'Friends that last a lifetime': the importance of emotions amongst volunteers working with refugees in Calais

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Abstract
The European 'refugee crisis' has generated a broad movement of volunteers offering their time and skills to support refugees across the continent, in the absence of nation states. This article focuses on volunteers who helped in the informal refugee camp in Calais called the 'Jungle'. It looks at the importance of emotions as a motivating factor for taking on responsibilities that are usually carried out by humanitarian aid organizations. We argue that empathy is not only the initial motivator for action, but it also sustains the voluntary activity as volunteers make sense of their emotions through working in the camp. This type of volunteering has also created new spaces for sociability and community, as volunteers have formed strong emotional and relational bonds with each other and with the refugees. Finally, this article contributes to the growing body of literature that aims at repositioning emotions within the social sciences research to argue that they are an important analytical tool to understand social life and fieldwork.
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Keywords: Calais; emotions; refugees; volunteers

23 ## Introduction

24 On 2 September 2015, front pages of newspapers across the world presented
25 the tragedy of events in Syria in graphic detail. Photos of the lifeless body of
26 Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old boy drowned with his mother and brother while
27 attempting to flee from Syria, were broadcast, revealing the innocent victims of
28 war. The outpouring of public emotion was palpable. Images of a limp, lifeless
29 young child, face down in the sea, acted as a powerful motivating force for
30 many volunteers who wanted to help in the European 'refugee crisis'. Hundreds

of people started to help, raise funds, collect aid and join organizations supporting refugees across Europe, including in the Calais ‘Jungle’, which forms the basis of this article. Emotions are a powerful motivator for mobilization of volunteers and activists (Collins 1990; Jasper 2007), and the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ is no exception. As Hannah, one volunteer stated, ‘My heart was really moved so that’s why I was interested in getting involved and see what I could do and wherever I could do it’ (Personal Interview, June 2016).

Some commentators have suggested that social life is becoming more individualistic (Giddens 1990, 1991, 1992; Beck 1992). Chouliaraki (2013) observes the emergence of the ‘ironic spectator’, an ambivalent figure that remains sceptical of moral appeals but, at the same time, is willing to offer help towards those who suffer because of the pleasure of a personal fulfilment. Others have argued that individualism has resulted in people withdrawing from political life and voluntarism (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993; Putnam 2000). Meštrović (1997) suggested that this was because we live in a ‘postemotional society’ where people no longer emotionally connect with global suffering. Individual needs and feelings are placed above humanitarian activities because society in the Global North has become desensitized to the wider issues around the globe. This is particularly relevant to the ‘refugee crisis’ as the political and media have often represented refugees and asylum seekers as criminalized and racialized ‘others’ (Bhatia 2018). In doing so, refugees and asylum seekers are seen as dehumanized and unworthy of attention, or worse, as human detritus (Bauman 1998). Whilst Meštrović ignores all the groups working on important humanitarian issues, like supporting refugees or fighting AIDS, he does identify the importance of emotion in our identities and what motivates us to link with others. This article will argue against these positions and highlight that empathy and emotion are central motivators for those who volunteer their time in the ‘refugee crisis’.

This article also argues that volunteering with refugees is infused with emotions throughout the process. It does this in three ways. Firstly, emotions are a key motivator for volunteers. Empathy and anger were identified as significant factors for individuals to volunteer their time in the ‘Jungle’ camp. Secondly, emotions are so central when volunteering with refugees that it can lead to a range of challenging and complex negotiations. Volunteers, for example, are often not prepared for the assault on their emotions. Not only can they hear or witness traumatic experiences, volunteers also need to manage their own emotions when volunteering and there is a significant amount of ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild 1983) required to control one’s emotions. Thirdly, alongside these powerful feelings, there are also joyous emotions. Volunteering has created many meaningful moments for volunteers and new and intense friendships have formed. As Durkheim (1912) argued, the emotional energy generated through regular interaction helps create a wider affiliation to the group. When additional emotional ingredients are added to that (for example, the collective

witnessing of the refugees' distress), deeper attachments can occur. Generally, in humanitarian work, aid workers engage with 'distant suffering', such as in Rwanda, Darfur or in other humanitarian emergencies (Terry 2002). Instead, the proximity to the UK of the refugee camps in France plays a central role in this process, as seeing such a degree of suffering on Europe's doorstep prompted volunteers to take on responsibilities.

