



---

**British children associated with ISIS in camps in North-East Syria: Counter-terrorism, security and children's rights concerns in repatriation decision-making**

Journal:	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>
Manuscript ID	RERS-2024-0392.R2
Manuscript Type:	Research Article
Keywords:	Citizenship, counter-terrorism, ISIS, race/racialisation, security/securitisation, camp

SCHOLARONE™  
Manuscripts

# British children associated with ISIS in camps in North-East Syria: Counter-terrorism, security and children's rights concerns in repatriation decision-making

## Abstract

Drawing empirical insights from NGOs working on statelessness, repatriation, and children's rights relating to children residing in al-Hol and Roj camps in North-East Syria, I explore critiques of UK government decision-making concerning repatriation amid unprecedented use of citizenship deprivation powers affecting ISIS-associated children which has enforced parent-child separation. A policy gap is created where children are unable to be returned with caregivers if citizenship is deprived. Adoption of a case-by-case approach rather than coherent policy response to repatriation prolongs children's detainment within insecure camps. Using a critical race lens, I advance theoretical understanding of spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation within the context of counter-terrorism policies affecting British children in NES camps through convergence of violent conflict, citizenship deprivation, and state failure to repatriate. A children's right approach to repatriation decision-making is required to ensure British children's safe return and right to family.

**Key words:** camp, citizenship, counter-terrorism, ISIS, race, security

1  
2  
3 Madeline-Sophie Abbas  
4  
5

6  
7 *Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK*  
8  
9

10 [m.abbas7@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:m.abbas7@lancaster.ac.uk)  
11  
12

13  
14 [madelinesophie80@gmail.com](mailto:madelinesophie80@gmail.com)  
15

16  
17 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0426-1924>  
18

19  
20  
21 Twitter: @abbas\_madeline  
22  
23

24  
25 Word count: 9,053  
26  
27

## 28 29 Context

30  
31  
32 In November 2019, former Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, announced that the UK  
33  
34 government had begun to repatriate a small number of orphaned British children entrapped  
35  
36 by conflict in North-East Syria (NES). Raab expressed: 'innocent, orphaned children should  
37  
38 never have been subjected to the horrors of war' (cited in Sabbagh, 21 November 2019),  
39  
40 positioning children as hapless victims of conflict requiring a humanitarian response. The  
41  
42 decision prompted calls to enable all British children detained in Syria to be returned.  
43  
44 However, then Home Secretary, Priti Patel, and then Defence Secretary, Ben Wallace, argued  
45  
46 full-scale rescue posed security issues (Townsend, 16 November 2019) despite ongoing  
47  
48 concerns (APPG on Trafficked Britons in Syria, 2022; Reprieve, 2021; RSI 2021a,b; Save the  
49  
50 Children, 2021, 2022; Médecins Sans Frontières, 2022) of children's *insecurity* within camps  
51  
52 amid Turkey's incursion of the border region and deteriorating weather conditions as winter  
53  
54 approached (UNHCR, 2023). These divergent positions illustrate the security/safeguarding  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 paradox within CT responses whereby security is placed above child protection within  
4  
5 repatriation decision-making for ISIS-associated children that this article explores.  
6  
7

8           Following the fall of Baghouz in 2019 and demise of ISIS or Daesh, the de-facto  
9  
10 Kurdish-run self-governance within the region, the Autonomous Administration of North and  
11  
12 East Syria (AANES), detained thousands of women and children within two open-air camps  
13  
14 (APPG on Trafficked Britons, 2022:13): al-Hol and Roj. Al-Hol is the largest camp in NES run  
15  
16 by the Syrian Democratic forces (SDF) and political leadership of the Syrian Democratic  
17  
18 Council (SDC) in AANES holding around 49,100 people, 94 per cent are women and children  
19  
20 (UN Security Council, 2023:4). Camp Roj holds around 3,000 people; around 65 per cent are  
21  
22 children (OHCHR, 2023).  
23  
24  
25  
26

27           Conditions remain unsafe from security and humanitarian standpoints, particularly for  
28  
29 approximately 7,442 third country nationals residing in the 'foreign' annex to al-Hol's main  
30  
31 camp where aid is restricted (UN Security Council, 2023:4). These populations are assumed  
32  
33 to be connected to ISIS, either having travelled to join and/or marry ISIS members (de  
34  
35 Azevedo, 2020; Reprieve, 2021:45). Almost two-thirds of foreign camp detainees are children,  
36  
37 the majority aged under 12 (Human Rights Watch, 2022a), raising children's rights concerns.  
38  
39 An estimated 1,400-1,650 minors were taken by their parents to IS territory or born there  
40  
41 (Cook and Vale, 2019:36). The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, Jonathan Hall  
42  
43 QC (2023:2), states that there are no official figures, but an estimated 60 'UK-linked children'  
44  
45 remain in NES.  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

51           Human Rights Watch (2023:1) document that prior to October 2022, the UK refused  
52  
53 to repatriate any women and only considered repatriating orphaned or unaccompanied  
54  
55 children case-by-case. Reprieve (2021:51-52), a legal action and human rights NGO, found  
56  
57 five cases where the UK government agreed to repatriate children but not their parents. For  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 example, Mehak Aslam (Sabbagh, 15 January 2020) who left the UK in 2014 to join Daesh with  
4 her five children was deprived of her citizenship on security grounds. The UK government  
5 agreed to repatriate her four children – one daughter was killed in an explosion in Baghouz  
6 illustrating the risk to British children. Syrian-Kurdish authorities responsible for refugee  
7 camps deny UK requests where repatriation involves family separation, meaning children are  
8 indefinitely detained within insecure camps (Sabbagh, 15 January 2020).  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16

17  
18 The UK lags behind international allies concerning repatriation efforts (Wintour, 21  
19 July 2023). Rights and Security International interviewed in this research launched its Global  
20 Repatriation Tracker in 2022 documenting estimated numbers of repatriated children,  
21 women, and men since 2019 to aid transparency and pressure states, including the UK, to act.  
22 Approximately 38 countries have repatriated some or most of their nationals<sup>1</sup> compared to  
23 the UK which has only repatriated 18 children (mostly orphaned or unaccompanied) and three  
24 woman since 2019 (RSI, 22 July 2024).<sup>2</sup> An estimated 20-25 British women or families are  
25 detained within Syrian camps not withstanding those denied citizenship appealing decisions  
26 within UK courts (Sabbagh, 12 December 2023); as the Shamima Begum case reveals, verdicts  
27 are difficult to overturn (Siddique, 23 February 2024).  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41

42 Drawing on empirical insights from key non-governmental organisations (NGOs)  
43 working on statelessness, repatriation, and children's rights relating to women and children  
44 residing in al-Hol and Roj camps in NES, this article explores critiques of UK government  
45 decision-making concerning repatriation and unprecedented use of citizenship deprivation  
46 (CD) powers affecting ISIS-associated children/families which disregard state obligations to its  
47 citizens and the international community and have enforced family separation (APPG on  
48 Trafficked Britons, 2022; Reprieve 2021). An irreconcilable policy gap is produced where  
49 children cannot be repatriated with caregivers if denied citizenship. These NGOs operate  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 internationally, but I focus on human/children's rights violations affecting British children  
4 within NES camps and impact of the UK government's protracted decision-making of adopting  
5 a case-by-case approach rather than a coherent policy response to repatriation, thus  
6 prolonging children's detention within insecure camps. NGO accounts reveal how British  
7 children are *insecuritised* by multi-scalar and dynamic spatio-temporal logics. I argue that the  
8 security/safeguarding paradox within CT policy whereby security concerns are prioritised  
9 above child protection is legitimised by childhood radicalisation narratives which pathologise  
10 Muslim families (Abbas, 2019a).

11  
12  
13 The article is in four parts: firstly, the theoretical context integrates analyses of  
14 citizenship and securitisation using a critical race lens to explore how racialised security  
15 practices and politics of (un)belonging undermine citizenship rights (Abbas, 2021:71-190,  
16 2019b; Tazzioli, 2021) through CT policy (Choudhury, 2017; Naqvi, 2022). I outline the CRT  
17 methodology and civil society coalition on statelessness. Findings delineate spatio-temporal  
18 logics of (in)securitisation concerning trajectories of detained children and agency; age-  
19 related factors affecting children's prolonged detention in NES camps and treatment as  
20 victims/threats; children's rights violations resulting from CD and family separation; and  
21 NGO's advocacy of a children's rights approach to protect children. I conclude that a  
22 children's rights framework is required in keeping with the UN Convention of the Rights of  
23 the Child (UNCRC) that treats children within armed conflict as victims and recognises  
24 obligations of member states to safeguard citizens.

