Migration Decision-Making and Immigration Policy:
A Qualitative Case Study of Migration from Iraq to Canada

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Contents

Abstract

Drawing on 18 in-depth, narrative interviews, this thesis responds to an emerging theoretical literature which seeks to understand how state immigration policy affects migrant decision-making with an empirical contribution. While economic and refugee migration are generally considered as separate phenomenon, this project samples research participants based on country of origin rather than entry status to Canada. It uses the case study of migration from Iraq to Canada following the 2003 US-invasion which provides an excellent opportunity to examine how immigration policies and migrants' access to capital affect decision making, as those fleeing held high capital endowments and employed diverse mobility strategies to seek safety (Chaterland 2008; Chatty and Mansour 2011b). The thesis finds that immigration policy affects the composition of migrants throughout the migration process along class and gendered lines, and that treating research on economic and refugee migration as part of the same process allows for further understanding of decision-making than is possible when following the dichotomy. It also provides evidence to the suggestion by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018) that a New Economics of Labour Migration Framework, which treats the risk of violence as another risk to be managed by a household, is particularly useful to analyze migration decisions from conflict regions. However, these findings suggest that this framework should also include how legal frameworks affect decisions, how capital affects the options available to potential migrants, and how gender structures mobility and subsequent decisions to migrate.

En utilisant 18 entretiens narratifs approfondis, cette thèse répond à une littérature théorique émergente qui cherche à comprendre comment la politique d'immigration de l'État affecte la prise de décision des migrants avec une contribution empirique. Bien que cette littérature considère généralement la migration économique et la migration de réfugiés comme un phénomène séparé, ce projet échantillonne les participants à la recherche en fonction de leur pays d'origine plutôt que de leur statut d'entrée au Canada. Il utilise le cas de la migration d'Irak vers le Canada après l'invasion américaine de 2003, ce qui fournit un excellent argument pour examiner la manière dont les politiques d'immigration et l'accès des capitaux aux migrants affectent la prise de décision, alors que ceux qui fuyaient détenaient des capitaux importants et utilisaient diverses stratégies de mobilité sécurité (Chaterland 2008; Chatty et Mansour 2011b). Il constate que la politique d'immigration affecte la composition des mouvements migratoires tout au long du processus, selon les classes et les sexes, et que les appels à la recherche sur les migrations et les mouvements de réfugiés dans le même processus permettent de mieux comprendre le processus décisionnel en matière d'immigration. Il apporte également des preuves à la suggestion de Fitzgerald et Arar (2018) selon laquelle un cadre pour la nouvelle économie des migrations de main-d'œuvre, qui considère le risque de violence comme un autre risque à gérer par les ménages, est particulièrement utile pour analyser les décisions de migration prises dans les régions en conflit. Cependant, ces résultats suggèrent qu'il devrait être élargi pour inclure la manière dont les cadres juridiques affectent les décisions, le capital affecte les options à la disposition des migrants potentiels et la manière dont la mobilité des hommes et des femmes et les décisions ultérieures d'émigrer.

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Introduction

Competing theories of international migration emphasize the importance of economic, social, and political motivations for movement where decisions are made in response to changing global conditions and informed by historically specific social and economic contexts (Massey et al. 1998; Richmond 1992). While much of the literature tends to follow state-designated categories, sorting those on the move as either economically or politically motivated, i.e. as 'migrants' or 'refugees', recent scholarship on migration from conflict regions highlights the complexity of motivations for migration in situations where an unstable political context can significantly inhibit economic opportunities (Crawley and Skleparis 2018). Labelled by some as the 'asylum-migration nexus' (Koser and Martin 2011), this scholarship observes that migrants with diverse motivations who move using various legal statuses flow through the same pathways, though this is hardly a new phenomenon (Richmond, 1992; Zolberg et al., 1989). As international migration is a distinctly political process which necessarily involves crossing state borders, in the context of increasing restrictions in immigrant-receiving countries (Massey 1999) the possibility of immigrating affects decisions to emigrate (Zolberg 1999).

An emerging line of inquiry considers how state policies which set specific entry requirements for immigration shape the characteristics of those who enter the country by a potential immigrant's class status and their ability to mobilize capital (Elrick and Winter 2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018; van Hear 2014; Stewart 2008). This literature begins to conceptualize how immigration policy shapes immigrant decision-making, though its contributions are mainly theoretical and centre on economic migration and does not consider how capital influences refugee migration or the pathways available to those fleeing conflict. Exceptions to this include work by Nicholas van Hear, who suggests asylum migration from conflict in Sri Lanka requires more capital than labour migration (2014), and Emma Stewart, who empirically demonstrates that highly-skilled health professionals from conflict regions were able to use multiple migration pathways to enter the UK, facilitated by their high capital credentials (2018).

In this thesis I examine how international migrants and refugees from Iraq, conceptualized as a conflict region following Stewart (2008), negotiate state legal frameworks as part of their international migration process. It is a qualitative case study which takes a novel approach, following calls by migration scholars to examine refugee and migration flows as related rather than separate phenomenon (Castles 2003, 2007; Crawley and Skelparis 2018;

Fitzgerald and Arar 2018) to sample based on country of origin instead of entrance category to Canada. Thus, it follows a nominalist assumption that state migration frameworks are socially constructed statistical categories used to sort potential migrants into groups; it begins from the assumption that following the state-assigned categories of practice in migration research limits understanding of how immigration policy affects migration decision-making (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018). This thesis adds an empirical contribution to, and its design is informed by, the above theoretical arguments, examining how migrants from a particular conflict region – Iraq following the 2003 US-invasion – negotiate legal frameworks as part of their international migration process. It asks how polices affect migrant decision-making; what social and economic resources come into play in these negotiations; and how incorporating legal frameworks in these inquiries further understanding of the role of the state in shaping international migration decisions. To answer these questions, I conducted eighteen in-depth, narrative interviews in the greater-Toronto area with individuals originally from Iraq, who fled after 2003 and entered Canada through refugee, economic, and family migration streams. All but one participant cited violence in Iraq as one of the main motivations for their flight, though eight of eighteen entered Canada through non-refugee channels.

This thesis contributes to the developing line of investigation about how migration policies affect decision-making with three main findings. First, it contributes empirical evidence to the theoretical arguments highlighted above—that immigration policy affects the composition of migration flows, which is particularly visible along class lines. Following Elrick and Winter, who found that state policies structure economic and family migration in Germany towards the middle class (2018), and van Hear, who argued that class shapes migrants' options to move, and their migration pathways and destinations (2014), this thesis finds that this pattern holds true for this case study. It further argues that transit migration, in addition to the final destination, is shaped by migrant class to advantage those who were able to mobilize their capital to enter more desirable transit states. Specific gendered policies in the Middle East influenced the decisions and strategies of families, but the data suggests that there is room for additional research in this area and on gender and skilled migration policy, where three out of six households who entered Canada through the skilled work program held female principal applicants.

Next, as evident throughout the findings, the thesis demonstrates that by treating the refugee and migrant dichotomy in migration research as related phenomenon – i.e. not following

the state-implemented categories of practice in sociological analysis (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018) – broader understanding of migration decision-making can be achieved. By designing the project to follow a particular case of migration from one country of origin to one destination country under a nominalist conceptualization of migration categories (Elrick and Lightman 2016; Hein 1993), the thesis traces the process of the diverse mobility strategies that the largely middle-class participants used to flee conflict (Bloemraad 2012). Thus, it recognizes that not all of those who fled necessarily sought refugee protection or used refugee migration channels, yet were still fleeing from a well-founded fear of violence (Zolberg et al. 1989), which would be missed in a project sampling on entrance category to Canada.

The third major finding suggests that the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) framework of decision-making as a household process to manage risks, as suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018), is particularly useful for conflict related migration decisions where violence is another risk to be managed. However, based on this thesis' contributions, which emphasize the role of capital in expanding migration options, for further understanding of migration decision-making from conflict regions, NELM theorization of decision-making should include how legal frameworks affect international migration decisions; how capital affects the legal (and illegal) options available to potential migrants; how gender affects mobility within the country that influences vulnerabilities to violence; and how gendered expectations shape international migration.

The thesis is structured by first situating the literature of international migration decision-making and stating the guiding research questions. Next, the methodology section explains the justification for and utility of the case study research design, the methods choice, and provides some necessary context of Iraqi displacement in the Middle East. The following chapters are based on empirical findings from the data and are organized following the typical stages of a participant's journey from Iraq to Canada.

The first empirical chapter situates migrants' class status in Iraq before they left and the context of violence which motivated their migration to suggest that, for these participants, flight was largely involuntary (Castles 2003; Richmond 1992). The next two chapters are further analytic in nature: the first introduces that migrants made strategic decisions following the household NELM model, where violence was one of several risks to be managed (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018), and then analyzes how these decisions were influenced by the ability to mobilize the

specific forms and combinations of capital. I first describe how capital influenced decisions for transit migration, then how transit country policy influenced why participants sought entry to a third country, and then how they were able to mobilize various forms of capital to match the specific positions offered by the Canadian immigration frameworks. The thesis ends with suggestions for further research before summarizing its main findings in the conclusion.

Literature Review and Research Question

International migration is a complex reaction to changing global conditions "in which ethnoreligious, social, economic and political determinants are inextricably bound together" (Richmond 1992:20), where motivations are mixed and historically rooted in specific social and economic contexts (Massey et al. 1998). Because of its inherent complexity, most international migration theorists agree that no single level of analysis is sufficient to explain the dynamics of migration processes (Castles and Miller 2003; Kivisto and Faist 2010; Massey et al. 1998; Portes 1997). Competing theories highlight the significance of either social, economic, structural or political determinants in decisions to migrate, with little agreement of the relative weight or level of interaction among them (De Hass 2011; Kivisto and Faist 2010). Because international migration involves crossing from one bounded nation to another, it is a distinctly political process where the availability of entrance categories – or lack thereof – plays an important yet understudied role in shaping its structure.

First, economic determinants feature heavily in theories of migration decision-making. The micro-level neoclassical migration theory models decisions to migrate as economistic, individual choices made by rational actors who migrate to where they can expect to receive higher wages (Massey et al. 1998). Following this theory, individuals move to maximize their utility to where they can be most productive, but only if they can expect a positive return to the necessary investments which include not only the material costs associated with travel and maintenance, but also the effort involved in learning a new language, culture, and way of life in the new country (Borjas 1989; Castles and Miller 2003). Under neoclassical theory, migration is caused by differences in wages and employment opportunities between states which are enough to generate migration flows from low-wage, labour rich countries toward countries with high wages and labour scarcities (Castles and Miller 2003; Massey et al. 1998). While economic differentials may be a significant driver of international migration, other theories of international

migration suggest that they are not adequate to predict migrant behaviour alone and argue that other social and political factors in addition to the desire to earn higher wages influence the decision to migrate (Castles and Miller 2003), as demonstrated by patterned migration flows that are not limited to differences between employment and income levels (de Hass 2011).

Another limitation of neoclassical migration theory is its focus on the individual as an isolated decision-maker (Kivisto and Faist 2010). Instead, the new economics of labour migration (NELM) and social capital theories highlight the relationship between economic and social determinants of decisions to migrate. NELM argues that migration decisions are made not by isolated individuals, but rather as individuals embedded in families or households to manage their socio-economic risks or to access alternative sources of capital under conditions of poverty (de Hass 2011; Massey et al. 1998). Social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social network connections in facilitating both decisions and opportunities to migrate, where capital is acquired through a migrant's social network(s) which eases the migration process and may help improve a migrant's social position upon arrival (Massey et al. 1993). Migrant social networks themselves are a form of social capital, which can lower the costs and risks of international movement by providing financial and settlement assistance and access to labour markets, making each subsequent journey easier for potential migrants (Bourdieu 1986; Kivisto and Faist 2010; Massey et al. 1998).

Others argue that macro-level structural elements shape the context which inhibits or encourages decisions to migrate (Boyd 1989; Castles and Miller 2003). According to segmented labour market theory (Poire 1979), international migration is demand-driven by the permanent labour needs of developed nations, labelled as the 'core' nations in World Systems theory (Massey et al. 1998). Under systems theory, an unequal distribution of political and economic power between countries in the 'core' and the 'periphery' countries structures international migration along certain ideological, military and lingering colonial links between states (Massey et al. 1998). However, these approaches have been criticized for being overly deterministic and that they portray migrants as passive victims to circumstance (de Hass 2011). Monica Boyd suggests that social networks can serve as a way of bridging the micro/macro level theoretical divides (1989), where structural factors "facilitate migration of specific social groups along specific geographical and legal pathways while simultaneously impeding it for many other

groups along many other pathways" (de Hass 2011:11). She argues that migration can be understood as a social product where decisions are made within the context created by macro-level structural factors and that networks provide the channel through which the social, political, and economic structures of sending and receiving countries influence individual decisions to migrate (1989:642).

While the above theories have proved useful in analyzing international migration throughout the industrial period, Massey et al. argue that they are not sufficient to explain the complexities of international migration in the post-industrial period (1998), where "it is precisely the control which states exercise over borders that defines international migration as a distinctive social process" (Zolberg et al. 1989:405). They have focused on the potential for migration flows without the legal and political structures in place which regulate migration, and largely do not account for non-economic migration. Though Massey and colleagues also argue that the distinctly political nature of crossing a border is the most important factor in determining migration flows (1998:14), the bulk of this research has been the domain of forced migration studies[1] which emphasizes the political determinants of international migration.

Though scholars acknowledge that the degree of volition in decisions to migrate generally falls somewhere on a spectrum between entirely forced or voluntary (Castles 2003; Richmond, 1993; Erdel and Oeppen, 2018), refugee migration is conceptualised as motivated by political factors outside of the migrants' control which entitles them to a distinct legal status (Hein 1993; Bakewell 2011). Refugee and forced migration studies take this focus because "the situation of refugees is uniquely political" (Bakewell 2011:17) where to be officially recognized as a refugee, individuals must cross an international border (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018; Hathaway 2007; Hein 1993). Unlike economic migration, the forced migration literature contains less theorization and instead tends to empirically document the main drivers of flight, which include state formation, state failure, ethnic conflict, genocide, generalized violence, and external conflict (Hein 1993; Neymayer 2005; Zolberg et al. 1989). Zolberg and his colleagues contribute a useful conceptualization of refugee migration as flight from direct or indirect political violence,

[1] For more on the debate on the boundaries of refugee or forced migration studies, see Hathaway in the *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20(3) 2007 and responses.

where assistance is only available outside the country of origin unless conditions within the state change (1989).

Recent scholarship on migration from conflict regions, however, highlights the blurring of political, economic, and social motivations for migration, though this is hardly a new phenomenon (Marfleet, 2011; Richmond, 1992; Zolberg et al., 1989).The complex relationship between drivers of migration has led scholars to conceptualize the 'asylum-migration nexus', where asylum and refugee migration occur alongside other migration flows (Stewart 2008); it is used to describe the phenomenon where migrants who may have diverse motivations for movement flow through the same transit and destination countries, thus making it difficult to distinguish between 'voluntary' migration and 'forced' displacement (Castles 2003; Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Koser and Martin 2011; de Hass 2011). This presents a challenge to bureaucracies that categorize migrants as they attempt state entry (Castles 2003; Collyer 2010) as distinct motivations are increasingly difficult to determine in a context where "political conditions can cause the economic problems that lead to migration" (Hein 1993:55). The relationship between economic and political motivations for migration becomes more complicated the longer the duration of conflict occurs, where political instability makes it difficult to earn a livelihood, which in turn generates further instability (Crawley and Skelparis 2018; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018). Because of this relationship Stephen Castles argued that it is necessary to link forced migration to economic theories of migration (2003) and as more recently emphasized by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018) and Crawley and Skelparis who argue "the decision to leave can only be understood within a wider political economy of forced migration" (2018:55).

Alongside economic, social, and political factors of migration determinants, immigration legislation plays a significant and under-theorized role in shaping international migration decision-making (de Hass 2011; Kivisto and Faist 2010; Zolberg 1999). As legal restrictions on emigration have decreased and there is little incentive for low-income states to repress emigration where remittance flows alleviate economic pressures, migration regulation largely falls on receiving state immigration policy. Thus, the extent to which they allow or limit entry can influence international migration flows significantly (Castles 2004; Portes and DeWind 2004; Zolbeg 1999) in what many scholars argue are increasingly strict contemporary border

policies[2] (Massey et al 1998; Mainwarning and Bridgen 2016; Schuster 2005). In any case, receiving states seek to control movement across their boundaries (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004) and Koser finds that states "are reasserting political control over borders, immigration, and asylum" 2007:249). Thus, receiving country government policy continues to function as a significant deterrent to international migration (Zolberg 1999:91) and prevents the movement of most potential immigrants (Portes and DeWind 2004).

In addition to the role of policy in shaping migration at the macro-level, there is an emerging body of work which analyzes how states affect international migration at the micro-level of decision making, where the possibility of immigrating affects decisions to emigrate (Zolberg 1999). Scholars who work within the 'mixed' migration flows of the asylum-migration nexus are focusing their attention on the increasingly fragmented nature of migration journeys, which Mainwaring and Bridgen and Stewart attribute to increased border control measures in immigrant-receiving countries (2016; 2008). As states shift their policies with the changing conditions of the political economy, migrants must adjust their strategies to fit the legal regulations available to them (Massey et al. 1998). These strategies can shift over the course of extended journeys which may involved multiple internal and external migrations, where migrant goals and the opportunities to achieve them change with time (Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Mainwarning and Bridgen 2016; Schuster 2005). Thus, this research seeks to understand migrants' strategies for working within the constraints of available immigration policies. Schwarz argues that legal conditions play a significant role in the migration process where migrants "navigate their legal statuses by actively choosing between different mobility options that are 'offered' by the different mobility regimes they have encountered" (Schwarz 2018:6), though all migrants are not impacted in the same way by changing circumstances (Wissink et al. 2018). While Belloni suggests that social networks did not seem to be a key determinant in decision-making (2016), Wissink et al. argue that that social networks, through their exchange of financial, material and knowledge resources, explain how migrants are able to respond to changing conditions and thus help shape their journeys (2018). While social networks may play a significant role in international migration decisions, there are other approaches to theorizing how resources and other forms of capital affect international migration decisions.

[2] Though De Hass (2011) argues the extent to which this is true.

Recent research focuses on how class and compositions of capital shape access to legal migration pathways and influence migration journeys, where state migration policies limit state entry and create stratified classes of migrants. Thus, individuals with specific characteristics such as a higher education or family connections within the state at an advantage (Erel 2010; Massey et al. 1998; Stewart 2008) in a global context where highly-skilled workers are recruited by governments searching for specific professions (Castles 2003; Boyd 2013). According to Nicolas van Hear, migrant capacity for successful navigation of international migration streams is influenced by class and socio-economic background, which "helps us understand who is able to move and who cannot, and the hierarchy of destinations that different migrants are able to reach" (2014:S117).

