The Political Determinants of Refugee Status Recognition

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The Political Determinants of Refugee Status Recognition

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Political Science

by

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December, 2017
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, in particular to my parents, who left everything behind to seek a better life. I also dedicate this dissertation to Will H. Moore. His work and scholarship on forced migration helped to propel my research interest in this topic.
Acknowledgement

I would like Dr. Michael Huelshoff for all of his suggestions, comments, and patience throughout the entire course of this project. I am also grateful to Dr. Christine Day and Dr. Edward Chervenak for their suggestions and encouragement. I also give special thanks to the committee for their assistance and support during challenging times.

I am eternally grateful for my parents, and their never-ending support during all my endeavors throughout my life. I could not have made it this far without both of you. Truly, I won the birth lottery. I am also grateful to my extended family’s continual support in Miami, FL and throughout the world, especially my cousins.

No words can suffice to thank my tribe, in particular to Cassandra Rodriguez, Javier Hernandez, Ralph Rodriguez, Jennifer Moralejo, Javier Aparicio, Jamie Dey, and Ashley Ponson. And to those that I met in graduate school, especially Alfonso Sanchez, Thomas McQuaid, Christina Kiel, and York Forsyth. You all have helped me in your own ways throughout my entire graduate career. Special thanks to all those on the Stata forum, in particular to Nick Cox, Clyde Schechter, Maarten Buis, Jeffrey Wooldridge, among many others, who possibly saved me months of coding anguish, and provided useful comments with the methodology.
## Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES .................................................................................................................. vii

LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................. viii

ABSTRACT .............................................................................................................................. ix

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Introduction to Study ...................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 Background of Problem ............................................................................................... 2
  1.3 Statement of the Problem ............................................................................................ 5
  1.4 Purpose and Methodology of Study ............................................................................ 7
  1.5 Significance of Study .................................................................................................. 10
  1.6 Limitations of Study ................................................................................................... 11
  1.7 Definitions of Terms .................................................................................................. 12
  1.8 Dissertation Map ........................................................................................................ 13

CHAPTER TWO: THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................. 14
  2.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 14
  2.2 Background and Brief Overview of Refugee Protection ............................................. 15
  2.3 Refugee Status Determination and State Interests ..................................................... 20
  2.4 Bilateral Relations ....................................................................................................... 26
      2.4.1 Rivalries ................................................................................................................ 27
      2.4.2 Alliances ............................................................................................................... 30
      2.4.3 Trade ..................................................................................................................... 34
  2.5 Domestic Politics ......................................................................................................... 38
      2.5.1 Regime-Type ......................................................................................................... 39
      2.5.2 Proximity to Elections ......................................................................................... 42
  2.6 Conclusion ................................................................................................................... 45

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN .......................................................................... 48
  3.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 48
  3.2 Unit of Analysis ............................................................................................................ 49
  3.3 Variables ....................................................................................................................... 52
      3.3.1 Dependent Variable: Refugee Recognition Rates ................................................. 52
      3.3.2 Total Recognition Rates ...................................................................................... 56
  3.4 Independent Variables ................................................................................................. 57
      3.4.1 Bilateral Relations Rivals ..................................................................................... 57
      3.4.2 Bilateral Relations Alliances ............................................................................... 57
      3.4.3 Bilateral Relations Log of Total Trade ................................................................. 58
      3.4.4 Bilateral Relations Trade Exchange .................................................................... 58
      3.4.5 Domestic Politics: Regime-Type, Democratization, and Proximity to elections in the Host State ........................................................................................................... 59
  3.5 Control Variables .......................................................................................................... 60
List of Figures

Figure 1: Global Refugee Population 1990-2014 ................................................................. 3
Figure 2: Current Map of Signatory States ................................................................. 17
Figure 3: Refugees per Capital by Country of Asylum mid-2015 .......................... 18
Figure 4: Refugees by Country of Asylum mid-2015 .................................................. 18
Figure 5: Log of Bilateral Trade and Refugee Recognition Rates ....................... 82
Figure 6: Log of Bilateral Trade and Total Recognition Rates .............................. 82
Figure 7: Democratization and Refugee Recognition Rates ................................. 89
Figure 8: Democratization and Total Recognition Rates ................................. 89
Abstract

What explains the variations in refugee status granting among states? How is refugee status determined? The purpose of the study is to analyze if politics affect refugee status granting to asylum-seekers. Despite the political implications revolving around refugee issues, forced migration studies are still a neglected topic in international relations research. However, scholarly works that focus on forced migration often overlook broad political themes, and do not thoroughly examine how politics affect refugee status rates across countries. This dissertation examines state responses to forced migration. It quantitatively investigates the research questions across countries between 2000 and 2013. It argues state interests affect refugee recognition rates. Specifically, it hypothesizes that bilateral relations between states and the domestic politics of the host state affect refugee recognition rates. This study finds rival host states grant refugee status recognition rates greater than non-rival host states. The results also find refugee status rates increase in dyads that are in alliances compared to dyads that are not in similar pacts. It also finds asylum rates decrease as bilateral trade increases. Most of the models show the more democratic a state becomes, the less asylum is granted. However, the results also demonstrate democracies grant asylum slightly more than non-democracies, and autocracies grant asylum less compared to non-autocracies. However, opposite results are found for democracies and autocracies that are not signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol. The study also finds minimal support for refugee recognition rates decreasing during years of national, executive elections. While the results did not find support for all hypotheses, this study concludes that on average, political and commercial relations between states affect refugee recognition rates.
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Study

Each year, thousands of individuals are forced to leave their countries of origin for fear of being persecuted, civil war, natural or man-made disasters, and other reasons. However, refugees are inherently political (Betts and Loescher 2011). Not only do refugees often flee for political reasons, but these forced migrants also cross international borders. This is in opposition to internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are displaced within their home regions. Despite these political implications, forced migration studies and refugee issues are still a neglected topic in international relations research. However, scholarly works that focus on forced migration often overlook broad political themes, and do not thoroughly examine how politics affect refugee status rates across countries. For example, many of these studies examine why individuals migrate, or use the individual unit of analysis. According to Betts and Loescher (2011) what is needed is a “‘top-down level’ of analysis in order to understand the macro-level structures that influence states’ and other international actors’ responses to forced migration. Analyzing these macro-level structures is crucial because it is often the choices of states and other political actors that determine outcomes for the displaced” (3-4). As a result, this research fills a gap in the literature. This dissertation examines state responses to forced migration. The purpose of this study is to quantitatively investigate the politics of granting refugee status to asylum-seekers across states. It argues state interests affect refugee recognition rates. Specifically, it hypothesizes that bilateral relations between states and the domestic politics of the host state affect refugee recognition rates.

Chapter One begins with the background of the problem, and the general overview of the problem investigated in this research. Next, the research questions and objectives are presented.
The following section provides a brief explanation on how bilateral relationships between states, and a host state’s domestic politics affect refugee status granting. The chapter then proceeds with a brief discussion of the methodology, followed by the significance of the study. While some scholars evaluate the political motivations behind asylum granting, most works are theoretical, qualitative, or region specific. Instead, this study provides a large-N analysis in order to evaluate if generalized trends exist with asylum granting. Next, the limitations of the study are discussed, followed by the definition of terms. The chapter concludes with an overview of the remaining chapters in the dissertation.

1.2 Background of Problem

Forced migration is a growing problem worldwide. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2015 held another displacement record. There were 65.3 million displaced persons, up 5.8 million from 2014, including 21.3 million refugees and 2.0 million new asylum claims (UNHCR 2016). This is in comparison to 2014, where there were 19.5 million refugees, and 1.7 million new individuals submitting applications for asylum (UNHCR 2015a). To put current numbers in perspective, if all 65.3 million displaced were a nation, it would be the 21st largest country in the world (UNHCR 2016). In 2015, roughly 34,000 people were displaced everyday, or 24 people every minute (UNHCR 2016). The current number of total displaced individuals surpassed post-World War II displacement numbers. Figure 1 shows the global refugee population numbers from 1990-2014. While we saw a decline in refugee populations during the 1990s, we are currently witnessing rapid increases in the number of refugees worldwide.
Ongoing conflicts and generalized violence in Syria, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and other countries are responsible for the millions of forcibly displaced. Furthermore, record numbers are the result of changes with traditional patterns of forced migration. Individuals leave in greater numbers and for reasons outside of persecution, such as climate change or state failure. States are also more restrictive in providing asylum compared to twenty years ago (Betts, Loescher, and Milner 2012, 5). However, regardless for reasons of flight, state responses to forced migrations are inconsistent. States respond differently to

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1 During the Cold War, most asylum-seekers were forced to leave Communist states or other forms of authoritarian regimes. Many host governments, particularly Western democratic states, were more likely to grant refugee status, or have an “open-door” policy, towards asylum-seekers leaving authoritarian states. This was partly due to Western interest in order to show the failings of Communist regimes. Similarly, African states were more “hospitable” towards other African refugees displaced during the African decolonization wars between the 1950s and 1970s, compared to current African asylum-seekers and refugees who are often treated with hostility. See also economist.com. 2013. “Flight to Nowhere.” March 2nd. http://www.economist.com/news/international/21572753-refugees-plight-worsening-their-numbers-grow-and-their-nature-changes-flight (April 20, 2015).
asylum-seekers depending on their nationalities. Therefore, it is imperative to analyze the causes behind why such responses are inconsistent.

What explains these discrepancies? How is refugee status determined? What are the protection gaps found with asylum implementation? This study argues asylum granting is not just the result of altruism or generosity. State interests and politics also motivate responses to forced migrants. Specifically, bilateral relations between states, as well as domestic and international politics, influence compliance. The research contributes to the current literature. Several scholars explored the political motives behind asylum policies. However, as Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) mention, studies on asylum are mostly theoretical or qualitative (680). Similarly, forced migration studies frequently use the individual unit of analysis, or only examine the reasons why individuals migrate (Bates 2002; Davenport, Moore, and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004; Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006; Schmeidl 1997). Little research incorporate large-N analyses, or use refugees as the independent variable. While some scholars made similar interest-based arguments (Betts 2013; Rosenblum and Salehyan 2004; Teitelbaum 1984), in order to fully examine if politics influence asylum policy implementation, research must quantitatively consider refugee recognition rates across countries.

The study draws on the research conducted in *Survival Migration: Failed Governance and the Crises of Displacement* (Betts 2013). Betts analyzes government response to African forced migrants who left fragile and failed states. He also examines when individuals will leave fragile states, and the domestic and international influences that shape the disparities found with host country responses. Specifically, Betts examines when host governments will be likely to

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2 An asylum-seeker is an individual who has applied for asylum outside of his or her country, but whose claim has not been processed yet. A refugee is often defined as an individual who has received such a claim. Asylum is a form of protection granted by a state to individuals who have left their home countries as a result of fear of persecution.

3 Meaning how do states enact obligations under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

4 Forced migrants are individuals who have been coerced to leave their home countries or regions.
expand on the United Nations’ Convention definition to individuals who may fall outside of the traditional refugee framework. Through the use of six case studies, he argues irregular responses to forced migration are the result of positive and negative incentives that shape elite interests. Strong political and economic bilateral relations between states will deter host states from granting refugee status to asylum-seekers from allied sending states. Domestic politics also influences inconsistent refugee recognition rates among states. However, the research expands from Betts (2013) by analyzing the questions of interests across countries and time. This will allow us to discern if refugee policies are the result of state and elite interests as a whole. The analyses also do not discriminate on reasons of flight, and examines all countries.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Interests affect when states will grant or deny asylum. Most states are signatories of international and regional conventions relating to the status of refugees. Despite this, why do variations in asylum granting among states exist? If asylum claims are to be fairly assessed, then there should not be discrepancies in refugee status granting. However, empirical evidence suggests that various factors, such as an asylum-seeker’s nationality, affect the likelihood of granting or denying asylum in the host state. In many cases states make refugee status granting extremely difficult. While such preventions may be the result of burden, security issues, or exercising national sovereignty, such concerns may also be used as a defense for state interests. This is especially evident in cases in which states suddenly shifted from an open-door approach

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5 The traditional refugee framework refers to those individuals who leave their countries of origin for reasons stated under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. According to the Convention (and the 1967 Protocol), a refugee is defined as, “A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” In this case, migrants that leave failed states traditionally fall outside of the mandate.

6 There are currently no datasets, which include reasons why individuals leave across states and across time. However, we can often assume the reasons by certain countries and years.
to more restrictive policies. In the worst cases, states deport refugees back to the sending states, despite still having a legitimate fear of persecution.

States have genuine security concerns. However, other factors may affect state responses to asylum-seekers. Host states normally compromise parts of their sovereignty in order to control both regular immigration and forced migration (Hathaway and Foster 2014). States must balance their own rights and human rights (Mathew 1994). More so, refugees are regularly seen as a burden or security issue (Betts 2009a; Milner 2009). However, states may welcome asylum-seekers despite the burden it places on the host state. Empirical evidence shows states also grant asylum to individuals that do not necessarily have a fear of persecution. Therefore, it is equally important to ask, what incentives drive refugee hosting? One such incentive regards the nationalities of asylum-seekers.

Some states are more likely to grant asylum to certain nationalities over others, although the asylum-seekers from different states are forced to leave for similar reasons. Similar to Betts (2013), this research questions what drives these inconsistencies. Gaps found within refugee protection are often the result of governments responding differently to groups of forced migrants. Protection gaps are also due to states constraining the operations of the United

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7 For example, for many decades, India has had an open-door policy towards Tibetan refugees, and is even home to the Tibetan government-in-exile. However, this hospitality has currently shifted towards more restriction. For the past few years, countries within the region are beginning to improve diplomatic and bilateral relations with China. As a result, countries where Tibetan asylum-seekers normally settle in, such as India and Nepal, are being more hostile and unwilling to accept these asylum-seekers from Tibet and other regions in China. Granting these individuals asylum is admitting they are being persecuted, or living in unsafe conditions in a state from which they are trying to mend or enhance relations. Needless to say, doing so could have grave repercussions among diplomatic relations between states. For further analysis on treatment regarding Chinese and Tibetan asylum-seekers in Asia, see Vaughn, Bruce. 2011. “Nepal: Political Developments and Bilateral Relations with the United States.” Congressional Research Service https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34731.pdf and Hathaway, James. 2005. The Rights of Refugees under International Law. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 242.

8 Also known as refoulement. Non-refoulement means that a refugee cannot be returned to his or her country of origin if he or she still has a legitimate fear of persecution. It is a key principle in the Convention, as well as in international refugee law.
Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) within their borders as the potential country of asylum. The inadequacies of refugee protection warrant further investigation. This research argues state interests and incentives affect refugee status determination. The first variable of interest, bilateral relations, examines how diplomatic and economic relations with the refugee sending state affects refugee status granting to these asylum-seekers. Granting refugee status is admitting the individual cannot live safely in his or her home state. As a result, strong relations between states will motivate governments to deny asylum claims. Bitter relations between them will increase the likelihood of granting refugee status. Domestic politics also affect refugee decisions. For example, scholars often argue that democracies are more cooperative in the international community compared to autocracies. Due to their liberalist ideals, democracies should then exhibit greater levels of openness towards forced migrants compared to autocracies. However, democratic states can equally be persuaded against such sentiments. Routine elections may place domestic pressure on state elects to deter refugee status recognition when the general voting population is critical of immigration. This research looks at how these factors affect refugee recognition rates based on the countries of origin. Similarly, international agencies can be constrained at the national level. Often times, UNHCR is asked to oversee asylum and grant refugee recognition rates. However, state interests may also influence their work.

1.4 Purpose and Methodology of Study

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9 This research uses country of asylum and host country synonymously.
10 Although there is a difference between immigrants and refugees, often the overall negative sentiments are shared between both. For example, an AP poll found that among Americans sampled, 46 percent of Americans believed we take in too many immigrants from Latin America and 54 percent believes we take in too many from the Middle East. While other groups were not found to be as high, 55 percent of those sampled believe the U.S. does not have a moral obligation to offer asylum. See “THE AP-GfK POLL December, 2015” http://ap-gfkpoll.com/main/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/AP-GfK_Poll_December-2015-topline_mideast-immigration.pdf Accessed April 5th, 2016.
Given the lack of large-N statistical analyses on refugee recognition rates, the purpose of this study is to quantitatively examine how politics drive refugee recognition rates across all countries. Chapter Three further details the research design and methodology. This research uses directed-dyad year as the unit of analysis for years 2000-2013. These are the years available from UNHCR’s population statistics database at the time of this research. The main dependent variable is refugee recognition rates. As Section 3.3.1 will show, refugee recognition rates are normally calculated by dividing the total number of asylum seekers granted full Convention status by the total number of accepted (those who received full and complementary status where applicable) and rejected cases. This research also uses a second dependent variable, the total recognition rates, as described in Section 3.3.2.11 The total recognition rates describe the rate of asylum-seekers who receive refugee status recognition and those that received complementary protection. In other words, the numerator pools these two numbers. It is important to mention that there is no standard definition with regards to what defines complementary protection. However, simply put, complementary recognition status is a form of protection for individuals that may have fled their home country for other humanitarian reasons. These individuals generally fall outside of the 1951 Convention recognition. Therefore, complementary protection often refers to individuals who do not receive full refugee status (Convention status), but have received other forms of protection on a humanitarian or temporary basis. These forms of protection, do not afford individuals the same rights given by Convention status recognition.

Section 3.3.2 claims that complementary protection is on the rise. As mentioned earlier, Betts (2013) found that sometimes states “stretch” the refugee Convention definition for forced migrants if it is in their interest to do so. It is often the case that states give complementary

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11 UNHCR often includes both refugee recognition rates and total recognition rates in their reports.
protection for individuals who should receive full refugee status recognition instead. The research does not provide an exhausted overview of complementary or other forms of protection. However, the total recognition rates are also included in order to provide robustness checks. For example, states may grant asylum-seekers lower levels of protection in lieu of full Convention recognition. Analyzing the two rates together will isolate the effect that the independent variables have on the main dependent variable, refugee recognition rates. For example, the first hypothesis claims receiving states will be more likely to provide asylum to individuals fleeing rival states compared to non-rival states. If the results find rival dyads provide refugee status rates more than non-rival dyads, and refugee status rates are greater than the total recognition rates, it is safe to assume rival dyads provide refugee status more than non-rival dyads. However, if the total recognition rates are greater than refugee recognition rates, these dyads grant complementary status more than refugee status. Similarly, many studies do not measure both refugee recognition rates and total recognition rates with the exception of Neumayer (2005a). However, Neumayer (2005a) only analyzes Western European host states.

The main independent variables of interest for bilateral relations are rival dyads, alliances, and bilateral trade. Regime-type and national executive election years measure how domestic politics in the host state affect asylum rates. Two binary variables measure the host state’s regime. The first variable regards autocracies and non-autocracies. The second variable refers to democracies and non-democracies. It is important to mention that a non-democratic state does not necessarily imply the state is autocratic and vice versa. For example, a non-democratic regime could be defined as an “anocracy.” While there is no standard definition for anocracy, these regime-types are usually politically unstable. They are neither fully democratic, nor fully autocratic. Often regimes in transition are anocracies. However, this study focuses on
democracies and autocracies, and does not include anocracies as a separate independent variable. The research also examines how increases in levels of democratization affect refugee status granting. Finally, year of executive elections in the host state investigate how elections affect asylum rates.

Because the dependent variable is a percentage, and the unit of analysis is directed-dyad year, this study uses a fractional response model alongside the generalized estimating equation. The use of this equation is explained further in Chapter Three. A recent study by Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) explore how alliances and rivalries affect refugee hosting across states. However, their main dependent variable uses refugee stock numbers, as oppose to the actual refugee recognition rates. This study avoids using the refugee stock numbers. These numbers are population numbers, and do not provide asylum rates. Reasons for avoiding the use of refugee stock numbers as the dependent variable are described in further detail in Chapter Three.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes both to international relations and refugee studies scholarship. It provides theoretical and methodological contributions to past works. Despite empirical evidence, much political science research ignores how politics affect asylum granting and refugee hosting. Most works are qualitative or regional focused. Instead, this study analyzes asylum-granting trends across all countries. However, currently there is a surge in research investigating state responses to forced migration. Nevertheless, several works focus solely on the Syrian refugee crisis, or only focus on particular host states, such as Turkey or the European Union.¹²

¹² See for example the most recent ISA Conference Program: http://web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/Baltimore%202017-s/Baltimore%202017%20-%20Full%20Program.pdf
Additionally, the investigation has implications for both policy and the international relations literature. The international relations literature rarely investigate the variations of state responses to forced migration (Betts 2009a; Betts 2009b). The academic neglect is puzzling. Forced migration is understood within the context of the state system (Betts 2014; Betts and Loescher 2011). Refugees will always exist as long as there are borders, states, and citizenship (Betts 2009a; Haddad 2003). Refugee exoduses also affect various sources of international politics ranging from non-state actors, international security, the role of international institutions and cooperation, and challenges with state sovereignty (Betts 2009a; Betts 2014; Goldenziel 2014; Loescher 1993; Loescher and Milner 2005; O’Sullivan 2012; Weiner 1992). Forced migration research overlooks political motives. Thus this research also fills the gap in the literature by expanding on works regarding international institutions and regimes, international cooperation, and the role of politics.

1.6 Limitations of Study

As previously mentioned, the dissertation evaluates all countries, and does not employ a regional focus. While the purpose of the study is to investigate how politics affect asylum granting at the global level, case studies and regional-focused research can provide a more detailed examination. The dependent variable also contains limitations. Currently, UNHCR is the only agency that provides a database of refugee status determination rates across all countries. However, the applications filed for asylum are not thoroughly described. In other words, we do not know specifically why an individual applied for asylum in a host state. (However we can make assumptions based on the country of origin and year). Limitations are also found with the years studied. The years available for the data are currently only from 2000-2013. Therefore, this study has a relatively small t. Similarly, a lot of applications were not
decided in the same year in which the individual applied. As explained in Chapter Three, asylum rates describe successful decisions, not successful applications (Neumayer 2005a, 51).

1.7 Definition of Terms

“The Convention” denotes the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Similarly, “Convention signatory” or “signatory states” describe states that have signed the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol. Although the Protocol is an independent instrument, most states are signatories of both. However, both St. Kitts and Nevis and Madagascar are signatories of only the 1951 Convention. Venezuela, the United States of America, and Cabo Verde are signatories to the 1967 Protocol only. The differences between the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol are described in Chapter Two.

Article One of the 1951 Convention defines a “refugee” as a person who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (UNHCR 2010a). However, as mentioned earlier and as Chapter Two will show, often states “stretch” this definition for asylum-seekers who may fall outside of these categories. Similarly, an “asylum-seeker” an individual who has applied for asylum outside of his or her country, but whose claim has not been processed yet (UNHCR 2010b, 35). Refugee recognition rates are the rates for individuals applied for asylum, and receive full Convention recognition. Total recognitions rates combine both full Convention status recognition and complementary status, meaning protection status for other humanitarian reasons. These rates are described in further detail in Chapter
Three. “Complementary status,” “humanitarian status,” and “other forms of protection” are used interchangeably, especially in Chapter Four.

