured in a very different pattern within a separate discourse, for example one which advances human rights.

Social logics are the starting point for critical explanation. It is by identifying a set of practices or a social phenomenon as problematic that the analyst can begin to search for their provenance and the ways in which their contingent origins have been concealed. Thus, with reference to the above, it is by questioning attitudes and practices towards foreigners in South Africa—by problematising their sedimented and natural appearance—that the grounds for social enquiry can be established. Through my analysis of the discourses described in the autochthony literature (Chapter 2) and the social practices evident in those contexts, I identified the four logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood. These are different forms of social logics, in that they describe the social practices which characterise autochthony discourse. In that chapter we encountered the social logics of genus in the practices of discrimination against Rwandophones in DR Congo and the annulling/reinstating of their citizenship on the basis that they are not properly autochthonous (Jackson 2007). The logic of impurity was demonstrated by the Front National’s denigration of immigrants as bearers of illnesses which endanger French people (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000:440). In Ghana, the fierce protection of the right to assert political influence and the actions taken to prevent ‘settlers’ from joining associations where such influence is exercised, illustrates the logic of entitlement (Lentz 2006:235), while the logic of victimhood is evident in San Francisco Tecoxpa, Mexico, in the demand that jobs at a local swimming pool be taken away from ‘foreigners’ and given to locals instead (López Caballero 2009:171).

Next, political logics concern the dynamic aspect of the discourse; they bring a discourse into being by reacting to antagonisms at the level of the social and drawing

---

39 See section ‘What makes a Discourse Autochthonous?’, p48, above.
40 See p50, above.
41 See p56, above.
42 See p59, above.
43 See p62-3, above.
up new political frontiers, or strengthening existing frontiers in the case that an antagonism threatens an existing discourse. These logics are concerned with the processes of construction, maintenance and sedimentation of social divisions and coalitions, and are thus critical to understanding how discourses arise, change and disappear. Political logics operate through the logics of equivalence and difference, that is by either polarising social relations or by dissolving polarities and instead emphasising similarities and differences within the discourse, as described above. They are particularly connected to dislocations and social antagonisms. While Laclau described political logics as the ‘institution of the social’, Glynos and Howarth point out that they must equally be concerned with the ‘de-institution’ and ‘contestation’ of the social, since the establishment of a new regime ‘presupposes the possibility that a previous social order be dislodged from its hegemonic position’ (Laclau 2005:117; Glynos and Howarth 2007:142).

With reference to the contemporary discourses of autochthony introduced in Chapter 2, political logics are illustrated in the Netherlands’ unprecedented institution of a restrictive discourse of immigration. Here the new discourse included the demand for (and implementation of) the production of a national ‘canon’ of Dutch history and culture, and the introduction of a compulsory exam as part of a stricter regime of citizenship (Geschiere 2009:134,161)⁴⁴. In this case, both the institution itself and the discussions that preceded it effectively sharpened the frontier between those who belonged (and were thus not subject to its measures) and those who required this in order to become ‘citizenised’ (ibid.). Political logics are tightly connected to social logics in that they institute them; social logics are the sedimented forms of previous political contestations, as observed above. Also, however, each new institution or activation of political logics via antagonism and the construction of new political frontiers ‘emerges from concrete empirical demands within a particular order’, and therefore the relationship between the two levels can be seen as a two-directional one (Glynos and Howarth 2007:143).

Finally, fantasmatic logics have a motivational purpose, both in sustaining an unachievable fantasy of a better world that is denied through the presence of an obstacle, and in naturalising the existing discourse by hiding its own contingent foundations and thus converting its political logics into ‘common-sense facts’. I will deal with the latter aspect of converting political logics into commonsense facts first.

⁴⁴ See p60, above.
Fantasmatic logics function by ensuring that the regular dislocations which occur in the discourse are not recognised as such, in other words that their potential as grounds for antagonism and contestation of the prevailing order is not seen, and thus that ‘the radical contingency of social reality remains firmly in the background’ (Howarth 2010:322). The logic of fantasy relates here to the social logics of a discourse, insofar as it presents the hegemonic discourse as a natural order and validates the social practices which constitute the discourse. For the social actors embedded in a discourse, fantasmatic logics thus ‘make sense’ of the social world and the partial fixations of meaning which structure social relations within it, and by concealing radical contingency they structure a subject’s lived experience of social reality (Howarth 2010:322). In this function, fantasy operates as a means of protecting the subject from the anxiety caused by the recognition of the contingent (and thus uncertain) nature of the social structures in which she is immersed (Glynos 2008:286).

The second function of fantasmatic logics, which relates to the political logics, is to direct and energise political practices ‘by pointing to things that are desired or rejected’ (Howarth 2010:326). Here the fantasmatic logics work by offering what Stavrakakis calls ‘the imaginary promise of recapturing our lost/impossible enjoyment’ (Stavrakakis 2005:73). Put differently, they provide the motivation for political practices. The ‘imaginary promise’ contains the fantasy which enables the fantasmatic logics and stands as the objective of the fantasmatic narrative. As this is central to my analysis in subsequent chapters it is worth breaking this down into its constituent parts. In my understanding, a fantasy consists in an idealised vision of social relations, in which both a better world and closure of the social are realised. In Glynos’ words, it ‘structures the subject’s desire’ (2008:283). It is an impossible vision, since closure of the social is not possible, but nonetheless a potent one. It is the ‘imaginary promise’ that a fantasy can be realised which drives political practices, in other words political practices are attempts to realise the fantasy. According to the fantasmatic narrative, however, that realisation is prevented by the presence of an obstacle. The fantasmatic narrative has two dimensions. The \textit{beatific} dimension indicates the potential realisation of the fantasy once the obstacle has been overcome, while the \textit{horific} dimension evokes the threat of disaster if the obstacle prevails (Glynos and Howarth 2007:147).

To relate this to the concept of autochthony, in Chapter 2 I suggested that the logics of autochthony produce an Elysian vision of the social in which the
restitution of genus is enacted within the bounded territory, social relations inside the community are perfectly harmonious and all needs are fulfilled. This fantasy can now be seen as part of autochthony’s fantasmatic narrative. Elysium represents the better world, or the idealised configuration of social relations, towards the realisation of which the discourse of autochthony is oriented. Before that beatific dimension can be achieved, however, the ‘obstacle’ must be overcome, and autochthony’s obstacle is the allochthon, or migrant-outsider, whose presence has contaminated perfection and prevents its re-establishment. Failure to remove the obstacle will result in the manifestation of autochthony’s horrific dimension, which is the destruction of genus and the ensuing onset of strife and deprivation.

In autochthony’s fantasmatc narrative, while it is the presence of the migrant-outsider which forms the obstacle to the realisation of the Elysian fantasy, at the same time that presence makes possible the continuation of the discourse by concealing radical contingency. What I mean by this is that, in the absence of a definable obstacle, the failure of the fantasy to materialise would require the recognition of the radical contingency which prevents any such closed and finalised social structures from forming. Such acknowledgement would then entail the abandonment of the discourse. By its inevitable ongoing presence, however, the fantasmatc obstacle perpetuates the discourse by prompting the implementation of further practices in pursuit of the impossible ideal of its own removal and the consequential realisation of Elysium (Howarth 2010:323). In this way, any political practices which work towards the removal of the obstacle are sustained and validated.

A related aspect concerns the way in which the subject responds to the fantasmatc narrative. Where she is ‘gripped’ by the fantasy, her response is said to be ideological, whereas an ethical response pertains when the subject acknowledges and engages with the radical contingency of the discourse (Glynos and Howarth 2007:111-3). Put differently, acceptance of the dominant discourse is described as an ideological response, while rejection of the discourse is said to be ethical. This distinction will be used in Chapter 5, when I present the findings of my empirical fieldwork to gauge whether or not the Kurdish and Turkish community members to whom I spoke accepted or rejected its fantasmatc logics.

---

45 See p66 above.
Given the complexity of this logic, how does it actually function? My own understanding is that fantasy can be understood as a mirror, which reflects back a subject’s own idealised vision of social relations (matching the ‘fantasmatic promise’ mentioned above) as the actual or proper configuration of the social. The reflection is then used by the subject as a template or point of reference against which social reality can be measured. Crucially, however, the idealised nature of the template/reflection is concealed, as is its contingency, leaving the subject an apparently singular and finalised template with which to make sense of the surrounding social world. In other words, the template doesn’t describe a state of social relations which might materialise in the future, given the right conditions, but rather it portrays a configuration of society which is, in the sense of being a timeless and natural order. That is not to say that the social relations portrayed in the template correspond to the current configuration, since this is clearly impossible.

This template then functions as the source of motivation for the subject’s engagement with a given discourse. Thus, where existing social relations are perceived as matching the outline of the template, these are understood as correctly configured. Where social relations appear to deviate from the template, then steps must be taken to correct the deviation and restore the wholeness of the natural order. To transpose this into the context of autochthony discourse, fantasy provides the subject with a template in which the community of belonging is one that is bounded by shared ancestral connections to territory. This configuration of the social is presented as natural, as closed beyond contestation, and as the only proper ordering. Where belonging and the rights of belonging are seen to be strictly delineated according to ancestral rootedness, social relations are seen to correspond to the autochthonous template, and consequently the autochthon need take no action other than to protect the status quo should it be put at risk. On the other hand, where belonging and the rights of belonging are no longer sharply delineated on the basis of ancestral rootedness but rather have taken on some other organising principle (e.g. shared values, shared citizenship, residential presence), this is understood as deviation from the proper order. In this case, the autochthon is compelled to demand or take action which will restore social relations to what she perceives as its only natural configuration, and this action corresponds to attempts to remove or overcome the obstacle which haunts the fantasmatic narrative. As the literature

---

46 I am not suggesting here that social relations can ever match the idealised and finalised template that make up the fantasy, but only that they may be perceived as matching by the subject.
presented in Chapter 2 demonstrates, where the politics of autochthony are mobilised it is invariably because the prevailing social relations are perceived as having deviated from the natural order of the autochthonous template.

The impossibility of realising the better world of pure genus can be evidenced with an example from the literature on autochthony presented earlier. In Chapter 2 I discussed the case of a Cameroonian village in which villagers were making strenuous efforts to reveal their neighbours and even family members as ‘fake autochthons’ in order to prevent them from receiving a share of the payment received by the village from a logging company\(^{47}\). Here, the figure of the allochthon appears to be preventing villagers from receiving the share of the logging payment to which they are properly entitled. By its mere presence, the figure of the allochthon continues to taunt the villagers, who come up with ever more complex definitions of what it means to be an autochthon in order to finally close the category. The search for the edges of autochthony is never complete but rather moves in ever-smaller circles. Nonetheless, the impossibility of arriving at fullness seems to strengthen rather than weaken the fantasies. The inevitable failure of the political logics to overcome the obstacle leads to additional corrective measures, also doomed to fail, and yet the act of failing seems only to reassert the need for greater efforts to overcome the obstacles, thereby entrenching the fantasy and the discourse still further. Although political practices are precisely evidence of the failure of a fantasy to fully conceal the contingent nature of the discourse, the activation of political logics through the construction of a new antagonism or political frontier does not necessarily mean that social actors view such practices in this light. As Howarth observes, the contingency which is presupposed in the ‘failure’ of a discourse and the subsequent construction of a new frontier is not always evident to those on the ground (Howarth 2010:322).

In setting out their logics framework, Glynos and Howarth stress the centrality of radical contingency in their understanding of discourse. Every field of social relations is, in their view, conditioned by radical contingency (Glynos and Howarth 2007:109). As we have seen above, that radical contingency is mostly concealed through the workings of fantasmatic logics and the partial fixation of meaning by a dominant discourse. Consequently, dislocation plays an important role in exposing contingency, as well as in opening up established social relations for

\(^{47}\)See p70 above.
contestation. The focus on contingency is critical to the practice of critique, and here they supplement the notion of contingency with their observation of the ‘non-necessary’ character of all configurations of social relations (Glynos and Howarth 2007:155). When a dislocation exposes the contingent nature of the current structure of the social, it becomes possible to recognise and uncover the many other potential configurations which had been excluded through the partial fixation of the dominant discourse and its political and fantasmatic logics (Glynos and Howarth 2007:162). The concept of non-necessity is one which plays a key role in the analysis which I will present in the following chapters, as it will allow me to consider the many configurations of the social which are foreclosed by an autochthonous interpretation of British housing discourse.

One further point requires some clarification. How do these logics relate to the ontological framework of autochthony discourse (and conventional IR discourse)? I suggested in Chapters 1 and 2 that both of these discourses share an inside-outside ontology. Glynos and Howarth insist that political and fantasmatic logics are ontological categories (Glynos and Howarth 2007:154). By this I understand them to mean that the political and fantasmatic logics represent or embody the ontological framework of a discourse. In the case of autochthony discourse, then, we can say that the political and fantasmatic logics of autochthony are ontological and thus they represent autochthony’s ontological framework. Consequently, by identifying and critiquing the political and fantasmatic logics of autochthonous discourse I will reveal something of its ontological framework, and in doing this I will be able to verify my claim that it is indeed an inside-outside ontology. In this respect I will pay particular attention to the fantasmatic logics, since it is these which motivate and shape the political logics.

The preceding paragraphs have provided detail on the ways in which the logics framework allows the analyst to approach different aspects of a discourse, beginning with the social practices which characterise it, moving to the political interventions which instituted and sedimented those practices and finally to the fantasmatc elements which directed the latter and validate the former. As its most visible dimension, the social logics may appear to dominate a discourse. However, everything that appears as a social practice or social identity has been constituted through the play of political logics, and in turn these have been shaped by a set of fantasmatc logics (Howarth 2010:327-8). By examining all three levels, the researcher
can produce a critical explanation of the discourse as a whole, as I hope to demonstrate in case study that I will present in Chapters 4 and 5.

**APPLYING DISCOURSE THEORY: METHODS AND STRATEGIES**

The preceding sections presented the conceptual and analytical tools that I will use to conduct the analysis of my case study of British housing discourse. The task for this section is to show how discourse theory moves from the level of theory to an engagement with the empirical context which both motivates the research question and supplies the data from which a response can be generated. Howarth (2010) elucidates five steps which comprise the method of discourse theory’s logics of critical explanation. These are, in brief: 1) problematising the practice; 2) turning the problem into a hypothesis and refining this with reference to the empirical data; 3) relating the content of the putative hypothesis to its social, political and fantasmatic logics; 4) exercising judgement to link together the identified social, political and fantasmatic logics in relation to a particular set of circumstances to provide a fitting explanation for the phenomenon; and 5) highlighting the political dimensions of a practice by showing which of its aspects are involved in producing and maintaining practices of domination or oppression. Thus far in the thesis, the first two steps have been completed: I have problematised IR’s exclusion of the concept of belonging from its remit, and I have hypothesised that this exclusion is caused by the inside-outside nature of its ontological framework. The remaining steps are the work of Chapters 4 and 5.

Howarth stresses the holistic nature of discourse theory as a research programme, and emphasises the degree to which its methodology is always tied to the ‘wider set of ontological and epistemological postulates’ as well as to the specific nature of the problematic in question (Howarth 2010:317). That said, there are a limited number of texts offering a comprehensive overview of how discourse theory should be operationalised. The primary source that I used here is the collected chapters of the volume *Discourse theory in European politics: identity, policy and governance*, edited by Howarth and Torfing. In the remainder of this chapter I will show how the research context and the methods that I used to obtain my empirical data meet discourse theory’s operational parameters. In preparation for the following chapter I will also expand on the rationale behind my choice of British housing discourse as a
research site and I will outline how my engagement with Kurdish and Turkish Londoners contributes to my analysis.

**The Case Study as Method**

This section will present the rationale behind my use of a case study and the general fit between the case study method and discourse theory. I will also explain how the particular case study that I have chosen to undertake contributes towards my overall aim of understanding conventional IR’s silence on the issue of belonging and why this matters for the discipline.

Though there are many ways in which to furnish a dataset for empirical research, a case study seemed to be the most effective and appropriate one in this instance. Hammersley and Gomm differentiate a case study from two other key methods of social research, namely experiment and social survey, in terms of the depth of data observed in a case study, as opposed to social survey, and the location of case studies in naturally occurring social contexts, in contrast to the controlled environment of the experiment (Hammersley and Gomm 2000:2). These are both important considerations for my own research, since I wanted to be able to produce more detail than could be offered through the use of survey, in order to flesh out my claims about British housing discourse and to show the often-subtle changes which embody both transformations and contradictions within the discourse. In addition, the messy realities of the social are an inherent factor in any discourse, and these can only be captured by looking at existing social relations.

Some social science methodologists suggest that cases studies play only a supporting role in a wider research strategy (Berg 2001:229) (Stake 2003:137). However, this claim seems to be suggestive of a particular type of research rather than a reflection of the case study method itself. In contrast, Howarth argues that the case study is an ideal means of pursuing discourse theory’s objectives of ‘the interpretation of singularly problematized phenomena and the critique of sedimented and exclusionary practices’ (Howarth 2005:330). Howarth uses Flyvbjerg’s categorisation of four types of case study to elaborate on the ways in which case studies can contribute to social research. The first type concerns extreme cases, which ‘highlight particular phenomena in a dramatic fashion’, while the second type, critical cases, are chosen on the basis that they will enable the theorist to test theories or hypotheses. Such cases studies are usually selected on a ‘least likely’ or ‘most likely’ basis in order to prove or disprove the theory being tested. Maximum variation cases
are a third kind of case study, which allow researchers to analyse the effects of specific circumstances on various aspects of the case; such studies include several cases which vary in respect of one dimension. Finally, paradigmatic cases provide ‘an accurate representation of a wider field of phenomena … [and] often function as exemplars or metaphors for an entire society’ (Howarth 2005:330-1; Flyvbjerg 2001).

The case study of British housing discourse that I present in Chapters 4 and 5 seems to fit the description of the ‘critical case study’ given in this scheme. I have chosen British housing discourse as a site at which the inside-outside model of the social suggests we would not expect to find the practices of line-drawing and the drawing up of borders between those who belong and those who don’t that characterise autochthony discourse, and in this respect it functions as a ‘least likely’ case study. On the other hand, I also understand my case study as an opportunity to provide the kind of in-depth account of a discourse of autochthony that can be analysed using the logics framework identified above. As such, the generation of rich detail is in my view an important aspect of the case study, but it is not accounted for by Flyvbjerg’s scheme.

Thus, my case study serves two purposes. The first of these is to illustrate autochthony discourse in action. While many such studies have been done, and I have presented a number of those in Chapter 2, to my knowledge a study of autochthonous discourse in the UK has not been carried out. The second purpose of the case study is to provide a context for analysing the way in which the ontological assumptions (or fantasmatic logics) of a discourse shape its political and social practices, as Glynos and Howarth’s logics indicate. I will attempt to show this with regard to the autochthonous assumptions of British housing discourse. The autochthonous qualities of this discourse will be revealed through a close examination of the social practices through which ‘migrants’ come to be articulated as outsiders with regard to housing, and the political practices that have worked to naturalise such articulations as a natural social order. This is not important simply as a critique of autochthony, however. Since I have argued that autochthony and conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology draw on the same set of fantasmatic logics, I will use the detailed study of autochthony to infer that this is what IR’s unspoken account of belonging would look like, if verbalised. Consequently, I will argue that the exclusionary treatment of migrants that is fleshed out in the case study can be understood as an approximation of conventional IR’s implicit treatment of migrants.
As noted above, in discourse theory the context-specific nature of the identified problematic or phenomenon means that any attempt to explain that problem is intrinsically dependent upon a critical analysis of the same context. It is for this reason that I have chosen to focus on Britain, and on housing discourse in particular. The British discourse of belonging is, I contend, a complex one which merits attention. The multinational composition of the migrant community in this country, and the wide variation in the immigration schemes under which those communities have arrived, have bequeathed an especially rich array of perspectives on how migrants fit into the country, and indeed of who counts as a migrant. In addition, the broad acceptance of multiculturalism (though recently abandoned) as a strategy for integration has indicated an openness to incorporating migrants and a set of expectations on the part of the migrant communities that differs to many other countries. Britain’s imperial past adds another dimension to its relationship with the migrant communities here, many of which were initially at least made up of people who came to the UK from the colonies as British citizens, and thus with expectations of begin treated as such.48

Furthermore, my experience of working with migrants in Britain has given me a broad insight into this particular discourse of belonging, and it is in this context that that my questions about conventional IR’s engagement with migrants and belonging first arose, so in a sense this is the logical setting in which to explore the issues. Nonetheless, the ‘British discourse of belonging’ is still an extremely broad subject that could potentially be approached from many angles. For that reason, and in order to produce a detailed and cohesive set of data, I chose to narrow the focus further by restricting the case study to belonging as it appears in contemporary housing discourse in Britain.49 Since the figure of the migrant plays a critical role in problematising IR’s silence of belonging, I was also interested to know how migrants are affected by and respond to autochthony discourse. As I indicated in the introductory chapter of this thesis, I was keen to speak to migrants rather than simply about them. Consequently, a second strand of enquiry consisted in qualitative fieldwork with the Kurdish and Turkish community in North London. The rationale behind the selection of this community is expanded on below. On a temporal dimension, I set out with a nominal start date for drawing up my account of the discourse of the beginning of the millennium. In my view, the spring and summer of

48 See Hampshire (2005) for an analysis of the relationship between Britain’s colonial immigrants and the British discourse of citizenship.
49 I expand on the reasons behind my use of this specific site below in this chapter.
2001 can be recognised as significant dislocatory moments in the convergence of discourses on housing, migrant and belonging. As Chapter 4 will show in more detail, the Northern Riots of summer 2001 were the catalyst for a range of far-reaching reforms in the rules and procedures for naturalisation as a British citizen and in the legal requirements attached to certain types of immigration (i.e. for the purpose of marriage). It also launched a decade of introspection as to what it means to be British, what values Britishness entails, and how to ensure ‘belonging’ as integration and community cohesion in Britain’s towns and cities.

Having set some of the parameters for my fieldwork, the next task was to work out what kind of materials I would use and which methods would be employed to collect them. One of the methodological advantages of discourse theory’s refusal to differentiate between the discursive and the extra-discursive is the wide range of data forms that can be drawn on. In addition to primary documents, interviews, newspaper articles, quantitative data, social practices, images, buildings and monuments are just some of the types of data which are ‘grist to the mill of problem-driven discourse theory’ (Howarth 2005:335). Nonetheless, though ‘there are no a priori limits on the forms of data available for discourse analysis’, Hansen and Sørensen contend that all sources have some shortcomings, and on that basis they recommend the use of different types of data to supplement each other (Hansen and Sørensen 2005:100). My case study uses primarily documentary analysis and interviews.

**Documentary Analysis**

The scope for documentary analysis within a case study is extensive. Yin sees documents as a having an explicit role in the case study material, but reminds the researcher that all have been written for a specific purpose, which is not that of the case study, and thus must be interpreted critically rather than at face value (Yin 2003:87-88). Atkinson and Coffey remind researchers to bear in mind that:

> Documents are social facts, in that they are produced, shared and used in socially organised ways. They are not, however, transparent representations ... They construct particular kinds of representations using their own conventions. (Atkinson and Coffey 2004:58)

Hansen and Sørensen likewise note the formalised nature of many documents which lack the informality and spontaneity of many aspects of a discourse; they advise that supplementary data sources should be used to overcome these limitations (Hansen and Sørensen 2005:99). A large number of documentary sources relating to housing
and migrants can be used to provide evidence of an official/elite discourse and in carrying out my research I have tried to incorporate as broad a selection as possible. At the level of national government, the documents selected included Government command papers, research reports by the Department for Communities and Local Government, House of Commons research reports, Home Affairs Committee reports, guidance on housing allocation from the Department for Work and Pensions, material from, the UK Borders Agency website, departmental press releases, official speech transcripts, and statistics from the Home Office and the Office for National Statistics.

Documents which relate to local government include publications by the Greater London Authority and material from local government websites, including Haringey and Hackney Borough Councils, and the post-2001 Riot reports written by teams in Burnley, Bradford and Oldham. Another set of documents furnished a critical perspective on the official discourse, and these came from such sources as housing- and/or community cohesion-oriented organisations such as Shelter, the Chartered Institute for Housing, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Institute for Public Policy Research and the Empty Homes Agency, as well as from independent research organisations and institutes such as market research company IPSOS-MORI, the university-linked Centre on Migration, Policy and Society and lobby group Migration Watch.

Academic research papers and publications supplied another strand of documentation, and many of these report the findings of the authors’ own empirical research, thereby supplying secondary research data on the attitudes of majority community members in particular (as do many of the publications by organisations such as Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which commissions a lot of academic-practitioner facilitated research). The media discourse on housing is both profuse and influential in terms of how people see the relationship between housing and migrants, both in terms of the stories that newspapers choose to run and the way in which they report ‘migrants in houses’ stories, and so this added an additional type of document to my dataset.

**Interviews**

Interviewing is a tried and tested qualitative research method used across the social sciences. Kvale sees interviews as ‘a uniquely sensitive and powerful research method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects’ everyday
world’ (Kvale 2007:11). They give participants an opportunity to ‘convey to others their situation from their own perspective and in their own words’ (ibid.), I carried out my fieldwork in July and August 2011. My initial plan was to interview people from both the majority and the Kurdish and Turkish community, although in the end I decided to focus on the Kurdish and Turkish community alone in order to generate a better appreciation of this perspective. There is a wealth of documentary and research evidence which conveys a sense of how many (but certainly not all) those who class themselves as autochthons view migrants and housing, while very little attention has been paid to the ways in which those ascribed an allochthonous status feel about the way they are assigned a subject position by the dominant discourse, so using the time that I had to obtain a more nuanced understanding of their perspective seemed to be the right strategy.

I was fortunate to be in London at the time of a large Turkish cultural festival sponsored by the Turkish state, and it was here that I learned about a number of organisations and set up contact meetings. Over the course of my fieldwork I made initial contact with 20 relevant individuals or organisations. I was also given further contacts but was unable to follow them up due to time limitations. Four of the organisations that I contacted didn’t want to participate in the fieldwork, while one individual (a local authority councillor) failed to respond, despite repeated attempts to reach her. Three of the organisations with which I made initial contact were willing to help me but I was again unable to follow those up. I held informal meetings and conversations with leading members of twelve community organisations as well as three community support workers from mainstream service provision organisations and I conducted seven formal interviews. Five of the interview participants were ordinary members of the community, while two held officer or leadership roles. Lack of language proficiency in Turkish, my complete ignorance of Kurdish and the absence of funding for an interpreter meant that my respondents came from the portion of the community which spoke fluent English. The interviews were loosely structured; I had an interview guide and a print-out card with media headlines that was designed to prompt discussion about the discursive linking of migrants and housing. Though this provided a good method of getting the conversation flowing I did not feel obliged to complete all questions but rather allowed the conversation to flow naturally provided that it was still ‘on topic’.

---

50 See Appendix A for a list of the community organisations contacted.
51 The interview guide is contained in Appendix B; the headline prompts are contained in Appendix C.
Several authors emphasise the need for the interviewer to take into account the co-productive nature of such interactions when conducting and analysing the interviews (Miller, J. and Glassner 2004:125; Mishler 1986:ch.3). Contrary to concerns about the researcher’s impact on the interviewee which characterise positivist texts on interview techniques, Holstein and Gubrium postulate that interviewer impact need not be viewed as problematic. Rather, they suggest that instead of trying to meet an ever-expanding set of constraints designed to produce standardised interviews, the researcher should ‘embrace the view of the interview as unavoidably active and begin to acknowledge, and capitalize upon, interviewers’ and respondents’ constitutive contributions to the production of interview data’ (Holstein and Gubrium 2004:142). From a discourse theory perspective, the problem of knowing whether the respondent is being truthful or not is a non-issue, since the objective of this research programme is not to prove what is true but rather to analyses the way in which discourse—as truth or untruth—is articulated, as Wæver notes:

What is often presented as a weakness of discourse analysis – ‘how do you find out if they really mean it?’, ‘what if it is only rhetoric?’ – can be turned into a methodological strength, as soon as one is scrupulous about sticking to discourse as discourse. (Wæver 2005:35)

A limited amount of biographical detail was collected at the beginning of each interview, and with the permission of the participant, the interview itself was audio-recorded (one person objected to this, and his interview was recorded in handwritten notes) and then transcribed. Mishler stresses the critical importance of ensuring the best possible transcription, and demonstrates the importance of contextual and non-verbal information on the interview (Mishler 1986:36). I also wrote fieldnotes immediately after each interview and in addition made notes on my visits to the community centres, which helped immensely in building a picture of the community. Participants were recruited through the community support organisations and cultural centres that I visited, and were carried out in those places, with the exception of one interview which took place in a cafe.

**Defining the Kurdish and Turkish Community**

In order to give further focus to my field research I chose to situate my exploration of the how belonging is shaped through housing discourse in Britain within the UK’s Kurdish and Turkish community, which is largely located in Haringey and Hackney boroughs of North London. This decision requires
explanation on two fronts. Firstly, why speak to members of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community—whose assignation as such already suggests a degree of marginality—about belonging in Britain rather than to people from the majority community? Secondly, what do I mean by ‘the community’ in general and ‘the Kurdish and Turkish community’ in particular, and does their selection not mean that I am imposing the subject position of ‘outsiders’ on them?