By arguing that emotions are central to understanding the experiences of volunteers in the 'Jungle' refugee camp, this article makes a contribution to the literature on emotional sociology. It highlights how difficult situations engender strong emotional attachments between participants. This article will outline the wider context for volunteers and the location of the research in the unofficial refugee camp in Calais called the 'Jungle'. It will then outline a wider sociology of emotions before presenting the methodology that was used. This will be followed by distinct sections that illustrate the importance of empathy as a motivating factor, the importance of emotional labour when volunteering and also the joyful emotions that result from volunteering.

The wider context – the 'Jungle' and the refugee crisis

In 2015 the numbers of refugees increased exponentially throughout Europe, with over a million people reaching Greek or Italian shores by boat (UNHCR 2015a). Numbers have grown because of the proximity of the conflict in Syria and continued conflict and instability in different parts of the world, such as Sudan and Afghanistan. It is important to bear in mind that Europe takes in only 6 per cent of the total number of displaced people around the world, that in total amounted to 65 million people in 2015 (UNHCR 2015b). As Bhatia (2018) highlights, refugees are represented by sections of the media and politicians as racialized and criminalized outsiders that do not belong within Britain or Europe. They are invariably represented as an inconvenience, rather than the real victims of war, rape, physical and sexual abuse or torture and who are risking their lives to seek asylum. This has been accompanied by a violent response from police, as both refugees and volunteers have detailed repression that ranges from systematic harassment, pepper spraying belongings to make them unusable, to physical violence (Refugees Rights Data Project 2017; Human Rights Watch 2017).

International migration is not a new phenomenon at the Calais border. Since the 1990s, refugees have been transiting in this town to reach the UK. Since the closure of the main reception centre in the area, the Sangatte Centre, in 2002 (Fassin 2005; Bhatia 2018), refugees started sleeping rough in the town and its outskirts. The 'Jungle' was informally established by refugees in spring 2015. France did not give permission to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) or other international agencies to bring humanitarian relief, hence the 'Jungle' was left

to self-manage. Sanitation, basic housing and access to food, as well as other standard international norms for refugee protection and camp management, were absent (Brimelow 2016). Médecins Sans Frontières and Doctors of the World were the only international humanitarian agencies operating in the camp. In August 2016, Help Refugees[2] published a census of the 'Jungle' that counted 9,106 people, including 676 unaccompanied minors, the youngest being eight years old (Help Refugees 2016). The census also listed 20 nationalities, the majority from Afghanistan and Sudan, and a small minority from Ethiopia, Iraq and Syria.

The absence of state action to try and resolve this 'crisis' necessitated the involvement of civil society and thousands of volunteers filled the humanitarian vacuum (Sandri 2017). Volunteers, mainly British, organized donation distributions, cooked food, built shelters, provided healthcare but also organized entertainment, such as theatre, music and sport. This informal humanitarian aid remained highly dependent on donations from the public: in July 2016, for example, the main warehouse for clothes, tents and food was closed because of a lack of items to distribute. Fundraising too is subject to public emotional responses: in September 2015, after Alan Kurdi was found on the beach, one organization received £14,000 of donations in just one night through an online fundraising platform. In the following months, fundraising campaigns were not as fruitful and the organization struggled to fund its activities.

Volunteers were never trained in humanitarian aid and the vast majority was not familiar with the international systems of refugee protection. Given their inexperience in this field, volunteers had to understand the basics of humanitarian aid very quickly (Sandri 2017). In only a few months, and without any training, volunteers were in charge of the entire management of the camp. In some cases, long-term volunteers quit their jobs and moved to the camp to dedicate themselves fully to the cause.

Not all volunteers chose to cut ties with their lives in Britain, though. Many people occasionally volunteered in Calais without committing to a single organization, whilst others helped in the warehouses or engaged in fundraising activities in the UK. Some of these organizations were led by political movements, others by Islamic and Christian groups, whilst many were civil society organizations, established spontaneously in the summer of 2015. Some of the initiatives disappeared throughout the months because of a lack of funding or changes in the make-up of the camp. Additionally, there has been a growing criminalization of volunteers: in Northern France, volunteers face police violence and harassment from local residents (Refugees Rights Data Project 2017; Human Rights Watch 2017); in Southern France, Céderic Herrou, a French farmer helping refugees cross the Italian-French border, was given a four-month suspended jail sentence in August 2017 (BBC News 2017). Yet, the 'Jungle', despite its wretchedness, was a place of communality and resourcefulness both of refugees and volunteers. The camp was dismantled in October 2016 and its

camp residents were scattered around France without a real alternative for resettlement.