## 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

## Theoretical context

### *Citizenship and racialised (in)securitisation: A CRT approach*

1  
2  
3 CRT developed from US legal scholarship (Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado, 1995). It is arguably a  
4 perspective rather than a theory (Hylton, 2012) but its unifying principles are that race is  
5 socially constructed and the means through which minoritised groups are 'ordered and  
6 constrained in society' (Treviño, Harris and Wallace, 2008:7). Racism is ingrained within  
7 institutional structures, practices, procedures and thus normalised within society (Delgado,  
8 1995:xvi) in support of white privilege.

9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18 Subsets of CRT have developed beyond the Black-White paradigm in the US to explore  
19 distinct experiences of racially minoritised groups, including British Muslims. Breen and Meer  
20 (2019; also Housee, 2012) use CRT to explore how anti-Muslim prejudice is engendered  
21 through UK securitisation measures. Since 'visible' Muslims experience heightened  
22 surveillance, racialisation of Muslims is not reducible to 'race' (Ali, 2022:348). As an  
23 intersectional framework, CRT centralise race within analyses whilst recognising that  
24 oppressions connect with other identity categories, here, religion, gender and age. CRT has  
25 also been applied to examine 'racialized law enforcement practices' (Romero, 2008:28)  
26 affecting immigration and citizenship status.

27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40 Using a CRT lens, I expand scholarship on the securitisation of Muslims (Breen and  
41 Meer 2019) and citizenship that addresses criticisms within critical security studies of the  
42 neglect of race (Howell and Richter-Montpetit, 2020). Treatment of British Muslims as  
43 'securitized citizens' (Hussain and Bagguley, 2013) deemed security threats within political,  
44 public and media framings legitimates CD that departs from previous CT responses. Between  
45 1973-2002 there were no UK cases (Balakrishnan, 2018) despite the threat from IRA  
46 terrorism. Comparatively, in 2017 there were 104 UK cases (Shah, 2022) (162 between 2017-  
47 2020) concerning ISIS-related terrorism. Although ethnicity is unrecorded, sources document  
48 that most cases are 'Muslim men with south Asian or middle Eastern/north African heritage'

1  
2  
3 (IRR, 2022:8). The UK government has responsibilities under international law not to leave  
4 individuals stateless. However, British Muslims are overwhelming from racially minoritised  
5 backgrounds<sup>3</sup> which has meant, as with Shamima Begum, they can be made de facto stateless  
6 on security grounds without having to prove citizenship elsewhere (Masters and Regilme,  
7 2020), and are consequently *insecuritised* (Abbas, 2021; Croft 2012). Unprecedented use of  
8 CD has been strengthened by the controversial Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and  
9 introduction of Clause 9 which allows citizenship to be deprived without notice (IRR, 2022:3-  
10 6).

11  
12 Both citizenship and securitisation comprise spatio-temporal processes (Nauman,  
13 2021). Pre-emptive CT measures re-work temporal conditions undergirding security  
14 responses by treating Muslims as already security threats to be managed. CRT's insistence  
15 on historical legal analyses helps reveal how past racial oppressions have contemporary  
16 effects (Möschel, 2011:1649). Colonial legacies underpinning differential citizenship rights  
17 allocate British Muslims, who are overwhelmingly from former colonies, insecure citizenship  
18 (Abbas, 2021:93108; Naqvi 2022). Repatriation decision-making highlights how citizenship  
19 functions to control movement by determining who belongs and who can be banished  
20 (Macklin, 2018).

21  
22 As Fortier (2021:204) observes, *citizenisation* comprises contested spatialities and  
23 temporalities through which state-citizen relations are (re)configured resulting from a  
24 'politics of waiting where who is to wait, how and what for are defined by, but also define,  
25 status.' Liminality provides a useful concept for understanding spatio-temporal 'separation'  
26 from previous social structures (Turner, 1969) or 'in-between' phases (Malkki, 1995:41).  
27 Stateless individuals are stuck in a liminal space or 'liminal statelessness' (Parsons and  
28 Lawreniuk, 2018:2) outside 'the national order of things' (Malkki, 1995) waiting to belong.  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 The concept of liminality has been nuanced to account for different temporal conditions:  
4  
5 'transitional liminality' (Beech, 2011) involving specified transitional periods or 'perpetual  
6  
7 liminality' (Johnsen and Sørensen, 2015) to describe indefinite states.  
8  
9

10 Alkhaled and Sasaki (2022:1584) advance 'indeterminate liminality' in the context of  
11  
12 forced displacement during the Syrian conflict defined as a 'liminal state into which actors are  
13  
14 forcibly entered, and their agency is structurally constrained until an unknown end date,  
15  
16 leaving them to experience seemingly never-ending uncertainty.' Temporality is central to  
17  
18 understanding structural constraints concerning spatial mobility whereby waiting is an effect  
19  
20 of power. For Biner and Biner (2021:795), sovereign state power 'subjugates people through  
21  
22 temporal power' through which 'subjects are transformed as they wait' into non-citizens. In  
23  
24 place of the waiting room as the central emblem in Fortier's work on citizenisation, I argue  
25  
26 that the camp occupies a similarly contested spatio-temporality that through the possibility  
27  
28 of *de*-citizenisation, legitimised as a CT measure, exemplifies religio-racialised hierarchies of  
29  
30 (un)belonging and (in)securitisation.  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36

37 Citizenship deprivation powers also have significant spatial dimensions. As argued  
38  
39 elsewhere (Abbas, 2021:305), Muslim populations experience (in)securitised spaces through  
40  
41 'complex interferences of different spatial registers (discursive, material and affective), scales  
42  
43 (local, national, global) and dimensions (horizontal and vertical geopolitics).' Here, spatio-  
44  
45 temporalities operate across geographic distance through convergence of imperial sites of  
46  
47 war (ground and aerial spaces) and domestic repatriation decision-making. Liminal camp  
48  
49 spaces are contemporaneous with political wranglings within UK policy/political spaces which  
50  
51 delay repatriation efforts. Waiting has implications for children's treatment as victims or  
52  
53 threats within CT policy and repatriation prospects as the next section explores.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

## *Children as victims or threats? Age and agency*

Age at which children are judged security threats affects repatriation decision-making underpinning religio-racialised spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation. Cook and Vale (2018:5) argue that minors, dubbed ‘cubs of the caliphate’ that have featured in ISIS videos as campaigners, soldiers, suicide bombers and even executioners (Winter, 5 January 2016) are poised to further IS legacy after the fall of the caliphate, thus posing security threats. To assess threat levels, they recommend categorising children as ‘infants (0-4 years); children (5-14 years) and teenagers (15-17 years).’ Since temporal considerations underlie judgements, length of stay within camps impacts children’s repatriation prospects. Age classifications are subjective, with the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN, 2018:2) placing infants at 0-3, children at 4-10, and teenagers at 10-17, suggesting children become threats earlier.

Categorisations are made alongside ‘motivations and proscribed roles within IS’ (Cook and Vale, 2018:5) that renders agency salient to threat assessment and assumes, problematically, that motivations are consistent, whilst downplaying coercive and exploitative ways roles may be ascribed (APPG on Trafficked Britons, 2022; War Child, 2023:5-7). This marks an important departure from treatment of children within the Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) agenda as victims and exceptionalism granted Muslim children. For RAN (2018:1), emotional and physical trauma experienced by children under 10, including exposure to extreme violence and losing family members in conflict, positions them as security threats rather than victims of conflict: ‘potentially vulnerable to radicalisation and violent extremism’ if not properly re-integrated into society.

Failure for children to access adequate mental health within camps (Médecins Sans Frontières, 2022; Save the Children, 2021) and dominance of security frames that associate

1  
2  
3 trauma with propensity for violence impacts repatriation decision-making and forces the  
4  
5 issue of family separation.  
6  
7

### 8 9 *Children's rights violations and family separation* 10

11  
12 CRT offers a useful lens for exploring radicalisation cases, almost all of which relate to  
13  
14 Islamist<sup>4</sup> terrorism (Ahdash, 2018:391), as important instances of religio-racialised  
15  
16 discrimination affecting Muslim families/children. Although children of parents detained or  
17  
18 arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Acts during the Northern Irish Troubles may have  
19  
20 temporarily been cared for by local authorities (Hillyard 1993), use of family courts and child  
21  
22 protection agencies marks a departure. Radicalisation cases deviate from usual care cases  
23  
24 whereby radicalisation is the only welfare concern, reflecting a particular socio-political  
25  
26 context that 'seeks to regulate Muslim cultural difference and Muslim family life' (Ahdash,  
27  
28 2018:390).  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33

