‘Migration crisis’ in the media: Making or reflecting a ‘crisis’?

A Departmental Project
The study

• Across European spaces and across time
  – **Content analysis** of influential ‘serious’/broadsheet press across 8 countries + Arab-language European press
  – **Discourse analysis** of same media
  – Discourse analysis of **social media**
  – **Visual analysis** of media representations

• Communicative architecture of the border – qualitative study in Greece
Researching narratives of the “migrant crisis” in European press

Rafal Zaborowski & Myria Georgiou

Ireland: Irish Independent
The Irish Times

Hungary: Magyar Nemzet
Népszabadság

Serbia: Vecernje Novosti
Blic

Germany: Süddeutsche Zeitung
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Greece: EFSYN
Kathimerini

Czech Republic: Pravo
Lidove Noviny

France: Le Monde
Le Figaro

Arab European press: Al-Hayat
Al-Araby Al-Jadeed
APRIL  first mass drownings
JULY  developing security measures
(Hungarian razor-wire fence, Merkel and the crying refugee)
SEPTEMBER the death of Alan Kurdi
NOVEMBER Paris attacks

• 2 newspapers from each country (4 for UK)
• 20 articles / newspaper for each period
Coverage intensity and sampling

• Differences between Western and Eastern European press
  - April – low coverage in Serbia, Hungary; high in Western European countries
  - By September – high coverage across countries

• 1200 articles for the 3 periods
  (in reality around 1500 articles coded)
Violence
Fear
Contemplation
Pity
Humanitarian
Militarisation
Active
Passive
Narratives of migration

• Reasons for coming to Europe:
  – geopolitical (Greece, France)
  – economy (UK)

• Negative consequences:
  – geopolitical (France, Hungary)
  – economic and cultural (UK, Greece)

• Positive aspects:
  – moral (Greece, Ireland)
  – uncertain (UK)
Competing narratives (East/West and left/right?)

“Europe/country has ethical responsibility towards refugees”

VS

“Europe/country has responsibility to protect its own people”

• **UK:** A distant problem (and keep it like that); focus on (British) volunteer/tourist stories
• **Serbia:** positive national response to refugees (unlike neighbours and many EU countries); praise of own citizens for sympathetic stance
• **Greece:** Greece carries the burden, Greeks compensate for lack of institutional support
• **France:** the need to uphold French values
Differences across time: securitisation

- Gradual shift from humanitarianism to militarization
- Need for European co-ordination
- From sufferers to perpetrators

- UK; Greece; Hungary: Security and border control
- UK; France; Ireland: Terrorism fear and control
Continuities across time: voiceless others

• The Telegraph: Refugees hardly ever speak – stark contrast to frequently quoted state actors

• Irish Independent: Refugees and migrants are spoken about

• Hungarian press: Female refugees are silent, only seen, never quoted
Our next steps

• Discourse analysis of the gathered data
• Social media analysis

Thank you.

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UK Press: The silenced voices of citizens

Sadichchha Pokharel
Leah Selig Chauhan
The Times

- Right-wing
- Compact
- Owner: News UK
- Average circulation (January 2016): 404,155

The Telegraph

- Right wing
- Broadsheet
- Owner: Telegraph media group
- Average circulation (January 2016): 472,033

Broadsheets/quality press with highest circulation
Dominating sources

➔ **UK/EU government**
  David Cameron, Angela Merkel, Viktor Orbán

➔ **Police/border force**
  French police, Hungarian police
Citizens rarely quoted

*Times* sample size: 60

Number of articles specifically about citizens’ experience: 1

“Bavarians humiliate Merkel over migrants” - Bavarian PM humiliated her, no citizen mentioned/quoted.

“Anti immigrant hate crimes soar in Germany” – neither citizens nor migrants quoted.

“Public abandons support for Syrian refugees coming to Britain” – no citizen directly quoted.
Why does this matter?

- Politicians do not necessarily represent the opinion of common citizens.
- Citizens are not given the chance to speak out on an issue that seriously affects them.
- Coverage too government-centric. Classic case of media being the lapdog of the elite?
Elite media = “agenda-setting media” (Noam Chomsky)

Divert attention away from camps/borders

Citizen voice ignored = impact on Britain’s migration policies?
MEDIA AND MIGRATION PROJECT
FINDINGS ON THE FRENCH SAMPLING

Pauline Vidal, Lisa Elkhoury
INTRODUCTION

→ 48 articles coded.
→ Periods:
  - From the 13th to the 24th of July, 2015.
  - From the 16th to the 27th of November, 2015.
→ Two newspapers:

Le Monde

Le Figaro
COMMON GROUND

- Syrians perceived as the only legitimate refugees.

- A crisis which is ahistoricised and depoliticised.

→ Consequence: focus on short-term solutions.
DIVERGENCES

✓ Politics of Pity
- Refugees as victims
- “Vulnerability as bare life”
  (Chouliaraki, 2010)

✓ Empathy → moral imperative to care
  “France, land of asylum”

✓ Solution: relocation schemes within the EU.