A Bourduseian approach to capital in international migration, as distinct from individual human capital approaches (Erel 2010), includes economic, cultural, and symbolic capital as well as social capital, and demonstrates how opportunities for international migration are stratified on local, national, and global levels. Cultural capital, which Erel argues plays a significant role in international migration and settlement (2010), can be institutional, including formal educational credentials; embodied, which is tacit or internalized cultural signals; or objectified, which includes engagement with material objects (Bourdieu 1986; Elrick and Winter 2018) formal education, tacit or internalized cultural signals, and consuming material objects (Bourdieu 1986; Elrick and Winter 2018:23). Under this approach,, what is distinct about capital from mere resource use is its convertibility; that the different forms of capital – economic, social and cultural – can be mobilized and converted from one form to another to shape migrants' ability to cross international borders (Bourdieu 1986; van Hear 2014). As such, different combinations of capital determine a potential migrant's social class, which shapes the processes and outcome of migration, and thus the migration route and the destinations they are able to access (Erel 2010; Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018; van Hear 2014). Migrants who hold or can mobilize stronger volumes and combinations of capital can reach more desirable destinations in the international status hierarchy (Wallerstein 1991 in Elrick and Winter 2018) and use preferable forms of migration – i.e., legality, mode(s) of transport, transit countries, periods of immobility, and entry status (van Hear 2014). Thus, capital endowments and their convertibility shape the whole process of migration, which is stratified along a hierarchy of destinations based on the capital that migrants can mobilize. For example, Umut Erel argues that migration-specific cultural

capital shapes female migrant trajectories from Turkey and in turn is mobilized into new forms of cultural capital migrants can use for their settlement (2010).

Others use Bourdieu's theory to analyze international migration from the level of state policies. Elrick and Winter argue that immigration policies create positions available to migrants in the transnational social field which are only accessible by those holding the correct volumes and combinations of capital, and thus they shape the composition of economic and family migrants in Germany towards the middle class (2018). Similarly, Jaeeun Kim argues that state policies and gatekeepers constitute 'migration-facilitating capital', which are the variety of resources that facilitate legal and illegal migration. She focuses on the "fundamentally relational, political, and cultural processes through which various resources are turned into migration-facilitating capital of differing values, (re)producing inequality in cross-border mobility and in the distribution of related material and symbolic goods" (2018: 263). Like van Hear, for Kim migrants' strategies are influenced by the capital they possess which determines their individual positions in the field. Both papers discuss the concept of national capital, identified by Erel (2010) as a form of symbolic capital based on the economic and political position of the state in the world system. Elrick and Winter argue that the transnational field positions available to migrants created by immigration policies are influenced by the national capital the potential migrant brings, but that the limitations of a holding low national capital can be compensated for by high levels of individual capital characteristics (2018); for example, an IT professional from a low status country can mobilize their credentials and transnationally valid work experience to enter Canada as a skilled worker.

While Bourdieusian approaches provide a useful framework for examining how uneven distribution of capital stratifies access to international migration, most studies of capital in migration assume the economic/forced migration dichotomy and do not explicitly engage with the influence of capital on conflict migration. Van Hear includes a brief description of how, given the high cost of asylum migration from conflict Sri-Lanka to refugee-receiving countries, this option is only available to affluent migrants and less affluent Sri Lankans leave as migrant workers (2014). Emma Stewart, while not explicitly employing Bourdieu's toolkit, through a novel quantitative study argues that because of increasingly restrictive asylum policies in Europe, professional migrants with high capital endowments are able to enter the UK under

alternative legal channels to asylum and refugee categories; "the implication then is that only the most educated wealthiest individuals, who possess both social connections and financial resources to pay for smugglers, have the ability to flee persecution" (Stewart 2008: 225). Her research is part of the limited empirical contribution to the largely theoretical literature on the influence of immigration policy on migration streams which suggests that capital provides options to individuals fleeing conflict, which are otherwise unavailable to those who do not hold significant capital. However, *how* migrants from conflict regions negotiate the legal entrance pathways shaped by states and how capital influences this migration remains understudied.

This thesis aims to contribute to the developing line of investigation that examines how immigration policies in countries of destination influence migrant decision making over the course of their journeys. While the literature highlighted above suggests that migration policy affects migration flows, and therefore the individual decisions of migrants, how migrants negotiate these restrictive legal channels is under-studied. Thus, this thesis asks how entrance categories available to migrants affect decision making. In other words, how do migrants negotiate legal frameworks when seeking to enter a country? What social and economic resources come into play in these negotiations? And, how does incorporating legal frameworks further our understanding of the role of the state in shaping international migration decisions, alongside known economic, social, and political determinants?

Methodology

This project is a small sample, process tracing case-study which uses "in-depth knowledge to follow the sequence of behaviours and events that led to a particular outcome" (Bloemraad 2012: 511); it traces participants' processes of their emigration from Iraq to immigration to Canada, and their explanations of what individual, network, and institutional-level factors shaped these trajectories. Thus, I used in-depth narrative interviews scheduled to follow participants' migration process from the conditions and context of their lives in Iraq at the time of their decision to leave until their arrival in Canada.

Iraqi-Origin Migrants to Canada as a Case Study

Migration from Iraq following the 2003 US-invasion is an excellent case study for this research project because it illustrates both the complexity inherent in contemporary international migration flows and the diverse mobility strategies that individuals and households use to flee

conflict. Following Emma Stewart, conceptualizing Iraq as a 'conflict region' understands that conflict is a driver of migration but that not all of those fleeing fall under convention refugee status, nor do they necessarily seek protection or use refugee migration channels (2008:227). Thus, the sample is based on country of origin rather than entrance category to Canada. This follows the nominalist logic that migration categorisation are social constructions created by the state (Elrick and Lightman 2016; Hein 1993) and avoids using categories of practice as categories of analysis (Brubaker and Cooper 2000) which limit the possibilities of understanding migration decisions.

It also understands that conflict related migration in Iraq is not limited to the immediate aftermath of the invasion and ensuing sectarian violence, but has occurred over multiple 'waves of displacement' through decades of internal political persecution from Ba'athist Arabisation policies and externally imposed economic sanctions, where at the time of the US-invasion Iraqis were the third largest refugee population in the world (Chaterland 2005). Thus, what Chaterland refers to as a historical, geographical and social continuum of outmigration from Iraq constitutes a diaspora that expands over several countries in the Middle East, Western Europe, North America and Australia. These diaspora groups create social networks that, following the social capital theory of migration, eases movement of people, capital and information which has facilitated the subsequent movement of Iraqis (Chaterland 2008; Fagan 2009; Masey et al. 1998) and continues over more recent waves of migration (Chatty and Mansour 2011a) driven by IS and continuing militia violence and intimidation. Thus, there is no theoretical justification to close the date of emigration for this project, as the findings further demonstrate that social capital facilitates migration of Iraqis to Canada.

As the project and its research questions are interested in the effect of class on migration, the composition of migration streams from Iraq provides further justification for its utility as a case study. Mass flight from Iraq did not immediately follow the invasion as anticipated by observers and humanitarian actors, when emergency camps were set-up and subsequently dismantled (Chatty and Mansour 2011a). Instead, this instance of Iraqi involuntary migration occurred in waves consisting of different segments of Iraqi society. The first, anticipating the invasion, were largely the highly-educated and wealthy former Ba'athist regime elites who were well connected in the region and thus experienced relative ease of mobility closely following the

invasion itself; the next was the educated middle-class, who consisted of trained professionals, technocrats and academics, who were subject to threats and victims of kidnapping, assassinations and disappearances, along with non-Islamic religious minorities (Al-Tikriti 2010; Chaterland 2008). The final, and largest wave occurred after the bombing of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra in February 2006 which ignited sectarian violence and the deterioration of general security, which continued until around 2008 (Al-Tikriti 2010; Arar 2016; Chatty and Mansour 2011b). Most of the sectarian violence occurred in urban Baghdad, where those previously living in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods were forced to flee and thus reshaped the city along sectarian lines (Boyle 2009; El- Shaarawi 2011), though political and sectarian violence influenced other major cities and provinces as well (Fagan 2009). UNCHR reports and qualitative research cite that the majority of registered refugees and research participants originated from Baghdad and up to 70 percent of Iraqi refugees in the Middle East were university graduates (Boyle 2009; Chatty and Mansour 2011b; El-Shaarawi 2011; Pascucci 2011; Saltsman 2011).

The majority of Iraqis fled to neighbouring Jordan, Syria or Egypt and settled in the urban areas. The context of reception and policies assigned to Iraqis in the Middle East were influenced by Palestinian population in the region, where the title of 'refugee' is commonly understood to mean a stateless Palestinian (Fagan 2007). Thus, researchers argue that the historical experience of housing large numbers of exiled Palestinians in camps for multiple generations structured state responses to Iraqi migration flows, which treat them as 'guests' or 'temporary visitors'. These policies were implemented to discourage long-term Iraqi presence, where establishing refugee camps like those that housed the Palestinian population would be to acknowledge that their stay was more than temporary (Fagan 2009; Chatty and Mansour 2011b).

Policies in the Middle East created different positions for Iraqis seeking refuge in each country; they structure who can enter, who can stay, and how they live – i.e. clandestinely or legally. In 2007, the UNHCR considered all Iraqis nationals as prima facie refugees, so that individuals from the designated region are presumed to hold a credible claim are not required to undergo the full status determination process (Fagan 2009; Pascucci 2011). However, Jordan and Syria are not signatories to the 1951 UN convention on refugees but allowed UNHCR to engage with Iraqis in limited capacities within their borders. Though not part of the Convention, Syria,

along with Egypt which is signatory, recognized Iraqis as holding prima facie status, but both states allocated UNHCR as responsible for documenting refugee status and restricted refugee access to economic and social rights (Fagan 2009; Pascucci 2011). For a short period following the invasion, Iraqis were able to enter these states through renewable tourist visas with relative ease, and visa overstayers were generally tolerated without sanction. However, following terrorist attacks from Al-Qaeda in Amman, and in response to growing unregistered Iraqi population, Jordan began limiting single men and boys in 2006, and in 2007 virtually closed the border to new entries of Iraqi foreign nationals (Fagan 2009). Egypt followed suit in severely limiting entrance visas to Iraqis between 2006 and 2008 (Pascucci 2011), and Syria around 2007-2008 until 2010 (Chatty and Mansour 2011b). The states also limited the availability of legal residency; in some states it was contingent on economic capital or proof of residency – which was difficult to obtain in informal markets – and only provided temporary residence which was subject to renewal, and Iraqis were generally not granted the right to work save for entrepreneurial and commercial investment (Chatty and Mansour 2011b). This suggests that securing temporary residency in a safe country outside of Iraq may be classed.

Iraqis also implemented diverse mobility strategies which made it difficult to categorize their movements in the Middle East. In addition, the diaspora's general class status and related anxieties caused some in the humanitarian regime to question their legitimacy as persons in need of protection (Chatty and Mansour 2011b). While the UNHCR considered all Iraqi nationals as prima facie refugees in 2007, the literature on Iraqi displacement in the Middle East acknowledges that many did not seek protection or asylum with UNHCR. Instead they relied on savings, remittances and pensions along with other mobility strategies of circular and brief return migration to Iraq to maintain livelihoods, only turning to UN protection as their savings depleted. Researchers suggest Iraqis used these strategies for various reasons which included distrust in the ability for UNHCR to maintain confidentiality in cases where many Iraqis fear for their personal or family safety; anticipation that their stay in these states are temporary and they would return to Iraq when the situation becomes more stable; not considering themselves as a refugee group where the term is associated with loss of the state of Palestine; and the desire of those from middle-class and professional backgrounds to maintain their status (Arar 2016; Chatty and Mansour 2011b; Fagan 2009; Pascucci 2011; Saltsman 2011). Sixteen percent of Saltsman's participants reported declining an offer for resettlement from the UNHCR, and one family pulled

their profile after learning of the poor assistance services in the United States. Despite recognition that many Iraqis in the region did not follow conventional refugee flight strategies, research on Iraqi displacement tends to focus only on refugees – those who interact with UNHCR (though Pascussi 2011 includes Iraqis economic migrants in Egypt in her sample). Beyond these three countries of first asylum, Iraqis also migrated en masse to the Gulf States (Chatty and Mansour 2011b) where no right to asylum is given. Instead, they enter as ordinary migrants[3] through existing visitor visa regulations and are only able to obtain residency if they can secure and maintain work contracts or marry a citizen.

The nature of Iraqi migration flows into Canada provides further justification for the case selection. While the population of Iraqis entering Canada through refugee channels significantly increased following the invasion, Iraqis entering Canada as 'voluntary' economic and family class migrants continued to make up a significant portion of Iraqi immigration during the same period; during the period of 2001-2010 14,770 Iraqis entered Canada as refugees, and 6,380 entered as economic migrants (Statistics Canada 2016a). As almost half of the number of refugees used non-refugee channels during the same period, this suggests that individuals who were motivated by the conflict to leave Iraq may have adopted different migration strategies to enter Canada. As Stewart quantitatively demonstrated that individuals with health professional training from conflict regions with refugee motivations were able to enter the UK through alternative legal pathways to asylum routes, I would like to see if a similar pattern holds true in the Canadian context. While immigration and asylum policies and trends vary between the two states, in Canada near 34% of people of Iraqi origin hold university degrees, versus 28% of the total Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2015), thus demonstrating that the population holds high capital credentials which advantages potential migrants seeking entry to Canada (Elrick and Winter 2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018; van hear 2014). To add an empirical contribution to this literature on how migrants negotiate the legal frameworks over their decision-making I conducted in-depth interviews with Iraqis who entered Canada through the economic, family, and refugee classes.

[3] Ordinary in the sense of not being entitled to the assistance available to recognized refugees

Methods

In-depth interviewing is the appropriate method for this project because its underlying assumption is that individuals have a range of motivations for migration that are not represented by the entrance categories available to them; that is, using a close-ended survey method of interview would be inappropriate in its design to analyze a context of migration from a conflict-region where participants were anticipated to have used alternatives to refugee migration pathways to enter immigrant-receiving third countries. Instead, in-depth interviews allow participants to explain why and how they used one migration stream rather than another and thus allows me to examine the factors taken into account in these decisions which range from identity, class, social networks and gender to physical distance and visa availability (Bloemraad 2012). While survey-style interviews can cover economic, geographic and demographic characteristics of participants to make arguments about how this influenced their migration decision-making, through in-depth interviews I can ask questions of social network influences and the knowledge available about transit routes and third country policy that are not able to be identified otherwise. The synchronicity of in-person interviews is another strength this method has for process-tracing, as it allows me to ask open-ended questions and then to probe participants for further inquiry or clarification in this necessarily complex process of international migration (Bloemraad 2012). This allows for a rich depth of understanding and analyzation of my theoretically-motivated research questions (Lamont and Swindler 2014). While I chose interviews over focus groups before beginning interviews because of the potentially sensitive nature of involuntary international migration, where some respondents may have been personally threatened, experienced violence, or used 'illegal' pathways to exit from Iraq or enter another state, my experience in gaining entry into the field and the participants' dispersion across several municipalities in the region suggests that having participants attend focus groups would have been a difficult task to manage for this population.

The selection criteria for this inclusion in the sample were that participants had to be over the age of 18, had left Iraq anytime after the 2003 US-invasion, and had achieved legal residence in Canada, i.e. they were not awaiting an asylum hearing nor had been denied legal asylum. This follows ethical concerns that participants would not be in a vulnerable legal position, but also follows the project's logic of exploring how migrants negotiated legal frameworks – if they were still waiting for approval or refusal, the process is not complete. Interviews were conducted in

the greater-Toronto area (GTA), the region with the highest population of Iraqi immigrants in Canada, where between 2001 and 2016 5,510 Iraqi foreign nationals entered Canada as economic migrants and 11,780 as refugee class immigrants (Statistics Canada 2015).

Entry to the Field

Gaining entry into the field, perhaps unsurprisingly, proved more difficult than I had expected. I first contacted multiple immigrant and settlement organizations in the greater-Toronto area to ask if it would be possible to ask for their help in meeting Iraqi members of their client base, though in general these did not prove fruitful – likely because they were too busy serving their clients to answer the emails of yet another student. However, someone from a settlement group in East Toronto, where I was staying, informed me that most Iraqis in the region resided in the Western municipalities in the GTA, so next I postered middle-Eastern grocery stores in Mississauga and, with the help of an employee at Mississauga public libraries, was able to poster all branches of the library system. The posters advertised that I was looking for volunteers to participate in my research project studying how different legal categories affected migration from Iraq to Canada, the criteria I was looking for in participants, that their participation was entirely voluntary and that their information would be kept confidential. My first three interviews came from participants who contacted me after seeing the posters at different Mississauga library branches. I was also able to conduct several interviews in the common areas of these library branches.

Next, I tried to recruit participants through contacting more Iraqi-specific settlement and service groups found through online searches, and one professional network in particular[4] was very helpful. One of the board members of the group, though not eligible himself to participate because he left Iraq in the 1990s, invited me to an event hosted by the group where he individually introduced me to those he knew would fit my research criteria. I conducted two interviews during the event, and another arranged to meet me at a later date. Snowball sampling ensued for the remaining interviews, and I owe a particular debt to the participants who were kind enough to share my contact information in some of the whatsapp groups[5] they shared with other Iraqis, which quickly spread my contact information to a much larger group that I would

[4] Which can not be named for confidentiality

[5] One participant said when she saw my information, someone commented in the group that I was very lucky because she had seen my information in a couple of other whatsapp groups as well.

have otherwise been able to reach. While snowball sampling limits generalisability of research findings, it proves useful in researching populations that may be hard to reach such as this one. As stated above, existing research demonstrates that the nature of migration from Iraq during this period, which included individual targets of violence, may leave participants to fear for family members remaining in Iraq and to experience distrust or interview fatigue after undergoing the refugee status determination process (Saltsman 2011; Arar 2016). Thus, individuals in this population are more likely to be willing to speak to me if introduced through a member of their social network who can vet my credibility and trustworthiness (Putnam et al. 1994). The importance of trust in accessing this population was further illustrated when my aunt, with whom I was staying in Toronto, asked one of her colleagues if they had any contacts within the Iraqi diaspora, who answered that I would have a difficult time finding Iraqis to speak with me. Because of the nature of the sampling, this population is not representative of the Iraqi diaspora population in Canada, however this project is not designed to claim representativeness of the population and instead aims to contribute empirical data to theoretical arguments of migration decision-making.

The interviews followed a schedule designed for consistency and so that participant answers could be compared. Interviews lasted between thirty minutes and an hour and a half, with most lasting near an hour. I began each interview asking participants if they could tell me about their lives in Iraq before they left, which usually led them to tell their migration story. Interviews focused on their reasons for leaving, where they went, with whom they migrated, how they migrated, why they chose one transit country over another, and why they chose to migrate to Canada. I made sure to emphasize to participants that their personal information would not be shared, and they would not be made identifiable, though only one participant, who left Iraq relatively recently was concerned for his confidentiality, while the majority, having settled in Canada for some time, were indifferent about confidentiality and said they did not mind if I used their real names. The only individual named in this project is Omar, as individuals with this name faced further vulnerabilities and threat from Shi'a militias during the height sectarian violence in Iraq which played a role in his migration (Gosh 2006; Wong 2006), though I took care to ensure his information is not identifiable.

Interviews were conducted in English and audio-recorded, and in two cases participants' young adult children attended the interview with them to provide translation where necessary and also contributed some of their own thoughts on the material (Interviews 9 and 12). They took place between July and October 2018. The English language was a limitation to two interviews which could have been improved with a translator present (Interviews 3 and 11), though both of these participants contacted me to volunteer. I had an informal meeting with one more Iraqi asylum claimant, who did not want to be recorded because he felt his English was not strong enough, but also played the role of informant and led me to two further recorded interviews. Language was not an issue the remaining participants, most of whom had lived and worked in Canada for several years. While the interview was not designed to probe into any sources of trauma or experiences of violence, which I stated before we began, I also included that I was interested in listening to anything they had to say so may interviews contain some data about experiences of violence in Iraq when participants desired to share them of their own volition. This necessarily was an emotional experience for some participants, where some cried – especially when describing instances where friends and family members had been killed or murdered. This likely also led to some data limitations, as I felt uncomfortable probing further if the participant was experiencing an emotional reaction or if the I felt the topic was inappropriate to the context of the interviews. In listening to interviews during the data analysis phase, there were also some questions and topics I wish I had questioned further unrelated to the emotional context of the interview which I hadn't realized in the moment.