34  
35 Local authorities applied for family court orders across 2015-16 due to 'suspicions that  
36  
37 children, with their parents or on their own, [were] planning or attempting or being groomed  
38  
39 with a view to travel to parts of [the Middle East] controlled by ISIS' (Munby, 2015 cited in  
40  
41 Blackbourn, 2020:1).<sup>5</sup> Ahdash (2023:1201) notes that following ISIS's demise, local  
42  
43 authorities shifted attention in family court order applications to manage 'child-protection  
44  
45 risks emerging from the return, or attempted return, of British parents and their children.'  
46  
47  
48 Convergence of family law with counter-terrorism and emergence of 'childhood  
49  
50 radicalisation' (Abbas, 2019a) as a 'category of abuse' (Stanley and Guru, 2015:353) positions  
51  
52 Muslim families as 'breeding grounds' for radicalisation (RAN, 2017:55) that legitimise state  
53  
54 intervention from security and law enforcement and makes the question of child-parent  
55  
56 separation salient.  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

Exceptional status afforded ISIS-associated families obfuscates their complex trajectories that may include grooming, trafficking, and other forms of sexual exploitation (APPG on Trafficked Britons, 2022; Reprieve, 2021). Children may have already experienced high levels of trauma where they have lost or been separated from caregivers (Human Rights Watch, 2022b) following the fall of Baghouz, the last territorial stronghold of IS. Trauma continues for minors and caregivers within NES camps through physical alienation and deprivation that cements stigmatised identification as 'ISIS families' (Cook and Vale, 2018:53). Save the Children (2021:24) report that family units in NES may not be biologically related or only partial biological families but have formed 'primary relationships in children's lives.' Governments have nevertheless used DNA testing to 'prove' children are nationals that subjects children to psychic and affective insecurities from family separation.

Whilst the UK government (UK Visas and Immigration, 2023) stipulates that deprivation decisions must involve consideration of the duty in section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 to have 'regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK,' a caveat is provided that 'their best interests may be outweighed by countervailing factors' which encapsulates the security/safeguarding paradox inherent in CT policy and enabled through CD powers.

Despite recognition that parent-child separation re-traumatizes children, including amongst CT professionals (RAN, 2021:2), security concerns are prioritised above children's rights. Where mothers are deprived of British citizenship for security reasons, their children are at risk of statelessness (Pougnnet and European Network on Statelessness, 2021). Reprieve (2021:20) reports that a pregnant British woman had her citizenship removed, making her child stateless, exemplifying how security trumps child protection.

## CRT Methodology

The research adopts a CRT lens which traditionally centralises racialised participants' lived experiences to reveal exclusionary political and legal structures through storytelling or legal narrativism (Crenshaw 1995; Delgado 1995:11; Matsuda, 1987). However, it was not possible within the research scope to speak directly to those impacted. NGO actors were cognisant of (racialised) implications of speaking for women and children and demonstrated reflexivity concerning their whiteness in navigating privileged yet nonetheless problematic policy spaces. Accounts revealed racialised structures/practices underpinning repatriation decision-making affecting British Muslims who are overwhelmingly from racially minoritised communities in keeping with a CRT approach.

Data relates to a broader 6-month UK Research Innovation (UKRI) project conducted in 2022 exploring impact of CT and related legislation on British Muslim populations and experiences of citizenship. The article focuses on 8 participants from 7 NGOs specialising in statelessness (Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, ISI), children's rights (Children's Rights International Network, CRIN, and Save the Children), and repatriation (Rights and Security International, RSI). NGO participants were predominately white British (3 white British females, 2 white British males, 1 white female European, 1 British Middle Eastern Muslim female, 1 British Asian female). I contacted various government committees and MPs but faced similar challenges to NGOs concerning speaking to state officials. NGO actors' CT expertise varied but centred on two key areas: 1. impact on children's rights; 2. statelessness. Most had undertaken research and/or reports in these areas and/or had professional qualifications in law or human rights. Whilst organisations were international, focusing on conflict-affected states, most participants had expertise on UK CT law and policy.

1  
2  
3 I used snowball sampling to compile my sample. As Noy (2008: 329, original italics)  
4 notes, this technique 'partakes in...*dynamics of...organic social networks.*' Interest  
5  
6 convergence is a key principle within CRT for effecting social change by aligning interests with  
7  
8 the dominant group. Participants discussed involvement in a 'civil society movement on  
9  
10 statelessness' to counter discriminatory practices concerning repatriation and children's  
11  
12 rights using strategies to incentivise political interest via public support and positive media  
13  
14 coverage.  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19

20 Where consented, I use participants' names/role/affiliation but respect differences  
21  
22 between views of individuals and organisations in analysis. Professional integrity and  
23  
24 organisational reputation were key ethical concerns, particularly since repatriation is  
25  
26 politicised, linked to security concerns and has ramifications for those negatively impacted  
27  
28 (children, caregivers, their families) who have limited influence, are overwhelmingly from  
29  
30 racially minoritised backgrounds, and which NGO actors felt responsibility to safeguard.  
31  
32  
33  
34

35 Interviews were around 1 hour-1 hour and 45 minutes via Microsoft Teams to mitigate  
36  
37 geographical constraints and participants' time-pressures. Along with the information sheet  
38  
39 and consent form, I sent questions tailored to participants' expertise in advance so they  
40  
41 could decide if they wanted to participate and prepare, meaning responses were detailed,  
42  
43 informed, and an effective use of time. Questions ensured key areas were covered whilst  
44  
45 allowing flexibility to discuss important avenues. Participants could send links to relevant  
46  
47 reports/sources during interviews. I probed responses and noted aspects to follow up to  
48  
49 support validity (Berry, 2003:679). Interviews explored professional background/experience;  
50  
51 citizenship deprivation; family law and CT; the question of returnees/repatriation and debates  
52  
53 within CT concerning definitions, civil liberties and the rule of law.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Critical thematic analysis was used that combined Braun and Clark's (2006:87)  
4 framework of familiarisation, code generation, searching, reviewing, defining, and naming  
5 themes with Lawless and Chen's (2019:93) recommendation of 'connecting everyday  
6 discourses with larger social and cultural practices nested in unequal power relations.'  
7  
8 Analyses revealed important tensions between CT and humanitarian protocols and policy  
9 objectives. The next sections elucidate spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation from  
10 research findings.  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21

## 22 Analyses/findings

### 23 *Age and spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation*

24  
25 NGOs highlighted complex trajectories by which children have come to reside in NES camps.  
26 These centre on the question of agency and treatment of children as paradoxically victims  
27 and/or security threats (Renard and Coolseat, 2020) that are shaped by different spatio-  
28 temporal dimensions:  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36

37  
38 And then the children that are with [women in the camps] ...in most cases...they are  
39 either those women's children, or they are children that they took with them as they  
40 escaped Baghouz...for the most part, I would say, born in Syria during the conflict in  
41 Syria or Iraq as the border...was...porous at the time.  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

49 ...for some of the older children...it is more complicated, they would have been  
50 brought out by their parents...[or]...children at the time who travelled out either of  
51 their own volition or without choice...who are now adults (Orlaith Minogue, then  
52 Senior Conflict and Humanitarian Advocacy Adviser, Save the Children, 13 June 2022,  
53 London, online).  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6 An important spatio-temporal dimension of (in)securitisation concerns how sites of  
7  
8 imperialist war converge with the domestic metropole. Minogue narrates that children are  
9  
10 predominately born into conflict relevant to the CAAC agenda traditionally used by  
11  
12 humanitarian organisations focused on protecting children and treating them as victims  
13  
14 (UNICEF, 2022). Minors taken or born to foreign parents under the caliphate raise questions  
15  
16 concerning citizenship and statelessness which 'extend beyond the Iraqi and Syrian borders'  
17  
18 (Cook and Vale, 2018:52) relevant to British imperial legacies within the region. A CRT lens  
19  
20 recognises the importance of historical contextualisation for understanding current racial  
21  
22 oppression. The Syria-Iraq boundary, the site of the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire  
23  
24 following the Anglo-French Sykes Picot Agreement 1916, has been unstable since the  
25  
26 neocolonial US-led Iraq War 2003 (Ababakr, 2022) and subsequent occupation, and ongoing  
27  
28 Syrian Civil War beginning in 2011.<sup>6</sup> UNICEF (2022:15) documents 'cross-border spill-over of  
29  
30 armed conflict,' meaning conflicts are uncontained by geographical borders. Porousness of  
31  
32 borders makes claims to citizenship problematic, meaning children are at risk of statelessness  
33  
34 (Spieß and Pyne-Jones, 2022:35) and being forcibly taken across borders for recruitment  
35  
36 and/or sexual exploitation (OHCHR, 2023), rendering the question of state responsibility  
37  
38 pressing to protect children.  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45