Emotions in sociology

Being in the refugee camp in Calais is an emotional experience; both for refugees and volunteers. In contrast to 'rational actor' theories, humans are inherently emotional (Flam 1990). Emotions pervade everyday human interaction (Kemper 1978; Shott 1979). As Collins (1990: 28) argues, 'Emotions are 'the "glue" of solidarity – and what mobilises conflict'. The powerful image of the lifeless Alan Kurdi on the Greek shoreline stimulated worldwide interest in the European 'refugee crisis'. The drowned child symbolized the lack of humanity in political responses and led to an outpouring of emotion. Even British newspapers which can be characterized by a less than positive approach to refugees, such as the Daily Mail, ran headlines deploring the tragedy of the situation. As Jasper (1998: 398) states:

> Emotions pervade all social life, social movements included. The most prosaic daily routines, seemingly neutral, can provoke violent emotional responses when interrupted. Unusual actions probably involve even more, and more complex, feelings. Not only are emotions part of our responses to events, but they also – in the form of deep affective attachments – shape the goals of our actions.

Emotions are so central to the mobilization and sustenance of voluntary activity groups in refugee camps that these activities could not exist without them.

Social actors' feelings are complex, multi-layered and often contradictory. This is especially true of volunteers in the 'Jungle' who were confronted with extreme stories of human suffering, but also met people, both volunteers and refugees, whose company they enjoyed. Flam (1990) argues that contradictory and complex emotions can undermine the group. Yet she refers to pre-existing emotions brought into the group, rather than those generated within the group. Emotions emerge through social interaction and are a way of connecting to another (Katz 1999; Ahmed 2004). Collective activity can generate an emotional sense of belonging (Durkheim 1912) and, in turn, it can intensify individual emotions: 'human sentiments are intensified when affirmed collectively. Sorrow, like joy, becomes exalted and amplified when leaping from mind to mind' (Durkheim 1912: 446). Yet emotions do not introduce feelings into a social activity, they merely highlight them and enable the researcher to analyse the wider significance (Katz 1999).

Ontologically, emotions are embodied cultural practises. Ahmed (2004: 4) argues that 'Emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, which take shape

through the repetition of actions over time'. These repetitive cultural practices create affective ties that help social actors to align themselves socially and politically. Yet Ahmed (2004) suggests that these emotions exist at the border, on the surfaces of bodies. Whilst emotions are sensory and pleasure and pain can be determined through touch and other senses, there is also a visceral aspect to emotion. As Katz (1999) argues, emotions are accompanied by a physiological response. When we are angry, our muscles tighten, our eyes narrow with our blood pressure rising. When we are fearful, our stomach will feel knotted and constricted. There is a phenomenological way of seeing emotion, that is a unified physical and emotional entity; 'My body', as Merleau-Ponty (1962: 234) suggests, 'is not a collection of adjacent organs but a synergic system, all of the functions of which are exercised and linked together in the general action of being in the world'. The social actor may be drawing on a cultural language of emotions, but this is enacted through bodily performance.

Emotions have been a peripheral analytical tool in social theory. Despite brief allusions to 'affectual actions', Weber emphasized the rational aspects of social life, while Marx's early social ontology highlighted that social praxis was a 'sensuous human activity'. Sensuousness implies a physical and emotional response, rather than intellectual. However, Marx's later Materialism virtually stripped out any indication of emotion even though resentment is a key component of class conflict (Barbalet 1998). Of the classical thinkers, Durkheim (1912) placed emotion central in his later work. Durkheim's influential analysis of religion highlighted how regular ritualistic interaction generates not only the totems that symbolize the group, but also the 'collective effervescence' that provides the glue of solidarity. In the case of the organization we researched, one of the group's symbol is a red heart, worn as a badge, or forming the basis of placards at marches. As the heart symbolizes the powerful emotion of love, the group embodied the importance of emotion as collective identity.

