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**Boundary Work between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’  
Global News Agencies’ Double Standard on the  
Construction of Forced Migrants by Geographical  
Proximity**

**Woo-chul Kim**

MSc in Media, Communication and development

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The Author can be contacted at: [14tamero@gmail.com](mailto:14tamero@gmail.com)

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# **Boundary Work between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ Global News Agencies’ Double Standard on the Construction of Forced Migrants by Geographical Proximity**

**Woo-chul Kim**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research raises the question of the global media’s impartiality in representing the other. It examines the ways in which the two leading global news agencies – the Associated Press (AP) and Reuters – represent forced migrants with an emphasis on refugees, and aims to discover whether geographical proximity influences their visual portrayal of forced migrants in an era of unprecedented refugee crisis. Combining both quantitative and qualitative research, and drawing on a blend of media and refugee studies, this research analyses photographs from the global news agencies to observe how forced migrants’ identities are constructed, and how their visibility changes by different geographical proximity when considered from a representation and framing studies perspective.

The framework of this research assumes the dynamics of a tension that arises during the process of blurring the distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’, when remote refugees who seek asylum attempt to cross the border to Europe. This forced migration route entails the issues of power, geography, and identity, which are densely intermingled with media representation. Overall, this framework empirically addresses Silverstone’s notion of ‘boundary work’ (2007) in which the media, in particular, play a vital role in defining the proper distance between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Whether it is material or cognitive, forced migrants’ act of crossing a border transforms the moral distance between us and them, and between humanitarian ethos and state sovereignty. In such a context, this research traces the shift in both the identity and visibility of forced migrants in terms of how they are perceived and represented according to the degree of distance between the migrants and the country where the news item is produced.

Thus, applying a theoretical framework combined with representation and framing studies which primarily claim that reality is socially constructed, this dissertation aims to explore the double standard of the global news agencies indicated above, which explicitly emphasizes their objectivity and unbiased news gathering, by analytically comparing remote Syrian

refugee camps and the nearby Calais camps. This research concludes that both of the two global media agencies construct different frames and visibility for remote and nearby forced migrants, transforming their identities from 'Oriental' sufferers to 'folk devils'. When forced migrants are directly related to the First World's context, the two news agencies label forced migrants as a negative homogeneous social group, focusing far more on male adults in contrast to remote refugee camps where women and children are widely covered as a spectacle for Western taste.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

'How can we reconcile our pity for the refugee in a camp in Africa and our fear of the same refugee arriving in our country to seek asylum' (Freedman, 2007)

The fast growing number of refugees is becoming a prime issue across the globe. The number of refugees reached an unprecedented 59.5 million by the end of 2014, and international communities have expressed concerns regarding contemporary refugee issues (UNHCR, 2015). While 86% of refugees were accepted by developing countries, the scale of forced migrants has also surged in the United States and Europe over the past decade (Donato & Armenta, 2011). While some debates revolve around the sovereignty and the jurisdiction of nation states, others are linked to human rights issues (Thorbjornsrud, 2015:39). Against such a backdrop, this research addresses the media's fairness and impartiality in their depiction of forced migrants by analysing the photographs of two global news agencies: Associated Press (AP) and Reuters. This question focuses on whether the media play a proper role in identifying forced migrants and defining the proper distance between 'us' and 'them'. In particular, as Barnett (2004:254) has argued, transnational media carry more weight as the main site of representation and visibility of cultural diversity. The Associated Press (AP) and Reuters are well known as the leading global news agencies with a worldwide presence in various media. Both articulate objectivity as a prime priority. As AP declares on its web, 'The Associated Press have had the privilege of bringing truth to the world abhorring inaccuracies, carelessness, bias or distortions' (AP, 2015), Reuters similarly acknowledges that 'Not aligned or affiliated with any country, culture or movement, our reporting is accurate, timely, objective and guided by our strict editorial principles' (Reuters, 2015).

In relation to media ethics and responsibility, transnational media representation is crucial to migrant groups who have been particularly vulnerable to global risks (Georgiou, 2012:305). The common rhetoric regarding this forced migrant issue is that the media framing of the migrants has the potential to affect public opinion on immigration issues (Freeman et al., 2013). Attracting a mass audience, news agencies not only introduce the issue but also suggest angles as to how to view it (Joffe, 1999:92). In particular, one of the salient trends in contemporary communication is the considerable reduction in textual communication, but a greater reliance on visual images to tell a story (Wright, 2000: 1). In this regard, the ways forced migrants are visually portrayed need to be addressed, since the images play a crucial role in drawing the boundary between 'us' and 'them', thus creating their identities.

However, even though much scholarship has focused on the discourses around issues of media and forced migration, little attention has been paid to the transnational media's double standard on the construction of the forced migrants according to a change in relative geographical proximity. Far more attention has been directed toward an episodic or thematic case analysis undertaken in a qualitative manner. Thus, the distinct framework of this study is based on a comparison between two locations: one is the Syrian refugee camp as a model of a remote forced migrant camp, and the other is the Calais camp as a near-border camp to the United Kingdom. In this process, this work conceptually conflates Silverstone's notion of the media's 'boundary work' with this question from Freedman: 'How can we reconcile our pity for the refugee in a camp in Africa and our fear of the same refugee arriving in our country to seek asylum?' (2007:1). According to Silverstone (2007), the media play such a role in the formation of moral space, defining distance between us and them. In a similar vein, Joffe (1999) stressed the media's role in connecting the other to risk. According to her argument, mass media raise the awareness of risk in our daily lives. People control anxiety related to danger by forming social representations that alleviate the worry by portraying 'others' rather than the self, and the in-group as the more deserving target of danger (Joffe, 1999: 1-2).

In this context, forced migrants, whose identities are socially constructed, are often depicted as spectacles or as threats to the First World. The dominant Western media discourse toward asylum seekers has hostilely labelled them as a threat to developed countries (Buchanan et al., 2003; ICAR, 2004; Saxton, 2003, Smart et al., 2007). Against this backdrop, many scholars have criticised the global media's bias in representing 'the 'others'' in favour of their own taste and hegemony, oversimplifying the rest of the world as homogeneous and primitive through stereotyping and othering. In these criticisms, the media do not merely reflect a universal reality, but rather construct it in asymmetrical power relationships (Hall, 1978).

In consideration of these aspects, this dissertation addresses the juncture of power, distance and the identity of ‘the ‘others’” in the media, and considers news impartiality by analysing the visual portrayals of forced migrants of two global media news agencies. In order to trace the trajectory of the images of forced migrants according to the changes in their geographical proximity, this research builds on representation and framing studies from ‘power and knowledge’ perspective. Provisionally, this framework assumes the migrants’ status transition from ‘spectacle sufferer’ (Chouliaraki, 2006) to ‘folk devil’ (Cohen, 1972) in media representation. Drawing on previous refugee and media studies, this research analyses a total of 273 images from AP and Reuters in a quantitative way in order to identify the pattern and its correlation; following this, the selected photographs are analysed in a qualitative way to explore the semeiotic meanings and asymmetrical power relationships. In this process, this dissertation investigates how the geographical proximity of forced migrants to Europe influences the ways in which global news agencies portray forced migrants in the media, connected to power, distance and identity.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter aims to outline the relevant theories with regard to the ways forced migrants are portrayed and identified by the media, focusing on the visual construction of refugees in the conjuncture of media and refugee studies. After first explaining the current forced migrant issue, this research articulates the indexical relationship between actuality and photographs, on which the impartiality of the news agencies is based, in terms of visual evidence. Then, it links to the counter-arguments that reality is, instead, socially constructed in an asymmetrical power relationship and that the power relationship is embedded in news framing and the identification of ‘others’. Finally, this research elaborates on the patterns in portrayals of forced migrants in the media connected to power, distance and identity, stressing the media’s tendency in defining ‘the other’ as a remote sufferer and a form of societal deviance.

### **Refugees, human rights and problematic identity**

According to the UN Convention of 1951, a refugee refers to ‘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 to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country’ (UN, 2015). In a broader sense, forced migration refers to ‘migratory movement in which an

element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes including people displaced by famine or development projects (International Organization for Migrants, 2015). At the end of 2014, a total of 59.5 million individuals worldwide had been forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, and human rights' violation. The number of refugees is at its highest volume in world history (UNHCR, 2015a).

However, refugees are not a recent phenomenon. Since the League of Nations' first official effort to manage Russian refugees in 1921, international communities have attempted to cope with many kinds of massive dislocations (Gibney, 2010). In earnest, the UNHCR founded in 1951 played a vital role in assisting with voluntary repatriation, local resettlement or third country resettlement based on the Geneva Convention that underpins the currently existing refugee and asylum regimes (Freedman, 2007: 70-75). In this process, complex issues began to arise from the fact that the concept of the international refugee, earnestly developed after World War II, was highly influenced by Western liberal democracy's stance against authoritarianism and communism (Innes, 2010: 462). During this resistant process, the Soviet Union was perceived as 'the other' and the refugee law functioned as a way of reinforcing the identity of Western states. Consequently, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, refugees were no longer in the Western states' interests, nor those of political actors against Communism (ibid.: 462-463). Simpson, who is supportive of this perspective, has observed that Afghanistan only attracted the Western media's attention when the Russians became involved (2001: 108).