46  
47 Language of escape positions children as victims of conflict with minimal agency and  
48  
49 'liminal statelessness' engendered by blocked access to citizenship rights (Parsons and  
50  
51 Lawreniuk, 2018:2) due to lack of documentation or its recognition that can continue to  
52  
53 impact children's rights on return (Pougnnet and European Network on Statelessness, 2021).  
54  
55 Alkhaled and Sasaki's (2022:1584) use of 'indeterminate liminality' acknowledges that agency  
56  
57 is structurally constrained, and uncertainty is indeterminable. Spatio-temporal logics of  
58  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 (in)securitisation operate through convergence of violent conflict, insecure borders and  
4  
5 absence of citizenship rights (UNICEF, 2022:15,19) that reveal how state and geopolitical  
6  
7 contexts, both past and present, are lived through everyday embodied experiences  
8  
9  
10 (Hyndman, 2001), exemplified here by women literally picking up and removing children once  
11  
12 the offensive battle by the SDF and US-led international coalition against IS broke out on 9  
13  
14 February 2019.  
15  
16

17  
18 For ISIS-associated women and children, spatial mobility is complicated by  
19  
20 entanglements of victim/perpetrator categorisations. Chuluv (7 October, 2017) writes that  
21  
22 ISIS-families, mostly ‘foreigners,’ have bleaker futures than those displaced from Syria and  
23  
24 Iraq and face hostility from refugee inmates and camp officials. Whilst Alkhaled and Sasaki  
25  
26 (2022:1583) argue ‘identity work’ helps re-establish a ‘familiar past’ and ‘meaningful future,’  
27  
28 the question remains: how can children *born into liminality* navigate indeterminacy? What  
29  
30 impact will indeterminacy have where children’s (stigmatised) identities are overwhelmingly  
31  
32 shaped by conflict with no familiar past of safety to bring into the present nor imagine for  
33  
34 their futures as captured here?  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 In the second extract, older children are more complexly positioned as possible victims  
41  
42 of childhood radicalisation (Stanley and Guru, 2015) taken by their presumed radicalised  
43  
44 parents to IS that renders the question of family separation salient (Reprieve, 2021:51-2), or  
45  
46 proponents of radicalisation who have voluntarily travelled or been groomed who may now  
47  
48 be adults, demonstrating religio-racialised, gendered and age-related ways children  
49  
50 complicate categories of victim/threat.  
51  
52  
53

54 Pre-emptive framings of Muslim minors as terror threats prohibits their treatment as  
55  
56 victims involving adultification that recalibrates temporalities defining normative human life  
57  
58 stages by prioritising security concerns above (Muslims’) human rights (Abbas, 2019b). Three  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 children's rights issues remain: firstly, choice – whether via their own volition or not, their age  
4 renders children victims of exploitation or trafficking ('without choice'); secondly, whether  
5 those who travelled when children who are now adults should be treated within law *as*  
6 *children* in keeping with previous humanitarian responses of children in armed conflict  
7 (Masters and Regilme, 2020:352; Nyamutata, 2020) (and as with the case of Begum, may have  
8 borne children requiring protection); and thirdly, whether children can be repatriated with  
9 caregivers.

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20 Women/mothers exhibit similarly complex trajectories and levels of agency that may  
21 involve cases of trafficking (APPG on Trafficked Britons, 2022) to marry and bear children to  
22 IS fighters or (presumed) supporters of IS (Bloom and Lokmanoglu, 2023) who have put their  
23 children at risk. Either pathway is neither static nor discrete, illustrating dynamic, multi-scalar  
24 spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation encompassing geopolitical, state, and ontological  
25 (in)securities.

26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
Importantly, women also feature as protectors prepared to risk their lives to rescue  
children, their own or those they escaped with. Arrival at the camp may signal disillusionment  
with IS (Speckhard and Ellenberg, 2020); others argue camps are 'breeding grounds' (de  
Azevedo, 2020:43) for radicalisation. Foreign women are deemed proponents of  
radicalisation and children as potential reproducers of radicalisation (Cook and Vale, 2019:53-  
55, 56-58) that negatively impacts repatriation outcomes.

61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
83  
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91  
92  
93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100  
NGOs revealed an important spatio-temporal dimension concerning liminality of  
camps as spaces of exception (Agamben, 1998) whereby children are cast out of the politico-  
juridical order unable to access citizenship rights. Minogue and Spearman discuss the passage  
of time children spent in camps as *insecuritising them*, both physically and psychologically due  
to government inaction:

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6 ...so much time is passing...you have...really vulnerable children growing up in this  
7  
8 camp with no obvious solution in sight (Orlaith Minogue, Save the Children).  
9

10  
11  
12  
13 ...there haven't been that many returnees and often, people are stuck in...camps, in  
14  
15 dire conditions (Ottoline Spearman, ISI).  
16

17  
18  
19  
20 Camps function as spatial devices 'separat[ing] qualified and expendable lives' (Martin,  
21  
22 2015:9) that comprise different temporal schemas across geographic spaces. Political  
23  
24 wranglings within UK Parliament prolong children's insecurity within inexorable 'dire' camp  
25  
26 conditions in contradiction to their 'vulnerable' status. Locked within a stalemate, time  
27  
28 features for children as simultaneously moving forward ('time is passing') yet standing still  
29  
30 ('stuck') with 'no resolution in sight.' The UK government's unprecedented use of CD makes  
31  
32 finding a sustainable solution more protracted, as Minogue develops:  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 ...having worked on this *a long time*...I get frustrated at our inability to make change or  
41  
42 how slow the movement is, it is difficult...children who are growing up in these camps -  
43  
44 they are spending pivotal, formative years with...the bare minimum of services...it is really  
45  
46 distressing...I wish...we could do more to hold them accountable. But it is certainly a  
47  
48 difficult policy space to work in - so we need to do more. And meanwhile they are growing  
49  
50 up, they are living in these camps. They are seeing other children that they have been  
51  
52 living with for the last three years repatriated to their home countries...it is really difficult  
53  
54 to watch, but also difficult to know how to tackle it...Because, ultimately, only the British  
55  
56 government can make this decision.  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Sontag (2004:104) poignantly asks in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 'Who is responsible? Is it  
4 excusable? Was it inevitable? Is there some state of affairs which we have accepted up to  
5 now that ought to be challenged?' Her intervention is reflected in Minogue's frustration to  
6 make the UK government accountable for children's prolonged detainment that enforces a  
7 'bare life' (Agamben, 1998) growing up when other outcomes are possible, 'pivotal'  
8 exemplifying how their lives could have been otherwise.  
9

10  
11 Minogue reports that British children witness children from other nations they have  
12 lived alongside being repatriated, illustrating how spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation  
13 are located within divergent geopolitical and state power dynamics (Hyndman, 2001).  
14 Powerlessness of NGOs to hold the UK government accountable for prolonging children's  
15 detainment means they can only 'watch,' 'know,' but not experience change akin to the  
16 liminality of camps, observing other children's lives going on without them, able to return and  
17 live a different life whilst they remain, unable to participate in such transitions. Unlike their  
18 peers, British children experience a stalemate, their formative years characterised by  
19 detainment due to the UK government's protracted decision-making using a 'case-by-case'  
20 (Sabbagh, 12 December 2023) approach rather than formulating a sustainable policy  
21 response to repatriation (Voronkov, UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, 19 August 2021 cited in  
22 Save the Children, 2021:33). Locked within the camp, a space simultaneously (un)stable,  
23 power to change children's circumstances ultimately resides with the UK government.  
24

25  
26 Another feature of spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation is emotional pressure  
27 for those involved in social justice (Sirriyeh, 2023). NGOs working within this 'difficult' policy  
28 space are mobilised to 'do more' which contrasts markedly with the slow movement exhibited  
29 by the UK government. However, despite 'work[ng] on this *a long time*,' Minogue is frustrated  
30 by their inability to effect change, certainly not within the timescale required to limit harm to  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 children growing up with the ‘bare minimum’ of services (APPG on Trafficked Britons, 2022,  
4 Médecins Sans Frontières, 2022; RSI 2022a,b; Save the Children, 2021). The account highlights  
5  
6 the security/safeguarding paradox where British children are denied a safe childhood under  
7  
8 the pretext of security agendas which has been complicated by CD, as I discuss next.  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14

### 15 *Citizenship deprivation, family separation and children’s rights*

16  
17  
18  
19 Deprivation decisions relate to complex trajectories by which children arrive at NES camps  
20  
21 discussed earlier. Co-director of CRIN, Leo Ratledge, outlined three ways children are affected  
22  
23 by CD:  
24  
25

26  
27 ...the first where a deprivation decision is made regarding somebody who is at that  
28  
29 time under 18 which is relatively rare. A second where deprivation happens in  
30  
31 response to concerns that arose while that person was a child...[but] are older than 18  
32  
33 at the time the decision is made...the typical example would be like the Shamima  
34  
35 Begum case...the third where deprivation of citizenship of a parent affected the child  
36  
37 as a consequence (London, online, 13 June 2022).  
38  
39  
40  
41