✓ Politics of Violence
- Refugees as perpetrators
- Confrontation refugees/borders police

✓ Fear → link with terrorism: terrorists as outside agents.

✓ Solution: border control, sending the military.
THE VOICE OF REFUGEES

Focus on the management of the refugee crisis at both the European and national level rather than on what asylum seekers and refugees have to say/what they feel.
THE POLITICS OF NAMING

“Refugee”, “Migrant” and “Asylum Seekers” are terms used interchangeably in our sample.

Period 16/11/2015-27/11/2015, Le Figaro
91 times refugees, 35 times migrants, 10 times asylum seekers

Period 13/07/2015 - 24/07/2015 Le Monde
97 times migrants, 52 times migrants, 17 times asylum seekers

→ Consequences on national citizens’ attitudes towards them.
CONCLUSION

- Construction of an “other” that we need to manage and control: either violent or passive/victimized.

- Discourses of violence vs. discourses of pity and vulnerability.
Choice of Newspapers

**KATHIMERINI:** Conservative

**EFSYN:** Left-leaning
Initial Proposition

**Expectations:** Respective political stances lead to distinctive reporting

- **EFSYN:** Humanitarian Approach (Sympathetic)
  - People are called refugees
  - Voice of refugees
  - Emotions held by refugees

- **KATHIMERINI:** Conservative Approach (Detached)
  - People are called migrants
  - Comment on the influx of migrants in Greece
  - Statistics to present a well-rounded picture of the problem
Images - EFSYN

July Phase
10.07.2015 - 10.09.2015

September Phase
09.09.2015 - 15.09.2015

November Phase
18.11.2015 - 23.11.2015
Images - KATHIMERININI

July Phase
16.07.2015
17.07.2015

September Phase
07.09.2015
08.09.2015

November Phase
20.11.2015
20.11.2015
Headlines - EFSYN

Έκκίνησε η ανέγερση του φράχτη της ντροπής
*Construction of the fence of “shame” has begun*

Συμβιβασμός - παρωδία για το μεταναστευτικό
*Compromise – Parody about migration crisis*

4.000.000 οι ξεσπιτωμένοι και κατατρεγμένοι Σύροι πρόσφυγες
*Displaced and persecuted Syrian refugees add up to 4,000,000*

Ο τρίχρονος Αϊλάν αλλάζει τις προτεραιότητες της Ε.Ε.
*3-Year old Aylan changes the priorities in the EU*

Λέρος: ατέλειωτος θρήνος και πόνος
*Leros: boundless lament and pain*

Αλλοι 4... Αϊλάν στο Φαρμακονήσι
*4 more...Aylans in Farmakonisi*

Ζώνη Σένγκεν... για λίγους κι εκλεκτούς
*Schengen Zone...only for the chosen ones*

Ενα σωσίβιο ως ενθύμιο του «εγκλήματος»
*A lifejacket as a memento of the “crime”*

Βουβή οργή στη «νεκρή ζώνη» Ελλάδας-ΠΓΔΜ
*Silent fury at Greece-FUROM «buffer zone»*
Headlines - KATHIMERINI

Prostitution and drugs being parts of the Pedion Areos Park

3,000 arrests of illegitimate migrants within 5 days

Municipality and Regional State are in stalemate about refugees

No problem caused by them (refugees), no whining or troubles

They mourn their spouses, children and siblings

Dead baby found in Agathonisi, daily riotings

The two arrested men in Kos are Syrian anti-government dissidents

They transferred migrants without registration

Refugees’ hospitalisation cost adds up to €800,000
Voice of Refugees

Share of refugees quoted per period

Key Takeaways

- **KATHIMERINI**: Refugees are mostly and temporarily quoted following Aylan’s Death

- **EFSYN**: Refugees regularly/consistently quoted, even after the Paris Terrorist Attacks
Conclusion:
Reality reflects expectations about reporting differences and distinctions

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<th>EFSYN</th>
<th>KATHIMERINI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>Detached</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>Slightly Humanitarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>Detached</td>
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Significance for the audience:
✓ The narratives of each newspaper will prescribe different civic participation/action
✓ For a well-rounded picture → consuming news from several media outlets
Thank you for your attention!
The visuality of a ‘crisis’

Photojournalism and the representation of refugees

Lilie Chouliaraki & Myria Georgiou
Vulnerability as bare life
Vulnerability as bare life
Vulnerability as pity
Vulnerability as pity
Vulnerability as hospitality
Beyond vulnerability and Otherness
Conclusions

• Media (can/do) support a possibility of an encounter with strangers – common humanity even if others suffer
• Media (can/do) support informed publics and shared responsibility

...but what’s missing

• Europe’s narrative of ‘the crisis’ is one of threat to its territory, values, identity, and security
• Balanced debate
• More and better contextualization – history; war; geopolitics
• Recognition of who these people are and what they bring to Europe and to Europe’s ethical space
Critical questions

• Do media support ethical citizenship?
  or
• Do media support citizenship of numbness and indifference?

And with what consequences?