To deal with the first point, one reason for choosing to make a study of a BME community is that not talking to them would constitute an act of political othering in itself: in other words, the very practice of assuming that a person is outside belonging based on an external judgement of who they are and whether they ‘fit’ a preconceived idea of what constitutes the community that this thesis seeks to problematise. Especially for second generation BME Britons and beyond, the assumption that their ancestral links to territory must irrevocably define where they belong amounts to the very discourse of autochthony which the thesis aims to critique. Why should people who may have lived their entire lives in the UK be assumed not to belong here? As Küçükcan declares, Turkish communities in the UK (as in other European states) ‘should not be viewed as immigrants any more because they are citizens of European countries’ (Küçükcan 2004:256).

By selecting an established BME community as a focus of my investigations I do not wish to suggest that this community is to be regarded as non-belonging. Rather, I want to examine how the line between belonging and non-belonging is drawn through the discourse of autochthony. BME communities in Britain are in many respects established and accepted as part of the British ‘we’, as was made clear before, during and after the recent 2012 London Olympics. According the organising committee of the Olympic games in London, not only was London’s (and by extension Britain’s) diversity a key part of the original pitch for the Olympics, it was also ‘a key reason’ why London was the city chosen to host the 2012 Games (LOCOG 2008:6). Many commentators saw the success of the games as a whole and the public embrace of several British athletes of BME heritage as a positive reflection of Britain’s relationship with its minority communities. Nonetheless, there is still a degree of precarity in the acceptance of BME communities as equal partners in Britishness. The precarity emanates for the most part not from the members of those communities, who profess as strong a commitment to the UK and Britishness as

---

52 The Daily Mail preferred to read the success of the Olympics as a ‘victory for patriotism and common British values’, which were ‘the precise opposite of multiculturalism’ (Hannan 2012).
many majority Britons (Nandi and Platt 2012:14), but on the part of the majority community, which seems incapable of unreserved acceptance. Amin captures the precarity in his observation that although it may appear that the mainstream mood towards its BME communities has become ‘more cosmopolitan, more multicultural, more tolerant, even seduced by the exotica of the stranger … [it] is more fickle than it appears on the surface’ (Amin 2003:460). In the eyes of many in the majority community, BME Britons exist in some kind of limbo, suspended between two worlds and belonging properly to neither. For this reason I view BME communities as a logical place to look for evidence about the extent to which autochthonous elements of the British discourse of belonging have become naturalised, and to look for signs of contestation and rejection of the fantasies which sustain it.

A second reason for doing fieldwork with a community which is viewed from the outside as a ‘migrant’ community is that this allows the disentangling or separating out of attachments to place and lineage—territory and community—and their relationship with belonging, which is hard to do with the ‘native’ community. Migrants, whose links to more than one country may prompt a sense of reflection on their relations to heritage, ancestry, community and place, are better placed to be able to view these as separable facets of belonging than people who have ‘always’ lived in one place and for whom all of these things are superimposed and thus appear to be fused into a singular condition. For the static community, ‘home’ and belonging require no sense-making since nothing disrupts their naturalised unity, whereas for migrants in diaspora communities, ‘ “home” has always been a central aspect of the battles [they] engage in as they think through how to relate to both the home they have left behind and the new home in which they are settling’ (Demir 2012:815).

A third concern of my fieldwork was to talk to people rather than about them. Netto underlines the crucial importance of allowing refugees and immigrants to make their own representations, particularly as a means of providing a contrast to the prevailingly negative portrayals found in most media coverage of such groups (Netto 2011:125). Much of the discourse on autochthony is necessarily given over to the anxieties and demands of those who claim the status of autochthon, and the perspective of those advancing the discourse also predominates the empirical evidence from which I make my case. Yet, as the preceding chapters have made clear, the disaggregation of those who belong from those who don’t is never straightforward and always changes to suit the context. Thus, many people may find themselves standing comfortably within the definition of autochthonous belonging at
one instance and yet outside its limits at another. For BME communities in the UK this is an ongoing challenge.

To respond to the question raised at the beginning of this section regarding the contentious matter of defining a community, both in terms of naming it and in understanding where it begins and ends, was perhaps the harder task. Baumann’s study of multiethnic Southall, London, clearly demonstrates the difficulty of trying to define community without simply equating it with culture and ethnicity (Baumann 1996). He describes a range of ways in which the term gets used to make inferences about people sound respectable rather than prejudiced or racist (i.e. it is ok to pass comments on ‘the Asian community’ which would not be acceptable if made about ‘Asians’). He also repeats Ignatieff’s observation that ‘[e]thnic minorities are called “communities” either because it makes them feel better, or because it makes the white majority feel more secure’ (Ignatieff, 1992, cited in Baumann 1996:14). Bearing this in mind, however, I still wanted to delimit my research focus in some way, and focusing on a specific community seemed to be the most effective way of achieving some degree of limitation. As this thesis consistently argues, borders between inside and outside are illusory and thus must be constructed, and decisions about who belongs and who doesn’t have political origins and political consequences. A primary problem I encountered when I set out on my fieldwork, then, was how to refer to the community in a way which was acceptable to all, and the complexity of negotiating this was something that I hadn’t fully appreciated prior to commencing. I regarded myself as well-informed about the intra-communal tensions after spending three years living and working in Istanbul and being a keen follower of Turkish politics since that time. I began the preparations for my fieldwork with the seemingly straightforward term ‘Turkish community’ in mind, but was soon made aware that a number of people that I spoke to found that to be deeply problematic, as other researchers have noted (e.g. King et al. 2008a:4). As my fieldwork progressed I realised that this naming problem was not just a tangential issue but rather had direct significance for my wider thesis.

So how do other researchers address the issue? The very concept of ‘a Turkish community’, both as a label and as a singular community, is fraught with tensions for its simplifying and reductionist agenda, and as a result there is an array of styles of addressing the naming problem. A 2009 report by the Greater London Authority uses the term ‘Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot communities’, while a Communities and Local Government report the same year refers only to Turkish and
Turkish Cypriots, with Kurds subsumed within the term Turkish (Department for Communities and Local Government 2009; Greater London Authority 2009). Respected researcher Mehmet Ali uses the term Turkish-speaking communities, as do researchers Hatzidimitriadou and Çağır (Hatzidimitriadou and Çağır 2009; Mehmet Ali 2001). On the other hand, community support organisation DERMAN uses Turkish and Kurdish communities, while King et al opt for the term Turkish-Cypriot-Kurdish (TCK) communities (DERMAN 2006; King et al. 2008b).

This community, small though it may be, is categorised as much by its heterogeneity as anything else: it consists of ‘a rather diverse group of people where categorization is not co-terminus with ethnicity or nationality’ (Erdemir and Vasta 2007:6). But it is not just the heterogeneity which lies at the base of the naming problem. The use of the word ‘Turkish’ has ethnic as well as nationality implications, and therefore is rejected by many parts of the Kurdish community. Its newer alternative, ‘Türkiyeli’ (a person from Turkey), is preferred in the Kurdish community (Erdemir and Vasta 2007) but this then excludes those such as the Turkish Cypriots and Western Thrace Turks, who identify fully with a Turkish ethnicity and play an active role in the Turkish community in London. Moreover, the whole concept of ‘Türkiyeliilik’ (being ‘from Turkey’, as opposed to being ‘Turkish’) is mired in an ongoing, bitter debate that has divided opinion in Turkey. In essence, this debate has pitched those who view ‘Turkish’ as an ethnic identification against those who see it as a civic identification. On the whole, Kurdish people (whose Kurdish identity was suppressed under the Republic’s project of Turkification) reject the idea that they should identify as Turkish, preferring instead to refer to themselves as ‘Türkiyeli’, thereby linking their identity to the territorial space that is Turkey (Oran 2011). In Turkey itself, however, this designation has at times provoked extreme reactions, with those who advocated its official adoption by the state in order to foster better relations between Turks and Kurds accused of ‘insulting state institutions’ and ‘inciting people to hatred and enmity’ (Oran 2007:2). Some right-wing Turks deny the existence of ethnic Kurds within the Turkish state, referring to these instead as ‘Mountain Turks’ (Sagnic 2010:128). To say ‘Turks and Kurds’ would nominally include Kurds from outside Turkey (Syria, Iran, Iraq), so that is also not wholly satisfactory. The label of ‘ethnic Turks and Kurds from Turkey’ may be more accurate but is pretty unwieldy. The situation is further complicated by the presence of Turkish Cypriots and people from the Turkish minorities in Greece and Bulgaria, for example).
In fact a ‘significant majority’ of the community in London is ethnically Kurdish, outnumbering ethnic Turks and those from Turkish Cyprus (Demir 2012:817). Kurds from Turkey predominated amongst the people that I met, and for many of these, ‘community’ referred to a specifically Kurdish affair. My impression was, however, that the Kurdish community which they had in mind referred only to Kurds from Turkey and did not include Kurds from Syria, Iran and Iraq, though for the more politicised, the ongoing struggle for a Kurdish state did indeed encompass this wider group. This impression came as much from the community centres and other support mechanisms as from the interviews themselves. The “Kurdish centres” I visited appeared to be centred on Turkish and Kurdish Kurmanji (the dialect of Kurdish spoken in Turkey); banners and posters bore witness to injustices committed by the Turkish state against the Kurdish communities living there (for example massacres in the predominantly Kurdish towns of Sivas, Diyarbakır and Kahramanmaraş). The Kurdish community centres also stated that they were very willing to assist ethnic Turks as well as Kurds, though there was little take-up of their services by non-Kurds. In contrast, for Turkish participants the community generally encompassed all those from Turkish territory, thus including Kurds. When pressed, a couple of respondents gave a definition of community as one of Turkish-speaking people, thereby including (nominally) Kurds as well as Turkish Cypriots and the wider diaspora (the Turkish minorities in Greece and Bulgaria, for example).

Given the complexity of the issue, and after adapting my terminology in accordance with the responses that I got during my fieldwork, I settled on the term ‘Kurdish and Turkish community’. I have used the singular term rather than viewing these as separate ‘communities’ because I had the sense that for all the political division between factions, there remains a collective (if, in some quarters, grudging) sense of unity, or perhaps commonality, between the disparate fragments of the community, albeit that those very important fracture lines remain. Demir concurs with this observation, stating that it would be ‘a mistake to conceptualise the political, social, cultural and business networks of Kurds and Turks in London as separate, divided and static entities with defined boundaries intersecting only on certain limited aspects and occasions’ (Demir 2012:822). Moreover, such internal fault-lines as there are, have as much to do with political, religious and cultural differences as with ethnic identifiers. Even within the ‘sub-communities’ of ethnic Turks and Kurds from Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots, there is notable intra-communal fragmentation along lines of religion (for example, the Kurdish community has both Alevi and
Sunni Muslim groups) and politics (within the Turkish Cypriot community there are strong differences between those who support the continued intervention of the Turkish military and the division of Cyprus into Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, while others see the division as a political problem which needs solving). Divisions also appeared between those who had ‘traditional’ culture and others who had a more progressive vision of their community’s future—in particular among women working to decrease what they viewed as patriarchal aspects of their culture. Further diversity in the community can be seen in the range of immigration statuses—from British citizen, EU national, overseas student, businessman, housewife, refugee and asylum seeker—education levels, length of residence, status and income bracket.

The importance of these dissonances and their relevance to understandings of ‘belonging’ in the UK and even the irresolvable issue of what constitutes a “Turkish community” in London cannot be overestimated. Migrant communities are subject to two distinct discourses of belonging: that of their home nation and that of the host nation. It is impossible to disaggregate one from the other. Of course, that doesn’t mean that these separate discourses are necessarily conflict-bound; nor does it suggest that migrants are the only people who face the problem of contrasting/conflicting notions of identity and belonging. In fact non-migrant populations also inhabit a world of double discourses, but where the contours of ethnicity and territory are understood to be isomorphic, it is very difficult to comprehend these as separate discourses: hence the appeal of the logic of autochthony. Of course, nationality/ethnicity narratives of belonging are but one dimension along which the politics of inclusion/exclusion play out. For the purposes of this thesis, however, the point is central to my attempts to offer a critical analysis of the compacting of ethno-ancestral nation and geographical territory which characterises the discourse of autochthony.

**Housing as an IR Study Context**

Why housing? After all, it is not an obvious context for the study of international politics. In fact, as the ultimate site of the ‘domestic’, it may seem to be the antithesis of international politics. However, the literature on autochthony shows that the politics of belonging are frequently mobilised in practices located at the level of the mundane and everyday; social practices which Glynos and Howarth describe as ongoing and routinized, ‘largely repetitive activities that do not typically entail a
strong notion of self-conscious reflexivity’ (Glynos and Howarth 2007:104).
Moreover, as I argued above, resources and the right to make resource claims are of
central importance to the development of autochthonous discourses\(^{53}\). Of course,
housing is just one of many such resource rights which get pulled into the
contemporary British discourse of belonging, and others such as welfare benefits,
jobs, education, as well as cultural and religious rights would be equally suitable. The
important point for my case study was to focus on a single resource discourse so as
to be able to provide a detailed study within the space constraints of my thesis. The
mundane and frequently depoliticised nature of housing belies its status as a
fundamental human need. Everyone engages with the physicality of housing in some
way, even if this is in the form of a negative engagement through homelessness.
Furthermore, there is something about the spatiality and ‘placeness’ of housing which
accords well with the literal claim of autochthons to be rooted in soil. Housing is
marked by its fixity, its territorial materiality. To dwell in one place is to begin to put
down roots of the very kind that are so critical to the claims of the autochthon, to
establish an almost physical connection to a tiny but specific patch of territory. At
any one time, the vast majority of us live in a single, specifiable location which is
geographically and territorially situated and nested within the larger scheme of global
subdivisions and demarcations: streets, towns, districts, counties, regions, states and
continents, all of which have precise political regimes, regulations and significances
of their own. The house in which we live places us at a precise location within this
vast scheme and especially in relation to the territory of the state. For this reason,
then, housing is a good place place to begin the search for the politics and practices
that mark inside from outside and belonging from non-belonging.

In spite of its apparent domesticity, the link between housing and
international politics has already been made, at least by housing scholars. Bengtsson
observes that the provision of housing is ‘affected by politics, policy and
implementation on a number of levels, from the individual estate, via the local,
regional and national levels up to, at least in some respects, the international and
global level’. He cites studies on the impact of EU legislation, international measures
to promote sustainability and globalisation on housing as examples of the kinds of
issues which make housing relevant to International Relations (Bengtsson 2009:13-
14). When we look at the pressing issues of recent or current international politics it
becomes clear that housing, while perhaps not the most central concern in any

\(^{53}\) See p57, above.
political tension, is frequently caught up in the messy pursuit of international politics. The deliberate bombing of residential areas during the Second World War stands in evidence of such actions; likewise the deserted and now crumbling homes along the green line in Nicosia, the divided capital of Cyprus\(^{54}\) bear silent witness to the way in which the houses of ordinary people become embroiled in international as well as national politics.

Michael Ignatieff has memorably described the precision destruction of individual homes occupied by families of the ‘wrong’ ethnicity in a hitherto multiethnic village in Croatia during the break-up of Yugoslavia (Ignatieff 1994:25-28). We might also consider the politics of the demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank of Israel and the severe restrictions on Palestinians wanting to build new homes, which throw into sharp relief the building of new homes for Jewish families in occupied West Bank settlements despite ongoing international condemnation (Amnesty International 2010; Fisher-Ilan 2011). Here, the construction and destruction of housing has evidently become a highly charged act of political provocation with international significance. The example of Palestine/Israel vividly illustrates the way in which housing comes to signify territorial rootedness and thus its potential as a site at which rootedness, and the belonging which accompanies roots, are contested. Chapter 4 will link the positioning of housing as a domestic concern with the inside-outside framework and will argue that a critical analysis of British housing discourse can illustrate the inseparability of domestic from international, as housing becomes the site for the production of the discourse of belonging.

**SOME PRELIMINARY CONCERNS**

During the planning stage of my fieldwork I had a number of concerns about it that took some thinking through. Two of these related to my interactions with the community and the third was based on the potential outcomes of my research.

**Immigration as an Inflammatory Topic**

I am aware that immigration, housing and integration are potentially explosive issues in many sections of the community at present and I was unsure how

---

\(^{54}\) One online blog contains an excellent series of photographs which illustrate the extent to which houses are caught up in the border zones of international politics in Cyprus, Palestine/Israel and Northern Ireland (Wainwright 2012).
best to approach the subject with participants. My prior work experience suggests that some participants from migrant communities would be highly suspicious of my research into housing, given the prominent linking of this subject with an anti-immigrant discourse in recent years. I suspected that using this as a topic could generate hostility from the people I spoke to unless I framed it in an acceptable way and represented myself as someone who was not coming with a critical agenda but rather was genuinely interested in their responses. To deal with this concern, I prepared an introduction to myself that I gave at the beginning of each interview (see Appendix B), and information about my wider research project. I also explained to participants how their interviews would be used and ensured them that all personal information would be kept confidential while the data from their interviews would be made anonymous. In fact, since the recruitment of all respondents came through my visits to community centres and were (with one exception) conducted on their premises, this gave me a degree of official ‘approval’ by the community leaders who had introduced me to the respondents. The most guarded responses that I had (these were not many) came from community gatekeepers when I first tried to make contact with them. Since my initial plans had been to conduct interviews with majority community members as well as those from the Kurdish and Turkish community, I had worried about the possibility of provoking anti-immigrant sentiments and needing to maintain a neutral response to them despite an internal inclination to respond more strongly. As it was, those interview plans were abandoned and thus my fear wasn’t tested.

**Potential for Misuse of Findings**

A second point of concern was linked to the (admittedly small) potential for my research findings to be distorted and abused by individuals who wish to pursue an anti-immigrant agenda. While I do not anticipate that my thesis as a whole will be read beyond the setting of my PhD, parts of it are being used to write articles which find a wider audience, and therefore the issue of misuse of data generated goes beyond the scope of my thesis. After discussions on the matter with my supervisor I realised that anyone who is determined to distort my work will do so no matter how I try to limit the potential for distortion; that the likelihood of this happening is comparatively small; and that the most important thing about the fieldwork was to ensure that I wrote it up, deployed and represented it as accurately and honestly as I could, which I have done.
Raising Expectations

A final issue that experience suggested I needed to be aware of was the possibility of raising unrealistic expectations. Discussing a topic such as housing with research participants could, if not adequately introduced, lead to expectations that some concrete results would follow the research. This is particularly relevant to the BME community setting, where in recent years community groups have been consulted continuously as service providers have attempted to carry out consultations in line with equalities and community cohesion policies. The flipside of this situation is that potential participants who have been the targets of relentless consultation—and have seen no improvements to facilities despite their input—may be cynical about the usefulness of taking part in research interviews or focus groups. I was relieved to find that the people I spoke to had few expectations. One or two veered towards the position of cynicism, but most were simply interested in my broader project and keen to air their thoughts on belonging in Britain.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an outline of the methods and methodology which inform my research project. I have described what I see as the key aspects of the critical theory perspective from which I view the subject, and I have clarified the central tenets of the discourse theory approach and the conceptual tools which I will use to undertake a critical analysis of British housing discourse as an autochthonous discourse. A third section has explained my choice of methods and has provided some background details on the most significant focal points of the case study, namely the Kurdish and Turkish community and housing discourse, as well as three ethical concerns identified at the planning stage.

Discourse theory and the logics framework will structure the analysis of my case study in the following chapters, and so all of the points raised in my discussion of those theoretical frames are critical. However, I would like to emphasise two key points which have especial relevance to the direction of my analysis, and so merit repetition here. These two connected points concern the radical contingency of the social and the non-necessary character of any given social formation that emerges. These two concepts underline the very political nature of autochthonous discourse as well as conventional IR discourse, and as such they keep the possibility of alternative formations in sight. By reminding us that the social practices that characterise British
housing discourse, or any other discourse, have been generated by political logics and are not natural or immutable, we are prompted to ask questions about how those practices came to be. In Chapter 4 I will explore the idea of alternatives by looking at the ‘other Others’ of the dislocations that I will analyse, by which I mean that I will identify the alternative social actors who could have been viewed as the discourse’s fantasmatic obstacle if a different, non-autochthonous discourse has dominated. In Chapter 5 I look at alternatives in the form of the ‘other communities of belonging’ which show the nation-state to be only one of many different communities which make sense of people’s everyday lives. Since all discourses are contingent, all are open to contestation and reconfiguration, and the new configurations which result can always be shown to be non-necessary, given the range of other social formations which are possible at the point of dislocation.

The following two chapters of the thesis will present my case study. Chapter 4 will focus specifically on showing how ontological assumptions shared by conventional IR and autochthony discourse operate as fantasmatic logics to shape the social and political practices which embody British housing discourse. In this chapter I will identify the autochthonous elements of British housing discourse with reference to the logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood, which I identified in Chapter 2 as the defining logics of autochthony. I will focus on three instances of dislocation in which the links between ‘migrants’ and ‘housing’ were problematised. Generating a detailed account of operationalised autochthony will enable me to scrutinise the fantasmatic logics which shape such discourses. By identifying autochthony’s foundations more closely, I will be able to confirm or reject the claim that I made earlier in the thesis to the effect that autochthony and conventional IR’s inside-outside discourse draw on a similar set of foundations. If this claim stands up, then my further claim that autochthony discourse provides a credible approximation of conventional IR’s silent discourse of belonging will merit further attention.

Chapter 5 will then consider why it matters what kind of discourse of belonging (if any) conventional IR has. I will do this by returning to the figure of the migrant. Specifically I will examine how the discourse of belonging which emerges from British housing discourse impacts on the lives of migrants in Britain by presenting the findings of original empirical research with the Kurdish and Turkish

---

55 See p48 above.
community in London. The fieldwork will illustrate how migrants place themselves in relation to the discourse’s inside-outside ontology. Here I will attempt to draw out the complexities of their response to the discourse, as well as the ways in which the participants’ perspective problematises conventional IR’s ontological assumptions about what it means to belong.
CHAPTER 4: 
BELONGING IN BRITISH HOUSING DISCOURSE

In the first half of this thesis I have established that conventional IR’s silence on belonging is drawn from an inside-outside ontology which relegates belonging to the inside sphere, while IR only looks at the outside. I have also shown that the autochthonous discourse of belonging appears to share that inside-outside ontology, and thus may be understood as the manifestation of IR’s implicit discourse of belonging. However, the figure of the migrant dislocates these discourses and their attempts to impose a strict demarcation between the spheres of inside and outside. Discourse theory, and the typology of social, political and fantasmatic logics in particular, provide a useful framework with which to approach this impasse. I have shown how the discourse theory concepts of contingency, dislocation, contestation, political frontiers, articulation and sedimentation can be deployed with the logics framework to critically analyse the way in which social relations are configured within the discourse of autochthony.

The purpose of the second half of this thesis is to put those discourse theory concepts to work in order to provide a critical analysis of British housing discourse as a representation of autochthony discourse. Using the 5-step outline for conducting critical explanation described above will allow me to reveal the alternative configurations of the social which have been excluded by autochthony’s political practices and remain concealed through the workings of its fantasmatic logics. Having completed the preceding steps of problematisation and the development of a loose hypothesis in the preceding chapters, the third step is to relate the hypothesis to its social, political and fantasmatic logics, and the fourth step involves linking these together to produce a fitting explanation for the phenomenon, which is the aim of this chapter and Chapter 5. The fifth step, which involves highlighting the political dimensions of the practice and showing how it is produced and maintained will be carried out in both of these chapters and in my concluding chapter. By highlighting the contingency of the autochthonous interpretation of social relations I will demonstrate the impossibility of fixing the boundary between inside and outside, and the failure of autochthony’s attempts to limit belonging to the inside. Finally this will allow me to undermine conventional IR’s position that belonging belongs exclusively

56 See section on Applying discourse theory: methods and strategies, p101.
on the inside, to reveal the political practices which instigate and maintain it, and to emphasise the effects that such a stance has on those who are construed as outsiders.

This latter point will be the focus of the next chapter, Chapter 5. Before reaching that, however, in this chapter I want to flesh out the claims made above by focusing on the politics of British housing discourse and the way in which this discourse positions migrants as the obstacle to the achievement of the fantasmatic promise of Elysium. I will claim here that this is a ‘non-necessary’ articulation, and I will support the claim by revealing the alternative discourses which have been concealed by the fantasmatic logics of an autochthonous discourse. In doing so, I will show the contingency of the inside-outside ontology and the impossibility of fixing such a framework in the messiness of contemporary social relations. The chapter proceeds as follows. The first two sections will present a general overview of housing in Britain and the position of migrants within it. Three further sections will each present a recent and contrasting example of dislocation in British housing discourse that provide evidence of the autochthonous nature of the social practices of housing discourse, the political logics which institute and maintain those practices, and the fantasmatic logics which provide the ontological motivation for the broader discourse. The first example concerns a strand of discourse which developed in the aftermath of a contentious newspaper article written by a senior politician, Margaret Hodge, which I refer to as the ‘Hodge Intervention’. My second example studies the autochthonous discourse which emerged from a series of riots in English towns in 2001, collectively known as the Northern Riots. The third case centres on a recent declaration by the producer of TV series Midsomer Murders that ethnic minorities would be out of place in the ‘English village’.

**Housing in Britain: a General Picture**

Having established housing as a valid case study in the previous chapter, the following sections will draw an outline sketch of the current state of housing discourse in Britain, which is frequently characterised by the phrase ‘housing crisis’. In doing this I will lay the groundwork for my subsequent assertion that the autochthonous explanation of the housing crisis is ‘non-necessary’, since many factors other than migrants are implicated in its origins. There are a vast number of elements which could be included in any such sketch, and consequently my illustration will inevitably be incomplete. Since I can only hope to present an
enormously simplified image of this complex field, I will focus on those elements which are directly connected to (or have implications for) those who are considered to be migrants. Four elements are in my view essential to this picture, and these are presented in two sections. The first section will give an overview of British attitudes to housing and will discuss the availability of housing and the Housing Crisis. The second section will look at the regulations governing migrant access to housing, and will introduce public perceptions of migrants in the housing discourse. I will look at each of these in turn.

British Attitudes to Housing and the Housing Crisis

The house as a mere building is not the object of politics. Rather, it is the house as the site of identity which is targeted. Winston Churchill reportedly stated that ‘we shape our dwellings, and afterwards our dwellings shape us’ (Churchill, undated, cited in Maginn et al. 2008:6). In Britain at least, though doubtless also in many other countries, housing takes on mythical proportions as we invest it with status, aspirations, hard work, ownership, financial profit, privacy and security, and housing has long been recognised ‘as both a consumption and an investment good’ (Smith, S. J. 2005:2). Under Margaret Thatcher’s premiership Adam Smith’s ‘nation of shopkeepers’ was turned into a nation of homeowners hoping to capitalise on their investments and use housing as ‘a route to social mobility’ (Smith, A. 2005 [1776]:498; Thatcher 1974; Smith, S. J. 2005:2). Moreover, the idea that housing might be imbued with an essence of identity is not restricted to the private imagination. For some years, regional planning policy has had an explicit objective of ‘preserv[ing] regional architectural identities and maintain[ing] a visual “Englishness” in the built environment’, which has led to the dominance of ‘neo-traditional’ housing styles in house-building projects over the last few decades (Maudlin 2009:51).

When the ‘identity’ of housing—its location as the site of belonging—is foregrounded, as the examples above show, we might wonder how housing as a political issue comes to be submerged under a sea of ordinariness in domestic affairs, and yet it does. Almost 20 years ago Clapham concluded that housing ‘does not have a high political profile’ (Clapham et al. 1996:58). Not much seems to have changed since then, and Clapham’s view is corroborated in a 2011 report by policy think-tank IPPR, which states categorically that:
Housing has been afforded too low a priority in British politics, with the Housing Minister rarely at the Cabinet table and a department (in Communities and Local Government [CLG]) with weak links to the key economic departments of state. (Dolphin and Griffith 2011:5).

Paris and Muir found that in the run-up to the 2001 General Election in the UK only 5% of voters named housing as an important public concern, while it was ranked 12th as an issue which respondents felt would influence the way they voted (Paris and Muir 2002:154). Those trends have continued, with only 3% of voters naming housing as very important to the way they planned to vote in the run-up to the 2010 General Election—an increase of 1% on polling results the previous year (Ipsos MORI 2010:unpaginated). On the other hand, housing does appear to have strong political resonance on a more local scale: for example, the British Social Attitudes survey of 2011 found that 45% of those asked objected to the building of new homes in their local area, and 15% of respondents classified themselves as ‘strongly opposing local house building (Park et al. 2012:129).

In many respects, housing has come to embody rights, aspirations and status in Britain. Since the Thatcher government was in power (1979-1990), home ownership has become an aspiration for a large majority and owning your own property has come to signify the norm (Clapham 2005:146; Taylor 2011:32). A 2010 policy report published by the think-tank Policy Exchange claimed that 80% of the British population share the goal of home-ownership, while social housing has become ‘part of a package of perceived failure’, something which is ‘“for social cases” and therefore not for the “normal”’ (Morton 2010:7; Rowlands and Gurney 2001:126; Clapham 2005:146). Britain reportedly has a home-ownership ideology which ‘eulogises owning at the expense of renting’ (Gurney 1999:1707). Consequently, houses have come to be seen as ‘a visible and large consumption good that gives signals as to our relative position in society’ (Griffith 2011:25; Phillips, D. and Harrison 2010:222).