In all cases, participants were incredibly generous with their energy and information, and most participants were interested into why I had chosen to study Iraqi migration, especially when there seemed to be so much emphasis on Syrian refugee resettlement to Canada; as Interviewee 8 said, "Yeah. I'm glad you guys are doing a study on us". All participants came from middle class backgrounds and most had tertiary education, which is not representative of all Iraqis in Canada and is likely a bias in sampling as described through the snowball method above. Individuals' class backgrounds likely influenced both their comfort with the interview process and the thought of being part of a research project, and thus influenced who contacted me (Lamont and Swindler 2014). For instance, many participants who had attended graduate school expressed to me that they were interested in participating because they remember being students themselves and wanted to help a young researcher. Almost all participants stated their concern at one point

during the interview that what they were sharing with me was relevant and beneficial to my project, even while some remarked that many of the questions I asked were similar to the refugee status determination or asylum process. Several participants expressed gratitude at being reminded of their story and for the opportunity to share it with me.

Data Analysis

The data analysis phase took place over several months. After each interview, when possible – there were three interviews where timing and location constraints did not allow – I created memos including summative, theoretical, methodological and personal notes (Aurini et al. 2016), paying special attention to Kristen Luker's advice to ask, "what is this a case of?" (Luker 2008). I manually transcribed interviews during and after recruitment, writing analytic memos throughout this process which proved useful in making connections through interviews during the data collection stage.

I used MaxQDA software to code interviews for data analysis, and began initial coding which included process, concept, in-vivo, descriptive and holistic coding methods in simultaneously (Saldaña 2016). I began by first reading through interviews followed by a line-by-line coding approach (Charmaz 2008), but after several interviews found that this found it more useful to code larger portions of the data together, sometimes based on responses to the questions asked. For example, I asked interview participants, "who stayed behind in Iraq?" and coded the answers as "stayed behind" even if they expressed that everyone they knew left, though the data was cross-coded with other codes, for example the in-vivo code for "had a chance" – where, if you "had a chance" to leave, you left. At this point, I was unsure how to proceed, but a paper recommended to me by my supervisor, Professor Jennifer Elrick, by Deterding and Waters (2018) proved most useful in thinking through the coding and data analysis process. As it suggests, my project design and data analysis procedures, like most qualitative research, did not fully follow the approaches of grounded theory, and instead my analysis was a combination of applying pre-conceptualized codes based on my theoretically-driven research questions and interview guide, but allowed for inductive coding (Deterding and Waters 2018; Bloemraad 2012). While I had some emergent themes in mind, I found it most beneficial to listen again to the recorded interviews while following along with a printed version of the interview – a time consuming process perhaps not realistic for a larger project – but the

physical process allowed me to think through conceptual connections and then make further analytic memos organized by the concepts that emerged. I also found it useful to revisit some key pieces of literature on the topic of the themes I was working with at the time, of migration capital, class, and household-level risk management strategies. Thus, coding and theming the data was not a liner process that began after open line-by-line coding, but an was an iterative, work in progress which began during data collection and transcription by creating analytic memos, continued throughout the data analysis. I took no official attempt to triangulate the data, as the project was not intended to search for any veracity of participants' accounts but rather examined their perceptions of and responses to the institutional context of state immigration policies to empirically examine a developing theoretical line of inquiry. However, when observed within the existing research on Iraqi refugee and migration movements after the US invasion, the data presented in this project largely follows recorded trends and analysis of the context of violence and conflict that motivated migration, migration patterns, characteristics of the population, and methods of migration.

RESULTS

Now begins the results section of the thesis, based on the interview data gathered in the Greater-Toronto Area between July and October 2018, and is organized according to the stages of migration. It begins by contextualizing participants' lives in Iraq before their final flight that demonstrates their relative membership in middle-class and higher status groups, which this thesis argues shapes the strategies they take to migrate. It then situates the context of violence which all but one participant – Interviewee 9 – state is a primary motivation for their decision to leave Iraq. Thus, it shows that following an analytical distinction between state-designated categories of immigrant and refugee limits understanding of how policy affects migration decision-making. Next, it demonstrates that Fitzgerald and Arar's (2018) suggestion that the NELM decision-making model for refugee migration, which includes the risk of violence as one of many risks to be managed by families in a time of conflict, is a useful framework to analyze flows within the asylum-migration nexus. However, it further argues that immigration policy influences the decisions to leave and thus to directly enter another state, structuring the avenues for migration; the opportunity to access these state policies, which create an international hierarchy of transit states, are shaped by social class and capital endowments. The chapter on decisions to migrate suggests that for those participants who were able to choose their country of

permanent residence as Canada, in other words, those who did not enter Canada as GARs, precarious residency and lack of access to legal work served as 'push' factors for participants to seek entry into a third country. The data also suggest that having social connections in Canada functioned as a 'pull' factor to seek entry into Canada rather than another immigrant-receiving country with a significant Iraqi diaspora. The following chapter shifts to how migrants mobilize their capital to enter Canada through the various positions set by Canada's specific immigration policies (Elrick and Winter 2018) with a particular emphasis on capital and asylum migration, which migration scholars using these frameworks generally do not examine. Finally, the next chapter presents data which suggest that the interaction of immigration policies and migrant capital structure the choice of destination available to Iraqis, which presents an opportunity for further comparative research of the case of migration of Iraq across different immigrant-receiving states and how gender shapes mobility trajectories, along with further research on NELM's applicability to other contexts of conflict migration.

Motivations for Migration

As discussed in the literature review, motivations for migration are difficult to classify as wholly voluntary or involuntary, and this project contributes empirical evidence to this point. The assumptions underlying the project design – that the labels of refugee and economic migrant are statistical categories used by migration managers to sort entrants to the country rather than a title that reflects their distinct qualities – necessitate a discussion of the reasons participants gave for their initial migration out of Iraq, where all but one of the research participants cite violence as one of the main motivations for leaving.

However, participants also demonstrate how political and economic factors together shape decisions to leave affected areas (Crawley and Skleparis 2018). Beyond the violence and fear for their family's safety as the most important factor, a common concern expressed in both reasons for leaving and in choosing a destination was the access to education that would be available for their children and the ability to safety access that education, for instance a guarantee that their children can commute to and from school securely, which could not be achieved in Iraq. As other literature on Iraqi displacement in the Middle East, these families were concerned with maintaining as close to the quality of life they enjoyed before they left as possible which was largely urban, educated, and middle class (Pascucci 2001). Interviewee 14, who entered Canada as a government-assisted refugee, explains how the generalized violence intersects with

the lack of educational and future economic options for his family, especially after his father received a direct threat of violence from a militia group and was forced to quit his work as a university professor:

"Well, yeah. Because after occupation, it's…a lot of things happened. Like I ah…for me, my family, we were living in Baghdad. And…there is no security. I cannot go to school. I cannot go to anywhere. Because there is a lot of terrorists happen there. So um…we decided to go. It was very dangerous, by like the – our roads – the street to Damascus by bus. But we just…we were um…like, ready to…to have this challenge. And we just went there, and decided because like I told you, there is no security, no electric. There is no future." (Interviewee 14)

In this section, I also establish the context of life in Iraq for participants before they felt compelled to leave. It first describes participants' social class, largely middle class, educated, and urban to contextualize their migration and class aspirations after flight and demonstrates that participants' main motivations for migration from Iraq was the context of violence, which together provide evidence that their migration from Iraq was largely involuntary[6][7].

"That's the…maybe if…it didn't go very bad in Iraq and things didn't deteriorate, maybe we – we wouldn't take the offer to come here, honestly, but…because where we came from, we had a very, very luxury life back there. Which we didn't think of leaving and then coming here unless it was not safe. Safety is more important than anything else." (Interviewee 5)

Interviewee 5, a successful business owner, was not alone in stating that his quality of life before leaving Iraq was quite good, and like others suggested that they would not have considered leaving Iraq under other circumstances. During the interviews, I first asked participants if they could tell me about their lives in Iraq before they left in order to get a sense of their general/perceived socio-economic status and lifestyle before their flight. All participants but the youngest three had at least a bachelor's degree before they entered Canada[8], with most holding professional or Master's degrees[9] and worked as architects, engineers, IT specialists, or other accredited professionals. Many have work experience at a university or have close family

[6] Of course, given the retrospective aspect of the interviews, how participants perceived the importance of motivating factors, their aspirations to leave, or the quality of their life could have shifted over time in attempt to create a coherent narrative, or in reflecting on the context of Iraq before and after the invasion (Stewart 2008), but descriptions given in the interviews largely match media and scholarly reports. In addition, as stated in the literature review this thesis aims to contribute to a theoretical argument and as such does not search for veracity behind participants' interviews.

[7] It also serves to remind the reader of the humanity of participants behind the theoretical arguments about what influences migration decisions and ability, who were forced to leave their home and lost friends and family in violence.

[8] One has since received an engineering degree having studied in three countries, another is enrolled in an engineering program in Canada, and the third is studying in college.

[9] Two received their training in Jordan

members who held positions in universities as lecturers or faculty members – one of the many groups targeted during the high period of sectarian violence as repeated throughout the interviews and in the literature (Al-Tikriti 2010; Fagan 2009; Pascucci 2011; Saltsman 2011). It was at this point that most participants discussed the role that access to education and career-building played in their lives and that they wanted similar opportunities for their children. Many were property owners and proud of the lives they had built in Iraq for themselves and for their families through their years of career-building. For example, Interviewee 6 lived in Baghdad for her entire life before leaving Iraq where she earned a Master's degree in architecture, was married and had three children. Her husband, an engineer, lost his position because of his religious affiliation during a post-invasion government restructure and moved to find work in the United Arab Emirates. She took pride in her work experiences in government, in an NGO and as a university lecturer she held after he left, but the risk of living in Baghdad became too much and she decided to join her husband; for her "something change your…future goal when it's something related to your kids and your safety."

The only participant who did not come from an urban area was also a business owner, forced to flee when their village was invaded by IS following the fall of Mosul. As an electrical engineer, he owned a business and three properties and had plans for his children to all attend university. During the interview, his son – who accompanied for translation – said, "life before we…we leave Iraq was like just perfect" (Interviewees 12)

Many told me that they were living a "normal life" before the invasion – a comfortable life where their immediate needs were met, they had access to steady work, and plenty of leisure time to spend with family and friends. If you did not participate in politics or interfere with the system, you could expect the reasonable stability and safety required to build this lifestyle, though this is not to ignore that this peace came at the costs of harsh reprisals for transgressions under the previous government, and was not held by most minority ethnic groups in Iraq, especially the Kurdish North (Al-Tikriti 2012). This common opinion was likely influenced by the relative social class of participants and their Muslim ethnic/religious affiliations that until after the invasion did not serve as a source of conflict, and further demonstrates that findings based on data collected from this sample can not be generalized to all Iraqis.

This evidence gives reason to believe that because participants have such high levels of cultural and economic capital, they were not in a position where migration for economic gain would be a rational decision. Because of participants generally were urban, middle-class and held professional positions in Iraq, research on international migration and class suggests they may have been better in a better position to leave the danger and violence in Iraq following the invasion (Elrick and Winter 2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018, van Hear 2014). The thesis will return to how participants' capital endowments helped facilitate their exit from Iraq and further migration in the next chapters, but first it situates the context of violence that participants state fuelled their decision to leave to further suggest that their flight from Iraq was not voluntary.

Why left: Context of Violence

"So, for example um… bombs on a daily basis or weekly basis that we know. Um, we go out and uh, you might get kidnapped anytime, you don't know. Um… (pause) really, whenever you leave home, you don't know if you're coming back or not. But it became…part of life, so we kind of accepted it." (Interviewee 8)

The majority of research participants lived in Baghdad at the time of the invasion (15/18), which experienced most violence following the invasion, particularly between 2005 to 2008 (Agnew et al. 2008; Boyle 2009). Following the existing research, participants also stated the invasion itself wasn't as harsh as expected, and especially not when compared to this period of sectarian violence, which drove many of them to leave. As interviewee 8 above, most describe the situation during these years to have been so unpredictable that if and when they left their homes, there was no guarantee of safe return; going outside to work, run errands, or engage in any leisure activities meant they faced a risk of violence .These risks included indiscriminate car bombing, explosions, arrests, kidnapping by militias, or the chance of being caught in crossfire between American forces and various Iraqi groups, which Interviewee 2 experienced in Baghdad while returning from lunch with her mother and her aunt, and Interviewee 5 during one of his trip to Amman; he stated, "if you're in the street and you see an American convoy, stay away." As documented in the media and the Iraq Body Count project, numerous dead bodies on the street were a regular occurrence during the period of high sectarian violence where, "I mean at – in 2000…7 or 6, it was easy everyday to hear news saying that we found fifty bodies easily. Sometimes you hear the news two hundred bodies were found, because people were killed and thrown away um, somewhere." (Interviewee 9).

"Mostly, the sectarian violence hit Baghdad the most. So, people from other provinces didn't leave. Baghdad especially, mixed neighbourhoods, where there was a lot of…tensions, they left. There were Sunni neighbourhoods, Shi'a neighbourhoods, Sunni neighbourhoods, Shi'a neighbour – and there were mixed neighbourhoods where whoever was stronger managed to kick out the people that would like – they would come in my neighbourhood – it was a Sunni neighbourhood. They would go to every single Shi'a house and they would write on – on the front, 'leave, you are not safe. We'll give you one week, leave'." (5, landed immigrant)

As Interviewee 5 describes, even within Baghdad, certain sections of the city experienced more violence than others, particularly in ethnically mixed areas where warring militias occupied whole neighbourhoods and eventually forced near total segregation along the Sunni and Shi'a Muslim divide (Agnew et al. 2008). Militias who were inside or occupied neighbourhoods, for example, "my neighbourhood, was like… was fully occupied by Al-Qaeda" (Interviewee 5), targeted anyone of the opposite sectarian affiliation, making it very dangerous to travel within the city. As Interviewee 15 states, "let's say if I'm-if I'm Shi'(e) I cannot go to a Sunni area. If I'm Sunni I can not go to a Shi'a area. Which is very sad. We didn't have that before" (Interviewee 15). Interviewee 18-2's two brothers, Shi'a Muslims living in a Sunni neighbourhood, were forced to leave during the night after receiving death threats; Interviewees 18[10] also have two friends who were killed because of their religious affiliation. Interviewee 2 describes the method of attributing either Sunni or Shi'a affiliation to an individual based on their last name when forced to show identification at the many militia checkpoints around the city, "they were killing, um, young men…based on last name. That was so popular at the time, we know so many people, like so many of my brother's friends and family, they were just killed based on their last names". Interviewee 9, however, was working in a high-level bureaucratic position in Baghdad that required him to move throughout the city. To mitigate the risk that came as a consequence of the neighbourhood segregation, his position allowed him to carry two separate IDs with different family names which each indicated a separate affiliation. This enabled him to move more safely through different neighbourhoods when it was necessary for his work.

Violence was not only targeted at those with opposite sectarian affiliates. At various periods throughout the conflict, doctors, scientists and university faculty were targeted by militias, along with anyone perceived to be working with the Americans or post-invasion

[10] This interview took place with two participants; a married heterosexual couple

government. For example, one of Interviewee 13's brother was a doctor who left when physicians were being targeted and Interviewee 14's father left his university position after receiving a threat of violence. Some participants received a direct threat of violence – two for their work in the Green Zone in Iraq, and the other for criticizing a militia group he thought was responsible a bombing that killed one of his friends, who narrowly avoided being detained by the militia who knew of his usual route home from work.

Situating the context of flight from Iraq is important in this thesis for several reasons. First, because it illustrates the level of violence that was a factor in almost all of these decisions to migrate and thus justifies the choice of sampling based on country of origin rather than entrance category to Canada. Because 8 out of 18 participants entered Canada through non-refugee channels, it empirically demonstrates that migration status is situational and achieved through negotiation with the state entry categories available to the individual seeking permanent residence in Canada. The combination of UNHCR designated prima facie refugee status to Iraqis 2007 and the descriptions and personal experiences of violence contained in the data, most participants could likely have credible claims to refugee status; if I only sampled participants of Iraqi origin who entered Canada through refugee channels, I would lose rich data about migration processes for those fleeing violence who were able to leverage their capital to enter through other avenues.

Thus, there is an argument that participants can be *analytically* classified as refugees according to Zolberg et al.'s theoretically grounded conceptualization, as "persons whose presence abroad is attributable to a well-founded fear of violence, as might be established by impartial experts with adequate information… who can be assisted only abroad, unless conditions change in their country of origin" (1989:33). However, similar to other findings on Iraqi forced migration in the Middle East, many did not consider themselves as refugees for various reasons according to class, migration route, or historical understandings of refugees as stateless Palestinians (Chaterland 2010; Fagan 2009; Pascucci 2011), so throughout the thesis I refer to participants as 'migrants' unless they entered Canada as through refugee channels.

Decisions to Migrate

For most participants, though the context of Iraq, and especially Baghdad, was highly volatile, the decision to leave is only taken after a risk assessment which determined that there was a

reasonable expectation that life outside the country is better life than inside[11]. However, the options to exit Iraq and necessarily enter another state (Zolberg 1999) are not equally accessible to all and thus the likelihood of being able to enter and reside in a transit state influences the decision to leave. As described in the literature review, recent migration research engages with Bourdieu's theorization of forms of capital and its concurrent ideas of field and position to examine how its accumulation and mobilization shapes migration, "particularly who is able to move and to where" (van Hear 2014: S100). Because immigration policy entrance pathways create particular positions in a transnational migration field, only those with the required specific combinations of capital can inhabit these positions (Elrick and Winter 2018:23). Thus, those who hold the correct quantities and compositions of capital are able to pursue different migration strategies (Kim 2018); capital shapes the capacity to make choices along all stages of a migration journey, not only the final destination a migrant can reacch (van Hear 2014).

NELM: Household Risk Management

Following the suggestion of Fitzgerald and Arar (2018), who suggest that the NELM framework is particularly useful for explaining refugee and conflict migration decision-making (2018) guidelines, the strategies participants used to manage the risk of violence largely follow this household decision-making model. The NELM framework can be employed by treating the risk of violence, including a direct threat to one's life, as a risk to be managed along with economic and livelihood risks that derive from the conflict which are more difficult to separate the longer a conflict becomes (Castles 2003; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018; Richmond 1992); as Crawley and Skleparis argue, "conflict, particularly where it becomes protracted, undermines the ability to earn a livelihood and feed a family by killing primary breadwinners, destroying businesses and making it impossible to travel to work." (2018:53). A NELM approach also recognizes that households do not always manage the risks of violence by moving every member, especially in the case where one is a target of violence, and also that not all members who have the opportunity to leave will leave (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018).