The re-emergence of emotion as a central component of social theory can be traced to the work of Randall Collins (1975). Subsequently, Collins (2004) draws on the work of Durkheim, in partnership with Goffman's microsociological work, to develop interaction ritual theory. Goffman's (1967) interaction rituals highlight the small repetitive actions that underpin everyday interaction. They are rituals because

> this activity, however informal and secular, represents a way in which the individual must guard and design the symbolic implications of his [or her] acts while in the presence of an object that has a special value for him [or her]. (Goffman 1967: 57)

As social actors manage their presentation of self, they engage in patterns of interaction they deem appropriate for the situation. These patterns of behaviour have to be performed and re-performed for there to build an emotional rapport with others. As Collins (2004) notes in relation to the 9/11 attack, whilst

there were the ingredients of emotions, shared focus and bodily co-presence that temporarily united survivors, there was no regular or ritualistic repetition that unified them more strongly as a group. In contrast, the volunteers in the 'Jungle' regularly interacted with each other and refugees through voluntarism, social activities and activism. This sustained regular engagement reinforced volunteers' unity under the emotional stress of the situation.

The work of Arlie Hochschild is also significant in the re-emergence of emotions in sociological thought. Hochschild (1983) identifies the importance of managing emotions in our daily working lives. The concept of 'emotional labour' is useful when considering volunteers working in the 'Jungle'. This type of labour 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 1983: 7). The social actor has to engage in 'emotion work' to manage feelings. This is part of a process, and 'in managing a feeling, we contribute to the creation of it' (Hochschild 1983: 18). Although Hochschild focuses on those working in the service industries, this is also important for those volunteering their time. Volunteers have to learn to suppress their own emotions when spending their time with people who have endured traumatic lives. In order to do this, volunteers utilize 'feeling rules' that 'demarcate how much of a given feeling, held in a given way, is crazy, unusual but understandable, normal, inappropriate, or almost inappropriate for a given social context' (Hochschild 1990: 122). Hochschild (1983) also identifies the importance of collective emotional labour as a way of supporting colleagues. Teamwork is vital when supporting others' emotion work. The collective can fuel the anger, or provide support when managing a complex range of feelings. Given the intensely traumatic experiences of many of the refugees in the 'Jungle', this requires significant emotion work from those volunteering. And as many people engaged in voluntary activity in this study did not have explicit training in this area, the solidarity of fellow volunteers becomes ever more important for emotional support.

Methodology

This study is based on participant observation by both authors with one voluntary organization that established and provided a range of services in the 'Jungle' from June 2015 until the camp's closure in November 2016. Since then, the organization has continued to provide services and support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in the UK. The group is a collective network of over 500 volunteers that includes builders, medics, artists, youth workers, fundraisers and activists. As a grassroots network, it was able to respond quickly to events on the ground in the 'Jungle' by providing clothing and other forms of aid, such as shelters, first aid and a safe space for young people. Within this network, there is a core group of about 20 people who regularly volunteer with

UASC, coordinate activities, participate in meetings, or attend social events. Given the racialized and dehumanized representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the media (Bhatia 2014, 2018), it is important to acknowledge that whilst the staff is ethnically diverse and it includes refugees or asylum-seekers too, the majority of volunteers would identify as White European. The authors are conscious of the power relations that can exist between volunteers based in Europe and those seeking refuge, and we are aware that these power relations can impact how volunteers, activists and researchers engage with refugees (Lumsden and Winter 2014). Ethics need to be placed centrally within these relationships in order to avoid that refugees may feel exploited or vulnerable (Pittaway, Bartolomei and Hugman 2010). This is not to deny their agency, as many refugees volunteered in the project. It is about acknowledging the privilege of the researchers and those volunteers who could freely move across borders. Following these ethical considerations, the focus of this research has been placed on the volunteers travelling from the UK to the camp rather than on camp residents.

Both authors are long-term volunteers with this organization and members of the core group. As a result, this research stems out of our direct engagement with this organization. Apart from going to Calais to provide humanitarian aid, we have also volunteered in the UK, providing support and assistance for the organization in different forms, including administration of social media, fundraising, campaigns, protests and emotional support. As many other volunteers, when we first offered to help we did not imagine that we would have committed so much of our time to this cause in the coming months. Because of our involvement – both practical and emotional – we could not pretend to write as neutral observers. Doing research on a highly emotionally charged topic and, at the same time, feeling those emotions, has meant that our work is necessarily permeated with feelings. This, however, does not mean that the findings are not to be trusted or that our work is less valuable. As Bhatia (2014) argues, emotions are a 'navigation system'. They indicate where we are as researchers and in which direction we should go. Ignoring emotions mutes the research, both the power of the participants, and the impact of the researcher.