Alongside this ideal of the showcase, status-giving home, however, the pressures on housing in Britain are intense and varied. Firstly, there is a distinct imbalance between supply and demand. This is in part attributable to shrinkage in the overall quantity of both social and private housing stock as a result of the right-to-buy policy initiated by Thatcher, which gave social housing tenants a chance to buy the council house they lived in at a very favourable price, and the insufficient

57 Housing which is owned by local authorities or associated non-profit housing management organisations.
The number of new social housing units being constructed (2009:vii)\(^{58}\). A recent report by the European Commission blamed the shortage of new housing on the failure of successive governments to reform Britain’s archaic planning laws, which restrict opportunities for new housing developments (European Commission 2012). As a direct result of these shortages, the cost of either renting or buying a house in Britain has gone up exponentially (ibid.); one report calculates that between the years 1995 and 2009 ‘average house prices rose in real terms by 120%’ (Morton 2010:35). There is also a geographical dimension to the imbalance: whilst in some areas demand for housing far outstrips supply, in others it is the opposite. A 1998 report found that many local authorities were faced with surplus housing which no-one wanted to move into (Social Exclusion Unit 1998).

Two further stock-related issues are under-occupation and non-occupation. The most recent statistics from independent charity Empty Homes, which campaigns for uninhabited houses to be brought back into circulation, show that almost three quarters of a million properties in England were recorded as empty in 2009 (Empty Homes Agency 2010). Under-occupation seems to be an even bigger issue. Research published in 2011 shows that almost 40% of the existing housing stock in Britain is under-occupied (measured as two or more empty bedrooms in the property), mainly as a result of older generations staying in large family homes rather than downsizing (Griffith 2011:2). As a result, a rising number of young adults remain in their parental home long after reaching the age of independence. Statistics published in 2012 show that the number of 20-34 year olds currently living with their parents has risen by 20% in the last 14 years. While there may be a range of factors involved in that rise, there is also a growing concern that young people are being disproportionately affected by the lack of housing and correlated rise in house prices (Morton 2010:9; Burn-Murdoch 2012). Accompanying this constriction in housing supply has been an ‘increase in the number of households in the UK as a result of greater longevity, marital breakdown and to a lesser extent, immigration’ (Rutter and Latorre 2009:vii). Finney and Simpson note that the trend towards smaller family units and larger houses is more commonly found in majority rather than minority communities (Finney and Simpson 2009:79-80).

\(^{58}\) A report published in 2011 showed that while official research estimated that 240,000 new homes were needed annually to meet the current housing shortage, in 2010 only 102,730 units were built, and 109,020 units in 2011 (Chartered Institute of Housing et al. 2011). The 2010 figure was the lowest number of new houses built since 1946 (Chartered Institute of Housing et al. 2012).
Given the pressures identified in the above paragraphs, it is no surprise that housing provides fertile ground for the expression of frustration by those who feel they are losing out. The preceding paragraphs have documented the long list of factors associated with the British housing crisis. This variety of factors demonstrates that it isn’t inevitable that migrants should be discursively held responsible for housing problems. The next section explores the situation of migrants in British housing discourse in closer detail.

**HOUSING AND MIGRANTS**

This section will turn to look specifically at how migrants are situated in British housing discourse. After a general introduction to the connections which have been made between housing and migrants, two subsections will look at migrants’ legal rights to housing in Britain and at the evidence for the public perception of migrant access to housing.

The field of housing has a long connection to migration and, as this chapter of the case study will demonstrate, the presence of migrants as (potential or actual) occupants of housing has been a key motivator of public and policymaking debate at specific flashpoints. Housing has frequently been afforded a prominent role in the execution of policies to manage the arrival and integration of migrants in Britain. As Pearl and Zetter put it, ‘[h]ousing is at the very cornerstone of reception and resettlement ... and controlling access to housing has become an increasingly important part of the government’s asylum and immigration strategy’ (Pearl and Zetter 2002:226). Through a policy of dispersal, the settlement of asylum seekers and refugees ‘has been mainly housing-led’ (Amas 2008:9). This is, not a new phenomenon, however. Research shows that housing availability has been a key determinant of where migrant populations settle since at least the Second World War. For example, the National Service Hostels Corporation (NSHC), set up by Ernest Bevin in 1941, played a significant role in accommodating migrants recruited in the post-war period to work on essential reconstruction projects. Searle notes the relationship between the location of some NSHC hostels and the contemporary location of ethnic minority communities. For example, Brixton, which is now a focal point of London’s Jamaican community, was the nearest Labour Exchange office to

---

59 These included Poles who arrived under the European Voluntary Work Scheme and other East European refugees recruited from Displaced Persons camps on the continent, as well as West Indian Servicemen who had stayed on after the war and others, notably Jamaicans, who travelled to the UK independently to look for work (Searle 2013).
the former air-raid shelters on Clapham Common where many of the early West Indian migrant workers were accommodated (Searle 2013:61). The availability of housing also played a prominent role in government plans to resettle the Ugandan Asians who arrived in the early 1970s (Kuepper et al. 1976). Likewise, migrants from the Asian subcontinent who arrived to work in the mill towns of northern England were able to settle and build a community in those towns largely because of the availability of cheap houses (Phillips, D. 1998).

Poverty, lack of knowledge with regard to housing options, racist discrimination in the allocation of social housing and a lack of options for raising finance to buy meant that, from the post-War period onwards, arrivals ended up occupying ‘the least popular and most run-down social housing, and in areas of cheap, often sub-standard private accommodation’ (Bowes et al. 2000; Harrison and Phillips 2003:25; Phillips, D. and Harrison 2010:223; Ratcliffe et al. 2001:21). Among public officials, there was widespread concern about the dangers of allowing the new arrivals to cluster together, which reflected a pervasive fear that Black migrants could only be ‘absorbed’ in limited numbers, and that to exceed such numbers would cause race relations to deteriorate (Hampshire 2005:65; see also Thatcher 1978). During the 1970s one city council pursued a policy of actively dispersing groups of Black social housing tenants to prevent the formation of ‘ghettos’, though such policies were dismantled with the passing of the 1976 Race Relations Act (Phillips, D. 2006:28; Kalra and Kapoor 2009:1400).

A place to live is critical to the success of the initial settlement of migrants and subsequent development of migrant communities, and the availability of sufficient accommodation shapes the migrant experience. Housing has been described as a mechanism which can ‘play a part in enabling people to participate fully in society’, and this holds for both migrants and fixed residents (Clapham et al. 1996:58). The incorporation of migrants into the prevailing social order depends upon the integration that is achieved by acquiring a place to live, since that offers a physical base for the development of local knowledge and support networks (Keyder 2005:125). In the absence of stable housing ‘there is little chance of establishing the minimum rights of citizenship, which offer inclusion into the host society’ (Pearl and Zetter 2002:226). At the same time, the presence of migrants as occupants of housing within the national space, which is perceived to occur at the expense of others, shapes their mode of inclusion/exclusion through the housing discourse.
Migrant Housing Rights and Public Perceptions

The paragraphs above illustrate the importance of housing for migrants, not just as shelter but also for the development of the communal ties and resources which are essential to daily life. When it comes to migrant housing rights, however, the picture is complex. The term ‘migrant’ covers a vast range of people and immigration statuses, and it is fair to say that the conditions governing access to housing vary widely. The current stratification of migrant housing rights stands in stark contrast to the situation up until the mid-1990s, when any migrant who was legally resident in the UK had the same access to housing-related social benefits as the host community (Larkin 2005:440). Then in 1994, the Habitual Residence Test was introduced because of a perception (never convincingly documented) that Britain was experiencing a high level of ‘benefits tourism’—that is, people coming to the UK expressly to access the country’s reputedly generous benefits (Kennedy 2011; Larkin 2005). Two years later, the 1996 Housing Act brought in severe restrictions on access to housing for people from abroad by issuing a very limited list of categories of eligible statuses. The Asylum and Immigration Act of the same year also introduced a rash of new embargoes on the ‘recourse to public funds’, which includes social housing, for people from abroad.

In 1999 the numbers of people seeking asylum in the UK reached record levels. In response, the government’s 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act created a completely new and segregated housing and support system for people seeking asylum in order to relieve local authorities of what was deemed to be the ‘intolerable burden’ placed by asylum seekers on local services (Fiddick 1999:55; Secretary of State for the Home Department 1998:8.14). Administered by a new National Asylum Support Service (NASS), the new system effectively removed this highly contentious group of migrants from mainstream public housing altogether. NASS came into force in 2000. Its most far-reaching effect came with the policy of ‘dispersal’, which moved asylum claimants from the overcrowded parts of southeast England to ‘dispersal areas’ with cheaper and more freely available housing, often in less affluent towns and cities of the Midlands and North of England. In 2004, concerns about the impending arrival of migrants from the new A8 EU Accession states led to the introduction of a Right to Reside Test, designed to ensure that the A8 migrants...

---

60 The rights and conditions are subject to continuous revision. For an up-to-date overview see the Chartered Institute of Housing’s dedicated website (Lukes and Lister 2013).
61 The A8 countries which joined the European Union on 1st May 2004 were Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.
would remain ineligible for social housing until they were actually in work. Thus, within the space of 20 years, migrants had gone from having substantial rights to housing in the UK to being viewed as housing pariahs (Pearl and Zetter 2002:230).

Migrants arriving in Britain the last decade can be divided into four main groups in terms of their right to access social housing. EU nationals may be entitled to social housing very quickly, depending on their ‘right to reside’ status, i.e. as a worker or self-employed person. For migrants from outside Europe there is generally no right to housing until indefinite leave to remain (ILR) has been granted, which is on average five years at present. Non-EU migrants who have been granted ILR and EU migrants who qualify for the European equivalent (Permanent Right to Reside) can access social housing with some qualifications. Asylum seekers waiting for their asylum application to be determined are currently housed under NASS’s successor, now called Asylum Support. Former asylum seekers who have been granted refugee or similar status (humanitarian protection or discretionary leave to remain) have immediate access to social housing.

Given the heavy restrictions on access to social housing for migrants from outside the EU in particular, many non-EU migrants are housed in the private sector, either as tenants or owners. Research on the housing status of skilled and highly skilled migrants between 2003 and 2009 found that:

Initially perhaps 70% live in the private rented sector with only 20% becoming owner-occupiers. This tenure mix changes only slowly - with owner-occupation rising to 45% after 5 years. This implies that the most important impact is on the rented sector, especially given the extent of turnover among migrants. (Whitehead et al. 2011:1)

These findings largely show the inaccuracy of public fears about the high levels of dependency of migrants on social housing, with the figures indicating that the vast majority of skilled and highly skilled workers from outside the EU go into private housing arrangements. Rutter and Latorre’s research confirms that the vast majority of migrants who arrived in the period 2004-2009 (i.e. that since A8 accession) were housed in the private rented sector (p.18), and that only 11% of new migrants (2% of those arriving since 2004) had been allocated social housing (Rutter and Latorre 2009). Other figures from 2011 show that 76% of migrants who had been in the UK for five years or less were categorised as being in private rented accommodation; 5% of lettings to existing social housing tenants were to foreign nationals, while 9% of new social tenant lettings went to foreign nationals (Vargas-Silva 2013:5). Research published by the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2008
surmised that ‘[m]any migrants, while theoretically eligible, are very unlikely to receive housing either because they are single people or because they are here for insufficient time to qualify’ (Chartered Institute of Housing 2008:unpaginated). The report also concluded that many migrants are discouraged from applying for social housing, even though they would probably qualify, by widespread misinformation on eligibility, an observation that I found to be anecdotally true in my work as a trainer on migrant housing rights.

The complexity of the rules on migrant housing indicated above arguably makes it more understandable that the majority community is largely ignorant of the highly restrictive nature of the regulations. This, and the confusion about which migrants have which status, may explain in part the overwhelming public perception that all migrants are given housing very quickly, and certainly more rapidly than locals (see Rutter and Latorre 2009; Garner et al. 2009; Hudson et al. 2007; Robinson 2009; Beider 2011). The perception is also sustained by the barrage of media articles which create the illusion of migrants being favoured in the social housing system. The following paragraphs will provide an overview of the prevailing perceptions of migrants in housing.

It is clear that positive net migration does have some kind of effect on the housing market, although the relationship is complex and different kinds of migrants arriving through different migration pathways will have a dissimilar impact (Vargas-Silva 2013:2). But what happens in the current climate—what makes it autochthonous—is that the framing of the ‘problem’ turns it into a simple correlation whereby all housing shortages are caused by the arrival of migrants. Put differently, in contemporary British housing discourse ‘migrants’, ‘belonging’ and ‘housing’ are articulated in such a way as to render their relationship problematic. Migrants become the obstacle to the fulfilment of the fantasy of Elysian harmony and fulfilled need. Their removal, from the realm of housing at least, if not from the country, becomes imperative. Thus, social antagonisms arise and the logics of equivalence come into play, ensuring that those bearing the characteristics of the migrant become the absolute other, and that any commonalities between individuals cast as ‘migrant’ and those who remain in the category ‘autochthon’ are suppressed, to allow the formation of a frontier between the two poles. In this way, most of the other causes of pressures in the supply of housing listed above—the impact of the right to buy scheme, changing family structures, planning laws or under-occupancy—are concealed through the actions of fantasmatic logics.
As I will elaborate below, schemes to separate out migrants from autochthons in terms of legal and moral housing eligibility, weekly media stories about ‘immigrants’ depriving the ‘indigenous’ of a home and declarations about where migrants do and don’t fit into the British residential landscape are all types of social practices which articulate a discourse of autochthony. These remain once the political logics have polarised migrants and ‘us’, and the fantasmatic logics have convinced us that this is indeed a natural ordering of the social by concealing over the internal inconsistencies and the availability of alternative interpretations of social reality. Such equivalent political logics are used by the anti-immigration lobby group Migration Watch, who lay the blame for increased housing demand solely with migrants and conveniently overlook all the internal factors that put pressure on the housing market (Migration Watch 2011:1-2). Migration Watch reports invariably draw an absolute equivalence between immigration and the need to build new houses. Their recent calculations suggest that at the current rate of immigration, the equivalent of 45 new homes per day was needed in the UK to house migrants alone (ibid.), and suggest that under zero immigration ‘the need for additional house building . . . would be largely removed’, a claim which is refuted elsewhere (Migration Watch 2007:1; Vargas-Silva 2013:6). Migration Watch’s claims are significant because the organisation’s chair, Sir Andrew Green, is treated by a broad spectrum of media outlets as an authoritative commentator on immigration. He is routinely invited to respond to new releases of government immigration figures, and his words are widely disseminated as expert independent opinion in the tabloid press as well as in the broadsheets and on the major news channels.

Another frequently voiced perception is not just that migrants are getting houses that they aren’t entitled to, but that this is occurring because they demand prioritisation over the indigenous population, either through infiltration of the echelons of power or through the workings of ‘political correctness’ which allegedly forces local authorities to attend to ethnic minority needs before those of ‘locals’ (Garner et al. 2009:28). As Beider found in his work, ‘[a] strongly held view was that local government officers were supporting minority interests in policy arenas such as housing over and above the needs of white working-class communities’ (Beider 2011:49). One local resident interviewed several years after the 2001 rioting in Oldham voiced a widely held opinion that ‘this town is run by Asians, by Asians and

---

62 Interview date not available.
for Asians, to the exclusion of the whites’ (Richards 2010:2m36s). The events of recent years have also fortified the notion that migrants choose to self-segregate by opting to live in housing ‘ghettos’, to the detriment of wider community cohesion, which contrasts with research findings, noted above, of the financial and discriminatory restrictions which largely resulted in ethnic clustering.

The contradictory nature of other perceptions about migrant housing is notable. For example, migrants are seen as the cause of house price increases because their presence in the housing market increases demand for all kinds of housing. In addition, asylum dispersal was welcomed in some deprived communities because private housing providers bought up and repaired previously empty properties in order to win or fulfil NASS contracts to house asylum seekers. One study found that ‘the physical environment was reported to have become more attractive, which was thought to have positively affected house prices and increased external demand for the area’ (Casey et al. 2004:13; Robinson and Reeve 2006:34). On the other hand, the same study notes residents’ concerns that their neighbourhood would be viewed negatively by outsiders because of the presence of migrants, and evidence elsewhere shows that migrants are believed to have a negative impact on house values in a neighbourhood because of the perception of an association between migrants and increased crimes rates (Casey et al. 2004:14; Blinder 2011:7).

In the preceding paragraphs I have traced the history of migrant housing in Britain and I have illustrated something of the complexity of the current regulations which govern migrant housing rights. These stand in stark contrast to public perceptions of migrant entitlement and their effect on the housing market, as the final section has demonstrated. This already indicates a series of differences between the regulatory position of migrants and the public interpretation of their position, which sets the stage for the discursive othering aimed at recouping what is deemed to have been unfairly allocated. The identification of the many contributing factors of the housing crisis is critical to my attempt to show that attaching blame to migrants—in other words resorting to an autochthonous discourse—is an act of politics. It is ‘non-necessary’, to use Glynos and Howarth’s term, in that other discourses and other ‘Others’ are available (Glynos and Howarth 2007:153). Consequently it can be seen that the difference between inside and outside is not

---

63 In 2001 Oldham actually had an ethnic minority population of 11%, comprising people of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black, Indian and ‘Other’ heritage (Ritchie 2001).
64 See p99, above.
foundational at all, but is rather the product of particular discursive strategies. The following section pays close attention to the autochthonous political practices which shape British housing discourse through my analysis of three instances of dislocation.

**IDENTIFYING AUTOCHTHONY IN HOUSING DISCOURSE, TRACING ITS FOUNDATIONS**

The outline sketched above indicates that through British housing discourse, the presence of migrants in housing is constructed as a ‘problem’ which has consequences for those who really belong; the majority community. In the following three sections I will fill in that outline with detailed analysis. I will identify examples of the social logics of genus (the ancestral rootedness of autochthons), impurity (the destructive effect of the presence of outsiders), entitlement (the autochthonous right to housing) and victimhood (allocation to migrants as deprivation for autochthons).

In each of the three examples of dislocation which I consider in the following paragraphs I will focus on a different aspect of autochthony’s fantasmatic narrative and I will foreground the presence of specific autochthonous logics. In the first example, the Hodge Intervention, I will emphasise the deployment of the autochthonous logic of entitlement, and I will argue that this strand of discourse is motivated by the fantasmatic objective of fulfilled need. My second example, which will start with the dislocation effected by the Northern Riots of 2001, pays particular attention to the logic of victimhood, which I will argue is motivated by the fantasmatic objective of the harmonious community. In the final example I consider the claim that the English village represents the ‘last bastion of Englishness’, and in this example I focus on the autochthonous logics of genus and impurity. This strand of discourse, I will suggest, is motivated by the fantasmatic promise of the restitution of genus. In each of the three cases, the autochthonous claim is advanced through the medium of housing, and through its identification of the migrant-outsider as the fantasmatic obstacle to the achievement of the promised Elysium.

**Autochthonous Entitlement and the Hodge Intervention**

This section aims to show how one strand of British housing discourse, identified as such here with reference to the logic of entitlement, is motivated by the fantasmatic promise of fulfilled need. I will do this by examining a newspaper article by a senior politician and by tracing the development of the discourse that it initiates. Here I will focus on identifying the political logics in order to expose the contingency
and non-necessary nature of the discourse which resulted from that dislocation, since other discourses could equally have been mobilised. Importantly, the example illustrates the difficulty of fixing the identity of the migrant, and thus the impossibility of closing the border between inside and outside.

In May 2007 Margaret Hodge, then a Cabinet Minister for Trade and Industry in Blair’s Labour government, wrote an article in *The Observer* which unleashed an outpouring of hostility towards migrants in Britain. Under the heading ‘A message to my fellow immigrants’⁶⁵, the article allegedly responded to a growing resentment of ‘immigrants’ and their impact on the housing situation in her constituency of Barking, East London (Hodge 2007). While acknowledging the ‘huge benefits’ that migration had brought to Britain, the article declared that too many migrant families were being given social housing at the expense of ‘indigenous’ families. There was a need, she concluded, to ‘question and debate whether our rules for deciding who can access social housing are fair’ (ibid.):

*We should look at policies where the legitimate sense of entitlement felt by the indigenous family overrides the legitimate need demonstrated by the new migrants. . . . most new migrant families are economic migrants who choose to come to live and work here. If you choose to come to Britain, should you presume the right to access social housing?* (ibid.)

Hodge’s article made explicit its autochthonous qualities by imposing a distinction between ‘indigenous’ and ‘migrant’, and then attaching to this the idea that the former have a ‘legitimate sense of entitlement’ to public resources, with the implication that migrants don’t. The simplistic division of the social into two distinct (and apparently neatly divisible) spheres clearly reflected the underpinning of an inside-outside ontology. Moreover, Hodge’s article invites comparison with the examples of autochthonous discourse presented in Chapter 2. There is a particular likeness between the article and the kind of ‘welfare chauvinism’ which Ceuppens describes in the Flemish discourse of autochthony, in which various categories of allochthon are deemed to be using resources to the detriment of the Fleming community (Ceuppens 2006)⁶⁶. It is also clear that the discourse mobilised the logic of entitlement, and the idea that only those who belong have such resource entitlement, since Hodge used exactly that word in her article. Her intervention spoke of pre-existing social antagonisms between the ‘indigenous’ and the migrants in her constituency. By claiming to be merely responding to her constituents’

---

⁶⁵ Hodge arrived as a child with her Jewish Émigré family.
⁶⁶ See p60, above.
concerns, the article in fact activated the political logic of equivalence to polarise the two groups to the extent that a new frontier of belonging can be placed between them. At the same time her senior position lent legitimacy to the discourse.

To think about why this rather than any other possible discourse emerged, we must consider the fantasmatic logics at work. In Chapter 2 I noted the Elysian fantasy which motivates autochthony discourse and suggested that it contains several intertwined fantasmatic logics. One of these is the fantasmatic promise of fulfilled need. Put differently, the discourse of autochthony is motivated in part by the fantasy that if only the non-belonging outside can be removed, then the autochthonous community will once more be able to have all its resource needs met, and want will effectively be abolished. This, I suggest, is the fantasmatic logic which motivated and directed Hodge’s article and the strand of discourse which developed out of it. Here, the migrant stands as the obstacle to the realisation of the autochthonous fantasy. The unspoken message of Hodge’s article was that if the ‘families of economic migrants’ were not being unjustifiably housed, then ‘indigenous’ families would be able to get the housing that they need (and to which their belonging entitles them) without having to wait in line for years.

What quickly becomes apparent, however, and what exposes both the slipperiness of autochthony and the ultimate impossibility of achieving the clear differentiation towards which Hodge’s article hinted, is the vagueness of the term ‘economic migrant’. The article referred specifically to Poles, Romanians, Africans and Asians in a passage on the groups which constitute the multiracial society of contemporary Britain. Africans and Asians are described as coming here to ‘seek a better life’, while Poles and Romanians are said to have come here to work. However, we have a very confusing picture as to who this ‘economic migrant’ really is. We could assume that Hodge means East European (i.e. Polish and Romanian) families, since these are singled out as coming here to work. Under EU rules, some (but not all) East European nationals in Britain who qualify as workers are entitled to access social housing, provided that they meet certain conditions. At the time the article was published, A8 East European nationals (here Poles) had been arriving for three years, while A2 (Bulgarian and Romanian) nationals had only had access to the British jobs market for five months. However, statistics already available indicated that East European workers were rarely allocated social housing. An inter-

---

67 See p66, above.
departmental report published in May 2007 found that across Britain, only 235 allocations of social housing had been made to A8 nationals between May 2004 and December 2006, compared to a total number of 630,000 A8 national registrations to work\(^6\) (Border and Immigration Agency et al. 2007). Since conditions of eligibility were even stricter for A2 nationals than for A8 nationals, it is unlikely that they would have had a large impact on the total number of allocations to East Europeans. Thus, it seems improbable that it was these migrants that she was targeting.

On the other hand, we might conclude that she is really referring to the Africans and Asians whom she cites as seeking a better life in the UK. This would make more sense in respect of her dissatisfied constituents. Barking had been the site of intense campaigning by BNP activists, and in 2006 the party had won 11 seats on the local Council following an election campaign that exploited local concerns about housing and demographic change. The campaign had claimed that the Council was running a secret scheme to give African families £50,000 to buy a house in the area (Boggan 2006). Many suspected that Hodge was using ‘BNP language’ to stop Labour voters from changing their allegiance to the far right party (Mulholland 2007). However, a sizeable proportion of those Africans and Asians who had access to housing in Barking were likely to be refugees, given the difficulties for non-Europeans of obtaining a British work visa and the restriction of at least 5 years on their access to social housing even if they were to have arrived as workers. Moreover, Hodge herself stated in her article that ‘confirmed refugees’ should receive the same entitlements as British citizens, which seems to rule them out as the object of her article.

It is also unlikely that she really meant asylum seekers, since these are now housed outside the social system, as noted above. Then perhaps Hodge was referring to members of the settled BME population? Barking has a sizeable BME population, although as a council Housing strategy document shows, most are living in private rented accommodation—not social housing:

The BME population in the borough represents 14.8% of the total population, with a high representation in the Barking area, specifically 45.62% in Abbey and 31.73% in Gascoigne wards. The Housing Needs Survey 2005 also revealed that Black and Asian households are disproportionately living in private rented accommodation, particularly in

\(^6\) Worker registrations are not an accurate reflection of the number of A8 nationals living in Britain, but there is no better single alternative statistic for quantifying this figure (Border and Immigration Agency et al. 2007).
areas which are more likely to be overcrowded. (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham 2007:15, italics added)

Thus it seems unlikely that the intended target is BME households either.

Consequently, it is difficult to know who precisely was inferred by Hodge’s article, or whether she even had a precise figure in mind. Then, if the migrant figure who is to be blamed for taking up too much social housing is so hard to define, we begin to wonder why she was selected as the fantasmatic obstacle in the first place. Certainly we know that other discourses were available. In the preceding section I listed a range of factors for the general shortage in housing, which included changes to family structures, under-occupancy and the failure to invest in new housing stock. Consequently, antagonisms could have polarised ‘ineffective housing managers’ against ‘the long-suffering working-class’, ‘government’ against ‘the people’ or right-to-buy owners against people on the housing waiting list. Equally importantly, however, it illustrates the contingency of the autochthonous interpretation of social relations and accentuates its ‘non-necessary’ status (Glynos and Howarth 2007:155).

What I mean by this is that there was nothing inevitable about the targeting of migrants and the singular blaming of their presence for the housing crisis, given the availability of alternative factors. The fact that the discourse developed the way that it did, then, must reflect the underlying presence of an autochthonous logic which shaped Hodge’s article and the ensuing debate.

Hodge’s claim that her article merely vocalised and responded to a widespread discourse of migrants receiving preferential allocation of social housing at the expense of locals has some merit (Robinson 2009:1-2). A substantial body of social research indicates that this perception is indeed pervasive, and underlines the presumption that ‘born and bred’ Britons have an inherent entitlement which is consequently being undermined. The following examples are responses from majority community respondents participating in qualitative research interviews:

‘Now what it is, is they just come in from wherever and there’s a readymade house, furnished, up to a standard which I even can’t get, and I was born in this country’ (Hudson et al. 2007:36, italics added).

I was told I didn’t have enough points – they haven’t been here two minutes and they get a house, we have to wait years. Why should we have to? (Beider 2011:51, italics added)

‘they seem to be getting what we’ve worked for all our lives and can’t get’ (Garner et al. 2009:22:47, italics added).
This view is repeated across the popular discourse and in the comments sections of online newspapers on a daily basis. When the article was first published, the tabloid newspapers largely endorsed Hodge’s message, with unequivocal headlines such as ‘Britons lefts on the street as immigrants move in’ (Knapp 2007).

There is clearly a correlation between popular articulations of the discourse and the media discourse, though the precise nature of this relationship evades simple explanation (Buchanan et al. 2003:13). Nonetheless, the complexity of the regulations on access to social housing, and on the different kinds of migrant status (and their varying rights and conditions) which exist in Britain, seem to result in a public assumption that anyone from an ethnic minority community must be an asylum seeker (Lewis 2005:28-31). This situation is very easy for the media to exploit. The frequent publication of erroneous media stories of migrants being given housing to which they aren’t legitimately entitled (according to the discourse) and the deliberate obfuscation of terminology in order to crank up resentment towards certain sections of the migrant population certainly seem to encourage misunderstanding (Lewis 2005:28-31). For example, the Daily Mail regularly insists on describing as ‘asylum seekers’, people who formerly had that status, but have now been granted another, such as refugee status. One headline vilifies a family’s presence in a large house with the headline ‘Somali asylum seeker family given £2m house ... after complaining 5-bed London home was ‘in poor area’’ (Hastings et al. 2010). Yet a quick look at the rest of the article, which gives details of the father’s previous employment, as well as the family’s eligibility for social housing, indicates that the family’s claim to asylum must have been already accepted by the Home Office and an alternative status (possibly refugee status) awarded. Without such a status, permission to work was unlikely to have been given and it is highly unlikely that the family would have been housed in London. Consequently, they are clearly no longer asylum seekers. However, as Greenslade notes, the term asylum-seeker is now so demonised as to constitute a term of abuse, and the article thus feeds into the already overwhelmingly negative discourse in the British press about asylum and those who seek it, and about foreigners getting houses which should be kept for ‘us’ (Buchanan et al. 2003; Greenslade 2005; Innes 2010).