However, in an era of forced migration crises, the identity of refugees has been regarded as a multi-dimensional and controversial issue. International migration flows have become increasingly mixed, in which refugees who need international protection also move through the paths of economic migrants who seek a better livelihood. This tendency has blurred the line between them (UN International Migration Policy Report, 2015: 95). In this complex thread, refugee protection generates a paradoxical tension between human rights and state sovereignty (Gibney, 2010). This issue penetrates through the issues of identity, rights and safety (Ullah, 2014: 7-18). In this multiple dimension, the key concept for this research is that refugees are not people who have been expelled but rather are ones who seek help (ICAR, 2012). In Article of the Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights(1948), 'everyone has the right to seek asylum', and the Geneva Convention of 1951 also prohibits states from imposing penalties on those entering 'illegally' who come directly from a territory where their life or freedom is threatened' (Phillips, 2011:2). The UNHCR (2015) also declares that 'a person who has a well-founded fear of persecution should be viewed as a refugee and not be

labelled as an illegal immigrant, since the nature of persecution motivates their undocumented migration’.

### **News objectivity as visual evidence**

Photographs have routinely been used as visual evidence. They have been a major source of information since they were initially used for recording political and industrial change based on positivism (Price & Wells, 1997: 31). Further, Barthes identified the denotative and connotative functions of photographs and stressed that photographs are messages without a code, and, thus, there is no need to ‘divide the reality into unit or code in order to move from the reality into its photographs’ (Barthes, 1977: 15-17). He asserted that ‘pictures are more imperative than writing, since they impose meaning at one stroke without anything diluting it’ (Barthes, 1972:110). One distinct function of photography is to record actuality to capture reality as a world of materiality that is available to rational knowledge (Cowie, 1999: 19). Even though the expectation of seizing reality can be traced back to the ancient Greek philosopher, Philostratus’ belief that a picture is reality (Jolley, 2009), the invention of photography has in earnest nurtured the belief in the camera’s ability to capture what actually happens and serve as a form of visual evidence. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, journalistic imagery has come to substitute drawings and cartoons of witnessed events with photography (Carlebach, 1992).

Moreover, since the Vietnam War, the presence of photography in the media has increasingly captured how news photographs have altered or overturned foreign policy (Perlmutter, 1998:1). Photographs reinforce the belief in journalistic objectivity based on its indexicality (Zelizer, 1998; Banks, 2011). Dimitrova (2011) has also stressed the analogic and indexical attributes of images as a denotative system in which most viewers of photographs may take it for granted that what they see is the reality, due to the indexicality of photography (2011: 52). Sontag has focused on the indexical nature of photography as well. For Sontag, photography provides viewers with evidence of how something or someone appeared (Price and Wells, 1997: 41).

From this perspective, photographs analogically provide one to one relations between images and reality (Dimitrova, 2011: 53). Photojournalism plays a vital role in the modern world with the common belief that images have an increasing power to shape public sentiment connected to public policy (Lyford & Payne, 2005: 119). This indexicality of photography supports the foundation of news agencies’ objectivity. AP acknowledges that they aim to

convey truth to audience (AP, 2015) while Reuters similarly articulates that their reports are objective (Reuters, 2015).

### **Construction of ‘the other’**

However, on this flip side of the indexicality of photography, taking pictures also entails framing through photographers’ selection of what to photograph and their interpretation of the world (Verscheren, 2012: 21). In addition to indexicality and referentiality, photographs entail connotation in which a symbolic system creates meaning for visual depictions (Zelizer, 2010: 3). The ways that meaning and discourse are created and conveyed have been studied in the fields of linguistics and, to a greater extent, semiotics. Many semiotic studies have focused on the image as the most important site of its meaning (Rose, 2007: 77). Saussure asserts that meaning must entail an active process of interpretation (Hall, 1997: 32). In his analysis, ‘meaning exists where its opposite exists. Due to the creation of difference, meanings can be recognised’ (ibid.: 234).

Foucault develops the notion of the relationship between power and knowledge. In his analysis, the history that determines us is not that of the relations of meaning but that of relations of power (Foucault, 1980: 114). According to Foucault, ‘there is no truth outside power, and each society has its general politics of truth: that is the types of discourse which society accepts and makes functions as true’ (ibid.: 131). Said introduces the notion of Orientalism, which concerns the imaginary invention of the Orient as ‘the other’. Otherness is fundamentally necessary to construction of meaning through its identification of ‘us’ and its construction of ‘them’ (Hall, 1997: 235). The Orient is constructed as inferior to Western identity (Said, 1978:22). In his analysis, ‘the imaginative geography which distinguished our land from barbarian land is enough for ‘us’ to set up the boundaries in our own mind, whether ‘the barbarians recognise them or not’. The Orient, in particular the near-Orient is regarded as the complementary opposite to the West (ibid.: 54-58).

In terms of representing otherness, Derrida and Pickering elaborate on the characteristics of oversimplifying ‘the other’. Derrida explains that meaning is reduced and over-simplified in the process of the constructing binary oppositions in the asymmetrical power relations of the binary poles (Derrida, 1974). Pickering similarly identifies stereotyping as the process of one-way interpretation of the other, thereby creating boundaries. According to Pickering, this evaluates some cultural groups in reductive terms (2001:47-48). Stereotyping is at the heart of representing race difference through which the other is constructed, excluded and fetishised under asymmetrical power relationships (Hall, 1997:257). Minh-ha has observed

that anthropology's romance with 'the other' is an 'outgrowth of a dualistic system of thought peculiar to the Occident in which difference becomes a tool of self-defence and conquest' (Minh-ha, 1986: 14). Additionally, Orgad (2012:82) articulates how the media construct 'ourselves' and represent 'otherness', and concludes that the media play a key role in reinforcing patriotism and nationhood. She argues that images on international channels and the Internet have an impact on our sense of national belonging through symbolic distancing and estrangement (ibid.: 86).

In terms of the link between knowledge and geography, Foucault articulates that the discourse on territorial partitioning and boundary-making is crucial to how the treatment of space is bound up with geographical knowledge (Crampton, 2007:224). Crampton stresses how race can be used to think out space and the cartographic imagination (ibid.: 225), exemplifying the US case in which most undocumented immigrants were characterised as Mexican, even though a significant number of undocumented immigrants were from Europe. As he explains, 'It is the other that threatens the purity of race' (Crampton 2007: 238-239). Harvey has highlighted the cognitive maps in geographical 'knowledges' and has observed that some regions are demonized (2004: 211). According to Harvey, as human populations identify themselves territorially, the cartographical imagination is at the centre of consciousness and identity construction (Harvey, 2001: 225).

Drawing more on images, Nichols clearly demonstrated the relationships of images, power and ideologies in media representations. Nichols argued that 'ideologies, which attach themselves to imaginary sense of self, offer representations in the forms of images, concepts, cognitive maps, world views to propose frames and punctuation to our experience' (1991: 8). According to Nichols, images form into systems of signs that help constitute the ideologies determining our subjectivity (ibid.: 10-11).

### **News frames and visuals**

Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001) argue that if the photograph is purposeful, it is important to know what editorial judgements have been made and how these have influenced the selection (2001: 65). Their argument is well captured by framing studies. The frame is conceptualised as a schema of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label (Goffman, 1974: 21). Framing essentially entails selection and salience. 'To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in the communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman, 1993: 51).

Many scholars have contributed to framing theory (Edeman, 1993; Entman, 1993; Fiske, & Taylor, 1991; Galtung, & Ruge, 1965; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Gamson, 1992; Gitlin, 1980; Goffman, 1974; Iyengar, 1990; Lang & Lang, 1983; Ostgaard, 1968 Tuchman, 1978). Their common account of media framing is that news frames are conceptual tools that the media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information (Neuman et al., 1992:60).

News media play a significant role in the process of defining social problems, their causes and their solutions (Kim & Willis, 2007). In a similar vein, Gamson (1992) has claimed that the media can affect the way the audience thinks about the issue by focusing on certain aspects of an issue. In this regard, reporters and editors construct news: 'they apply interpretive frameworks as a means to structure information into coherent stories' (Ryan, 1991: 75).

In this respect, many scholars have analysed photographs from this ideological perspective (Falmy, 2004; Griffith and Lee, 1994; Jackson, 1996, Pavik, 2001). Images are powerful framing tools in a sense that they are less intrusive than words, and audiences are more likely to accept a visual frame without question (Dimitrova, 2011: 50). As Gamson and Stuart have claimed, visuals offer interpretations and symbols that suggest the core frame of the issue (1992:60). In everyday life, visuals help audiences understand social phenomena, legitimating the grounds on which some interpretations can be favoured and 'others' not. In a similar vein, Griffin analysed the films, and concluded that 'photographs symbolize generalities, offering transcending frames of pre-existing interpretive schema that lead the audience to interpret information' (Griffin, 2004: 384). Brantner et al. (2011:527) also highlighted the importance of visuals in the sense that images elicit emotions more than texts (2011: 527) while Moller has argued that 'images have an authority over the imagination' (1999:47). Cornelia et al (2011) have examined the effects of visual framing through their conduct of experiments, and have found that visual framing involves four functions: 1) emotional response; 2) evaluation of communicative quality; 3) journalistic credibility and objectivity; 4) perception of actor representation.