1.8 Dissertation Map

The following chapters describe how politics affects refugee status granting to asylum-seekers. Chapter Two covers the theory and literature review. It argues that variations in asylum granting between states are the result of bilateral relations and the domestic politics of the host state. The chapter begins with a very brief, historical overview of refugee protection in order to provide context with how institutions were put in place to protect refugees leading up to the 1951 Convention. Most states are signatories of the 1951 Convention. However, the majority of refugees are confined to a small group of states; most of which are located in the Global South. As a result, burden sharing is one of the greatest challenges facing unequal refugee asylum rates and refugee hosting. Unequal levels of burden sharing are often due to state interests. The rest of Chapter Two describes the literature regarding how bilateral relations and domestic politics affect refugee population numbers. Chapter Three defines the methodology and the specific variables for the analysis. The methodology chapter underscores the importance of using asylum rates as the dependent variable, as opposed to the standard refugee stock variables often used in quantitative research regarding refugees. The methodology chapter also explains the choice of the estimation equation used for the analysis. Because the dependent variable is a rate, and the unit of analysis is directed-dyad year, these factors must be taken into account. Chapter Four describes the results found after the analysis. The findings of the results did not support some of the hypotheses. The meanings of these findings are described in further detail in Chapter Five.
Chapter Two: Theory and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlights how refugee studies scholarship overlooks the role state politics have in refugee status granting. Additionally, studies ignore why variations in refugee status granting exists across host states. This study argues international politics matter. The relationship between the potential host state and the sending state influences the likelihood of granting asylum. The domestic politics of the host state also shape responses to forced migrants.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the history of refugee protection. Despite measures put in place to protect forced migrants, empirical evidence suggests refugee status granting varies across states. Next, the chapter provides a review of the literature. It describes how bilateral relations between states and the host state’s domestic politics affect refugee recognition rates. Beginning with Section 2.4, the hypotheses are presented at the end of each section. Granting asylum to individuals implies they cannot live safely in their country of origin. States do not wish to harm their relations with other states; however, rival states use refugees to undermine their enemies. It is hypothesized rival states will grant refugee recognition to asylum-seekers more than non-rival dyads in order to undermine their enemies. However, it is expected that potential host states will provide refugee recognition less to asylum-seekers from alliances. Similarly, a host state’s domestic politics affect refugee recognition rates. Often times, voters have negative views on migration. Therefore, it is hypothesized democracies will grant asylum less compared to autocracies. Authoritarian leaders are not bound by routine elections. Furthermore, case studies show that African states with once open-door asylum policies became more restricted to refugee hosting when the host state began to democratize. This study hypothesizes increases in democratization in host states will decrease asylum rates. These case
studies also depict that refugee deportations took place during national elections. It is also expected that refugee recognition rates will be lower in years when executive elections take place. Chapter Two ends with a brief conclusion.

2.2 Background and Brief Overview of Refugee Protection

Individuals have been forced to flee their home regions for hundreds of years. When the French Protestant Huguenots fled religious persecution in France, it eventually laid the foundations for what would be the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Orchard 2014). Signed in 1598, The Edict of Nantes afforded the Huguenots civil rights in France without fear of persecution. In 1685, Louis XIV replaced and revoked the Edict of Nantes with the Edict of Fontainebleau. As a result of the Edict of Fontainebleau, the Huguenots were persecuted in France. French Protestant schools were banned, and the Huguenots were forced to convert to Catholicism. Louis XIV also prohibited the Huguenots from leaving France. However, the Huguenots who were able to leave the country sought refuge in the surrounding states. As a result, the receiving states were placed in a dilemma. State leaders had to figure out a way to host the Huguenots without possibly engaging in conflict with France (Orchard 2014, 1). As Orchard (2014) mentions, states eventually protected the Huguenots under their domestic laws. The Huguenots became classified “as a distinct category of migrants, ones who, because they could no longer count on the protection of their own state, should be allowed to leave that state and receive protection elsewhere” (Orchard 2014, 1).

Since the Huguenots were forced to migrate out of France, the origins of the refugee regime began to slowly surface. After the First World War, the international community attempted to protect the two million or so displaced individuals. At first, protection measures were difficult, as many of the displaced had no forms of identification. For example, when
Russians sought to leave the Soviet Union, the Soviet government denationalized these individuals (Hathaway 2005, 83). Political tensions continued, and mass migrations showed no signs of stopping. As a result, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (LNHCR) was created in 1921. The office provided refugees with the “Nassen Passport” in order to afford refugees proper documentation to flee to other League of Nations member states (Betts 2009a). Later, the 1933 Convention Relating to International Status of Refugees attempted to promote international cooperation with refugee protection between states. The 1933 Convention contained an important addition to the treaty by including the principle of non-refoulement, but only eight states ratified and seven did so with reservations (Hathaway 2005, 88). This eventually led to the foundations for the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Hence, although modern refugee law can be traced back almost 100 years to the League of Nations, the UNHCR was not officially formed as an agency until 1951 (Goodwin-Gill 2014). In the same year, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was completed at a conference in Geneva, and officially entered into force in 1954 (Goodwin-Gill 2014, 37).

The 1951 Convention, though, contains geographic restrictions, as it pertains only to Europeans displaced as a result of World War II (specifically, it refers to those displaced before January 1st 1951). However, global conflict became widespread during the 1960s. The African continent in particular found itself torn by decolonization wars. As a consequence, the 1967 Protocol was entered. The Protocol removes both temporal and geographic restrictions, but it does not amend the 1951 Convention (Goodwin-Gill 2014; Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007). The 1967 Protocol is considered to be an “independent instrument” (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007,

\[\text{Non-refoulement} \text{ means that a refugee cannot be returned to his or her country of origin if he or she still has a legitimate fear of persecution. It is a key principle in the Convention, as well as in international refugee law.}\]

\[\text{For the complete definition of what constitutes a refugee according to the treaty and what defines persecution please reference footnote five and Section 1.7.}\]
This brief summary shows that the 1951 Convention is vital not just for refugee protection, but also for human rights in general. There are currently 145 countries that are signatories to the 1951 Convention, 146 signatories to 1967 Protocol, as seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Current Map of Signatory States**

![Signatories](image)

*Source: UNHCR*

However, despite the number of signatories, states are being restrictive with refugee hosting and asylum granting. Similarly, some non-signatory states host some of the most important refugee populations. For example, India hosts Tibetan refugees and the Tibetan government in exile. Are treaties merely scraps of paper, or do they influence state behavior? Do states interests affect behavior? If individuals have been forced to leave for reasons of persecution or other humanitarian reasons, there should not be too many inconsistencies with regards to how states grant asylum and host refugees. Empirical evidence suggests otherwise.

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15 For example, on the one hand, United States has acceded only to the Protocol. On the other hand, states like Madagascar, are parties to the 1951 Convention only.
Figure 3: Refugees per Capita by Country of Asylum mid-2015

Source: UHCHR Mid-2015 Statistics

Figure 4: Refugees by Country of Asylum mid-2015.

Source: UNHCR Mid-2015 Statistics
Suhrke (1998) argues that burden sharing across states is extremely problematic and challenging to implement with refugee hosting. She claims refugee protection also suffers from the free-rider problem. Although states want international stability, most states also want to decrease the number of refugees and asylum-seekers in their own territories. As a result, while some states admit their fair share of refugees in their territories, other states do not, but will still benefit from the regional stability that derives from refugee hosting (Suhrke 1998, 400). Suhrke’s argument underscores the issues surrounding asylum policy complexities, such as how international organizations struggle to increase cooperation with states and refugee hosting. Figures 3 and 4 above show unequal distributions of the world’s refugees per capita and destination. These figures show that most of the world’s refugees are in the Global South.

Although refugee protection measures are set in place, and international organizations attempt to increase cooperation between states, there are other factors influencing asylum granting in potential host states. For example, Neumayer (2005a) analyzes asylum rates in Western Europe, and finds asylum granting is often based on arbitrary decisions. According to Neumayer, asylum rates vary depending where asylum-seekers file for asylum. In other words, part of his analysis examines the host state themselves and how country specific elements, such as the host state’s political and economic factors, affects asylum granting. Neumayer’s work emphasizes that asylum applications are sometimes not processed based on their merits, but other reasons may influence the likelihood of granting asylum. More so, the nationalities of asylum-seekers affects whether they will be granting refugee status in the host state. As a result, unequal distributions of refugee hosting are not only found with refugee populations as a whole, but also with the nationalities of the refugees themselves. The problem of burden sharing hints at the notion that state interests may help to explain the unequal distributions of refugees in host states.
More so, it highlights how state interests affect refugee status determination. States will only cooperate if it is in their interest to do so.

Thielemann (2006) claims refugee burdens are unequal among Western states, and mentions there are generally two reasons that might explain the unequal distributions of refugee burdens. Normative based motivations, such as solidarity with other countries and refugees, may explain why states decide to host refugees. However, we “can expect interest-based motivations to be paramount for most (if not all) states” (Thielemann 2006, 14). This research departs from Neumayer (2005a) and other similar studies, because while the research analyzes how state interests affect refugee hosting, this study examines how domestic politics and bilateral relations between states may be contributing to these unequal asylum recognition rates. The next section analyzes how refugee status determination and state interests are linked.

2.3 Refugee Status Determination and State Interests

Section 2.2 explains how the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol were implemented. However, both the Convention and Protocol contain several limitations. First, the meaning of persecution is narrow.\textsuperscript{16} It relates to individuals having a fear of persecution based on political reasons, race, religion, nationality, and belonging to a particular social group. Therefore, individuals forcibly displaced as a result of natural disasters, climate change, or state failure do not traditionally fall under the Convention definition. Second, belonging to a “particular social group” is also an ambiguous term. For instance, women may classify as a particular social group, but categorizing gender as a social group varies between states. As a result, women who file for asylum on the grounds of gendered based persecution often have their claims denied (Querton 2012). Nonetheless, protection for displaced persons is effective only if states commit to

\textsuperscript{16} Please refer to the Convention definition of “refugee” in Section 1.7.
ensuring such protection. The following measures allow for proper refugee protection: the application of international and regional conventions, allowing UNHCR to work unrestrained when needed, through other forms of protection, such as third country resettlement, and through the proper implementation of refugee status determination.

Refugee status determination (RSD) is the procedure where individuals who applied for asylum meet “the eligibility criteria under international or regional refugee instruments, national legislation or UNHCR’s mandate” in order to be officially recognized as a refugee (UNHCR 2005, 1). States are primarily responsible for RSD (UNHCR 2015b, 51). In several cases, governments and UNHCR jointly determine refugee status for asylum-seekers. However, in many cases, UNHCR is solely responsible for RSD in host states. The agency is normally in charge of RSD in non-convention signatory states, or where effective national procedures on asylum are lacking (Stainsby 2009).17 Recently, UNHCR is taking a greater role, and documenting asylum applications in record numbers (UNHCR 2015b). RSD may be done in an individual basis, or declared *prima facie* during mass flights when governments and agencies find themselves with little capacity to handle claims individually.

However, while actual asylum procedures vary due to the differences at the national and regional levels, the goal remains the same—to identify individuals “who should benefit from recognition of their refugee status” (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2007, 532). As Türk and Dowd (2014) stress “Consistent with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the 1951 Convention needs to be interpreted in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning of its terms in their context and in light of its object and purpose,” (280). However, discrepancies in

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17 For example, UNHCR often determines refugee status in Asian states, because most countries in the region are not signatories of the 1951 Convention, or the 1967 protocol. UNHCR also single-handily handles asylum cases in Egypt. Although Egypt is a Convention signatory, it does not have any government procedures regarding refugee status determination.
asylum granting also lend to variations in refugee recognition rates between states, and to gaps in refugee protection. Gaps in refugee protection are one of the greatest challenges facing forced migrants. Gaps in international refugee law arise when protection is non-existent, not applicable, not adequate, or not appropriately applied (Türk and Dowd 2014). Protection gaps affect both those seeking asylum, and individuals with legal refugee status. Türk and Dowd (2014) acknowledge that states have granted refugee protection to individuals who fall out of the traditional refugee framework.\textsuperscript{18} However, states often narrowly dissect the Convention definition, and hold conflicting views with regards to who legally qualifies for refugee status (Türk and Dowd 2014, 280). For example, the authors mention refugee recognition rates among Afghan asylum-seekers in 2011 varied across European countries. They found the Netherlands’s refugee recognition rate for Afghan asylum-seekers at 3%, in contrast to Austria’s 33% refugee recognition rate for Afghans (281). Article 3 in the 1951 Convention states that “The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this Convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin” (UNHCR 2010a). Therefore, states should not discriminate refugees based on their country of origin. However, as Türk and Dowd (2014) claim, empirically this has not been the case. Similarly, during the Gulf War, Saudi Arabia recognized Iraqis displaced by the war, but refused to let other forced migrants through their borders and grant asylum, such as the Somalis (Hathaway 2005, 239). Hathaway (2005) also claims India showed preferential treatment to Tibetan refugees compared to migrants from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and (up until recently) the United States has shown preferential treatment to Cuban refugees compared to those fleeing Haiti (239).

\textsuperscript{18} See footnote five.
As previously mentioned, UNHCR is currently taking a greater role with asylum granting. The UNHCR also has independent authority to shape the behavior of states (Goldenziel 2014). Using the example of the 2003 Iraqi refugee crisis, Goldenziel (2014) examines how UNHCR influenced Syria and Jordan (both non-signatory states) to comply with international refugee law. The agency was originally met with backlash; however, it enforced compliance with Iraqi refugees when the agency provided humanitarian assistance (Goldenziel 2014, 467). Specifically, UNHCR enticed states to host refugees by delivering economic incentives. More so, it lured the cooperation of wealthier donor states, such as the United States by also providing cover through “minimizing the visibility in assisting Iraqi refugees fleeing the war they wrought” (467). The United States also wanted to hide their aid to Syria, because it seemed to contradict “their other foreign policy objectives” (467); thus, the U.S. funneled their funds through UNHCR instead. The Iraqi government also channeled money through UNHCR in order to prevent itself from seeming unstable (467).

Similarly, Hartigan (1992) illustrates how UNHCR influenced elite interests in Mexico and Honduras. Originally, both Mexico and Honduras were hesitant to provide asylum to Central American migrants displaced as a result of regional civil wars during the 1980s. However, UNHCR influenced state policy makers by offering funds and pursuing security and international legitimacy interests. By matching humanitarian norms with their particular state interests, UNHCR helped to shift Mexican and Honduran asylum policies.

While UNHCR influenced potential states to cooperate with regional refugee crises, this research maintains the findings of Haritgan (1992), Goldenziel (2014), among others, are isolated cases. In the case of the 1980s refugee crisis in Central America, Mexico and Honduras provided asylum to other Central Americans. In other words, it hosted refugees from the same
region, many of who have similar cultural and religious backgrounds. During the U.S. led
invasion of Iraq in 2003, both Jordan and Syria were openly opposed to U.S. intervention. While
individuals are currently fleeing for reasons of violence and regional instability, many migrants
flee for other reasons, such as state failure. Furthermore, individuals flee to non-contiguous
states with different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Many migrants also stay
displaced for long and indefinite periods of time. These situations make international
cooperation more difficult, and challenge the work of UNHCR. Governments can also suppress
UNHCR’s work in the host state. While there are cases where UNHCR influenced state
cooperation with refugee and asylum-seeker populations (Hartigan 1992, Goldenziel 2014), the
agency often does not work autonomously, and cannot solely enforce policy changes at the state
level. Governments must first grant UNHCR permission to work within its borders (Loescher
2001). Once the agency begins work, it may be constrained by the state in which it operates
(Betts 2013; Goldenziel 2014). Many times, the UNHCR finds itself sandwiched between its
own interests and that of the state. One the one hand, if UNHCR does not take state interests
into account, it may find itself sidelined (Betts, Loescher, and Milner 2012).

In the worst cases, host countries expel UNHCR agents. For example, Botswana
banished its UNHCR representative after the organization spoke out against the country’s human
rights abuses towards Zimbabwean refugees (Betts 2013, 82 and 192). On the other hand, if
the agency takes state interests too much into account, it jeopardizes its principles. One of the
criticisms against UNHCR regards the notions of “due process, and appeal or review” (Goodwin-
Gill and McAdam 2007, 53). For instance, in regards to due process, RSD applications should
be processed in a timely and non-discriminatory manner. Likewise, asylum-seekers have the

19 Libya also expelled UNHCR workers in 2012. See
right to appeal if the application was rejected, and should be provided with sufficient information as to why the application was rejected (UNHCR 2003, 1.2 and 7.1). Often this is not the case. Roesch et al (2014) found RSD by UNHCR officers in Tunisia failed to adhere to due process. Refugee status determination has also been assessed subjectively, as opposed to objectively, which “undermines confidence in the system” (Kagan 2003, 375).20

UNHCR is accused of being both state-centric and state-led (Ullah 2014, 95). The agency often acts under state supervision, and is constrained by state preferences (Betts 2013). As the case of Botswana above shows, the state is the main actor and enforcer with refugee status determination. In other words, state interests influence status determination. More so, when international agencies such as UNHCR are in charge of refugee status determination, states could influence agencies to deny asylum to certain asylum-seekers if it is in their interests to do so. Governments may allow UNHCR to help oversee refugee populations, and aid with asylum application processing within their borders. However, the state may place limits on how the agency works, and restrict UNHCR’s influence on refugee recognition rates.

Goldsmith and Posner (2005) claim states often act rationally in order to maximize their interests. However, Goldsmith and Posner (2005) do not thoroughly explain “which interests matter, how they are formed, or how we are to discover them” (Hathaway and Lavinbuk 2006, 1406). More so, Hathaway and Lavinbuk (2006) stress that international law research should focus on how international law matters, and importantly, under what conditions (1407). The following sections describe how state interests affect asylum granting in states. Bilateral relations

20 Kagan claims that in one case, RSD by a UNHCR officer in Cairo came to different status determinations for a Sudanese mother and her son. Although both accounts were extremely similar, and testified to the same events, the officer recognized the mother at first instance, but rejected first instance status determination for the son, as well as his appeal (Kagan 2003, 376).
between states, as well as domestic politics drive or deny asylum. These interests affect whether states will comply with international law.

2.4 Bilateral Relations

This section analyzes the role of bilateral relations between asylum and sending states, and its effect on refugee hosting and recognition rates. The foreign relations between host countries and refugee sending states influence asylum (Teitelbaum 1984; Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1986). In other words, the foreign policy goals of countries impact refugee recognition rates for asylum-seekers. Refugees are often geopolitical pawns. For example, granting asylum may create unfavorable relations with the sending state (Weiner 1992). Doing so is to admit individuals cannot safely live in their country of origin; therefore, states with favorable bilateral relations are less likely to grant asylum. Similarly, states with negative relations are more likely to grant asylum, and increase refugee-hosting numbers. One example regards the Cuban Adjustment Act, which allows Cubans to become permanent residents after legally residing in the United States after one year. Cubans also have access to a special immigration lottery program, which is not available to other nationals. These special privileges given to Cuban asylum-seekers and refugees originally stemmed from Cold War politics, and the bitter relations between the United States and Cuba.\(^\text{21}\) The United States and other Western countries were more likely to offer asylum to individuals fleeing Communist states in order to discredit communism (Betts 2009a). Likewise, the United States denied asylum to those fleeing states with favorable relations, such as post-Allende Chile, and El Salvador and Guatemala during the 1980s (Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1986, 155). For example, only 2% of asylum applications from El Salvadorans during the 1980s were approved in the United States (Gammage 2007).

\(^{21}\) Cuba’s latest out-migration crisis was in the winter of 2015, where many Cuban migrants began crossing through Central America in order to reach the United States when relations with Cuba began to improve.
The following variables analyze the bilateral relations between states: rivalries, alliances, and bilateral trade. These variables examine the political and commercial relations between states, and how they influence refugee status determination rates. We should find that positive relations between states would make asylum granting to individuals from allied states more difficult. Negative relations will provoke states to grant asylum to individuals from adversarial states. This section illustrates that political and economic motives drive or deny asylum rates depending on the nationalities of asylum-seekers.

2.4.1 Rivalries

Rival states often use opportunities to weaken an opposition state (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016). The case of Guinea exhibits the Guinean president’s negative perceptions of Liberian and Sierra Leonean leaders influenced the government’s decision to host Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. More so, Guinea allowed its refugee camps to be used as a base by Liberian rebels in opposition to Liberian president, Charles Taylor. Although Guinea is an extreme case, it is not rare for countries to host rebel groups and refugees in order to undermine rival states. For instance, Pakistan has been generous with hosting Afghan refugees, but it has been especially keen on receiving Afghans fighting against the Afghan government. Many (but not all) Arab nations host Palestinian refugees, and Libya hosted Chadians who fought against the Chadian government (Zoldberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo 1986, 156).

Throughout most of the 1990s, Guinea hosted thousands of refugees, most of whom were fleeing violence and conflict in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Guinean government had an open asylum policy (Milner 2009). In 1999, Southern Guinea became UNHCR’s largest refugee program in Africa, hosting about 500,000 refugees (Milner 2009, 135). Guinea also welcomed UNHCR’s assistance. For the most part, Guinea allowed the agency to encourage the

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22 Specifically, this was the Guékédou settlement.
refugees to be self-sufficient, in contrast to other African states (Milner 2009, van Damme 1999). However, when neighboring conflicts began to spill over into Guinea, the Guinean government began to restrict asylum granting. Blaming the violence on foreigners, Guinea’s leader, Lansana Conté, ordered refugees to be detained, especially those who settled in the capital of Conarky (Milner 2009). Interestingly, these restricted policies were short-lived. When violence in Guinea diminished around 2001, both Guinea and UNHCR, continued to host refugees from the region (Milner 2009, 143).

Nevertheless, one question arises from this situation. Despite the violent spillover from neighboring wars, and blaming Guinea’s instability on its foreign population, why did Guinea continue to host refugees when the violence subsided? Further analysis depicts that Guinea’s seemingly hospitality is nothing more than the result of political and foreign policy motives. The rivalry between Lansana Conté and Charles Taylor provided Guinea an incentive to host Liberian refugees (Milner 2009; Smith 2006). Similar to Western states during the Cold War, Conté hosted Liberian refugees in order to underscore the failings of the Charles Taylor regime (Milner 2009, 158). Guinea’s poor diplomatic relations with Liberia made the government particularly eager to provide safe spaces for the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), the rebellion group against Charles Taylor.

The LURD became “the largest armed group in Southern Guinea in 2000-2004,” (159). Guinean officials also consistently stopped Liberian asylum-seekers at the border, and handed them over to the LURD (Human Rights Watch 2002). The LURD eventually used asylum-seekers to transport arms “up to 20 times before being allowed to seek asylum in Guinea” (Milner 2009, 151). Guinea also allowed the LURD to use the Kouankan refugee camp as its rebel base (Human Rights Watch 2002). Guinea breached international law it when allowed
refugee camps to be used a rebel base, and when it forced individuals to transfer arms. This shows part of Guinea’s true motives for hosting refugees from neighboring states. Part of Guinea’s interest to take in refugees was to hopefully topple Charles Taylor and the Liberian government. Guinea’s tense relations with Liberia provided strong incentives to host thousands of refugees, even after the government blamed the country’s violence on them. Guinea engaged in a similar approach with Sierra Leonean refugees. In 1991, the guerrilla unit known as The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), formed by Foday Saybana Sankoh and assisted by Charles Taylor, plagued Sierra Leone with terror and insecurity. Eventually, the RUF controlled most of Sierra Leone, and ousted the president, Ahmad Kabbah, in 1997 during a coupe. Kabbah fled to Guinea. Because of the RUF’s ties to Charles Taylor, the Guinean government was intent to host Kabbah, as well as individuals fleeing the Sierra Leonean civil war.

Guinea’s course of action with refugees from both Sierra Leone and Liberia illustrate the political motives behind its so-called open-door policy. Hosting refugees from neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone was “an important political statement for Conté” (Milner 2009, 158). Despite conflict and instability spilling over to Guinea, it did not restrict refugee hosting in terms of numbers, although it did with quality. Guinea was not the only country to open its borders to refugees in order to show the deficiencies of rival states. However, the Guinean case exhibits the non-humanitarian motives for hosting refugees. While Guinea did not directly engage in war with Liberia and Sierra Leone, there were diplomatic strains between Conté, Charles Taylor, and the new government formed under the RUF. This case illustrates that poor diplomatic relations incentivized Conté to host refugees from rival states. When bilateral relations between states are
tense, states will be more likely to provide asylum to individuals migrating from their enemy’s country. The above discussion leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: Receiving states will be more likely to provide asylum to individuals fleeing rival states compared to non-rival states.

As mentioned earlier, the United States government used to give preferential treatment to Cubans compared to Haitian migrants (Hathaway 2005). Prior to the most recent easing of relations between the United States and Cuba, Cubans were allowed free access to U.S. territory, unlike Haitians who were often detained in Guantanamo Bay (239). If Haitians reach U.S. soil, Hathaway (2005) claims they are often ineligible to receive bond for their release, and have their claims processed under the “‘expedited removal’ procedure, rather than under the usual refugee status assessment rules” (240). As the Guinean case also shows, it is often in the best interests of states to grant asylum to individuals from rival states in order to show the deficiencies of rival states.