One of the strongest objections to Hodge’s article was that she portrayed an image of migrants being allocated social housing with an ease that simply didn’t match the reality. In the section on ‘Migrant Housing Rights’ above I outlined the continuous squeeze on rights to access social housing for most migrants over the
past twenty years. Nonetheless, the government’s inability to provide precise figures on allocations to migrants at the time prompted the commissioning of several pieces of research to assess the scale of the ‘problem’. When published, the commissioned research reports, together with independent research responding to Hodge’s statement, all concluded that there was no discernible favouring of migrants (Chartered Institute of Housing 2008; Pawson et al. 2009; Rutter and Latorre 2009). If anything, they showed that groups such as East European migrants were underrepresented in social housing (Amas 2008; Robinson 2007, 2008), prompting a further flurry of headlines (for example Douglas 1966; Morris 2009; Waugh 2009). Strangely, however, these publications which effectively disproved Hodge’s thesis were followed swiftly by an announcement by then Prime Minister Gordon Brown that legislation would be changed to allow local authorities to ‘to give more priority to local people and those who have spent a long time on a waiting list’ when allocating housing, a proposal since made law by the Coalition government in the Localism Act 2011 (Department for Communities and Local Government 2011; HM Government 2009). The power to set local priorities and give some housing preference to those with local connections has now been issued to local authorities (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012a). What transpires, then, is that the discourse which was initiated by Hodge’s article, and her identification of ‘economic migrants’ as the primary cause of the housing shortage, resulted in changes to the law and the implementation of new social practices to further restrict what was already a limited right to social housing for most migrants. This has occurred despite the imprecision of the migrant whose alleged impact on housing was the initial target of Hodge’s article. At the same time, however, in inability to pinpoint the offending category of migrant, and Hodge’s own ring-fencing of the right of refugees to access social housing, means that there has been (and can be) no finalisation of the frontier between those who belong, and thus have an entitlement to resources, and those who don’t. This is evident in the continued search for the fantasmatic obstacle, beyond the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 which already ought to have given sufficient priority to Hodge’s ‘indigenous families’.

At the time of writing we appear to be back to the drawing board and the focus is once more on East Europeans, this time specifically Bulgarian and Romanian nationals. On 31st December 2013 the restrictions on the right of these nationals to work in the UK will expire, and they will thereafter be treated the same as any other EU nationals present in the UK. At present the conditions under which
Bulgarians and Romanians can access social housing are stringent. The imminent ending of restrictions, which is governed by EU (rather than British) legislation, and thus cannot be overruled by London, has prompted another wave of autochthonous panic about the impact which they are expected to have on the availability of resources such as housing. Wild estimates of the number of new migrants likely to arrive from these countries have circulated, in spite of the government’s refusal to publish its own estimations. One article in the Daily Telegraph mentioned figures varying from 30,000 to 455,000 new arrivals (Dominiczak 2013). Eric Pickles, the Coalition government Minister for Communities and Local Government, reportedly stated that ‘[g]iven that we’ve got a housing shortage, any influx from Romania and Bulgaria is going to cause problems’ (ibid.). Here, too, the official message is of foreigners as a danger or resource threat which needs to be excluded. Once again a prominent politician is endorsing a discourse which draws on an inside-outside ontology to portray outsiders as the obstacle to the achievement of the fantasmatic promise of fulfilled autochthonous need.

In my discussion of the logic of impurity in Chapter 2 I noted that the threatening other needn’t actually be in the community in order to be perceived as a danger. The anticipated ‘influx’ from Romania and Bulgaria has not yet taken place, but already projections of damage are being used as an argument for efforts to limit or prevent altogether their arrival. The logic of equivalence insists that these potential new arrivals will be exactly the same as those already problematised in Hodge’s article, even though we cannot be sure exactly who or what the originally problematic migrants were. The autochthonous discourse appears to have become sedimented, and to offer a common-sense interpretation, such that all the major political parties see a move to further restrict welfare and housing rights for European migrant workers as a natural response to the situation.

Responding to the perceived threat of arrivals from those countries, Prime Minister David Cameron’s speech on immigration and welfare in March 2013 underlined the perception that too many migrants were getting housing to which they shouldn’t be entitled because they don’t have local connections. He insisted that housing policy must take into account how long people have lived in and contributed to an area, and pledged to introduce a system under which ‘local people rightly get priority in the social housing system’ (Cameron 2013). The take-home message here

---

69 See p57, above.
was that ‘[n]ew migrants should not expect to be given a home on arrival’ (ibid.).
Cameron’s pledge was turned into a commitment to new legislation on immigration
and welfare to achieve such restrictions in the Queen’s Speech of May 2013. If the
proposals become law, landlords of private property will be legally obliged to check
the immigration status of all their new tenants. In a recent speech the shadow Home
Secretary stated the Labour Party’s commitment to tightening the rules on access to
welfare resources and cited public concern about ‘the impact of Bulgarian and
Romanian migration from next January’ as a reason why the rules on entitlement
need to be changed (Cooper 2013). This clearly continues the narrative, begun by
Margaret Hodge six years earlier, which sees access to housing by migrants as an
infringement of the resource rights of autochthons.

The preceding paragraphs have given details on the development of a
discourse in which the perception of migrants as non-belonging led to the
questioning of and restrictions to their access to housing as a resource. I have shown
how a newspaper article by a senior politician effected a dislocation in the existing
discourse and provoked a fierce debate about who ought to have access to social
housing. The example has demonstrated the presence of the autochthonous logic of
entitlement. Although Hodge’s article initially questioned the right of an ill-described
category of ‘economic migrants’ to access social housing, the logics of equivalence
rapidly came into effect to make all migrants in social housing questionable, and to
polarise social relations into the camps of ‘the indigenous’ and migrants. I have
argued that the development of the discourse shows evidence of being shaped by an
autochthonous fantasmatic narrative which draws on an inside-outside ontology
which makes it ‘obvious’ that insiders should have an entitlement to housing which
outsiders don’t have. I have additionally shown that this was a non-necessary
articulation, as other discourses were available. Moreover, the perceived need to
impose restrictions to prevent access to housing but also to discourage migrants to
come the Britain in the first place reveals the ontological constructs of fixity and
exclusion at work, as well as showing migrants to be construed as the obstacle to the
achievement of the fullness promised by the fantasmatic narrative. The following
section looks at a contrasting example of dislocation which emerged from the
Northern Riots of 2001.
The Northern Riots and the Discourse of Self-Segregation

My second example provides analysis of the political logics which developed in response to a series of riots in England in summer 2001. In this section I will show how these riots caused a dislocatory shock which led to the articulation of a discourse based on an autochthonous fantasmatic logic. The discourse associates an indistinct ‘minority community’ with problematised housing status to render this community outside belonging. By examining the way in which the discourse developed and revealing the influence of the autochthonous logic of victimhood I will illustrate its political, rather than natural, distinction between insiders and outsiders, and the influence of the fantasmatic narrative of the harmonious community. At the same time, I will show that by failing to make a clear identification of the migrants who were presumed to be the obstacles, the distinction cannot be fixed.

Between April and July 2001, the three towns of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in Northern England experienced large-scale rioting between gangs of White and Asian youths which caused considerable material damage. In Bradford, where rioting occurred in both April and July, during the July riots up to 500 people became involved in the rioting, 14 members of the public and 326 police officers were injured and approximately £10 million of damage to property occurred (Hussain and Bagguley 2005:407-8; Kundnani 2001:105; Denham 2001:7). In all three towns, the participants were overwhelmingly young men from the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community and the White majority community (Denham 2001:8).

Reports were swiftly commissioned to examine the circumstances of the riots in each town, and a combined report chaired by Ted Cantle was also prepared (Ouseley 2001; Clarke 2001b; Denham 2001; Ritchie 2001; Independent Review Team 2001). These laid out various factors behind the start of the riots, and although in each place the exact trigger for the riots differed, a number of underlying commonalities appeared. In all three towns, tensions between the White and Asian communities had been simmering for many weeks prior to the outbreak of rioting. High-profile attacks on vulnerable white people by gangs of Asian youths had been pivotal in attracting attention from the British National Party (BNP), which had mobilised in Oldham and Burnley in the preceding months to contest local and national election seats in the June 2001 General Election (Hussain and Bagguley 2005:408). In Burnley and Oldham, clashes between rival criminal gangs and the involvement of drug dealing were allegedly responsible for providing the ‘spark’ for
the rioting there (Denham 2001:9). Another significant commonality was the level of poverty and material deprivation, and the reports painted a dismal picture of the communities involved. In Burnley, for example, 40% of families were dependent on some form of welfare benefit, 42% of children eligible for free school meals, and ‘[h]ousehold income deprivation measures shows that Daneshouse ward [the site of the rioting] is among the most deprived in England. Only 7 wards out of 8414 are more deprived’ (Clarke 2001a:3). The existence of dilapidated housing stock in both Asian and White neighbourhoods in all three towns was noted in the combined review. Moreover, where regeneration funding had been injected into the towns, the area-based focus which conditioned how such funding was applied for and distributed resulted in considerable resentment amongst both Whites and Asians, and claims that the other side were being favoured by the local authority (Independent Review Team 2001:17).

Stedman-Jones has noted that changes in the social realm ‘are not bearers of essential political meaning in themselves. They are only endowed with political meanings so far as they are effectively articulated through specific forms of political discourse and practice’ (Stedman-Jones 1983:242, cited in Reyes 2005:249). Put another way, events such as the riots are not self-explanatory in terms of their social implications; these only emerge through the political practices which inscribe them with a particular significance. This underlines the fact that these riots could have been interpreted in many different ways, and a range of alternative polarisations could have developed. Deprivation and accusations of racist agitation, perceived police discrimination, and gang warfare were widely commented on in the reports. Polarisations of central government (funding) vs. local government, rioters vs. non-rioters, racists vs. non-racists could have emerged. As in the Hodge Interventions discussed above, the autochthonous logics which were applied to the riots can be seen as discursively constructed and thus ‘non-necessary’. What ensued following the riots was the autochthonous problematisation of the housing status of ‘minorities’ which drew on an inside-outside ontology and the fantasmatic promise of a harmonious community.

The Cantle report directed the discourse to its autochthonous outcome in three steps. Firstly, despite the many background factors and possible triggers of the rioting noted in all of the reports and above (racist agitation, perceived police discrimination, gang warfare and so on), Cantle and his colleagues found that the root cause of the riots was housing segregation:
Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarisation of our towns and cities. The extent to which these physical divisions were compounded by so many other aspects of our daily lives, was very evident. ... many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. (Independent Review Team 2001:9)

From this perspective, segregated housing was shown to foster parallel lives, polarised communities and consequently the total absence of cohesion between the different groups. Although the diagnosis of problematic housing segregation is not in itself biased, the report soon makes clear where the ‘blame’ for segregation should be laid. Under the heading Integration and Segregation, the report states that:

> Of course, *some minorities* choose to live within their own communities. For example, some would choose to live in a distinct area dominated by one culture and to ensure that there is a sufficient critical mass to support facilities such as shops and places of worship – and to try to ensure safety of community members. (Independent Review Team 2001:28, italics added)

Though the list of reasons behind segregation given here might be termed ‘positive choice’ reasons, the report does acknowledge that more negative factors, such as availability of housing, discrimination by housing providers and lack of financing options, also come into play. Nonetheless, it fails to concede that the White majority community is equally implicated in segregation. The report in the Oldham riots makes clear that:

> many Asian Oldhamers [said] that they did not seek to live in exclusively Asian surroundings, but that every time they moved into a new street, white people began to move out . . . Some Asian purchasers feel resentful that their arrival causes this reaction on the part of white people. (Ritchie 2001:16)

Given that, as this excerpt shows, the White community must be at least partly involved in the rise of segregation, the singling out of minority communities thus appears to be deliberate and guided by autochthonous logics. This constitutes the report’s second step towards the development of an autochthonous discourse. At this point, the breakdown of community cohesion can be attributed to minorities who choose to live together. Minorities can therefore be understood as the fantasmatic obstacle, and the fantasmatic promise which they ‘block’ is that of the harmonious community. According to the fantasmatic narrative deployed here, the communities of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford would be harmonious places were it not for the residential segregation of minority communities (which implicitly causes rioting). Of course, this deliberately overlooks the fact that segregation is not necessarily construed as problematic when majority communities are involved. Many
other kinds of segregation exist in contemporary Britain, such as that between North and South, rich and poor, young and old, or between classes. Residential segregation along lines of class and poverty is well documented, but in contrast to the scare stories of ethnic ghettoisation, ‘the retreat of the wealthy into gated communities and the self-segregation of the middle class into zones of sameness continues unquestioned’ (Cheshire 2007; Flint and Robinson 2008:2). Consequently, we can assume that is not segregation per se that causes concern, but only the segregation of certain non-majority groups (Bolt et al. 2010:174). Thus we discover that in terms of the identification of minority segregation as a root cause, it is the ‘minority’ element and not the fact of segregation which is the most problematic.

The third step towards the development of an autochthonous discourse concerns the linkage of failed cohesion with economic deprivation. Towards the end the report carries the declaration that ‘in societies where there is a high degree of community cohesion, there is greater economic growth and stronger development’ (Independent Review Team 2001:75). It is not simply the linking of cohesion and economic growth/development which is striking here, but rather the direction in which they are linked. It clearly implies that cohesion must come first; that cohesion causes economic growth. If this is the case, then the reverse is also likely to hold; lack of cohesion causes economic stagnation or deprivation. Since the report has already linked minority communities with segregated housing, and pointed to the latter as an indicator of failed cohesion, it effectively correlates the minority communities with the towns’ economic status. The implication is that housing segregation on the part of minority communities is causing economic hardship for the wider community, and in this we have a clear example of the logic of victimhood. Moreover, this also formalises the logics of equivalence by separating out ‘minorities’ from a ‘majority white community’ (Independent Review Team 2001:29) and presenting one side as blameworthy. In doing so, it prepares the ground for the raising of new political frontiers between minorities, who can now be understood to be outsiders, and the majority insiders.

To think about the problem in terms of the logics framework, we recall that the political logics—as shown here through the logics of equivalence and the construction of a political frontier between minorities and the majority—are directed by the fantasmatic logics. In fact, the Cantle report can be read as an autochthonous fantasmatic narrative, complete with the promise of fullness-to-come and an identified obstacle to the achievement of that fullness. The ‘promise’ concerns the
Elysian vision of the social that we encountered in Chapter 2. Here, it promises a harmonious community. For this to be realised, however, the ‘obstacle’ that is represented by minority segregation must be overcome. Until the obstacle is removed, however, the sense of victimhood of the majority community will dominate. Failure to overcome the obstacle can only result in more tension and inter-communal strife.

Although we may now be clear that it is minorities, and their chosen segregation, which are seen as problematic, we don’t really know who this imprecise minority community includes. The Cantle report speaks specifically about ‘minority’ communities, and includes the range of ‘black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities’ in its generalisations. However, given the numerical dominance of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in the three towns, and the predominance of youths from these communities in the rioting, we might wonder whether it is this ‘South Asian’ community which is really meant. As in the previous example, the failure to name precisely which part of the community was being constructed as outsiders both allowed the discourse to develop in relation to a varying range of BME communities but also prevented the possibility of closure.

The articulatory linking of (housing) segregation, minority communities and failed cohesion that emerged in the Cantle report appears to have become rapidly sedimented. A few months after the Cantle report was published, the Home Office white paper *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain* paved the way for far-reaching changes to British immigration and citizenship laws which were designed to prevent such segregation from reoccurring (Home Office 2002). While housing was not explicitly mentioned, the spectre of ‘fractured and divided communities, lacking a sense of common values or shared civic identity’ was raised, as were the Northern Riots. The concepts of cohesion and integration were now linked to the government’s ‘managed migration’ strategy (Home Office 2002:28). In other words, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* took the imprecise term ‘minorities’ and applied this more widely to ‘migrants’, towards whom policies would be developed with the express purpose of preventing the eruption of more divided communities.

This represents a clear continuation of Cantle’s report to the extent that it draws on an inside-outside ontology and autochthonous logics of victimhood, as well

---

70 According to estimates given in the Oldham report, for example, the combined Bangladeshi and Pakistani community in that town accounts for around 80% of its BME community (Ritchie 2001:74)
as being motivated by the fantasmatic logic of the harmonious community, yet the expansion of the group which now represents the obstacle is notable. The entire migrant community is now rendered suspect and construed as the fantasmatic object.

In response to the Cantle report’s call for the establishment of a meaningful conception of citizenship which would establish a clear primary loyalty to the UK, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* promised a ‘constructive debate about citizenship, civic identity and shared values’, in order to aid integration and the development of cohesive communities (Independent Review Team 2001:20; Home Office 2002:10). Despite insisting that citizenship and values were not issues for immigrants alone, its proposals regarding language teaching, compulsory citizenship education and a ‘simple examination for citizenship applicants’ precisely demonstrated that it was immigrants who needed to make themselves ready for integration, and not the majority community (Home Office 2002:10-11).

Introduced in November 2005, the compulsory ‘Life in the UK’ tests and citizenship ceremonies were preceded by the ‘7/7’ attacks on London transport by four Islamist suicide bombers, which occurred in July of that year. However, the London bombings offered another adaptation of the now-sedimented articulation of segregation and minority/immigrant communities as the inflicts of communal suffering and an obstacle to the fantasy of the harmonious community. Once again, the vagueness of the community in question facilitates the moulding of the identity of the outsider to suit the context. Trevor Phillips, then chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, drew a connection between those acts and what he portrayed as the increasingly segregated lives of some people and communities in a Britain which was ‘sleepwalking into segregation’. This country, he asserted, was one in which:

> increasingly, we live with our own kind. The most concentrated areas, what the social scientists call ‘ghettoes’, aren’t all poverty-stricken and drug-ridden. But they are places where more than two-thirds of the residents belong to a single ethnic group. (Phillips, T. 2005:unpaginated)

Phillips’ claim was robustly rejected by others, including those ‘social scientists’ whose work he had cited (Peach 2009; Finney and Simpson 2009). Nonetheless, his contentious speech rearticulated the existing discourse of housing segregation, minority communities and danger to the wider community. There are two significant adaptations, however. Firstly, Phillips singled out the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities as the minorities of concern regarding housing segregation.

---

71 Under the heading of ‘Knowledge of Life in the UK’.
Secondly, by linking the existing discourse to the terrorist bombings which had just taken place, Phillips greatly expanded the size of the threat allegedly posed by that residential segregation. Now, the fantasmatic narrative suggests that the failure to remove the ‘obstacle’ of segregated minorities may encourage acts of destruction far more extreme than rioting. Despite these adaptations, however, the rearticulation of minority segregation as the cause of problems for the wider community indicates a naturalisation of the linkage, and at the same time a repetition of minorities/migrants as external to the majority community. The same naturalisation is present in Prime Minister David Cameron’s 2011 ‘security speech’, which linked Muslim extremism/terrorism to the idea of segregated communities who live ‘apart from the mainstream’ (Cameron 2011).

One final modification to this articulation attempts to finalise the fixing of the political frontier by placing those segregated minorities entirely outside belonging. In February 2012 the Coalition government set out its approach to improving integration in England in the document *Creating the Conditions for Integration*. After confirming the benefits of migration to Britain, the document rearticulated the now-sedimented linking of migrant/minority communities with residential segregation, only this is now construed as a statement of deliberate and wilful rejection of integration. According to the document, successful integration meant communities where everyone contributed together. Such people and communities it named ‘mainstream’, and within the mainstream ‘[m]ost people feel a strong sense of belonging to Britain and to British society’ (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012b:5). By implication, the ‘integration problem’ which the document aimed to remedy must lie with those people who are outside the mainstream and thus do not have a sense of belonging.

The document took care not to name the community which it perceived to be rejecting integration. However, tucked away in the Annex the following passage tells us everything that we need to know:

Integration problems may be caused if people feel that they have little opportunity to sort out problems or grievances affecting their lives, . . . This risk is compounded when unplanned separation and segregation occurs. Mainly because of the way houses become available in local areas and the tendency for new migrants to live close to each other, some people live only with others from the same ethnic background. Such segregation can reinforce fear or resentment of other people and cultures and can lead to trapped, fearful and inward-looking communities. (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012b:22)
The naming of housing segregation and migrants immediately points to the established discourse. What it adds, however, is the sub-text that those people who choose to live ‘only with others from the same ethnic background’ in such segregated communities effectively choose not to belong in mainstream society or in Britain as a whole. The paper warns that ‘[t]here are too many people still left outside, or choosing to remain outside, mainstream society’ (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012b:6). The word ‘choosing’ indicates the accusation that these communities have taken active and deliberate steps to isolate themselves and thereby have instigated their own unbelonging. By failing to intertwine fully with the majority community, these minorities have allegedly failed to play their part in British society, in other words to enact their belonging. Never mind the fact that we still don’t know precisely who this community is, it represents the obstacle to the achievement of the fantasmatic promise of the harmonious community, which can only be realised by eradicating the problematic otherness. Yet perhaps the failure to name the precise identity of this problematic migrant/minority community plays a part in the fact that Creating the Conditions for Integration appears to be repeating exactly the same warnings and conclusions as the Cantle report did a decade earlier. In other words, no noticeable progress has been made towards resolving the obstacle, which has mutated but not disappeared. Moreover, the very insistence that these communities are outside the mainstream and thus outside belonging seems to reproduce the exclusion that the document purports to be trying to overcome.

In the preceding paragraphs I have examined a second example in which a dislocatory event has led to the activation and sedimentation of an autochthonous strand of housing discourse. Thus, housing has once again become a site at which a new political frontier between those who belong and those who don’t is drawn and in which migrants/minority communities in particular find themselves placed as non-belonging through the political logic of equivalence. Other explanations for the riots, and other sets of polarised identities were available, but these were concealed by the fantasmatic logics. I have shown here that the motivation for the selection of this discourse has come from the fantasmatic promise of the harmonious community, which is one of several strands of fantasmatic narrative that I identified in Chapter 2. By masking the documented constraints on migrant housing, the fantasmatic logics of autochthony present minority segregated housing as a deliberate choice and thus mark out the non-specified (and thus potentially every) minority community as a
danger to the wider, autochthonous community. The following section considers my final example of autochthonous British housing discourse.

**Midsomer Murders: The Last Bastion of Englishness**

In contrast to the preceding examples, the third and last example of how migrants feature in the housing discourse is perhaps more reflection than dislocatory event. The first example of dislocation presented in this chapter began by marking out migrants as different from ‘the indigenous’, and therefore outside belonging, in order to problematise their right to housing. Conversely, the second dislocation began with the problematisation of housing status and from there developed a discourse of minority non-belonging. This third focal point will analyse a dislocation which appears to indicate an absolute fusion between the two elements, so that housing comes to embody belonging rather than being in a relationship with it. In the following paragraphs I will present evidence to justify this claim. I will also illustrate the extent to which the English village\(^4\), as the imagined manifestation of the fusion, can be read as a representation of the tantalising promise of Elysium that haunts the fantastmatic narrative of autochthony.

The television crime series Midsomer Murders is set in the fictional English county of Midsomer, in which every village is picturesque, filled with stately homes, quaint thatched cottages, beautiful gardens, well-tended parish churches, traditional village greens and real pubs. Though set in the contemporary period, in effect the entire setting harks back to an (imaginary) golden age of neighbours who all knew each other, front doors left unlocked, a slower pace of life and barely a discarded crisp packet in sight. In March 2011, the programme’s executive producer, Brian True-May, responded to an interview question about the absence of ethnic minority characters from the programme with the claim that ‘it wouldn’t be an English village’ if it featured black and Asian characters (Singh 2011). The setting represented, he said, ‘the last bastion of Englishness’, and multiculturalism ‘would just look out of place’ in Midsomer (ibid.).

There is an interesting literature on symbolic representations of the English village, the rural landscape and the problematisation of ethnic minorities within that landscape which shows that the English village is constructed as an idealised space

---

\(^{4}\) The relationship between Englishness and Britishness is highly complex and beyond the scope of this thesis. A number of papers pay attention to the subject; see for example (Kumar 2006; Rosie et al. 2006; Skey 2012; McCrone 2002; Langlands 1999).
free of crime, hardship and squalor. This village is invariably inhabited by a homogeneous white community which exemplifies neighbourliness and community spirit (see for example Tyler 2003, 2012; Neal 2002; Garland and Chakraborti 2007). What I want to do here is to tease out the autochthonous nature of True-May’s invocation of this discourse by looking at the way in which the English village which he evokes demonstrates the autochthonous logics of genus and impurity. In Chapter 2 I identified genus as one of the logics of autochthony, and I stated that while it is the starting point for claims to autochthony, it is also most often implicit rather than explicit in autochthonous claims-making. Genus ties the autochthon as individual and community to territory through historical (ancestral) rootedness. It also embraces the idea of uniqueness, boundedness and purity, since the community which has always lived in one place and has never moved cannot have mixed with other communities, who have also always remained fixed. Thus, according to the autochthonous logic of genus, communities can be clearly differentiated and demarcated. In declaring the English village, and with it ‘Englishness’, to be under threat from ethnic minorities True-May clearly employs the logic of genus. In this formulation, the genus of Englishness is fixed and finite. Consequently, it is highly susceptible to corruption and ultimately to destruction. This Englishness is not something which is able to adapt or embrace change.

With his use of the phrase ‘the last bastion’, True-May’s statements constructed an image of Englishness as a finite entity, under attack from migrants. As Sarah Neal has noted, there is a well-established articulation of white spaces (hospitals, workplaces, classrooms, streets) at risk of infiltration by Black/others, begun by figures such as Margaret Thatcher and Enoch Powell (Neal 2002:449). Powell, who was the Conservative politician and Shadow Secretary of State for Defence at the time of his infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech, set the scenario of an elderly white woman who was the last white person left on her ‘respectable street in Wolverhampton’. This woman was completely isolated and afraid to go out because of the abuse that she received from the ‘negros’ who now surrounded her, and Powell implied that such corruption and loss of identity would destroy Britain if immigration was not sharply curtailed (Powell 2007 [1968]). This was echoed in Thatcher’s provocative claim in 1978, used to justify her government’s proposals to introduce tough new measures to limit immigration, that:

---

73 See p49, above.
people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture and, you know, the British character has done so much for democracy, for law and done so much throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped, people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in. (Thatcher 1978)

Both Powell and Thatcher portrayed people of different culture as a direct threat to Britishness and invoke an irreducible difference between the British and ‘those coming in’, whose presence can only be a destructive force. True-May’s ‘last bastion’ represents the idea of a final stronghold or fortified place, the remaining part of a larger space of which the rest has succumbed to invasion. It evokes the image of a besieged castle, surrounded by its enemies against whom it is fighting valiantly, determined to resist attack. By deploying this imagery, True-May clearly equates ‘ethnic minorities’ with the notion of an invading enemy and implies that they have already conquered the rest of the country, leaving only the English village to uphold the once-great identity of Englishness. Moreover, with his suggestion that the presence of ethnic minority characters in a Midsomer village would render it ‘no longer an English village’ we are given the impression that even a small number of minorities would bring about the destruction of Englishness. Thus, the threat posed to the English village—and by implication to Englishness itself—appears to be extreme. So, who are these ethnic minority bringers of impurity? True-May doesn’t qualify the identity, although given the visual medium of the TV series it is possible to conceive that he meant ‘visible’ minorities, in other words those who are not ‘White’. On the other hand, his statements do make a clear distinction as to who is to count as an insider, and that is simply the English. Consequently we might understand the term ‘ethnic minority’ to apply to everyone who is outside that group.

On the other hand, there are plenty of other ‘Others’ who also appear to jeopardise the version of Englishness portrayed in Midsomer Murders. Many other communities also fail to put in an appearance in the shows. Over the course of the sixteen series to date there have been few representations of groups such as teenage mums, Goths, hippies, gays, Jehovah’s Witnesses, benefits claimants or drug addicts. There don’t appear to be many owners of dangerous dogs, fake tans, false eyelashes or St George Cross flags either. This list of absentees underlines the ‘non-necessary’ selection of migrants as the threat to this bastion of Englishness; there are so many other kinds of people who, judging by their absence from the series, might be construed as out of place in Midsomer and thus a threat to the kind of Englishness that is represented there. A recent and highly charged campaign to prevent the
development of a boarding school for deprived inner-city (presumably perceived to be urbanised, minority ethnic and/or working-class) children in the West Sussex countryside shows the prevalence of this sentiment (Marsden 2013). Given the ‘racialised and classed constitution of English ‘village’ life’ as reflected in Midsomer Murders, a person who watched the series but knew little else about Britain might easily conclude that the only people who live in the English village are prosperous, White, middle-class heterosexuals (Tyler 2003:392; Neal 2002:446). Through programmes such as this, the English village has been sanitised and the real presence of poverty, crime and deprivation in rural areas has been concealed (Neal 2002:447).