In addition, Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001) have demonstrated that meaning is embedded in the photographic convention, as Hall argued that 'news angles can directly intersect with the ideological theme' (1973: 231). The photographers expertly use photographic convention to express objects through framing, gaze, the camera's point of view and position (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001: 73- 90). In this regard, the selection process of news photographs is influenced by news values and ideological treatment (Hall, 1973). Thus, reading media imagery is an

active process in which social location and context can produce quite different decoding (Gamson et al., 1992: 375).

### **News and forced migrants as deviance**

Silverstone identified the media's role in the formation of social, civic and moral spaces as boundary work (Silverstone, 2007:5). Boundary work involves 'the continuous inscription of difference in texts and discourse, which endlessly plays with difference and sameness in diverse ways in which dramatic characterisation and narrative construction takes place'. Thus, the media's boundary work requires imagination, understanding and a duty of care (ibid: 19-47).

However, it is not a recent phenomenon for the media to treat minorities and 'others' as a threat to society. The media play a key role in constructing collective identity, thus positing the relationship between security and migration (Innes, 2010: 458). The media construct everyday images of 'us' and 'the others', fixing and disseminating those images (Joffe, 1999: 29). In a considerable amount of Western news, refugees have long been depicted as negative in a stereotypical manner (Article, 19; Bank, 2001; Buchanan et al, 2003; Coole, 2002; Freeman, 2007; ICAR 2004, 2012; Keleda, 2014; Robins, 2003; Speers, 2001, Verschueren, 2012; Wrights, 2002). A common ground for their criticisms is that Western societies ignore many of the complex aspects of migration (Benson, 2013; Horsti, 2007; Suro, 2011), and that migrants are depicted as a homogeneous group. (Thorbjornsrud, 2015: 773). In addition, many scholars noted that the media emphasise the negative aspects of forced migration by focusing on threat, and illegality and constructing forced or irregular immigrants as vicious "others" (Van Dijk, 1993; Horsti, 2008; Mathews, & Browns, 2012, Thorbjornsrud, 2015). Thorbjornsrud has recognised that the media support the government stance that legitimises restrictive and inhuman immigration policies (2015: 795). Banks (2011) has explored the visual representational pattern of asylum seekers and refugees, and has categorised the types into three sequential stages: 1) the faceless and de-identified strangers; 2) spoiled identity construction with stigmatization; 3) the confirmation of deviance. Makki (1995:8) identifies the media's tendency of universalizing the refugee as a special kind of person, not only in the text, but also in photographic images, while Wright has similarly observed that Afghan refugee women are often treated as an insidious encroachment by media (2004:98). Rogers and Thorson have called attention to the stereotypes of photographs in the New York Times, recognizing a pattern in which ethnicity and gender has been stereotyped for the past five decades (2009:8). Further, based on Said's Orientalism (1978), Verschueren (2012) has studied the Western media portrayals of Afghan female refugees, and concluded that Western

media often oversimplify and decontextualise international news. All of these findings can be potentially linked to Grimshaw's research on media, refugees and crimes, which shows that unbalanced and inaccurate media images increase community tension (2005:10).

### **Distant suffering as spectacle and nearby suffering as deviance**

The theories referenced above demonstrate that identity and power are densely interwoven. At the heart of the representation of 'the other', distant sufferers have repeatedly fallen into the position of mere spectacle. There is an asymmetry of power between a safe spectator and a vulnerable sufferer where television portrayals are concerned. As Chouliaraki has observed, 'who watches and who suffers reflect the manner in which differences in economic resources and political stability lie' (2006: 4). Chouliaraki has criticised the media for often oversimplifying distant sufferers as a homogeneous mass through the annihilation of the sufferer, as well as hierarchies of place and human life (ibid.: 104-110). For Chouliaraki, images play a vital role in aestheticising human suffering in postmodern times in which images override facts. This perspective is in line with Baudrillard's conceptualization of 'simulation', which refers to mediation without a referent (ibid.: 51).

In a similar vein, much literature on framing studies demonstrates that the media play a key role in defining deviance in society. In terms of deviance, Cohen (1972) has identified how the media react to such individuals by amplifying deviance, which consequently leads to increased public anxiety. According to Cohen, the role of mass media is vital in defining the deviant for society. Mass media repeatedly present deviance and sensational crimes as having news value, and inform the audience of the boundaries of deviance through labelling, stereotyping and myth-making (Cohen, 1972: 16-44). This tendency is presented in both texts and images from the initial stage in which emotive symbols are used for a labelling process to the circulation of composite stigma attributable to such persons (ibid.: 54). The symbolic power of words and images plays a crucial role in the formation of stereotypes. Notably, image-making through stereotyping serves as an integral part of identifying deviance. Cohen has asserted that logic is not necessary for this attribution (ibid: 57-75).

In terms of risk, Joffe (1999) has emphasised the relationships between the 'others' and risk in media representations. In her analysis, 'others' are denounced for having contributed to polluting society (ibid.: 27). She emphasizes the emotional factors elicited by representation as a key component of responses to risk (ibid.: 109). According to Joffe, 'People control the anxiety evoked by dangers by forming social representations which alleviate the worry by

portraying 'others' rather than self and the in-group, as the more deserving targets of danger' (ibid.: 2) and the mass media play an significant role in circulating knowledge about risk.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND CASE STUDIES**

Following the Syrian refugees' scenario route to Europe, this work addresses the change in the ways the transnational news agencies - AP and Reuters - represent forced migrants according to geographical proximity from remote Syrian refugee camp to the Calais camp in Europe. This research selected AP and Reuters, because both of them are world leading news agencies with dominant distribution power throughout the world, but with a different geographical context. AP is based in the US, while Reuters is based in the UK.

This work builds on Silverstone's insights into the media's boundary work (2007) in which the media define the distance between 'us' and 'them', and Said's notion of Orientalism that is 'a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over Orient' (Said, 1978: 85). In order to identify the detailed performance of the two transnational news agencies, this work adopts semiotic approach from representation studies on identifying the 'other'. As with Said's notion of postcolonial discourse, Orientalism being the basis of this analysis, Chouliaraki's work (2006) associated with representing distant suffering is mainly applied to analyse the portrayals of the Syrian camp refugees; in particular, her analytical terms, 'hierarchy of place and human life'. Finally, Cohen's notion of 'folk devil'(1972) based on framing theory and Joffe's work which links risk to the other, are key tools to analyse the Calais case in a social semeiotic manner.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research attempts to examine whether the geographical proximity influences the ways the global news agencies– the Associated Press and Reuters –represent forced migrants by analysing their photographs of the Syrian refugee camps as remote suffering and the Calais camp as nearby suffering. The key questions of this research are:

RQ1) To what extent does the geographical proximity change the representation and visibility of forced migrants in AP and Reuters' news photographs between the Syrian camp and the Calais camp?

RQ2) How is the identity of forced migrants constructed and changed by varying degrees of geographical closeness?

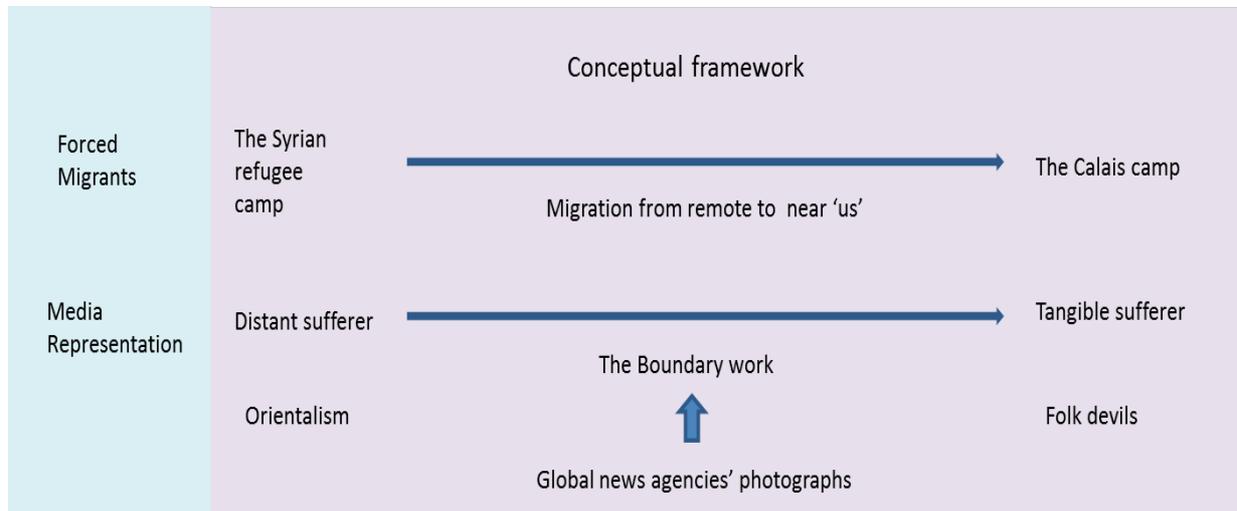


Figure 1 – The map of the framework

## METHODOLOGY

In order to examine the extent to which the geographical closeness of forced migrants to Europe influences the global news agencies' portrayals, this research employed both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Content analysis (CA) was used to identify the pattern of the representation, and semiotic visual analysis was secondarily employed to overcome quantitative fragmentation in the nature of the texts (Henson et al., 1998).