This thesis empirically demonstrates how a risk management framework explains the complexity of decision-making inherent in migration from the violence of conflict regions, but what it adds is a suggestion that this should explicitly engage with available migration policies

[11] This does not include those who were forced to flee an IS invasion in a matter of hours

by providing an explanation of how this population negotiated the necessary legal barriers over the course of their migration process to Canada. It argues that specific endowments and combinations of Bourdieu's forms of capital allow migrants to access state migration legislation – legally and illegally (Elrick and Winter 2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018; Stewart 2008; van Hear 2014), or those who have higher amounts and combinations of capital are at an advantage to those who do not throughout all stages of migration – leaving/entering another initial state, the ability to live in that state for an extended period of time, and the ability to enter a third state with access to permanent residency. It also suggests that gender intersects with both norms of mobility and in the management of legal frameworks along these stages. These two approaches work well together because, because as Kim argues, a Bourdieusian approach assumes that migrants are strategic actors, without subjecting them to economistic bias, who attempt to navigate a transnational social field (2018) in which:

> "Household decisions are shaped by culturally elaborated expectations of the different vulnerabilities faced by family members depending on their age and gender; reactions to shifting policies at home, in neighboring countries, and in countries of potential asylum or resettlement; and efforts to maintain an income stream and to protect their assets while laying the long-term educational groundwork for economic mobility." (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018:10)

"So, so, my dad was still insisting, 'we shouldn't leave Iraq, we shouldn't leave Iraq', until like 2006, like you see dead people on the street. So, by that time and even in our street two young men were killed, we only—like *everyday* we hear someone get killed, as if it is a good morning, we get used to it, we are not shocked anymore. So… uh, so he is agreed, he is okay now to move out of Iraq." (13, skilled worker)

Thus, for some the risk of violence only outweighed the risks involved in leaving the country after the situation became close to or affected them personally. Like Interviewee 13 above, some participants made the decision to leave only after family members experienced a violent event or the violence entered their neighbourhoods. As she describes above, even after her two brothers felt compelled to leave Iraq for the UAE, the event she recalls which triggered her family's decision to leave was the murder of two young men on her street – when the proximity of violence could no longer be ignored, they felt they had to leave Baghdad for their safety. Interviewee 6 decided to leave after having three of her children experience close calls with violence while attending school; her youngest daughter had a dead body dropped at their

school, one son experienced an explosion at a gas station near his school, and the other had a militia group occupy the school during an exam period. Interviewee 10's youngest daughter had an explosion at her school and while she was not physically injured, she suffered some after-effects of shock so the participant felt she had to leave her job to stay with her daughter, and that the best option for their family would be to find other work opportunities in another country.

While violence is clearly a salient factor in the decision to leave Iraq, it is not the only risk that households must take into consideration. Participants are aware of the difficulties they will likely encounter as part of their migration, which depending on the first country outside of Iraq they enter, includes the risk that they may have much less opportunity to support themselves financially than if they stay. For example, in Jordan most Iraqis can't access legal work permits, and those in this sample who sought UN protection stated that they didn't receive much assistance from them and instead relied on their savings, selling items of value or property, on salaries of family members still working in Iraq, or on pensions received upon retirement from positions in Iraq.

Social Class Shapes Available Options

For many participants an important factor in the decision to leave, as suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar's quote above, is the ability for the children to access good-quality education in a safe environment. It appears that, at least for the participants in this sample who are largely from the urban, educated middle-class, a quality university education holds inherent value and also feeds further opportunities to succeed, especially important in an uncertain future where credentials may need to be transferred internationally. They are aware that their own cultural capital offered them more options for this migration than those who lacked post-secondary education, and that by their children also being able to access this form of institutional cultural capital they will be better equipped with "a set of pre-emptive rights over the future" (Bourdieu 2000:225, in Kim 2018); education is "the only good weapon you have to prove yourself" (Interview 7). For example, while stating that the first concern was safety for her children, Interviewee 1 stated that the next was that her children could access a better life, which would include receiving a university education. However, as described in the above section where commuting in Baghdad was fraught with daily uncertainty, this education couldn't have been safely accessed in Iraq, where Interviewee 1 states, "in that circumstance I will never let my daughter go to university – I will never." Interviewee 7 also discussed the risks in commuting to

and from the university as a factor to seek safety and her Master's education in Jordan, but also said that because of the targeting and subsequent kidnappings, killings, and forced migration of university professors, the quality of education she was able to receive in Iraq was diminishing.

Thus, after deciding that the risks of staying outweighs the risks of leaving Iraq, the first barrier to overcome is determining which state a family can enter and how they can enter – both in terms of the physical travel and in terms of how to gain access to the country. All participants in the sample entered the second country using 'legal' means, i.e. entering at border crossings using their own travel documents and legitimate visas. As prior research highlighted, most migrants in this sample initially entered transit countries by acquiring tourist or visit visas, except for one who moved to Egypt with his family in 2004 where his father accepted an offer of employment from a social network contact[12].

Also included into this decision was whether participants considered their move to be permanent or temporary – despite them all eventually becoming permanent. If the decision to leave was thought of as a temporary move, then the initial risk taken was less than that of a decision to leave permanently; if you intend to return to your home and livelihoods, then there is no need to plan to financially support a family for an indeterminate amount of time. However, the ability to leave for even a short period of time implies at least a middle-class family economic status, where some economic capital is required to pay for transportation for the family, the cost of accommodation and food while staying outside of Iraq, and enough savings to take time off from employment.

For example, Interviewee 8's family did not intend to stay outside of Iraq long term but left for Egypt for a respite from the violence in Baghdad after his father was injured from a car bomb. However, the move quickly became permanent when Egypt stopped issuing entrance or tourist visas to Iraqis. He says, "and I couldn't even travel to Jordan, because Jordan wouldn't give you – like you could not travel anywhere. Now you're stuck in Egypt. Yeah, but stuck in Egypt was better than being stuck in Iraq." This demonstrates how the changing immigration policies of the state, where the lack of available options to *exit* Iraq by necessity of *entering* another state thus significantly shifted the options available to them, and contributed to their

[12] See appendix 1 for participant transit and status description

decision to stay in Egypt much longer than they had anticipated. Since Interviewee 8 was attending university before they left Iraq, his family decided that since they couldn't return, they would continue living their lives as close to normally as possible, so he enrolled in university in Egypt – an option not available to all Iraqis in Egypt at the time and one that granted him temporary residency. He states:

"It was like you know, safe place or a dangerous place? It was a super easy decision (laughs), yeah. It was hard though for a lot of people. We kind of, could somewhat afford it. Ah… a lot of people wouldn't. A lot of people couldn't. So… yeah. That's what we basically did." (8, family class)

Thus, though the decision to stay was influenced by a shift in the legal frameworks, this example also demonstrates how capital allows further options, even under shifting legal circumstances. His family's significant accumulated economic capital allowed him to remain in Egypt as a student, paying international tuition, without having access to a source of income.

Besides Interviewee 8, others who stated that they didn't intend their leave from Iraq to be permanent used various strategies to maintain their livelihoods while living – what was intended to be temporarily – in transit countries. Using temporary work contracts or separating the breadwinner from the rest of the family were options taken by those who viewed their flight from Iraq as permanent as well as temporary; it removed the risk of violence for most family members while also allowing relative stability in standard of living if the household breadwinner was able to maintain their normal income. This demonstrates the main concept in the decision-making processes of participants seeking to leave Iraq as suggested above: life needs to be better outside the country than in. This means that to make the decision to leave, there needs to be a reasonable expectation that you will be able to first to enter another country, and next that to be able to maintain a livelihood while living there – if you can flee to Syria and live safely, but don't have savings to support you while waiting for resettlement and will live in poverty but can maintain an income if you stay in Iraq, then the risk – based on evidence from this group – may not have been worth the flight.

Another significant factor in the decision to leave Iraq includes an assessment of the potential opportunities to eventually enter a third country with access permanent residence. Even for those who fled their homes from IS invasion to other cities within the country, these participants only decided to leave Iraq anticipating that they could reasonably expect to find refuge in a third country. For instance, Interviewee 4 was staying in Kurdistan with his family

and waiting to return to Mosul, because at previous occasions they had fled the city temporarily and returned before its complete occupation by IS. When it became clear that return to Mosul was no longer an option, they left Iraq for Jordan to apply for UN protection. However, this strategy was influenced by his social network contact, a former colleague living in Canada, who had discussed the possibility of private sponsorship to him. Interviewee 4 was aware that it was necessary to seek asylum or refugee protection in a country outside of Iraq to be eligible for sponsorship to Canada, and left Iraq because he thought this was a viable option for his family.

"You know, I have maybe two options. Or…just one option, actually. To go to Turkey, get a visa, like a visitor visa, then at that time when I reach there, I have to get a…a like a…permanent visa, or something like that. Or, I apply for—to stay more there. And I have to…apply for UN aid, United Nations, to go to another country, to live there because Turkey they are also, they are not going to give us citizenship, so it's not easy to live there. So…and the United Nations is a…just I have to wait. My appointment may be…they said around ah…six years, seven years, ten years sometimes happen like that. And ah…yeah it's *so* hard to stay there for ten years and…working—job there is very hard, I have to know Turkish and anyway if, also if I know Turkish, still it's not easy to work there.

A: Mhm.

R: Yeah. Especially for us—for them it's not easy. Ah…for Turkish guys, they are working in other countries and it's not easy actually for them. So…for us, more difficult. And ten years for my life and my children's life, it's not easy. What should I do until I get ah…I get from UN something to go to USA, or Canada, or Australia. Okay? I think just these three countries they accept refugee from UN. So…that—this is a long way. So I decided to, to go apply for a US visa." (16, asylum claimant)

Here Interviewee 16, who was forced to flee Iraq following a threat against his life, describes how he made the decision of where to seek asylum, which balanced the fear for his family's bodily safety with concerns about access to their future livelihoods which follows the risk management model presented above. He had the option to claim asylum in Turkey, which at the time in 2016 housed 2.9 million refugees (UNHCR 2017), but he was aware of the uncertainty and lack of economic opportunity this would bring. While he knew he had to leave the country urgently, his position in the field, as an educated, urban middle-class bureaucrat, allowed him to take an alternative strategy in his forced migration, which offered him better opportunities than he would have been able to access in Turkey (Kim 2018). As explained on page 36, he was able to enter the US as a tourist with his family directly from Iraq because of the combination of his own economic and cultural capital with his previous experience in the US, which is not available to most Iraqis.

Thus, this chapter examines the household decision-making strategies participants used in order to negotiate the legal frameworks necessary to navigate over the course of their

international migration. While violence has been important in the decision to leave for all but one participant, their class status as described in the previous chapter – including both economic and ascribed group characteristics (Weber 1978; in Elrick and Winter 2018) – influenced both their concerns for their migration journeys (Pascucci 2011), and the positions available to them over their journeys; i.e., the quantities and combinations of capital they hold shapes the strategies available to them along a hierarchy of available international destinations and modes of migration (Kim 2018; van Hear 2014).

The Role of National Capital

However, as described in the literature review, the international field positions available to Iraqis fleeing violence are not based on solely individual traits. As Elrick and Winter argue following Wallerstein (2018), nation-states are status groups and thus designate "national capital" according to an international hierarchy whose value is determined by the immigration policies of states (Erel 2010). At first, I assumed that as all participants originate from the same country of origin, they held the same volume of lower-status national capital, and that their individual traits could "increase opportunities for members of otherwise low-status international groups (Elrick and Winter 2018: 22), particularly through Canada's skilled worker program. However, Kim suggests that asylum policies in immigration states may reverse the national capital of particular countries of origin. Thus, national capital for this country of origin, which can be ethicized and classed (Elrick and Winter 2018:23), is not static and can create different positions for a potential immigrant depending on the state's immigration policies and the mode of entry chosen.

First, for a period of time the national capital of Iraq granted prima facie refugee status – at least in Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt – which allows legal residency and, depending on which sorts of vulnerabilities the refugee was considered to hold, potential access to UNHCR aid programmes and opportunity for resettlement in a third country. As further elaborated below, the national status of Iraq is beneficial when seeking asylum in a third-country and thus adds credibility to an asylum claim. Because of its history of violence and unstable political leadership, which increased its national capital to an asylum claim, it would appear that Iraq's national capital creates a lower position available in the field for Iraqis seeking economic migration to Canada. However, the population of Iraqis outside of Iraq has been documented to

hold high levels of institutionalized cultural capital, with Chatty and Mansour citing that 70 percent of Iraqi refugees in the Middle East were university graduates (2011:104). While this thesis argues that the capital held by this population largely influenced their ability to exit Iraq, this also suggests that Iraqi diaspora populations are well-endowed with cultural capital which may influence their national capital in positive ways when seeking economic migration. As "the ability to exchange institutionalized cultural capital depends on the 'credit of renown' accorded to the country where the credentials were obtained" (Elrick and Winter 2018: 26), credential recognition is tied to a country's national status. While only a small percentage of my sample, those who entered Canada as skilled workers from the UAE with Master's training in IT and engineering had their credentials recognized and did not require further training – though those with degrees in health care occupations did require some courses and further training to reach equivalency. Thus, an Iraqi passport appears to offer different national capital, depending on the position available through the desired migration pathway.

Managing Risks of Transit

The decision to leave Iraq was determined by assessing the risk of violence of living in Iraq against the risks inherent in leaving – both of which are influenced by the family's position in the field depending on their volumes and combinations of capital (Kim 2018). A family's class also influences decisions of where to enter when leaving Iraq depending on the state's respective entrance, residency and access to employment which in turn influences the ability to access and maintain livelihoods while in exile.

For example, the only way to acquire residency in the UAE is to be sponsored by a spouse or parent which can only be enacted if the sponsor holds a particular profession or salary, or to hold a work contract which allows for temporary legal residency for its duration. While Jordan also offers temporary residency based on the ability to mobilize specific volumes of economic capital, as demonstrated below, and the ability to claim asylum status, opportunities for Iraqis to legally access employment were much more limited (Fagan 2009)**.** As this section demonstrates, the immigration and residency policies of transit countries structure who can access life outside of Iraq and for how long which benefits those with significant accumulation and combinations of the forms of capital. While Elrick and Winter analyze how this structures immigrants towards middle-class national status groups in countries of permanent immigration

(2018), this section suggests that a similar pattern holds for transit countries near conflict regions; evidence suggests that the ability to flee and maintain life outside of violent and protracted conflict is stratified by social class and the associated access to the forms and combinations of capital. First I will explain the strategies of those who initially intended for their migration to be temporary, then how their relative access to convertible forms of capital enabled them to manage the changing nature of their situations based on both the deteriorating security situation in Iraq and changing visa regulations in transit countries before moving on to examine the strategies of transit migration that participants who left Iraq intending no return used in their migration.

Those participants who saw their flight from Iraq as temporary went either to Jordan or Egypt, when border policies of both countries were relatively open to Iraqis and allocated them temporary tourist or guest visas (Chaterland 2010; Fagan 2009). Those who went to Jordan had family members either residing in Jordan at the time or were planning to take the journey with them, which influenced their decision to go to Jordan rather than another transit state (Interviewees 1, 2, 5). However, Interviewees 1 and 5 also mentioned that there was a difference in cost of living between Jordan and Syria, which also housed large numbers of Iraqis fleeing the state at the time. While only one member of the sample, a GAR, fled to Syria, the interview data suggests that there were classed differences between those who went to Syria and those Iraqis who went to Jordan, which prior research confirms (Chaterland 2010; Fagan 2009). Thus, this would suggest that political and economic conditions in transit countries created variation among which countries Iraqi migrants were able to enter. The composition of this sample contributes further evidence to this pattern. As all participants are 'successful' migrants having obtained permanent residence in Canada – which this thesis argues is facilitated by their access to forms and composition of capital – and come from middle-class households it follows that the transit countries most frequented by the sample are at the top of the status hierarchy. As presented in Appendix 1, 5 participants transited through Jordan and 3 through the United Arab Emirates, which require the highest capital endowments for residency of the options available in the Middle East, and 3 transited briefly through United States, which requires particular forms of and significant capital and rites of institution, examined further below (Kim 2018).

Some of the families who did not intend to leave permanently managed the risk of violence in Iraq against the need to maintain their livelihoods by having the family breadwinner remain in Iraq while other members left the country to escape the conflict. Interviewee 2 left Iraq for Jordan with her mother, Interviewee 1[13], and her brother, intending to return to Iraq while her father continued to work in Baghdad. Her father was able to further mitigate of living in his home neighbourhood, Ghazaliya, which was particularly violent due to the presence of an American joint security station (Lee Anderson 2007), by moving to his brother-in-law's house. This was in a safer neighbourhood which was also closer to his workplace and thus lowered the risk of violence both at home and during his commute to and from his job. Maintaining this source of income enabled the family to send their two children to university and reside legally in Jordan under student visas, however Interviewee 1 was in the country illegally for a period after overstaying her tourist visa. In 2008 the father retired from his position at a university and received his pension so he joined his family in Jordan, where they applied for asylum with the UNHCR, as stated that Jordan did not accept the prima facie status assignment for Iraqis (Fagan 2009), and received minimal legal rights to stay in the country as temporary guests without access to work or permanent residency. At the point of their decision to claim asylum with the UNHCR, after seeing the situation in Iraqi steadily deteriorate since they had initially fled, the family decided that they would seek resettlement from Jordan and sold property in Iraq to finance their stay in Jordan.

The father's management position at a university gave the family a salary that could support those living in Jordan and pay the university fees for their children – a clear example of how economic capital allowed most family members to live outside of Iraq, away from the violence. When their plans changed in response to the lack of resolution in Iraq and they sought resettlement outside Iraq after the father's retirement, this family was able to rely on the breadwinner's pension in addition to the economic capital from the property they sold in Iraq[14]. While this family did not purchase property in Amman as others did to access temporary residency, their access to economic capital allowed them to undertake the initially temporary strategy of separating their household which financed the children's university tuition, then to

[13] They were included as separate interviews because while they left Iraq together, they entered Canada under different entry categories at different times, see page 48

[14] Which interview 5 suggests increased in value after the invasion

wait for resettlement in Jordan, where they did not receive financial support from the UNCHR.

Interviewee 1 was not the only participant to mention the lack of financial support or other forms of aid from the UNHCR, which further demonstrates the importance of economic capital in this case of involuntary migration. Some participants describe friends and family members who felt that they had no other option but return to Iraq after spending time in a transit country without receiving aid nor seeing any reasonable expectation for an opportunity to enter a third country. Given high populations of Iraqi and other refugees in transit countries, the beneficiaries of UNCHR programs were selected on basis of vulnerabilities, which prioritized "women on their own, many whose husbands have been killed in Iraq, and other isolated individuals; households where breadwinners are unable to work; children who find difficulties joining Jordanian schools; former victims of torture, etc" (Chaterland 2010:16). Thus, for those who sought UN protection but received little or no aid, saw no opportunities for resettlement, were unable to access work and who did not have significant savings or a way to mobilize economic capital, there was little other option but to return to Iraq; at least at home they could access secure citizenship rights and legal work, even if the situation was still unsafe. For example, Interviewee 12's elderly parents and brother did not have access to enough economic capital to continue living in Lebanon and decided to return to Iraq after receiving no funding from the UNHCR or resettlement opportunities, where "they don't have any hope that they can get out of Iraq again" (Interviewee 12: Child).

If there are no options for onward migration, as structured by state immigration policies, and no ability to mobilize enough capital to maintain a livelihood in exile, there is little option but to return home for many of those living outside of Iraq. Interviewee 14, who recalled the UN office in Damascus as incredibly crowded the day he registered his family's refugee status, discussed how many people did not receive resettlement and the effects of this, "But ah, they don't have the visa. I don't know why…we were lucky to have the visa (pause). We were lucky and ah (pause) right now they're back home because (pause) they couldn't get the visa". Interviewee 5 furthers this when he stated, "Some people went to Syria and went back to Iraq because they didn't do anything, they spent all their money and they didn't get anywhere." Interviewee 8 shared that before knew he would be able to enter Canada through family reunification he was planning to move back to Iraq from Egypt when he finished university because of residency regulations in Egypt; he wouldn't be legally allowed to work in Egypt, and

though his family had some significant economic capital to send him to university while outside Iraq, without access to work he couldn't afford to live in the country indefinitely. This was the option that many of his friends took where, "basically, the ones that didn't leave…ah…they ended up going back to Iraq."