Thus far I have shown that the logics of genus and impurity are central to the comments made by True-May. The identification of other ‘Others’, such as members of working class groups, also reveals the ‘non necessary’ articulation of ethnic minority people as threats to the notion of Englishness contained in the villages of Midsomer. The precise group of ‘ethnic minority’ figures thought to be threatening to the English village isn’t revealed, but is rather simply polarised against Englishness itself. As minorities are claimed not to belong in the village, so the claim suggests that they don’t belong in Englishness either. In the previous examples, I was able to track the development and mutation/adaptation of the discourse with the resulting rearticulation and redefinition of who the migrant or minority figure being discursively placed outside belonging was. In the Midsomer Murders case I am unable to do that. This is not just because of the recentness of the dislocation. At the time, True-May’s comments were quickly taken up in the national press. ITV, the channel which broadcast the programme, immediately distanced itself from the comments by declaring itself to be ‘shocked and appalled’ by them, and True-May was forced to resign from the programme (for example Daily Mail 2011; Plunkett 2011; BBC 2011). Within a short time, however, the event had disappeared from the headlines and the story died. It appears to have had no visible lasting impact. Three series of Midsomer Murders have aired since the interview; two ‘Asian’ characters appeared in one episode of the programme 18 months after True-May’s comments but apart from that, the series continues, minorities-free, as before.

The ‘dislocation’, if it can be described as such, was thus short-lived and one which was quickly absorbed by the dominant discourse by being explained as an anomaly, something ‘shocking’ and ‘appalling’ which didn’t represent the attitude of the wider society. The director of race equality think-tank The Runnymede Trust was quoted at the time as stating that True-May’s comments were ‘out of date and no
longer reflected English society’ (Plunkett 2011). In the sense that the TV series itself has managed to maintain a virtually minority-free existence, it might be argued that the discourse has succeeded in establishing and finalising the political frontier between the ‘ethnic minority’ and the ‘English’. That, however, is only possible in fiction. Back in the real world, things look quite different. Even 20 years ago, a report found significant numbers of people from ethnic minorities to be living in rural areas, and since that time there have been voluntary migrations of minorities away from the big cities, an active asylum dispersal which has placed asylum seekers in much smaller towns and outlying villages, and the arrival of European migrant workers employed in rural industries (Reeve and Robinson 2007; Jay 1992:unpaginated).

Despite these demographic changes, what I want to argue here is that although an ethnically diverse population is now the reality for many English villages, the ideal of the rural village as the quintessence of Englishness endures. Consequently, the fictional villages of Midsomer county should be understood as representations of the fullness-to-come promised by the fantasmatic narrative of the British discourse of autochthony, which elsewhere I have referred to as the Elysian promise. Thus, by understanding what they represent we gain critical insight to the ways in which housing discourse becomes entangled with autochthonous discourses of belonging in Britain. Several authors have noted the conflation of whiteness, Englishness and the nostalgic idea of the rural idyll (Garland and Chakraborti 2006:161; Tyler 2012:87; Neal 2002:443). As we have noted above, the English village as depicted in Midsomer Murders has been sanitised, and all its less ‘desirable’ elements extracted. There is no real poverty, no homelessness, no social housing waiting list, and there is a strong community spirit, with obvious neighbourliness. Most of all, the people who live there are ‘people like us’, people who share ‘our’ moral and cultural values. In short, this is the idealised environment which motivates claims to autochthony in British housing discourse, with its fantasmatic promise of the prosperous and harmonious community and fulfilled need. Moreover, the logic of genus insists that this is what England (Britain) used to be, before the outsiders arrived to spoil everything. The catch to obtaining all of this, and thus to the restitution of genus, is of course the fantasmatic obstacle, defined by the

---

74 The sole negative element in the villages of Midsomer is the shockingly high murder rate, but that, as we know, is because it is fiction.
discourse of autochthony as the migrant-outsider, and articulated here as the bringer of strife and deprivation.

In this section I have shown how a short-lived news story concerning the idea that ethnic minorities don’t belong in the English village reveals the sedimentation and naturalisation of the autochthonous logics of genus and impurity in British housing discourse. I demonstrated that the rapid absorption of the dislocation by the dominant discourse indicates that rather than this being an exceptional statement, it actually chimed with a widely-held fantasmatic ideal of the English village, which approximates the Elysian promise of the discourse of autochthony. This promise offers no less than the restitution of genus, if only the obstacle of migrants and minorities can be removed.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a critical analysis of British housing discourse, and has demonstrated the autochthonous nature of that discourse. After providing an overview of the context of housing in Britain in general, and the position of migrants within that discourse, my analysis of the three dislocations explored a number of aspects of contemporary British housing discourse and teased out its autochthonous characteristics. While all of the four logics of autochthony that I identified in Chapter 2—genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood—are present in British housing discourse, I separated these out for the sake of analytical clarity. In the first example of the Hodge Intervention I showed how the logic of entitlement was evident in the unqualified assumption that the insider ‘we’ have a legitimate and unconditional right to housing simply on the basis of being ‘us’. ‘Our’ entitlement is not up for discussion, and the focus is solely on the problematised entitlement of others. The second example illustrated the presence of the logic of victimhood in the aftermath of the Northern Riots through assertions of suffering in the wider community in the form of tensions, non-cohesion, economic deprivation and even terrorist bombings, all of which were linked to the problematised housing status of an unspecified minority community. My final example provided clear evidence of the logics of genus and impurity in the assertion that ethnic minorities don’t belong in the English village. Here, the English village represented the locus and embodiment of genus itself, while ethnic minorities are articulated as bringers of impurity.
As well as illustrating the presence of autochthonous logics, each of these examples showed the workings of the political logic of equivalence, which acted on the social antagonisms unleashed by the dislocations to create polarised pairs of identities between which the frontier between inside and outside, belonging and non-belonging could be installed. In the first case the equivalence separated out those marked as ‘economic migrants’ from ‘the indigenous’, while the second set of polarised identities divided ‘minority communities’ from the white majority. In the final example, ‘ethnic minorities’ were set against Englishness itself. The political practices which instigated the equivalences were shown to draw on the fantasmatic logics of fulfilled need, the harmonious community and the restitution of genus. In each case, the figure of the migrant/ethnic minority was articulated as the obstacle to the achievement of the Elysian promise of fullness-to-come.

Having thus provided evidence to support my claim that British housing discourse can be understood as an autochthonous discourse, two further points remain to be made. These pertain to the wider aims of this chapter and my overarching research question. One point concerns the failure of each strand of the discourse as evidence of the impossibility of fixing the border between inside and outside. The second point touches on the ‘non-necessity’ of the use of migrants/minorities as the fantasmatic obstacle and the source of failure in the housing discourse, since in each case other ‘Others’ were available. I will deal with these points in order.

The examples analysed in this chapter demonstrate the impossibility of achieving the fixed demarcation between inside and outside which drives autochthonous discourse. Fixity is required in order to enact the full exclusion of those identified as problematic others and thereby to remove the obstacle to the manifestation of the Elysian promise of the harmonious, prosperous and fulfilled community and the restitution of genus. This failure is not the result of lack of trying. As the development of the discourse which emerged from the Northern Riots amply shows, repeated opportunities were seized to try to finalise the distinction between problematic self-segregating minorities and the majority community, either through integration and thus dissipation of otherness, or through measures to prevent those others from arriving. Yet each time the discourse is rearticulated, the figure of the outsider must be reshaped to fit the new context. This, I suggest, gives evidence of the impossibility of finalising a division between inside and outside, which has implications far beyond British housing discourse. The fact that the discourse can
only be maintained by changing the identity of the outsider (and thus concomitantly changing the identity of the insider) indicates that the distinction between the two cannot be foundational, but rather must be the product of discourse. This means that the social is not comprised of two discrete spheres, as an inside-outside ontology asserts, but rather a single sphere which is divided up through the imposition of an inside-outside discourse. Inside and outside are thus shown to be discursive entities. This point will be expanded on in my concluding chapter.

The second, connected point is that the identification of migrants or minorities as the problematic outsiders in British housing discourse is non-necessary. This is evident from the contextual material on the state of housing (the housing crisis) in Britain which I presented in the earlier sections of the chapter. There I showed that there are many contributing factors which have caused the apparent shortage of housing, and a number of factors which led to the clustering of minorities in housing which comes to be interpreted as ‘self-segregation’. In consequence, there are other ‘Others’ who could equally well be blamed and thus constructed as the polarised Other. The use of the figure of the migrant here, and the linked assumption that migrants don’t belong, is thus not natural, but is rather the result of politics. That politics is shown to be motivated by an inside-outside ontology in which the border between the two categories is perceived as being contiguous with the border of the nation-state. The nation-state itself is idealised here as a throwback to the days before migration, in which every town and village represented the harmonious and prosperous English village portrayed in Midsomer Murders.

These points are returned to in the concluding chapter. First, however, Chapter 5 will present findings from my empirical fieldwork with the Kurdish and Turkish community in London. In the chapter I will illustrate the alternative communities of belonging which make sense of the lives of my interview participants, and which obviate the need to distinguish between inside and outside in autochthonous terms. I will also draw attention to the effects of the discourse of autochthony on those who are construed as outsiders, which I describe as the fantasmatic dangers of autochthony discourse.
CHAPTER 5:
HOUSING AND BELONGING: A RESPONSE FROM THE MARGINS

In Chapter 4 I presented empirical evidence to show that the discourse of housing in Britain follows an autochthonous logic, and I demonstrated that migrants and BME communities are consequently positioned as ‘others’ whose presence is construed as the cause of lost harmony and of economic deprivation for the majority community. At the same time, the chapter demonstrated the impossibility of fixing the line of demarcation between migrants/ethnic minorities and the majority, and revealed the identification of migrants as outsiders (allochthons) to be non-necessary, as ‘other Others’ are available. These findings have already substantiated the tentative conclusions of Chapter 2 regarding the ultimate impossibility of fixing an autochthonous (inside-outside) boundary between belonging and non-belonging. The chapter findings also support the claim made in Chapter 1 that the figure of the migrant, which disrupts the inside-outside binary, offers a useful focal point for identifying discourses which draw on an inside-outside ontology.

Following from that, this chapter will present evidence from qualitative research undertaken in the Kurdish and Turkish community in North London. Glynos and Howarth insist that in order to identify and solidify logics as analytical categories it is necessary to ‘pass through the self-interpretations of the social actors involved in the regime and practices under investigation’ (Glynos and Howarth 2007:139). Bearing this stipulation in mind, my purpose in carrying out this fieldwork was to gauge the extent to which (if at all) the members of migrant and BME communities are ‘gripped’ by the discourse. Do they respond to it ideologically, in other words by accepting its logics, overlooking its contingent and thus its non-necessary character? Or is their response ethical, cognisant of the wide range of other possible configurations of social relations concealed by autochthony’s fantasmatic logics?

The chapter begins by contextualising the Kurdish and Turkish community in its North London setting and providing further detail on the respondents who participated in my interviews. Three further sections are organised as follows. In the first section I will show how the research participants’ interview responses reflected or contradicted the logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood. The second section will tease out aspects of the interviews which illustrate the contestation of an autochthonous discourse of belonging and the availability of
‘other communities of belonging’. The final section will advance the claim that in spite of the apparent space for contestation of the discourse, a number of fantasmatic dangers emanate from both the autochthonous discourse itself and the inside-outside framework on which it depends, and this of course has critical relevance for conventional IR and its inside-outside framework. The chapter will conclude by restating the links between the fieldwork findings and my wider research questions.

THE KURDISH AND TURKISH PRESENCE IN LONDON

In Chapter 3 I provided an outline of the Kurdish and Turkish community and discussed the complexities of defining where the community starts and ends. In this section I will present further information to contextualise the community before proceeding to the analysis of my fieldwork.

In common with many of Britain’s other BME communities, London is the focal point of the Kurdish and Turkish community. In the North London boroughs of Hackney and Haringey in particular, there are pockets in which the congregation of Kurdish and Turkish businesses—restaurants, supermarkets, cafes, hairdressers, community centres, lawyers, accountants, clothes shops, taxi firms and travel agents—are so tightly packed that it is easy to forget that you are in London at all. Yet despite this very tangible urban, commercial presence, and the existence of a community in London for more than fifty years, there is an absence of Turkish people in the imaginary of Britain’s BME communities. The historical account of the community describes three ‘waves’ of arrival in London (Enneli et al. 2005; King et al. 2008b; Küçükcan 2004; Mehmet Ali 2001). First, a number of Turkish Cypriots arrived from the 1940s onwards to find work and because of growing inter-communal conflict on the island. A second wave of migration, this time from mainland Turkey, is reported to have taken place in the 1970s and early 1980s as people fled a military coup and other oppressive practices. These new arrivals settled around the already established Cypriot community in North London and often worked in the businesses which their predecessors had established (often in the textile trade). A final wave was composed primarily of Kurds fleeing political and military violence in south-eastern Turkey as the Ankara government pursued the outlawed guerrilla group the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party), and these too settled around the same North London neighbourhoods. These three communities, Turkish
Cypriots, ethnic Turks and Kurds from mainland Turkey, make up the bulk of the Kurdish and Turkish community. However, other, smaller groups, such as the Turks of Western Thrace (Greece) and the Iraqi Turcoman community, are present and actively consider themselves to be a part of the Turkish community in London. In terms of the size of community and the range of purposes which people have for being in the UK, the claims vary wildly according to whom you ask. However, a recent Home Office gives the following data:

There are approximately 150,000 Turkish nationals in the UK at present, of a total of about 500,000 people of Turkish origin in the UK. Of the 178,000 Turkish nationals given leave to enter the UK in 2009, some 66,300 were returnees after temporary absence abroad, 64,700 were visitors, 28,300 were business visitors, 9,755 were tier 4 students plus dependents, 1,145 came for employment and 945 for family purposes. Turkish asylum applications dropped from 3,990 in 2000 to 185 in 2009. (Home Affairs Committee 2011:38)

Compared to, say, the Ugandan Asians, the Jamaicans who arrived on the Empire Windrush, or the Pakistani community, Turkish people occupy a much less obvious place in our inter-communal geography, and their ‘invisibility’ is noted in several studies (Ennelli, Madood et al. 2005, King, Thomson et al. 2008, Holgate, Pollert et al. 2009). One researcher suggests that ‘ethnically specific anti-Turkish or anti-Kurdish racist public discourses are barely articulated in Britain. Instead, this group is racialized by association with and representation as “Muslim”, “asylum seeker” or “refugee” ’ (Erel 2009:31). The community is sporadically noted by association in public discourse regarding the pending EU Accession of the Republic of Turkey. At these times, politicians worry about the number of new migrants who might choose to move to the UK to join those already settled in London, but interest in the community seems to wane as soon as the Accession issue recedes (see for example Home Affairs Committee 2011). Following rioting in London in 2011, the Turkish community found national—albeit short-lived—attention again for their bravery in facing down rioters to protect the shops and cafes in their neighbourhoods, with headlines such as ‘British society could learn a lot from the Turks of Dalston’ featuring widely in the press for a few days and then disappearing completely (West 2011). The Kurdish part of the community is arguably even less visible than its Turkish counterpart. This is in part because the earliest Kurdish settlers in London, who moved into a space already occupied by a Turkish community and Turkish businesses, often referred to themselves as Turkish too (D'Angelo 2008:12). However, the invisibility is also linked to the fact that
government statistics in Britain only record the country of origin of arrivals and not their ethnic group (Greater London Authority 2009:8).

In contrast to the national ‘invisibility’ of the Kurdish and Turkish population, within London the community is most often connected with two things: catering and criminality. With regard to the latter, occasional but spectacular crimes relating to drugs, guns and gangs, though condemned by most Kurds and Turks in London, have become difficult to disassociate from the public imaginary of ‘the Turkish community’ (Davenport and Millard 2009; Fresco 2006; Greater London Authority 2009). Less problematic is the community’s involvement in the catering trade. In the community strongholds a wide range of Kurdish and Turkish cafes, kebab shops and restaurants line the streets. For some younger members of the Kurdish and Turkish community, the catering tradition has become something of a curse, as many of them reluctantly follow their parents into the low-wage, long-hours employment on offer in the sector and once there find it hard to escape, with negative consequences for their independence and integration into a more diverse community (Ennelli et al. 2005:26; Holgate et al. 2009:6).

On the other hand, there is also a tendency towards an orientalising vision of Kurds and Turks as exotic Other. An example of this comes from a training session, run by specialist health and well-being organisation DERMAN, for mental health workers wanting to learn more about the mental health problems faced by Kurdish and Turkish youths. Following the training, participants were invited to leave feedback about the session. One participant complained that there should have been ‘[m]uch more information of the cultural style of Kurdish and Turkish clients’ and was disappointed that the information given seemed to overlap with information about other BME communities, adding that ‘cultural competency must include specific information on a specific culture’ (DERMAN 2006:32). In other words, the participant had expected to learn how culturally ‘different’ or alien young Kurds and Turks were, and was not satisfied with being told about their similarities to other communities.

There is, however, no singular profile of the Kurdish and Turkish community in London. While it doubtless shares many characteristics with other minority and majority communities, it is also rich in internal variation. Its members have arrived from multiple geographical locations. They have different ethnic identities and a range of religious affiliations. A third generation is in evidence, while new arrivals still
come. Several different immigration statuses are represented, from British citizen, EU national, overseas student, businessman, housewife, to refugee and asylum seeker. The variations in background, length of residence, status and income bracket must necessarily obstruct any reductionist account of the community.

During my fieldwork I met with people from a broad range of organisations and sections of the community (listed in Appendix A). The community as a whole was very welcoming and willing to engage with my research, and people gave generously of their time and knowledge. Most of my interviews were conducted on the premises of one of the many Kurdish and Turkish community centres in Hackney and Haringey. These community centres are an integral part of the lives of many Kurds and Turks in London. They provide a safe social space, news from Turkey (in the form of newspapers and satellite television broadcasts) as well as a comprehensive range of events and services, from support and advice on health and welfare issues, youth clubs, specialist drop-ins to language classes, supplementary school and cultural projects. In Chapter 3 I noted that despite internal schisms, there is a certain sense that all factions belong to and have shared interests with the wider London community of Kurds and Turks. Many of the community centres that I visited made a point of stressing that they were open to all sections of the community, though in practice they dealt predominantly with a single section. For example, Halkevi community centre describes itself as catering for ‘the Kurdish and Turkish Communities in Britain without distinction of sex, ethnicity, disability, religious or other opinions’, but the staff I spoke to there acknowledged that they worked overwhelmingly (though not exclusively) with Kurdish people (Halkevi n.d.).

Against this background, I carried out seven formal interviews with community members. My shortest interview lasted for around 30 minutes, with the longest taking around 1 hr 40 minutes. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. All of my interviewees were graduates, fluent in English. Deniz and Ayhan are Kurds in their 20s who had arrived in Britain as young children. Gül and Elif are Kurdish women, also in their 20s and also arrived in Britain as children. Özlem, a Kurdish woman in her 30s, arrived in Britain as an adult, and was working as an officer in one of the community centres that I visited. Murat is a first-

---

75 All names have been changed in agreement with the participants.
76 All four self-described as second generation, but had in fact arrived in the UK as children rather than being born here, which is referred to elsewhere as being ‘generation 1.5’ (e.g. Nagel 2002:284). This is noteworthy because geographical place of birth seemed to have some bearing on their understanding of identity, as we see below.
generation Turkish man, in his 30s, and Ipek is a first-generation Turkish woman in her 30s who was working as an officer for a statutory service provider. As described in Chapter 3, my interviews were semi-structured, and the conversation wandered from the script where this seemed appropriate. The topic of conversation for the interviews was the participant’s experience of housing in the UK, and whether they felt that housing practices worked to exclude people who it categorised as migrants.

To stimulate discussion respondents were shown a set of headlines about migrants in housing and asked to comment on them. I also enquired about their own experiences of finding housing and of belonging in the UK. Three of my interviewees still lived in the family home and thus were not housing tenants or owners in their own right, but all three had undertaken advocacy work for their own family and for other members of the community who were struggling with housing issues, and so they were able to refer to those experiences.

Having filled in this background information on the community, the following section presents material from the interviews to show how the participants located themselves in relation to the autochthonous logics of British housing discourse.

**RESPONDING TO THE DISCOURSE OF AUTOCHTHONY**

The two following subsections will attempt to show how members of a migrant community respond to a discourse which, as I have established in the preceding chapter, increasingly problematises migrant access to (and use of) housing on the basis of their perceived non-belonging. The first section will consider my participants’ reactions to the ideas of identity and community which are encapsulated in the logics of genus and impurity. This will deal with their reaction to the notion that only those who are ancestrally rooted can be conceived of as belonging, and the linked idea that the form of community described by the logic of genus is fixed and finite, and thus susceptible to the kind of corruption or pollution which informs the logic of impurity. The second section will deal with the slightly different question of autochthonous attitudes to resources, and I will demonstrate my participants’ responses to the idea that the presence of migrants in housing is necessarily to the detriment of the majority community. Both of these sections will illustrate the participants’ experience of the social practices of British housing discourse (in other words their daily experience of housing and the discursive practices which govern it,
such as contact with housing providers and landlords or neighbourhood experiences). The sections will also provide an insight into the participants’ interpretation of the political and fantasmatic logics of the discourse. My presentation of the logics framework in Chapter 3 noted that social actors can engage with a discourse either ideologically, in which case they can be said to be ‘gripped’ by the fantasmatic narrative and thus blind to its contingency, or they can engage with the fantasy ethically, in other words by recognising its contingent nature and being open to the range of contesting accounts of social relations. In the following paragraphs I will try to pick out the ideological and ethical aspects of my Kurdish and Turkish participant’s responses to the autochthonous logics.

**Gripped by the Logics of Genus and Impurity?**

This section focuses on my participants’ responses to the aspects of British housing discourse that I have called the logics of genus and impurity. The logic of genus was identified in Chapter 2 as the conception of the community as one of irreducible and essential difference in relation to all others, whose fixity reaches back through ancestral history and territorial rootedness. The logic of impurity was described as denoting the threat of corruption, loss or damage to that community as a result of the presence of outsiders. In Chapter 4, I argued that these logics are present in British housing discourse, and I supported my claim with the analytical example of a dislocation surrounding the TV series Midsomer Murders, in which ethnic minorities were declared to be out of place in the fictional English villages in its programmes. I will show in the following paragraphs that the response to these logics was ambiguous, and that while in some respects the logics had appeal, in others there was a clear rejection of the autochthonous interpretation of community and belonging.

To what extent are my participants gripped by the logics of genus and impurity? How do their self-identification and their own interpretation of community correspond to those logics? Do they count themselves as British, and if not, why not? In a recent essay, Parekh notes the difference between having British citizenship and being British (Parekh 2007:33). He asserts that to be British ‘is to say that Britain means something to one, that one’s membership of it is a significant element in one’s identity and says something important about oneself, that one is shaped by it, has some degree of attachment to it, and feels at home in it’ (ibid.). Hussain and

---

77 See p66, above.
Bagguley’s study of second-generation South Asians of Pakistani heritage provides evidence that supports Parekh’s thesis, though they draw the distinction in different terms, contrasting citizenship and nationality in place of Parekh’s Britishness and citizenship. The researchers found that amongst young British Asians there is a rejection of British ‘nationality’ as something which is suffused with whiteness, but on the other hand there is a strong claim to British’ citizenship’ as an identity. In other words those young people strongly regard themselves as British citizens but do not feel that the fit the white definition of being British nationals (Hussain and Bagguley 2005). Despite their reluctance to identify themselves as British, all except one of my interview participants seemed to enjoy this kind of ambiguous relationship with Britain. Their responses indicated a resistance to the concept of British nationality, and their responses suggest that the logic of genus is one which they largely share with the discourse of autochthony. On the other hand, as I will show below, they were less inclined to accept the need for ancestral rootedness in order to belong. They regarded themselves as either Kurdish or Turkish and rejected for themselves a British or English identity, which implied an understanding of these as ‘either/or’ options. For example, Murat, who had arrived from Turkey as an adult, has naturalised as a British citizen and is very committed to his life in Britain, stated that:

I’m proud to be part of this country, and I try to contribute as much as I can … but … I still think of myself belonging to … more Turkey than United Kingdom. (Murat)

The implication here is that he couldn’t fully embrace and English or British identity because of his attachment to Turkey. In other words, for Murat it isn’t possible to identify as belonging in both places. On the other hand, his children, who were born in London, will in his opinion be British by virtue of that fact. Like Murat, Ayhan was unable to call himself British, although for him that hadn’t always been the case. He recalled that as an adolescent:

I would say … I’m some Kurdish, some Turkish, and some English — or British, but after a certain age, about 18, 19, I reclaimed my Kurdish identity … so, I mean, today I describe myself as a Kurdish person. (Ayhan)

As a result of claiming his Kurdish identity, he was no longer able to feel British. As is the case for Murat, it seems that these identities are not mixable but rather need to be kept separate in order to make sense. Throughout his interview Ayhan returned to the idea of struggling with identity, and of having found a sense of belonging only
when he stopped trying to carry multiple identities and embraced a fully Kurdish identity. Another respondent, Elif, who had arrived as a child, showed a similar resistance to the idea of being British and emphasised her Kurdishness instead:

I always describe myself as Kurdish. So I wouldn’t say English, I wouldn’t say British – I do own a British passport but I still don’t say I’m British, because it doesn’t feel right. (Elif)

Deniz, likewise, explained that he always describes himself as British on monitoring forms, but he really considers himself to be Turkish. Although these participants were all fully integrated, in the sense that in addition to having British citizenship they spoke excellent English, had completed some or all of their education in the UK and had a good understanding of the British way of life, they could not count themselves as British. For these Kurdish and Turkish participants, Britishness is understood as more than formal citizenship, and here too as a category which was somehow in conflict with holding an identity of Kurdishness or Turkishness.

These responses seem to adopt the logic of genus in understanding the community of belonging as a discrete, historically fixed and finite entity that cannot just be adopted, and which is thus vulnerable to erosion under the influence of others. For these participants, though, the community of genus at risk is a Kurdish or Turkish one. On the other hand, while they did not claim Britishness for themselves, they made apparently conflicting claims about what Britishness meant, seeing it as an inclusive identity for others which contrasted with the ethnically exclusive idea of Englishness. One such example came from Murat, who qualified a statement about his British neighbours by telling me that:

While saying British, it … might be important to mention that not all of them are from white English background, but they are the people who call themselves British, they could be from Afro … African background or Jamaican background and so on. (Murat)

And though Britishness has the capacity to absorb an array of ancestral origins, Englishness in contrast was perceived to be a closed ethnic category, marked off from Britishness as the ‘white English’ (Murat) or ‘English-English’ (Ayhan). Gül spoke for many when she made the distinction:

I’m more integrated into British society than my parents are, … but then again I still know where my roots are, I still know where I come from. To an extent, I might be British, but I’m not really English or anything like that. (Gül)
These and other comments gathered during the fieldwork confirm the suggestion above that participants viewed ethnicities—both their own and Englishness—as something naturally given and thus fixed. You are either English or not, just as you are either Kurdish or not and Turkish or not; these are communities which cannot overlap. Ayhan’s attempts to embrace elements of Turkishness and Britishness alongside Kurdishness had left him confused, and his confusion was only resolved by abandoning all but one of those identities. On the other hand, Britishness was acknowledged as being slightly more flexible, although it was still mostly seen as something pertaining to other migrants but not themselves.

A second aspect of the logic of genus that appears to be accepted by the respondents, albeit in a qualified way, concerns the relationship between identity and soil. There was a clear acceptance that the place of birth is a major factor in identity, and that being born in Britain was a big factor in being British. Murat suggested that his children will probably regard themselves as British because they were born in London, and Deniz concurred:

_I say I’m Turkish because I was born in Turkey … but my children, or the children of my children, are going to be different, I mean they might consider themselves British – they would be, because they will be born here._ (Deniz)

Ayhan appears to take the logic further with reference to the ties between identity and soil. For him, the natural order is that people would live in their own countries wherever possible: ‘why would you want to leave your own country? … unless you had a problem there?’ In this statement, ‘people’ have ‘their own countries’; there is a clear correspondence between a people or nation and a particular piece of territory. While Ayhan stressed that this didn’t mean that nobody should be able to live in another country, he nonetheless implied that this is somehow ‘unnatural’. Other research, however, has found contrasting views on the links between place and identity. Ennneli et al.’s study of young Kurds and Turks in London found that as well the rejection of a British identity by those not born in the UK, ‘more than half of the young people who were born in Britain did not choose a British identity either’ (Ennneli et al. 2005). The authors ascribed this to the variety of ways in which Britishness is understood, and this resonates with Parelkh’s and Hussain and Bagguley’s contrasting of British citizenship and Britishness/nationality noted above.