### Content Analysis

Content analysis refers to a research technique for the systemic classification and description of communication content based on certain pre-determined categories. The priority of this methodology is technological objectivity, which requires clear categories of classification for reliability (Wright, 1986: 125-126). The purpose of this method is to identify the occurrence of specified characteristics of texts, representations and images (Hansen et al. 1998: 32). It has been widely employed in media framing studies to identify the tendencies of media coverage or international news flows (Goffman 1974; Entman, 1993; Fiske & Tayler, 1991; Galtung, & Rouge 1965; Gamson, & Modigliani, 1989; Gitlin, 1980). More importantly for this

research, the majority of gender and ethnicity studies have also employed content analysis to explore how individuals are depicted in the mass media. (Rogers & Thorson, 2009:8).

### *Sample*

A total of 273 images were collected from the photo archives of AP and Reuters. The images were then categorised into four data sets for analysis of the ratio of the variables (AP Syrian, 103; AP Calais 53; Reuters' Syrian camp, 58; Reuters Calais camp, 59). This research used a keyword search in the online archives of AP and Reuters to harvest units of analysis. This analysis included all of the photographs that appeared in each of the archives during the period between 9th May and 9th July; irrelevant or duplicated images were erased. In order to compare the images of remote and near forced migrants, the same combined key words were used: 'Syrian refugee camp', and 'Calais refugee camp'. However, it is noted that due to the complexity of their identity and naming in the media, 'Calais refugee camp' did not provide the relevant data. Consequently, using a secondary keyword, 'migrants' was applied on both sites; it obtained an equal result due to a relatively reliable algorithm and a limited number of photographs.

Following Krippendorff's guidelines (2004) on content analysis, this research applied a census for the selected period in which all the data were examined. The method was selected for three primary reasons. First, the frequencies of the images also served a crucial purpose for the visibility of migrants. Second, the data were manageable in size. Third, this research was primarily based on the change in the ratio of images rather than change in individual frequencies. Krippendorff (2004:120) articulates that there is no need to reduce data by using relevance or random sampling in case that research aims to discover an aspect about the press coverage of a given event, and its data was manageable. As far as the research period is concerned, this study examined the period between 9th May and 9th July. Its rationale is presented below.

- It has been a prominent issue to which the media continues to pay attention.
- In order to address the research question, it is crucial to trace demographic change and social behaviour pattern change. However, in the preliminary sampling test for event-centric analysis, the distribution was skewed for the event itself rather than for migrants. Hansen et al. (1988) have demonstrated the reason for avoiding seasonal variations and events affecting the nature of coverage over a selected period of time (Hansen et al., 1998: 103), which corresponds with this research, due to its focus on the generalisation of forced migrants.

### *Coding*

Drawing on the research questions, this research reviewed the previous studies that focused on social semiotic approaches to camerawork associated with representing the 'others'. Jewitt and Oyama (2001) also explained the ways of analysing camera conventional work including distance, point of view and framing (2001: 134-56). After a piloting test, photographs were categorized and coded as follows: 1) media outlets, 2) distance of the refugee camp, 3) main actors, 4) social behaviour, 5) tone, 6) social distance between photographers and forced migrants, 7) point of view, 8) eye contact with refugees, and 9) migrants' facial expression for the coding schedule. (See appendix#1). The coding principles are presented below.

- The duplicated photographs were removed from the samples in order to avoid counting them more than once. If there was more than one actor in a photograph, the main actor described in the caption and cutline of the photograph was primarily coded. If there was no specific subject in action, a dominant individual was defined as being larger, relative to 'others', and more centrally located. Cropped photographs taken in the same or similar position were erased from the samples as well.
- The main actor was coded to identify the difference between the two camps. This is an analytical category dealing with action that influences the spectator's orientations towards sufferers (Chouliaraki, 2006: 88).
- In terms of refugee behaviour, it mainly aimed to analyse the action type of people in the images. According to Goffman (1976), photographic behaviour delivers social meanings. In this research, the previous studies from Fahmy (2004) and Banks (2011) guided to develop this coding. Fahmy(2004: 94) categorized motionless women starring at the camera in a photograph as passive and submissive based on Leeuwen and Jewitt's theory (2001). Moreover, Banks (2011) explored the relationship between images and the deviant. He classified the visual scenarios in the discovery of refugee deviance as: 1) faceless and de-identified strangers; 2) implicit stigma and spoiled identities; 3) unmasking deviance.
- In analysing the tone of the photographs, which was subject to subjective and arbitrary judgment, the caption was referenced based on Barthes' (1987) notion of 'anchorage', meaning that texts play a role in fixing the meaning of images. For example, the image associated with word, 'deviant' or 'flood', was coded as negative.

- Social distance and eye-contact were coded to identify the distance between photographers and forced migrants in consideration of Falmy's previous analysis of 'Afghan women' (2004). The camera angle can be analysed to demonstrate the potential meanings (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). Distance could demonstrate the underlying symbolic value. For example, Berger (1991:26-27) categorized 'the signified' based on the shot size from close-up to full shot. In a similar vein, Hodge and Kress also linked physical relationships in space to set of meanings, specifically in terms of closeness and distance (1988: 52-78).
- In terms of framing, this work transformed Semetko and Valkenburg's categorisation of the frame (2000) - conflict, human interest, responsibility, and economic consequences - into a more relevant coding frame for this research: human interest, crime and order, poor living conditions, Western hope, and moral obligation after an inductive piloting analysis of the samples. Benson's (2013) law and order frame as well as Garcia (2008) and Suro's (2011) victim and right frames were also examined for this coding unit.
- The final coding unit, the facial expression of forced migrants, was coded on the grounds that facial expression indicates human emotions. It was also selected because this research expected that it would provide more of an aggregate dimension of images including the intimacy between photographers and forced migrants.

Based on the findings of frequency analysis, this research conducted correlation and crosstab tests for selected variables. In an analysis of a plethora of media content, the generalisation of the relationship between measures beyond a particular sample is crucial (Stempell III et al., 2003: 153). After examining the ratio of each variable, the correlation was checked in order to explore the relationships between variables for both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

#### *Inter-coder reliability*

This research coding was performed with the assistance of a mainstream news photographer with an MA in media and journalism, who could understand the camerawork. The inter-coder reliability was estimated by coding a random sample (n= 80). The reliability was 92.2% based on Holsti's methodology (1969).

## **Visual analysis**

Berger (2011:214) identified five difficulties of CA: 1) finding a representative sample; 2) determining measurable units; 3) obtaining reliability in coding; 4) defining terms operationally; and 5) ensuring validity and utility in one's findings. In this regard, content analysis has been repeatedly criticised for its quantitative nature, its fragmentation of textual wholes, its positivist notion of objectivity, and its lack of a theory of meaning (Hansen et al., 1998). In order to overcome the limitations of content analysis - in particular, the fragmentation of each element - this research supplemented secondary visual analysis. A total of 22 images were selected to explore the asymmetrical relationship between power and identity in the photographs.

According to Hansen et al., 'Semiotics is primarily concerned with how meaning is generated at the level of signs and their relationship to other signs within sign-system' (1998:204). The semiotic analysis was specifically set up to work in decoding the way visual components construct knowledge by focusing on the veracity of certain images, and uncovering the way a certain type of meaning is constructed (ibid.: 213). Much previous literature has employed visual analysis to examine the underlying meanings of migrants' images at the symbolic level (Dogra, 2012; Fair, 1996; Verschueren, 2012; Wright, 2000), decoding the way in which the visual component helps authenticate the news report and its projected status as a provider of knowledge (Hansen et al., 1998: 213).

In this research, the base analytical tool was 'sufferers as spectacle', following Chouliaraki's work (2006) as well as the notion of social deviance as folk devil from Cohen (1972). In addition, it involved purposive camerawork that required interpretation since previous studies demonstrated that camera angle is an important element to map out potential meanings (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). Along with these guidelines, Nichols' (1991) insight on editorship in image production provided the insight for analysing camerawork, including point of view, and shot size in relation to an asymmetrical power relationship.