2.4.2 Alliances

In the international relations literature, alliances are formal commitments where “certain specific obligations are written out” (Morrow 2000, 64). Normally, alliances are formed through treaties. States join and form alliances for different purposes; however, it is often done to further military goals, such as in the case of war. Most of the alliance literature focuses on defense pacts (Morrow 2000), and whether alliances can deter or promote conflict between alliance member and non-member states. For example, Leeds (2003) argues that the specific alliances between states will either deter war or initiate. Kenwick, Vasquez, and Powers (2015) find that alliances
deter or promote aggression depending on the pre or post nuclear era. Vasquez (1993) argues alliances actually increase the likelihood of war. Despite the mixed findings regarding alliances and conflict, alliance formation and maintaining these agreement obligations come at a cost. These costs outweigh granting asylum to individuals from allied states. Potential host states do not wish to lose their international support by admitting refugees from allies (Moorthy and Braithwate 2016).

Alliance formation is one of the central topics in international relations. The literature describes the different reasons why states form alliances. One line of research describes alliance formation as the result of balancing power between states. For example, states will join alliances in order to prevent themselves from being dominated by stronger ones (Morgenthau, Thompson, and Clinton 2005; Waltz 1979). Or they may balance depending their level of perceived threat from other states (Walt 1987). States may also bandwagon, and align with the state instigating the threat.Besides warding off potential enemies, joining an alliance has benefits, such as the possibility of increasing military capabilities (Waltz 1979).

However, joining and forming alliances also entails costs, because states often have to bargain between their autonomy and security (Altfeld 1984; Morrow 1991; 2000), “with security defined as the ability to preserve the status quo and autonomy defined as the freedom to pursue changes in the status quo” (Morrow 2000, 65). Morrow mentions alliances force their costs on other states, if not, states would join alliances more freely (65). States sometimes intervene on behalf of another state if that state is attacked. If not, this can also entail costs. Audience costs may lessen the cost of intervention if a state fails to uphold its commitment to intervene (Morrow 2000). Fearon (1997) argues if countries do not come to the aid of another state when they claim they would, it can tarnish their reputations. According to Altfeld (1984), states also lose some
autonomy when they join alliances, because many alliances “tend to tie nations more broadly to each other’s positions on relevant issues so that it becomes difficult for either party to adopt policy stands too different from those of its ally” (Altfeld 1984, 526).

Cooperation between states is largely observable through the formation of alliances and the signing of treaties. Although states form alliances as a consequence for security concerns, states lose a portion of autonomy when they do so. Once in an alliance, if states do not adhere to their commitments, this can also entail costs. The fact that states are willing to lose portions of their autonomy to reap the benefits of alliances also suggests strong relations between other alliance member states. Despite this fact, outside of Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016), the forced migration literature largely ignores how alliances may deter refugee status determination and refugee hosting from other member states, which may suggest omitted variable bias. For example, the section on trade below briefly mentions strong political and economic ties between China and North Korea has made China adamant with granting asylum to North Koreans. China and North Korea both signed the “Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty,” which states that necessary actions will be taken to oppose any country (or countries) if either China or North Korea is attacked. China has been under scrutiny for its deportations of North Korean defectors (Kumar 2012). This leads me to my next hypothesis:

H2: States will be more restricted in providing refugee recognition to asylum seekers from a sending state, if both states belong to an alliance compared to dyads that are not in similar pacts.

Whether states join alliances for security reasons or other intentions, and whether they do so to bandwagon or balance, formal alliances entail costs. Alliances are one type of commitment,
often in the form of treaties. If this theory is correct, and alliances affect refugee status granting especially among Convention signatory states, then perhaps certain treaties matter more over others. The costs of alliance membership might far exceed granting refugee recognition to asylum-seekers from member states. Doing so may tarnish relations. As a result, we should expect to find that refugee hosting would be less likely in dyads that are in similar pacts, as the Chinese-North Korean case suggests. Greater political and commercial relationships among states will decrease asylum rates. It is not in the best interest of states to admit individuals have a fear of persecution from allies, or with those in which they are trying to restore relations with. For example, with the most recent refugee crisis, Russia has not provided asylum to Syrians. This is not surprising given the positive diplomatic relations between Vladimir Putin and Bashar al-Assad. Both in 2012 and 2013, zero percent of Syrian asylum-seekers were recognized by Russia. In 2015, Russia granted permanent asylum to only two Syrians (Luhn 2016). Similar to Western states during the Cold War, the Guinean case suggests that governments will be more enticed to provide asylum to individuals fleeing enemy states. While the quantity of refugees increase, the quality of hosting decreases. On the contrary, if relations begin to open, asylum granting will be more difficult. The costs of granting asylum will be greater, because it may strain relations between states.

Most studies have not provided multi-country, quantitative analyses on how alliances and rivalries affect refugee hosting. Although, a recent study by Moorothy and Brathwaite (2016) analyze how alliances and rivals affect refugee-hosting numbers their study uses refugee stock

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23 According to UNHCR statistics database numbers. The rate was calculated by the author based on the refugee recognition formula seen in the methodology chapter. First instance government applications by Syrian refugees in 2013 were 68 pending since the beginning of the year, 1073 applied, 0 recognized, and 710 rejected. In 2012, there were 8 pending since the beginning of the year, 197 applied, 0 recognized, and 137 rejected.
numbers as opposed to the actual asylum rates for their dependent variable. Their use of this variable, and why this study uses asylum rates instead is explained in further detail in Chapter 3.

**2.4.3 Trade**

Similar to diplomatic relations, bilateral trade also measure relations between states. Distinguishing from diplomatic relations; however, trade normally signals strong commercial ties. States may have good diplomatic relations, but poor levels of trade with one another. Similarly, trade relations between countries may exist despite poor diplomatic relations between them. For example, the United States is Venezuela’s top export destination, and most important trading partner. However, there is currently no U.S. ambassador to Venezuela, and relations between the two countries are strained.

Despite this, states often wish to preserve their economic ties with other states. The international conflict literature, for example, suggests that trade and economic interdependence often reduces the likelihood of states engaging in conflict and militarized disputes with one another (Gartzke and Li 2003; Hegre, Oneal, and Russett 2010; Mansfield 1994; Oneal and Russett 1997, 1999a; Oneal et al 1996). Mansfield and Pevehouse (2000) argue states that are part of the same preferential trading agreements (PTAs), and engage in high levels of trade, are less likely to engaging in disputes with one another. Gains from commercial ties dissuade states from engaging in conflict. Conflict puts economic gains at risk, and burdens other PTA members (776).

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25 Preferential trade agreements are trading blocs or pacts where participating countries receive preferential access to certain products.
One explanation that describes how trade affects conflict regards opportunity costs. Opportunity costs refer to the benefits lost when choosing one alternative over the other. Opportunity costs may decrease the likelihood of war (Polachek and Xiang 2010). Similar to Mansfield and Pevehouse’s findings with PTAs, conflict lessens gains from trade (Russett and Oneal 2001). In other words, the economic benefits that states gain from trade increase the costs of engaging in conflict with other states. Therefore, states will not engage in conflict with trading partners, because the commercial benefits dissuades states from doing so. States also do not wish to interrupt their trade flows due to conflict. Increases in economic wealth provide states with the incentives to cooperate and oppose militarized disputes. States wish to preserve their economic improvements. Countries will attempt to avoid anything that interrupts or halts economic gains from trading partners.

A similar line of argument may be made regarding how trade affects refugee status recognition rates. Bilateral trade increases the opportunity costs of granting refugee status, even for Convention signatory states. In other words, although states signed the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, economic incentives are stronger than compliance to human rights treaties. Consequently, trade can deter potential host states from accepting asylum-seekers from trading partners. Comparable to alliances, states do not wish to tarnish their relationship with their trading partners. Therefore, potential host states will be hesitant to admit that individuals from trading partner states have a well-founded fear of persecution. Granting asylum may anger government leaders from the sending states, and compromise commercial trade agreements. The potential costs acquired by trade loss are far greater than denying asylum.

Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) argue, “the instrumental goals of asylum enforcement are a function of diplomatic, security, and economic relations” (681). As result, this view
“assumes that asylum enforcement seeks to preserve good relations with allies (i.e. by rejecting their refugees), [and] to weaken opponents (i.e. by accepting refugees)” (681). They find asylum enforcement during the post-Cold War years in the United States favored preventing undocumented immigration from trade partners (693), and argue the United States seeks to preserve their good relations with their trading partners (686).

However, despite the fact bilateral trade may influence asylum enforcement, outside of Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004), most forced migration research ignores this variable and its potential effect on refugee status determination. As the conflict literature suggests, economic interdependence influences state policy choices. Economic interdependence should also affect asylum policies. Therefore, the omission of trade as a potential independent variable in the asylum literature is puzzling. Multi-country analyses have not thoroughly explored how bilateral trade affects asylum granting, although empirical cases support the theory. For example, Mexico signed a free trade agreement with Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador known as the “Mexico-Northern Triangle Free Trade Agreement” in 2001. In 2013, Mexico rejected 77.77 percent of Guatemalan asylum claims at the first instance, and 52.5 percent in 2012. In the beginning of 2015, deportations from the Central America’s Northern Triangle in Mexico were up by 79 percent (Arce 2015). Similar trends are observed in Asia. Strong political and economic ties between China and North Korea often prevent China from granting asylum to North Koreans (Hathaway 2005, 242). Nepal uses similar measures with Tibetans, often sending Buddhist monks and nuns back to China, where later many of them end up detained (Hathaway 2005, 280). Nepal’s strict stance on Tibetan asylum-seekers is probably due to increases in

26 Mexico is Guatemala’s second-largest import partner. See the CIA’s World Factbook Guatemala Profile Economy Overview https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.htm
27 According to UNHCR statistics database numbers. The rate was calculated based on the refugee recognition formula seen in the methodology section. Author’s own calculations.
commercial and political ties with China. In the Middle East, the Yemeni government often treats Ethiopian migrants differently compared to migrants from Somalia (Betts 2013). The Yemeni government, particularly under the Saleh regime, strived to improve economic and security relations with Ethiopia. As a result, authorities in Yemen expressed hostility towards Ethiopians arriving in Yemen, and often treated them more harshly compared to Somalis.

The international conflict literature argues that states engaged in more trade with one another have higher costs if they engage in conflict (Polachek and Seiglie 2006). Strong economic relations should also have similar effects with refugee status recognition. Opportunity costs from trade may deter asylum. States wish to preserve their economic interests and relations with other states. Thus, gains from trade outweigh the likelihood of positive refugee status determination. As trade increases, the gains become greater, as the costs of granting asylum. Asylum may strain warm relations between states and jeopardize commercial interdependence. Thus, I argue the following:

H3A: As trade increases between the receiving and sending state, the receiving state will be more resistant in providing asylum to individuals from the sending state.

H3B: Countries that trade with one another will be less likely to grant asylum to individuals from the sending state, compared to dyads that do not trade with one another.

Asylum rates should decrease when trade flows begin to increase. These arguments also help to explain the economic determinants of asylum. As the international conflict literature shows, opportunity costs from trade can often decrease the likelihood of states engaging in militarized disputes with one another. The cases of Nepal, China, and Yemen also denote the
likelihood that bilateral trade plays in preventing asylum. As a result, increases in trade reduce positive asylum rates.

2.5 Domestic Politics

Refugee hosting and asylum rates are also a function of domestic politics. It is easy to presume democracies may be more accommodating to refugees, and show greater concern to vulnerable populations, compared to autocratic states. However, democracies may also exhibit stricter stances on both regular immigration and forced migration. Democracies have greater audience costs than autocracies. Similarly, voters may show discontent with refugee populations, such as by deeming refugees as an economic burden or security threat. As a result, democratic leaders bound by routine elections will be more likely to enforce harsher asylum policies, reducing refugee recognition rates. In contrast, autocratic leaders may use refugee populations as an incentive to build greater international credibility. For example, for autocracies that have been criticized for human rights abuses at home, refugee hosting may offset this criticism. More so, autocratic leaders are able to host refugee populations without the threat of losing power during elections.

This section examines how regime-type and proximity to elections affects refugee hosting and asylum rates. It argues that autocracies are more likely to welcome refugees compared to non-autocracies. Similarly, democracies are less likely to grant asylum compared to non-democracies. Routine elections also prevent democracies from engaging in more open asylum, especially when voters have negative sentiments towards refugee populations. African countries in particular became more restricted with asylum as they shifted from one-party autocracies to multiparty democracies. Proximity to elections also affects asylum rates.
Elections provide added pressure to reduce asylum. Therefore, asylum rates will be lower overall during election years compared to non-election years.

2.5.1 Regime-Type

Theoretically, we might assume democracies will engage in more open-door asylum policies compared to autocracies. Liberal states are likely to engage in expansionist approaches towards “unwanted immigration,” because doing so is a characteristic of liberal ideals (Joppke 1998). However, democracies can hold restrictive approaches towards forced and voluntary migration. Liberal stances on immigration can lead to disapproval among voters. Often, the public has negative views on immigration (Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008; Cornelius and Rosenblum 2005; Sagar 2003; Schlueter, Mueleman, and Davidov 2013). For example, immigrants are sometimes considered to be an economic threat by the public. Likewise, individuals view migration as a security, cultural, or political risk in host states (Ullah 2014).

While individuals living in autocracies may be just as discontent with unwanted immigration, democratic leaders bear greater domestic audience costs due to routine elections. As a result, greater levels of accountability and electoral constraints force democratic states to further restrict asylum policies towards refugees and asylum-seekers (Jacobsen 1996, 671). Furthermore, democratic governments may place restrictions on UNHCR agency workers in charge of overseeing asylum cases. In retrospect, autocratic leaders might also view immigration and refugees just as negatively as their democratic counterparts. However, if it is within the interests for autocratic leaders to host refugees, the lack of routine elections and domestic accountability will allow leaders to do so without any significant opposition.

In analyzing global migration flows, Breunig, Cao, Luedtke (2012) argue political leadership affects immigration (827). Democratic elections place constraints on policy choices.
In democracies there is a push for border closures and control, as well as deportation measures due to public xenophobia (830). Their results find strong support for democratic regimes blocking overall immigration entry, and being less accommodating towards immigration compared to autocracies. However, Breunig, Cao, and Luedtke (2012) do not analyze asylum-seeker or refugee flows. Some argue there is a difference in public perception between regular migration and refugees where individuals are more sympathetic towards the latter. Salehyan and Rosenblum (2008) observe U.S. asylum approval rates. They argue asylum decisions are not “immune from non-humanitarian factors” (114). However, they also claim the American public recognizes the importance of humanitarian factors, and are more sensitive to the plight of vulnerable people, dependent on the nature of immigration and asylum at the time (108). Most importantly, “presidents do not enforce asylum policy unfettered, but are constrained in various ways by popular and congressional ‘principals’” (114). Presidents may be under pressure to accept refugee populations or deny them.

In this context, it may be safe to assume that there are differences between how the public overall views immigration versus refugees. In other words, while public opinion may lean towards strict policies on immigration, they might hold different opinions with refugees or other vulnerable migrants. However, this is often not the case. Pew Research archival polls found that the American public has not been particularly welcoming towards refugees (DeSilver 2015). Pew Research found 55% of those polled in 1958 disapproved of a plan to let 65,000 Hungarian refugees to come to the United States. In regards to the Indochinese in 1979, 62% disapproved a plan of the U.S. government to admit 14,000 Indochinese a month. Seventy-one percent of Americans disapproved of the U.S. allowing Cuban refugees to settle in 1980, but 66 %
approved of ethnic Albanians entering the country in 1999. With the exception of the Kosovo
conflict, Americans had disapproved of plans to let refugees into the United States by a majority.

Case studies have not only proven public hostility towards refugees, but have shown that
democratization affected asylum policies especially in African states. Rutinwa (1999) argues
that democratization in Africa led government leaders to start taking public opinion into account
when determining refugee policies. For example, Tanzania had an “open door” policy, and
hosted many refugees for decades. However, Tanzania’s hospitality shifted towards more closed-
door, restrictive policies after the country democratized (Betts 2013; Milner 2009). Tanzania
even closed its border with Burundi in 1995. Rutinwa (1999) claims Tanzania’s border closure
was partly due to its transformation into a multiparty democracy.

On the contrary, autocratic leaders, and leaders without any political opposition, also
affect the quantity of immigration (Breunig, Cao, Luedtka 2012, 827). Milner (2009) remarks
that despite a decline in donor commitments and growing concerns among the public with the
refugee community in Guinea, the government generally engaged in open asylum policies. The
Guinean state’s policies were a result of the president’s monopoly of power “in the absence of
any meaning political opposition” (160).28 Although refugees are often seen as a burden,
autocratic states may use refugee hosting as a positive incentive. Autocracies often must
establish credibility at the international level, and refugee hosting may provide autocracies with
such credibility. For example, autocratic leaders with human rights abuse records may use
refugee hosting in order to counterbalance neglecting human rights at home. This leads to the
following hypotheses:

28 It is important to note that since Milner’s publication, Guinea held their first democratic elections for the first
time in over 50 years in 2010.
H4A: Autocracies are more likely than non-autocracies to grant asylum.

H4B: Democracies are less likely than non-democracies to grant asylum.

H4C: As levels of democratization increase in a state, asylum granting in that state will decrease.

When nations democratize, leaders must begin to take into account public opinion more seriously unlike in autocracies. If autocracies believe refugee hosting provides benefits, they can often do so without the expense of substantial backlash from the public. However, autocracies in particular should have greater incentives to host refugees and provide asylum compared to democracies. Due to the negative views that voters have towards immigration and refugees, coupled with routine executive and legislative elections, democracies should be overall less likely to grant asylum and host refugees compared to non-democracies. Autocracies should be overall more likely to grant asylum compared to non-autocracies.

2.5.2 Proximity to Elections

National elections also affect the pressure to implement more austere asylum policies, lower refugee recognition rates, and constrain international agencies, such as the UNHCR. As the section on regime-type shows, voters often see migrants as threats, including refugees. Hopkins (2010) finds communities currently undergoing large immigration flows drive hostile political reactions to immigration. Individuals often see migrants under a negative light, due to possible competition in the labor force. Using the National Election Studies (NES) surveys, Scheve and Slaughter (2001) find low-skilled workers in particular are more likely to be opposed to immigration, because of potential economic threat. Hopkins (2010) and Scheve and Slaughter (2001) show the importance of immigration policy preference by the public. And in light of recent events, immigration dominated most debates prior to the United Kingdom European
Union membership referendum. The cases of Tanzania and Kenya show that deportations and border closures often occurred around national elections. Negative public sentiment on foreigners and refugees influence public leaders to pass more restrictive asylum policies, such as in Tanzania. More so, the Kenyan case exhibits how the president of Kenya exploited local grievances around election years against refugee populations in order to defend deportations. This section demonstrates how election cycles affect refugee populations.

The Burundian civil war in 1993 sent thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers to neighboring Tanzania and Rwanda. Citing security concerns, Tanzania closed its border with Burundi in 1995 and in 1996. Tanzania, once one of the most generous refugee hosting nations in the region, became one of the most restricted. According to a Human Rights Watch (1999) report it was easy for the Tanzanian government to make sweeping accusations against refugees for crimes in western Tanzania. Although both Tanzanians and refugees committed crimes in the region, public opinion in Tanzania commonly depicted refugees as criminals and the root of insecurity in Tanzania. The Human Rights Watch report states some of these accusations were inconsistent, as many Burundians were also at risk of crime if they left their camps, due to rebel activity in Tanzania. However, accusations increased xenophobia, which provided the Tanzanian government justification for strict asylum policies (Human Rights Watch 1999). Alongside these security concerns, border closures were also the result of Tanzania’s first multiparty elections in 1995 (Loescher and Milner 2005, 34). It is probable the Tanzanian government used public xenophobia and its first election cycle to close their borders, and round-up Burundian refugees due to public pressure. Elected officials in Tanzania want to remain in power, and when public opinion turned against the refugees, refugee policies displayed such sentiments (Veney 2004).
In Kenya, the government rounded up urban refugees, many of who were Somalis, in August 1992 and 1993, as well as in July 1997 (Hyndman 2000). The refugees were then transferred to refugee camps in remote areas of Kenya or around the border. The Kenyan government wanted to protect central Kenya from a “Somali invasion,” and also prevented UNHCR from settling refugees in central Kenya (51). Hyndman’s example does not particularly examine refugee recognition rates; however, constraints placed on UNHCR by the Kenyan government should be further analyzed. It is probable the roundups may have been the result of Kenyan general elections. Kenya held elections in 1992 and 1993. For example, shortly after the Kenyan president’s (Daniel arap Moi) reelection in December 1992, he openly declared Somalis would be sent back to Somalia, a similar statement he made previously in August of that year (Hyndman 2000, 51-52).\(^{29}\) Kenya and Somalia have a long history of adverse relations, and Moi exploited the tensions of Kenyans prior and after his reelection. For many years, refugees in Kenya had access to free health care and education, among other services, in contrast to the average Kenyan who does not. The Kenyan government at the time used the grievances of Kenyans to their advantage in order to defend the deportation rounds (Loescher and Milner 2005, 42).\(^{30}\)

Furthermore, a Human Rights Watch Report (2009) states the Kenyan government closed their border in 2007, began deporting Somalis back to Somalia, and detained new arrivals unless they paid a bribe. The same report also mentions the Kenyan government forced the closure of an UNHCR registration center near the border. Kenya went against both national and international law regarding refugees, breaching the principle of *non-refoulement*. Somali

\(^{29}\) Daniel arap Moi served as Kenya’s president from 1978-2002.

\(^{30}\) It is important to mention that currently the Kenyan government feels that it is under security threat by Somalis. In fact, there are recent talks about closing the Dadaab operation camps. However, the argument still holds in that public opinion also affects asylum policies.
migrants do pose a security issue in Kenya; however, Kenya also held national elections in December 2007. Roundups and deportations within proximity to national elections are not unique to only Tanzania and Kenya. National elections provide strong incentives for government elites to implement harsher policies towards refugees and asylum-seekers. In fact, they may even provide motives for governments to go against international laws and norms. Proximity to elections may also lure governments to restrain UNHCR’s capacity to work. The Kenyan case in particular displays how states restrict international agency workers around elections. States are the main force behind international law, despite being regional and international convention signatories.

The above discussions leads to the following hypothesis:

H5. In the year of a national or executive election, overall asylum rates will be lower compared to non-election years.

Similar to autocratic leaders, democratic leaders wish to remain in power. Elections put pressure on government elites to adhere public opinion. In the case of refugees, public opinion is often negative, and government leaders, such as in Kenya, often exploit tensions to secure positive election results. However, in order to satisfy voters and maintain power, it is expected that there will be lower asylum rates in election years compared to non-election years.

2.6 Conclusion

Most scholarly works have not quantitatively examined how politics drives refugee status granting. The majority of the works presented in this chapter are case studies or regional focused. In the case of trade, most forced migration studies have not examined how economic
interests between the host state and the sending state affect refugee status granting. Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) inspect how commercial interests affect asylum; however, their study only focuses on the United States. Similar to Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004), this study also measures the log of total bilateral trade in the dyad across multiple countries. Most studies have also ignored how rivals and alliances affect refugee status granting. A recent study by Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) analyze how the relationship between the host and sending state affect a state’s willingness to host refugees depending on their country of origin. While, their study examines the effect of these variables across a large temporal space (for the years 1951-2008) for directed-dyads, their dependent variable uses refugee stock numbers and not actual asylum rates. The next chapter explains why this variable is not an optimal choice.

Regimes and their effects on asylum granting have not been thoroughly examined. Breunig, Cao, and Luedtke (2012) assess how regimes affect global migration movements. However, their study focuses on general migration and not forced migration. More so, their study only analyzes migration for the 2000 round of census. With regards to proximity of elections, research has not quantitatively investigated how elections may affect asylum rates. Some studies have researched how refugees or migration affect elections (Dustmann, Vasiljeva, and Damm 2016). Similarly, last year’s Brexit vote implies that immigration was extremely salient in determining the referendum vote. However, it is just as imperative to study how elections may affect refugee recognition rates. Most works describing how elections affect refugee hosting have been case studies. It is imperative to understand if these trends can be expanded across case studies.