A third strand of the interview responses which showed evidence of being gripped by the logic of genus concerned the assumption by some participants that
they were still classed as migrants, despite having been in the UK for many years. Gül, for example, came to the UK at the age of six and had lived in London for 21 years at the time of our interview. When we discussed how she placed herself, she stated that:

_I definitely accept that I am a migrant … I’m from a migrant community._ (Gül)

However, she insisted that this is not the most significant aspect of her identity, since she thinks of herself firstly as Kurdish and secondly as a woman. The significance of this ordering will be returned to below, when I come to discuss other (non-autochthonous) communities of belonging. Deniz, who grew up as one of only four or five Kurdish or Turkish families in a Northern city a long way from London, was less sure about how to place himself with regard to the category of migrant. During the interview he dismissed claims that ‘immigrants take our jobs’ by stating that:

_If we weren’t needed in this country as part of the … wider economic scheme … then we wouldn’t need to be here._ (Deniz)

In this statement he positions himself firmly inside the category of migrant. In contrast, however, in our continued discussion of the same topic he suggests that:

_If you, we—if they let them in, then they have to accept it, … you know …_ (Deniz)

The pronoun confusion which he displays here indicates a certain ambiguity or confusion about how he sees himself in relation to both the majority community and the category of migrant. Here, then, there seems to be some degree of adherence to the logic of genus. On the other hand, genus insists that for true belonging, rootedness in the soil must go back to time immemorial, while Deniz and Murat’s suggestions that the next generation will be able to claim Britishness because they will have been born in Britain seems to contravene that logic.

Another way in which the participants arguably subvert the logic of genus is in their claims of belonging to place in spite of a rejection of British identity. With the exception of Ayhan, they all declared a sense of belonging both to a wider multicultural community and specifically to London as a multicultural space. In this case, the neighbourhoods of Hackney and Haringey, which are the focal point of the Kurdish and Turkish community, are the site of belonging. Hackney and Haringey local authorities make much of their multicultural heritage, Hackney even more so than Haringey. The 2010 summary report of the Hackney Cohesion Review opens
with the statement that ‘Hackney’s richly diverse community—where people from different backgrounds are confident and respectful of one another—is one of the borough’s greatest strengths’ (London Borough of Hackney 2012:1). The borough’s draft Migrant Strategy further emphasises the apparent embrace of the rich diversity which migrants bring:

The Council and its partners in Team Hackney welcome migrants as an essential and valued part of Hackney’s population. For the future, they recognise that the migration process has great potential to strengthen our local economy and enhance community life. (Migration Work CIC 2011)

One local community officer with whom I spoke asserted that Hackney’s celebration of its BME communities was somewhat superficial, and that there was actually ‘not much space in the borough for migrants’ (Vedat). For my interview participants, however, the multicultural environment was a defining feature of London in general and of the London to which they have feelings of attachment and in which they feel at home, and thus it is pivotal for their sense of belonging to place. Ayhan describes how he felt at home on the estate where he grew up because he was surrounded by ‘people like us, both class-wise and nationality-wise—people who are not from here’.

Although as I showed above my participants rejected British identity for themselves, their sense of attachment to London seems to negate the idea that a person would have to be English or British in order to belong in Britain. Indeed, in the areas which comprise ‘London’ for these participants, Britishness and Englishness seem to be wholly irrelevant. The exceptionality of London in this respect is clearly recognised by my participants and is underlined by two participants’ comments regarding other parts of Britain. Gül emphasised that:

London, rather than the UK—London is my home. Because obviously there are parts in the UK which are kind of—they’re not really fond of ethnic minorities. (Gül)

In a similar vein, Ayhan associates people who come from ‘the North’ with racism towards Asians and Islamophobia. As well as the attachment to, and sense of belonging in, multicultural London, there is a strong identification with the local territory of the Kurdish and Turkish neighbourhoods of Hackney and Haringey. Elif summarised this best:

I feel at home because ... when I come down the road and where the Green Lanes is, ... I say hello to everyone, all the shopkeepers and restaurants I know and people who I stop by and speak to—well this is, you know, it feels comforting sometimes, to be somewhere where you can say yeah, this is where I’m from, people know me and I know them. (Elif)
The identification with North London and differentiation between this area and the rest of Britain was also noted by Ennelli et al. They describe meeting a Kurdish taxi driver who implied that, for him, the Kurdish and Turkish-dominated parts of North London couldn’t be considered to belong to Britain, and that he only felt himself to be in Britain when he travelled beyond those neighbourhoods (Ennelli et al. 2005:2).

It appears from the above that the participants’ understanding of community and identity overlaps partly but not wholly with the conception of these which informs the logic of genius. The same degree of ambiguity is found in the participants’ attitudes to the notion of impurity. While this wasn’t a topic that was explicitly discussed in any of the interviews, the responses are nonetheless telling. As noted above, their concern is predominantly related to the threat of impurity in their own Kurdish or Turkish community. The officers that I spoke to described a fear among their Kurdish and Turkish service users—especially strong amongst the first generation—of losing their culture or losing their children to an unknown culture. The issue of young Kurdish and Turkish boys getting involved in gangs and being in trouble with the police, which is a growing concern, was ascribed to the corrupt influence of Black youths in the area. Ipek told me that the families of these boys would invariably ‘blame the Black boys’. To prevent this kind of corrupting influence and to preserve their cultural identity, the parents of Kurdish and Turkish young people try to limit exposure to the majority community. Elif explained it like this:

> Coming to this country, it’s more difficult because you try to hold onto whatever identity or culture you have in this country because you were forbidden in your own country and now you’re in a different country. …, my parents generation, usually … slow down the process of … getting involved with English culture. (Elif)

In a similar vein, Dağdelen and Zeynep Karakılıç’s study of Turkish immigrants in London also revealed a fear of impurity which was particularly strong amongst the older members of the community. They describe how one community centre put on courses for the younger members of their community ‘as a measure against, as they define, “the destructive effect of British culture” on the young people’ (Dağdelen and Zeynep Karakılıç 2011:13). Likewise, Robins and Aksoy’s study of the Turkish Cypriot community found that a strong ‘anxiety’ about losing, or having already lost, culture prevailed (Robins and Aksoy 2001:691).

Though my participants may see the effect of British culture as corrupting Kurdish and Turkish culture and in this respect may be thought to reflect the logic of impurity, the notion that the presence of migrants and BME communities in Britain
might also constitute a threat to British culture was firmly rejected. Several respondents mentioned the positive impact of immigration, especially in London, as illustrated by Elif’s claim that:

*This country, especially in London, is London because of its immigrant population.*

(Elif)

In other words, there is an acknowledgement that the presence of others has had an impact, but this is to be understood to be a positive rather than a negative one. This point is explored further in the discussion on the logics of entitlement and victimhood below.

The responses above have shown that among these members of the Kurdish and Turkish community in London, attitudes to concepts which I have named as logics of genus and impurity cannot be easily categorised as being either an ideological or an ethical response, but rather seem to contain a mixture of both. Certain aspects of the logic of genus do thus appear to grip the participants, in particular the notion of (ethnic) community as a discrete entity. There is clear agreement that Englishness and Kurdishness are mutually exclusive; while Britishness is a more inclusive formulation it is still resisted by the respondents who implied that to accept Britishness as an identity would be to lose their own ethnic identity. The idea that identity relates to a community of belonging with fixed contours, which is consequently at risk of pollution or collapse through contact with otherness, also seems to be accepted as natural by my participants. However, while they construe birthplace as an important factor in someone’s identity, the requirement for territorial attachment to reach back through ancestry is rejected. Moreover, the sense of belonging is not attached to identity, so those who do not identify as British can still experience a sense of belonging in a British city. The evident ambiguities identified here suggest at the very least that the participants are not gripped by the discourse but rather contest at least some of its contingent configurations.

**Contesting the Logics of Entitlement and Victimhood?**

Having looked at my interview participants’ position in relation to the logics of genus and impurity in the preceding section, this section will explore their engagement with the practices linked with the logics of entitlement and victimhood. I will try to show the extent to which the participants responded either ideologically or ethically to the workings of these logics.
One of the dilemmas, touched upon by Deniz’ pronoun confusion in the previous section but more apparent here, related to being able to say decisively who should be categorised as autochthon and who counted as allochthon. The examples of autochthony discourse presented in Chapter 2 demonstrated the impossibility of finalising this distinction, and my analysis of British housing discourse in Chapter 4 underlined the point. Research has shown that it is not only members of BME communities who find it difficult to draw the line. The majority community likewise oscillates between including and excluding certain BME communities (particularly the more established ones) in their definition of ‘us’ when complaining about the favouritism of immigrants. Consequently ‘the ‘imagined communities’ that are the product of white British working-class people’s discussions also frequently and unproblematically include their black and Asian neighbours’ (Garner 2009:49). Ray et al’s study of discourses of belonging in multiethnic neighbourhoods likewise found a duality of positioning of the BME (Black Caribbean) community. Members of this community described themselves and were described by white residents as part of ‘us’ in comparison to the more recently arrived Somali community, but at other times they were positioned alongside the Somali community, on the other side of the line of belonging from the white community (Ray et al. 2008). Much has also been made of the fact that some BME individuals express as much (if not more) resistance to new immigration as members of the majority population. This was outlined in a 2011 report of research into attitudes towards immigration and race in Britain, which found that ‘39% of Asians and 34% of whites are in a hard anti-immigration camp’, and that ‘more Asians believe immigration has a greater detrimental effect upon [them] than White respondents’ (Lowles and Painter 2011:unpaginated).

In light of the apparent impossibility of making a clear differentiation, how might members of a migrant community understand and respond to the dominant articulations of entitlement and victimhood illustrated in Chapter 4? To elicit a response to this question I will focus here on the housing-related aspects of our interview discussions. With regard to their housing situation, the Kurdish and Turkish community presents once again a very mixed picture. Most of the newest arrivals, who are predominantly Kurdish, have arrived through the asylum system and as noted in Chapter 4 may have been eligible for either social housing or NASS accommodation when they first arrived. Many remain in social housing, though they may have moved on from the asylum system. A report published by IPPR in 2005 used Labour Force Survey statistics to estimate that 49% of people born in Turkey
and resident in the UK were likely to be in social housing, the second-highest figure for a BME community (after the Somali community), which it attributes to the fact that many of those from Turkey are likely to be refugees (Sriskandarajah et al. 2007:30). A 2009 report on the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot communities by the Greater London Authority uses figures from the 2001 census to calculate that nearly 59% of Kurdish households and 47% of Turkish households were living in social housing. According to the same report, around 15% of Kurdish and Turkish households were in private rented accommodation, while only 13% of Kurdish and 31% of Turkish households live in owner-occupied housing. These figures compare negatively with the general population, which has a lower percentage of rented accommodation and a higher percentage of owner-occupation (Greater London Authority 2009:39).

During my interviews I gave each participant a set of recent newspaper headlines which referred (both positively and negatively) to housing and migrants (see Appendix B). This led to discussions about whether being Turkish, Kurdish or simply a migrant affected a person’s ability to find a place to live or their right to social housing. A common reaction to the newspaper headlines was to reject out of hand their accuracy and fairness. Interestingly, while the headlines that I showed them juxtaposed positive and negative stories, a cursory reading meant that several of the participants judged the whole set on their expectations towards keywords such as ‘immigrants’ and ‘housing’. Only Deniz commented on the positive stories as providing a counter-narrative to the negative headlines. This may indicate a resigned expectation that news headlines about migrants and housing will inevitably be ‘anti-immigrant’ in perspective, though it may simply be a result of the limited time that I gave them to read the headlines.

Three participants brought up a ‘notorious’ recent news story that concerned a migrant couple with a large family who had been housed in an expensive property in London, to the outrage of both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers. Elif recalled the story like this:

> I did see a case about an Afghan woman that had - what, eight kids and she was living in a £2 million house in some posh area, and they made that into a big thing. (Elif)

No-one could remember the exact details, but it could have been the story about a Somali family that I discussed in Chapter 4, or a very similar story on an Ethiopian family (Hastings et al. 2010; Woodhouse 2011).
Like Elif, Gül recalled a similar story, and felt that it had been blown out of proportion, stating that they made that such a big, big, issue, as if she was the only one who's consuming all the UK’s money. As both Gül and Elif noted, such stories single out wholly unrepresentative, ‘exceptional’ migrant housing cases and completely ignore the standard, generally poor housing which most migrants inhabit. As such, they present a hugely distorted image of migrant housing to confirm a pre-established narrative of migrants consuming resources to which they are not rightly entitled, as if the subjects of the stories are single-handedly consuming all the UK’s resources, to rephrase Gül. The dominant discourse, as demonstrated by the secondary research responses included in Chapter 4, suggests that migrants are handed luxury houses the moment they arrive, with a direct impact on the majority. According to another research respondent, it is unfair that single mums should have to live in hostels while ‘foreigners are in nice cars and have big houses’ (Garner 2009:47). In fact, the mundane reality of the experience of housing amongst the Turks and Kurds from Turkey is much less newsworthy, as several participants point out. Living in overcrowded accommodation in less than ideal conditions was a childhood experience for Gül, Elif, and Ayhan as well as many other members of BME communities, as I noted in Chapter 479. This was especially exemplified by the housing situation of the Asian communities in the Northern Riot towns, who had taken sub-standard housing in need of extensive work because that was all they could afford and because discriminatory practices prevented them from accessing social housing or mortgage financing. So although the wider housing discourse portrays migrants as taking housing that isn’t rightfully theirs, the housing ‘used’ by migrants seems to be largely at the least desirable end of the spectrum.

There is popular belief that migrants come to the UK deliberately to take advantage of the social housing and other benefits systems (and thus to deprive the majority of their rightful entitlement), and this is increasingly reflected by senior politicians (Economist 2013; Cameron 2013; Wilson 2013). However, this belief is contradicted by the widespread ignorance about housing rights amongst many members of the community. Elif explained how her own family had been exploited by an unscrupulous landlord when they first arrived, a situation that had endured for two years because her parents were unaware that they had a right not to put up with such treatment. The experience motivated her and others from her generation to do voluntary work in her community:

79 See p127 above.
This is why we like to work in here as well: they don’t know their rights, or how to go about going and doing stuff. Landlords, these days, especially independent landlords that work with councils, they do take the piss. (Elif)

Other people that I spoke to had similar stories of the appalling housing problems faced by the people that they advocate for, who have not realised that those conditions are not ‘normal’ in Britain or have not had the support to ask for improvements or repairs. Ipek, a support worker on a housing estate with a large number of Kurdish and Turkish residents, explained that:

The first year I started working here, I had people who were living in damp houses, for five years, their children would have asthma and they would have all sorts of health problems, but because they couldn’t communicate with anyone, they just didn’t do anything about it (Ipek).

Özlem, a community advocate working in one of the community centres, corroborated Ipek’s description of people living in poor conditions. She had encountered hostility in her advocacy dealings with some housing providers, which she attributed to the fact that the large number of calls made by or on behalf of migrant families (because they were often in poor housing and let problems build up due to lack of language fluency) might give the impression that there were excessive numbers of migrants occupying social housing. However, most respondents insisted that members of their community only stay in social housing until they are able to move on to buy their own houses. Ipek told me that a number of her service users had qualified for the right to buy their council properties and had done so. Ayhan’s parents had moved on and out of London into their own house. Robins and Aksoy also found that Turkish Cypriots, the most established members of the community and the ones who have had the longest to develop their financial interests, have progressively moved out from the inner-city areas where the community began (Robins and Aksoy 2001:690). However, Ipek was concerned by the small number of young Kurds and Turks on the estate where she worked who had completed a university education but were applying for social housing in order to live near their parents. Her criticism of their behaviour, however, was not related to the fact that they are migrants. Rather, she felt that as graduates they should have been making a greater attempt to find work and get private housing of some kind instead of relying on public provision, with the implication that this is what graduates of any community background should do. Read in this way, Ipek’s comments underline the commonalities between migrant and majority communities.
Did my participants feel that the majority community suffered as a result of the migrant presence, as the logic of victimhood suggests? There was a limited amount of support for this logic. Murat explained that despite his own status as a migrant:

*Sometimes I feel sorry for [the] British government, and I feel sorry for the British locals … because of the immigrants to this country, they don’t respect the values they have here in this country, those values that they don’t have in their own home countries, like jumping – just jumping the queue and so on.* (Murat)

Despite his sympathy, however, Murat insisted that this is not representative of all migrants. Similarly, Ayhan had some sympathy for the autochthonous fear of cultural and identity loss under the influence of outsiders, as this statement makes clear:

*I do understand certain things about what is going on—not from a racist or a nationalist point of view but, about how they might want to ... control, or … be in charge of their own identity or formation of their own identity, or their own culture* (Ayhan)

This statement seems to echo the ideas of loss and corruption which were evoked by the Midsomer Murders dislocation, and it implies a degree of acceptance of the autochthonous narrative that because of the presence of migrants, British culture is suffering. Here, too, however, the understanding was limited, and Ayhan emphasised that British history, and colonialism in particular in his opinion, meant that it was impossible to contemplate Britishness as something fixed and limited to the interior of the nation-state. But others insisted that migrants did what they could, given their circumstances, and would repay the favours once established. During my conversation with Deniz, he made the link between the housing headlines and similar headlines claiming that migrants take British jobs. As Deniz stressed:

*When it comes to the ‘ob immigrants, coming here taking our jobs’, … my father says that, he pays his taxes, I mean he works, he pays his taxes, so - obviously at the start when he first came to this country he did benefit from the benefits system, which he was fortunate to be granted. And now I can say he’s a tax-contributing law-abiding citizen.* (Deniz)

Deniz’ assertion suggests a reading of access to housing as a type of temporary investment. In other words, while the family may initially have used state resources, they are now contributing back into the system. In addition, they have become citizens, and as such are equally eligible for state support as other citizens. Further to this, several participants argued that on the whole, the presence of migrants in the UK came about in response to a need for labour, and that if they weren’t needed
then they wouldn’t be here. They did not feel that the refugee background of certain parts of the Turkish and Kurdish communities in particular contradicted that. The theme of contributions to the wider community made by migrants came up several times. Murat stressed this when he told me that:

I’ve got so many friends who are working in really senior positions at universities, at finance sector, in health sector. I believe they’re doing their best to contribute to this country—not only from Turkey, from all other countries. (Murat)

Murat and others suggested from first-hand experience that immigrants put as much into the country as they take out. Empirical research has been used to argue both sides of the debate on the ratio between migrant contributions and receipts (see for example Trades Union Congress 2007). However, financial contributions aren’t the only kind of contributions made by migrant communities. Murat also highlighted the positive role played by Turkish Muslims as a moderating factor in relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in the UK, especially in the wake of the 7/7 bombings in 2005. In his opinion, members of his community played ‘a positive role in making peace between the Muslims and British because you don’t observe far [extremist] Islamic groups in Turkey, in Turkish society’. These contributions are seen to go some way towards offsetting the reliance on welfare benefits of some members of the community. A few community centres are actively involved in labour movements in London and make political contributions by standing alongside workers and others at the bottom of the economic ladder in their struggles for better conditions. The Turkish/Kurdish community centre DAY-MER, for example, has been an active supporter of strikes for workers’ rights, as well as joining local and national campaigns against cuts to welfare, education and health services, and another community organisation GIK-DER, which describes itself as a refugee workers’ cultural association, has taken similar actions (DAY-MER n.d.; GIK-DER Refugee Workers Cultural Association n.d.). Other researchers document a similar attitude held by Turkish migrants towards the welfare state system in the UK and their right to receive a share of its resources. They report that:

The immigrants in general have two major and opposing perceptions about the social state in UK. The first group ... think that they gain these benefits for their work in harsh conditions in the jobs which a non-immigrant British does not want to work. ... The second group of the immigrants see these benefits as a kind of trap that British state utilizes to keep the immigrants in Britain as cheap labor. They say that even if they receive benefits, they cannot make money to change their way of life in Britain or return to Turkey (Dağdelen and Zeynep Karakılıç 2011:14-15).
In other words, both groups view their benefits as earned, in either a positive or a negative sense. This is not to say that there isn’t recognition of dependence on social housing and welfare benefits amongst some Turks and Kurds from Turkey. Several of my interview participants acknowledged that certain parts of the communities relied on benefits, though on the whole this was seen to be the newer arrivals, many of whom didn’t have permission to work, or first-generation women, who either spoke insufficient English to support themselves through work or were culturally expected to stay at home.

In light of the responses described above, to what extent can it be said that the participants engage either ideologically or ethically with the logics of entitlement and victimhood? I suggest that there is a much clearer contestation of these logics than was the case for the logics of genus and impurity. There was a shared feeling that migrants make a range of contributions to Britain, in terms of enriching it culturally as well as through more direct contributions as workers and as taxpayers. As contributors, they should therefore also be able to make resource claims where these were needed. With regard to the notion of victimhood, this was heartily rejected with reference to the very poor state of the housing which many migrants, including some of the participants, endured, and with further reference to migrant contributions. In other words, the connection between resource entitlement and ancestral rootedness is rejected, and the possibility of alternative logics, which might be understood as logic of need or of contribution, is envisaged. Consequently, it can be concluded that the participants show an ethical engagement with the discourse, and recognition of the contingency of the dominant discourse of autochthony.

**ARTICULATING OTHER COMMUNITIES OF BELONGING**

The sections above demonstrate that to a degree, my Kurdish and Turkish participants respond ideologically to the autochthonous logics of British housing discourse. They seem to accept the idea, expressed by the logic of genus, of community as something discrete, fixed and finite, and as such vulnerable to corruption in the presence of outsiders who bring impurity. Neither Englishness nor Britishness seem to be compatible with a Kurdish or Turkish identity, with Englishness (distinguished from Britishness as ‘white English’ or ‘English-English’) particularly understood as a fixed identity. However, while birthplace was understood
as a key factor in defining identity, the autochthonous condition of ancestral rootedness was contested, as shown by the acceptance that the children of Turks and Kurds born in Britain would be British. In contrast to this tentatively ideological response to genus and impurity, participants displayed a more distinctly ethical response to the logics of entitlement and victimhood, contesting both the idea that entitlement must be based on ancestrally rooted belonging, and victimhood’s portrayal of the migrant-outsider impact on the community of belonging as inevitably negative. The articulation of alternative relations of resource entitlement, including that of the logic of contributions, demonstrates that participants were aware of the contingent nature of autochthonous discourse.

Chapter 4 emphasised the non-necessary articulation of migrants and BME communities as the obstacle to the realisation of the Elysian fantasy, and showed that in each case the dislocation could have been followed by antagonisms which polarised different sets of identities, which I described as ‘other Others’. Expanding on the ideas of non-necessity and alternative configurations, in this section I will show how the fieldwork draws attention to ‘other communities of belonging’ which give meaning to the lives of my participants. I will use these alternative articulations to argue that autochthony’s fixation on the link between blood and soil reduces lives to a single dimension and fails to capture the multidimensionality of lived experience.

The failures of autochthony, and the multiplicity of alternative communities of belonging which are articulated through the fieldwork, are important not just for the case study but also for the critique of an ontological framework based on an inside-outside binary. Here, then, I want to begin to draw out the connections between my analysis of an autochthonous discourse and the implications of this analysis for conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology and the silence on belonging which it generates, which will occupy the remaining sections of the thesis. I will do this by aligning my observations regarding those alternative communities of belonging with the ontological assumptions of the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion I identified as foundational to conventional IR discourse in Chapter 1.\(^{80}\)

The first set of alternative articulations problematises the correspondence between community of belonging and the nation-state. Of particular concern here is the simplistic conflation of nation with state, which suggests that the inside of the

\(^{80}\) See p26, above.
state comprises a single, homogeneous unit of nation to which all people inside the

state belong. Alternative articulations are most evident in the case of my Kurdish

participants. Here, their emphatic identification with the Kurdish nation as a

significant community of belonging counters a highly troubled relationship with

Turkey, the nation-state to which the discourse of autochthony assigns them. The

forceful suppression of Kurdish identity by the Turkish state, as ‘something which was

taken away’ (Ayhan), leads to a rejection of Turkishness as a national identity and as a

political entity, yet that doesn’t produce a rejection of Turkey as a territorial

homeland. Demir’s insightful paper on the relationship between London-based

Kurds and Turkey describes the dualistic nature of this relationship in terms of

battling and ‘memleket’ (homeland), in which ‘battling’ describes the ongoing nature

of the political dispute between Kurds and the Turkish state and ‘memleket’

summarises the intimate ties to parts of the geographical state of Turkey which

Kurds retain in diaspora (Demir 2012:816). In this case, the conflated nation-state

brings little meaning to the understanding of Kurdish identity, which cannot be

neatly boxed into Turkey or any other state.

A similar complexity is involved in the Turkish Cypriot relation to a nation-

state community of belonging. Robins and Aksoy found that for this community the

nation-state is likewise a meaningless concept, since Turkish-Cypriot culture and

identity has formed through its relationship with the three reference points of Britain

(both as colonial overlord and as the present context of the community), Cyprus

(itself fractured between its Turkish and Greek parts and the impossibility of a united

Cypriot identity) and Turkey. To make sense of Turkish Cypriot identity, they

conclude, expectations of conformity to the ‘standard model of a national

community’ must be removed, and a transnational frame developed instead (Robins

and Aksoy 2001:686). Within the comparatively small Kurdish and Turkish

community of London, then, there is plentiful evidence to show that the

differentiation between nation and state is critical to identification with a community

of belonging, as Elif indicated when she described herself as being ‘from Turkey but

Kurdish’.

The second type of alternative community of belonging articulated by the

interview participants insists of the possibility of transnational belonging which

contests inside-outside’s assumption of a domestic-international dichotomy. For my

Kurdish participants this was especially strong, and it was compounded by the extent

to which the Kurdish homeland already spreads across four ‘domestic’ territories of
Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, which is only increased when the diaspora community is taken into account. Here too, the idea that nation as community of belonging can be defined in relation to a single state is shown to be impossible. Ayhan, who was arguably the most heavily involved in Kurdish politics of my participants, stressed that the Kurdish movement, which includes all those working for an independent Kurdish state whether in Turkey or abroad, means that politically motivated Kurds share an identity which ‘is quite similar regardless of their geographical placement’. He also acknowledged that this identity and community ‘is bigger now, than any other single aspect of my identity’. In other words, the community with which he (and many other politically active Kurds) most closely identifies is one which transcends the boundaries of a domestic-international dichotomy. Identification with a transnational community of belonging is also shared by some other groups within the London community. For example, though I was unable to arrange formal interviews with either the Turks of Western Thrace (Greece) or Turkish Cypriots, in the informal meetings which I had with representatives of these communities there was an extremely strong claim to belonging as part of the community of ethnic Turks centred on the Republic of Turkey. Here again, the domestic-international dichotomy is powerless to describe the communities which made sense of these people’s lives.

Another alternative articulation of the community of belonging defies inside-outside’s notion of the territorial dimension of belonging to community. As my participants (with the exception of Ayhan) made very clear, they felt a strong territorial sense of belonging in London, and specifically to the Kurdish and Turkish neighbourhoods of North London. At the same time, there was an open recognition that territory here was limited to the city and did not extend to other parts of British territory. A similar attachment to a territorially expressed community of belonging can be understood in the limitations of the Kurdish attachment to the Kurdish regions of Turkey and not the entirety of the territory of the Turkish state, as alluded to above. Arguably of equal importance, however, is the territorially localised sense of community of belonging which many first-generation Kurds and Turks have brought with them to London. Many of the cafes in Hackney and Haringey are named after the towns from which their owners came, and the ties of the village or town of origin remain strong even when removed from the original setting. Erdemir and Vasta describe how in one such café, the ‘co-villagers’ have practically recreated the village atmosphere in the middle of London, having even set up the institution of the traditional village leader and the use of a community noticeboard which relays
news from the village back in Turkey (Erdemir and Vasta 2007:19). Dağdelen and Zeynep Karakılıç also describe how the women from one specific village in Turkey don’t even associate with Turkish women who have ties to different villages in Turkey, whom they consider to be as foreign to them as English women (Dağdelen and Zeynep Karakılıç 2011:11). These articulations of the territorial dimensions of the community of belonging contest autochthony’s treatment of the territorial basis for belonging as defined by the territorial dimensions of the nation-state.

The fourth way in which the articulation of community of belonging expressed in my fieldwork confounds that of the autochthonous articulation of belonging concerns the possibility of multiplicity. By this I mean that, rather than reducing community to the singular and exclusionary nation-state community, as autochthony does, my participants emphasised the multiplicity of communities to which they belong, and the possibility of holding conflicting identities at the same time. To begin with, whilst there was a clear rejection of the possibility of being British at the same time as being Kurdish or Turkish, this didn’t prevent most participants from expressing some level of belonging to what might be construed as a civil notion of Britishness. This can be related to the discussion above regarding observations by Parekh and by Hussain and Bagguley regarding the discrepancy between Britishness and being a British citizen/national. My interviews suggested a degree of confusion for the participants themselves as to how they should make sense of these conflicting belongings. As an example, Murat emphasised that he was ‘very proud to be a part of this country’, but that he nonetheless described himself as ‘belonging to … more Turkey than United Kingdom’.