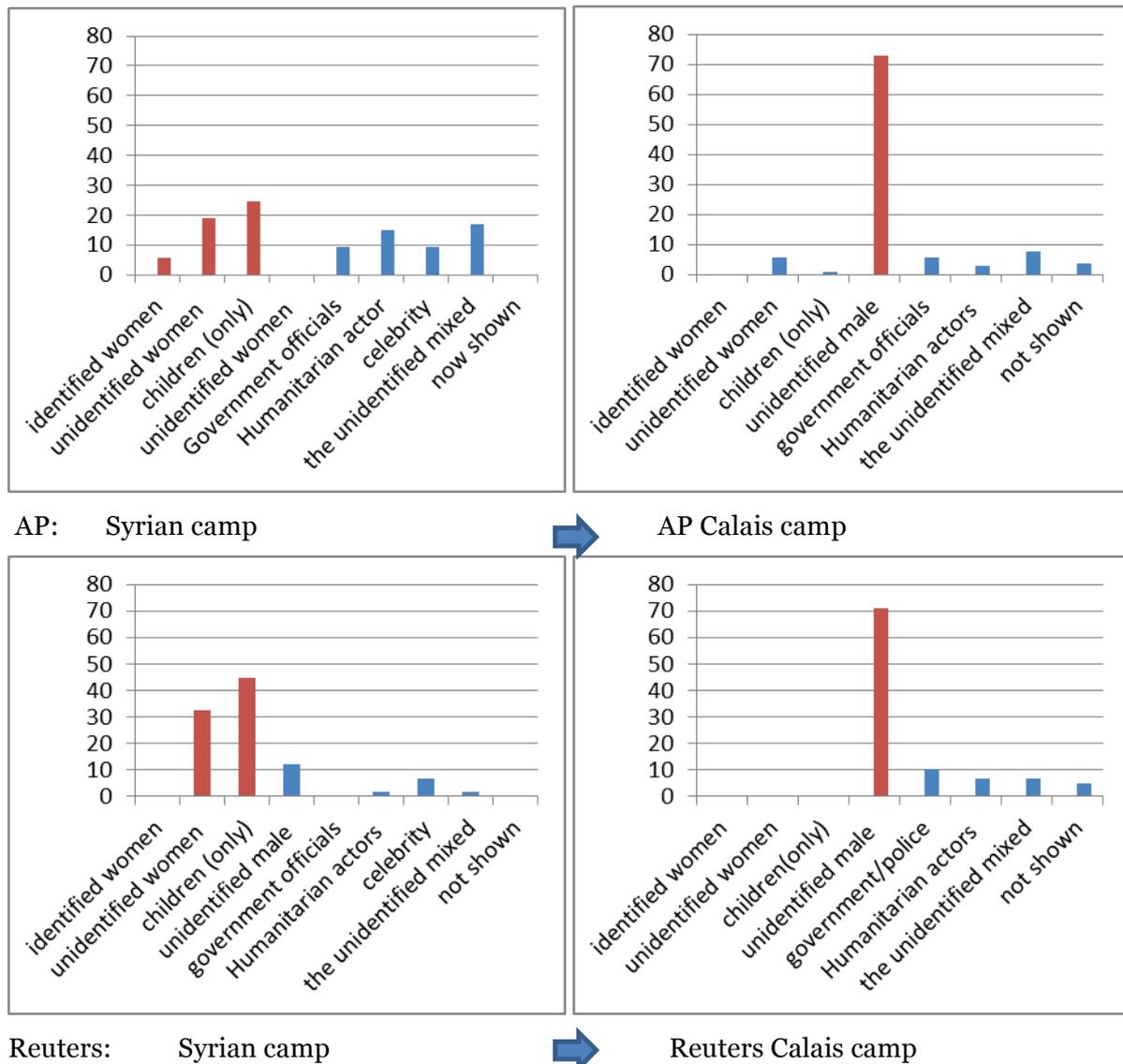
## **FINDINGS**

This chapter details this study's findings in two sections. In the first section, the findings of the content analysis are summarized; in the second section, the interpretations of these patterns are presented combined with the conceptualised theories.

## Content analysis

Six major differences in the ways that forced migrants were represented became evident from the findings: main actor; social behaviour; social distance; image tone; frame; facial expression visibility.

*Main actor: Shift from women and children to male adults*

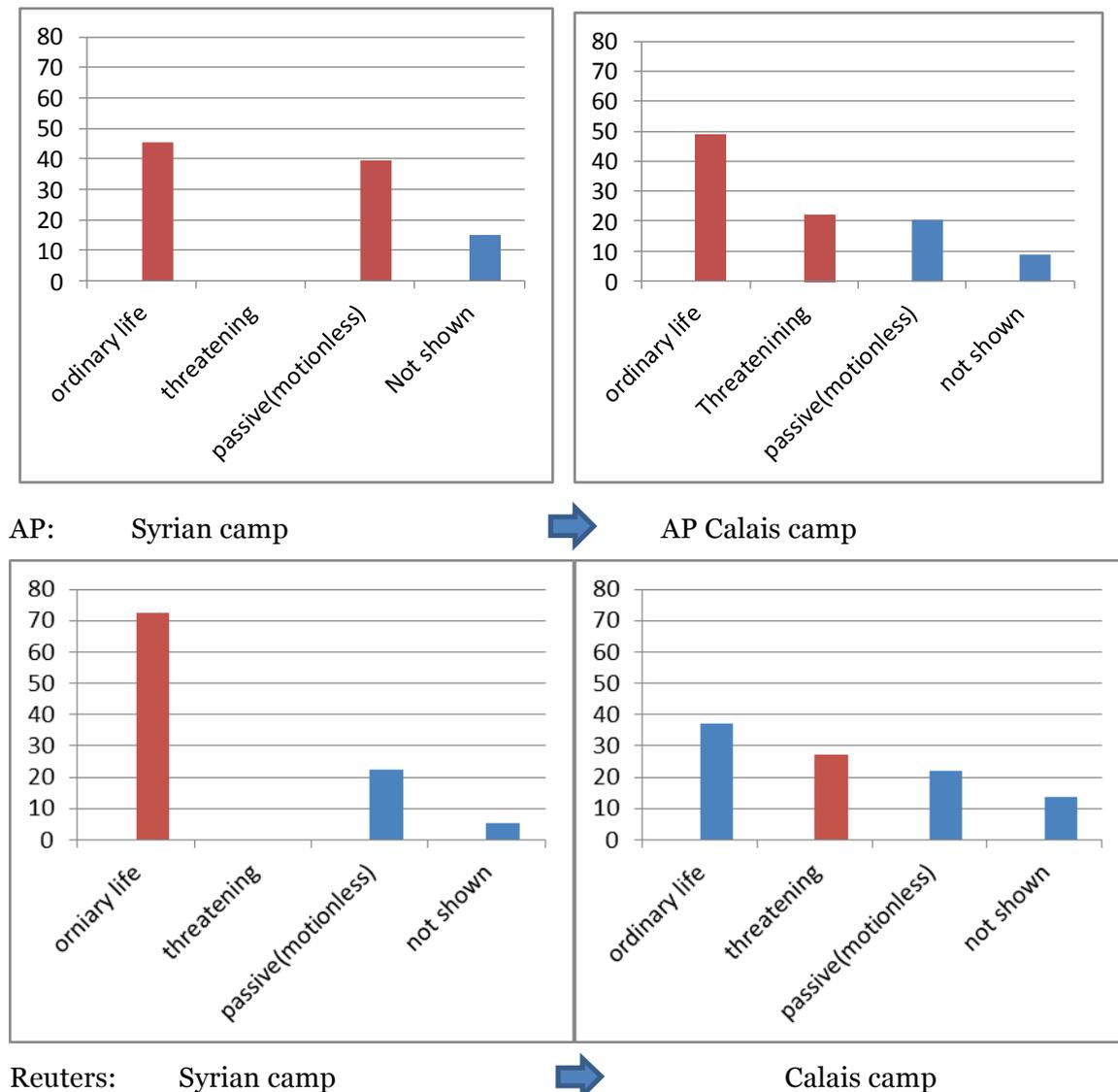


Graph #1: Change in main actor

The representations of forced migrants in the two camps demonstrated the different focus on main actors in the photographs. In the Syrian camps, both AP and Reuters showed the same pattern for main actor selection. In AP photographs of the Syrian refugee camps, the majority of the main actors were women and children. A total of 49.1% were unidentified women and children (women 24.6%; children 24.5%) while Reuters filled the photographs with 87.6% of

women and children. One striking point is that AP did not cover any single male refugees in the Syrian refugee camp, even though Reuters focused far more on women and children during the researched period. AP paid more attention to international organisations, government officers (24.4% combined) and celebrity (9.4%), in contrast to a weak focus on those actors in the Reuters’ photographs (celebrity 6.7%). This pattern dramatically changed when both AP and Reuters covered the Calais camp. Here, by stark contrast, both AP and Reuters predominantly focused on male adults: 72.8% and 71.2% respectively. As AP just filled their photo archive with only 6.8% of women and children in Calais, Reuters did not cover any female migrants during the period. The next most frequented main actors were police officers and the control authorities. Humanitarian actors infrequently appeared in Reuters’ photographs of the Calais camp.