Participant 5's family took a similar strategy to Participant 1's family to mitigate the risks of violence in Baghdad while also maintaining the family income. He was the main breadwinner of the family as a business owner and property manager in Baghdad, which gave him significant economic capital to both purchase property and maintain the necessary bank deposit in Jordan so his wife and young children could maintain residency. Thus, he was able to enter the country once a month to visit them between 2003, when they relocated as what they thought would be temporarily to Jordan, and 2006 when they received their Canadian residence visa. While existing research and participants who stayed in Iraq suggest that unemployment increased during the period of sectarian violence (Chatty and Mansour 2011b), Participant 5 shared that his financial situation improved after the invasion, "because there was a lot of money pumped into the economy by the Americans" where "the fact that [he] could speak English was [gave] me this privilege that I could talk to them and – and make a deal happen" when they were renting property in Baghdad for their operations and government restructuring. His embodied cultural capital of ability to speak English, paired with the position he already held as a business owner and property manger, enabled him to further increase his economic capital which allowed his family to maintain, and possibly improve, their class status outside of Iraq.

Because of their significant economic capital, he was also able to pursue different strategies to mitigate the risk of travel between Amman and Baghdad when ground transportation became too dangerous. After being caught in crossfire between the American army and a militia group which destroyed his car, among other close calls on the inter-country commute to maintain both a relationship with his family and financially supporting them, his position allowed him to afford the costs of airfare between the two capitals. His risk assessment was different than others in the sample precisely because of his accruing economic capital, which also provided him increased incentive to continue work in an increasingly dangerous Baghdad. This was especially dangerous if one was working with the Americans, yet his increased economic capital *as a result of* working with the Americans also allowed him to continue brief

respites from the violence by being able to purchase the expensive plane tickets each month, which wouldn't be accessible to others, for example to a low-paid translator. However, at the same time as he described the money that came into Iraq with the Americans, he included that "on the other hand the security was not there". For him, the risk of violence eventually became too high to continue his lucrative work in Baghdad – but he was able to make this decision only because he had the opportunity to leave which they had not planned. By chance, his sister who worked at an immigration law firm in Jordan had pressured him to apply to immigrate to Canada in 2001, even though at the time he says they had no reason to want to emigrate, and the family received their Canadian visa in 2005 and moved to Canada in 2006; he states, "totally, like we didn't even think about it for…and for our luck, it…if it only took one year, we would not have come" (Interview 5).

Thus, the social capital of having a sister work at an immigration law firm who was able to use her cultural and embodied capital to file the application, combined with the economic capital necessary to pay for the immigration application and then move across continents facilitated the opportunity to make the decision that maintaining work in Baghdad was too risky; the opportunity to move to Canada significantly changed their risk assessment. Like Interviewee 2, Interviewee 5 also sold property in Iraq to finance the move and their expenses while settling in Canada, further increasing the positions available to him in the transnational migration field as they had more economic capital at hand to mitigate the financial risk of being unemployed for a period upon an international move (Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018). If he had been in a more precarious financial situation, for example if he had been working in Baghdad for mere subsistence to keep his family alive, it is reasonable to suggest that – beyond not having the necessary capital for an immigration application to Canada – Interviewee 5 would not have been able to make the decision that it was too dangerous to keep living in Baghdad without conceding access to an income, nor would they have been able to take on the costs associated with a cross-continent move.

Following the NELM theory, the above families used the strategy of sending family members abroad to mitigate the risks of violence while a breadwinner stays in Iraq to maintain an income as what they thought to be a temporary solution to the risk of violence, but participants who left Iraq intending no return adopted similar strategies as well. Interviewee 7's

family also followed the same pattern of sending the children to live in Jordan where her grandmother and aunt were living since 2003[15], while their father maintained his position in Iraq as an engineer, and her mother travelled between Amman and Baghdad. Her mother had applied in Jordan to enter Canada as a skilled worker in 2006, but they delayed their move to Jordan until 2007, after Interviewee 7 had finished her undergraduate education in Baghdad and her younger brothers finished elementary and high school. Their family had considered leaving earlier to join her grandmother, but she was given the choice of where she wanted to finish her Bachelor's degree. While she says that education was free in Iraq, "for [her] family it wasn't an issue. They said well, uh, for safety reasons, for so many reasons, just do whatever you wanna do", so she decided to remain in Iraq until she finished so that she wouldn't lose any credits in an international transfer, and so that she could graduate with her friends. When there is no direct threat against anyone's life, the risk of generalized violence – which she and others describe becomes normalized over time (Interviewees 8, 13)– is worth the gain that comes with waiting to finish educational milestones. Or, the risk of leaving education which include losing non-transferable credits or losing important relationships outweighs the risk of generalized violence. Although, again this family's endowment of economic capital, and continued access to it, provides options not open to all in the field (Kim 2018). It meant that for Interviewee 7, continuing education outside of Iraq was also an option she had to choose from, whereas it is logical to assume that for others leaving Iraq, where university tuition is free, may also mean leaving behind opportunity for tertiary education, thus limiting potential for accumulation of cultural capital and possibly future employment options both in the country and outside.

Like Interviewee 5's family, her father's employment also allowed the family to purchase an apartment in Amman as per temporary residency requirements, which enabled her mother to travel between the states. As they left Iraq intending eventual onward migration, they were aware that there would be a significant period of time before they learned the outcome of their visa application. So, in addition to financing the apartment necessary for the family to secure temporary residence status in Jordan, her father's salary was sufficient to allow the family to pay university tuition for two children while Interviewee 7 completed her Master's degree, and the third child attended high school during their wait for their Canadian immigration application to

[15] Because they lived near Saddam's former headquarters in Baghdad and their neighbourhood was heavily affected by the invasion.

be processed. Thus, the children were granted access to legal status in the country with their student visas, while accruing further institutionalized cultural capital themselves.

Thus, like Interviewees 2 and 8, another strategy for children to access residency in the transit state was to enroll them in university, so that they were in the country legally under student visas. However, high tuition costs – especially when compared to the previously free university education in Iraq – made this another option only available to those families with significant economic capital and the cultural capital necessary to navigate the requirements of university registration in another country.

Interviewee 7's household used further deliberate action in order to remain eligible to enter Canada under her mother's application as a dependent child by intentionally using extra time to complete her Master's degree. At the time of their application to Canada, an adult child could be considered dependent on their parents if they were financially dependent and enrolled in full-time studies[16]. Thus, they held the necessary embodied cultural capital to shape their strategy in response to with the Canadian immigration policy regulations which dictate which types of relationship count as family (Fitzgerald and Arar 2018), or, which set the positions available to potential immigrants based on their age and economic profile (Elrick and Winter 2018).

Other families who left Iraq permanently used strategies suggested by the NELM theory to manage the risks of violence experienced by family members by having a member find a contract in the United Arab Emirates, where entrance and residence requirements are more strict for Iraqis than those required by other transit countries in the Middle East. Interviewee 6 was sponsored by her husband[17], who found work in the UAE after losing his position in the provisional government because of his religious affiliation.

To find a work contract in the UAE, as Interviewees 10 and 13 did, it is first necessary to secure a visit visa to enter the state, which is obtained from an invitation from a legal resident; thus, Iraqis seeking to enter the UAE must first mobilize members of their social network to provide the invitation which serves as a form of social capital that can be converted to migration-

[16] Which has since changed, see: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/notice-changes-definition-dependent-child-2014-08-01.html

[17] Though she did secure several of her own work contracts during her time in the UAE

facilitating capital (Kim 2018). Interviewee 10 received an invitation from her sister in Dubai following an explosion at her daughter's school as highlighted in the context of violence section, and Interviewee 13 sought entrance to the UAE to find work so that she and her parents could join her two brothers in Abu Dhabi, though for her the process was not as straightforward. After her brother's invitations from Abu Dhabi were rejected, an uncle in another province was able to invitation so that she could enter the country. Having family members in multiple provinces in the UAE granted her a larger field from which she could draw to mobilize the social capital necessary to overcome the barriers to enter the UAE, thus providing her further advantage against legal constraints. Entrance via a visit visa allows a stay of three months, during which the two non-sponsored migrants needed to find work contracts to obtain their residency. Thus, after using their social capital to gain entry the country, Interviewees 10 and 13 mobilized their cultural capital to find work in their highly-skilled fields of engineering and information technology where they held respective graduate training, which was then converted to legal – but temporary – residency in the state.

Thus, the UAE's strict sponsorship and selective residency policies "creates substantial heterogeneity among potential immigrants within the same country in terms of the kinds of capital they possess" (Elrick and Winter 2018:29). While Elrick and Winter argue that immigration policies shape and stratify entrance to immigrant-receiving countries, data presented in this thesis would also suggest that this pattern holds for transit countries as well. Entrance and residency policies of transit countries in the Middle East for migration form Iraq also fall along an international hierarchy of status groups (Elrick and Winter 2018), which then has implications for further migration and can affect the migrant's ability to gain further capital to aid in third-country entry, which I further examine in the next chapter. Thus, the UAE's immigration policies create strict positions in the transnational field that are only accessible through a combination of social capital via an entrance invitation – based on the national capital of Iraq – and the cultural capital of educational credentials to find work in the country's highly-skilled occupations available to Iraqis, where "Dubai, you know, attracts ah, highly qualified people" (Interviewee 10), but, as I suggest below, may provide these migrants with further advantage for onward migration

3 participants in the project transited to Canada briefly through United States[18], before make an asylum claim at the Canadian border. Because of the position implied by Iraq as a national status group in the international hierarchy (Elrick and Winter 2018), the option for direct flight to the United States is not available to most Iraqis as a result of "remote control" measures of immigration regulation (Zolberg 1999:73). However, as Elrick and Winter argue, individual traits such as markers of class can mediate opportunities to enter a state where an individual's 'national capital' limits the possibilities to enter, where those within this national status groups are treated as likely candidates for unwanted migration (2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018). These participants held prominent positions in Iraq which contributed to their individual capital endowments and credibility. As a manager of the IT department at his firm in Baghdad, Interviewee 15 had made previous trips to attend conferences and purchase equipment in the US which gave him a valid US visa on his passport, thus he had already been deemed credible based on his individual traits (Erick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018).

"One of the most important reasons to give us a visa, because I came already to USA, and you know when somebody come and go back without any problem or something like that so it's, second time would be easier for him. They…it's like identified person or…they trust that person or something like that. Then I…when I went to the second visa, they accept that visa I think one of the most important things because I—already I went there before…. Not easy, unless if you—for example if I am going for one program or to study, and I have a family and a job, and they are sure that I am going back because I have a family, and sometimes they didn't even accept that. And um…for example if somebody is old man, and he has a family, and he is going for example to visit his son, or to visit, or to go to ah…conference or some things like program, or like that, they give him. Usually, they give him. Otherwise, if they feel who is going to apply, for example one in age eighteen, and he has nothing, and he is going to apply, they told him, 'sorry, because maybe you're gonna apply for—you're gonna stay there, you're not going to come back'. Yeah, so, when they know ah…this guy he is going to come back to Iraq, they give him. And, it depends. Now, after Trump, it's become more harder." (Interviewee 16)

While Interviewee 16 held a high-status bureaucratic position in Baghdad, his position did not require international travel so he instead had to apply for a visit visa to the United States. This process required that an agent of the state assess his credibility as a candidate to enter the US as part of what Bourdieu called the 'rites of institution', which create distinctions between those who go through the rites and those who have not (Bourdieu 2000; in Kim 2018). The above excerpt from his interview demonstrates that Interviewee 16 was well aware of the conditions under which visas were distributed – or not – and because of this embodied capital he understood that he was a likely candidate because of his personal characteristics and previous travel to the

[18] See appendix 1

US. He had visited the US in 2000 and 2010 for some training programs, so this previous travel with return to Iraq became part of the 'memory of the state', which Matsuda argues can negatively affect migrant credibility if previous attempts at visa application had been unsuccessful (1996; in Kim 2018). However, for Interview 16 this worked in his favour; his record of following the visa regulations set out for him increased his credibility for this application in the 'memory of the state'. Combined with his age and personal situation as a father of two children holding – on paper – a high ranking bureaucratic position, allowed him to overcome the low-ranking Iraqi national capital in seeking a US travel visas and pass the credibility assessment to receive the 'rite of institution' of a US tourist visa, which allowed him to enter the United States (Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018).

Gender in NELM transit strategies

In the instances of NELM strategizing employed by families where the breadwinner stayed behind to work in Iraq, the trend is that the mother and children leave Iraq to escape the violence while the father stays behind, though this is not the only method households used to manage the risk. The data suggests that young male Iraqis, more mobile in the state than women or older generations, are highly susceptible to kidnapping and violence in Iraq and thus more likely to receive direct threats of violence which force them to flee from Iraq; Interviewee 2 states, "they [militias and police] would do that all the time, they would kill innocent people – innocent guys – all the time". Interviewee 18-2 stated that "in my situation women are find – they don't have any problem. But men are problems". However, if forced to flee from a direct threat of violence, this decision is made as a household, especially if the boys were younger or living with their parents. As mentioned above, Interviewee 18-2's two brothers were threatened and forced to leave, where her family "sent them in the middle of the night, just to leave the country" after she found paid two thousand American dollars each for their passports, a price unlikely to be afforded by the young boys without family support, and suggests that significant capital can help to leave the country as quickly as possible when necessary.

> "Yeah, so first one who left the fa—who left us was my older brother, who moved to Abu—to UAE, United Arab Emirates. And then, ah, followed by my youngest brother, because you know, boys they are all, like usually the girls in Iraq they're always with their parents, they don't go out that much by ourselves, usually it's with our family. But the Iraqis for the boys they go with the friends, they don't listen (laughs), yeah. So once even my youngest brother was like, he just disappeared, he was outside in our neighbourhood." (Interview 13)

The case of Interviewee 13, the young woman who joined her brothers in Abu Dhabi with her parents described above, demonstrates well the gendered dimensions at work in this case study of international migration; while it influences mobility in Iraq, which then affects experiences of violence and subsequent flight from the state, it also plays a role in state immigration frameworks. As she states, it was more common for men to be outside of the home on their own which then exposes them to violence and higher chances of being targeted by militia groups; if they are mobile and visible in the city, then they are more likely to experience violence than women who are expected to stay home without a relative accompanying them. While her two brothers had already fled to the UAE on their own, Interviewee 13 was not able to make the trip alone as a young, unmarried woman. As Fitzgerald and Arar argue "household decisions are shaped by culturally elaborated expectations of vulnerabilities faced by family members depending on their age and gender" (2018:396), her brothers faced targeted vulnerabilities as young men in Iraq, but were permitted to leave without their parents – though the younger brother's migration was likely made easier by fleeing to the same place as his older brother, who could provide social support and help him to find work. These vulnerabilities were context-specific to the situation in Baghdad and made more pressing by their gender but were managed by the household through sending them away one at a time. Interviewee 13 faced less extreme vulnerability in Baghdad as a woman as compared to her brothers – not to downplay the risk of generalized violence which prompted the family to move – but as a young unmarried woman she wasn't able to move on her own as they were. She moved with her family when her father decided that the risk of violence was too great to remain in Baghdad after two men on their street were killed, further illustrating the heightened vulnerabilities young men faced Baghdad at the peak of sectarian conflict. Like Canada, Emirati policy requirements also constrain which familial relationships can be sponsored so that only spouses, children and parents are eligible; thus, while her parents could be sponsored to the UAE by one of her brothers, to stay in the UAE Interviewee 12 was required her find her own work permit to access residency. Because of expectations based on her gender and marital status, her parents would have accompanied her back to Iraq if she couldn't find a job; both her and her parents' residency in the UAE thus depended on her job search being a success.

However, this household management strategy can not be solely attributed to gendered familial expectations in Iraq. Interviewee 13 said that "but, the problem is my visa I was still

under 30 and I am not married, so it's not easy to get a visa to the UAE", implying that UAE immigration policies made it difficult for young unmarried women to enter the country; she may not have been able to enter the country without her father[19], or at least this added credibility based on UAE entrance policies for her entry. If this is the case, then travelling with her family, specifically her father, was the only way for her to enter the UAE. Mobilizing her cultural capital to find work in the UAE allowed her to flee the violence in Baghdad, live with her immediate family members, *and* continue her career in IT, where she otherwise would not have been able to legally work in Jordan or Syria and not been with her social network.

This was not the only gendered immigration policy in a transit country which influenced participants' migration strategies to escape the violence in Iraq. In late 2006 Jordan restricted entry to single Iraqi men between age 17-35 (El-Shaarawi 2011). This was a concern for Interviewee 2 and her family when crossing the border to Jordan when she and her mother feared that her brother would not be allowed to enter, because "s*o* many people, like they were accepting the mom, the dad, the sister, and for the guy (snaps finger) – go back to Iraq – you are not in." However, as a university professor in Baghdad, her father had social network connections with universities in Amman, and thus Interviewee 2's brother was able to register as a student provide the documentation of his transfer to show at the border. As she states, her father's social capital appears to have influenced his ability to negotiate this gendered entrance restrictions as a young, unmarried male Iraqi and enter Jordan, because "without that paper, you never know".

Interviewee 14's family's strategy to exit Iraq also follows a household risk management scheme and following the argument above that that gendered mobility in Iraq is related to the vulnerabilities faced by young men who faced a higher risk of violence influenced by gender. The family decided in 2005 that they would leave Baghdad, after his father felt compelled to leave his position as a faculty member at a university in 2004 when he was targeted, like other academics. Interviewee 14 and his brother travelled first to Damascus in 2006 to apply for UN protection, later joined by his sister and parents. As the cases of Interviewees 13 and 18 above suggest, sending two young men on what he describes as a dangerous journey at the time follows

[19] This was my understanding based on my discussion with Interviewee 13, but I could not find any documentation in the secondary literature to confirm this.

gendered mobility norms of who is able to leave the family without supervision, but it may also be a method to manage the risk of violence they would face if they remained in Baghdad. This was especially salient because his name was Omar, which at the time was a Sunnni name heavily targeted by Shi'a militias (Gosh 2006; Wong 2006). In an earlier interview, Interviewee 2 provides context that suggests the high-risks that both Omar and his father faced in Baghdad, "yeah, they were targeting scientists, doctors, professors, they were targeting like even boys named Omar. Like, I don't know if you've heard about that like Omar? That's a Sunni name. We had so many people named Omar killed".

This chapter has demonstrated the utility of using the NELM framework as suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018) for structuring migration decision-making from conflict regions as methods of risk management undertaken by households instead of isolated individuals – where the risks are not solely economic but include risk of violence. It allows the researcher to analyze how the risks of violence and economic livelihood are taken into consideration and managed through decisions to migrate – including whether to leave and where to go. However, as this chapter demonstrated, to fully understand these decisions in an international social field where positions to enter transit countries, and then to remain outside of Iraq, are not equally available because of state entrance and residency policies, the household decision making model needs to be supplemented by consideration of how social class and capital stratifies opportunities for international migration, along with how gender structures mobility norms.