Being volunteers gave us the chance to understand the internal dynamics of the organization as well as comprehending the most critical issues concerning refugees in Calais. Understanding and not suppressing the emotions that arose during fieldwork is essential to the knowledge of this field (Holland 2007). This research, then, is based on the idea that:

> . . .rather than repressing emotion in epistemology it is necessary to rethink the relation between knowledge and emotion and construct conceptual models that demonstrate the mutually constitutive rather than oppositional relations between reason and emotion. (Jaggar 1989: 156–7).

Nevertheless, when we started writing this article, we reflected that within our organization volunteers seldom share their feelings with each other. Even though group members provide extensive collective emotional labour through solidarity, chats and hugs, deep emotional feelings were not communicated. Only when volunteers couldn't return due to the traumas experienced, did core members address these feelings.[3] This might be because similar feelings are felt within the group and more often, we both find ourselves 'unloading' with other people who are external to the core group.

The content of this article derives from our first-hand experiences, as well as from in-depth semi-structured interviews carried out by the second author with five volunteers from the core group in the summer of 2016. Whilst some of the volunteers did have prior involvement in refugee projects or anti-racism activities, many were driven by the emotional need to do something for fellow human beings. With three exceptions, the core group of volunteers did not know each other prior to going to the 'Jungle'. Yet the group has created and maintained strong bonds of solidarity and friendship throughout the months. Due to the previous involvement with the organization, a significant level of mutual trust was shared with interviewees, which allowed the interviewing process to be open and intimate. During the interviews, some of the interviewees became visibly emotional recalling some of the situations they witnessed in the camps. Of course, this emotional response was not triggered for the purpose of the argument. What became striking during the interviews was that the experience of volunteering in the 'Jungle' is very much tied to emotions and to their response even outside of the camp. A vast range of words connected to emotions kept surfacing when talking about their experiences, such as 'annoyed', 'bothered', 'angry', 'shocked', 'overwhelmed' and 'heartbroken'. These feelings are shared by other volunteers (Storm 2016), and they reinforce the importance of emotions in volunteering. As Pink (2009: 83) argues, interviews are 'social, sensorial and emotive encounters'. Identifying and understanding the emotive aspects are crucial when conducting interviews of volunteers in refugee camps.

Finally, we would like to make a contribution to 'sensory ethnography' (Pink 2009). For Pink (2009: 10), 'doing sensory ethnography entails taking a series of new participatory and collaborative ethnographic research techniques in terms of sensory perception, categories, meanings and values, ways of knowing and practise'. Whilst we did not use specific participatory activities as a means of data collection, we acknowledge and reflect upon the sensual nature of ethnography in the 'Jungle'. We would challenge any visitor to the camp to not see it as an assault on the senses. The sights of the living conditions and despair etched onto the faces of the camp's inhabitants would be contrasted with the moments of joy when football matches took place. The feeling of squelching through cold, wet mud in order to run errands would sit with the smells of the wood fires burning. When police fired tear gas into the camp, there was a direct link between the sensual impact on the body and eyes, and the heightened emotions of those running away.

Consequently, the authors also engaged in 'participant sensing' (Pink 2009). This is 'where the ethnographer often simultaneously undergoes a series of unplanned everyday life experiences and is concerned with purposefully joining in with whatever is going on in order to become further involved in the practices of the research participants' (Pink 2009: 67). As this article is not the description of an ethnographic experience in the camp, but a study of emotions amongst volunteers who spent time there, it is still important to be aware of the broader sensual experience of being in the 'Jungle' which could have an emotional impact on the volunteers. Drawing on Katz (1999), ontologically, emotions are embodied. The sensual aspects of spending time in the 'Jungle' impacted on the emotions and feelings of those volunteering. Acknowledging and emphasizing these emotional aspects allows us to develop a deeper understanding of how an intense sensual environment links to our emotional responses. As Pink (2009: 65) identifies, 'the sensory ethnographer would not only observe and document other people's sensory categories and behaviours, but seek routes through which to develop experience-based empathetic understandings of what others might be experiencing and knowing'. Acknowledging the role of emotions is crucial in developing that understanding.