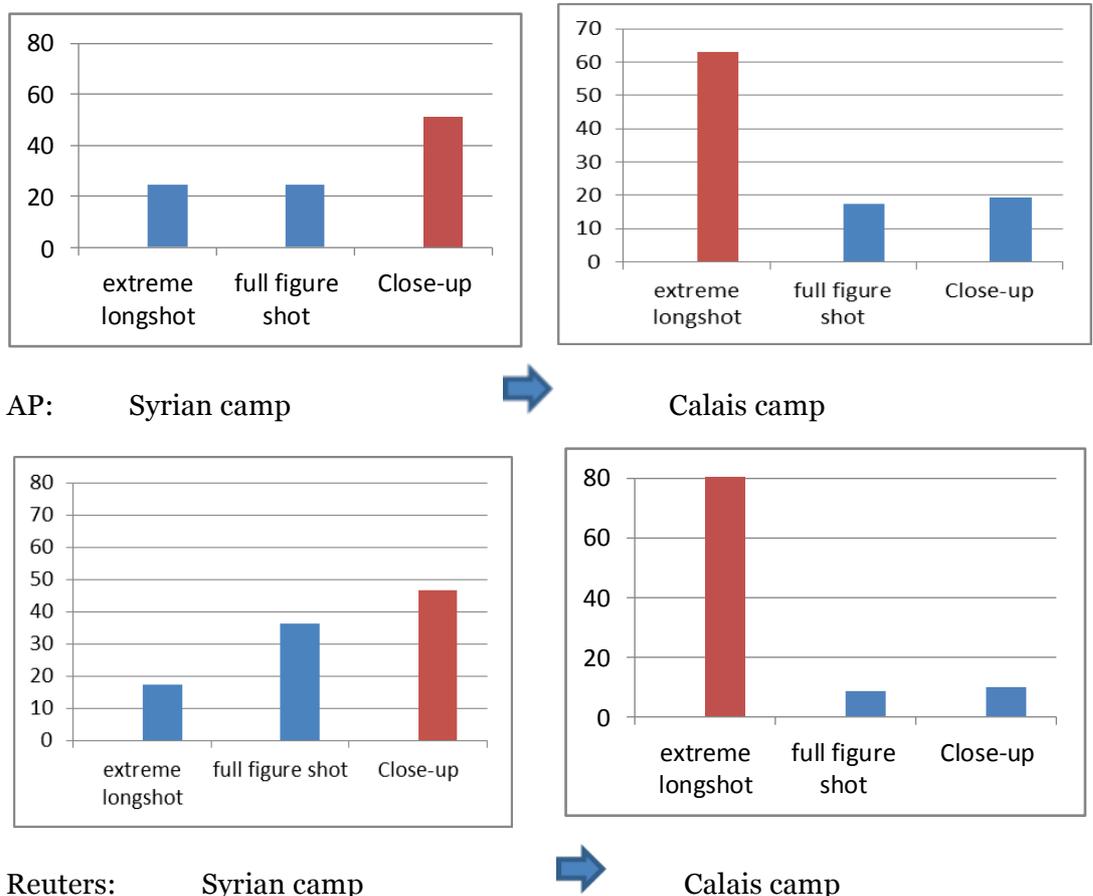
*Social behaviour type: shift from sufferers to deviance*



Graph #2: Change in behaviour type

In terms of the behaviour type, AP provided more coverage of the daily lives of the refugees (45.3%), followed by the ‘passive (motionless)’ group (39.6%). In the Reuters’ photographs of Syrian refugee camps, even though the order of the distribution showed a similar trend, this tendency was more amplified. A total of 72.4% belonged to ‘the ordinary life’ category while 22.4% of the samples were in the ‘passive (motionless)’ group. In contrast to the pattern for the Syrian camp, both AP and Reuters shifted their attention to the aggressive behaviour, focusing on ‘crime and order’ in the Calais camp. A total of 22.3% of the sampled forced migrants showed aggressive action in AP’s photographs. Similarly, 27.1% of Reuters’ total photographs during the research period belonged to this type of action. One noticeable difference between the two news agencies was that AP focused more on ‘ordinary life action’ (48.5%) than Reuters (37.3%). This was partly because AP covered a welcome centre in Calais while Reuters did not. Even when removed from the welcome centre, AP did not focus on people’s violent actions as much. With regard to this difference, it may be because AP’s public guidelines, available on their webpage, state that they do not use the term ‘illegality’ for forced migrants.

*Social distance: shift from close-up to long shot*

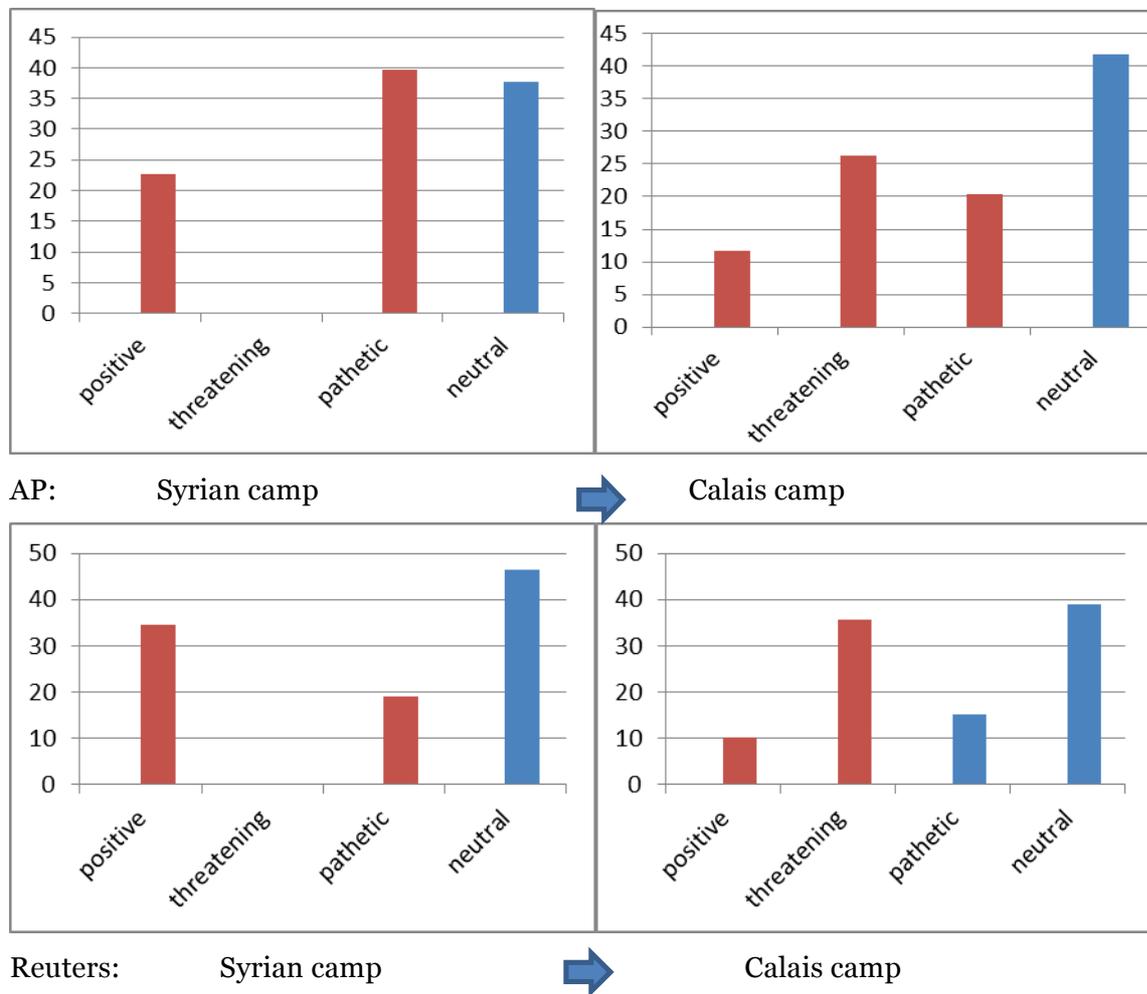


Graph #3: Change in social distance

In terms of social distance, close-ups were used the most for both AP and Reuters' photographs, which accounted for 50.9 % (AP) and 46.6 % (Reuters) in the total of the sampled photographs. Including full figure shots, the figure reached more than approximately 80 % for both AP and Reuters.

This tendency significantly changed when they covered the Calais camp. In the case of AP's photographs, the use of close-ups reduced from 50.9% to 19.4%, while the use of long shots increased by 40%. In a similar pattern, Reuters used close-up shots only 10.2% of the time while 81.4% of their photographs were captured with a longshot. This figure implicitly informs the far distance between photographers and forced migrants.

*Tone: shift from positive to negative*

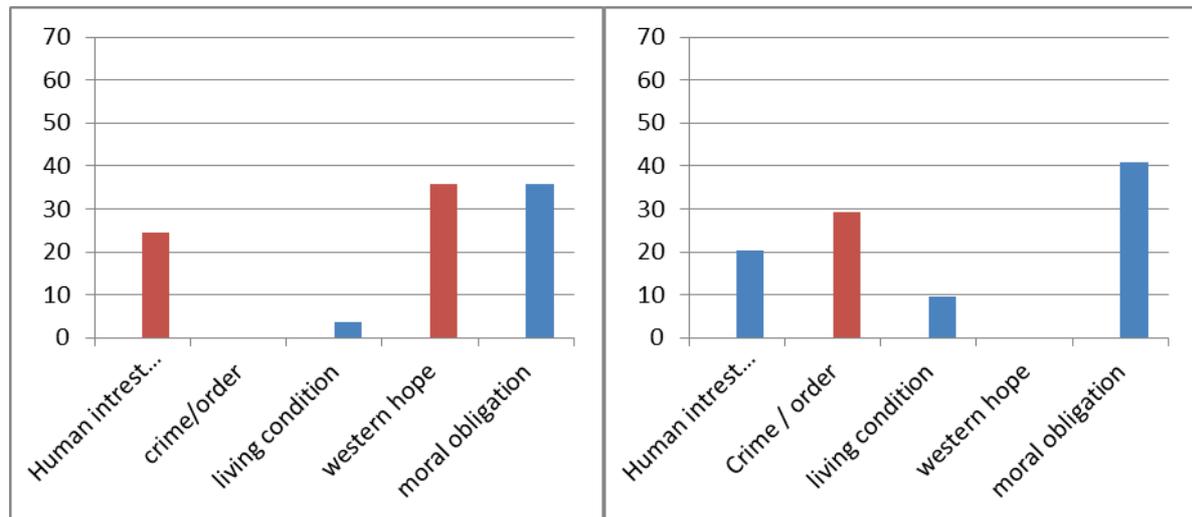


Graph #4: Change in tone

As for the image tone analysis, a clear dichotomy was found between the two camps. In the case of the Syrian refugee camps, more positive tones appeared: AP, 22.6 %; Reuters, 34.5 %. The most noticeable tonal change in the portrayals of forced migrants when they covered the