Decisions to Settle

As the literature has established, contemporary migration streams are increasingly fragmented and thus decisions – structured by a migrant's position in the transnational field – take place over an international, multi-stage process. As the thesis has described how capital endowments influence migrants' decisions to leave Iraq and which country they are able to access, it now shifts to why and how migrants in this case study entered Canada, where some intended to settle, though not all. In the following chapter, the thesis explains how migrants mobilized their capital through their risk management decisions to enter Canada through the available entrance policies, but first it demonstrates how transit country policies influence the decision to seek entry to a third county.

Precarious Status

"This is of course one of the other reasons we had to leave Jordan. We can't live there forever illegal status." (Interviewee 2)

For those who did not enter Canada through government refugee resettlement and thus had no choice in the destination offered by UNHCR, the precarious legal status in transit countries was the main motivation for participants to seek residency in a third country, when return Iraq was not a reasonable option. The precarious legal status available to Iraqis in transit countries in the Middle East entailed with it a lack of options for permanent residency, and depending on the country, very limited access to legal work.

While Iraqis could access legal status in some states based on their work contracts or economic capital and existing research suggests that Iraqi visa overstayers in the Middle East generally went unpunished (Chaterland 2010; Fagan 2009), to maintain residence, the transit states required frequent status renewal which further intensified participant's feelings of instability in their temporary legal situations. Participants who accessed temporary residency based in Jordan shared that they would "we would go through that stress every year" (Interviewee 2) to renew their status. For Interviewee 5, the necessary economic capital they invested in country to acquire of their temporary residency[20] where "every year you have to go through a lot – a lot of steps to renew it", combined with a general feeling of unwelcome by Jordanian authorities – which included having his passport taken during one of his border crossings – further emphasized his family's feeling of their precarious status in the country.

Others who held work permits were also required to renew their permits often. Interviewee 18-1, who was working in an African country[21] first received a one-year permit, followed by another, and then a permit allowing two years of residency, followed by another one-year permit before his next permit was not renewed. Interviewee 13 describes the process in the UAE, "Like, every three, every two years for non-government. For me, I was working in semi-government, so every three years. But every three years I'm really panicking, because I can not guarantee that my visa will be renewed at all – no guarantee". Even though being able to access a skilled work contract outside of Iraq requires that the participant holds significant capital which allows them to reach a higher position in the international status hierarchy of

[20] His family both purchased property and maintained a Jordanian bank deposit
[21] Omitted for privacy concerns

transit countries available to Iraqis, they are still in a precarious residence environment. While these participants mobilized their capital to reside outside of Iraq in safety while also following their career trajectories, without the ability to access permanent residency, they still lack stability in a context where a refused work contract[22] or permit renewal without a contingency option for residency in another country could leave no choice but to return to an unstable Iraq. Interviewees stated that the "UAE is always a temporary place…for – for everyone who has no good place to get back to, because your residency is based on your – your job. If you lost your job, you get kicked out of the country" (13), where "to feel safe and settled," (Interviewee 6), "we always have to think about plan B" (Interviewee 13).

This precarity becomes even more pronounced to participants when a member of their social network loses a job contract, and thus their legal entitlement to reside in the country. While Interviewee 13 spent some time in Abu Dhabi without applying for further migration, when some of her colleagues did not receive visa renewals she realized that the UAE would not be a permanent home for her, and "you have to think about a second option, then, that time – when you see people in front of your eyes…got like… yeah". One strategy that she and her husband took was to apply for a US tourist visa as an option where they could claim asylum to have in case her work contract in the UAE was rejected – which as established above takes significant individual capital endowments to receive this 'rite of institution'. When her contract was renewed, she and her husband took advantage of the opportunity to vacation and visit family members and friends in the United States, where they received further advice to start looking for a permanent option from a relative who had resided in the UAE but was forced to leave when her visa was not renewed; she advised them that "you have to find another place, this is – it is a bubble".

While short-term work contracts left participants in precarious legal statuses that faced the possibility of rejection every few years, in countries where access to legal work is limited[23], Iraqis may be in a more precarious situation where exploitative (skilled) work in informal economy is the only available option to maintain livelihoods. For example, Interviewee 2 states "My education was in Jordan, and everything was in Jordan, but they still won't allow Iraqi

[22] That one participant suggests could be easily rejected based on religious grounds in the UAE
[23] 2 participants reported being able to or having family members who could work in Jordan in specialized fields

people to work legally as pharmacists, or even as dentists, or doctors. So, we had to work from under the table", where she and her husband received much lower salaries than Jordanians.

"So we were thinking about um, USA, Canada, Europe. And then my uncle, he was the first one he initiated, and he came to Canada. And he said, yeah. I'd love my kids to be here, I encourage you guys to come here, so all my cousins applied, um, my mom applied in 2006. And things, things went well." (Interviewee 7)

Though the data suggest that precarious residency status and limited access to legal work in transit countries serve as the 'push' factors that urge participants to consider leaving transit countries, they also suggest that social network connections serve as the 'pull' that motivates participants to consider entry to Canada, as opposed to the other immigrant-receiving countries with available legal residencies such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, or Germany[24]. As social capital theory argues, migrants are more likely to move to where they have social network members who can lower the cost of migration and settlement by providing information about entrance and settlement, tangible resources and further in-country social network connections and work opportunities (Massey et al. 1998). Family members and friends already established in Canada encouraged Interviewees 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16 and 17 – and some of these relationships served as migration-facilitating social capital through refugee and asylum routes, which I discuss further below. For example, Interviewee 7 in discussing her family's options for countries where they could access permanent residency said, "we were thinking USA, Canada, Europe. And then my uncle, he was the first one he initiated, and he came to Canada. And he said, yeah, I'd love my kids to be here. I encourage you guys to come here". While Interviewees 6 and 10 did not have social network connections in Canada when they applied, stated that their decision to apply to immigrate to Canada instead of elsewhere was influenced by others in their social network in the UAE, where "at that time, everyone choose Canada from the United Arab Emirates" (Interviewee 6).

This chapter described participants' decision making near the final stage of their migration process; more specifically, why they sought entry into a third country, and what factors contributed to this sample choosing Canada over their other options. For this largely urban, educated middle class group, lack of access to legal employment or stability in residency

[24] List compiled from interview data of where participants mention they have social network connections. Fagan also describes Iraqi diasporic social networks (2009).

status served as the 'push' factors to seek permanent residency in a third country where immigrant-receiving countries that offer employment rights and an available path to citizenship. Staying in a transit country without permanent residency is a risky and precarious legal situation, so to both manage this risk and avoid return to Iraq, onward migration is necessary. However, just as every other step in the international migration process, the ability to enter these countries is not evenly accessible to all displaced Iraqis seeking permanent residence; this group is at an advantage because of the positions they hold in the transnational social field based on their different endowments and combinations of capital, which can match the positions set by Canada's immigration policy pathways (Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018). While I suggested that social networks provide the 'pull' to seek entrance to Canada as opposed to other immigrant-receiving countries with potential access to permanent residency, having family members and friends in Canada can also serve as social capital that provides an opportunity to enter the country which is not available to those who do not have family members in the country. In the next section I examine which forms of capital allowed participants to seriously consider Canada as a possible third country, and how they mobilised their economic, social, cultural, national and symbolic capital to enter the country and its permanent residency.

How to enter Canada

Having explained why participants sought to enter Canada – the lack of access to permanent residency or to legal work entitlements in transit countries in the Middle East – the thesis now examines how migrants negotiate their capital with the third state legal frameworks in order to gain entry, and thus permanent residence and the right to work[25]. As findings have established that endowments of economic and cultural capital must be mobilized to meet the state-specific combinations to enter and remain in transit states (Elrick and Winter 2018), this final stage in the migration process requires different, yet still significant, combinations of capital dependent on the stream through which they enter. While most participants gained access to Canada through applications they filed abroad while living in Iraq or a transit country, four participants were asylum claimants at a either a border crossing from the United States or from within Canada. I focus first on how migrants mobilized their capital to enter Canada from outside

[25] Though not the topic of this thesis, a few interviews ventured into difficulties they faced in finding work in Canada, though this was not discussed by the majority

the country and then shift to how participants who sought asylum in Canada employed their capital to enter and establish their asylum claims.

External Access: Refugee Migration

First, two respondents entered Canada as government assisted refugees, where they fled Iraq to a neighbouring country and registered with the UNHCR upon their arrival. As they intentionally registered with the UNHCR seeking resettlement, this is the first step to gain access to a third country. For these respondents, the status determination process was the negotiation with legal frameworks required to eventually resettle to Canada. The first registered in Syria when Iraqis were granted prima facie status and thus only had to provide certain identification and necessary documents to prove his Iraqi citizenship. The second, however, was required to have his case assessed to determine his family's eligibility as a credible refugee claim.

This participant, Interviewee 11, is a member of a minority religious group in Iraq who was forced to flee after his father had been injured by a militia and was told to leave the country with his family because of their religious membership. He flew to Turkey with his family, which included his parents, his sister and his sister's children, and registered with the UNCHR in 2014 where he experienced the refugee status determination process. This process required an interaction between a member of the UNHCR or an affiliated organization to assess the credibility of his refugee claim, and thus to allocate the rites of institution which distinguishes he and his family as refugees and thus persons who hold a special legal status (Kim 2018). As his claim was based on persecution because of his religious identity, to receive the rite he needed to establish his credibility as a member of this group. Though this was the reason why his father was injured, and his family forced to leave, he described the process of establishing his membership in such a small religious minority difficult. However, his credibility as a refugee was eventually established, but in both of these cases, as government assisted refugees selected for resettlement by the UNHCR, they were given little autonomy over available resettlement options beyond accepting or refusing an offer.

Social Capital

Interviewee 1 and 2 were registered with UNHCR in Jordan and offered resettlement to the US after her brother in Canada had begun his private refugee sponsorship application. Because she had the alternate option of a private sponsorship in Canada, she was able to choose

not to enter the United States, and like many other participants she strongly preferred any option other than America. Most participants who entered Canada as privately sponsored refugees were able to do so because of their ability to mobilize social capital from their social network members of the Iraqi diaspora already residing in Canada – many because of prior refugee migration or having been privately sponsored themselves (Chaterland 2008). Participants with access to this specific form of social capital determined their position in the transnational field, which allowed them to use the Canadian PRS entry pathway (Elrick and Winter 2018); this particular pathway privileges those who hold both refugee status and social network connections in Canada. Thus, those who can mobilize social capital of a network connection within Canada which matches this specific entrance pathway in Canada provides further options for mobility for those fleeing conflict in Iraq (van Hear 2014:S110). However, one case which entered Canada via a group of five PSR is an example of the 'migration industry' at work – where this entry was arranged through a lawyer at a high cost to his family with none of the settlement assistance associated with the program – where he and his family entered Canada through this channel because of their very high access to economic capital[26].

In addition to government assisted refugee resettlement through case recommendations from the UNHCR in countries of asylum, refugees can enter Canada through the private sponsorship program, where private citizens can form a group of five or collaborate with an existing sponsorship agreement holder to fund the first year of expenses for the refugees (Hyndman et al. 2017). Prior research and data presented in the thesis indicates that this method of entry in Canada has been used to reunite extended families who have been split during the resettlement process, as Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act maintains the definition of family as two adults and their non-adult children (Hyndman et al. 2017b: 58). These regulations disadvantage common Middle Eastern family preferences (Chatty and Mansour 2011a), as demonstrated when Interviewee 2 was removed from her family UNHCR case file in Jordan after she was married and could no longer enter Canada with her family members through her uncle's private sponsorship application. As Chapman found, "the majority of private sponsorships are named or family-linked cases, it's often a personal connection that compels

[26] Though, this is not as straightforwardly an 'illegal' migration as its seems; this family initially left Iraq to Egypt because the father's life was in danger in Iraq where he was on a kill-list of a Shi'a militia group. So, while their use of the migration stream may be in precarious legal territory, their claim to refugee status is likely not.

sponsors to commit to the financial undertaking and provide the year of settlement services" (2014:9). Thus, having members of their social network already residing in Canada can act as an avenue for Iraqis with refugee status in transit countries to enter Canada; in other words, having extended family members or friends as part of the Iraqi diaspora triggered by previous waves of involuntary migration (Chatty and Mansour 2011a; Fagan 2009) can act as a form of social capital to facilitate further refugee migration. However, those inside Canada must be able to mobilize their own social, cultural and economic capital in order to provide the necessary economic capital for an application to be approved, though more recently region-specific caps on refuge entrants has provided a further legal barrier to the private sponsorship program.

Returning to the case of Interviewee 1 presented above, she left Iraq initially intending to return and was living in Jordan having overstayed her entrance visa while her children attended school. She sought UN protection after her brother suggested that the UNHCR could help them relocate to Canada. After receiving no offers for resettlement, her brother, who lived in Canada since the early 1990s, started a group of five sponsorship for her family which included her two children – one being Interviewee 2 – and her husband. When their private sponsorship was almost finalized, they received an offer for resettlement to the United States, as suggested above. Like many others she preferred not to go to the United States, and the social capital from her brother's permanent residence status in Canada facilitated entry to Canada for her, her husband and her son; the position created by the private refugee sponsorship program allowed her family member living in Canada to serve as a form of social capital to gain entry (Elrick and Winter 2018), thus giving her access to options outside of UN resettlement to the US. Though she preferred not to go to the United States, they kept the application open as a contingency option if the PSR did not work out, "because we were worried if – if Canada would not work, we will be…to go to the United States. Yeah, we don't have choice, you know?" Otherwise, this would likely have been her the only option for her family because she and her husband were likely too old to be considered for the skilled worker application, lacked the high-level English language requirements, and would not have met the criteria for family reunification from her brother[27]. The ability to mobilize her social capital into a legal pathway to residency gave Interviewee 1

[27] https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/reports-statistics/evaluations/family-reunification-program.html#a1.2.2

and most, but not all of her family, access to more options than those who didn't have similar social network connections.

Two of the other participants who entered Canada through private refugee sponsorship were Christians fleeing the IS invasion of Mosul and the Nineveh plains. Both had social network members in Canada who were able to organize their resettlement through local churches[28] in Ontario. Interviewee 4 was a professor in the university of Mosul, who fled with his wife and two children hours before IS invaded the city in 2014. They initially went to Erbil and thought that they would soon be able to return to Mosul. However, when it became evident that the family would not be able to return, he got in contact with his friend who had left Iraq following the US-invasion who then began the sponsorship process. As stated above, he knew that in order to be sponsored to Canada, he first needed to leave claim refugee status and his family only left the country when they could be confident that they had the opportunity to enter Canada through the private sponsorship program; in other words, his ability to mobilize this social capital served to significantly lower the risk involved in leaving the country.

Interviewee 12 and his son[29] were living in a village outside of Mosul and were hosting Christian IDPs a result of the IS invasion of Mosul, but were then forced to flee themselves when the Peshmerga protecting the region retreated and IS invaded. They rented a house in Kurdistan with 26 other family members, where it would be difficult to settle and find work without knowledge of the language, and there are few opportunities to reside in the region as non-ethnic Kurds[30]. They fled to Lebanon to seek UN protection with the expectation that they eventually would be resettled. Like Interviewee 1's family, they didn't receive any offers and after a year and a half his two brothers in Canada, who were themselves PSRs after the 2010 church bombings in Baghdad, began the legal process to sponsor them to Canada through a church group.

"So, they didn't have enough money, they didn't have enough money to do a sponsorship for all of us, so they had just money enough just for two families, so my grandfather decided like that, he's not going out because like, he is old, and we still young, and we can like make a better future there. So… they made a sponsorship for us, and my other uncle." (Interviewee 12, son)

[28] It is likely that these churches are sponsorship agreement holders but is unclear from the data.
[29] Both were present during and contributed to the interview
[30] Interviewees 15 and 18 state the same as reasons why they left Iraq instead of living in semi-autonomous Kurdistan

Because sponsors must be able to demonstrate that they have the financial means necessary to cover settlement costs during the first year, the ability of sponsors in Canada to meet the necessary cost influences their capacity to serve as social capital to their family members seeking entry to Canada. The ability to enter through this program depends on sponsors' access to a certain amount of economic capital, and thus the sponsor may have to mobilize other forms of capital in Canada to fundraise or save the necessary amount, which according to the most recent sponsorship cost table from the government of Canada is at minimum $28,700 for a family of four[31] . Thus, sponsors – if former immigrants or refugees themselves – would likely be better able to be able to use this program to facilitate the entry of their family members and friends to Canada the longer that they spend in Canada, after they have had time to cultivate their social network in Canada to mobilize the necessary resources or have more time to access resources through work or entrepreneurship activities, if they do not have the significant amount of economic capital to cover the cost outright. For example, Interviewee 12's family took out a bank loan and each brother worked two jobs in order to finance their sponsorship. As the above quote demonstrates, beyond limiting access to who can act as a private sponsor in Canada, the necessary cost of private sponsorship also shapes within-family decisions about who should be the recipients when there is not enough funding to cover the necessary cost for everyone in need of resettlement.

Economic Migration

While the private refugee sponsorship program allows participants with refugee status to mobilize their social capital to gain legal access to Canada, those who entered Canada through non-refugee channels primarily leveraged their economic and cultural capital to enter Canada as permanent residents through economic channels. Canada is one of several immigrant-receiving countries with a highly-selective immigration stream designed to recruit international skilled workers. 7 participants entered through this skilled worker program or the previous landed immigrant category as principal applicants or as the dependents of skilled workers. Under these programs, the potential immigrant's credibility is assessed based on a points system to assess their capital and credentials (Satzewich 2015)[32]. Though the primary applicant's capital was the

[31] https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/guide-sponsor-refugee-community.html#appA

[32] All participants who entered through the points-based stream when the points necessary to qualify were 67 (Satzewich 2015)

most significant for the application, certain capital held by other household members also could contribute points to the primary applicant's application.

As Elrick and Winter identify in the case of immigration to Germany, application requirements for skilled worker programs necessitate a significant endowment of economic capital (2018). At the very least, the processing fee and permanent residence fee for applications to Canada amount to $1,040 with $150 per dependent child[33]. As none of the participants had previous Canadian work experience nor did they have job offers in Canada, application eligibility requires that a family of two have proof of 15,772 Canadian dollars[34] in order to support themselves while they settle in Canada. To apply as a skilled worker potential migrants require one year of continuous skilled work in a managerial, professional, or technical/skilled trade job which requires the embodied and institutional cultural capital of related work experience and educational training – though university education in Iraq was free for its citizens placing Iraqis at an advantage over other countries of origin where post-secondary education is costly. This may also lower the cost of English language training relative to other countries of origin if studied alongside or as part of program requirements. Thus, obtaining the cultural capital of a university education, at least for students in urban areas near universities, would not have required significant family economic capital. However, even if applicants received their English Language training at a tuition-free university, they must meet the language requirements which consist of a minimum score of Canadian Language Benchmark 7 for all four components of an official language test in English or French[35]. According to the British Council, which administers IELTS testing in Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, the costs are 145 or 155 Jordanian Dinar for paper and computer delivered tests, respectively– around 276 and 296 Canadian dollars[36] at the time of writing[37], with a 32 hour preparation course costing 275 Jordanian Dinar – near 525 Canadian dollars. Tests were more expensive in the UAE, with online and paper tests costing 1092 and 1155 UAE Dirham[38] – around 402 dollars and 425 Canadian dollars, respectively. One participant stated that both she and her husband didn't

[33] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/fees/fees.asp#permanent
[34] https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/documents/proof-funds.html
[35] All participants in this study completed their testing in English
[36] https://www.britishcouncil.jo/en/exam/ielts/dates-fees-locations
[37] May 2019
[38] https://www.britishcouncil.ae/en/exam/ielts/dates-locations

receive the necessary score to apply the first time the took the test, so she took it again, thus incurring further cost. To complete the immigration application, workers must also validate their educational credentials as equivalent to those received in Canada through an approved agency, which through World Education Services costs 220 Canadian dollars. In addition, most employed immigration consultants or lawyers to oversee the process, further increasing the cost. Thus, at minimum, the total application fees including proof of funds amounts to 17,177 dollars for a couple to apply to enter Canada as a skilled worker, without legal fees.