42  
43 Deprivation decisions derive from adultification of children who can be judged by actions  
44  
45 taken when a child or parents’ ascribed actions (Ní Aoláin, former Special Rapporteur on  
46  
47 Counter-terrorism and Human Rights cited in RSI, 2021b:3). Deprivation overturns temporal  
48  
49 constraints – powers can be retroactively applied and intergenerational transmitted  
50  
51 (intergenerational statelessness) meaning children are impacted where parents’ citizenship is  
52  
53 deprived (RSI, 2020:206).  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3           Whilst the UK government has repatriated some unaccompanied and separated  
4 children (Sabbagh, 12 December 2023), CD raises human rights concerns of the right to family  
5  
6 (Reprive, 2021:51-2):  
7  
8  
9

10  
11  
12           ...sometimes, children are repatriated and are separated from their families...and  
13  
14 then, ...other human rights being infringed...when those people are in the camps  
15  
16 (Spearman, ISI, 18 May 2022, London, online).  
17  
18  
19

20  
21           [The UK government] ...consistently say and then act on repatriating unaccompanied  
22  
23 and separated children. But really...a focus needs to be on...children who are with their  
24  
25 mothers...Because that is where we get into these tricky questions... (Minogue, Save  
26  
27 the Children).  
28  
29

30  
31 Spearman and Minogue highlight a policy gap affecting British children where caregivers face  
32  
33 CD. In some cases, mothers agree to child separation so children can safely return to the UK  
34  
35 demonstrating predominance of childhood radicalisation narratives that construct Muslim  
36  
37 parents as terrorist risks unsuitable to raise children (Stanley and Guru, 2015). Reprive  
38  
39 (2021:51) reported that 'five adults and 12 children between the ages of two and 12 are  
40  
41 affected.'  
42  
43  
44

45  
46           Whilst permanent removals are rare within radicalisation cases, Ahdash (2023:1224)  
47  
48 notes 'temporary removals under police protection, emergency protection orders (EPOs) and  
49  
50 interim care orders are certainly not.' Children may be placed in foster care for prolonged  
51  
52 periods,<sup>7</sup> illustrating unprecedented use of the family justice system within national security.  
53  
54  
55 This situation reveals spatio-temporal distinctions embedded within religio-racialised  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 disciplinary state interventions affecting Muslim families/children due to differences in how  
4  
5 welfare and child protection responses operate for them, raising children's rights concerns.  
6  
7  
8  
9

### 10 *Children's rights approach*

11  
12  
13  
14

15 NGOs argued repatriation was the only solution for safeguarding children from insecure camp  
16  
17 conditions and favoured the UK government coming up with a new policy solution, with  
18  
19 reinstating citizenship the preferred option. NGOs advocated a children's rights approach  
20  
21 centred on treating children as victims:  
22  
23

24  
25 ...it's really...important in this context to be treating children, first and foremost, as  
26  
27 victims. That's an international legal standard [and]...evidenced by...child psychology and  
28  
29 child support agencies...involved in repatriation processes in other countries (Emily  
30  
31 Ramsden, then Senior Officer for Migration, Citizenship and Belonging programme, RSI,  
32  
33 London, online, 27 May 2022).  
34  
35  
36  
37

38  
39 ...really...rooting some of these issues in...the children's rights agenda. How these things  
40  
41 are managed elsewhere...by other actors, is really, powerful...affected families and  
42  
43 communities wouldn't necessarily have access to that information and comparative  
44  
45 analysis...I...think that it is important to be able to take a whole...look...at the implications  
46  
47  
48 ...and...what the UK government are doing relevant to other member states (Minogue,  
49  
50 Save the Children).  
51  
52  
53

54 In keeping with CRT's commitment to social justice, advocating for children's rights not only  
55  
56 helps limit harm for affected families, but wider communities, illustrating the symbolic weight  
57  
58 of repatriation and location within racialised politics of (un)belongings. Since the traditional  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 family ideal functions, as critical race theorist Hill Collins (1998:62) notes, as ‘a gendered  
4 system of social organization, racial ideas and practices, and constructions of...national  
5 identity,’ it follows that Muslim families deemed problematic to national identity and security  
6 are subjected to exclusions from the political community, as evidenced here.  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12

13 The work NGOs do to make information accessible highlights lack of transparency  
14 around government policy concerning repatriation decisions. Powerlessness of affected  
15 families to bring family members back without NGO support evidence differential citizenship  
16 rights (Abbas, 2021:103-106; Naqvi, 2022) and racialised securitisation practices (Tazzioli,  
17 2021).  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

25 Ramsden and Minogue discussed the importance of highlighting the UK government’s  
26 international obligations to repatriate. One strategy was publicising when successful  
27 repatriations had occurred and providing comparative analyses of other member states. For  
28 example, RSI’s (2024) publicly verifiable tracker of ‘global repatriation efforts from North-East  
29 Syria from January 2019’ evidence differences in repatriation decisions amongst the  
30 international community that challenges capacity issues as a reason for failure to repatriate.  
31 Comparative data agitates for the UK government to take responsibility for its citizens and  
32 prioritise repatriation above CD measures that is particularly pressing for children growing up  
33 in unsafe camp conditions.  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

## 49 Conclusion

50  
51  
52 The article contributes to scholarship on CRT theoretically and methodologically through  
53 examining (in)securitisation of British Muslims involving intersections of race, religion,  
54 gender, age and citizenship status and impact on children’s rights in the context of ISIS-  
55 associated terrorism. I delineate three interrelated policy shifts affecting British Muslims that  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 depart from previous CT responses (notably, Northern Ireland-related terrorism). Firstly,  
4  
5 unprecedented use of CD powers involving convergence of UK CT and immigration law;  
6  
7  
8 secondly, use of family courts within radicalisation cases that overwhelmingly affect Muslim  
9  
10 families/children who would otherwise not present welfare concerns; and thirdly, shift from  
11  
12 treating (Muslim) children as security threats rather than victims which violates international  
13  
14 legal standards concerning children's rights enshrined in the CAAC agenda and UN Convention  
15  
16 of the Rights of the Child (War Child 2023).  
17  
18

19  
20 I advance spatio-temporal logics of (in)securitisation affecting children within NES  
21  
22 camps involving unstable and multi-scalar dimensions, both past and present, and across  
23  
24 ontological, state and geopolitical contexts. Spatial (in)securities traverse discursive spaces  
25  
26 concerning political/policy/media framings of British Muslim children/families as security  
27  
28 threats within CT responses; material conditions of the camp relating to health concerns,  
29  
30 threat of violence and lack of development opportunities; and affective concerning  
31  
32 psychological effects of detainment and statelessness within insecure camp spaces for  
33  
34 affected families and British Muslim communities more broadly.  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 The article contributes three ways these logics operate. Firstly, complex trajectories  
41  
42 by which children arrive at camps affect how they are constructed within CT responses as  
43  
44 victims/threats. Repatriation decision-making fails to adequately account for grooming  
45  
46 and/or exploitation as possible explanations for travelling to IS or that trajectories may not  
47  
48 be fixed. Predominance of the childhood radicalisation narrative posits Muslim families as  
49  
50 sites for radicalisation and Muslim children as terror threats that legitimises parent-child  
51  
52 separation. Temporal constraints are embedded within racialised discourses underpinning  
53  
54 disciplinary state interventions affecting Muslim children/families. Children who were  
55  
56 brought by their parents are judged by their parents' decisions despite being children.  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Comparably, adults are judged by actions taken when they were children. In both cases,  
4  
5 Muslim children are adultified meaning they are denied status of children worthy of  
6  
7 protection and affixed as terror suspects. Unaccompanied or orphaned children or those who  
8  
9 are removed from parents are more likely to be repatriated, suggesting that Muslim families  
10  
11 are constructed as risk factors within CT policy. Whilst (Muslim) women are judged within CT  
12  
13 policy as putting their children at risk, Minogue provided a counter-narrative of women  
14  
15 protecting children from violent conflict, their own or those they arrived at camps with.  
16  
17  
18  
19

20  
21 Secondly, sites of war relating to British imperial legacies within the region and  
22  
23 involvement in the neo-colonial Iraq War 2003 contribute longstanding colonial and racial  
24  
25 logics embedded in governing Muslim populations and political instability through which ISIS  
26  
27 emerged (Ababkr, 2022). These converge with the domestic metropole and UK state  
28  
29 responses to CT and repatriation. Children born during the conflict face particular insecurities  
30  
31 from statelessness and being taken across insecure borders for recruitment into violent  
32  
33 conflict and/or sexual exploitation (OHCHR, 2023), pressing the issue of UK state  
34  
35 responsibility to protect children.  
36  
37  
38  
39