Calais case was an increase in negative tone. In covering the Calais camp, a negative tone was more frequently created by both of the two global agencies than in the Syrian samples, while the positive and pathetic tone was significantly reduced. In particular, Reuters' photographs fell more into this category (35.6%), along with the selection of action and the camerawork. However, it is noticeable that the positive tone in Syrian camps was not created by Syrians' potential actions; rather, it was constructed by Western events such as the World Refugee Day. This is explained in the Visual Analysis and Discussion chapter.

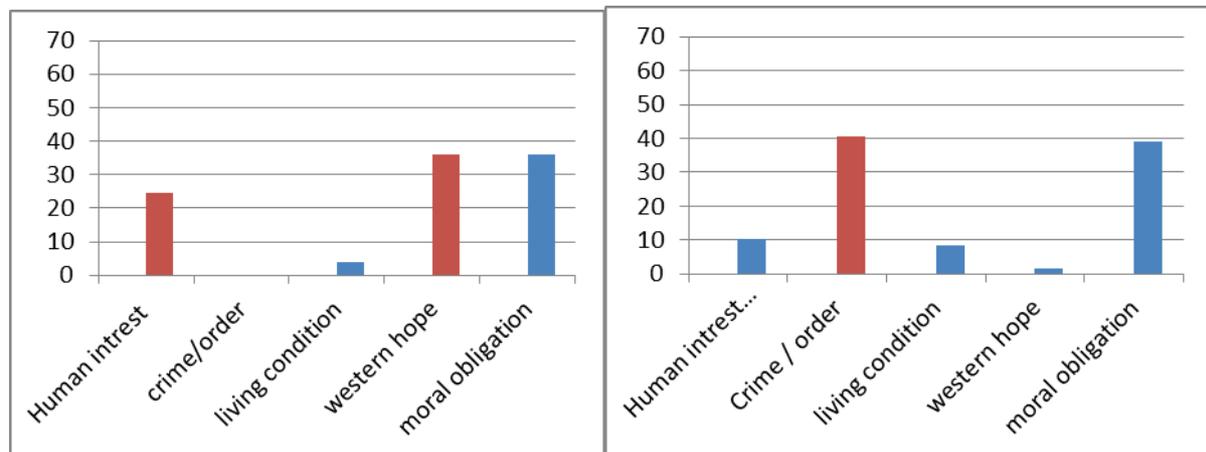
*Frame: shift from human life to crime*



AP: Syrian camp



Calais camp



Reuters Syrian camp



Calais camp

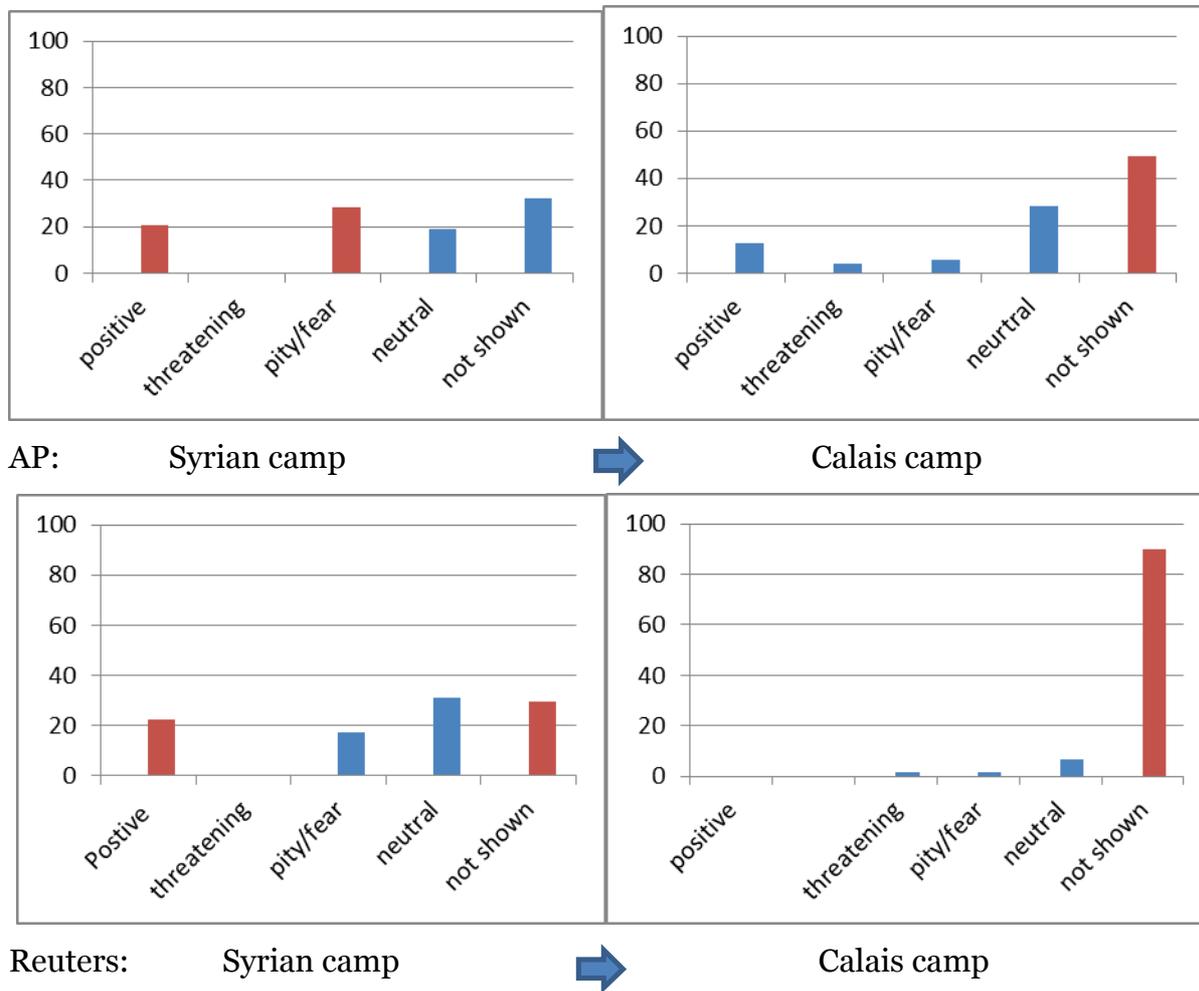
**Graph #5: Change in framing**

With regard to frame analysis of the Syrian refugee camps, 'moral obligation' and 'Western hope' were the most salient patterns in framing the refugee camps. Whereas AP focused more

on celebrities including Angelina Jolie (35.8%), Reuters created more photographs of the World Refugee Day event and ordinary life in the camp.

In the case of the Calais camp, framing as ‘human interest’ declined; instead, framing as ‘crime and order’ was salient. This is particularly true in Reuters’ coverage (40%) in contrast to the equivalent in AP’s’ photographs (29.1%). In terms of framing as ‘human-interest’ that showed the individuals or their lives, AP attempted to cover more ordinary life with a human-interest frame.

*Facial expression: shift from visible to invisible*



Graph #6: Change in facial expression

As for the last coding unit worthy of mention, the facial expressions of the forced migrants in their photographs showed the stark difference between the two camps. In the Syrian refugee camps, AP showed 20.8% of positive faces, which is next to the pathetic facial expression (28.3%). This is also true in the case of Reuters, which captured 22.4% of bright facial

expressions out of the total sample. The two news agencies showed similar distribution in terms of facial expressions in the case of the Syrian camps.

However, this distribution significantly changed when they covered the Calais case. While AP still retained 12.6% of positive facial expressions in their photographs, Reuters by no means showed positive expressions of the forced migrants. The most noticeable change was approximately 90% of Reuters' photographs in the Calais camp did not capture facial expressions. The primary reason was because of the use of long shots, which implies the far distance from forced migrants, and the photographers' position behind the people. Both AP and Reuters' photographs taken in the Calais camp seemed to show the photographers' clearly remote positions away from the people.