At the same time, it was very clear that nation- or state-based identities are only one kind of community to which my participants belong, and that the participants have attachments to multiple communities of belonging which have equal significance in their lives. Earlier in this chapter I noted that although Gül accepted the idea that she could be identified as a migrant, this was not the defining feature of her self-identification. She regarded herself rather ‘as a Kurdish female — that’s the only way I would describe myself’. Thus her gender informed her sense of belonging just as strongly as her ethnic/national identity. This hints at the existence of multiple, overlapping identities, a point which resonated strongly with other participants. Both Elif and Özlem were actively involved in feminist groups within the Kurdish community, and these constituted an important structure for their self-identification. Murat clearly placed considerable importance on being part of a
community of professionals, while Ayhan was part of a creative community as well as being heavily involved in Kurdish political activism. None of my participants stated a strong involvement in a religious community, but for the members of the Kurdish Alevi community to whom I spoke informally, their belonging to the Alevi community was equally as important as their belonging to the Kurdish community. Furthermore, Küçükcan claims that the Muslim faith is a significant aspect of the collective identity of the Turkish community in London (Küçükcan 2004:250). All of these examples contest both autochthony’s emphasis on the nation-state as the primary community of belonging and the idea of exclusionary belonging which accompanies that.

The final way in which the fieldwork demonstrates attachment to communities of belonging which go beyond the autochthonous articulation relates to the autochthonous notion of fixity, here largely in the chronological sense. Three of my participants described having changed their feelings of belonging over time. Ayhan’s adolescent feelings of attachment to Kurdish, Turkish and British communities of belonging changed when he reached his late teens, when he ‘reclaimed’ his Kurdish identity. Despite the fact that all of the participants argued that their own identity was fixed—they were either Turkish or Kurdish, and could not regard themselves as British—there was an acceptance that change would occur between generations. Elif insisted that her nephew, who was born in London, was primarily Kurdish, however both Murat and Deniz implied that the next generation would be British as a result of being born on British territory.

There was also a sense that whole communities could change their status of belonging. Several of my Kurdish participants suggested that their (Kurdish) community was too recent to be considered as settled, and Gül pointed out that ‘my community has only been here for 20/25 years—we’re one of the recent ones’. On the other hand, there was an understanding that with time, the community might claim full belonging. Deniz was certain that the next generation would be more integrated than his (1.5) generation. What also needs to be taken into account here, however, is that BME communities themselves are not fixed entities. One of the examples given above in this chapter suggested that certain groups of long-established ethnic minorities, for example Black Caribbeans, can be accepted by the majority community in Britain as part of ‘us’, in contrast to more recent groups of arrivals such as Somalis. But that assumes that the communities themselves are static. As the Kurdish and Turkish community in London demonstrates, this is not necessarily the
case. Its earliest members settled in Britain in the 1940s, while others are still arriving today. It seems reasonable to assume that the members of communities such as these will have a range of perceptions of belonging, both inside the Kurdish and/or Turkish community itself, and within the wider community in Britain, but that these are equally all subject to change.

The preceding paragraphs have advanced the claim that the lives of my interview participants demonstrate the many ways in which the discourse of autochthony fails to account for the multidimensionality of their lives with its unidimensional reduction of belonging to a bloodline in the soil. Their articulation of alternative communities of belonging which have an equal, if not greater, role in structuring and giving meaning to their lives once again emphasises the limits of an autochthonous discourse of belonging, and beyond that the limits of its inside-outside ontology. By examining the everyday lives of a migrant community in London and the responses of some community members to the autochthonous discourse of British housing, I have demonstrated the existence of communities of belonging which go beyond the assumptions of the nation-state, domestic-international dichotomy, territory, exclusion and fixity which structure autochthony’s account of belonging. Consequently, the fieldwork has shown the impossibility of containing belonging, or the community of belonging, inside any of these dimensions. Having already established autochthony to be a credible approximation of conventional IR’s implicit discourse of belonging, these fieldwork findings can be seen to have relevance for that discourse and its inside-outside ontology as well. The following and final section of this chapter uses the fieldwork insights to reflect on why it matters that conventional IR’s discourse of belonging might resemble that of the autochthonous discourse.

**THE FANTASMATIC DANGERS OF AN INSIDE-OUTSIDE ONTOLOGY**

If, as I have claimed above, an engagement with a marginalised community demonstrates that despite its seductive appeal the discourse of autochthony ultimately fails to capture and to delimit lived lives, then why does it matter? The answer to this has to be that regardless of the success or failure of the discourse and its inside-outside ontology, it has enormous destructive potential. Although my participants and the community around them may contest at least some of the overt claims of the autochthonous housing discourse, they are nonetheless precariously
positioned at its margins and thus easily construed as outsiders. This can have a profound effect on their everyday lives which even in failure creates resentment and exclusion: attempts to enforce an autochthonous reading of resource rights inflict misery on many and seem to result in little benefit for the majority. The discourse works by blaming migrants, who are often the most vulnerable members of society and the least able to answer back, for perceived failures which might be better attributed to internal causes. However, this blaming can only be achieved through the misremembering of the past, which also has implications for migrants, and it reduces human life to the dimensions of blood and soil, as if nothing else matters. Finally, autochthonous discourse works by setting up conditions of belonging which threaten to exclude migrants in perpetuity, since a person’s ancestry and the territorial location of those ancestors lie in the past and thus can never be changed.

I will tackle these in order. As the fieldwork shows, autochthonous housing discourse preys on the most vulnerable members of society, among them those who have come to Britain as asylum seekers ‘from a very bad background, and they’re fleeing persecution’, as Elif points out. The housing they end up in is often in bad repair, often on very deprived estates with ‘high unemployment, high crime rate, gangs, and … things like prostitution, drugs, right on the main road’, as Gül described the estate where she and her family had lived in temporary accommodation for 9 years. In fact the location in deprived neighbourhoods is not unique to asylum seekers but also affects many migrant communities, as my discussion of the Northern Riots in Chapter 4 indicated. Many of these people face daily uncertainty about their legal status. They are in limbo, ‘still waiting … for the answer from Home Office – some of them can’t still work – well most of them can’t still work, they are still waiting for the answers, they are in court [fighting their asylum cases]’, as Özlem described the service users in the centre where she gives advocacy support. As I argued in Chapter 4, asylum seekers are easy targets for journalists wanting to sensationalise a story, given that the press have already turned the term ‘asylum seeker’ into a term of abuse, and the public seem willing to believe any story about them81. Such migrants are an easy target for those pursuing claims of autochthony. They constitute a fantasmatic obstacle which appears to be easily removable by simply closing the borders and making the asylum system and similar routes of entry all but impossible to access. While a small section of the majority community responds ethically to the fantasmatic narrative of this discourse, for most, asylum seekers and other needy migrants present an ‘obvious’ explanation of social

---

81 See p138, above.
relations and the housing crisis. Asylum seekers and many other insecure migrant categories cannot refute the autochthonous accusations of unfairly using resources, since they have no political power and their vulnerability means that few of them want to attract attention to themselves, preferring to endure poor conditions rather than risk attack.

In addition, the perpetual shift in the line of demarcation between belonging and non-belonging, which I demonstrated in my analysis of the discourse which emerged from the Northern Riots, puts pressure on the more established BME communities to distance themselves from the new arrivals by forgetting the struggles and discrimination of their own recent migratory history. They differentiate themselves from the new migrants by calling for a halt to immigration and for tougher conditions on resource rights, as shown by the research mentioned earlier in the chapter, which found that more Asians that whites described themselves as strongly opposed to further immigration (Lowles and Painter 2011). Thus the solidarity which might have existed between those who have shared the experience of marginalisation is destroyed, as groups compete to disassociate themselves from the new unfortunates. Other potential allies are also separated by the discourse as it pits the working-class against ‘scrounging’ immigrants despite the amount that the two groups have in common. As Garner correctly notes,

[W]ere a space to be created in which the white British working class, migrants and BME people could tell each other their stories of being refused housing, being obliged to live in sub-standard conditions (while paying a premium), and of asylum-seekers placed en masse in motels and in unwanted properties on estates (or even in detention centres!), our white respondents would probably find much more in common with these groups than they imagine. (Garner 2009:50)

The second aspect of autochthony’s destructive potential is the way in which it reduces human life to the two dimensions of blood and soil. These are the only aspects of life which are deemed to be meaningful and to credit a person as part of the community, the discourse claims. Any other kind of contribution—being a taxpayer, like Deniz’ father, contributing to the intellectual and professional life of the community, like Murat and his friends, showing solidarity with the struggles of the working class, as DAY-MER members do, working to advocate for the most needy members of the community, as Gül and Elif do, standing up for the rights of all women, as Özlem does, or participating in the cultural life of the community, as Ayhan does—counts for nothing according to the logic of autochthony unless the contributor has the right ancestry and territorial connections. Ties to neighbourhood,
to the multicultural community, to the wider society are likewise worthless to those pursuing claims of autochthony if not accompanied by bloodlines rooted deep into the soil. Good deeds by migrants and even by members of BME communities are accepted in spite of the deed-doer’s provenance, not regardless of it, as was demonstrated by media reactions to the defensive deeds of Kurds and Turks during the 2011 riots which spread across London and several other cities in the UK. As gangs of rioting youths attacked Hackney, groups of Kurdish and Turkish shopkeepers and restaurateurs stood together to protect their livelihoods and were credited with deterring the rioters from the neighbourhood, thereby also protecting majority community residents from harm. For this they earned grudging respect from many journalists, though others still managed to turn their acknowledgment into a critique by emphasising the threatening aspect of the community’s self-protection, as did the Daily Telegraph’s headline of ‘London riots: the knives are being sharpened’ (Archer 2011). One tweet beautifully captured the irony of those who normally complained about immigrants having to show gratitude to these men:

Turkish and Asian groups have stood up to & chased off rioters. Bloody immigrants. Coming over here, defending our boroughs and communities. (SallyCan’tDance 2011)

Finally, by misremembering history, and concealing the migratory and heterogeneous past that has haunted every community since the Athenians first coined the concept of autochthony, the autochthonous discourse of housing can project the notion of a community of genus which is jeopardised by the presence of others and whose members are suffering because of the presence of others. By insisting on genus—and its derivation from ancestral ties to territory which accompanies it—the logic of autochthonous discourse sets an impossible hurdle for migrants who might want to become accepted by (and as part of) the majority. In my analysis of the Northern Riots I made the point that the very insistence that BME communities must integrate works to erase any degree of integration that they might already have achieved by putting them once more outside the line of belonging. As one interviewee stated in Robins and Aksoy’s study of London’s Turkish Cypriot community, it ‘doesn’t matter how much your ways are close to the English ways, at a certain stage, by someone, you are reminded that you are not English’ (Robins and Aksoy 2001:693). Elif put it more simply: you’re ‘always another immigrant family’.
CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the findings of fieldwork with the Kurdish and Turkish community in London, in which I used the figure of the migrant once again to problematise the autochthonous logics of British housing discourse. In the chapter I have demonstrated that the response of this community to that discourse cannot be described as either fully ideological or fully ethical, but rather its logics elicited conflicting responses. While there was a limited acceptance of the logics of genus and purity, the logics of entitlement and victimhood were almost universally rejected. With regard to the former, the notion of (ethnic) community (Kurdishness, Turkishness and Englishness) was articulated as a discrete and fixed entity, which was thus vulnerable to corruption and impurity under the presence and influence of others. On the other hand, while territorial birthplace had a strong influence over identity, the idea that territorial attachment should stretch back across generations in order to count was rejected. In addition, the sense of belonging was not attached to ethnic/national identity, so those who do not identify as British can still experience a sense of belonging in Britain. In response to the logics of entitlement and victimhood, participants suggested that migrant contributions cancel out any negative effect that their use of resources might have on the majority community, and that such resources were effectively earned. Overall, the participants demonstrated a predominantly, but not wholly, ethical engagement with the autochthonous discourse of housing. Their rejection of most aspects of the autochthonous logics reveals its inadequacy as a means of making sense of their social realities.

As well as revealing the contingency of the housing discourse, I have identified a number of alternative configurations of the community of belonging which emerged in the fieldwork. I have shown that these alternative articulations dismantle the ontological assumptions which structure conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology. Thus, the assumption of the nation-state is undermined by the evidence of meaningful communities of belonging which break the link between nation and state, and the assumed domestic-international dichotomy is refuted by my participants’ attachment to communities which transcend the divide between the two. Attachments to territorially defined communities of belonging that ignored the territorial scale of the nation-state defied inside-outside’s conception of territory, while evidence of simultaneous attachment to multiple communities and the potential for individual attachments and the contours of community to change dismissed assumptions of the fixed and exclusive community.
In the final section of the chapter I have drawn on the fieldwork findings to reflect on the dangers of an autochthonous discourse and the inside-outside ontology. The fact that the members of the Kurdish and Turkish community to whom I spoke could see the contingency of the discourse and the impossibility of framing belonging inside the ‘inside’ sphere of its inside-outside framing of the social doesn’t negate its pernicious effect on their lives. The majority community appears to be gripped by autochthony’s fantasmatic logics, as Chapter 4 made clear. Consequently, British housing practices are oriented towards the total prevention of migrant access to housing and the problematisation of the occupation of housing by anyone who might in some way be construed as a migrant, in the hope that the Elysian fantasy might be realised in this way. This has impacted on the lives of my participants as they have been relegated to the worst housing, have been made to feel that they were ‘just another immigrant family’, and have put up with exploitation by those who held power over them. Moreover, they have endured the onslaught of media stories which constantly question the rights of communities such as theirs to access social housing, and which blame migrants and their otherness for the problems that erupt in their deprived neighbourhoods. The next chapter takes the insights garnered from the study of autochthonous discourse and reflects them back on to the conventional discourse of IR via the shared ontological framework which structures both discourses.
CHAPTER 6:
CONCLUSION: IR, AUTOCHTHONY AND BELONGING

At the outset of this thesis I stated my key research question as ‘Why is the discipline of International Relations (IR) silent on the issue of belonging, and how does this matter?’ What remains for this chapter, then, is to pull together the work of the preceding chapters and to show how these contribute thematically to form an answer to this and the subsidiary questions which motivate my project as a whole. Here I will draw the links between belonging, autochthony and conventional IR discourse and underline how this thesis contributes to the wider study of international relations/global politics. The chapter will first return to the original research questions which structured my research project and in this section I will show in brief which parts of my thesis have responded to each question. In a following section I will then reiterate the links between conventional IR discourse and autochthony discourse, before reflecting the findings of my critical analysis of British housing discourse back onto conventional IR and my opening problematic of its silence on the issue of belonging in three further sections. A final section concludes.

RESPONDING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To turn the research question into a workable research project I broke it down into five sub-questions:

1) Does the ontological framework which structures conventional IR discourse work to exclude belonging from the discipline’s purview?

2) In what way does the figure of the migrant help to problematise conventional IR’s silence on the issue of belonging?

3) How can the concept of autochthony contribute to the study of the absence of belonging from conventional IR discourse?

4) What does a critical analysis of the autochthonous discourse of British housing reveal about the ontological framework that it shares with conventional IR?

5) Does the search for IR’s missing account of belonging, and its findings, have broader relevance to the discipline?
In response to the first question, I argued in Chapter 1 that a number of the ontological assumptions on which conventional IR discourse draws appear to reflect an inside-outside ontology which precludes the study of belonging from the discipline. I identified those ontological assumptions as the nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territoriality, fixity and exclusion, and I suggested that together these imply that there is a foundational difference between the ‘inside’, which is construed here as the domestic sphere and demarcated from the outside by the territorial borders of the nation-state, and the ‘outside’, understood as the international sphere. The foundational status of the difference between inside and outside allows the two spheres to be separated and differentiated. I argued that since community is understood to occur on the inside, belonging (which concerns an individual’s relations with the community) must also occur on the inside in conventional IR’s ontology, and thus it does appear that its ontological framework prevents an engagement with the issue of belonging.

This leads onto the second research question, namely in what way does the figure of the migrant help to problematise conventional IR’s silence on the issue of belonging? In Chapter 1 I suggested that the figure of the migrant provides a powerful means of problematising that silence on belonging and the inside-outside ontology on which it draws. Migrants operate as a marker of the international, and are thus of relevance to IR, and yet their presence on the ‘inside’ sphere makes them difficult for conventional IR to engage with, since its framework is focused on the ‘outside’. Equally, however, their very migrantness, as movement from outside to inside, undermines the possibility of a foundational difference between the two spheres.

My third question concerned the contribution which the concept of autochthony could make to our understanding of conventional IR’s silence on belonging. In Chapter 2 I pointed out that the discourse of autochthony advances the idea that only people who can prove their ancestral rootedness in the territory of a community can be said to belong to it. Like conventional IR, autochthony draws on an inside-outside ontology and draws the boundary between the two spheres at the border of the nation-state. I argued that autochthony can thus be said to share IR’s ontological assumptions. Consequently, I suggested that autochthony discourse could be treated as a credible approximation of what conventional IR’s discourse of

---

82 See p26, above.
83 See p33, above.
belonging would look like, if it were to be made explicit. I identified a set of key logics which characterise autochthony-thinking, and concluded that the presence of these logics—genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood—in discourses of belonging shows it to be autochthonous regardless of whether it uses explicitly autochthonous vocabulary. Thus, the anti-migrant discourses in France or Italy, for example, that I discussed in Chapter 2, can be seen to have strongly autochthonous content despite the absence of terms such as autochthon or allochthon.

Having made these theoretical claims, in Chapter 3 I presented the conceptual tools of discourse theory and the analytical framework of social, political and fantasmatic logics. The logics framework can be used to unpack discourse and to emphasise the links between the social practices which give evidence of a discourse, the political means by which that discourse is maintained or contested, and the fantasmatic narratives which underpin and motivate its politics. I also underlined discourse theory’s insights regarding the contingency of all discourses and the subsequent ‘non-necessity’ of any social structures which emerge from a given discourse, which are useful concepts for understanding the politics at work in the construction of insiders and outsiders.

My fourth research question, which asked what a critical analysis of the autochthonous discourse of British housing could reveal about the ontological framework that it shares with conventional IR, was largely answered by my fourth chapter, which presented the first part of my case study of British housing discourse. In the chapter I presented a critical analysis of three discursive dislocations which revealed both autochthony’s contingency and the impossibility of fixing a stable line of demarcation between its categories of autochthon (those who belong) and allochthon (those who don’t belong). By indicating that the fantasy of a clear division between inside and outside which appears to motivate autochthony discourse is unrealisable, Chapter 4 problematises the notion that there can be a foundational difference between inside and outside, and thus destabilises the inside-outside ontology on which both autochthony discourse and conventional IR draw. Moreover, in eliciting the slipperiness and blurring of the categories of the migrant (as allochthon) and the majority (as autochthon) as well as the non-necessity of identifying the migrant as the cause of housing problems, the case study reveals the

---

84 See p78, above.
85 See p53ff, above.
86 See p93, above.
87 See p156, above.
inherringly political nature of autochthony’s attempts to impose an inside-outside structuring of social relations.

Chapter 5 presented empirical fieldwork with the Kurdish and Turkish community in London which corroborates the non-necessary configuration of migrants as outsiders to the community of belonging. By emphasising a range of alternative communities of belonging which make sense of my fieldwork participants’ lives, this chapter also problematised the inside-outside ontology which informs autochthony discourse, especially with regard to its equation of ‘inside’ with the fixed and homogeneous nation-state. My final research question then asked whether the findings of the critical analysis of British housing discourse have broader relevance for the discipline. Chapter 5 responded to the question by outlining some of the fantasmatic dangers88 which an inside-outside ontology, such as the one on which conventional IR draws, pose for those who, like migrants, don’t conform to its strict demarcations, or whose stories of belonging escape the ‘clean lines’ of conventional IR’s inside-outside framework (Walker 2006:57). The purpose of the present chapter is to pull together the findings of the five chapters to give a fuller response to that question.

As the outline response to my initial research questions shows, a critical analysis of the autochthonous discourse of belonging matters to international relations in that it calls into question a number of key assumptions which underpin conventional IR discourse. The following section of this analytical chapter will expand on the links between conventional IR and autochthony by restating their shared ontological assumptions.

**RESTATING THE LINKS BETWEEN AUTOCHTHONY AND CONVENTIONAL IR DISCOURSE**

The nation-state, the domestic-international dichotomy, territory, fixity and exclusion: these are the five ontological assumptions which I have identified as contributing to conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology. In this section I will restate the connections between these assumptions and the discourse of autochthony, in preparation for my claims that the critical analysis of autochthony discourse has relevance for conventional IR discourse in the following sections.

88 See p184, above.
In Chapter 1 I first identified the nation-state as a significant ontological assumption with relation to IR’s silence on belonging. The nation-state stands in conventional IR as the primary community of belonging and the model of the ‘inside’, or domestic. As such it overlaps with a second assumption of the domestic-international dichotomy, which is conventional IR’s term for marking inside and outside as separate spheres. Territoriality, which is the third significant assumption, provides a physical dimension of the domestic-inside which is bounded by the borders of the nation-state. The fourth ontological assumption which shapes conventional IR’s silence on belonging is that of fixity, which suggests that the territorial and domestic nation-state is both ahistorical and yet fixed in time, unchanging and unchangeable, while the fifth assumption of exclusion indicates the absolute separation of the two spheres of domestic and international as well as the exclusive power of the nation-state over the territorial sphere of the domestic-inside.

While these five assumptions are perhaps less apparent in autochthony discourse than in conventional IR discourse they are nonetheless present, as Chapter 2 shows. We can start by looking at territory. This is of central importance in the concept of autochthony in that it quite literally grounds the discourse. Territory provides the soil in which ancestral roots are to be planted and traced, and the space which it represents constitutes the space of autochthonous belonging. As a result of the territorial logics that constitute the inside-outside ontology, the community of belonging is fused onto the political community of the nation-state. Thus, by virtue of its equivalence with territory and with the ‘inside’, the nation-state represents the autochthonous community of belonging. The domestic-international dichotomy provides autochthony discourse with the point of demarcation for its spheres of inside and outside. The assumptions of fixity and exclusion work together in autochthony discourse to underline the separateness of inside and outside and its specific categories of insider and outsider. The idea of the fixed and exclusive identity of the autochthon is critical, even if in practice it turns out to be unworkable. Identity and belonging are not changeable characteristics according to autochthony’s logic, but are instead inherent fixtures. They are nonetheless finite and vulnerable to corruption and ruin. Outsiders who try to enter the space of autochthony pose a threat to insiders and must therefore be fully excluded from entering. Thus, all five of conventional IR’s ontological assumptions can be seen also to have foundational status for autochthony discourse.
As the above shows, both discourses converge on those five foundational commitments, which are reflected in their shared inside-outside ontology. Consequently, there is a great deal of similarity in each discourse’s interpretation of social relations and their attempts to impose structure on everyday lives through the partial fixation of meaning. Conventional IR discourse and autochthony discourse can be said to map onto each other at the point where the border between inside and outside (domestic and international or autochthon and allochthon) coincides. The nation-state border can then be understood as a mirror in which autochthony’s explicit discourse of belonging reflects IR’s implicit discourse. Through a critical engagement with the concept of autochthony and a case study of autochthony discourse in action in Britain, this research project has tried to furnish a better understanding of the effects of such a foundational framework as it forms the contours of possibility within which each discourse can operate.

Despite their importance to autochthony, however, these assumptions are not always visible or verbalised, especially since it is usually elaborated through and motivated by the medium of resource claims, as I stressed in Chapter 2. Instead, the autochthonous discourse of belonging can be more easily traced through the articulation of a set of ideas—genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood—which I describe as the logics of autochthony, and which I explored in detail in Chapter 2. The logic of genus expresses the idea of discrete and territorially fixed communities which claim belonging on the basis of their ancestral rootedness. The logic of impurity describes the fear that outsiders will enter the autochthonous space and pollute or destroy its community. Entitlement describes the automatic right of those who have proved their status as autochthons to a share of the community’s resources, whether these are economic, political, social or cultural. Finally the logic of victimhood describes the suffering of the autochthonous community if allochthonous others enters the autochthonous territory. Though not identical to the ontological foundations named above, these logics are intrinsically tied to the foundational commitments outlined above. Without the certainty that the social world is divided along lines of inside-outside, that nation-states are the ultimate communities of belonging, that territory is the source and manifestation of the nation-state, and so on, the logics of autochthony would be more visibly problematic. But with those foundations in place, the notion of fixed difference between those

---

89 See p57, above.
90 See p48ff, above.
who can claim territorial belonging as autochthons and those who can’t, becomes possible.

The preceding paragraphs have reiterated the links between autochthony and conventional IR via their shared ontological framework. Given the striking overlap between conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology and that of autochthony discourse, the section can be concluded by restating my claim that autochthony discourse thus appears to function as an implicit discourse of belonging for conventional IR. This is important because it validates my use of autochthony discourse to provide insights on conventional IR discourse.

**Why Does the Autochthonous Account of Belonging Matter to IR?**

Having established that autochthony discourse can be understood to correspond to conventional IR discourse’s implicit account of belonging, the following sections set out the way in which this finding answers my research questions. The thesis makes three findings which stand as contributions to the discipline, and these coalesce around the following points. Firstly, through its analytical reading of British housing discourse the thesis illustrates autochthony’s radical contingency, and in doing so it highlights the ultimate impossibility of an inside-outside framework that assumes a fundamental difference between the two spheres. If inside and outside are in fact inseparable, as this thesis argues, then conventional IR’s reliance on this framework as the grounds for not engaging with the concept of belonging requires rethinking. Secondly, the thesis indicates that the imposition of an inside-outside framework, as represented by the discourse of autochthony, permeates all aspects of the social, so that everything becomes reducible to its divisive (equivalential) logic. This generates a very limited, and impoverished understanding of what it means to belong, which consequently fails to capture the messy reality of the social world. Finally, the thesis demonstrates the pernicious effects of the assumption that inside and outside are fundamentally discrete spheres on those who are construed as outsiders. These three points are elucidated in the following paragraphs.

**Inside and Outside are Ultimately Inseparable**

Having elaborated above on the likeness between the autochthonous account of belonging and conventional IR’s foundational assumptions, in this section I will
reflect this correlation back on itself to show that the ultimate impossibility of the autochthonous politics of belonging reflects the impossibility of conventional IR’s ontological framework. My discussion of discourse theory and its conceptual framework in Chapter 3 pointed out the radical contingency of all discursive structures. Since all aspects of the social are fundamentally lacking, none can ever reach closure. At best, partial fixations can be achieved which may become sedimented and thus come to be understood as natural configurations of social reality\textsuperscript{91}. Consequently, we can understand that while inside and outside may be projected as discrete, closed spheres, they are in fact nothing more than sedimented partial fixations which remain open to contestation and reinterpretation. The concept of a foundational difference between the two spheres is thus called into question and must be ultimately rejected.

The impossibility of separating inside from outside has been amply demonstrated by my examination of the discourse of autochthony in this thesis. It is made especially clear by the evidence which illustrates the impossibility of fixing the line between autochthon and allochthon. In Chapter 3 I noted that the logic of equivalence, which polarises identities so that a political frontier can be placed between them to close one off from the other, is maintained by focusing on the identity or category which is being excluded and the difference which constitutes the exclusion\textsuperscript{92}. In autochthony discourse, the category of the Other to be excluded, the allochthon, is always the migrant, differentiated from the autochthon by her failure to demonstrate ancestral rootedness in the territory of the autochthonous community.

My presentation of the autochthony literature in Chapter 2 offered a range of examples of the impossibility of fixing the identity of the allochthon. The Flemish discourse of autochthony sustains its narrative by categorising different groups as allochthonous according to context. Thus the allochthon is sometimes the Francophone Belgian, sometimes the ‘illegal immigrant’, sometimes non-Europeans and sometimes Muslims\textsuperscript{93}. The failure to close this category means that each of those groups is also implicitly included as insiders when the occasion suits. This is shown by the example of the autochthony-driven political party Vlaams Blok (VB) soliciting the support of Turks living in Brussels for one of its policy proposals, despite the fact that that elsewhere it vilifies Turks both implicitly as non-Europeans and

---

\textsuperscript{91} See p88, above.
\textsuperscript{92} See p91, above.
\textsuperscript{93} See p68, above.
Muslims and explicitly in the party’s opposition to Turkish membership of the EU94. Further evidence of the inability to close the category of the allochthon comes from Cameroon, where conflict over resource rights has resulted in the constant refinement of the category. This is illustrated in the example of the villagers who are defining belonging in an ever-decreasing circle (and concomitantly defining non-belonging in an ever-expanding circle) as they denounce even relatives as allochthons so as to deny them access to resources95.

My analysis of British housing discourse in Chapter 4 provided an opportunity to examine the working of autochthony discourse more closely. Here too the impossibility of closing the category of allochthon and thus fixing the boundary between inside and outside was readily apparent, as illustrated by the example of Black Caribbeans being at different times positioned by the majority community as both inside and outside the ‘we’ of belonging96. I presented a critical analysis of the discourse which emerged following the Hodge Intervention, which centred on a newspaper article by a senior politician which claimed that a vaguely defined group of ‘economic migrants’ was being unfairly allocated social housing and was thus preventing the ‘indigenous’ population from enjoying their legitimate entitlement to this resource97. On close inspection this category of migrants was shown to be unfixable, since none of the possible configurations of that imprecise category matched extant groups of migrants. However, the lack of closure didn’t prohibit others from taking it up and applying it to different contexts, each time targeting a redefined group as the migrants in question. Consequently, it has been used to problematise the presence of all foreign-born nationals in social housing (including those who may have been British citizens for decades), and to problematise the potential arrival of migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in 2014, who are not yet even in Britain98.