These works and empirical evidence suggest that domestic politics and bilateral relations between states do affect refugee hosting and asylum granting in states. The following chapter
will describe the methodological approach to this study in detail. Given the nature of the study and research questions, two things must be taken into account. The first regards the directed-dyad year unit of analysis. As Chapter Three will describe, using the directed-dyad unit of analysis implies non-independence across cases. Secondly, the dependent variable is a rate (later converted as a proportion). Both the unit of analysis and the dependent variable must be taken into consideration in the methodology. Chapter Three will explain the variables chosen for the study, as well as describe in detail the reasoning behind choosing a fractional proportional model.
Chapter Three: Research Design

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine how politics affect state responses to forced migrants. Specifically, this research analyzes how the domestic politics of the host state, and its relations with the sending state, affect refugee recognition rates. While asylum claims should be processed based on evidence and merits, empirical cases suggest that external factors also influence refugee status recognition as described in Chapter Two. Therefore, this investigation seeks to examine if there are variations in asylum granting dependent on the domestic politics of the host state, and the bilateral relations between the sending and host states. This chapter describes the research design used to conduct the analysis for the hypotheses presented in the previous chapter. In order to test the hypotheses, the data are gathered from all temporal and spatial domains possible.

The following sections describe the research design in detail. First, the chapter begins with the unit of analysis used in this study. Because individuals can migrate from Country A to Country B, as well as from Country B to Country A, directed-dyad years are used. Next, the chapter defines the variables used for the study beginning with the dependent variable. In order to measure asylum rates, the main dependent variable of interest are refugee recognition rates. This rate measures the number of successful decisions (refugee status granted) in the dyad for that year. Refugee recognition rates are also known as “Convention status,” meaning those individuals who are recognized as refugees under the 1951 Convention. Additionally, the total recognition rates pools those who have Convention status and/or those who have protection on a humanitarian or temporary status, often known as “complementary protection.” While there is no explicit definition for complementary protection, it is generally used as a form of protection for
those who fall outside of the 1951 Convention framework. Complementary and other forms of protection result in lower forms of protection and rights compared to full Convention status (McAdam 2006, 11). More so, states sometimes prefer to provide other forms of protection for those that may qualify for refugee status in order to avoid the obligations they must undertake when providing Convention status (McAdam 2006, 3). In analyzing asylum rates in Western Europe, Neumayer (2005a) finds that granting full-Convention status (refugee status recognition), and other forms of protection and Convention status (total recognition rates) vary, and lack convergence. While this dissertation does not examine complementary protection in the literature review, it is included as a separate dependent variable (“Total Recognition Rates”) for robustness checks in order to inspect if other forms of lesser protection are being granted instead of full Convention status. Section 3.3.1 explains why rates are chosen as the main dependent variable, as opposed to the standard refugee stock variables.

Next, the chapter describes the main independent variables of interest plus the control variables. Finally, the chapter explains the estimating equation used for this study. When choosing which regression to use in order to test the hypotheses, there were two things to consider. First, the unit of analysis is directed-dyad year. When directed dyad-years are used, statistical independence becomes jeopardized because the same dyad must be used twice. Second, the dependent variable is a rate, which means that it is bound between 0-100, or between zero and one as a proportion. However, the values may also be equal to zero or one. Therefore, this study incorporates the generalized estimating equation. Specifically, it utilizes the fractional response model (Papke and Wooldridge 1996). The chapter concludes with a short summary.

3.2 Unit of Analysis
The unit of analysis is directed-dyad year where State \( i \) is the host state (the state which grants or denies asylum) and State \( j \) is the country of origin for asylum-seekers. Non-directed dyads have only one case per year, for example:

United States Canada 2000

However, a directed-dyad analysis will have two cases:

United States Canada 2000
Canada United States 2000

Directed-dyads allow for different outcomes in both directions (Bennett and Stam 2004, 47). For example, given that migrants can flow from the United States to Canada, and from Canada to the United States, directed-dyads are necessary for migration studies. This study only includes dyads that have a history of asylum-seekers from State\( _j \) seeking asylum in State\( _i \). Since this research seeks to understand the political motives for granting asylum, this can only be analyzed if there is a history of individuals seeking asylum from State\( _j \) to State\( _i \). For example, according to the UNHCR database, no one from Uruguay applied for asylum in the United Arab Emirates during 2000-2013. Therefore, this dyad was excluded. However, Uruguayans have applied for asylum across South America, Europe, and Oceania. If asylum-seekers from State\( _j \) applied at least once in State\( _i \), these dyads were included in the analyses.\textsuperscript{31}

Moore and Shellman (2007) examine what motivates refugees to seek refuge in one country versus another. The authors remind us that there are often two approaches to take when using directed-dyads. The researcher either includes all directed dyads or only relevant dyads

\textsuperscript{31} As a form of robustness check, dyads in which there was only one year of movement from the sending to host state were dropped. The results did not affect the significance or the directionality. These results are provided in the appendices.
Moore and Shellman (2007) also mention the work by Lemke and Reed (2001). Lemke and Reed (2001) study the potential costs behind case selections. They find possible measurement errors and selection bias when selecting cases in dyads; however, the errors and bias are “small and substantively unimportant” (141). They also “find little to no evidence that such error or bias leads to erroneous estimation” (Lemke and Reed 2001, 140-141). The recent work of Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) include all possible dyads. As a result, Moorthy and Brathwaite’s data contain excessive zeros, because no refugees left the country or origin, or the host state did not receive refugees (8). In order to account for the excessive zeros, Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) use a zero inflated binomial regression in order to distinguish between true and false zeros (8). However, as mentioned below in Section 3.3.1, this can be problematic. UNHCR’s refugee data only includes values for countries that have a refugee population of at least one. An unpublished paper by Marbach (2016) stresses that there is no way to distinguish in UNHCR’s database between missing values and a value of zero (7). Section 3.3.1 also explains that the dependent variable for this research is a rate; therefore, a value of zero means zero asylum cases were successful for that year. In other words, these cases were rejected. A value of zero therefore has meaning, and this research cannot pool both missing values and zeros together. More so, including all dyads for this research will emphasize Maoz and Russett’s (1993) point of incorporating “irrelevant” dyads (627). Furthermore, asylum seekers are individuals that request or apply for asylum. This study investigates what are the political determinants of asylum granting. Asylum cannot be granted or denied unless an

32 In Moore and Shellman (2007), this regards directed-dyads where the country of origin produces refugees. Given their research question, their study includes all potential host countries in their sample. However, they include country pairs if the sending state produces a refugee flow for that year in the second stage. If the sending state did not produce any refugees in a given year, the country pairs were excluded. See footnote seven on page 813 and page 820 (Moore and Shellman (2007)).
33 Zero-inflated binomial regressions are used when there are two kinds of zeros-true and excessive.
individual applies for asylum first. As a result, this study only includes dyads where there is a history of applying for asylum from State$_j$ to State$_i$. In order to account for possible errors that may result in using dyads, this study uses a sandwich-type estimator as explained in Section 3.6.2.

The analyses are done across the following five samples: the full base model, host states that are signatories of 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol, non-signatory states, contiguous states, and non-contiguous states. Host states that are signatories may be more likely to grant asylum compared to non-signatory states, because they may be more likely to adhere to treaties and international law. However, some of the world’s important refugee populations are located in non-signatory states, such as in Asia and in the Middle East. Most individuals are likely to migrate to neighboring states. Figures 3 and 4 show that most of the world’s refugees are located in the Global South. Likewise, many individuals have sought asylum in non-contiguous states, particularly in wealthier host states, such as Afghan asylum-seekers in Australia. For these reasons, these extra four models are included in the study. This is also further discussed in Section 3.6.1.

3.3 Variables

3.3.1 Dependent Variable: Refugee Recognition Rates

To test the hypotheses, I perform statistical analysis of asylum rates from 2000-2013. The data are from the UNHCR’s population statistics for asylum-seekers and refugee status determination. UNHCR began providing data on asylum-seekers and refugee status determination in 2000. While there are data for 2014 and 2015, at the time of this writing, numerical values for the years are still missing in order to protect asylum-seekers’ anonymity. Therefore, the only years available are from 2000-2013. The data contain figures regarding how
many individuals applied for asylum, how many applications are pending, the number of those that received Convention (positive decision) status, those that received protection status on a temporary or humanitarian basis, the number of rejections in the host state, and those that were “otherwise closed.” The UNHCR population database breaks down decisions by first instance applications (FI), appeal, review, and others.\textsuperscript{34} UNHCR recommends pooling all procedure levels in order to calculate the refugee recognition rates (RRR) for that country.\textsuperscript{35}

The data also break down which entity analyzed the asylum cases—the government, UNHCR, or jointly. This research analyzes all three cases in order to examine if politics drives asylum at the government level, and if it influences UNHCR’s asylum processes. Again, all entities were pooled together if necessary.\textsuperscript{36} There is no general consensus with regards to calculating refugee recognition rates. However, UNHCR calculates refugee recognition rates by dividing the total number of asylum seekers granted full Convention status, by the total number of accepted (full Convention status and complementary status where applicable), and rejected cases.\textsuperscript{37}

\begin{equation}
(1) \quad RRR_y = \frac{\sum_{c=1}^{N} CR_{yc}}{\sum_{c=1}^{N} (CR_{yc} + HR_{yc} + RJ_{yc})}
\end{equation}

Where CR is the number of refugees recognized under the 1951 Convention, HR is the number of asylum seekers granted refugee status on a temporary/humanitarian basis, and RJ denotes the

\textsuperscript{35} Personal email exchange with UNHCR information officer, Htun Zaw Oo.
\textsuperscript{36} In most states RSD is determined solely by states or UNHCR, or jointly if needed. However, as mentioned in footnote 35, UNHCR recommends pooling all procedure levels and entities together if needed in order to analyze the refugee recognition rates that year in that dyad.
\textsuperscript{37} Complementary protection refers to the obligation for states to protect individuals who do not necessarily fall under Convention status, but who are otherwise in need of protection for violation of human rights in their countries of origins.
number of rejected cases. \( C \) denotes the country of origin and \( y \) is the year of reference.\(^{38}\)

Similar to Neumayer (2005a), these rates measure the rate of successful decisions, not the rate of successful applications. As Neumayer (2005a) notes, many asylum claims are not decided in the same year they are filed. The dependent variable “refugee recognition rate” \((\text{RRR}_{ijt})\) is defined as the percentage of individuals granted full refugee status recognition recognized under the Convention. The refugee recognition rates were calculated based on UNHCR’s refugee recognition rate equation. Because the dependent variable is a rate, it is bounded by zero and one hundred. The rate is then converted to a proportion, bounded by zero and one.

This research also departs from works that use refugee stock variables as the dependent variable, such as the recent work analyzing alliances and rivalries by Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016). Although UNHCR also breaks down refugee population numbers by dyads similar to refugee recognition data, existing yearly refugee population stock numbers do not capture flows of people. Another issue with this variable regards excessive zeros. Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) claim that their refugee stock dependent variable produced excessive zeros, and opt for a zero-inflated negative binomial regression. They claim that the disproportionate zeros are due to the sending state not producing any refugees in a given year, or because the host state did not receive them (8). However, there are criticisms with regards to zero values in refugee stock numbers from UNHCR. An unpublished paper by Marbach (2016) specifically examines this issue. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data on refugee stock numbers do not report zeros and missing values. In other words, data are only provided if there is

a refugee population of at least one in a host state in a given year. As Marbach (2016) also stresses, this leaves researchers in a precarious situation where they must decide how to code missing values. Researchers either code the missing refugee stock numbers as zeros or interpolate and extrapolate the missing values (Marbach 2016, 3).

There are other issues with missing values with UNHCR’s refugee stock numbers. Marbach (2016) also claims that missing stock numbers are due to idiosyncratic reporting of UNHCR, especially during the Cold War years, which contain several missing values (19). While this study does not include the Cold War years, Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016)’s study of alliances and rivals on refugee hosting does. Moreover, as Marbach also stresses, there is no information on the forced migrants’ home countries before 1960. Moorthy and Braithwaite’s study begins in 1951. Therefore, we should be slightly skeptical with regards to the results of their study given the usage of the refugee stock numbers. Due to these issues, this research uses asylum rates as the dependent variable. Asylum rates better capture state interests than actual refugee population stock numbers. Also, a value of zero with asylum rates denote refugee status recognition rate of zero. The rates are specifically calculated based on equation 1 (and equation 2 below).

After calculating the rates for the dyads, often times the rates are depicted as “missing.” However, missing values for asylum rates are not necessarily missing. Rather, the numbers do not exist in order to calculate the rates. They are not real missing values. Therefore, standard approaches for undertaking missing values will not work. Specifically, this occurs when the only decisions made that year were “otherwise closed.” In other words, the total decisions that year were neither granted nor denied status, but merely closed for other reasons (or still pending). Otherwise closed generally denotes no substantive decisions were made. Otherwise closed is
also ambiguous in meaning. However, one example for “otherwise closed” regards if the migrants did not show up for their interviews (UNHCR 2007, 48). This can also mean the migrants have left. Therefore, these are not real missing values in that the values were not recorded, and thus, missing. It is that the substantive decisions were not made and therefore, the decisions are not made for that year. However, because the dependent variable is a rate, we cannot code these “missing” values as zero. As mentioned earlier, asylum rates here give us the rate of “successful decisions.” As a result, a value of “zero” means no asylum granted, specifically, it means zero percent asylum granted. Finally, because past year’s asylum rates may affect future years, the asylum rates are lagged for one year (t-1).

3.3.2 Total Recognition Rates

This research will also include separate analysis for total recognition rates (TRR_{ijt}), which include both full refugee status protection and other forms of protection, often called “complementary protection.” The rates are calculated similarly to the refugee recognition rates.\(^{39}\)

\[
(2) \quad \text{TRR}_{yt} = \frac{\sum_{c=1}^{N} (CR_{yc} + HR_{yc})}{\sum_{c=1}^{N} (CR_{yc} + HR_{yc} + RJ_{yc})}
\]

Complementary protection regards forms of protection where individuals are at risk for human rights violations in their countries of origin; however, these individuals do not qualify as refugees with full Convention status. Therefore, these forms of protection do not afford individuals the same rights as full Convention status. Complementary protection has also been on the rise (Dicker and Mansfield 2012), thus, it is imperative to also include total recognition rates. As mentioned at the introduction, this research does not particularly analyze the complementary protection. However, this study will also examine when total recognition rates

\(^{39}\) Please reference footnote 38.
are more likely to be determined in order to see if lesser forms of protection are being implemented in lieu of full Convention status recognition. Further analysis of the findings of total recognition rates will be discussed in Chapter Five.

3.4 Independent Variables

3.4.1 Bilateral Relations Rivals

The main independent variables for alliances and rivals regard the presence of rivalries and military alliances in the dyad. I create a dummy variable if a rivalry exists in a dyad (RIVALRY_{ijt}). Aligning with the recent research of Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016), this research uses data from Thompson and Dreyer (2011).

Thompson and Dreyer (2011) define rival states as two states that “categorize each other as threatening competitors in international politics” (1). Thompson and Dreyer (2011) then categorize rivals according to four types of issues (21). Spatial issues regard states contesting territorial control. In positional issues, states contest their influence over a regional or global system. Ideological issues regard when states contest different belief systems. Finally, states may impose on the affairs of other states to reduce threat, or influence the decisions of other states (Thompson and Dreyer 2011, 21). Values are available for years up to 2010. Rivalry is coded as “one” if both states were rivals for the given years; however, this study does not distinguish between the four issues defined by Thompson and Dreyer (2011). It is hypothesized that the host state will be more likely to grant asylum to asylum-seekers from the sending state if a rivalry exists.

3.4.2 Bilateral Relations Alliances

---

40 The rivalry data provided by Klein, Goertz, Diehl (2006) are only provided until 2001.
I hypothesize that when host states and sending states have positive, friendly relations, the host state will be less likely to grant asylum to asylum-seekers from the sending state. I construct a dummy variable coded as “one” if alliances are represented in the dyad in a given year (ALLIANCES\(_{ijt}\)). However, similar to Moore and Shellman (2007) and Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) non-aggression pacts were excluded. Non-aggression pacts are dissimilar compared to other pacts (Moore and Shellman 2007). Non-aggression pacts pledge states not to use force with one another. This is in contrast to neutrality pacts where signatories must refrain from supporting adversaries if an alliance member engages in military conflict with another state (Leeds 2003, 430). Nonaggression pacts do not necessarily yield to affinity between states. In order to obtain values across the largest temporal and spatial realm possible, the data are obtained from the Correlates of War Formal Alliances dataset (v4.1.) (Gibler 2009).

3.4.3 Bilateral Relations Log of Total Trade

In order to explore if increases in trade lead to less asylum granting, I also include a variable with the log of total trade between the host and sending states (LOGTRADE\(_{ijt}\)). Similarly, the log of the total trade between two countries is also obtained by the Correlates of War Project Bilateral Trade dataset (v4.0). The total trade values are obtained by adding both flow1 and flow2. The total trade values between two countries are obtained and then logged.

3.4.4 Bilateral Relations Trade Exchange

The second main independent variable for trade (EXCHANGE\(_{ijt}\)) is a dummy variable indicating if both states engaged in trade with one another. The data are obtained from the Correlates of War Project Bilateral Trade dataset (v4.0) (Barbieri and Keshk 2016; Barbieri, 2016).

---

41 Host states and country of asylum are used interchangeably, as well as with sending state and origin.
The data are originally ordered as non-directed dyadic year, and was converted to directed dyad-year. Trade flows are described as the imports from Country A to Country B (flow1), and imports from Country B to Country A (flow2) in current US millions of dollars. However, not all dyads have imports from Country A to Country B and vice versa. There are occasions where only one state had imported to another state in a dyad. Therefore, trade exchange was coded as “one” if both Country A and B in the dyad imported goods to one another. Trade exchange was coded as “zero” if only one country in the dyad imported, or if none in the dyad imported. It is hypothesized that countries that trade with one another will have lower asylum rates compared to those that do not. State_i will be less likely to grant asylum to State_j if they are trading partners. Values for trade data are available for years up to 2014. However, given the nature of the dependent variable, exchange data are available up until 2013. The general variable EXCHANGE_{i,j,t} is used in order to examine asylum rates are affected if the sending state is a trading partner of the host state.

3.4.5 Domestic Politics: Regime-Type, Democratization, and Proximity to Elections in the Host State

Variables measuring regime-type and democratization are obtained from Polity IV. This study uses Polity IV, because Polity includes measures of chief executive constraints (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2017) as opposed to Freedom House, which measures civil liberties. Given the research interests of this dissertation, Polity IV is used. Polity scores range from -10 to 10+ where a score of -10 to -6 denotes autocracies, and scores of +6 to +10 for democracies. Autocracies (AUTOCRACY_{i}) are also coded as a binary variable if the host state’s Polity IV score is between -10 and -6. This research does not analyze anocracies (those with a score of -5

---

43 According to Barbieri and Keshk (2016), most of the data on bilateral trade are obtained by the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS).
and +5).\textsuperscript{44} Democracy (\text{DEMOCRACY}_{it}) is coded as a binary variable if the host state’s Polity IV score is a 6+ or above. For levels of democratization (\text{DEMOCRATIZATION}_{it}), the variable will not be recoded. An increase in a positive score should allow us to see if increases in democratization have an effect on refugee hosting. Years of an executive election are obtained from the World Bank’s database on political institutions. The variable is a binary variable indicating if an executive election was held in that year (\text{EXEC}_{it}).

3.5 Control Variables

3.5.1 State of Origin in Conflict

Other variables may explain asylum rates in a country of asylum. Therefore, several control variables are included. There are also variables that must be controlled for on behalf of the sending state. This research controls for the country of origin being in civil conflict (\text{CONFLICT}_{jt}). This can create a “push” factor, and create mass migration. It is operationalized as “one” if the country of origin is experiencing intrastate conflict, and “zero” for otherwise. Data are obtained from UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Version 4-2016) (Gleditsch et al 2002; Melander, Petterson, Themnér 2016).

3.5.2 Human Rights Records in Country of Origin

In analyzing asylum enforcement in the United States, Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) find that individuals from sending states with better human rights records were approved at a lower rate compared to individuals from states with worse human rights records. Similar to Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) this research controls for the level of human rights record in the sending state (\text{POLITERROR}_{jt}) using the Political Terror Index (PTS).

3.5.3 Number of Borders and Contiguity

\textsuperscript{44} However, this study did attempt to include a separate variable for anocracies, but was excluded by Stata for collinearity. Given that the study is concerned more with democracies and autocracies, anocracies are therefore omitted.
The total number of borders in the host state (NUMOFBORDERS\textsubscript{i}) may make states more likely to receive more refugees compared to others (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016, 10). Similarly, this may also make host states more likely to grant asylum to more asylum-seekers compared to states that do not have as many borders. Individuals often migrate to countries that border their own (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016; Moore and Shellman 2007). For example, Figure 4 in Section 2.2 shows that Turkey hosted the most refugees in 2015, many of which came from Syria (İçduygu 2015). Therefore, this research also controls for contiguous dyads (CONTIGUOUS\textsubscript{ijt}). The total number of borders and contiguous states are derived from the Correlates of War Project Direct Contiguity (v3.2) (Stinnett et al 2002). Contiguous dyads are organized by land contiguity and water contiguity. Land contiguity is “defined as the intersection of the homeland territory of the two states in the dyad either through a land boundary or a river” (Sinnett et al 2002, 62). Water contiguity is divided by the following four categories: 12, 24, 150, and 400 miles. Because asylum-seekers and forced migrants often travel large distances, contiguity is coded as “one” if two states in the dyad share a land boundary of any of the four water contiguity categories.

3.5.4 Similar Religion

Host states may be partial towards asylum-seekers that originate from states that share similar religions (RELIGION\textsubscript{ij}). In analyzing the case study of Yemen, Betts (2013) argues that Yemen’s response to forced migrants from Somalia contrasts to their response to migrants from Ethiopia. Yemen’s response to Ethiopians is often met with xenophobia, in which its Muslim society also directs such xenophobia towards Ethiopian Coptic Christians (Betts 2013, 169). Currently, we are also witnessing similar dialogue in the West towards forced migrants and asylum-seekers from predominately Muslim nations. During Europe’s migration crisis
Slovakia’s prime minister, Robert Fico claimed, “Islam has no place in Slovakia,” (Tharoor 2016). President Trump’s executive order travel ban, which barred refugees and others from seven countries, proved controversial, as all seven countries were Muslim majority states. Currently, asylum-seeker data are not broken down by applicants’ religion. Therefore, in order to control for religion, I create a dummy variable if two states share a similar religion. Specifically, it is coded as “one” if 50 % of both states’ populations identify with the same religion. The data is obtained from the Correlates of War World Religion Data (v1.1) (Maoz and Henderson 2013). The numbers are given for every half-decade up until 2010. Numbers were then interpolated for missing years between 2000-2010, and extrapolated for 2011-2013.

3.5.5 Economic Disparity

Building off the work of Neumayer (2004, 2005b), who finds that some host states are more economically appealing than others for asylum-seekers, Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) control for economic disparity by taking the logged difference between the GDP per capital of both the host and sending states. In a similar fashion, this research controls for economic disparities (LOGGEDGDP\text{ijt}). While 86% of refugees are in the developing world (UNHCR 2016), asylum-seekers may also be attracted to countries that are wealthier than their home states. Data are obtained from the World Bank, and are in constant numbers from 2010.

3.5.6 Convention Signatory

Host states that are Convention signatories (CONVEN\text{it}) may be more likely to grant asylum compared to non-Convention signatories. This is also a dummy variable coded if a host state signed either the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol. However, it should be noted that many Asian states are non-Convention states, but host important refugee populations.

3.5.7 Colonial Ties
Countries may be partial towards asylum-seekers from states with colonial ties (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016). Neumayer (2004) found that colonial links made destinations more attractive. Moore and Shellman (2007) argue that colonial linkages provide less transaction costs and uncertainty to migrants compared to countries with no colonial linkages (818). While destinations with colonial ties may seem more attractive to migrants, this research seeks to analyze if colonial links (COLONY\text{ijt}) actually make host states more likely to provide asylum. Data are obtained from Hensel (2014).