40  
41 Thirdly, UK government indecision concerning repatriating British children has an  
42  
43 important temporal dimension by sustaining liminal camp spaces whilst children's  
44  
45 development opportunities are impeded during pivotal, formative years, powerless to alter  
46  
47 detention conditions. Concurrently, whilst the passage of time from child to adulthood, and  
48  
49 thus victim to terror threat continues apace, hopes of repatriation diminish. Temporal  
50  
51 dimensions are tempered by spatial constraints: the longer children remain, the more  
52  
53 insecure they are from dire camp conditions concerning healthcare, wellbeing and threat  
54  
55 of violence. Locked within a protracted policy space, NGO actors experience distress and  
56  
57 frustration from inability to gain political traction to protect children or hold the UK  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 government accountable for failing to meet international legal standards concerning  
4  
5 children's rights that can lead to burnout, further undermining social justice efforts.  
6  
7

8 The article contributes important empirical findings from key NGO actors working on  
9  
10 statelessness, repatriation, and children's rights at the forefront of challenging UK  
11  
12 government inaction concerning repatriating children with caregivers. CRT as a methodology  
13  
14 usually centres minoritised accounts to support counter-narratives (Ali, 2022:351). Empirical  
15  
16 findings do not offer first-hand accounts from children within camps. However, they  
17  
18 document insecure camp conditions that challenge dominant framings of Muslim children as  
19  
20 threats. Breen and Meer (2019:596) observe that 'relationality to whiteness' is central to CRT  
21  
22 approaches. Participants had privileged access to political and legal policy spaces unavailable  
23  
24 to affected Muslim families who were therefore reliant on NGO actors to act on their behalf.  
25  
26 Conditions of oppression and change are coterminous which perhaps explains NGO actor's  
27  
28 frustration to ensure children's rights within the same system that securitises them.  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33

34  
35 NGOs agitated for change by rooting concerns within a children's rights rather than  
36  
37 security agenda and addressing the policy gap concerning repatriating caregivers with  
38  
39 children. Strategies involved using comparative analyses of repatriation numbers of member  
40  
41 states to highlight UK failures are not due to capacity issues to hold the UK accountable for  
42  
43 failure to repatriate. CRT advocates interest convergence to secure change by aligning with  
44  
45 elite interests; here, taking responsibility for UK citizens via repatriation supports effective  
46  
47 international community relations.  
48  
49  
50

51  
52 Accounts suggest that a different policy response is required based on a children's  
53  
54 rights approach that treats children foremost as victims within contexts of armed conflict in  
55  
56 keeping with international human rights law, including those who travelled to ISIS-governed  
57  
58 areas when children who are now adults (Nyamutata, 2020). Prioritising children's rights  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 renders the question of agency inconsequential in favour of safeguarding children within  
4 contexts of humanitarian crises. This would involve reinstating citizenship where deprived  
5  
6  
7  
8 to retain responsibility for citizens and enable children to be returned with caregivers to limit  
9  
10 further trauma of family separation.  
11  
12  
13

## 14 Funding

15  
16  
17  
18 This work was supported by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Research England Policy  
19 Support Fund (PSF).  
20  
21  
22

## 23 Statement of Ethics

24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29 This study received ethical approval from the School of Health and Social Sciences (SHSS)  
30 Research Ethics Committee, Leeds Trinity University (approval no. SSHS/2022/01) on 9  
31  
32  
33  
34 March 2022.  
35  
36

## 37 References

- 38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43 Abbas M-S (2021) *Terror and the Dynamism of Islamophobia in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain: The*  
44  
45 *Concentrationary Gothic*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.  
46  
47  
48 Abbas, M-S (2019a) 'I grew a beard and my dad flipped out!' Co-option of British Muslim  
49  
50 parents in countering "extremism" within their families in Bradford and Leeds. *Journal*  
51  
52 *of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45(9):1458-1476.  
53  
54  
55 [doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1466694](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1466694).  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Abbas M-S (2019b) Conflating the Muslim refugee and the terror suspect: Responses to the  
4  
5 Syrian refugee 'crisis' in Brexit Britain. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42(14):2450-2469.  
6  
7 [doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1588339](https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1588339).  
8  
9
- 10 Agamben G (1998) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University  
11  
12 Press.  
13  
14
- 15 Ahdash F (2023) Countering terrorism in the family courts: A dangerous development.  
16  
17 *Modern Law Review* 86(5):1197-1231. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2230.12812>.  
18  
19
- 20 Ahdash F (2018) The interaction between family law and counter-terrorism: A critical  
21  
22 examination of the radicalisation cases in the family courts. *Child and Family Law*  
23  
24 *Quarterly* 30(4):389-414.  
25  
26
- 27 Ababakr A (2022) The reasons behind the rise of ISIS: An analytical perspective.  
28  
29 *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 13(5):12-27. [https://doi.org/10.36941/mjss-](https://doi.org/10.36941/mjss-2022-0035)  
30  
31 [2022-0035](https://doi.org/10.36941/mjss-2022-0035)  
32  
33
- 34 Ali N (2022) Muscrit: Towards carving a niche in critical race theory for the Muslim  
35  
36 educational experience. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*  
37  
38 45(4):343-355, DOI:10.1080/1743727X.2022.2103112.  
39  
40
- 41 Alkhaled S and Sasaki I (2022) Syrian Women Refugees: Coping with indeterminate liminality  
42  
43 during forcible displacement. *Organization Studies* 43(10):1583-  
44  
45 1605. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01708406211040214>  
46  
47  
48
- 49 All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Trafficked Britons in Syria (2022) *Report of the*  
50  
51 *Inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trafficked Britons in Syria*. [Report-of-](https://www.appgtraffickedbritons.org/the-inquiry-by-the-appg-on-trafficked-britons-in-syria.pdf)  
52  
53 [the-inquiry-by-the-APPG-on-Trafficked-Britons-in-Syria.pdf \(appgtraffickedbritons.org\)](https://www.appgtraffickedbritons.org/the-inquiry-by-the-appg-on-trafficked-britons-in-syria.pdf)  
54  
55  
56  
57 (accessed 26 December 2023).  
58  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Balakrishnan P (2018) *Citizenship by Investment Journal*, 9 August. UK stripped 81 individuals  
4 of their citizenship | Citizenship by Investment Journal (accessed 13 March 2024).  
5  
6  
7  
8 Beech Nic (2011). Liminality and the practices of identity reconstruction. *Human Relations*,  
9  
10 64:285–302.  
11  
12  
13 Berry JM (2002) Validity and reliability issues in elite interviewing. *Political Science and*  
14 *Politics* 35(4): 679-682. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1554809>.  
15  
16  
17 Biner ZO and Biner O (2021) Introduction: On the politics of waiting. *Social Anthropology*  
18 29(3):789-799. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.13100>.  
19  
20  
21  
22 Blackbourn, J. (2020). Closed material procedures in the radicalisation cases. *Child and*  
23 *family law quarterly* 32(4).  
24  
25  
26  
27 Bloom M and Lokmanoglu A (2023) From Pawn to Knights: The Changing Role of Women’s  
28 Agency in Terrorism? *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 46(4):399–414.  
29  
30 <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2020.1759263>  
31  
32  
33  
34 Braun V and Clarke V (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in*  
35 *Psychology* 3(2):77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.  
36  
37  
38  
39 Breen D and Meer N (2019) Securing whiteness?: Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the  
40 securitization of Muslims in education. *Identities* 26(5):595-613,  
41  
42 DOI:10.1080/1070289X.2019.1589981.  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47 Choudhury T (2017) The radicalisation of citizenship deprivation. *Critical Social*  
48 *Policy* 37(2):225–244. doi:10.1177/0261018316684507.  
49  
50  
51  
52 Chuluv M (2017) Scorned and stateless: Children of ISIS fighters face an uncertain future.  
53  
54 *Guardian Online*, 7 October. Available at: Scorned and stateless: children of Isis  
55 fighters face an uncertain future | Syria | The Guardian (accessed 20 December 2023).  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Cook J & Vale G (2018) From Daesh to 'diaspora': Tracing the women and minors of Islamic  
4 State. ICSR. [ICSR-Report-From-Daesh-to-'Diaspora'-Tracing-the-Women-and-Minors-](#)  
5 [of-Islamic-State.pdf](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10 Cook J and Vale G (2019) From Daesh to 'diaspora' II: The challenges posed by women and  
11 minors after the fall of the Caliphate. International Centre for the Study of  
12 Radicalisation (ICSR). [ICSR-Feature-From-Daesh-to-'Diaspora'-II-The-Challenges-Posed-](#)  
13 [by-Women-and-Minors-After-the-Fall-of-the-Caliphate.pdf](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20 Crenshaw K (1995) *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*. New  
21 York: The New Press.  
22  
23  
24  
25 Croft S (2012) *Securitizing Islam: Identity and the Search for Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge  
26 University Press.  
27  
28  
29  
30 de Azevedo CV (2020) ISIS resurgence in Al Hawl Camp and human smuggling enterprises in  
31 Syria: Crime and terror convergence? *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14(4):43–63.  
32  
33 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26927663>.  
34  
35  
36  
37 Delgado R (1995) *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*. Philadelphia: Temple University  
38 Press.  
39  
40  
41  
42 Fortier A-M (2021) *Uncertain Citizenship: Life in the Waiting Room*. Manchester: Manchester  
43 University Press.  
44  
45  
46  
47 Hall J (2023) *Returning from Islamic State: Risk and Response*. Speech at King's College  
48 London, 27 February. [KCL-Speech-final1.pdf \(independent.gov.uk\)](#).  
49  
50  
51  
52 Hill Collins P (1998) It's all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation. *Hypatia*  
53 13(3):62-82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01370.x>.  
54  
55  
56  
57 Hillyard P (1993) *Suspect Community: People's Experiences of the Prevention of Terrorism*  
58 *Acts in Britain*. London: Pluto Press.  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Housee S (2012) What's the point? Anti-racism and students' voices against Islamophobia.  
4  
5  
6 *Race Ethnicity and Education* 15(1):101-120. DOI:10.1080/13613324.2012.638867.  
7
- 8 Howell A and Richter-Montpetit M (2020) Is securitization theory racist? Civilizationism,  
9  
10 methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School. *Security*  
11  
12 *Dialogue* 51(1):3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619862921>.  
13  
14
- 15 Human Rights Watch (2022a) Syria: Repatriations lag for foreigners with alleged ISIS ties, 15  
16  
17 December. [Syria: Repatriations Lag for Foreigners with Alleged ISIS Ties | Human](#)  
18  
19 [Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#) (accessed 13 March 2024).  
20  
21
- 22 Human Rights Watch (2022b) 'My son is just another kid': Experiences of children  
23  
24 repatriated from camps for ISIS suspects and their families in Northeast Syria, 21  
25  
26 November. ["My Son is Just Another Kid": Experiences of Children Repatriated from](#)  
27  
28 [Camps for ISIS Suspects and Their Families in Northeast Syria | HRW](#) (accessed 13  
29  
30 March 2024).  
31  
32  
33
- 34 Human Rights Watch (2023) *Human Rights Watch submission to the United Nation's*  
35  
36 *Committee on the Rights of the Child review of the United Kingdom of Great Britain*  
37  
38 *and Northern Ireland 93<sup>rd</sup> session*, April. [The UK: Submission to the UN Committee on](#)  
39  
40 [the Rights of the Child | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#) (accessed 13 March 2024).  
41  
42  
43
- 44 Hussain Y and Bagguley P (2013) Securitized citizens: Islamophobia, racism and the 7/7  
45  
46 London bombings. *The Sociological Review* 60(4):715-734. [doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2012.02130.x)  
47  
48 [954X.2012.02130.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2012.02130.x).  
49  
50
- 51 Hylton K (2012) Talk the talk, walk the walk: Defining Critical Race Theory in research. *Race*  
52  
53 *Ethnicity and Education* 15(1): 23-41. DOI: 10.1080/13613324.2012.638862.  
54  
55
- 56 Hyndman J (2001) Towards a feminist geopolitics. *Canadian Geographer* 45(2):210-222.  
57  
58  
59 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.2001.tb01484.x>.  
60