The importance of empathy

Empathy is an important motivator for volunteers joining groups who worked in the 'Jungle'. Shott (1979: 1328) argues that empathy is 'the arousal in oneself of the emotion one would feel in another's situation'. Social actors have a physiological response to the joy or despair of another, often those with whom they share no pre-existing relationship. Reinforcing Bhatia's (2018) argument, when refugees were explicitly dehumanized, but then humanized through the work in the camp, there was an emotional reaction. Two events happened that were considered by our informants as the tipping points, both of which caused mass public outrage: firstly, when then Prime Minister David Cameron referred to refugees in Calais as a 'swarm' (BBC News 2015); and secondly, when the photo of Alan Kurdi was published. Interviewees recalled that at that point they felt determined to act as they felt it became their responsibility to alleviate the suffering of refugees. This emotional response moves individuals to act, as one volunteer stated:

> I was moved by the cause and once I met the people I was back there before I had a chance to think about it – my legs kept taking me there. I don't even know how many times I've been there, months and months at the weekends but when things were really, really bad, I took annual leave to manage the situation. (Hannah, Personal interview, June 2016)

She openly states that she was moved by the cause and this motivated her to join the group. She saw the situation on the news and felt that she had ‘to do something about it’. Although this emotional empathic response drove the initial voluntary activity, it led to face-to-face interactions with people in the camp and this fuelled her empathic engagement. As Durkheim (1912) noted, sustained, repeated interactions generate a collective emotional engagement with the group. Hannah’s comments highlight how empathy can be an initial motivator, but this is sustained through repetitive voluntary activity.

Empathy is not simply a motivating factor, but places the subject firmly within the social action. The individual volunteer is not only motivated to act out of an emotional feeling, but helps the individual to understand and make sense of the situation. Just as Katz (1999) showed in relation to road rage, an ‘attack’ on the car becomes an ‘attack’ on the individual; ontologically, the car becomes an extension of the self. Likewise, inhuman conditions for refugees is seen as an attack on the individual volunteer. As Katz (1999: 24) argues, ‘we must understand how becoming “pissed off” is not simply a “release of tension” or some other negatively defined phenomenon but is a positive affect to construct new meaning for the situation’. Empathy drives the individual to resolve that embodied feeling. Shott (1979: 1329) highlights that:

> Perhaps more than any other sentiment, empathy connects us intimately with others, making us share their distress or pleasure. By relieving the unhappiness of those with whom we empathise, or increasing their happiness, we relieve or increase our own corresponding feeling.

The central factors here are not just about emotionally connecting with someone else, but resolving one’s own feelings aroused by the situation. As Oliver stated:

> It’s just my empathy, these people are no different from me, they’re hurting. They ran away from something horrible. If I can help to make their existence a little bit less uncomfortable then I should do that. We should all do that. (Personal interview, July 2016)

Oliver explicitly explains his motivation as empathy. Ontologically, he identifies himself and those in the camp as the same. By alleviating their suffering, no matter how lightly, is a way of making sense of the situation and resolving one’s own emotional reaction to the event.

There are two levels of empathy: ‘one entails feeling what *we* would feel in another’s situation; the other consists of feeling the emotions *the other person* feels [italics in the original]’ (Shott 1979: 1328). Both locate the individual within the emotions, but the first is more subjective and identifying how that individual imagines they would feel in that situation. Clara, project leader, recalls:

> I can’t remember what news report actually made me feel angry or made me feel motivated to go to Calais. The thing I can remember is walking

> into the kitchen and saying 'I'm going to quit my job, I'm going to quit everything and go to Calais because people are being treated like shit in Calais and it's just the worst thing to hear about it all'. (Personal interview, June 2016)

Clara's own feelings of anger at the situation in Calais was resolved by empowering herself to try and do something about it. She felt angry about the conditions of refugees and resolved of herself to lead a response. Yet this was before she experienced conditions in the 'Jungle' first-hand.

The second level of empathy requires a greater emotional connection to the individuals affected. It requires understanding how the other person feels and in some cases, this is relatively easy, as Oliver states:

> Sometimes I feel like shouting and screaming, people don't realise what's going on so close by. When it rains, I don't find myself being worried about me getting wet, I'd be thinking about all the people over the tunnel getting wet. It's really stuck in my heart. (Personal interview, July 2016)

One can understand what it is like to be cold and wet. Oliver transferred his feelings of concern for the weather onto those he knew to be in worse conditions. This intimate understanding of the experience of others may also derive from a volunteer's experience of volunteering in the 'Jungle' or their own personal history. Irena affirmed, 'I was bothered about it because [.. .] it's circumstantial, it could happen to everyone and it has happened to me in the past' (personal interview, May 2016). Having come from a country that experienced extreme conflict, Irena was able to empathize directly with those in the 'Jungle'. Empathy derives from subjective feelings of a wider social situation that entail identifying with others and then utilizing those emotions to make sense of the situation.