3.5.8 Refugee Population per Capita in Host State

The number of refugees per capital in the host state may affect the willingness to further grant asylum. Host states with large refugee populations may grant asylum less compared to states with small refugee populations per capita. Hosting large refugee populations can strain the host state from resources. As a result, the study controls for the refugee population per capita in the host state (REFUGEEPOP\text{it}). The next section describes the methodology used in the study.

3.6 Methodology

3.6.1 Model

The summary of the full base model is:

\[
RRR_{ijt-1} = \alpha_t + \beta_1 (RIVALRY_{ijt}) + \beta_2 (ALLIANCES_{ijt}) + \beta_3 (LOGTRADE_{ijt}) + \beta_4 (EXCHANGE_{ijt}) + \beta_5 (AUTOCRACY_{it}) + \beta_6 (DEMOCRACY_{it}) + \beta_7 (DEMOCRATIZATION_{it}) + \beta_8 (EXEC_{it}) + \beta_9 (CONFLICT_{jt}) + \beta_{10} (POLITERROR_{jt}) + \beta_{11} (NUMOFBORDERS_{it}) + \beta_{12} (CONTIGUOUS_{ijt}) + \beta_{13} (RELIGION_{ijt}) + \beta_{14} (LOGGEDGDP_{ijt}) + \beta_{15} (CONVEN_{it}) + \beta_{16} (COLONY_{ijt}) + \beta_{17} (REFUGEEPOP_{it}) + \varepsilon_{ijt}
\]

This study is done across the following five samples: the full base model, signatory host states, non-signatory host states, contiguous dyads, and non-contiguous dyads. As previously mentioned, signatory states may be more likely to grant asylum to asylum-seekers; however, many non-signatory states also host important refugee populations. Individuals are more likely
to migrate to neighboring countries; therefore, it is important to also include dyads that are non-contiguous in order further isolate the effects the independent variables may have on the dependent variables. This will allow us to analyze the true strength of the base model.

3.6.2 Generalized Estimating Equation (GEE)

The data are time-series, cross-sectional (TSCS) with a directed-dyad year unit of analysis for 2000-2013. Because of the directed dyads, spatial and temporal correlations in the error terms are expected (Leeds 2003, 434). Generalized Least Squares (GLS) are often used when there is correlation among error terms and possible heteroskedasticity. Before, GLS was used with the Parks-Kmenta method in order to account for autocorrelation and heteroskedasticity. However, Beck and Katz (1995) find that generalized least squares (GLS), especially when using the Parks method, may produce overconfident standard errors. The authors recommend OLS with panel-correlated standards errors (PCSE). In order to account for heteroskedasticity and correlation of residuals, Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) use GLS with PCSE in their studying analyzing asylum enforcement in the United States. In contrast to Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004), this study uses directed-dyad year as previously mentioned. However, given that the dependent variable in this study is bound between zero and one, and also take the values of zero and one, these regressions are not appropriate for the study.

Using directed-dyad years creates other methodological problems besides correlation in the error terms. Because the same dyads are repeated and get counted twice in the dataset, this jeopardizes the assumption of statistical independence (Mitchell and Prins 2014, 191). Using directed-dyad years as cases, then, rejects the assumption of the independence of cases (Bennett and Stam 2000; Leeds 2003; Mitchell and Prins 2014, 192). In her study on military alliances and the likelihood of initiating militarized interstate disputes between dyads, Leeds (2003)
employs a generalized estimating equation (GEE) in order to account for her use of directed-dyads, and the possibility of temporal and cross-sectional correlation. Similarly, political scientists have utilized generalized estimating equations, particularly in international relations research (Bennett and Stam 2000; Leeds and Davis 1997; Mitchell and Prins 2014; Oneal and Russett 1999a; Oneal and Russett 1999b).

Liang and Zeger (1986) first introduced the generalized estimating equation as an extension of a generalized linear model (GLM). However, GLM models assume independence among cases. Despite its name, the GLM does not assume linearity in the traditional sense between the dependent and independent variables and are often assumed to be non-linear; however, it does assume linearity between the transformed response variable with regards to the link function and the independent variables (Penn State 2017). Link functions will link the mean of the dependent variable to the linear term. GLMs allow for a variety of different link functions and exponential families. Because GLM does not assume a normal distribution, dependent variables can take other values besides continuous. Thus, link functions must be fitted accordingly to the dependent variable (e.g. logit, probit, natural log, identity, etc). The parameters can be estimated through maximum likelihood estimations (MLE).

GLM can be applied to subjects with a single observation (Liang and Zeger 1986, 13). However, the problem arises when there are repeated observations for subjects in longitudinal studies, such as in the case of directed dyads. In contrast to the GLM, the GEE does “not specify a form for the joint distribution” (Liang and Zeger 1986, 14), and is an estimating equation with weak assumptions regarding the joint distribution (14). Generalized estimating equations are used for population average effects as opposed to individual effects (or conditional approach). Therefore, generalized estimating equations use a marginal approach, and focus on marginal
expectations (Liang and Zeger 1986; Zeger, Liang, Albert 1988; Zorn 2001). GEE, therefore, does not require distributional assumptions, because the estimation of the population average requires few specifications, such as “the mean of the outcome given the covariates” as opposed to the whole joint distribution (Hubbard et. al 2010, 469). As opposed to the GLM, GEE does not use maximum likelihood methods, and is thus a quasi-likelihood method. Also, Zorn (2001) claims that the use of individual effects versus the population average effects is a substantive one (475). Using the example of the democratic peace, Zorn (2001) explains that a conditional approach would be more suitable in research that wishes to analyze if democratization affects a nation or pair of nations to go to war; however, using GEE would be more appropriate if the researcher wants to analyze the overall general effect of autocracies and democracies on engaging in military disputes (475). Given the directed-dyad unit of analysis I also include a Huber-White sandwich estimator in order to account for possible heteroskedasticity (Huber 1967; White 1980), and within-group error. Therefore, this study also uses the Huber-White sandwich estimator clustered around dyads.

3.7 Fractional Response Model (FRM) Fractional-Logit Model

As previously mentioned, the generalized estimating equations allows for flexibility to estimate the dependent variable whether they are discrete, continuous, and categorical by specifying a link function to connect the mean of the response variable to the linear predictors. While the generalized estimating equation and the Huber-White sandwich estimator account for the methodological problems that are associated with directed dyads and within-cluster correlation, the structure of the dependent variable must also be taken into account. The dependent variable is a percentage, with values landing at zero and at 100 (later converted to a proportion). One model for handling continuous proportions and percentage data is the beta
regression (Ferrari and Cribari-Neto 2004). However, observations in beta regressions cannot be found to equal zero or one, and must be $0 < y < 1$ given the beta regression’s log-likelihood (Cribari-Neto and Zeileis 2010, 4; Smithson and Verkuilen 2006, 58). The log-likelihood for the beta regression includes $\log y_i$ and $\log(1 - y_i)$; therefore, $y$ cannot take a value of 0 or 1.\(^{45}\) Therefore, the beta regression cannot be used for this study.

Papke and Wooldridge propose the fractional response model, a quasi-likelihood model for proportional data (Papke and Wooldridge 1996). Papke and Wooldridge (1996) expand on the GLM with a binomial family and logit link function in order to account for values that lie on zero and one. The fractional response model can overcome problems from other models. Standard OLS cannot guarantee that $y$ will fall within the unit interval of $[0,1]$ (Papke and Wooldridge 1996, 620). Papke and Wooldridge (1996) state the common alternative is to include the “logs-odd ratio as a linear function” (620). However, similar to the beta regression, $\log[y/(1 - y)]$ cannot be true if $y$ equals zero or one (Papke and Wooldridge 1996, 620). Quasi-likelihood estimations only require correct specifications of the model means (Wedderburn 1974). According to equation four in Papke and Wooldridge (1996, 621) the main assumption for the fractional logit estimation that for all $i$

$$E(y_i | x_i) = G(x_i \beta)$$

where $G(\cdot)$ is a link function, (in this case, the logistic function $\exp(z)/(1 + \exp(z))$\(^{46}\) that satisfies “$0 < G(z) < 1$ for all $z \in \mathbb{R}$.” Papke and Wooldridge claim that the above equation not only allows for $y_i$ to lie between the interval of zero and one it also allows for $y_i$ to take the

\(^{45}\) See equation two in Cribari-Neto and Zeileis (2010) and equation four in Smithson and Verkuilen (2006).

values of zero and one (621). Due to the dependent variable being a proportion, this dissertation uses the fractional response model.47

3.8 Summary

This chapter describes the research design for the dissertation study. Given the questions and the unit of analysis, two methodological problems have to be taken into account. First, several methodological problems arise through the use of directed-dyad years, such as non-independence across observations, and the possibility of spatial and temporal correlations among error terms. Therefore, the generalized estimating equation will be incorporated in the study. Second, the nature of the dependent variable as a proportion taking values of 0 ≤ y ≤ 1 allows for the fractional proportional model as a good fit. This chapter also describes the nature of the dependent and independent variables used for the study. The next chapter will show the results found after the analyses. However, given the model, and the dichotomous and continuous independent variables, standard regression coefficient tables will not suffice for describing the substantive effects. Therefore, marginal effects will also be used to further analyze the results in Chapter Four.

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47 This was done in Stata by using the xtgee program in combination with the logit link, binomial family, alongside the Huber-White sandwich estimator.
Chapter Four: Results

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter describes the research design for this study. As mentioned in the conclusion of Chapter Three, while a standard regression table will be provided for significance and directionality, it does not thoroughly explain substantive effects. Therefore, the marginal effects of the results are also reported in this chapter. It is important to note, however, that given the use of the generalized estimation equation with the fractional proportional response model, the marginal effects do not describe probabilities. For example, the results will not read, “the probability of getting asylum is 4% in a democracy…” Instead, the marginal effects estimate the expected value. As a result, these results will not describe the likelihood of an event happening, but rather, the average outcome. For example, the marginal effects for binary variables, are described as asylum increasing or decreasing by x percentage points when the independent variable goes from zero to one.

Marginal effects give an approximation of how the dependent variable increases or decreases after a unit change in the independent variable, and are presented on an additive scale (Buis 2010, 305). It is for this reason why the effects on the dependent variable describe “percentage points” as opposed to “percent.” With binary variables, the marginal effects measure discrete change. In this model, it analyzes how the expected value changes when the independent variable changes from zero to one. In the example of democracies, when the variable democracy goes from zero to one, people receiving asylum increases by 4 percentage points. On the contrary, the marginal effects of continuous variables measure instantaneous rates of change (Williams 2017a). For these variables, plots are better able to explain marginal effects (Williams 2017b).
This chapter will describe the findings and the results of the fractional response model. However, explanations of what these results imply, and further analyses of these results, are described in more detail in Chapter Five. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables. Table 2 presents the main findings of the effects of bilateral relations and domestic politics on refugee recognition rates. Table 3 presents the results for the total recognition rates, which are the rates for Convention status and other others form of protection. As mentioned in Chapter Three, while the research is primarily interested in the refugee recognition rates, the total recognition rates are also analyzed in order to analyze if states are providing other forms of less protection in lieu of full refugee recognition rates (Convention status). Again, meaning and comparisons of these results will be explained in the next chapter. The chapter is then subsequently organized according to the hypotheses presented in Chapter Two. The marginal effects for each hypothesis are presented accordingly in each section. Tables for the marginal effects are presented for dichotomous independent variables. For continuous variables, tables do not provide an adequate visual representation of the findings. Therefore, graphs of the marginal effects for the continuous independent variables are presented instead. The results show overall support for rival dyads, bilateral trade, and democratization. The findings for democratic and autocratic host states, and alliances were contrary to what was hypothesized for most of the models with minor exceptions. In other words, the results show statistical significance, but the directionality was not as expected. The findings for the control variables are presented after. The chapter ends with a brief conclusion, and provides a table with a summary of findings.
### 4.2 Findings

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Max</th>
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<td><strong>Dependent Variable</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asylum Rates (RRR)</td>
<td>43868</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.340</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Combined (TRR)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rivalry</td>
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<td>.00850</td>
<td>.0918</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Alliances</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Trade Exchange</td>
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<td>.376</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td><strong>Domestic Politics of Host State</strong></td>
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<td>Autocracy</td>
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<td>5.501</td>
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<td>Conflict in sending state</td>
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<td>.430</td>
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<td>Political Terror in sending state</td>
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<td>3.009</td>
<td>1.0504</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Total borders in host state</td>
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<td>3.837</td>
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<td>Contiguous</td>
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<td>Logged GDP difference</td>
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<td>Sending state former colony</td>
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<td>.0195</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Log Refugee population / capita in host state</td>
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<td>-.465</td>
<td>2.458</td>
<td>-9.165</td>
<td>6.0556</td>
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Table 2: The effects of bilateral relations and domestic politics on refugee recognition rates (t-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Base (Model 1)</th>
<th>Signatory (Model 2)</th>
<th>Non-signatory (Model 3)</th>
<th>Contiguous (Model 4)</th>
<th>Non-Contiguous (Model 5)</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Rivalry</td>
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<td>.899***</td>
<td>-.311</td>
<td>.749***</td>
<td>.476</td>
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Robust Standard errors for clustering around dyads in parenthesis ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1
Table 3: The effects of bilateral relations and domestic politics on total recognition rates (t-1)

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Robust Standard errors for clustering around dyads in parenthesis ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1

73
4.2.1 Rivals

Hypothesis 1: Receiving states will be more likely to provide asylum to individuals fleeing rival states compared to non-rival states.

It is hypothesized that the relationship between the host and sending state affects asylum rates. The first hypothesis claims that asylum rates will be greater in rival dyads than in non-rival dyads. The base model found in Model 1, Table 2 finds strong support for this hypothesis. However, while the sign and statistical significance supports the first hypothesis, it tells us little about the substantive effects. Therefore, the average marginal effects were calculated (Williams 2012). Marginal effects measure discrete changes with binary variables, and normally measure how predicted probabilities change when the variable shifts from 0 to 1 (Williams 2017a, 1). However, given the generalized estimating equation, the marginal effects do not measure predicted probabilities, but estimate the expected value.

According to Table 4 below, rival host states provide full Convention status to asylum-seekers at around 14.8 percentage points more than non-rival host states. Table 5 finds that rival states provide full and complementary status 12.8 percentage points more than non-rival host states. Overall, rival states provide full refugee status more than the full and complementary status. The results also found support for host states that are signatories of the Convention, and for contiguous dyads as seen by Model 2 and Model 4. Table 4 shows that if the host state is a signatory of the 1951 Convention, and a rivalry exists between two states in a dyad, full Convention recognition rates increase by 16.4 percentage points compared to non-rival dyads, and asylum rates increase by 14.1 percentage points for full-Convention status and other forms of protection. For contiguous dyads, refugee status rates increase by 14.8 percentage points, and total recognition rates increase by 11.9 percentage points. The hypothesis was found to be not significant for non-signatory host states and for non-contiguous dyads.
This study seeks to understand what are the political determinants of asylum granting. Therefore, one question this study seeks to investigate is what drives asylum granting? If refugees are often seen as a burden, or a security or cultural threat, what motivates states to take in asylum-seekers and grant refugee status recognition? The results find support for the hypothesis that host states are more likely to grant asylum to individuals fleeing rival host states compared to non-rival host states. The results support both the literature and empirical cases that refugee status granting is affected by the foreign policy goals of states and the nationality of asylum-seekers. For example, Pakistan and Afghanistan have a difficult bilateral relationship. In 1947, Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan’s admission to the United Nations. Similar to Guinea’s leader who was keen on hosting Liberian rebels in hopes to overthrow Charles Taylor in Liberia, Pakistan has also hosted Afghan rebels fighting against the Afghan government, as well as the Mujahedeen during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Until recently, Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees. The findings of this research support the case of Pakistan, among others, in which host governments provided asylum to individuals fleeing rival states. More so, it supports the literature that finds granting refugee status is often used as a political motive to undermine enemies. The results also find support for contiguous dyads. This probably reflects the fact that many rivalries began from territorial or border disputes, and probably explains why there is no significance for non-contiguous rival states. Rival signatory host states are also more likely to grant asylum to individuals fleeing rival states. While states may meet their obligations in international law, these results show that foreign policy also matters with refugee status granting. No statistical significance was found for non-signatory rival states. The lack of statistical significance may reflect on the fact that there are not too many non-signatory, rival states globally.
### Table 4: Marginal Effects of Rivalries on RRR (expected values)

| Model     | Variable | Margins | Standard Error (Delta Method) | Z-Value | P > |z|   | 95 % Confidence Interval |
|-----------|----------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----|----|--------------------------|
| Full-Model| Rivalry  | .3480347| .0374304                      | 9.30    | 0.00|    | .2746726                 |
|           | No Rivalry| .200059 | .0032391                      | 61.76   | 0.00|    | .1937106                 |
| Signatory | Rivalry  | .3600206| .0397117                      | 9.07    | 0.00|    | .2821872                 |
|           | No Rivalry| .1951374| .0033175                      | 58.82   | 0.00|    | .1886352                 |
| Contiguous| Rivalry  | .4484361| .0416967                      | 10.75   | 0.00|    | .3667121                 |
|           | No Rivalry| .2998974| .0123916                      | 24.20   | 0.00|    | .2756103                 |

### Table 5: Marginal Effects of Rivalries on TRR (expected values)

| Model     | Variable | Margins | Standard Error (Delta Method) | Z-Value | P > |z|   | 95 % Confidence Interval |
|-----------|----------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----|----|--------------------------|
| Full-Model| Rivalry  | .3929499| .0374118                      | 10.50   | 0.00|    | .319624                  |
|           | No Rivalry| .2651509| .0033657                      | 78.78   | 0.00|    | .2585543                 |
| Signatory | Rivalry  | .4043743| .0398906                      | 10.14   | 0.00|    | .3261901                 |
|           | No Rivalry| .2626612| .0034516                      | 76.10   | 0.00|    | .2558961                 |
| Contiguous| Rivalry  | .4675594| .0417864                      | 11.19   | 0.00|    | .3856596                 |
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### 4.2.2 Alliances

Hypothesis 2: States will be more restricted in providing refugee recognition to asylum seekers from a sending state, if both states belong to an alliance compared to dyads that are not in similar pacts.

The findings in Model 1 show strong statistical significance; however, the directionality is not as anticipated. The results in Model 1 find no support for hypothesis 2. According to Table 6, when the host state is in an alliance with the sending state, refugee recognition rates increase on average by 4 percentage points. Similarly, the total recognition rates increase by 3.9 percentage points in allied dyads compared to dyads that are not in an alliance. The results in Model 2 show that refugee recognition rates increase in signatory host states that are in an alliance with the sending state. According to Table 6, when the alliance variable goes from zero to one, the estimated expected value of receiving full Convention status for asylum-seekers increases by 4.5 percentage points. The total recognition rates increase by 4.4 percentage points. In contiguous states, the estimated expected value for receiving full recognition status (Model 4) in an allied host state is 5.1 percentage points. The findings for Model 4 in Table 2 were found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval level. However, in allied, contiguous dyads the total recognition rates were found not to be significant as seen in Model 9. Table 6 shows that in non-contiguous dyads, the marginal effects of alliances increase refugee status recognition by 4.1 percentage points, and Table 7 shows that the total recognition rates increase
by 4 percentage points. Results were not significant for non-signatory host states that are allies of sending states.

The findings for rival host and sending states support the literature and empirical cases. However, the results do not find support that host states will be less likely to grant asylum to individuals fleeing allied sending states. Chapter Five will explain that the findings here support most of the results found in Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016). Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) also hypothesize that host states will be less likely to host refugees from allied sending states; however, most of their results did not find support for the argument. While statistically significant, the findings in Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) also differ in directionality. In other words, refugee hosting increased in allied host states for most of their models. One explanation for these findings may regard that individuals migrating to host states that are allies may have lower transaction costs (Moore and Shellman 2007). Similar to individuals fleeing sending states that were former colonies of the host state, allied states may have cultural or ethnic similarities, though it may not be as prominent as former colonies. This may explain why allied host states provide asylum more on average compared to non-allied host states across most of the models in this study.

Another reason for the findings may be due to the coding of the dependent variable. This study, similar to Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) and Moore and Shellman (2007), do not differentiate between alliances. As previously mentioned, non-aggression alliances were not included. However, defense, entente, and neutral alliances were pooled together. Future studies should investigate how different types of alliances may affect asylum rates. For example, defense pacts are the strongest type of commitment in the Correlates of War dataset. In this type of alliance, a state must come to the aid of another state if attacked by another party. Defense
alliances have more at stake than other types of pacts. Therefore, asylum rates may be reflected on the types of military treaties signed. Based on this line of argument, we can expect that asylum granting will be less likely in dyads that are in defense pacts compared to other pacts. The cost of joining and maintaining commitment in defense pacts are greater than other pacts; therefore, these treaties outweigh maintaining commitment to international law, and admitting that individuals leaving states from military alliances have a fear of persecution in their home states.

| Table 6: Marginal Effects of Alliances on RRR (expected values) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Model                 | Variable        | Margins         | Standard Error  | Z-Value         | P > |z| |
|                       |                 | (Delta Method)  |                 |                 |     |
| Full-Model            | Alliance        | .2376189        | .0098189        | 24.20           | 0.00 |
|                       | No Alliance     | .1957018        | .0035478        | 55.16           | 0.00 |
| Signatory            | Alliance        | .2354762        | .0104753        | 22.48           | 0.00 |
|                       | No Alliance     | .1902753        | .0036407        | 52.26           | 0.00 |
| Contiguous           | Alliance        | .3378483        | .0165759        | 20.38           | 0.00 |
|                       | No Alliance     | .2863871        | .0163373        | 17.53           | 0.00 |
| Non-Contiguous       | Alliance        | .2287076        | .0115239        | 19.85           | 0.00 |
|                       | No Alliance     | .1879556        | .0035387        | 53.11           | 0.00 |
Table 7: Marginal Effects of Alliances on TRR (expected values)

| Model            | Variable | Margins | Standard Error (Delta Method) | Z-Value | P > |z| | 95% Confidence Interval |
|------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----|---|-------------------------|
| Full-Model       | Alliance | 0.3001263 | 0.0102767                    | 29.20   | 0.000 |   | 0.2799843 - 0.3202682    |
|                  | No Alliance | 0.2613351 | 0.0036578                    | 71.45   | 0.000 |   | 0.254166 - 0.254166      |
| Signatory        | Alliance | 0.3018226 | 0.0108151                    | 27.91   | 0.000 |   | 0.2806254 - 0.2806254    |
|                  | No Alliance | 0.2582162 | 0.003747                     | 68.91   | 0.000 |   | 0.2685042 - 0.2685042    |
| Non-Contiguous   | Alliance | 0.2945319 | 0.0120925                    | 24.36   | 0.000 |   | 0.2708311 - 0.3182327    |
|                  | No Alliance | 0.2548784 | 0.0036766                    | 0.000   | 0.000 |   | 0.247625 - 0.2620843     |

4.2.3 Trade

Hypothesis 3A: As trade increases between the receiving and sending state, the receiving state will be more resistant in providing asylum to individuals from the sending state.

Hypothesis 3B: Countries that trade with one another will be less likely to grant asylum to individuals from the sending state, compared to dyads that do not trade with one another.

There is strong, statistical significance for hypothesis 3A that posits as trade increases between the receiving and sending state, the receiving state will be more resistant in providing asylum to individuals from the sending state. The findings in Model 1 in Table 2 show that full Convention status rates decrease as bilateral trade increases. Similarly, asylum rates for full and other protection status decrease as trade increases (Table 3, Model 6). For signatory states, as seen in Model 2, results find support for hypothesis 3A, as well as for total recognition rates (Table 3, Model 7). Level of trade decreases refugee recognition rates in contiguous states (Table 3, Model 7).
2, Model 4) as well as for total recognition rates (Table 3, Model 9). Levels of trade also decrease refugee status recognition rates in states that are non-contiguous (Table 2, Model 5), and similarly decrease as total recognition rates increase (Table 3, Model 10).