The findings of my fieldwork with members of London’s Kurdish and Turkish community corroborate the impossibility of fixing the category of migrant in opposition to belonging in the way that the inside-outside framework tries to do. All of my interview participants accepted a degree of migrant identification, though one, Deniz, showed some confusion as to how to define himself according to the

94 See p69, above.
95 See p70, above.
96 See p172, above.
97 See p134, above.
98 See p140, above.
categories of ‘we’ and ‘they’\textsuperscript{99}. Yet even those who demonstrated greater clarity about their status as migrants nonetheless emphasised their belonging in London and its Kurdish/Turkish neighbourhoods\textsuperscript{100}. Thus it is possible to be a migrant and yet consider yourself to be part of the community of belonging. This finding contrasts with the example from the autochthony literature of the Baka tribe in Cameroon, who are acknowledged as first occupants of the land in which they live but whose status as autochthons is denied on the basis that the group has been largely mobile and its roots thus didn’t count\textsuperscript{101}.

One further way in which my empirical findings subvert the inside-outside framing of autochthony is by emphasising that belonging cannot be fixed chronologically. Ayhan’s changed identity, from Kurdish/Turkish/British to simply Kurdish\textsuperscript{102}, emphasised that ideas of belonging and attachment evolve as we interact with social structures and other social actors, and as we become ethically aware of the contingency of the discursive. Belonging changes between generations as well as over time, as Deniz and Murat’s acknowledgement that their children will be British shows\textsuperscript{103}. This is true for communities as well as for individuals, and the participants suggested that their community would be more integrated as time passed\textsuperscript{104}. Thus, an individual or community may cross the boundary between the two categories more than once, which refutes the notion of foundational difference between the two.

The paragraphs above demonstrate that autochthonous discourse tries to fix and close the border between the categories of migrant and belonging, but that this cannot be achieved, thus British housing discourse cannot finalise its definition of belonging. Claims of autochthony arise within an ontological framework which insists that a difference between inside and outside is both foundational and fixable. The mere presence of migrants—as the embodiment of the outside present on the inside—demonstrates the infeasibility of autochthony discourse. This brings us back to conventional IR discourse, which I showed in the previous section of this chapter shares autochthony’s inside-outside ontology. As my initial research question noted, conventional IR discourse doesn’t have an account of belonging because its inside-outside ontology precludes belonging as a fit subject for IR scholarship. However, since autochthony is shown to function as an approximation of an implicit IR

\textsuperscript{99} See p168, above.
\textsuperscript{100} See p181, above.
\textsuperscript{101} See p52, above.
\textsuperscript{102} See p165, above.
\textsuperscript{103} See p167, above.
\textsuperscript{104} See p183, above.
discourse of belonging, the questions which the presence of migrants raise regarding autochthony’s inside-outside ontology should also be valid for conventional IR’s inside-outside ontology. The absence of belonging from conventional IR discourse shines a light on its inside-outside ontology, while the presence of migrants picks out the impossibility of fixing the boundary between inside and outside and confirms the inseparability of the two spheres. The inside-outside ontology which assumes a fundamental difference is thus destabilised as the illusion of difference is exposed as an effect of discourse, and since all discourses are inherently contingent, the social formations which it constructs can be seen as non-necessary.

**Inside-Outside Distinctions Permeate and Impoverish the Social**

The preceding section has substantiated my claim that the spheres of inside and outside are ultimately inseparable, and that fixing the line between the categories of insider and outsider is impossible, with evidence from the first five chapters of the thesis. In this section I will argue that despite the ultimate impossibility of finalising the distinction, the dominance of an inside-outside ontology makes its appearance in many aspects of the social. As I established earlier, within an inside-outside framework such as the one which underpins both autochthony and conventional IR discourse, the nation-state is treated as the primary community of belonging. Here I will illustrate the point that by focusing so intensely on the nation-state as community of belonging, however, these discourses devalue and are blind to attachments to alternative communities of belonging which may exist at the sub-state level, may cross state borders or may have no territorial dimensions at all. In consequence, a partial and impoverished interpretation of the social is generated.

Conventional IR and autochthonous discourse both present a simplified, binary view of the community of belonging. In Chapter 4 I suggested that the ‘English village’ represented by the TV series ‘Midsomer Murders’ has come to represent the idealised fulfilment of autochthony’s Elysian fantasy. Elysium here contains the ideal of a harmonious and prosperous community, in which all needs are fulfilled and the purity of the autochthonous community is restored. In the Midsomer village you either belong or you don’t, and the intervention by the programme’s producer made it clear that migrants, as ethnic minorities, simply had no place in such a village, and by implication has no place in the English community of belonging. That exclusion, however, could only be realised in the fictional setting

---

105 See p155, above.
of Midsomer. The undeniable reality of the presence of migrant communities contradicts those ‘clean lines’ of demarcation to which the binary aspires and acts as a constant reminder of the messiness of the people’s lived experiences (Walker 2006). During fieldwork interviews, respondents from the Kurdish and Turkish communities expressed both the variety and the multiplicity of the communities which structured their lives. Of course, belonging to the transnational community of Kurds or Turks was a defining aspect of the identity of everyone that I spoke to, however it was certainly not the only one. Gül insisted that being a woman was a critical part of her identity, and certainly more significant than her identity as a migrant. During our interviews, both Elif and Özlem also described their active involvement in feminist politics within the Kurdish community. For all three, ‘women’ constituted an important community of belonging which brings meaning and structure to their lives.

Another type of community of belonging which is overlooked by the inside-outside fixation on the nation-state is that of locality. In my analysis of the discourse which emerged in the aftermath of the 2001 Northern Riots, I demonstrated how the segregated ‘minority communities’ were discursively constructed as outsiders on the basis that they weren’t integrated with the majority community. Yet this totally discounted the very strong sense of community which existed inside those segregated neighbourhoods, despite the fact that these were arguably the social structures which gave most meaning to the lives of their residents. The document Creating the Conditions for Integration actively undermined the relevance of those communities by articulating them together with the negative ideas of failed integration and tensions or problems for the mainstream. In Chapter 5, however, the Kurds and Turks who participated in my fieldwork emphasised their strong sense of belonging both in the neighbourhoods of Hackney and Haringey where the Kurdish and Turkish community is predominantly based, as well as in a wider multicultural London. Elif declared that she felt at home in Green Lanes because she knew and could chat to so many of the people who worked and owned businesses there, adding that:

‘it feels comforting sometimes, to be somewhere where you can say yeah, this is where I’m from, people know me and I know them’.

---

106 See p168, above.
107 See p144, above.
108 See p148, above.
109 A long stretch of road which connects Hackney and Haringey and which forms a central artery for London’s Kurdish and Turkish community.
110 See p169, above.
Being part of a community of workers or professionals offered another meaningful community of belonging for members of the Kurdish and Turkish community in London, but one which is again overlooked by inside-outside discourses that prioritise the nation-state community. Murat made sense of his belonging in London with reference to his friends who came from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds but were united by a shared community of professional work. My contacts at the Kurdish/Turkish community centre DAY-MER emphasised the importance of being part of the community of workers, and described their involvement in shows of solidarity with striking British firemen and other workers. Conversely, the effects of being excluded from a work-based community of belonging was illustrated by Özlem as she discussed the isolation experienced by many of the people using the community centre where she worked. She agreed that the community centres provided a lifeline for those people whose status as asylum seekers prohibited them from working, and told me that:

“They don’t fit in here because they are still waiting … for the answer [to their asylum application] from Home Office … most of them can’t still work. (Özlem)

In other words, there is a connection between not fitting in and not working. Some communities of belonging, such as religious communities or transnational ethnic communities, for example, span the globe, while others (neighbourhood communities, school communities, business communities, leisure communities) are contained in an area of a few square miles. Some—being a feminist, being left-wing—cannot be reduced to territorial dimensions.

By overlooking the complexities and the multiple scales of belonging, the inside-outside ontology also produces the nation-state inside as a homogeneous community in which difference is difficult to account for. In Chapter 1 I referred to Inayatullah and Blaney’s point that the inside-outside framework suggests difference to be something which characterises the outside and not the inside, and thus internal differences must be somehow managed or evicted (Inayatullah and Blaney 2004:6). This point can be illustrated by thinking once more about the example given by the document Creating the Conditions of Integration, which I discussed in relation to the Northern Riots. The purpose of that document was to set the ground for a renewed attempt by central government to banish segregation and achieve a wholly

---

111 See p177, above.
112 See p177, above.
113 See p25, above.
114 See p148, above.
integrated society. What becomes evident through this, however, is that there is no room for difference in the government’s view of the social. Remaining outside the mainstream, and thereby flaunting difference, is rendered problematic here. Everyone must be a part of the mainstream, and remaining outside is seen as unnatural and a problem to be resolved.

In this section I have shown how the thesis demonstrates that inside-outside’s fixation on the nation-state as the primary community of belonging offers an impoverished account of the social, which overlooks the multiple and overlapping communities of belonging below, above and beyond that community. The autochthonous discourse, which also represents IR’s implicit discourse of belonging, sees belonging measured in terms of ancestry and historical links to territory and thus cannot capture these multilayered attachments, not least because its gaze is directed to the perimeter and thus it doesn’t see the interior at all.

**The Inside-Outside Framework Has Pernicious Effects**

The two preceding sections have shown how the thesis supports my claims that conventional IR draws on an inside-outside ontology and that the discourse of autochthony, by virtue of the fact that it shares that ontology, can be understood to represent a credible approximation of conventional IR’s implicit discourse of belonging. Furthermore, I have shown how the thesis demonstrates inside-outside’s fixation on the nation-state as the primary community of belonging, and the impoverished interpretation of belonging which results from that ontology. The purpose of the present section is to illustrate the ways in which my thesis supports the claim that the inside-outside ontology, and the discourse of belonging which it makes possible, have a profound and pernicious effect on those who constitute its polarised ‘Other’. I will do this by bringing in the notion of fantasy and the fantasmatic logics of autochthony.

In Chapter 2 I suggested that autochthony discourse, and the logics of genus, impurity, entitlement and victimhood which characterise it, produce an Elysian fantasy of the social in which there is a perfect (isomorphic) fit between community and bounded territory, as well as a match between available resources and the needs of the community’s members (autochthons). I concluded that the objective of the politics of autochthony is to restore the lost Elysium and regain the imagined
isomorphism of community, territory, resources and need\textsuperscript{115}. Following this, my presentation of the logics framework in Chapter 3 introduced the concept of fantasmatic logics, which can be described as those logics which motivate or direct the political practices of a discourse by covering over its contingency and by sustaining an unachievable fantasy of a better world that is denied through the presence of an obstacle. Through my analysis of British housing discourse in Chapter 4 I refined my understanding of the fantasmatic logics of that discourse and identified three fantasmatic objectives as fulfilled need\textsuperscript{116}, the harmonious community\textsuperscript{117} and the restitution of genus\textsuperscript{118}.

As I have just noted, the fantasmatic narrative of a discourse depends on the naming of an obstacle which is seen as blocking the realisation of the fantasy. In autochthony discourse, migrants function as the fantasmatic obstacle. Although the contingency of the social prevents the possibility of closing or completing the discourse, the obstacle conceals that contingency by representing an explanation for its failure, and so the drive to achieve closure is increased. In my presentation of the concept of autochthony in Chapter 2 I discussed the autochthonous discourse of Côte d’Ivoire, where the migrant-as-obstacle is claimed to have taken advantage of the land which rightly belonged to the country’s autochthons, thereby leaving the latter in want and leading to tensions in the community which eventually exploded into civil war. According to the autochthonous discourse which circulated there for many years, it was only by unmasking allochthons and removing from the country, thereby bringing the restitution of the community of genus, that autochthons would once again be prosperous. Closer to home, in the case of the Northern Riots, I showed how the fantasy of the harmonious community propelled the development of a discourse in which the segregated housing conditions of minority communities have come to represent an non-cohesive community, failed integration and tensions between different segments of the community\textsuperscript{119}.

In these and other examples of autochthonous discourse in my thesis, the migrant is produced as the obstacle to the realisation of the fantasy of the harmonious and fulfilled community, or the restitution of genus. We saw in the example of the TV series Midsomer Murders that if the fantasy could be fulfilled, it

\textsuperscript{115} See p67, above.
\textsuperscript{116} See p130, above.
\textsuperscript{117} See p143, above.
\textsuperscript{118} See p154, above.
\textsuperscript{119} See p144-5, above.
would look very much like the idealised English village of Midsomer, a place in which the presence of ethnic minorities cannot be tolerated\textsuperscript{120}. What follows on from this positioning, however, is the enactment of political practices which work to exclude migrants as obstacles, and the sedimentation of social practices which naturalise the problematisation and exclusion of anyone who can be perceived as a migrant. This explains the drive to exclude migrants from being allocated social housing, as exemplified in the British context by the many successive Acts of parliament aimed at minimising the right to social housing for people from abroad\textsuperscript{121} and most recently by the Hodge Intervention and its subsequent development\textsuperscript{122}. It is also demonstrated by the ongoing vilification of migrants occupying houses, the blaming of migrants for British housing (and other) problems by senior politicians, including the current Prime Minister and a previous one, as a means of justifying ever more restrictive rules governing migrant access to housing or to enter the country at all\textsuperscript{123}.

In Chapter 5 I showed that by using the figure of the migrant as its obstacle to the realisation of the fantasmatric narrative, autochthony discourse is often pursued against the most vulnerable of all migrants, with the example of those who are here seeking asylum. In my overview of migrant housing rights in Chapter 4 I explained how the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act created a wholly segregated system for housing asylum seekers on the basis that they had come to represent ‘an intolerable burden’ for local authorities\textsuperscript{124}. Consequently, this powerless group have been completely written out of ‘the mainstream’ for housing purposes, into a segregated system where they still remain. In light of the current government’s avowed commitment to tackling segregation and enforcing integration, as indicated by the document \textit{Creating the Conditions for Integration}\textsuperscript{125}, their deliberate and ongoing exclusion does seem to suggest that in their vulnerability asylum seekers have come to represent the ultimate migrant-obstacle, beyond the reach of any integration programme. Their perpetual denigration in the press, where the term ‘asylum seeker’ seems to be used wherever a scapegoat migrant is required, can be illustrated with reference to the story about a Somali ‘asylum seeker’ family living in a luxurious house, in which the term asylum seeker was both inaccurate and designed to cause

\textsuperscript{120} See p150, above.
\textsuperscript{121} See p128, above.
\textsuperscript{122} See p135, above.
\textsuperscript{123} See p140, 152 above.
\textsuperscript{124} See p129, above.
\textsuperscript{125} See p148, above.
maximum public indignation\textsuperscript{126}. While asylum seekers are particularly easy targets, even the more apparently established BME communities are not safe from the search for a fantasmatc obstacle, as the blaming of minority communities for the parallel lives which had developed in the Northern towns of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford illustrates\textsuperscript{127}. Here, the many other background factors in the unrest (drugs, poverty, unemployment, racist activity), and the factors involved in their ‘choice’ to live in close proximity to other community members (poverty, race discrimination) are neatly set aside in order to focus on the migrant as wilful obstacle to the achievement of the harmonious community.

The preceding paragraphs have demonstrated, with examples from my thesis, that the autochthonous discourse of belonging which is produced by an inside-outside framing of the social has a pernicious effect on those who constitute its category of outsider. Following autochthony’s logic, the allochthonous migrant functions as the obstacle to the achievement of the better world promised by the Elysian fantasy. Since the radical contingency of the social means that the fantasy can never be realised, the continued presence of migrants prompts an ongoing refinement of the category of the migrant and the political practices which are implemented to resolve the obstacle. In consequence, all those who can in any way be shown to bear the characteristics of migrantness are at risk of being cast as the obstacle and thus subjected to practices of exclusion. Even those who may have long considered themselves to be established as part of the majority community are not immune to this treatment, as the case of the minority communities dragged into the Northern Riots shows.

\textbf{CHAPTER CONCLUSION}

My thesis began with the puzzle of the absence of belonging from IR scholarship. I wanted to know why the discipline had so little to say about migrants, and where and how they belong, despite the fact that they represent the embodiment of the international. I also wanted to know what effect this absence had on the discipline. In the preceding chapters I have produced a set of answers to that puzzle. In brief, the puzzle can be unravelled as follows.

\textsuperscript{126} See p138, above.
\textsuperscript{127} See p142ff, above.
The conventional discourse of IR doesn’t talk about belonging because the inside-outside ontology on which it draws locates belonging on the ‘inside’ and thus beyond the limits of IR, which only deals with the ‘outside’. Furthermore, the inside-outside ontology maintains that there are foundational differences between the two parts of the binary, which can thus be separated and differentiated. In short, conventional IR understands belonging as an issue which belongs only on the inside. This assumption that belonging is confined within the inside is reflected by the concept of autochthony, which holds that only those people who are insiders can belong. Autochthony thus appears to function as an implicit discourse of belonging for IR.

The figure of the migrant, however, complicates the binary ontology. They simply don’t have a space in which they can belong in the inside-outside framework. Moreover, as outsiders located on the inside they indicate the absolute failure of the foundational assumption of separateness, and thus require some kind of explanation or response. Conventional IR is largely unable to do that, since it maintains that belonging, migrant or otherwise, is not within its disciplinary parameters. To explore the issue further, therefore, it is necessary to look at the discourse of autochthony, which functions as IR’s implicit discourse of belonging.

As the case study of British housing discourse presented in the thesis has shown, autochthonous attempts to enforce the inside-outside ontology reveal the inherently contingent nature of the categories of insider and outsider, which must undergo constant revision and refinement if the difference between the two is to be upheld. The contingency of the discourse also indicates the autochthonous interpretation of social relations to be non-necessary, since other Others and other communities of belonging are available, and consequently the continued positioning of the migrant as outsider can be seen to be the result of politics rather than of natural or foundational difference.

The second part of my research question was ‘how does this matter?’ In answer to that, the thesis gives the following responses. Firstly, it matters because IR’s silence on belonging only makes sense within the framework of an inside-outside ontology which assumes the two spheres to be distinct and separable. If, as I have argued here, that is not the case, if inside and outside cannot be kept separate, then IR cannot claim that belonging is beyond its remit. Consequently, the discipline should take note of the concept of belonging and the politics which accompany it.
This is especially so since the discourse of belonging which its silent stance appears to condone is that of autochthony. The autochthonous discourse of belonging, as illustrated by this thesis, offers only a partial and impoverished interpretation of the social in which belonging is reduced to the single dimension of bloodlines in the soil. This fails to capture a large part of the messy, overlapping and at times contradictory nature of people’s lived experience. If this is to be IR’s version of belonging, then the discipline can hope to achieve only a limited understanding of the social world and the politics which constitute it. Finally, IR’s silence on belonging, and the autochthonous discourse of belonging with which this silence can be linked, produces a highly exclusionary response to the question of where migrants belong. This discourse is maintained by the political problematisation and vilification of those who can be perceived as migrants, who are in any case often the most marginalised and vulnerable members of society. It does this in the hopes of realising the Elysian fantasy of a harmonious, prosperous and need-free community which can never be achieved. If IR is to condone this discourse of belonging, then it should at the very least be cognizant of its implications.

Policy and discourse often seem to deal with abstracted or archetypal figures, whether these are of categories of people, ideal images of undeserving migrants and long-suffering autochthons, or the regulations for implementing policy. In the abstract, these figures can be neatly contained within unbroken outlines, and each part of a model can be kept separate. On the ground the picture is much messier. Many individuals and communities defy abstractions and straddle categories, so that policies and discourses are rendered inappropriate or unworkable. Those in power may be able to hide such disjunctures in rhetoric or ignore them thanks to a public which is reluctant to question the construction of migrants as threats. But for those who are implicated as both migrants and threats from the outside, the mismatch is more problematic. Ultimately, those discourses of conventional IR and autochthony which do their utmost to insist that belonging must be interpreted within an inside-outside framework do not always prevail, and the evidence suggests that even in the midst of such discourses, there are spaces in which individuals can participate in alternative communities of belonging, which scholars of international relations overlook at their own cost.

The logics of the discourse of autochthony and its fantasy of a better world and a harmonious and prosperous community are seductive, as we can tell by the fact that they grip, albeit partially, even some of those whom the discourse portrays as
outsiders. However, a critical analysis of one example of the discourse reveals the concept of autochthony to be politically driven rather than a natural phenomenon. Thus, there is no natural or fixed congruity between the community of belonging, territory and the nation-state, as the ontological assumptions which underpin the discourse suggest. This finding prompts questions about the inside-outside framework, which can also be considered to be politically constituted rather than a reflection of some naturalised reality. This is what the study of autochthony discourse can best bring to the discipline of IR: a warning to look to the foundations which sustain its inside-outside framework to see what kind of politics lurk behind them.


BEIDER, H (2011). 'Community Cohesion: The Views of White Working-Class Communities'. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at:


--- (2011). 'Misunderstanding of Autochthony Vis-À-Vis the Question of Indigenous Peoples'. Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale, 19 (2), 204-12.


http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0bk3k2nq


http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-migration-determinants-attitudes.


http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/jul/08/uk.thefarright.


NETTO, G (2011). 'Identity Negotiation, Pathways to Housing and “Place”: The Experience of Refugees in Glasgow'. Housing, Theory and Society, 28 (2), 123-43.


SALLYCANTDANCE, (2011). 'Turkish and Asian Groups Have Stood up to & Chased Off Rioters. Bloody Immigrants. Coming over Here, Defending Our Boroughs and Communities.'. Available at: https://twitter.com/SallyCantDance/status/100679073600249856.


SHAH, N (2012). 'The Territorial Trap of the Territorial Trap: Global Transformation and the Problem of the State's Two Territories'. International Political Sociology, 6, 57-76.


**APPENDIX A: ORGANISATIONS CONTACTED DURING FIELDWORK**

**Contact with representative individuals and organisations in Hackney, Haringey and central London**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hackney Refugee Forum / CVS</td>
<td>Voluntary sector umbrella organisation</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish Community Centre</td>
<td>Portland Gardens, Haringey</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting, several visits to site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunus Emre Institute</td>
<td>Turkish cultural institute, Central London</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney Homes</td>
<td>Hackney, London</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Western Thrace Turks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halkevi</td>
<td>Kurdish community centre, Downham Road, Dalston</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting, several visits to site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balik Arts</td>
<td>Youth arts project, Stoke Newington</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biznet-Pronet</td>
<td>Turkish-British business association</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY-MER</td>
<td>Turkish and Kurdish community organisation</td>
<td>Two visits to the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Centre for Social Studies</td>
<td>Social researchers focusing on London's Turkish community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gik-Der</td>
<td>Kurdish and Turkish Workers' Cultural Association</td>
<td>Fact-finding meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsel (sic) of Turkish Cypriot Organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Two visits to the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derman</td>
<td>Turkish &amp; Kurdish health/well-being support</td>
<td>Unwilling to get involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milli Gorus</td>
<td>Islamic Turkish diaspora organisation</td>
<td>Unwilling to get involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesis Housing Association</td>
<td>Woodberry Down, Hackney</td>
<td>Unwilling to get involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imec</td>
<td>Centre for Turkish-speaking women</td>
<td>Unwilling to get involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsey Ataturk Okulu</td>
<td>Supplementary Turkish school</td>
<td>Invited: no time to pursue contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Fazil Kucuk Turkish School</td>
<td>Supplementary Turkish school</td>
<td>Invited: no time to pursue contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aziziye Camii</td>
<td>Sunni mosque, Stoke Newington</td>
<td>Initial contact only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferhan Demirci</td>
<td>Cabinet member for Neighbourhoods, Hackney</td>
<td>No response received</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: HEADLINE PROMPTS FOR INTERVIEWS

One in ten state-subsidised homes goes to an immigrant family

‘Queue jumping immigrants’ are a myth, says study

Charities condemn plans to let councils house locals before immigrants

Government urged to put need before nationality

Locals to be given priority over immigrants in queue for council houses

Call for migrant housing rethink

Established British families should be given priority over economic migrants for council housing, government minister Margaret Hodge has said.

EU migrants face destitution

Migrants who come to the UK from within the European Union are more likely to end up destitute and in poor quality housing than other immigrants, a report has found.

New immigrants occupy just two per cent of social housing

UNFORESEEN EVILS OF UNCONTROLLED IMMIGRATION TO UK
Residents powerless to remove illegal immigrants from their gardens

Immigration: the true cost to Britain

Claims that immigrants prioritised for social housing ‘a myth’

£1,500 a week to house immigrant family of 12

House this for lunacy?

EU JUDGES ordered that a Somali mum be given a four-bedroom council house in Britain - even though she was an illegal immigrant.

Midsomer Murders producer suspended over diversity remarks

Co-creator Brian True-May said ITV crime drama ‘wouldn’t be English village’ if it featured minority groups
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: ONE-TO-ONE INTERVIEWS

Aim of interview: To uncover discourses of autochthony in practice in everyday experiences of housing in Hackney; to elicit self-identification and the perceived impact that this has had on participants’ experience of housing

Key to themes:

Self-identity/belonging B: participants’ own perception of belonging and identity

Housing as context C: exploring experiences of housing practices

Autochthony theme 1: recourse to history/ancestry as trump card for priority access to resources

Autochthony theme 2: autochthons as victims of allochthon actions

Autochthony theme 3: migrant-associated mixing/impurity/dirtiness as the cause or problem

Autochthony theme 4: unmixing and fixing as the solution/restitution of autochthon primacy

Introduction and practicalities

First of all I wanted to remind you about the practical details of the interview, as we discussed when you agreed to be interviewed. The interview will probably last for about an hour: it may be a bit longer, if you are happy to keep talking. I will be recording our conversation, with your permission, and I will also make a few notes while we are talking. After the interview, I will type up our conversation, but your name will not be used, and no-one else will be able to connect you with the typed-up notes. If, either during the interview or at any time after the interview you decide that you no longer want me to use the notes that I have made of our conversation, you can contact me and I will destroy them. You’ve signed the form that I gave you to say that you are happy to take part in this interview; thank you for that. Do you have any questions about these practical arrangements?

The reason why I have come to Hackney to talk to members of the Turkish community is that I am very interested in understanding how people from different communities in the UK get a sense of belonging. We often hear politicians talking about things like ‘integration’ and ‘community cohesion’, but I want to know what real people — like you — think about their communities and the daily lives that people live in them. What is it that makes people feel that they belong in a particular place? Which community (or communities) do they think they belong to? How do your everyday experiences make you feel at home – or not at home – in your neighbourhood, in London, or in the UK?

There aren’t any right or wrong answers to the questions that I’m asking; I’m really just interested to hear about your life here in Hackney. Everything that you can tell me is useful, especially since I don’t know very much about this area at all. Actually, to tell you a
bit about myself, I grew up in the Lake District in the North of England; I live in Manchester at the moment, and I have spent several years working in the Northwest of England with refugees and other migrants from many countries, giving them support and advice. Before that, I worked abroad for ten years, in Greece, France and Germany, and I also spent three years working as an English teacher in Istanbul, which is why I love talking to people with Turkish connections. Now I’m a student at the University of Manchester and I have this great opportunity to come and learn about other people’s experiences. So tell me about yourself: where did you grow up? ..... 

Section One: Identity and belonging

Where did you grow up? (Is that where you were born? So how long have you lived in Hackney?)

If you were introducing yourself to someone on the telephone, how would you describe yourself?

(If not British): would you say that you are: more [self-label] than British, equally [self-label] and British, or more British than [self-label]?

Would you give the same answer to: Turkish people living in Turkey? Turkish people living in the UK? Colleagues/neighbours? .....................................................the 2011 Census form?

Do you have dual nationality?

Do you feel that you belong in this neighbourhood/London/the UK?

What is it that makes you feel that you belong/don’t belong?

Do you have a lot of British/self-identity friends in the neighbourhood?

Section Two: Direct experience of housing/the neighbourhood

How did you come to be living in your current home?

Tell me a bit about your home. Do you enjoy living here?

- Attitude to neighbours/hood
Quality of housing stock

How easy was it to get this house?
- If social: waiting lists, priority bands
- If private: shortage/costs/landlord problems
- Contacts/competition

What is the best thing about living in this neighbourhood?

What would make the area better, in your opinion?

Section Three: Perception of national discourses

Next, I'd like you to have a look at a few headlines from different newspapers which mention housing in connection with migrants. Have a look at these, and then I would like to ask you what you think about them and how they make you feel.

[Show headlines page]

(Probed knowledge of the stories connected to the headlines and whether the issues are important ones to participant and/or to the people in the neighbourhood.

Section Four: Linking belongingness to housing practices

Have you ever felt that your experiences of housing are shaped by your identity as a [self-identity] person?

Do you think that people from other groups have the same housing experience as you? Why? Should everyone be treated in exactly the same way?

Would you like your children/grandchildren to live in this neighbourhood? Why?

What positive contributions would you say that have migrants made to this neighbourhood?

(if not already covered) Do you consider yourself to be a migrant?
Section Five: Summarising and concluding

If you could live anywhere in London/the UK, where would you want to be? Why?
What are the differences between there and here?

Close: Thanks for taking part and for hospitality (if appropriate): reminder about anonymity.