- 1  
2  
3 Institute of Race Relations (IRR) (2022). *Citizenship: From right to privilege - A background*  
4 *paper on the history of citizenship-stripping powers.* Deprivation-of-citizenship-Final-  
5 LR.pdf (irr.org.uk) (accessed 13 March 2024).  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10 Johnsen Christian Garmann, Sørensen Bent Meier (2015). 'It's capitalism on coke!': From  
11 temporary to permanent liminality in organization studies. *Culture and Organization*,  
12 21:321–337.  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18 Lawless B and Chen Y-W (2019) Developing a method of critical thematic analysis for  
19 qualitative communication inquiry. *Howard Journal of Communications* 30(1): 92-106.  
20  
21  
22  
23 DOI: 10.1080/10646175.2018.1439423.  
24  
25  
26 Macklin A (2018) The return of banishment: Do the new denationalisation policies weaken  
27 citizenship? In: Bauböck R. (eds) *Debating Transformations of National Citizenship*.  
28 Springer: Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92719-0\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92719-0_31).  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33 Malkki L (1995) *Purity and Exile: Violence, memory, and national cosmology among Hutu*  
34 *Refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.  
35  
36  
37  
38 Martin D (2015) From spaces of exception to 'campscape': Palestinian refugee camps and  
39 informal settlements in Beirut. *Political Geography* 44:9-18.  
40  
41  
42 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2014.08.001>.  
43  
44  
45 Masters M and Regilme SSF Jr (2020) Human rights and British citizenship: The case of  
46 Shamima Begum as citizen to homo sacer. *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 12(2):341–  
47 363. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huaa029>.  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52 Matsuda MJ (1987) Looking to the bottom: Critical legal studies and reparations. *Harvard*  
53 *Civil Rights Civil Liberties Law Review* 22(2):323–399.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 MCB (Muslim Council of Britain) (2024) *British Muslims Striving for Fairness*. mcb.org.uk -  
4  
5 <https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/MCB-Striving-For-Fairness-Full->  
6  
7 Report.pdf.  
8  
9

10 Médecins Sans Frontières (2022) *Between two fires: Danger and desperation in Al-Hol camp*.  
11  
12 Available at: [between-two-fires -danger-and-desperation-in-syria's-al-hol-camp](#)  
13  
14 [\(2\).pdf](#) (accessed 26 December 2023).  
15  
16

17 Möschel M (2011) Race in mainland European legal analysis: Towards a European critical  
18  
19 race theory. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34(10):1648-1664.  
20  
21 DOI:10.1080/01419870.2011.566623.  
22  
23

24 Naqvi ZB (2022) Coloniality, belonging and citizenship deprivation in the UK: Exploring  
25  
26 judicial responses. *Social & Legal Studies* 31(4):515-  
27  
28 534. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09646639211044294>.  
29  
30  
31

32 Nauman S (2021) Securitisation of space and time. *Journal of the British Academy* 9(4):13-  
33  
34 31. [doi.org/10.5871/jba/009s4.013](https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/009s4.013).  
35  
36

37 Noy C (2008) Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative  
38  
39 research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 11(4):327-344.  
40  
41 DOI: [10.1080/13645570701401305](https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570701401305)  
42  
43

44 Nyamutata C (2020) Young terrorists or child soldiers? ISIS children, international law and  
45  
46 victimhood. *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 25(2):237-  
47  
48 261. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/krz034>.  
49  
50  
51

52 OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner United Nations Human Rights) (2023) *Syria: UN*  
53  
54 *experts alarmed by reports of boys taken from Camp Roj by de facto authorities*, 16  
55  
56 February. [Syria: UN experts alarmed by reports of boys taken from Camp Roj by de](#)  
57  
58 [facto authorities | OHCHR](#) (accessed 26 December 2023).  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Parsons L and Lawreniuk S (2018) Seeing like the stateless: Documentation and the  
4  
5 mobilities of liminal citizenship in Cambodia. *Political Geography* 62:1-  
6  
7  
8 11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.09.016>  
9
- 10 Pougnet R and European Network on Statelessness (2021) Risks of childhood statelessness  
11  
12 for the children associated with alleged 'foreign fighters' detained in Syria and Iraq.  
13  
14 *Policy Bristol*, 67. [PolicyBristol Report67 Pougnet childhood-statelessness-risks.pdf](#)  
15  
16 (accessed 13 March 2024).  
17
- 18  
19  
20 Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) (2017) *Responses to Returnees: Foreign Terrorist*  
21  
22 *Fighters and Their Families*. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf)  
23  
24 [affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran\\_br\\_a4\\_m10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf) (accessed 8 March 2024).  
25  
26
- 27 RAN (2018) *Ex Post Paper RAN policy and practice event: Building resilience among young*  
28  
29 *children raised in extremist environments – specifically child returnees*, 4 July.  
30  
31  
32 [ran\\_policy\\_practice\\_event\\_building\\_resilience\\_among\\_young\\_children\\_raised\\_in\\_extremist\\_environments\\_-\\_specifically\\_child\\_returnees\\_warsaw\\_4\\_july\\_2018\\_en.pdf](#)  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39 (europa.eu) (accessed 13 March 2024).
- 40 Renard T and Coolseat R (2020) From bad to worse: The fate of European foreign fighters  
41  
42 and families detained in Syria, one year after the Turkish offensive. *Security Policy*  
43  
44 *Brief No. 130*. <https://www.istor.org/stable/resrep26747>.  
45  
46
- 47 Reprieve (2021) *Trafficked to ISIS: British families detained in Syria after being trafficked to*  
48  
49 *Islamic State*. [2 2021 04 30 PUB-Reprieve-Report-Trafficked-to-Syria-British-families-detained-in-Syria-after-being-trafficked-to-Islamic-State-1 \(2\).pdf](#) (accessed 26  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60 December 2023).