The emotional labour of volunteering

As noted earlier, 'emotional labour' presupposes the management of emotions in our daily working life (Hochschild 1983). 'Emotional labour' requires the control, management and suppression of emotions when engaging with other people. Although Hochschild focuses on employees managing emotion in the workplace, the concept is useful for volunteers as they have to interact with a variety of traumatic experiences. In everyday life, emotions are something that constantly emerge in interaction with others. Hence, it requires significant 'emotion work' to manage emotions as well as present the emotions that the individual wants to display (Katz 1999). This is amplified when confronted with a variety of stories and images from the camp. As one volunteer demonstrates:

> I think it's traumatic for people [volunteers], they don't expect to see that stuff and that level of suffering, they don't expect to see people having to

> go through that experience. [. . .] I think it burdens people emotionally and mentally. I've come back and have been ok and then I felt very very angry. Angry that it's happening, very upset and devastated by seeing people that are living in those conditions. But then it has motivated me to go back out there, it's my compassion that moves me and to go back out and try to do what I can where I can. (Hannah, personal interview, June 2016)

Hannah draws on a range of emotions when referring to the situation in the camp. Experiencing the conditions is traumatic, yet this leads to a sense of helplessness then anger. As Katz (1999) argues, emotions are a way of an individual taking control of the situation. Hannah highlights how getting angry motivated her to volunteer, which was underpinned by her compassion. The emotional anguish about the 'refugee crisis' needed to be soothed through the direct encounter with the refugees. This wasn't the selfish, personal gain identified by Chouliaraki (2013); volunteering was a way for the volunteers to affect some control of their own emotions by attempting to have an impact in the camp.

The conditions in the camp led many volunteers to be confronted with difficult emotional situations. Volunteers were not professional humanitarians and were not trained in how to deal with this type of emotional labour. Volunteers had to draw on their own 'feeling rules' (Hochschild 1990) in order to navigate their way through the difficult emotions:

> The worst thing is that it's there. One of my worst ever experiences was meeting a kid of fifteen, who came all the way from Syria, his family were dead. I was going down the queue of people outside the clinic, and I said 'What's wrong with you?' and his eyes filled up and said 'You have to help me'. He just arrived, his family were dead, he probably just learned those words, he just wept and wept and wept. He was shaking like a leaf, the weather was terrible, muddy and wet, and I didn't know what to say or to do. At that moment, I just knelt in the mud, sat and held his hands. I don't know how I didn't fall completely and utterly to pieces, but after that when we got a translator to tell us his story, I felt devastated. (Hannah, personal interview, June 2016)

Hannah shows the incredible emotional labour undertaken so as not to 'completely and utterly fall to pieces'. She drew on her own emotional resources to do what she felt to be the right thing to do in that situation and demonstrate compassion to the teenager.

Creating an emotional connection with the refugees strengthened the volunteers' sense of purpose in the camp and made the volunteering experience more poignant. The informants also stressed that leaving the 'Jungle' was emotionally hard because they felt they were abandoning their friends. Hannah, talking about her feelings when returning to Britain, said:

> It made everything else seem a bit meaningless. You come back and there's almost a sense of guilt sometimes, you feel guilty for what you have. (Personal interview, June 2016)

The reflexivity of Hannah reiterated the power and privilege that the British-based volunteers held. Because of the emotional aftermath many experience, volunteers with a background in counselling organized support groups that offered the opportunity to confidentially offload and seek peer assistance after visiting the camp. In this way, further trusted connections among volunteers were created, reinforcing the strong sense of mutual solidarity.

The joy and sociability of volunteering

Despite many of the difficult emotions, volunteering created a significant space for sociality and new forms of community. People from different backgrounds organized aid convoys and volunteered together despite their differing motives and outlooks on life (Sandri 2017). Simmel (1949) argued that a shared sense of purpose helped foster a sense of 'sociability'. On one hand, this can be political. Maeckelbergh (2009) points out that the commitment to a particular cause that rejects inequality inevitably creates unity between individuals. Offering time, ideas and skills for a particular purpose creates social, affective, and self-making effects (Malkki 2015). As Taylor (1989: 769) argues, in relation to the women's movement:

> Personal ties of love and friendship among members were an important cultural ideal. A willingness to shape personal relationships around the cause was, in large measure, what made possible the intense commitment of members.

This point was also made by Oliver, 'I don't think at any point in my life in such a short amount of time I ever made so many new friends that are all so warm and caring and just brilliant' (personal interview, July 2016). Meeting people who shared a similar set of cultural ideals was an important aspect of sustaining personal friendships.