The specific combinations of capital required to enter Canada through non-refugee channels are policies shaped by the national economic interests of Canada (Erel 2010) and thus values certain forms of institutional cultural capital – i.e., which industries and levels of training the program seeks – over others. As mentioned above, one of the selection factors points for the skilled worker application is education, where the applicant must hold significant institutionalized cultural capital in these specific fields designated by the state to be eligible to apply, but also that the credential must be recognized as equivalent to the training received at Canadian post-secondary institutions. Thus, where immigration policies "create a transnational field that structures possibilities available to potential immigrants" (Elrick and Winter 2018:23), those with transnationally valid institutional cultural capital – participants with technical training who enter Canada as skilled workers – are at an advantage; these participants have mobilized their cultural capital, along with economic capital to gain entry to Canada (Erel 2010). Primary applicants' in the sample held educational credentials which included Master's level training in IT and engineering, certification as a health professional in Iraq, and a doctorate. While participants in healthcare and with PhD training required further accreditation in Canada, the primary applicants who were educated in Iraq in Engineering and IT were able to find work without the need for further education or formal upgrading in Canada. While this is a very limited sample, it would suggest that the "credit of renown" of Iraq – at least in professional, technical fields – is relatively positive in the international hierarchy and adds an advantage of national capital to Iraqi professionals over professionals trained in other countries (Elrick and Winter: 25).

Social capital can also be mobilized by potential migrants in their skilled worker applications – though to a lesser extent than in refugee and asylum modes of entry to Canada. Another selection factor evaluated on the application are points for adaptability, which includes

having a family member as a resident of Canada – where the social capital can be converted directly to extra application points – along with the symbolic and cultural capital of Canadian education and spouse's language skills. The combination of having a sister-in-law residing in Canada with her husband's English test scores enabled Interviewee 13 to maximize the adaptability portion of points on her application to have a final score of 73 compared to the required 67 points, thus demonstrating how participants mobilize different forms of capital to bolster their skilled worker application and thus chances for permanent residency in Canada.

While interviews with other skilled workers didn't go as in-depth into their points application[39], Interviewee 2's parents and Interviewee 7's uncle – the brother of her mother, the primary applicant – would have also added extra points to their applications that were not available to Interviewees 6 and 10, who did not have family members in Canada. However, Interviewee 10 stated that her social network in Iraq helped her gather some of the necessary documents she required for her skilled worker application, for example a criminal record check in Iraq.

Same exit, separate entrance to Canada

As briefly mentioned in several points throughout the thesis, two participants in the sample entered Canada through different legal pathways than their parents and siblings, though they left Iraq on the same journeys. Their cases demonstrate how household decisions are made based on managing the risk of their surrounding circumstances, and how having access to diverse forms of capital shapes the options available – and thus shapes migrant strategies when forced to deal with changing circumstances over the course of a journey; capital enables migrants to strategically move between categories, which again indicates that maintaining an analytical divide between refugees and migrants limits understanding of international migration from conflict regions.

Interviewee 2

"Yeah, it's never easy. One day you are living in your… original country. You are – like you are surrounded by your friends, neighbours; you are living a peaceful life, and them boom! In comes the war and everything is changed. You are losing like a family member every day. And then in Jordan, it's a different story. As I told you like, we are working illegally. Like, waiting for immigration like everyday of our lives. Like, when I got rejected, ah… to travel from- like with my family. It was an awful, awful situation to be in. Yeah. But, thank god… there were like, different options for the skilled worker. Yeah." (Interviewee 2)

[39] A limitation to the interview schedule, but something to include in future interviews

Interviewee 2 left Iraq for Jordan with her parents and brother where she received her specialised university training as a health professional. Because she married while living in Jordan and was thus no longer considered a dependent on her parents she was unable to stay on the same case file as Interviewee 1, her mother who was privately sponsored to Canada as a refugee by her brother as described above – which was a surprise to her and her family members. However, as she and her husband were both health professionals they were able to mobilize their capital to enter Canada through the skilled worker program. The previous section indicates the significant and specific combinations of capital that they required for the application process[40], and also that having her family members living in Canada would have added adaptation points to their application. Since Interviewee 2 was working illegally in Jordan because of residency restrictions even after receiving her training in the country, none of her experience was eligible for inclusion on the skilled work application. In her words, "that's why I wasn't the principal applicant. But my husband, he graduated from the University of Baghdad and he worked in Iraq for seven years…his experience in Iraq was what counted". Without the specific combination of capital endowments her husband held – for example if she had married someone poorer and less skilled, she would have been unable to enter Canada under this program without her own valid work experience.

Two separate observations come from Samar's experience when compared to others – beyond adding further evidence to the constructivist view of migration entrance categories as not representative of some inherent qualities of people which exist outside of their sorting and that high capital migrants are able to attain status fluidity (Hein 1993; Elrick and Lightman 2016; Stewart 2008). The first contributes to my previous argument that choice of transit country, already stratified on endowments of capital, itself influences the migration-facilitating capital that a potential migrant is able to accumulate along their journeys to facilitate entry into a third country. Those who worked in the UAE were able to include their work experience as part of their immigration applications to Canada, whereas, while certified in her field, Interviewee 2 was unable to access legal employment. In addition to making her easy to exploit, she was also unable to contribute this experience to an application for further immigration. Thus, those who transited through the UAE gained additional convertible cultural capital to bolster their

[40] In addition to the economic capital necessary to maintain their temporary residency in Jordan

applications that provided an advantage compared to those who were working illegally in transit states, even though Interviewee 2 held a comparable level of institutionalized cultural capital through her educational credentials. Thus, as transit country immigration policies create a hierarchical field which advantages higher-class Iraqi migrants (Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018; van Hear 2014), access to transit states where migrants are able to legally work allows them to further accumulate internationally valid capital considered credible by immigrant-receiving countries; the international hierarchy stratified by capital endowments also includes transit countries the migrant is able to reach in addition to the intended final destination.

Gender and skilled migration

The second observation from Samar's case, while perhaps not immediately evident, is the intersection of gender and educational credentials that facilitate international skilled labour migration. While the literature suggests with strong evidence that the context of international labour migration favours male-dominant engineering and technical industries (Boyd 2013; Elrick and Winter 2018), which has consequences for the economic outcomes of female secondary or dependent migrants even if qualified themselves (Elrick and Lightman 2016), three of the six households who entered Canada through the skilled worker program were female principal applicants. As in this sample, women are generally as qualified as men in educational credentials – though work experience may vary following expected gendered trends, particularly when violence motivates flight from Iraq and mothers seem more likely to leave employment to serve as caretakers – the interviews would suggest that the decision of who will serve as primary applicant is pragmatic based on whose application would be stronger where both spouses held similar qualifications. Interviewee 13 was the same age as her husband, and both of their fields of IT and engineering were open for application at the time, so they both took the IELTS English exam and decided that whoever received the higher score would serve as principal applicant. While her husband had applied to Canada before they met, I asked if she could have been considered on his application, which she answered, "he will add me, but he – it's the other way around. I add – I mean he came with me, right?" Interviewee 13 and her husband both had Master's degrees, she said that she was the main applicant "because he is not good with paperwork".

While, of course the small sample size of this project impedes the possibility of creating any generalizations of gender in Iraqi skilled migration, and this line of inquiry was not part of the original interview schedule design, it suggests an avenue for further research on the intersections of gender and education in skilled work migration from this country of origin. From the data, it appears that the value and history of education in Iraq[41] has, for at least the middle class of Baghdad, led to similar educational outcomes across genders where participants describe having siblings as doctors, pharmacists, professors, dentists, engineers, and architects of varying specializations.

Interviewee 8

As described in a previous chapter, Interviewee 8 left Iraq with his parents and sister for Egypt following his father's injury in a car bombing. Soon after, they became stuck because most countries accepting Iraqis in the region closed their borders to Iraqis following their entrance to Egypt and they did not want to return to a dangerous Baghdad with no options to exit the country again. While in Egypt, his father's health began to deteriorate, and his former surgeon in the US organized an emergency health visa for medical treatment for his father and sister, while Interviewee 8 and his mother remained in Egypt. His older sister who was living in Canada also went to the United States for his surgery and then was able to invite her father and sister to Canada as visitors while he recovered from surgery in 2007. His father then claimed asylum in Canada, received his permanent residency, and Interviewee 8 and his mother were able to join their family in Canada in 2010 as family class immigrants.

First, it is clear that this family had not only enough economic capital to plan for a short break from Iraq, but enough to allow Interviewee 8 to attend university in Egypt, in addition to the economic capital necessary to travel to the United States for private medical treatment. Like others above, his father's social capital of having a daughter as a resident of Canada then facilitated his entry to Canada. While Interviewee 8 did not share any details about his father's refugee file, the national capital of Iraq as a refugee-producing country in addition to the prima facie refugee status UNHCR granted to Iraqis in 2007 likely contributed to the credibility of his refugee claim. Then, both the social capital of Interviewee 8's father's residency in Canada,

[41] Possibly fuelled by years of conflict and potential of future out-migration, or by sanctions and necessity of Iraqi self-sufficiency

mobilised through his sister's residency in Canada paired with the national status of Iraq, in addition to the economic capital necessary to apply for family sponsorship facilitated his migration to Canada. At the time of writing there was no requirement for a proof of annual income to sponsor a spouse and dependent child[42], however because their application was approved and they were able to move to Canada suggests that the family held significant economic capital, given the literature that suggests family reunification is associated with middle-class status (Bonjour 2011 and Wray 2009 in Elrick and Winter 2018). This family responded to the changing circumstances as best they could to manage their risks to not be forced to return to Iraq, but their options were increased by the volumes and combinations of capital they could access. For example, without significant economic capital Intervieweee 8's father would not have been able to travel to the US, nor would he and his mother have been able to study and live in Egypt without continued access to income.

Asylum in Canada at/within borders:

Social Capital

Having a family member as a legal resident of Canada who can organize private refugee or family sponsorship is not the only way social capital can be mobilised to directly facilitate entry to Canada; it can also be used to provide an exception to the safe third-country agreement between Canada and the United States. Under this agreement, those seeking asylum in either country must make their claim in the first state they enter unless they fall under one of the designated exemptions or exceptions to the agreement. According to the exceptions, a person claiming asylum at a border crossing will not be returned to the US if they have a family member who is a citizen, permanent resident, protected person, holds a valid work or study permit, or is in one of several stages of the refugee status determination process. Under the agreement, a more generous definition of family is allowed than when selecting refugees for resettlement and includes " [a] spouse, sons, daughters, parents, legal guardians, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews" (Safe Third Country Agreement 2002)[43] which widens the scope of relationships which can be used as social capital. This exception

[42] https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/guide-5482-instruction-fill-financial-evaluation-form-1283.html

[43] https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/mandate/policies-operational-instructions-agreements/agreements/safe-third-country-agreement/final-text.html

allowed the three participants who transited quickly through the United States to file an asylum claim at their port of entry to Canada from the United States, where they otherwise would have had to file, which all participants chose to avoid. Interviewee 15 was met by his brother and Interviewees 16 and 17 were met by Interviewee 16's uncle at the border. Like other participants' network connections in Canada, both of these relatives residing in Canada had refugee status because of previous threats of violence based on their work in Iraq. Interviewee 16's uncle was threatened for his work as a dentist in a non-profit organization during the height of sectarian violence and was resettled to Canada through the UNHCR in 2010. Interviewee 15's brother was also threatened because of his position which was "exactly the same job, and he had to leave for exactly the same reason". He was Interviewee 15's source of information that he could seek asylum in Canada at the border because of this family connection, who was unaware of this policy and had assumed he would have to seek asylum in the United States[44] when he fled Iraq.

These participants' entries into Canada were facilitated through their social network connections, which were a result of previous waves of forced migration out of Iraq (Chatty and Mansour 2011b; Massey et al. 1998). Having a family member as a resident of Canada allowed those who were able to enter the United States – and consequently already held significant capital endowments – a further legal exemption to the safe third country agreement. After gaining legal entry to the country, asylum claimants are then subject to a refugee status determination hearing which dictates their eligibility to stay inside Canada. Here the thesis has established how social capital allows access to an asylum claim in Canada which would otherwise not have been available to participants, and now it examines how capital influences refugee status determination claims once inside Canada, thus also including Interviewees 18-1 and 18-2.

Enacting Asylum

As scholars who employ Bourdieusian theoretical frameworks do not explicitly engage with asylum/refugee migration, except for van Hear who briefly argues that those fleeing conflict in Sri Lanka who are better endowed with capital combinations can seek the more costly asylum

[44] See page 36 for a discussion of their entry to the US

migration (2014), the impact of the ability to prove a credibly asylum claim it has yet to be thoroughly examined as a form of 'migration-facilitating capital'.

While the refugee label was created with a humanitarian intention to protect those fleeing 'a well-founded fear of persecution', though applied unevenly to specific groups for political purposes (Zolberg et al. 1989), mobilization of various forms of capital is nonetheless essential for the ability to access this status and its subsequent benefits, even if those benefits are minor and difficult to access in this particular case of forced migration. National capital plays a substantial role in determining an applicant's asylum or refugee status, especially when the UNHCR has designated a national origin group as eligible for prima facie protection. As it is well-established most refugees in the global population do not receive an offer for resettlement, this form of national capital is difficult to convert to migration-facilitating capital if refugee or asylum status is attained in refugee host countries largely located in the global South. However, as described above, the combination of social capital through international social network connections in the right states and designated refugee or asylum status aided by national capital can offer opportunities for migration facilitating capital in third countries which have private refugee sponsorship programs, i.e. Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom.

Claiming asylum within Canada's borders is a separate process and, at least for participants in this sample, problematizes assumptions that asylum and refugee status are not a negotiation with the state, which is not to argue that participants are undeserving. As established in the "managing risks of transit" section and argued below, reaching an immigrant-receiving country to claim asylum with an Iraqi passport requires the individual's capital characteristics be adequate to overcome its ascribed group membership and is therefore not an option available to most Iraqis (Elrick and Winter 2018). However, once the participant is able to make an asylum claim at or inside Canada's borders, the national capital of Iraq as the claimant's country of origin serves as migration-facilitating capital (Kim 2018), based on its (well-founded) international political perception (Elrick and Winter 2018).

The extensive and specific capital required to make an asylum claim in Canada, at least for those coming from Iraq as their country of origin, also illustrates how holding the correct volumes and combinations of capital can speed up the temporal process of international migration. As the case of Interviewee 16 demonstrates when discussing his decision-making, if

one can reach the desired country **and then** claim asylum, the risks that come with spending years in a refugee host country with no guarantee for resettlement are significantly reduced, though of course there is still no guarantee that the claim will be approved, and case processing times are out of the claimant's control. However, here the national status of Iraq as a refugee-producing state has contributed to a policy from the Immigration and Refugee board of Canada which considers it as one of six countries where claims are eligible for acceptance without a hearing through the file-review process (IRB 2019[45]), thus providing an advantage for those from Iraq claiming asylum in Canada.

Interviewee 16's case was approved through this file-review process, though he was required to provide substantial documentary evidence for his case. Much like the immigration through economic channels, where "when applying for visas, aspiring migrants present evidence of economic (e.g. salary slips, bank accounts, title deeds, tax statements), cultural (e.g., language test scores, evidence of school matriculation, degree certificates), and social (e.g. documentary evidence of spousal relations with citizens, affidavits of potential employer-sponsors) capital they claim to possess" (Kim 2018: 268), asylum claimants must prove the credibility of their case of persecution or fear of violence. In this way, a personalized and direct threat of violence constitutes a form of symbolic capital which facilitates legal residency in Canada. To provide evidence for his asylum claim, Interviewee 15 provided his company ID, university diploma and union ID in addition to his written statement of his threat of violence. Interviewee 16 provided similar documents along with written statements from some contacts in Iraq including an important one from his employer, who told him to leave the workplace after he received the threat over the telephone, and also confirmed and that the militia searched for Interviewee 16 on his usual route home in a shared van with his colleagues.

As the evidence suggests, some of the necessary documentation are similar to those necessary to establish credibility as qualified economic migrants, especially for Interviewee 15, whose threat of violence was a result of the work that he did as an engineer in the Green Zone. Thus, navigating the refugee status determination process necessarily requires some embodied cultural capital to organize this process and engage with the legal system (Elrick and Winter 2018). The ability to mobilize social capital through social network members in Iraq can

[45] https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/information-sheets/Pages/less-complex-claims.aspx

contribute to a claim's credibility and thus increase chances of an asylum claim acceptance where they can help gather the necessary documents left behind in Iraq, and contribtue personal statements as evidence towards a claim.

Asylum as a Contingency Strategy

So that, like that time, when my visa was about to be renewed, my husband said like 'let's, we need to think about something, I cannot take you back to Iraq'. So, I said 'let's—let's apply for a visit visa to US.' So I said, we'll have it as a second plan, if our visa got rejected, then… we'll see, we might go and then apply for asylum. (Interviewee 13)

Claiming asylum is not always such a straightforward process. As Interviewee 16 demonstrated on page 28, it was the best of several options he considered, though only because of the position where he was able to reach Canada through the US and be exempt from the third country agreement. For others who had access to temporary residency and legal work in other states, like Interviewee 13 above, the possibility of asylum was held as a contingency strategy in the case where they lost residence permits before they had another option, though she said "since we have, I mean I don't want to risk it unless we are in a bad situation". In other words, asylum, particularly in the United States because of their specific visa and refugee policies for Iraqis, could be enacted as a last resort.

Interviewee 18-1 had been living outside of Iraq for several years because both he and his brother received threats of violence from militia groups in Baghdad. After spending time in several Middle Eastern countries, he received a work contract in an African country, via social network connections made through a position outside of Iraq which saw him travelling often, and this renewable contract allowed he and his family temporary residency. While they had hoped for eventual return to Iraq after spending a short time working in Africa, time quickly passed, but Interviewee 18-1's contract was rejected for a renewal before they were able to find residency in another country. Considering their options Interviewee 18-2 visited Iraq with their children before they came to Canada only to find that the situation had become very dangerous again. At this time kidnapping children was becoming more common, especially children whose parents who worked abroad and paired with the threat against her husband's life and lack of opportunity for them to find work or access residence in Kurdistan, she felt they "had no option".

Interviewee 18-1 received his threat in 2005 and used strategies outside of refugee migration to find work outside of Iraq lived and worked in Africa with his family for six years. They did not intend for Canada to be their permanent home, but when his visa was rejected in

Africa and they had to leave the country within a few months, there were no other residency options available to them, they felt that their only opportunity to live outside of Iraq was asylum in Canada or the United States. Thus, while Interviewee 18-1 had a credible threat against his life for the previous ten years, he did not choose to enact it until he felt he had no other choice. However, his position in the field also allowed him to take this route, again not available to most other Iraqis. Much like the process through which Interviewee 16 obtained his US visa, Interviewee 18-1's individual traits of holding a bank account, owning property, having a work contract at the time of application and family living in the state with his children enrolled in school – all middle class attributes that would indicate their intent to return – contributed to their family receiving the 'rites of institution' of a travel visa to Canada where they could apply for asylum from inside the state (Kim 2018).