- 1  
2  
3 Rights and Security International (RSI) (2021a) *Europe's Guantanamo: The indefinite*  
4 *detention of European women and children in North East Syria.* [Europes-guantanamo-](#)  
5 [THE\\_REPORT.pdf \(rightsandsecurity.org\)](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10 Romero M (2008) Crossing the immigration and race border: A critical race theory approach  
11 to immigration studies, *Contemporary Justice Review*, 11:1, 23-37, DOI:  
12 10.1080/10282580701850371.  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17 RSI (2021b) *Abandoned to torture: Dehumanising rights violations against children and*  
18 *women in northeast Syria.* [Abandoned to Torture - Final Report.pdf](#)  
19 [\(rightsandsecurity.org\)](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25 RSI (2024) Global repatriations tracker. [Global Repatriations Tracker | Rights and Security](#)  
26 [International](#) (accessed 3 October 2024).  
27  
28  
29  
30 Sabbagh D (2020) UK's attempt to repatriate British children from Syria to be rejected.  
31 *Guardian Online*, 15 January. [UK's attempt to repatriate British children from Syria to](#)  
32 [be rejected | Refugees | The Guardian](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37 Sabbagh D (2023) Britain to repatriate woman and five children from Syrian camps.  
38 *Guardian Online*, 12 December. [Britain to repatriate woman and five children from](#)  
39 [Syrian camps | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office | The Guardian](#)  
40 (accessed 26 December 2023).  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47 Save the Children (2021). *When am I going to start to live? The urgent need to repatriate*  
48 *foreign children trapped in Al Hol and Roj Camps.* [when-am-i-going-to-start-to-live-](#)  
49 [report.pdf \(savethechildren.org\)](#) (accessed 25 December 2023).  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55 Save the Children (2022) *'Remember the armed men who wanted to kill mum': The hidden*  
56 *toll of violence in Al Hol on Syrian and Iraqi Children.* ["Remember the Armed Men who](#)  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Wanted to Kill Mum”: The hidden toll of violence in Al Hol on Syrian and Iraqi Children  
4  
5 | Save the Children’s Resource Centre (accessed 26 December 2023).  
6  
7

8 Shah S (2023) ‘Maximum suffering.’ A man stripped of his citizenship sheds light on the  
9  
10 potential impact of the UK’s Nationality Bill. *Time*, 10 February. How the U.K.  
11  
12 Immigration Bill Could Erode Citizenship Rights | TIME (accessed 13 March 2024).  
13  
14

15 Siddique H (2024) Shamima Begum ruling shows UK wants to wash its hands of such  
16  
17 prisoners. *Guardian Online*, 23 February. Shamima Begum ruling shows UK wants to  
18  
19 wash its hands of such prisoners | Shamima Begum | The Guardian (accessed 7 March  
20  
21 2023).  
22  
23

24  
25 Sirriyeh A (2023) Emotions and emotional reflexivity in undocumented migrant youth  
26  
27 activism. *The Sociological Review* 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00380261231173753>  
28  
29

30 Sontag S (2004) *Regarding the Pain of Others*. London: Penguin Books.  
31

32 Speckhard A and Ellenberg M (2020) ISIS in their own words. *Journal of Strategic Security*  
33  
34 13(1): 82-127. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26907414>.  
35  
36

37 Spieß L and Pyne-Jones L (2022) Children at risk of statelessness in the fight against  
38  
39 terrorism. *The Statelessness & Citizenship Review* 4(1):33-65.  
40  
41 <https://statelessnessandcitizenshipreview.com/index.php/journal/article/view/321>  
42  
43 (accessed 25 December 2023).  
44  
45  
46

47 Stanley T and Guru S (2015) Childhood radicalisation risk: An emerging practice issue.  
48  
49 *Practice* 27(5): 353–366. doi:10.1080/09503153.2015.1053858.  
50  
51

52 Tazzioli M (2021) The making of racialized subjects: Practices, history, struggles. *Security*  
53  
54 *Dialogue* 52(1): 107-114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/096701062111024423>.  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

- 1  
2  
3 Townsend M (2019) Priti Patel blocks rescue of British Isis children. *Guardian Online*, 16  
4  
5 November. [Priti Patel blocks rescue of British Isis children | Priti Patel | The Guardian](#)  
6  
7 (accessed 13 March 2024).  
8  
9
- 10 Treviño Javier A, Harris MA and Wallace D (2008) What's so critical about critical race  
11  
12 theory? *Contemporary Justice Review* 11(1):7-10. DOI:10.1080/10282580701850330.  
13  
14
- 15 Turner V (1969) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.  
16  
17
- 18 UK Visas and Immigration (2023) *Guidance: Deprivation of British citizenship*, 5 October.  
19  
20 [Deprivation of British citizenship \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)  
21  
22 (accessed 13 March 2023).  
23  
24
- 25 UN Security Council (2023) S/2023/621. Report of the Secretary General, 23 August.  
26  
27 [S/2023/621: UN Documents: Security Council Report](#) (accessed 13 March 2024).  
28  
29
- 30 UNHCR (2023) *Syria Winterization Factsheet 2023-2024: Preparing for Winter in Syria*,  
31  
32 September. [Document - UNHCR Syria Winterization Factsheet 2023- 2024](#) (accessed 13  
33  
34 March 2024).  
35  
36
- 37 UNICEF (2022) *25 years of children and armed conflict: Taking action to protect children in*  
38  
39 *war*. [UNICEF Report-June-2022 25-Years-Children-in-Armed-Conflict.pdf \(iihl.org\)](#)  
40  
41 (accessed 13 March 2024).  
42  
43
- 44 War Child (2023) *Being 'a force for good': How the UK can tackle child recruitment and use*  
45  
46 *by armed forces and armed groups*.  
47  
48 [War Child UK Being A Force for Good 2023 Exec Summary.pdf \(warchild.org.uk\)](#)  
49  
50 (accessed 13 March 2024).  
51  
52  
53
- 54 Winter C (2016) Shocked by the 'cubs of the caliphate'? Of course you are – that's Isis's plan.  
55  
56 *Guardian Online*, 5 January. [Shocked by the 'cubs of the caliphate'? Of course you are](#)  
57  
58 [– that's Isis's plan | Charlie Winter | The Guardian](#) (accessed 8 March 2024).  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Wintour P (2023) UK must repatriate more nationals in Syria, says terrorism policy adviser.  
4

5 Guardian Online, 21 July. [UK must repatriate more nationals in Syria, says terrorism](#)  
6 [policy adviser | Syria | The Guardian](#) (accessed 7 March 2024).  
7  
8  
9

---

## 15 Notes

16  
17  
18 <sup>1</sup> France has repatriated over 160 children and 50 women, Germany almost 100 women and  
19 children (Sabbagh, 12 December 2023). Russia and Central Asia collectively repatriated  
20 approximately 1,000 children - almost double that of Western nations combined (Human  
21 Rights Watch, 2022b).  
22  
23  
24  
25

26  
27 <sup>2</sup> Of 900 UK-associated people who travelled to Syria and Iraq, around 500 have returned  
28 (Wintour, 21 July 2023).  
29  
30

31  
32 <sup>3</sup> 66 percent are Asian/Asian British, 49 percent are non-UK born although for 75 percent their  
33 sole identity is the UK (MCB, 2024).  
34  
35

36  
37 <sup>4</sup> I acknowledge criticisms of 'Islamist' for associating 'Islam' with terrorism. Alistair Gent,  
38 chair of the National Association of Muslim Police (NAMP) has called for the Home Office  
39 and police service to stop using this term within CT policing.  
40  
41  
42  
43

44  
45 <sup>5</sup> Children and Courts Advisory Service (Cafcass, 2016 cited in Ahdash 2018:391) reported 54  
46 family cases between July 2015 and December 2015 featuring radicalisation. Freedom of  
47 Information requests to Cafcass showed 450 cases appeared before family courts of England  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
Information Institute's (BAILII) online database between 2013-22 (Ahdash 2023:1199),  
perhaps due to nationality security or child protection concerns (Ahdash, 2018:391).

1  
2  
3  
4 <sup>6</sup> Much of the border region was part of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Its  
5  
6 northern part remained under Kurdish control. IS has since lost border control, currently  
7  
8 undertaken by the Syrian government (Syrian side) and Rojava and the Kurdistan Regional  
9  
10 Government and Iraqi government (Iraqi side).  
11  
12

13  
14 <sup>7</sup> Lancashire County Council v M and Others [2016] EWFC 9; [2016] 2 WLUK 148 and Re X; Re  
15  
16 Y n 115. A Local Authority v M and Others n 76 lasted more than two years (cited in Ahdash,  
17  
18 2023:1124).  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60