As mentioned at the onset of the chapter, marginal effects are best explained with factor variables, such as with binary variables. However, for continuous variables, the marginal effects are best visualized through plots (Royston 2013). Figures 5 and 6 below show the marginal effects for the results. According to these figures, the greatest effects are seen with contiguous dyads. Detailed explanations of these results will be further explained in Chapter 5. However, none of the models find support for hypothesis 3B. The findings do not support the hypothesis that dyads that trade with one another will be less likely to grant asylum compared to dyads that do not trade with one another.

The effect seen in Figure 5(c) is probably the result of contiguous states being more likely to trade with one another. As mentioned, individuals normally migrate first to host states within reach. Over increases in trade decrease refugee recognition slightly. While the results support both empirical cases and literature that claim states wish to preserve commercial interests, studies should continue to analyze if commercial interests affect asylum rates given that not much research investigates the relationship between trade and asylum granting. The model for non-signatory states is not significant. Many non-signatory states are authoritarian or politically unstable. Many of these states have major trading partner such as the United States or China. Therefore, the lack of statistical significance may be due to the fact that many individuals do not apply for asylum in non-signatory states, especially from major trading partners.
Figure 5

Log of Bilateral Trade and Refugee Recognition Rates

(a) Base Model
(b) Signatory Host States Only

(c) Contiguous Dyads
(d) Non-Contiguous Dyads

Figure 6

Bilateral Trade and Total Recognition Rates

(a) Base Model
(b) Signatory Host State

(c) Contiguous Dyads
(d) Non-Contiguous Dyads
4.3 Domestic Politics: Regime-Type
4.3.1 Autocracies

Hypothesis 4A: Autocracies are more likely than non-autocracies to grant asylum.

The results find statistical significance, but no support for hypothesis 4A with the exception of non-signatory states. Table 8 shows that full Convention recognition falls by 6.89 percentage points in autocracies compared to non-autocratic states. Recognition rates for full status and other protection in Table 9 decrease by 5.3 percentage points compared non-autocracies. In autocracies that are signatory states, refugee recognition rates fall by 10.5 percentage points, and total recognition rates fall by 9.8 percentage points. However, the results found support for the model that isolates non-signatory host states. For non-signatory states, refugee status recognition rates increase by 16.3 percentage points, and total recognition rates increase by 16.4 percentage points. As seen in Model 5, when autocracies go from zero to one, full Convention status decreases by 7.7 percentage points in non-contiguous dyads. Refugee recognition status and other forms of protection decrease in autocracies compared to non-autocracies by 6.2 percentage points in non-contiguous dyads. No statistical significance was found for contiguous states.

Most of the results went opposite to what was expected, which may imply that autocracies are less likely to comply with international law. This is further emphasized in the signatory model where signatory, autocratic states grant asylum about ten percentage points on average less than non-autocratic signatory states. However, the findings show that non-signatory states grant asylum more on average than non-signatory, non-autocratic states. Most non-signatory, autocratic states are Gulf Arab states. Most of these states have small refugee populations, and most asylum-seekers apply from other Gulf States or from Africa. This may explain why non-signatory autocratic states grant refugee status recognition more than non-
autocratic, non-signatory states. Many individuals especially from other nations do not apply for asylum in these states. The exceptions were the non-signatory states of Libya and Syria. While Libya and Syria are not in the Gulf, theses states have normally hosted large refugee populations until recently. In the case of Libya, the government probably became more prone to host refugees overall when it began to reintegrate itself in the international community around 2006-2007. More so, Italy and the European Union provided monetary incentives for Libya to host refugees, and prevent migrants from leaving Libya to enter the European Union. Since Qaddafi’s fall, Libya went from a mainly refugee hosting nation to a migration transit state.

| Model           | Variable          | Margins | Standard Error (Delta Method) | Z-Value | P > |z| | 95 % Confidence Interval |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Full-Model      | Autocracy         | .1370   | .0139                         | 9.86    | 0.00|   | .097846                 |
|                 | Non-Autocracy     | .2059   | .0034                         | 60.01   | 0.00|   | .199253                 |
| Signatory       | Autocracy         | .0980   | .0116                         | 8.48    | 0.00|   | .075366                 |
|                 | Non-Autocracy     | .2031   | .0035                         | 58.25   | 0.00|   | .196324                 |
| Non-Signatory   | Autocracy         | .4361   | .0556                         | 7.85    | 0.00|   | .327204                 |
|                 | Non-Autocracy     | .2727   | .0149                         | 18.24   | 0.00|   | .243393                 |
| Non-Contiguous  | Autocracy         | .1187   | .0143                         | 8.33    | 0.00|   | .090741                 |
|                 | Non-Autocracy     | .1962   | .0035                         | 56.02   | 0.00|   | .189322                 |
| Model       | Variable       | Margins | Standard Error (Delta Method) | Z-Value | P > |z| | 95 % Confidence Interval |
|-------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----|---|--------------------------|
| Full-Model  | Autocracy      | .2159169| .0181649                      | 11.89   | 0.000 |   | .1803144 - .2515194      |
|             | Non-Autocracy  | .2689493| .003515                       | 76.51   | 0.000 |   | .2620599 - .2758386      |
| Signatory   | Autocracy      | .1704834| .0171553                      | 9.94    | 0.000 |   | .1368596 - .2041072      |
|             | Non-Autocracy  | .268254 | .0035836                      | 74.86   | 0.000 |   | .2612302 - .2752777      |
| Non-Signatory| Autocracy     | .4598822| .0545182                      | 8.44    | 0.000 |   | .3530285 - .5667359      |
|             | Non-Autocracy  | .2957708| .0154664                      | 19.12   | 0.000 |   | .2654572 - .3260843      |
| Non-Contiguous| Autocracy   | .1991723| .0199461                      | 9.99    | 0.000 |   | .1600786 - .2382659      |
|             | Non-Autocracy  | .2609993| .0036186                      | 72.13   | 0.000 |   | .2539069 - .2680916      |

### 4.3.2 Democracies

Hypothesis 4B: Democracies are less likely than non-democracies to grant asylum.

The unrestricted model (Model 1, Table 2) finds no support in that democracies grant refugee status less compared to non-democracies. For democracies that are signatory states, the results show that as the binary variable goes from zero to one, full refugee recognition increases by 4.2 percentage points. These results were found to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval. For democratic signatory states, recognition rates for full status and other forms of protection increase by 2.2 percentage points. However, according to Table 2, Model 3, refugee status recognition rates decrease in democracies that are not signatory states. These results were found to be significant at the 95% confidence level. Table 10 demonstrates that
individuals receiving refugee recognition decrease by 9.1 percentage points in non-signatory states. When democracies go from zero to one, refugee status and other forms of protection decrease by 8.5 percentage points. Results were not significant for contiguous dyads and non-contiguous states. Overall, the results for this hypothesis did not find strong support for democracies granting asylum less than non-democracies.

Democratic signatory states granted refugee status recognition more than non-democratic signatory states by about four percentage points. However, given that there are more democracies in the world compared to other regimes, and that the majority of states around the world are signatory states, these numbers should be greater. Therefore, other factors affect refugee status recognition. While some states do adhere to international law, based on these numbers, host states are persuaded (or not) by other influences. Democratic non-signatory states grant asylum on average less that non-democratic states, which seems to align with the findings in the previous section that autocratic, non-signatory states grant asylum more on average than non-autocratic, non-signatory states. Most democratic, non-signatory states are found in Asia. These states are more likely to grant asylum to other Asian states, but are less likely to grant asylum to other nationalities, such as African asylum-seekers. More so, some Asian states have been accused of not providing asylum to individuals that qualify, and exploiting migrants for labor.
Hypothesis 4C: As levels of democratization increase in a state, asylum granting in that state will decrease.

As seen on Section 4.2.3 on trade, democratization is also a continuous variable. Therefore, Figure 7 and 8 plot the marginal effects for hypothesis 4C. The unrestricted model (Model 1) finds support for hypothesis 4C. For signatory states, as democratization increases, refugee status recognition decreases. Similar results were found for total recognition rates as seen in Figure 7(a); however, the results for the total recognition rates and democratization have
wide confidence level margins, and should be analyzed cautiously. Opposite results were found for non-signatory states. As levels of democratization increases, refugee recognition rates, as well as total recognition rates, for non-signatory states slightly increase. No statistical significance was found for contiguous dyads. However, increases in democratization decrease refugee status rates in non-contiguous dyads. Yet, the results were not significant for non-contiguous dyads for full and other forms of protection.

The results for most of the models support the literature and case studies that state as countries began to democratize, such as in the case of African states, host states became less willing to host refugees. After democratization, government leaders and elites have to be more attuned to voters’ and public opinions. Voters may often view migration, both voluntary and forced, as a threat. Therefore, voters may be less likely to vote for leaders who are more pro-immigration. As in the case of Kenya, the President of Kenya exploited Kenyan grievances towards refugees, such as the Somalis, during elections. However, these results seem somewhat contradictory given the results seen in the previous section. As Chapter Five explains, this may be due to the coding of the regime-type variables.
**Figure 7**

Democratization and Refugee Recognition Rates

(a) Base Model

(b) Signatory Host States

(c) Non-Contiguous Dyads

(d) Non-Signatory States

**Figure 8**

Democratization and Total Recognition Rates

(a) Signatory States

(b) Non-Signatory States
4.3.4 Domestic Politics: Year of National Elections

Hypothesis 5: In the year of a national or executive election, overall asylum rates will be lower compared to non-election years.

The unrestricted sample finds minimal support for hypothesis 5, and no support in Model 6 for total recognition rates. In Model 2, when national elections are held in signatory host states, refugee recognition decreases by 1.1 percentage points compared to non-election years. In non-contiguous dyads (Model 5), refugee recognition rates fall by 1.2 percentage points. The results were not statistically significant for non-signatory states and for contiguous dyads. Immigration was a salient issue in the recent UK referendum, in the presidential election of the United States, and across elections throughout the European Union. However, it often takes some time for asylum policies to pass after national elections. This may explain why the results were only significantly minor during election years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 12: Marginal Effects of Elections on RRR (expected values)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signatory Year of Nat. Elections Held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No nat. elections held that year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Contiguous Year of Nat. Elections Held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No nat. elections held that year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Control Variables

As expected, the full model for refugee recognition rates (Model 1) found strong support for asylum granting if asylum-seekers come from a sending state experiencing civil conflict, and
from states experiencing political terror. Refugee rates are also statistically significant and increase in contiguous dyads. Full Convention status decreases in countries when refugee populations per capita increase, and in host states with more borders. Asylum also increases in host states with a greater GDP difference from the sending state. Total recognition rates increase (Model 6) if the sending state is experiencing civil conflict, high levels of terror, and in contiguous dyads. It decreases with increases in borders. The logged GDP was found to be not strongly statistically significant.

In signatory states, refugee status rates (Model 2), decrease in host states with greater refugee populations. Refugee status recognition is granted more when asylum seekers come from states with political terror. Asylum decreases in states with more borders, but increases in contiguous states. In Model 7 for signatory host states, refugee status and other forms of protection increases in sending states experiencing political terror and in contiguous states. Total recognition rates decrease as the number of borders increase. In Model 3 for non-signatory states, refugee recognition rates increase if civil conflict is experienced in the sending states, if political terror is in the sending state, for contiguous states, and if the GDP is in the host state is greater compared to the sending state. In Model 8 for non-signatory states total recognition rates increase for sending states in conflict, for those with political terror, in contiguous states, and if the GDP is greater in host states.

For contiguous dyads as seen in Model 4 the only statistically significant variables regard political terror in the sending state, the logged GDP per capita, and if the host state is a signatory state. As political terror increases, refugee recognition rates increase. Similarly, as the GDP gap widens between the sending and host states, refugee recognition rates increase. Asylum rates decrease in signatory, contiguous states. Similar results were found for these control variables
with the total recognition rates in Model 9. However, there is no significance for signatory states. In Model 5 for non-contiguous dyads if the sending state is experiencing civil conflict, then refugee status rates increase. The greater the log of refugees per capital, the less asylum is granted. Refugee status recognition increases if the sending state is experiencing political terror. However, refugee status rates decrease as the number of borders increase. The greater the GDP between the host and sending state, full Convention status increases. In Model 10 with non-contiguous dyads and total recognition rates, these rates increase if the host state is experiencing civil conflict, and has political terror. Total recognition rates increase if the host state is a signatory state, but it is only significant at the 90% confidence interval. At the 95% confidence interval, the more refugees per capita in the host state, total refugee recognition rates decrease. As the number of borders increases, the total recognition rates decrease.

4.5 Conclusion

The results find strong support for hypothesis 1, which claims that rival states provide refugee status rates more than non-rival dyads. Similarly, the results find support for hypothesis 3A. As trade increases in a dyad, refugee status rates decrease. Results also found support for hypothesis 4C, which states that as democratization increases, refugee status rates decrease. However, results did not support the hypotheses for regime-types. For the most part, states provide more refugee status than the combined status. However, in non-signatory autocratic states, refugee rates increase. But in democratic, non-signatory states refugee status rates decrease. Some of the results for the hypotheses are conflicting. For example, while most of the models did not find support that democracies are less likely than non-democracies to grant asylum, the results show that as democratization (Polity 2 scores) increase, refugee status rates decrease. The interpretations of these findings are further described in Chapter 5.
Table 13: Summary of Findings for Refugee Recognition Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model [ # ]</th>
<th>Support?</th>
<th>Statistical Significance</th>
<th>Marginal Effects</th>
<th>TRR =</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Rivals Base [1]</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14.8 pp (increase)</td>
<td>12.8 pp (increase)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivals Signatory [2]</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.4 pp (increase)</td>
<td>14.1 pp (increase)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivals Contiguous [4]</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14.8 pp (increase)</td>
<td>11.9 pp (increase)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivals Non-Signatory [3]</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivals Non-Contiguous[5]</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances Base [1]</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>3.9 pp (increase)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>4.5 pp (increase)</td>
<td>4.4 pp (increase)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances Contiguous [4]</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5.1. pp (increase)</td>
<td>(not significant)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Alliances Non-Contiguous[5]</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>4 pp (increase)</td>
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<td>decrease</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>decrease</td>
<td>decrease</td>
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<td>decrease</td>
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<td>Trade Exchange No support/significance for any model</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>16.4 pp (increase)</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>___</td>
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<td>Democracies</td>
<td>Base [1]</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Increase</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Contiguous [4]</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Elections</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.1 pp (decrease)</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
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<td>Elections</td>
<td>Non-contiguous [5]</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.2 pp (decrease)</td>
<td>_</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>Base [1]</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, very minimal</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Non-Signatory [3]</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>
Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

What explains the variations in refugee status granting among states? How is refugee status determined? The purpose of the study is to analyze if politics affect refugee status granting to asylum-seekers. In order to accomplish this goal, the research provides quantitative analyses across all temporal and spatial cases possible. This study finds that rival host states grant refugee status recognition rates greater than non-rival host states. It also finds that asylum rates decrease as bilateral trade increases. Most of the models show that the more democratic a state becomes, the less asylum is granted. However, the results also find that democracies in general grant asylum slightly more than non-democracies, and autocracies grant asylum less compared to non-autocracies. While the results did not find support for all hypotheses, this study concludes that on average, politics and commercial relations between states affect refugee recognition rates. It supports the conclusions drawn by Betts (2013) that elite interests drive state responses to forced migrants. Equally, it supports the findings of Neumayer (2005a) and Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004) that origin-specific recognition rates vary across host states.

This chapter discusses the results and findings from Chapter Four in more detail. Some of the hypotheses found no support. Some of these hypotheses found statistical significance, but contrary to what was expected. However, this study finds that on most occasions, state interests drive or deny compliance. Chapter Five begins with the interpretation of the findings based on the hypotheses. It discusses possible explanations of the results. Some of these results seem inconsistent, particularly with the domestic politics variables. The chapter then proceeds to comment on signatory host states. While the majority of states are signatories of the 1951 and the 1967 Protocol, most of the results find that even after controlling for signatory states,
political and economic relations affect refugee status granting. This suggests that while states adhere to their international obligations, political motives also affect refugee status granting. Finally, the significance of the study and implications for future research are described.

5.2 Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

5.2.1 Bilateral Relations: Rivals

One of the motivations of this study is to understand what drives asylum granting. Often times, refugees are seen as a burden on the host state. Therefore, it is imperative to inquire what motivates states to grant refugee status to asylum-seekers. Section 2.4 describes the role of bilateral relations between the asylum and sending states, and its effect on asylum granting. The foreign policy goals of countries impact refugee recognition rates for asylum-seekers. Refugee status granting acknowledges the individual cannot live safely in his or her country of origin. Granting asylum may create unfavorable relations with the sending state. However, rivals states often use such opportunities to weaken the opposition state.

Interstate rivalry is often investigated within international relations literature, especially in research revolving around conflict. However, most international relations research has ignored the role that rivalries play with refugee hosting and asylum granting. With the exception of the work by Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016), little to no studies have incorporated a large-N analysis to date. Despite this, most empirical cases find support for the role that rivalries play in accepting asylum-seekers. Chapter Two commented on the rivalry between Lansana Conté of Guinea, Liberia’s Charles Taylor, and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone. Lansana Conté was keen on hosting refugees fleeing Liberia and Sierra Leone. Moreover, Guinea provided the Liberian rebels fighting against Charles Taylor a safe haven in its refugee camps. In a similar fashion, the United States and other Western states were more likely to grant asylum to
those fleeing rival Communist states during the Cold War. For example, the Reagan administration showed partiality to those fleeing the leftist governments of Cuba and Nicaragua compared to those fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, and Haiti (Rosenblum and Salehyan 2004, 684). Despite the fact that many of these individuals were forced to flee for more or less the same reasons, the United States gave different preferences for refugee status granting depending on the nationalities of asylum-seekers. A 1982 memo from the Central American Refugee Center in Washington, quoted in Teitelbaum (1984, 439), stated the United States was the only nation who did not recognize El Salvadorians as legal refugees. The memo claimed there were two reasons for doing so. First, the United States government supported the El Salvadorian regime, and did not want to communicate to the international community that the El Salvadorian government engaged in human rights abuses (Teitelbaum 1984, 439). Second, the memo stated American refusal to provide refugee recognition to El Salvadorian asylum-seekers was also done in order to suppress possible opposition to American foreign policy in El Salvador. In other words, undocumented individuals would be less likely to speak up against the United States’ role in El Salvador’s politics (Teitelbaum 1984, 439). Acknowledging that individuals have a well-founded fear of persecution also accepts that these individuals have a moral right to oppose their home state’s regime (Weiner 1992, 106). This may also jeopardize relations between states. Therefore, it was first hypothesized that receiving states will grant asylum to individuals fleeing rival states compared to non-rival states. The hypothesis is supported in the full model, among contiguous dyads, and among host states that were signatories of the 1951 Convention. In these models, full recognition rates were greater than total recognition rates (often by three or more percentage points), suggesting that rival states indeed offer greater levels of refugee status compared to non-rival states. The findings suggest that interstate rivalry motivates states to grant
refugee status to these asylum seekers. The full base model shows that individuals receiving asylum increases by 14.8 percentage points in rival dyads compared to non-rivals. The results support the findings in Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016), and align with case studies that claim states use refugees to undermine rival states.

The findings for contiguous dyads are not surprising, given that many conflicts among states are due to border issues. Similar to the base model, refugee status increases by 14.8 percentage points in rival contiguous dyads. Refugees also tend to migrate to neighboring states first (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016; Moore and Shellman 2007), which can thus increase rivalry among contiguous dyads. For example, Figure 4 in Section 2.2 shows Turkey hosted the majority of refugees in 2015. As Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) mention, Turkey has been particularly outspoken against the Syrian regime. Specifically, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has vocally expressed discontent with Bashar al-Assad. Similarly, in Eastern Africa, a recent article in The Christian Science Monitor mentions Ethiopia’s generous hosting of refugees from its border rival, Eritrea (Jeffery 2017). The article discusses that cultural and religious similarities may explain Ethiopia’s generosity, but Ethiopia also believes that hosting Eritrean refugees will enhance regional stability. While this claim is not necessarily false, there may be another strategic reason, which is to undermine the rival Eritrean regime. Ethiopia and Eritrea fought against one another in a border war between 1998 and 2000. Since then, their bilateral relations have been adversarial. Ethiopia has given refuge to Eritrean opposition groups hoping to topple Eritrea’s leader, Isaias Afwerki. Similarly, Ethiopia consistently accused Eritrea of supporting Ethiopian rebels (Al Jazeera 2012). While it is possible that Ethiopia’s hosting of Eritrea refugees are based on altruism, given their history and hosting of rebels, it is somewhat questionable. Other reasons may influence Ethiopia’s hosting of Eritrean refugees.
Signatory rival states grant refugee status recognition more compared to non-rival signatory host states by 16.4 percentage points. The results are not significant in non-signatory host states. One reason for this explanation may be due to the fact that most states are signatories of the refugee convention. Also, many non-signatories do not have many rivals. However, the results are also not significant in non-contiguous dyads. This is in contrast to the recent findings from Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016)’s study. Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) find refugee population numbers increase in rival host states for both contiguous and non-contiguous dyads. Their study analyzes the variables of interests between 1951 and 2008; therefore, it encompasses a larger temporal space. Currently, there are few rivals occurring between non-contiguous states. Most of these rival symmetries are between major powers, or with one minor and one major power. Many rival states are found within geographical proximity to one another. Most of the empirical evidences suggested in Chapter Two claims that rivals are more likely to host refugees from adversary states. However, many of these states share a border. Territorial disputes often lead to conflict (Huth 2000). While it seems somewhat optimistic to suggest that signatory host states grant asylum to asylum-seekers from rival states, the protection rights for these refugees may be neglected. This is further explained below in Section 5.3, which provides a commentary on signatory host states.

Refugees increasingly became manipulated between superpowers during the Cold War in order to enhance state interests. As thousands, and sometimes millions, of individuals fled to escape violence and persecution, these individuals were often manipulated as a result of the geopolitics between super and regional powers (Stedman and Tanner 2003). Currently, refugees and other migrants are also manipulated due to the bilateral relations between the sending and host states. In the case of Angola, Congolese migrants are constantly deported in waves back to
the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Betts 2013). Many Congolese also suffer extreme human rights abuses in Angola. Most Congolese in Angola support the Angolan party, União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), the opposition party to Angola’s ruling party since 1975, Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola – Partido do Trabalho (MPLA). The treatment of Congolese migrants in Angola portrays that even today, incentives and state interests affect how host states treat forced migrants. The results from this study find support for the role that host states play in granting refugee status recognition to asylum-seekers from rival states for current, post-Cold War years. This suggests that rivalries still influence asylum granting. While refugees may be perceived as a burden on the host state, states are willing to grant refugee status recognition to asylum-seekers and bare the costs of doing so if it may potentially undermine their rivals.

5.2.2 Bilateral Relations: Alliances

States are more likely to grant asylum to asylum-seekers from adversarial countries, because the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. In a similar line of logic, the second hypothesis suggests that states will be more restricted in providing refugee recognition to asylum-seekers from a sending state, if both states belong to an alliance compared to dyads that are not in similar pacts. First, host states in a similar alliance with the sending state may share an affinity towards the sending state’s government. Second, Section 2.4.2 explains that states often endure costs when they join military alliances. If there were no costs to joining an alliance, states would do so more freely (Morrow 2000, 65). When states join an alliance, they may lose a part of their autonomy when they do so. If states do not uphold their part of the treaty, such as refusing to intervene when another state in the alliance is attacked, these states will undergo large, reputational costs. Similar to rival dyads, with the exception of Moorthy and Brathwaite
(2016), most forced migration studies overlook the role that alliances have with accepting or denying asylum-seekers.

Chapter Four illustrates that the research finds statistical significance across most models for refugee recognition rates, but no significance was found for host states that are non-signatories. However, the directionality of the findings was not as expected. The results suggest that refugee status actually increases among alliances. The expected value for alliances granting full refugee status compared to non-alliances were quite low, around 4 – 5 percentage points, compared to 14 – 16 percentage points for rivals versus non-rivals. The results in this study do not currently support empirical cases that claim asylum seekers from allied states have been denied asylum. The results find that refugee status recognition increases by 4 percentage points in the base model and in non-contiguous dyads. In signatory host states, refugee recognition rates increase by 4.5 percentage points. Refugee recognition rates increase by 5.1 percentage points in contiguous dyads.