The intense emotion that emerged in the camp helped foster this sense of community. Durkheim demonstrated that the emotional energy of the gathering fuelled a sense of group affiliation and belonging. This sentiment was clearly expressed by Oliver:

> When you go through such incredibly emotionally experiences, you bond very quickly. A lot of us have very strong bonds with each other. I'm sure there's friendships that have been made in the last year that will last a life time. (Personal interview, July 2016)

These regular interactions fostered new and intense relationships and friendships. Emotion helped forge the sense of belonging amongst the various

volunteers, but these extended beyond weekends spent in the ‘Jungle’. Malkki, in her ethnography of Finnish Red Cross humanitarian aid workers, notes a strong desire among her informants to feel ‘part of something greater than themselves’ (Malkki 2015: 9). Similarly, for many volunteers in Calais, one of the motivating forces behind the work in the ‘Jungle’, was the wish to ‘be on the right side of history’, a sentence we heard many times at volunteer meetings. This example signals a strong sense of community based on the work with refugees in Calais.

The improvised nature of the camp and voluntary activity offered many memorable moments. Despite the traumatic aspects, these also provided opportunities for fun, laughter and joy. As Hannah recalls:

> We had a great weekend where we played football and there were women, kids, people from all the globe playing football and everyone forgot everything for a while. Those are the meaningful things to me, being united and connected, having a laugh, sharing stories and sitting around after the football, eating oranges, everybody relaxing and chatting and be able to have a heart-warming kind of experience. (Personal interview, June 2016)

A simple game of football provided an opportunity to escape the harsh conditions of the camp, and to unite and connect with others from all walks of life. The post-match oranges also gave an opportunity to bond and, more importantly, it gave an opportunity to reflect on the warmth and compassion of those taking part.

Conclusion

In this article, we have shown that rather than being an obstacle to research, emotions can open up new levels of enquiry. We wish to make a contribution to the repositioning of emotions inside of the social sciences, both as a subject of study and as an intrinsic part of fieldwork. The case of volunteering with refugees in the ‘Jungle’ has shown that emotions are one of the greatest motivators for action. Emotions emerged as a way of taking control of the situation (Katz 1999). Volunteering can be seen as a way to channel feelings that linger in someone’s life and are otherwise unable to take form. Empathy, we argued, is a multi-layered emotion that motivated people to go to the ‘Jungle’ camp and, at the same time, it is a way to connect with others, be it refugees or volunteers. In this connection, and through the practical engagement with the ‘refugee crisis’, volunteers found ways to resolve feelings of helplessness, heartbroken-ness and anger related to the current situation in Europe. This emotional engagement has also created communities of volunteers who have shared their feelings, both before, during and after their experiences in the camp. Volunteers are part of the same ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild 1983), inasmuch they have to negotiate between the refugees’ suffering and their own anguish about being in the ‘Jungle’.

However, joyous emotions are also at the centre of this experience: volunteers have created deep and meaningful emotional connections with each other and with the refugees. The fact that they shared the particular experience of going to the 'Jungle' has fostered relationships that have become central in the volunteers' lives. These conflicting and contradictory emotions emerged during our research and are best exemplified by Irena:

> I met some fantastic people. Regardless of how bad it was, on the way there and back we laughed because laughter is the best way to deal with stress. And I know this, even during the war for months everything is so bad but you get hysterical and you laugh, and it's a human condition. I really cherish those moments when you cry and laugh at the same time. (Personal interview, May 2016)

In our experience as researchers and volunteers, there is very high level of mutual trust and affection between volunteers even though their relationships are relatively new. Having shared other people's suffering has meant that volunteers have formed strong bonds with each other. All in all, we have argued that emotions necessarily need to be taken into account when looking at experiences of volunteering with refugees because they are central to volunteers' actions, as motivators, sustenance for the group and they help to make sense of the situation.

(Date accepted: April 2018)

Notes

1. The authors would like to thank members of the University of Brighton Social Movements seminar for their insightful and challenging comments on an earlier draft of this paper. We would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive reviews in making this paper better.

2. Help Refugees is a charity that began in the summer of 2015 to provide aid to the 'Jungle'. They have since expanded to support refugee settlements in Paris, Greece, Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

3. Some volunteers from the wider net- work of 500 did not return to the camp because of the emotional impact, but for the purposes of this article, we have focused on those who were members of the core group and consequently, returned to the 'Jungle' regularly.

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