This does not downplay the risk and uncertainty of an asylum claim but aims to demonstrate that it was a decision made to manage the risks of violence that participants would likely have faced if they stayed in or returned to Iraq. Because all participants in the sample who claimed asylum in Canada did had personalized and direct threat of violence against their lives, which following the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act states that removal from Canada would subject them to danger (IRPA 2001), and they were able to mobilize the capital necessary to provide evidence for their credibility, this was the best option available to them. Interviewee 13, who above described how she had thought about claiming asylum with her family in the United States, demonstrates the risks inherent in the decision to seek asylum when they were considering their options to find permanent residency. After stated on page 41, her contract was renewed and instead they used their US visa for a vacation. While there, her concerned relative who suggested that they leave the UAE brought them to an immigration lawyer, who "did not recommend, he said, 'you both are well educated, you have everything. Why you need to risk everything, and you come here, you might not get it'." Without reasonable expectation that one's asylum case will be accepted and considering the capital necessary to reach an immigrant-receiving country, asylum migration to Canada can be a very risky option.

Capital allows choice of destination: avenues for further research

"Friends, everyone, left. Everyone, we are all over the pl—world now. Seriously, I have friends all over the world. In Australia, I think in every state in America I have someone, because it was easy, you know that some people, like, either for those who do not really have the experience, or the—or the I don't

know, experience and univer—most of us we have university degree, it's a must in Iraq. If you have not really you are a loser, so it's not like here. It's a college—college we don't, no one goes to college (A laughs)—only losers. So, everyone has a university degree, but the point is do you have the experience? This is the question. So, if you don't have the experience you go as asylum, or if you don't the have the enough points to be—like maybe you are too old, if you are like in for—forties, you would never get the points because you will lose so many points, right? But for us, our age was good, our experience was good, so it was easy for us. But so many people, they went to—to US because it was really easy for them, so, so many, so many friends that I know, especially those who are in UAE, they get the visit visa to US, and then they go there, they tell them 'we are staying'. That's it, as simple as that, yeah." (Interviewee 13)

For those participants who entered Canada through the economic migration stream, and as demonstrated by the case of Interviewees 18 presented in the previous chapter, asylum could have been enacted as a last resort – i.e. in a situation where there is an urgent need to leave a country with no other options besides return to Iraq. In the selected excerpt above, Interviewee 13 describes how other displaced Iraqis in her social network navigate entry to immigrant-receiving countries where they can acquire permanent residency. She directly illustrates how specific combinations of capital influence where in the international status hierarchy the displaced Iraqis in her social network are able to reach as their country of permanent residence where "access to the more prosperous and desirable destinations is limited to better resourced migrants" (van Hear 2014: S111). Those with the right forms of economic and cultural capital, valued by immigrant-receiving countries for their skilled worker programs, can immigrate through economic streams based on the positions these programs have created in the transnational social field and maintain their class status (Elrick and Winter 2018); those without the necessary work experience for these applications, though still holding significant institutionalized cultural capital, can mobilize their national capital of being an Iraqi citizen which offer specialized avenues for Iraqis, particularly those who have experienced threats as a result of their work with Americans. While this thesis follows much of the literature on the impacts of capital in migration-decision making, what it contributes is the context of migration from a conflict region, which thus makes migration largely involuntary for its sample population.

However, the international status hierarchy is not universal. Most participants in the sample expressed a similar sentiment to Interviewee 9, who told me "the United States was not our preferred country. We know the challenges there, and frankly we don't like living there for good"; most expressed a strong preference to live in any immigrant-receiving country but the United States. Those who entered Canada later were concerned by the presidential campaign of Donald Trump, like Interviewee 16, who was influenced to come to Canada by his uncle, but

was also weary of Donald Trump's presidential campaign, where, "at that time he was speech – sectarian, actually, sectarian speech". Interviewees 18 preferred Canada over the US even though they had a brother, cousins and uncle living there because at the time Iraq was on the original proposed 'Muslim ban' by Donald Trump.

Many of those who left earlier, mostly during the violent period of 2005-2008, stated that they were unwilling to live in the country which invaded theirs and who they blame for the ensuing violence, as Interviewee 3 states, "America is the country who invaded us. So why I want to go there?" It was the least desirable options available for this group of participants, even though some had the option for refugee resettlement or asylum there. As suggested above, while Interviewee 1 expressed a strong desire to live anywhere else but the US during our interview, when given an offer for resettlement she said, "and I think we did the first step because we were worried if, if Canada would not work, we will be… to go to United States."; thus, while maintaining it as a contingency plan like Interviewee 13, she was able to live in her preferred country because of the social capital of her brother's private sponsorship application. Interviewee 7's family also received an offer for asylum in the US after her father received a threat for his work with Americans in Baghdad, which happened after her mother's application to enter Canada as a skilled worker. Like Interviewee 1, she and her mother held a strong opinion against this option, which she describes in her own words:

> I'll be very honest with you. Me and my mom, we refused to go to America. Because – it's an American invasion. It's all in the American's pockets (laughs). And I refuse to live under the American flag. It's something uh, maybe it's not right to say, it's not uh-diplomatic to say. But it's my… true feeling. Um, I can't. (Interviewee 7)

She was "willing to serve the queen, but not under the American flag" (Interviewee 7). Interviewee 13, who in the excerpt above describes how capital, in the form of legal skilled work experience, influences the destinations she and her social network were able to reach. While she and her husband had considered claiming asylum in the United States as described on page 54, their capital and ability to enter Canada through economic channels allowed them to avoid this option, as she states, "I mean, US they destroyed our country. I don't want to be a US citizen. They just destroyed our country, so what's the point? Now you will be proud to be a US citizen? All my friends are but… I don't like it."

One of the arguments of this thesis – that access and ability to mobilize particular forms and combinations of capital allowed Iraqi (forced) migrants in this small case study to negotiate the changing legal frameworks along their journeys – demonstrates how having the forms of capital described gave participants options for onwards migration or to cross international borders that they would not have otherwise been able to access (van Hear 2014). Thus, the data suggest that holding higher quantities of the forms of capital that facilitate international migration – economic, cultural and social – allowed these participants to the ability to choose Canada over the United States. It then follows that there may be a difference in capital possessions between those Iraqis who were able to enter the United States and those who were able to enter to the Canada and other destinations in the separate transnational fields created by the countries' different entry regulations (Elrick and Winter 2018). Whereas in Canada the majority of permanent immigrants to Canada come through economic streams (Satzewich 2015), the main source of immigration to the Untied States main immigration come from family reunification; however, the US also offers special immigrant visas and had options for asylum for Iraqis who were employed by the US government[46]. While many participants also mention having family in Australia and New Zealand, Interviewee 10 suggested that the process for health professionals to receive certification in Australia was easier than other immigrant-receiving countries, where her sister, a dentist, was able to take her accreditation exams while living in the UAE before entering the state.

Thus, this presents opportunity for future comparative research on migration decision-making and state entrance policy in the international status hierarchy – which holds particular salience in migration from conflict regions. As this thesis suggests, opportunities for international migration from conflict in Iraq to Canada were stratified along all stages of migration – exit, entrance to a transit country, and opportunity for third country residency – thus further research which compares policies across immigrant-receiving countries would contribute to the theoretical literature in migration decision-making and an emerging line of inquiry of how capital influences opportunity to flee conflict or refugee-producing regions.

This thesis has also used the NELM framework to analyze how participants managed the risks of violence against the risks that come with international migration, as suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018) as a useful tool to study migration from conflict regions. While it

[46] https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/special-immg-visas-iraqis-employed-us-gov.html

proved a valuable framework for this particular case, this thesis suggests that it can be improved by explicitly focusing on how legal frameworks and migrant capital affect the decisions available and suggests how gender can influence household risk management as is affects vulnerabilities in contexts of violence and norms of migration. As this is a small-n case study, these results can not be considered conclusive, and but the findings suggest further research to explicitly test whether the NELM theory is a suitable framework for conflict decision making, and if so, how this unfolds in other contexts of forced migration. As these empirical findings suggest, it could prove a valuable theoretical framework which would help further understanding of migration decision making from conflict or refugee producing regions, which has been limited by divides between the Sociology and Forced Migration disciplinary boundaries and the practice of following realist categories of practice as sociological categories of analysis (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Castles 2003; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018).

These findings also suggest that there is room for further research on gendered mobility in this case study; first, how it influenced vulnerabilities within Iraq based on movement within the country which affected threats of violence and forced displacement; next, how families structure their mobility – who can move alone, where and when they can move; and third how they move, i.e. the channels they take. While the sample is too small to draw any conclusions, as established three out of six of the skilled worker primary applicants in this sample were females – and of the other three heterosexual couples where men served as primary applicants one woman held a master's degree in architecture, and the other was a health professional. If this is a larger pattern, some questions remain. What are its influences? Is it distinctive to the education system in Iraq? And, what are the consequences for households migrating from Iraq; do they have an advantage over others of similar national status groups when seeking skilled labour migration from conflict regions if both adults are trained in the skilled professions sought by the receiving country?

Conclusion

"There is a danger of falling into the trap of assuming a certain set of problems or experiences are the exclusive domain of refuges" (Bakewell 2008:445)

This thesis responds to a developing line of inquiry in the immigration policy literature which argues that state-specific entry requirements shape the composition of those who are able to enter

along class lines. Thus, entry is stratified towards those who are able to mobilize the specific capital requirements to meet these positions (Elrick and Winter 2018; Erel 2010; Kim 2018; van Hear 2014; Stewart 2008). While this literature begins to conceptualize how immigration policy affects migration decision-making, its contributions are largely theoretical. Except for van Hear's 2014 paper, where he suggests that asylum migration from Sri Lanka is more costly than labour migration, it centres on economic migration which omits consideration of the influence of capital on refugee migration, or how it structures available pathways to migrants fleeing conflict.

Following calls by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018) and Stephen Castles (2003, 2007), the thesis is a result of an empirical project designed to treat migrant and refugee movements as related rather than separate phenomena, rare in the literature save for Emma Stewart's paper on health professional migration from conflict regions to the UK (2008). It is a qualitative case study which samples interview participants based on country of origin rather than entry status to Canada, following the assumption that using state-assigned categories of practice as categories of sociological analysis limits understanding into migration decision-making (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Fitzgerald and Arar 2018). It examines how migrants from a particular conflict region – Iraq following the 2003 US-invasion – negotiate legal frameworks over the course of their migration, how state policies affected their decision-making, what capital resources came into play in these negotiations, and how incorporating legal frameworks contribute to further understanding of the role of the state in shaping international migration decisions.

Three main findings come from this project. First, it contributes empirical evidence to the theoretical argument that migration policies affect the composition of migration streams, particularly along class lines. The ability and options to move are stratified to those who hold and are able to mobilize significant and diverse combinations of capital. While most research focuses on immigrant-receiving countries, these findings suggest that this pattern holds true for entry to and residence in transit countries, where policies informed by historical refugee migration in the region "create substantial heterogeneity among potential immigrants within the same sending country in terms of the kinds of capital they possess" (Elrick and Winter 2018:29). Thus, transit countries also exist along an international status hierarchy (van Hear 2014), where access to legal work in the United Arab Emirates allows migrants to gather further cultural and economic capital which then strengthens migration applications to Canada. It also demonstrates

that specific gendered policies affected the migration decisions and the capital families were required to mobilize to overcome these policies; the findings of gender and economic migration to Canada – where 3 out of 6 skilled worker primary applicants were women – suggest directions for further research on gender and skilled migration in this case study.

Next, its findings suggest that a much richer understanding of international migration decision-making can be found when refugee and economic migration are considered together, i.e. when research follows Brubaker and Cooper's advice not to follow categories of practice in sociological analysis (2000). As suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018), this design allows for findings which would not be possible if the project sampled on entry category to Canada, further supporting Elrick and Lightman's nominalist argument that migration categorization is a result of negotiation with the state (2016). This is most evident in the composition of the sample, where all but one participant cited violence as a main motivation for their migration, yet 8 of 18 entered Canada through non-refugee routes. Further support is found in two households in the sample which have members who left Iraq together for the same transit countries but entered Canada under different entrance categories. In addition, this thesis finds – as a result of its design – that asylum is a choice to be enacted in particular contexts, though for this group usually occurred as a last resort, and often an option influenced by a claimant's ability to mobilize capital.

The third main finding to emerge from this thesis is that, again as suggested by Fitzgerald and Arar (2018), a NELM framework where migrants act strategically to minimize the risk of violence and make decisions embedded in households rather than as individual actors is particularly useful for research conflict or refugee migration decision-making. However, as the thesis finds that capital plays a particularly important role in shaping migration throughout the journey, further research using this framework should incorporate how capital shapes the options available to migrants, how legal frameworks shape these options and thus affect decision-making, and how gender affects both mobility both within a conflict region and, in turn, international migration.

Thus, this thesis finds that migration from violence, in addition to economic migration for family reunification, can also be stratified along class lines (Elrick and Winter 2018; Kim 2018). As Elrick and Winter argue, the implications of immigration policies on social class "need to be considered in terms of the way they will affect the broad processes of social inclusion/exclusion"

in immigrant-receiving countries (2018:29). This project suggests that the ability to flee protracted conflict and find permanent residency may be restricted to those with the proper combinations of and ability to mobilize capital to match entry requirements. Participants state that some of their displaced social network members who fled Iraq and could not mobilize their capital for onward migration received inadequate or no UN aid nor resettlement offers, could not access employment because of residency policies and were left with no other options but to return home to Iraq, where at least they had access to stable residency and the ability to work. When contrasted to the well-educated segment of Iraqis fleeing violence – like those in this sample – who hold the correct forms of capital to match positions available in immigrant-receiving countries, this suggests similar findings to Stewart, who in 2008 argued that "the poorest and most vulnerable individuals are forced to remain in their country or become internally displaced" (Stewart 2008:223).

Following the theoretical literature, these empirical findings suggest that a migrant's endowments and combinations of capital affect which final destination along the international status hierarchy and thus presents an opportunity for further comparative research using this case study. Given the utility of migration from Iraq as a case study based on the high-capital endowments of its diaspora and the related multiple migration pathways accessed by this group, further research following a similar design can demonstrate how different immigration policies in other immigrant-receiving countries affect the capital endowments and composition of the Iraqi diaspora in each respective state. For example, given that many of these high-capital research participants were able to choose Canada over the United States, along with the special entrance policies for Iraqis in the United States, which Interviewee 13 suggests makes it easier to enter than Canada, Iraqis living in the United States should have generally lower capital endowments than those in Canada. This thesis also suggests that further research in this migration case study should examine gendered mobility – how gender structures mobility within Iraq and affects forced out-migration – and also the effects of gender on principal applicants from Iraq entering through Canada's skilled work program.

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Appendix I: Participant Migration Characteristics

Interview Number	City/Region of Origin	Gender	Transit Country(ies)	Status in Transit country	Entrance to Canada
1	Baghdad	Female	Jordan	Tourist/overstayed/Asylum	PSR
2	Baghdad	Female	Jordan	Student/temporary resident	Skilled worker dependent (husband)
3	Mosul	Male	Egypt	Son of resident or employee	PSR *
4	Mosul	Male	Jordan	Refugee	PSR
5	Baghdad	Male	Jordan	Temporary Resident	Landed immigrant
6	Baghdad	Female	UAE	Sponsored Spouse/Temporary resident	Skilled worker dependent (husband)
7	Baghdad	Female	Jordan	Temporary resident/student	Skilled worker dependent (mother)
8	Baghdad	Male	Egypt	Tourist/Student	Family Reunification (father – asylum)
9	Baghdad	Male	-	-	Skilled Worker
10	Baghdad	Female	UAE	Work Permit/Temporary resident	Skilled Worker
11	Baghdad	Male	Turkey	Refugee	GAR
12	Village in Nineveh Plains	Male	Lebanon	Refugee	PSR
13	Baghdad	Female	UAE	Work Permit/Temporary Resident	Skilled worker
14	Baghdad	Male	Syria	Refugee	GAR
15	Baghdad	Male	US	Business Visitor (B1 Visa)	Asylum Claimant
16	Baghdad	Female	US	Tourism (B2 Visa)	Asylum Claimant
17	Baghdad	Male	US	Tourism (B2 Visa)	Asylum C
18	Baghdad	M/F (2 participants)	Country in Africa (not stated for privacy purposes)	Work Permit/Temporary Residency	Tourist – claimed asylum inland

Appendix II: Interview Schedule

My name is Alicia. I am a Master's student in Sociology and my thesis project is on international migration from Iraq after the 2003 invasion.

Thank you very much for your participation in this project. I am interested in learning about your migration process, and in hearing as much as you have to say, even if it seems messy or confusing because I'm interested in learning about your whole migration experience. The purpose of this study is to examine how migration from conflict areas is not so black and white, and how different legal migration status influences migration journeys.

I am going to go through the consent form with you now which outlines the purpose of the study, what your participation involves, potential risks and my guarantee of your confidentiality. **Most important is that you may stop the interview at anytime and withdraw your contribution at any time**. [Consent form process]. Do you agree to have this interview recorded?

Great. Thank you, do you have any questions before we begin?

Okay. **Again, you may stop the interview at any time, do not need to answer any questions you are not comfortable with, and can withdraw your contribution at anytime. First, we will start with some questions about you**.

Can **you tell me about your life before you left**?

- Where were you living?
- Who with?
- Education and occupation of individual and their family members
- If pursued further education, why? [**Education-Human capital]**
- Did you have family members or friends living nearby? **[Social networks**]
- Did you have family/friends or know others living outside of Iraq? **[Networks/capital]**
- **Did you move before you left**?

Great, thank you. Now we are going to talk about your migration from home. Could you tell me about your migration from home, and I will ask some questions during the story?

- When did you leave?
    - **How long was it after the invasion?**
- **Why did you leave? [probes here for specific reasons- economic, threat of violence?]**
- Had you thought about the possibility that you would have to leave?
    - If not immediate, how did they plan the journey?
- **Where** did you go first?
    - Was this your first destination choice?
    - Did you have a preference of where you wanted to go? Why?
    - **Why did you go to this place?**
    - Did you know others in this place?
- **Who did you move with?**

    - Why did you move with them?
    - Why did you go there?
- **Who stayed behind?**
- How long did you think you would stay there?
- For how long were you there?
- **How was the border crossing- transportation?**
- **If external to Iraq, what was your legal status**?
    - If didn't apply for legal status, why not?
    - **If had legal status, how did it affect your life**?
    - Did you apply for refugee status?
    - Did you think you would have access to any refugee status?
    - Were your ideas of status in line with what actually happened?

Okay, now we will talk about your secondary/further migration.

- When did you move again?
    - Where/with who/how (same questions as above)
- **How did your legal status change over the process of your migration?**
    - **What did this mean for you (and your migration partner/family)?**
- **At what point did you consider permanent resettlement?**
    - **Where? When? Why? With whom**?
- If economic/family migrant, how did you find out about the immigration system in Canada?

Okay, so as you are the expert on migration from Iraq after the invasion, do you think there is anything else I should know?

- **Are there any other questions you think I should ask?**

That's great, thank you very, very much for your time today, I really appreciate you agreeing to speak to me and this cannot be done without you.

I was wondering if you would know anyone else who would be interested in participating in this project as well.

If you have any other questions, or would like to withdraw any or all of your contribution, please feel free to contact me at any time. My contact information is at the top of the consent form.