The outcomes of this research also align with most of the findings of Moorthy and Brathwaite’s study. Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) find that, contrary to their expectations, refugee stock numbers increase among dyads that are alliances with the exception of contiguous dyads. In contiguous allied dyads, refugee stock numbers actually decrease in their model. Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) claim one explanation for this regards that there may be “less political opposition to refugees originating from distant allied states” (13). Also, host states may be able to turn individuals more efficiently at the border compared to those fleeing from non-contiguous states (Moorthy and Brathwaite 2016, 14). However, the findings in this research overall do not support Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016)’s findings that allied, contiguous dyads
are more likely to have less refugees. This research found that refugee recognition rates in contiguous dyads increase by 5 percentage points.

One explanation for the different findings with contiguous dyads in this research compared to Moorthy and Brathwaite’s study may regard the use of different dependent variables. The use of the refugee stock variables in their study may be capturing the effect of individuals being turned away at the border in allied states. However, the refugee recognition rates regard the rate of successful decisions for those who applied for asylum. Therefore, one explanation may be that denying asylum is more difficult than denying individuals entry into the border. States can prevent individuals from entering their borders. When an individual applies for asylum, his or her application must be reviewed. Depending on the host state, asylum applications often go through multiple channels. Therefore, while asylum officers and other workers can deny asylum, it may be slightly more difficult to do so compared to denying an individual entry through a border. More so, UNHCR’s refugee stock variables claim the individual is a refugee, or in “refugee like-situations,” which excludes asylum-seekers. In other words, if the individual can only apply for asylum in the host state, denying he or she entry into the country will prevent the individual from applying for asylum in the first place. (In the case of countries like the United States, individuals can apply for asylum in their host country or in the United States. Therefore, this is assuming that the individual did not apply for asylum once the individual left his or her country of origin). Given that most forced migrants flee to bordering states, this may explain why contiguous allies grant asylum more than the other models, and why the findings do not align with Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016)’s results that refugee stock variables decrease in allied, contiguous states.
Another explanation may be that the number of applicants applying for asylum is greater in contiguous host states compared to non-contiguous states. As previously mentioned, individuals often flee to neighboring states. Individuals that escape to states that are further in terms of mileage have to spend more money in transit, buying multiple passports, and other expenses. The results in this research find that refugee status recognition rates increase about ten percentage points more on average in contiguous dyads compared to non-contiguous dyads may be capturing the fact that there might be more applications on average in contiguous host states than non-contiguous states.

With regards to the overall findings, another explanation provided by Moorthy and Braithwaite regards these conclusions “may be capturing broader migration patterns” (14). For example, the authors claim that increases in the refugee variable for non-contiguous states may overlap with the fact that refugees will migrate to popular Western state destinations. In fact, most of the models in this study found that asylum increases in host states with greater GDP differences from the sending state.

Moore and Shellman (2007) also explored why refugees seek asylum in certain countries over others. They analyzed if dyadic military alliances increase or decrease refugee flows into the host state. They argue that military alliances can either attract or repel refugees. On the one hand, alliances can repel refugee flows from allied sending states given their possible affinity for the sending state’s regime. On the other hand, allied host states may attract refugees to seek asylum there, due to low transaction costs and familiarity with the host state (similar to states with colonial ties, but not as pronounced) (Moore and Shellman 2007, 817). Their findings suggest that host states in a military alliance with the sending state slightly decrease the number of refugees from allied states. However, the base model in this study and the complete model in
Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) do not align with Moore and Shellman (2007)’s results regarding allied dyads. This suggests that the findings with rival and allied dyads warrant further analysis.

Chapter Three explains the complications revolving around use of the refugee stock variables, and why the use of rates better tests the hypotheses for this research. The differences between the findings in this study and the recent study by Moorthy and Braithwaite (2016) suggest that different uses of different dependent variables will yield to diverse results. Therefore, future studies should continue to analyze how allies and rivals affect asylum rates. Furthermore, the significance of alliances should also be studied. Neither this study, nor Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016), differentiate between the different types of alliances. However, both this study and Moorthy and Brathwaite (2016) exclude non-aggression pacts, as mentioned in Chapter Three. Future studies should differentiate between the types of military treaties signed between the host and sending states. For example, in the Correlates of War Formal Alliances Dataset, there are four kinds of commitments—defense, neutrality, non-aggression, and entente. The defense pact is the highest type of commitment where allies are committed to come to the aid of another member state if attacked. In entente pacts, members must consult with one another in times of crisis. Neutral and non-aggression pacts mean member states pledge to remain neutral or withhold force. Therefore, future studies should explore how specific types of commitments affect asylum granting. If, as empirical evidence suggests, host states in alliances do not want to jeopardize their pacts with the sending states, then future studies should examine how different kinds of pacts affect asylum granting. For example, in exploring militarized dispute initiations, Leeds (2003) finds that the type of alliance commitment will affect whether militarized disputes will occur. Specifically, she finds that defense pacts are less likely to initiate disputes, while neutral and offensive pacts make militarized disputes more
likely. In other words, the likelihood of militarized disputes between two states depends on the type of commitment and the kind of treaty signed between the dyad. The specific content of the treaty determines the probability of conflict. In a similar fashion, the type of treaties signed could explain whether asylum granting will be more or less likely. If defense pacts are the greatest type of commitment, then perchance, dyads that have signed these types of treaties have more at stake, which may not be limited to studies on militarized disputes. Therefore, it should be expected that host states that signed this particular agreement will be less likely to grant asylum to individuals from the sending state, compared to neutral and entente pacts. However, overall, the findings suggest that rival dyads grant asylum more than non-rival dyads by double-digit percentage points. The percentage points for these findings exceeded the findings for alliances that granted asylum 5 percentage points more on average than non-allied dyads. Therefore, future studies should also continue to examine the role that rivalries and alliances play in asylum granting.

5.2.3 Bilateral Relations: Trade

Based on the literature in Section 2.4.3, it is hypothesized that states that trade with one another will grant asylum less compared to dyads that do not trade with one another. It was also hypothesized that increases in bilateral trade will decrease refugee status recognition rates. States normally want to preserve their economic ties with other states. The opportunity costs of trade are often analyzed within the international conflict literature. As Section 2.4.3 explains, the economic benefits that states gain from trading with other states increases the costs of engaging in conflict. Bilateral trade may also increase the costs of granting asylum to forced migrants from trading partner states. Similar to alliances and rival dyads, states do not want to tarnish their reputation with the sending state by granting asylum to asylum-seekers from states with
economic interests. More so, commercial ties between states may motivate host states to prevent granting refugee status recognition to potential dissidents.

The results in Chapter Four found no support for hypothesis 3B. There is no support for the claim that countries that trade with one another will be less likely to grant asylum to individuals from the sending state, compared to dyads that do not trade with one another. Oddly, though, the results found support for hypothesis 3A that claims when bilateral trade between the host and sending states increases, asylum granting to these asylum-seekers decreases. Perhaps a reason for such conflicting results regards the exchange variable (EXCHANGE) is coded as “1” if both states trade with one another. Sometimes, the scale is tilted in commercial and economic relationships. A state may be dependent on a certain country (or countries) for goods, although this state does not export equally as much to these states. Therefore, future refugee studies should examine the amount of trade the refugee sending state imports into the host state, and how this amount affects refugee status granting. For example, if the potential host state is an import-dependent country, then perhaps the host state will be less likely to grant asylum to migrants who come from states that import heavily into the host state.

However, despite the results found with the exchange variable, Chapter Four demonstrates commercial interests between states affect refugee recognition rates. These results support the international relations literature observed in Chapter Two, which argues that trade between states normally prevents states from engaging in conflict with one another. While the dissertation does not examine conflict, it supports this set of literature insofar that it emphasizes that states often do not want to jeopardize their commercial agreements. In the case of granting asylum, states do not seek to risk their commercial interests. Therefore, as trade between two countries increase, these host states grant refugee status less to individuals from the sending
state. These results also support the international relations literature that argues trade affects the likelihood of conflict initiation insofar that states do not wish to jeopardize their commercial agreements, and thus do not engage in conflict. Similarly, states do not seek to risk their commercial interests, and thus, are less likely to grant refugee status rates to these asylum-seekers. Doing so is to admit that these individuals are being persecuted in their home state, and this may threaten commercial relations with the sending states. This variable offers promising avenues for future research.

The results also show support for the unrestricted model, for signatory host states, contiguous dyads, and for non-contiguous dyads. However, according to Figures 5c and 6c in Chapter Four, the greatest effect trade has on refugee recognition rates is among contiguous dyads, much more than non-contiguous dyads. States often trade with neighboring states. For example, Chapter Two mentions that Mexico signed a trade agreement with the Central American Northern Triangle (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala). Likewise, deportations in Mexico have risen; the majority of these deported individuals come from the Northern Triangle. As stated, forced migrants generally migrate to neighboring states. Therefore, the model may be capturing this effect. Similar effects have been found with Thailand and (what was then) Burma (now Myanmar). Hyndman (2001) argues that bilateral economic relations between Thailand and Burma affected protection for Burmese refugees in Thailand at the time of her writing. She maintains that as economic integration with Thailand progressed, protection for Burmese refugees became more negotiable (Hyndman 2001, 39). For many years, the Burmese suffered human rights abuses, and are either internally displaced, or have fled to other nations, such as to surrounding Asian states. At the time of Hyndman’s article, Thailand was Burma’s main investor (currently it is China). Hyndman claims that Thai investment in Burma declined in
1995 after the Burmese government accused Thailand of hosting Burmese dissidents. When relations began to improve around 1997, the Thai government anxiously sought to rid Burmese refugees around its border after infrastructure plans were made with Burma (Hyndman 2001, 43).

These results also support the model analyzing only signatory host states. While the effects are not as strong, the results showed a consistent decline that as trade increased, refugee status decreased. This is cause for concern, because the results propose that commercial interests affect refugee status granting even for states that signed the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol. As mentioned earlier, with the exception of Rosenblum and Salehyan (2004), studies have not thoroughly examined how bilateral trade affects asylum granting. Therefore, future research should continue to examine how commercial interests affect asylum granting, in particular with regards to bilateral relations where the host state is import-dependent. Hyndman (2001) stresses that economic cooperation between states not only changes the meaning and values of political borders, but also the meaning and values of migrants (39). Therefore, refugee studies and forced migration research should continue to examine how commercial interests between states affect refugee recognition rates.

5.2.4 Regime-Type: Autocracies

Although refugees may be viewed as a burden in the host state, government elites in autocratic states may use refugee populations in order to enhance state interests without the constraints of routine elections and voters. For example, it was mentioned that autocracies must often establish credibility with the international community. Thus, hosting refugees can allow autocratic states to improve their reputation within the international sphere. It was hypothesized that autocracies will grant refugee status to asylum-seekers more than non-autocratic regimes.
The findings did not support the hypothesis. Autocracies provide refugee status recognition less on average compared to non-autocracies. In the unrestricted base model, refugee status recognition falls by almost 7 percentage points compared to non-autocracies. However, in the same model, refugee status and other forms of protection falls by less than 5 percentage points compared to non-autocracies. Therefore, one explanation could be that autocratic states compared to non-autocratic countries may be providing other forms of lesser protection in lieu of full Convention status.

However, the findings for autocratic regimes and non-autocratic regimes are particularly interesting when we compare the results for signatory states and non-signatory states. In autocratic states that are signatories of the Convention, refugee status recognition rates fall by 10.5 percentage points on average. However, in non-signatory states refugee status rates increase by 16 percentage points compared to non-autocratic states. The hypothesis is supported in the model for non-signatory host states. Given these findings, these numbers were further examined. As noted before, because of the limitations of the number of years used, there are not too many autocratic regimes in the world. Most of these regimes are found in the Middle East, particularly in the Arabian Gulf States. Other autocracies are found in Asia and in Africa.

In terms of the number of autocratic states, about half of autocracies in the dataset were non-signatory states and about half were signatory states. With the exception of Cuba, Laos, and Uzbekistan, most non-signatory, autocratic states are found in the Arabian Gulf. Cuba hosts a small refugee population, averaging less than 10 refugees per every 100,000 inhabitants. More so, not too many individuals apply for asylum in Cuba. However, most individuals applying for asylum arrive from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and currently Syria. Most of these individuals were recognized as refugees. Libya is also a non-signatory, autocratic state (coded as such until 2011).
that hosts around 176 refugees per 100,000 inhabitants between 2000 and 2013. Most individuals seeking asylum in Libya originate from the African continent. Most of these asylum-seekers originate from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Chad, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Iraq. There are also large amounts of Eritreans applying for asylum in Libya. For the most part, asylum-seekers have been granted refugee status recognition with steady increases after 2006. In 2006, the United States removed Libya from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. According to Human Rights Watch, Libya’s reintegration into the international community quickened around 2007, though Libya still participates in grave human rights infractions (Human Rights Watch 2008). Around 2007, Libya also began to increase economic liberalization such as by allowing foreign banks to place branches in Libya (El-Amir 2007). Therefore, one explanation in the case of Libya could regard Libya’s cooperation with refugees began around the time the country reintegrated back into the international community despite not being a signatory state. However, Libya is a case that should continue to be monitored given its role during current refugee crisis. Most forced migrants cross into Libya prior to arriving in Europe. Libya is seen as the gateway to Europe. However, Libya has also been accused of hosting refugees in extremely harsh conditions. Therefore, while Libya also hosts refugees, it often comes at a price with refugees being kept in cruel conditions. Around the time Libya reintegrated into the international community, the European Union also enticed Muammar Qaddafi to begin cooperating with European governments, such as Italy, to prevent migrants from crossing into Europe. Therefore, Libya’s asylum granting might be reflective of these events. However, given that the dataset ends in 2013, these numbers do not reflect the current migrant crisis and leaves much to be missing from the story. Given Libya’s current shift to a transit state and an anocracy, research on autocratic non-signatory states should continue in order to examine if autocratic, non-signatory
states continue to grant asylum more on average compared to non-autocratic, non-signatory states.

Syria is another autocratic, non-signatory state. Between 2006 and 2011, Syria hosted well over one million refugees. Despite the gradual decline of its refugee population, in 2013 there were 4884 thousand refugees per 100,000 inhabitants in Syria (though, it is assumed these numbers have dramatically declined). While individuals applying for asylum come from many different states, the majority are from Somalia (with about over 90% of individuals receiving refugee recognition since 2007) and Iraq. Several hundred people from the Sudan have applied for asylum in Syria; however, less than 50% of Sudanese individuals receive refugee status recognition in Syria for most years in the dataset. It is not clear as to why this is the case. There is currently not much to be said with regards to Syrian and Sudanese bilateral relations. However, an article by the *New York Times* claims that the Sudan sold arms to Qatar to then distribute to Syrian rebels (Chivers and Schmitt 2013). While it may be the case that the Sudanese government wishes to overthrow the Syrian regime, this arms deal may just be reflective of the current economic crisis looming in the Sudan. However, Syria’s hesitancy with granting refugee status to Sudanese may be due to Syria’s suspicion that the Sudan desires to over throw the Syrian government. Many individuals from Iran have applied for asylum in Syria, but less than half are granted (with the exception in 2006 when 80% of Persians were granted asylum in Syria). This is unsurprising given that Iran and Syria are allies. However, Syria has been quite hospitable towards asylum-seekers from Afghanistan and African states. In fact, Syria has always been particularly generous towards Somali refugees since the 1990s. Upon closer inspection, many of Syria’s refugee population are from Iraq with numbers often reaching over one million. In 2013, about 50% of Iraqi asylum-seekers were granted asylum;
however, in previous years, the asylum rate for Iraqis averaged around 20% with the exception of 2004 where almost 60% of Iraqis received refugee status recognition. These numbers may reflect the improved bilateral relations between Iraq and Syria (where before relations were more tense). However, it should be noted that these numbers are based on the asylum-seeker database. Syria has always hosted Iraqi refugees, and was vocally opposed to the United States invasion of Iraq. Therefore, another reason why such asylum numbers seem low for Iraqi asylum-seekers may be due to the fact that Syria hosted many Iraqis, often topping over one million. Both Syria and Iraq are mostly Sunni Muslims, though, many Iraqi Shi’a also settled in Syria. While Syria may have been selective in granting asylum to certain nationalities, it has hosted many other refugee populations. However, given the current crisis in Syria, many Iraqis and other former refugees, have also fled alongside Syrians.

Repressive Gulf states host small refugee populations. In the case of Saudi Arabia, individuals from only a handful of states apply for asylum, and often the number of individuals applying for asylum in Saudi Arabia from a given origin state reaches less than 100 applicants. Most individuals who receive asylum in Saudi Arabia come from African states or other Arab nations. One explanation for why non-signatory autocracies grant asylum more than non-autocratic, non-signatories, could be that many individuals do not apply for asylum in these states. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the state’s refugee recognition rates could reflect the lack of individuals applying for asylum in the first place.

Similarly, the government of Qatar is a hereditary monarchy with Sharia law as its form of legislation. Polity IV scores Qatar as a -10, the lowest score on the scale. Qatar is neither a signatory of the 1951 Convention nor the 1967 Protocol. According to UNHCR, Qatar’s total refugee population is less than 100 individuals, with the exception of 2013 when its total refugee
population was at 130. Qatar’s population is around two million, and has a low refugee population per capita. Qatar has often granted asylum to Iraqis; however, this may soon change given their improvement in diplomatic relations with Iraq. Similar to Saudi Arabia, not too many individuals from only from a handful of states apply for asylum in Qatar. Other states in the Gulf, such as Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman also have small refugee populations. It is still unclear as to why non-signatory autocratic states grant asylum more than non-signatory, non-autocratic states. However, it could be because not too many individuals apply for asylum in autocratic states in the first place. Therefore, given the low rate of individuals applying for asylum, these states may be more likely to grant asylum. Also, most individuals only come from a handful of nations, such as surrounding Arab nations or from African states such as Somalia and other East African States. In the case of the Gulf States, most of these host states are open to hosting other Muslim refugees. Similarly, states like Syria were against the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Therefore, the Syrian government was more prone to host hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees until the recent civil war in Syria. Eritrea is also a repressive state with about 100 refugees per 100,000 inhabitants. The majority of these refugees are from Somalia and Ethiopia. Eritrea generally grants refugee status recognition, but most individuals applying for asylum in Eritrea come from a small handful of sending states.

What we can conclude from these analyses is that while autocratic, non-signatory states are more likely to grant asylum, these numbers are based upon a small handful of sending states. Moreover, most of these states are located in the Gulf, and are more likely to grant asylum to individuals from surrounding areas. This might be one explanation as to why non-signatory autocratic states are more likely to grant refugee status recognition compared to non-signatory non-autocratic states.
On the contrary, signatory autocratic states grant asylum less on average compared to signatory, non-autocratic states. The refugee recognition rates fell by an average of 10 percentage points, and the total recognition rates fell by 9.8 percentage points for autocratic states that were signatories of the refugee convention. Whereas the majority of non-signatory autocratic states are in the Gulf region, signatory autocratic states vary geographically. Belarus is a signatory state, often known as the last dictatorship in Europe. Overall, according to the dataset, Belarus contains several observations where refugee recognition rates are found at zero percent. In other cases, other forms of protection were provided instead of refugee status recognition. In Belarus, Iraqi asylum-seekers were often granted other forms of protection instead of refugee status recognition. With the exception of 2012, most of the asylum rates for Iraqis were at zero percent.

According to the same dataset, Azerbaijan was hospitable towards Afghan and Russian asylum-seekers (and often times towards Iraqis), but barely provided any asylum towards Pakistani asylum-seekers. The latter is probably due to Azerbaijan and Pakistan being alliances with generally good diplomatic relations. Azerbaijan averaged about 33 percent refugee status recognition for Iranians. Morocco was also an autocracy, and recently has been coded as an anocracy in Polity IV. However, the government of Morocco is often defined as repressive and authoritarian. Morocco is a signatory of both the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Recently, Morocco, as well as Algeria, was criticized for their refusal to aid Syrian asylum-seekers who were stranded at the Moroccan-Algerian border. Humans Rights Watch also condemned Morocco for its treatment of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa (Human Rights Watch 2014). According to UNHCR’s dataset, Morocco is more likely to grant asylum for asylum seekers from Sierra Leone and Senegal. However, in several cases, Morocco neither
granted refugee status recognition, nor complementary protection. For example, with the exception of 2012, Morocco did not grant any refugee recognition to individuals from the Gambia. Similar rates were found for individuals fleeing Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Mali, and Nigeria. While these refugee recognition rates were not found at zero percent, the numbers were quite low averaging around one percent despite hundreds of Nigerians applying for asylum in Morocco. Human rights abuses are especially well documented in Nigeria, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, and in the Gambia under Yahya Jammeh. Morocco granted asylum to those leaving the Congo and the Democratic of the Congo; however, these numbers fluctuate. Refugee recognition rates were greater in some years over others.

What we can conclude from these cases is that non-signatory autocratic states grant asylum more on average compared to non-signatory non-autocracies. However, signatory autocracies grant asylum less overall compared to signatory non-autocracies. The first case may very well reflect that not too many individuals apply for asylum in non-signatory autocratic states. As stated earlier, many of these states are Gulf Arab states. Many of these authoritarian states host small refugee populations. With the exception of Syria, many of these individuals applying for asylum in the Gulf come from predominantly Muslim majority nations. However, in the case of signatory autocracies, these states are not confined to only one geographic region. Autocratic signatory states grant refugee status recognition about 10.5 percentage points less than non-autocratic signatory states, and about 9.8 percentage points less for the combined statuses. Given these results, perhaps repressive regimes are indeed less likely to comply with international treaties. As mentioned earlier, Morocco and Algeria were both internationally condemned for keeping Syrian asylum-seekers stranded along their border in 2017. It is against Morocco’s international obligations to do so. More so, according to Human Rights Watch, two
of these individuals were in advance stages of pregnancy (Human Rights Watch 2017). The Human Rights Watch (2017) report states that such treatment of the pregnant women migrants may also be a violation of Moroccan law. Therefore, while the migration and refugee literature still debates whether democracies are more welcoming towards migrants compared to other regimes, the findings of this research conclude that the debate continues. It may also be the case that autocracies are more likely to perhaps grant lesser forms of protection compared to Convention status recognition given that signatory autocracies grant refugee status recognition less compared to other forms of protection.

Why are signatory, autocratic states less likely to adhere to the Refugee Convention? Why did these states sign the treaty in the first place? In the cases of Algeria and Morocco, Algeria signed the 1951 Convention in 1963, and the 1967 Protocol in 1967. Morocco signed the 1951 Convention in 1956 and the 1967 Protocol in 1971. Perhaps these states, as many other signatory states, did not foresee the dramatic change in forced migration patterns beginning in the 1990s. After the Cold War, many individuals were displaced. Similarly, in recent times, more and more people are becoming displaced, but also for much longer periods of time given the changes in forced migration patterns. While many individuals are forced to flee because of generalized violence and persecution, others are forced to leave because of climate change or state failure. Therefore, not only are the patterns of forced migration changing, but also the nature of forced migration. Given this, autocratic states may be less willing to adhere to the obligations set upon them by the refugee convention. Besides for reasons mentioned where migrants may often be seen as a threat to the host state, some signatory autocratic states may also not have the financial resources to host refugees. In the case of recent signatories such as Azerbaijan and Belarus, these states probably signed the refugee convention in order to maintain
some credibility within the international community. However, they often do not oblige to their commitments probably for the same reasons mentioned above.

There is no statistical significance for autocratic contiguous states; however, non-contiguous autocratic states granted asylum less overall. Given these conclusions, and the differences between the refugee recognition rates and the total recognition rates, research that focuses on complementary status granting should examine if there are generalized trends with autocracies granting lesser forms of protection. Perhaps these results will be clearer in the future as more years are available in UNHCR’s population database.

5.2.5 Regime-Type: Democracies

Given their liberal ideals, it is often assumed that democracies will provide more open-door immigration and asylum policies compared to non-democracies. However, democracies may also be equally as restricted towards immigration. Breunig, Cao, Luedtke (2012) find democracies often block immigration entry compared to autocracies. Refugees and immigration are consistently a salient issue in the current geopolitical climate in the West. Voters may view immigration and asylum granting with disapproval. They may see migration as an economic or cultural threat. Therefore, democratic leaders bare greater audience costs due to routine elections. It was hypothesized that democracies are less likely than non-democracies to grant asylum.

The results in Chapter 4 show there is no statistical significance with the unrestricted model for democratic host states. Similarly, there is no statistical significance for contiguous dyads and non-contiguous dyads. However, non-signatory democratic states grant asylum less than non-signatory, non-democratic states on average. On the contrary, for democratic signatory states, refugee status recognition increases by 4 percentage points compared to non-democracies.
Similarly, convention and other forms of protection increase by two percentage points for
democratic, signatory host states. These results seem to support the notion that democracies are
more welcoming towards migrants compared to non-democracies. However, there are more
democracies in the world compared to non-democracies, and most states are signatory states.
Therefore, increases in refugee status rates by four percentage points compared to non-
democracies are not terribly high. Support for the hypothesis is found with non-signatory host
states. In non-signatory, democratic states refugee status recognition rates decrease by 9
percentage points compared to non-democratic, non-signatory states. This is also in contrast to
non-signatory autocratic states that find refugee status recognition rates in this model actually
increase by 16 percentage points. These results were further investigated.

Most non-signatory, democratic states are found in Asia. Some of these states host
important refugee populations, with the prime example being India and the Tibetan refugee
community. However, the average rate of asylum granting falls by 9.1 percentage points on
average. While India has hosted the Tibetan government in exile, given that the country’s
population is over one billion, India’s refugee population per capital numbers are small–around
15 refugees per every 100,000 inhabitants. India’s small refugee population per capita is
probably the result of its overpopulation. However, India has also granted asylum to other
asylum-seekers such as to those from Somalia, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, and
Myanmar. Nonetheless, the international community has criticized India for its treatment of
Myanmar refugees, particularly the Rohingya, and for taking a stance of mere tolerance for these
refugees (Ramzy 2015). The Rohingya are Muslim and considered stateless in Myanmar. Many
Rohingya live in harsh conditions within the slums of Delhi (Zargar 2017). However, India has
not been too keen on granting asylum to other asylum-seekers, particularly to those from other African states.

Pakistan went from being an autocratic regime to a democratic regime beginning around 2010 in the dataset according to Polity IV. In 2010, the 18th Amendment to Pakistan’s Constitution passed, which turned Pakistan into a parliamentary republic. However, their refugee population numbers have been more or less the same, altering between 800 and over 1,000 refugees per 100,000 individuals despite their regime change. Pakistan has generally granted asylum to individuals fleeing Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq. Most of the refugees in Pakistan are from Afghanistan, toppling well over 1,000,000. Yet, these numbers recently changed. Pakistan, once one of the most generous host nations for Afghan refugees, forced hundreds of thousands of Afghans back to Afghanistan between 2016 and 2017. Many young individuals forced back to Afghanistan were actually born in Pakistan to Afghan parents. While it is unclear with regards to the motives of the recent Afghan crackdown, it may be due to the combination of Pakistan’s transition to a parliamentary system and security concerns. These security concerns became further instigated after the 2014 Peshawar school massacre, in which two Afghans also took part in the incident. As shown in Chapter Two, as of mid-2015 Pakistan has hosted most of the world’s refugees. However, given the recent events in Pakistan, we should continue to monitor Pakistan as these refugee numbers may dwindle in the future.

Nepal is also a non-signatory, democratic regime that has generally granted asylum to individuals feeling Somalia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, and Myanmar.\footnote{Nepal was coded as a democracy by Polity IV in 2000 and 2001, and again between 2006 and 2013.} However, according to the dataset, Nepal has not normally granted asylum to other states. In fact, while it has hosted refugees from the Bhutan, according to UNHCR’s dataset on asylum-seekers, Nepal barely
granted refugee status recognition to hundreds of individuals fleeing the Bhutan in recent years. Between 2000 and 2013 Nepal averaged zero percent in granting refugee status recognition to those fleeing Bhutan; however, it granted other forms of lesser protection, averaging around 88.9% between 2000 and 2013. Bhutan is known for persecuting ethnic and religious minorities, especially its Christian population.

Thailand is coded as a democracy between 2000 and 2005, and again between 2011 and 2013. The country had a political crisis between 2005 and 2006 with a coup d’État in 2006. Thailand also had a political crisis between 2013 and 2014, with another coup d’État in 2014. Although the dataset does not cover 2014, the junta, The National Council for Peace and Order, has since ruled Thailand. Individuals from an array of different sending states apply for asylum in Thailand. For the most part, Thailand has typically granted asylum to individuals fleeing Somalia, Israel, China, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, and other regions. Thailand has been more likely to deny asylum to individuals leaving most African states, however. Thailand hosts mostly Myanmar refugees. With the exception of between 2005 and 2007, where Thailand granted mostly complementary protection, Thailand granted refugee status recognition to over half of applicants applying for asylum from Myanmar.

Similar to Thailand, Malaysia hosts mostly refugees from Myanmar. Malaysia is also a non-signatory state, but is coded as a democracy between 2008 and 2013. Overall, both Thailand and Malaysia receive the largest number of asylum-seekers in the region (McConnahie 2014). Most Asian states, despite hosting a fair amount of refugees and despite not being signatory states, have often been criticized for their treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees. Both Thailand and Malaysia do not have domestic legislation for protection and refugee status recognition, and have been handled through a variety of different methods in order to control
migration (McConnahie 2014, 630). According to McConnahie (2014), Thailand also uses undocumented migrants as a source of cheap labor, many of whom should probably qualify for full Convention status (630). In Malaysia, immigrants that do not have refugee status often live in fear of detention, but there seems to be improvement in recent years and increases in negotiations between Malaysia and allowing UNHCR to work in the country (McConnahie 2014, 630). This suggests that while democracies may provide asylum more than non-democracies, in the case of non-signatory states, human rights violations towards refugees and other migrants exist in these states. Moreover, McConnahie (2014) finds that many individuals who qualify for refugee status in these host states do not receive it. An article published in The Economist mentioned Thailand’s human rights abuses towards undocumented immigrants who have been exploited for labor (The Economist 2013). The article states most of these immigrants come from Bangladesh, Myanmar, Laos, Philippines, Cambodia, and other states. For example, with the exception of a few years, it is often the case that more than half of Cambodians who apply for asylum in Thailand do not receive refugee status recognition despite the fact that Cambodia has been ruled by Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rogue commander, since 1985.

Similar to autocratic regimes, the findings of non-signatory democratic regimes do not tell us the whole story, and will perhaps benefit from a mixed methods approach. While there are not many non-signatory states overall, these states were found to be less likely to grant refugee status compared to non-democracies, findings that were opposite to autocratic regimes. However, it is interesting to note that the majority of non-signatory democratic states were found in Asia, and the majority of non-signatory autocratic regimes were found mostly in the Middle East. However, while many of these Asian non-signatory states are defined as democracies, many of them are in the low end of the Polity scale (with score around a 6). Similarly, between
2000 and 2013, several of these states have fluctuated between democratic and anocratic regimes during this time period. The “highest” on the Polity IV scale for non-signatory states was India scoring a +9. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches with regional focuses will probably suit studies on non-signatory, democratic regimes, because most non-signatory democratic and autocratic regimes are found within particular regions. Many of these host states grant asylum, but also deny asylum to asylum-seekers that are probably deserving of Convention status recognition. Non-signatory democratic states also seem to provide asylum more towards other Asian states, but are less likely to provide asylum to many individuals fleeing Africa with minor exceptions. The results of non-signatory democratic states granting asylum less on average than non-democratic non-signatory states is also probably capturing the effect that not many individuals apply for asylum in non-signatory autocratic countries. Similarly, non-signatory anocracies are not generally attractive to asylum-seekers. However, as mentioned, it is also the case that many non-signatory Asian states are more likely to exploit migrants for labor. While signatory democracies provide refugee status recognition more on average compared non-democracies by 4 percentage points, these numbers are not too high given that most of the world’s regimes are democracies, and most states are signatory states. We should expect these numbers to be greater. This suggests that while signatory democracies grant asylum more on average, other factors influence refugee status recognition rates in these as well. Figure four in Chapter Two shows that the majority of the world’s refugee populations are not hosted in democratic states. Section 5.3 provides a commentary on signatory states.

5.2.6 Regime-Type: Democratization

As stated in the previous section, democratic leaders often have greater audience costs compared to non-democratic leaders. Often, voters see migration, both forced and voluntary, as
economic and cultural threats, and express their discontent through routine elections by voting pro-immigration and asylum supporters out. In Section 2.5.1, the case of Tanzania states the country once had an open-door policy towards refugees, especially for other African refugees. However, Tanzania became more resistant in hosting refugees as the country began to democratize. Therefore, it was hypothesized that as levels of democratization increase in a host state, asylum rates in that state will decrease. The results are supported for the base model, signatory host states, and non-signatory states. No statistical significance is found for contiguous states. However, increases in democratization slightly increased asylum rates for non-signatory host states. The findings for this hypothesis are perplexing given the results for autocracies and democracies. At first glance, it seems almost contradictory. Therefore, it is imperative to thoroughly analyze these results. In the previous hypothesis, refugee status increased for autocratic non-signatory states, but decreased for democratic non-signatory states.

As mentioned, autocracies and democracies were coded based on Polity IV scale where a score of between +6 and +10 is coded as a democracy and -10 and -6 was coded as an autocracy. Polity measures for electoral constraints on government leaders compared to Freedom House, which instead measures civil liberties. Although Polity IV is not a perfect measure for regime-type, how Polity IV measures regimes is appropriate for this study compared to Freedom House. However, this research did not analyze a regime type known as “anocracy” which is often coded between -5 and +5. These regimes are neither fully democratic nor fully autocratic. Anocracies contain both democratic and autocratic characteristics, and are often unstable. Therefore, refugee and forced migration studies will probably benefit from analyzing regimes in transition, and anocratic states. In Chapter 2, research that analyzed forced migration and democratization are qualitative or case studies mainly focused on African states. The research cited in Chapter 2
show that as African states became more democratic, refugee host states became more resistant in accommodating refugee populations, and often engage in mass deportations, especially around election years.

However, as mentioned, the dataset is limited and asylum rates are not provided during the Cold War years when most African states began to transition to democratic regimes. The true effect of regimes in transition will greatly benefit refugee studies research if asylum rates were provided for years before 2000. Nevertheless, one explanation regarding the differences between democratization and the regime-type variables may be the result of pooling the scales in autocracies and democracies, and leaving the scale unrestricted for democratization. In the case of non-signatory states, refugee status recognition in autocracies increased on average, and decreased on average for non-signatory democratic states. In contrast, refugee status recognitions increased in non-signatory states as democratization increases. However, after further analysis within the data, there were only a handful of non-signatory states in which Polity IV scores increase over time. One such case is Pakistan. In 2000 and 2001 Polity IV designated Pakistan a score of -6, an autocracy, and between 2002 and 2006 Pakistan scored a -5. Pakistan then received a score of +2 in 2007, and +5 in 2008 and 2009. Between 2002 and 2009, Pakistan was considered to be an anocracy under Polity, and was coded as a democracy between 2010 and 2012 with a score of +6, and in 2013 with a score of +7. For the years provided in the dataset, Pakistan’s Polity score consistently increased. For some cases, asylum rates increased alongside Polity’s score. With Iranian asylum-seekers, refugee status recognition rates consistently increased between 2009 and 2013. Asylum rates for Iraqi asylum-seekers increased in Pakistan around 2006, and similarly for Somali asylum-seekers around 2005. According to UNHCR’s asylum-seeker database, there were over 12,000 Afghan asylum-seekers pending asylum status,
with an extra 2380 asylum-seekers applying for refugee status in 2004. In 2004, less than 4% of Afghan asylum-seekers received refugee recognition. Refugee recognition rates begin to dramatically increase for Afghans around 2007 and in 2011. For the most part, Pakistan and Afghanistan have frosty relations. However, as previously mentioned, Pakistan began mass deportations of Afghans in recent years. Pakistan amended its constitution in 2010 and became a parliamentary system. Therefore, while the data may claim that increases in democratization for this non-signatory state also increased asylum rates for Afghans, due to the current wave of mass deportations, this particular case should continue to be monitored in the future.

Despite the non-signatory states, most of the models support the hypothesis that increases in democratization lead to less asylum granting. It supports past qualitative works that suggest less democratic states were more likely to provide asylum, and asylum rates decrease as states began to democratize. These results also add to the international relations debate that coding for regime-types often seems more complicated (see for example, Munck and Verkuilen 2002; Plümper and Neumayer 2010; Treier and Jackman 2008). However, the overall results support the literature that claimed that as states democratize, they become less likely to grant asylum. Future studies should continue to focus on how regime types, or regimes in transition, differ in asylum granting particularly in comparison to signatory and non-signatory host states.

5.2.7 Elections

Similar to the literature on regime-type, immigration and asylum can be frequently seen as a contested issue with voters. Voters may see foreigners and refugees as threats. The cases of Kenya and Tanzania not only demonstrate that asylum policies changed from relatively open-door to hostile during democratization, but that tightening of border security and deportations often occurred around national and executive elections. Negative public sentiment around
immigration can entice democratic leaders to implement austere asylum policies. In recent events, immigration and the refugee crisis were salient issues during Brexit and the U.S. Presidential election. These issues continue to be significant topics throughout most European elections. Both autocratic and democratic leaders wish to remain in power. However, routine elections place added pressure on democratic government elites to be more aware of public opinion. Therefore, it was hypothesized in Section 2.5.2 that in the year of an executive election, overall asylum rates will be lower compared to non-election years in order to please voters.

The results found very minimal support for the hypothesis that national elections affect refugee status rates. The results show an average of a one percentage point decrease in refugee status rates during election years in signatory states, and around a one percentage point decrease for non-contiguous states. There may be a couple of explanations for why the results exhibit little to no support. Most of the empirical cases in Section 2.5.2 mention how waves of deportations occurred during elections years. Therefore, future studies should continue to use directed dyads, but incorporate refugee stock variables instead. It is possible that changes in actual asylum policies would not happen the year of the election, but perhaps the following year or thereafter. In the case of the United States, national elections were held in November, but U.S. Presidents are not inaugurated until January of the following year. The recent travel ban in the United States, which incorporates individuals from mostly predominately Muslim nations, first occurred a few weeks after inauguration in January of the following year. Moreover, if some individuals from these nations affected by the U.S. travel ban hoped to apply once in the United States, they were prevented from doing so in the first place, and probably would have to apply for asylum in their home country. The asylum-seeker dataset contains figures for individuals that already applied for asylum. It is for these reasons why the refugee stock
variable, albeit imperfect, will better suit this hypothesis. The asylum-seeker dataset only contains figures for individuals that actually applied for asylum. If they were prevented from applying for asylum, the dataset will not capture these figures.

Quantitative work should analyze how changes in presidential terms affect asylum rates as a whole, and will probably be better suited if all asylum rates were pooled through the use of country year as the unit of analysis. Another avenue for future studies should examine how changes in executive leadership changes asylum rates between allied and rival countries. For example, the Obama administration clamped down on Cuban asylum policies once diplomatic relations began to improve. It is uncertain whether the Trump administration will reverse Obama’s policies on Cuban immigration; however, the current administration is still in its onset. Therefore, while executive elections may not affect actual asylum rates themselves, the changes in administrations in democratic states might.

5.3 Commentary on Signatory States

The introduction of this dissertation also asked, “Are treaties merely scraps of paper, or do they influence state behavior? Or do interests effect behavior?” Some of the results in the models for signatory host states are cause for concern. In the case of trade, signatory host states grant asylum less as trade increases with the sending states. Commercial interests affect the willingness of signatory states to provide refugee status, as well as for both refugee status and other forms of protection. The gradual decline of asylum and other forms of humanitarian protection by signatory states found with some of the models is also worrisome.

One of the biggest topics in international relations and human rights literature regards whether treaties do or do not influence state behavior. Often, the evidence suggests that human rights treaties do not improve a state’s human rights records. Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005)
find no evidence that ratifying UN human rights treaties improve human rights (1401). Hathaway (2002) claims that placing external pressure on states can entice them to commit to human rights commitments such as by ratifying human rights treaties; however, these treaties are only minimally monitored and enforced at best (2020). She suggests that the UN and regional organizations could not only work to enhance monitoring, but also provide assistance so that these countries could adhere to better human rights and treaty obligations (Hathaway 2002, 2025). However, international enforcement is rather weak, and often do not go beyond naming and shaming (Hill 2010, 1162). Naming and shaming may work to entice repressive governments to improve their human rights records, but it is not consistent. Hafner-Burton (2008) looks at the relationship between international naming and shaming and human rights practices in 145 countries between 1975 and 2000. Hafner-Burton (2008) finds that while there are some instances where naming and shaming forced governments to improve their human rights records, there were also instances where naming and shaming did not do so. In fact, in some instances, naming and shaming made states more repressive. Hafner-Burton claims certain types of naming and shaming may prevent states from taking action to lessen repression.

While Hafner-Burton’s research analyzes human rights infractions done by states to their own citizens, the findings may be extended in light of recent events regarding the plight of refugees. Around September 2015, during the climax of the refugee crisis in Europe, the Hungarian government was named and shamed by foreign media and governments due to their treatment of asylum-seekers and forced migrants, and their pushbacks against migrants and asylum-seekers attempting to enter through their southern border with Serbia. However, despite such naming and shaming, Hungary built a barrier on its border with Croatia and Serbia. Not
only does this prove that naming and shaming may not go far, but that state interests go farther than adhering to human rights accords.

The refugee case is an interesting one, and proves to be a challenging line of research especially for human rights scholars. Compliance with human rights treaties is difficult, but more so in the refugee case. Refugees are individuals that have left their home countries, and are often not citizens of the host state. Therefore, it is difficult to entice states to comply with hosting individuals that are not citizens of the state, and may come from different cultural and religious backgrounds. The nature of geopolitics was different when the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol were enacted. The original drafters of the Convention did not anticipate refugee crises to expand beyond Europe. In fact, they expected the UN refugee agency to only last about three years (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). The organization was not created to look towards the future, because it anticipated protecting only refugees at the time, and not so much as offering protection for future cases (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 81). This makes implementing obligations to the Convention especially difficult. The discussions in the above findings cause worry, particularly in models for signatory host states only.

In this study rival signatory host states granted the most asylum. This seems to imply that while some states adhere to their international obligations, other political factors matter. Chapter One in Section 1.2 asked what are the protection gaps found with asylum implementation, meaning how do states enact their obligations under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol? Also, what incentives drive refugee hosting? Section 2.4.1 mentions the case of Guinea. Throughout the 1990s, the Guinean government hosted refugees fleeing conflict in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone. Rivals of the Guinean government were the Liberian dictator, Charles Taylor, and the Sierra Leone guerilla unit, the Revolutionary United Front. As Section 2.4.1
emphasizes, human rights were violated when Guinea hosted Liberian rebel groups in camps, and forced Liberian refugees to transfer arms across the border. Guinea is both a Convention signatory and a signatory of the Organisation of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. These findings and the cases mentioned imply that despite host states are signatories of refugee convention treaties, refugees are often used as political pawns. While these states host refugees and grant asylum, they may be guilty of several human rights infractions, and states essentially do not adhere to all of their obligations according to the Convention.

Democratic signatory states provide asylum about 4 percentage points more on average than non-democratic signatory states. However, as mentioned, given that the majority of states between 2000 and 2013 are both democratic and signatory states, asylum granting should be greater. As Figures 3 and 4 highlight, most of the world’s refugees are confined to a few small states. More so, as democratization increases, asylum rates decrease even among signatory host states. Autocratic non-signatory host states provided more asylum on average compared to non-autocratic, non-signatory host states. This emphasizes that special interests affect asylum, especially when many autocratic, non-signatory states host refugees from a few, select countries. These findings align with studies, such as Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005) and Hafner-Burton (2008) who claim that human rights treaties do not improve human rights records. This is especially the case with the 1951 Convention that is supposed to protect individuals who have been forced to flee their home states, and are not citizens of the host state.

5.4 Significance of Study

The preliminary results of the research find support that politics affects refugee status granting for asylum-seekers. Refugee status rates are not only based on altruism or generosity,
but rather, elite interests as affect refugee status granting. This is significant for both international relations and human rights research. Chapter One stresses that international relations research has rarely analyzed how politics drive or deny asylum rates across countries. This study is a first attempt. The results and the findings imply that international relations scholars should continue to study the macro-level effects on state responses to forced migrants. Equally, this research will also continue to benefit from regional case studies as well given the results. However, it should be assumed that in the future, data on refugee recognition rates will be more sophisticated. Therefore, scholars should also continue to run large-N quantitative analyses. The study also has significance for human rights research, particularly studies that investigate the effects that treaties have on state behavior. Human rights treaties may not be enough to entice positive changes in state behavior. Consequently, human rights research should continue to focus on the ways states can adhere to human rights protections outside of treaties.

5.5 Implications for Future Research and Conclusion

The results propose several implications for future research. Future studies, particularly policy research, should examine the role that rival host states have on refugee protection measures, and evaluate how refugee rights are maintained in the host states. Another avenue for future research mentioned in Section 5.2.2 regards how military alliances affect refugee status granting. Studies should explore the nature of the actual military treaties that were signed between the host and the sending state. This can be done at the quantitative level by recoding variables according to the respective treaties or at the qualitative level. A mixed-methods approach will also better serve this research question. Case studies could further hone in detail the nature of the military alliances signed between host and sending states, and how this affects refugee-hosting trends in the host state.
Future research should also explore how commercial interests affect refugee status granting. One approach may inspect how refugee rates are affected in import dependent host states. Due to such dependencies, host states may be less likely to grant refugee status recognition to individuals fleeing states that import important resources, such as oil and natural gas. With regards to domestic politics, the findings are still unclear. In this case, case studies or region specific studies will provide better clarification with respect to how regimes affect asylum rates and refugee hosting. Furthermore, as more data are gathered on asylum rates in the future, perhaps it will provide a clearer picture with regards to how democracies, autocracies, and even anocracies, implement asylum policies differently.

Goldsmith and Posner (2005) claim states often act rationally in order to maximize their interests. Cases revolving around refugees prove no different. Evaluating state responses to refugees are critical. Since refugee hosting is not motivated solely on philanthropic affairs, it is imperative to understand the political reasons behind state reactions towards forced migrants. In other words, it is equally imperative to understand what are the non-humanitarian and political factors that influence refugee hosting and asylum rates. Despite the fact that similar interest-based arguments have been made before, it is crucial to examine if the argument holds across countries. Doing so will allow us to see if there are generalized asylum trends across countries.

Understanding the motives behind state intentions can also help in the status of refugees. Therefore, this work has implications at the policy level. For example, refugee camps have often been used as haven for rebel organizations and recruitment, and as a result, presence of refugees can increase civil conflict in both the host country and the country of origin (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). When refugees are not integrated into society, and maintained in camps that are often unregulated or lack security, conflict is more likely to increase. Additionally, the
authors point out that in the case of refugees feeling Mozambique into neighboring Malawi
during the 1980s, conflict was avoided in Malawi. Mozambicans were incorporated into
Malawian society, particularly with regard to economic activity, such as through employment
and owning land. Aiding in the statuses of refugees not only helps the refugees themselves, but
the host and country of origin, and helps to maintain regional stability. Regional instability
essentially has global repercussions, particularly with regards to the international political
economy and regional security. Unfortunately, in the chessboard of geopolitics, refugees and
asylum-seekers are nothing more than political pawns, often used strategically among states
dependent on its relation with the sending state, as well among their relations with the
international community.
References


### Appendix A: The effects of bilateral relations and domestic politics on refugee recognition rates (t-1). Cases Dropped with Only One Year of Movement.

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Robust Standard errors for clustering around dyads in parenthesis ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1
### Appendix B: The effects of bilateral relations and domestic politics on total recognition rates (t-1). Cases Dropped with Only One Year of Movement.

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Robust Standard errors for clustering around dyads in parenthesis ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1
Vita

The author was born in Miami, Florida. She obtained a Bachelor’s degree in philosophy and psychology from Loyola University New Orleans in 2008. She received a Master’s degree in political science from the University of New Orleans in 2014.