Another salient difference to be addressed was visibility. When the news agencies covered distant sufferers in the Syrian camps, they came closer to the forced migrants and captured far more women and children on camera. This pattern changed in accordance with the geographical position, that is, when the 'others' came near 'us'. In the Calais camp, the visibility of women and children significantly declined in the ways in which the photographers were positioned away from the sufferers and captured the scene of the chaotic and messy camp. They focused more on the deviance of male adults in comparison to the pattern of the Syrian camps, in which women and children frequently appeared to Western audiences as pathetic sufferers. From the findings of the research, this tendency is more obvious in the case of Reuters in the UK, which has a more direct political and social context. In terms of the exclusion of female refugees, refugee statistics clearly reported that approximately 50% of the world's refugees were women (Downing & Husband, 2005: 793). This pattern involved not only the selection of the main actors, but also the on-location distance between photographers and forced migrants. Thus, the lack of facial expressions, which potentially created a less intimate feeling, can be linked to social distance and purposeful camera work, along with the selection of the people on camera.

#### *Correlations between variables*

In analysing the correlations between variables, there turned out to be clear correlations between main actor and behaviour type, social distance, image contact, and facial expression ( $P < 0.001$ ). The findings implied that photographers took a different approach to the two different forced migrant groups. In particular, photographers' position and demographic selection of forced migrants on camera were significantly different between the two camps. Despite the different percentage, the patterns of both AP and Reuters did not show the significant difference (See appendix #2-3).

Frame was associated with social behaviour, which supported framing theories, while social distance and facial expression were also linked to the tone of the images. Overall, the data demonstrated that photographers' selection and angles of the people on camera, and their position, widely affected the sentiment and meaning of the images. Coming close to the forced migrant is, thus, a matter of media ethics in relation to editorship with one-way interpretation (See appendix #4).

From a cross tabulation analysis (See appendix # 5- 7), it is noted that when forced migrants came to Calais - the territory of the First World - migrants' individual identities became invisible and forced migrants fell into the position of homogeneous deviant migrants. The tone of images changed from positive or pathetic to threatening. In the relationship between main actor and tone, it is also noted that images of children and women were used to create pity sentiment, while those of adult males were used for threatening sentiment. In a similar vein, women and children were photographed more for the human-interest frame, while adult males were more used for the 'crime and order' frame.

## **Visual analysis and Discussion**

The findings of this content analysis primarily support previous refugee and migrant studies that have criticised media bias against forced migrants (Article 19; Banks, 2011; ICAR, 2012; Don & Lee, 2014; Hufker & Cavender, 1990; Innes, 2010; Moore, 2013; Ryan, 2011; Wright, 2002, 1010). In relation to power and knowledge, based on the content analysis, the findings demonstrated the dynamics from remote 'Oriental' sufferers to social deviance. As Innes (2010) has argued, the media play an important role in stereotyping and spoiling their identity, which leads to stigmatisation of the 'others', whether as Oriental sufferers or deviant 'folk devils'. Borrowing Innes' (2010) expression, this is the moment when, 'the threatened became the threat' (2010:456). Forced migration is an important social expression of global connectedness in which multi-layered reasons are inscribed in the persecution or conflicts (Castles, 2013: 17) However, in short, the global news agencies, which publicly proclaim their impartiality, have oversimplified and depoliticised forced migrants in several ways and have repeatedly fluctuated between Orientalism and social deviance through stereotyping and othering. In this context, material geographical proximity, which inextricably involves cognitive proximity, influences the ways in which the media represents forced migrants.

### **Syrian Camps as a spectacle of the ‘Orient’**

Following Chouliaraki’s analysis (2006) of distant suffering, the findings of this research supported the fact that the visualisation of suffering does not necessarily humanise the sufferers. Rather, it dehumanises and aestheticizes them. In this analysis, women and children comprised the majority of the total images of forced migrants in both AP and Reuters’ photographs of the Syrian case. At first glance, the two global news agencies seemingly elicited universal humanitarianism towards the women and children. These patterns are not new at all, but women and children are conventionally portrayed in other examples of distant suffering such as famine issues. This pattern has been long encountered by many criticisms. For example, Dogra (2014:12) argued that the construction of difference between the West and the Orient is a central tenet of colonial discourses, which still dominate the forms of the representation. According to Dogra, colonialism created a number of modalities, such as stereotypes that show the difference between ‘us’ and the ‘other’ (ibid.: 13). This research conformed to Dogra’s argument based on Orientalism in three ways: 1) contrast between the First World woman and Third World women; 2) the decontextualized refugees; 3) constructing identity as confined only to that exhibited in the camps.

#### *Contrast between the First World and the Third World women*

There was a clear distinction between the First world woman and Third World women in the case of the Syrian camp. In image #1 below, Third World women in traditional clothes merely wait for the celebrity from the First World to visit their camps, while Angelina Jolie demonstrates the brisk manner of a professional. The motionlessness of the women was constructed right behind the fence as if they were caged. These photographs of Syrian women were distinct from the way in which they were portrayed alone without First World women, or other First World celebrities, in which they were portrayed in ordinary actions that created a brighter tone.

In terms of representing gender, even though Goffman (1976) had previously articulated the fact that women are portrayed as passive and dependent in terms of gender representation, this pattern, nevertheless showed a different pattern from Goffman’s generalisation, since it was relatively negative in comparison with the First World woman, Jolie. This finding better relates to Dogra’s (2014) argument that such a pattern reflects colonial discourses by defining Third World women’s position. The fence not only materially divided the border but also drew a symbolic, distinct boundary between the First World and the Third World. From the findings, this narrative repeatedly continued when western politicians visited the camp. Based on the content analysis, AP noticeably focused more on images of this kind.



Images #1- AP's Syrian camps

*The decontextualized refugees*

Another visual pattern of the two global news agencies, which showed the westernized eyes on the refugee issue, is that their images de-contextualised and depoliticised refugee issues. This pattern and the superiority of the First World woman mutually reinforced each other. These conventional images made the refugees' lives look ordinary compared to the Western life style. Away from their distress in reality, the pictures below (images # 2 and 3) documented this tendency, implying that refugees were doing well under Western protection. The boy and girl in the picture below (left) were in Western style clothes and enthusiastically walked hand in hand with Angelina Jolie. Another example was found in AP's Syrian refugee photographs, where a girl gifted a bouquet of flowers to Jolie in a tiny formal cloth. It again de-contextualised the situation in which they were forcibly migrated from their hometown while Jolie was highlighted as a Western symbolic do-gooder.

From the camerawork perspective, the use of bright lenses that created a shallow depth of field, purposefully removed the material background in this respect. From the researched sample photographs on that day, it was recognised that refugees were prevented from coming close to Jolie. In this regard, asymmetrical power relationships were reproduced, and embedded by the preferred Western views of marketed political communication that attempted to create the sentiments that the politicians sought (Street, 2003: 92).



Images #2 – AP's Syrian camps



Images#3 - Reuters' Syrian refugee camps

### *Constructing identity as confined only to the camps*

Even though many photographs of Syrian refugees were positively or neutrally depicted in contrast to Calais forced migrants, the increasing criticism in this pattern stems from the fact that their sufferings were ahistorical and de-contextualised. In the refugee camp, most of the things seemed to be in order, with women watching TV in a clean tent, a mother smiling in front of the tent and children playing soccer. Inside the boundary of the steel-fenced refugee camps, no suffering was noticed, which suggested that they were well protected by the international community. In Chouliarakis's terms (2006), the hierarchies of place are embedded in those pictures.

In this context, these findings share a common ground with the representation of global poverty that many institutions and NGOs employ. 'Innocent children' is a category that shows the same tendency in images related to global poverty and refugee representation. As Fair has argued (1996), the images of refugees are similar to those of the famine in Africa. For example, in Dogra's analysis of INGOs messages (2014), 42% of the total messages showed children who stared at the camera passively. The close-up of the needy-looking children's faces can be read as sad, hurt, appealing or complaining (Dogra, 2014: 34). In a similar way to the findings of this research, Dogra's work shows Third World women as the second most popular group and as an example of what Kelleher has called the 'feminisation of famine' (1997:2). The frequently used angle was refugees contained by a fence. The fence drew a clear line between refugees and viewers. The findings of this research repeated the conventional representation that treated the 'others' as passive and inferior, confining them in a fenced society.

In a similar vein, Fair and Parks have similarly criticised this convention by arguing that labelling the refugee as being confined to refugee camp is consonant with a long-naturalised association of non-Western people's place (Fair & Parks, 2001: 36). They suggested that even though the refugee camp provided access to humanitarian aid, it also positioned refugees as

objects of knowledge (ibid.: 40). In accordance with their argument, this research found that women behind the fence can be categorised into two types: those who passively wait for Europe to accept them and those who seem to live an ordinary life in the far away fenced society. Malkki argued that such representation gives a distorted perception that the refugee camp is the place in which they find new allegiances and create new histories by reconstructing new identities (1995: 235-258). They are de-territorialised and de-politicised ones that merely fell into the Western taste under asymmetrical power relationships between the First world and the Third World; between photographers and the refugees - that is, in Chouliaraki's terms (2006), inside the semiotic system and outside the semiotic system.



Images #4 – AP's Syrian refugee camps

### **Calais camp: from Orientalism to 'folk devil'**

According to Silverstone (2007), the media play a crucial role in defining distance between 'us' and 'them' that is a moral distance. In contrast to images depicting migrants as distant sufferers, AP and Reuters showed a different prism in depicting the Calais forced migrants. From the content analysis, the tendency or the portrayals can be divided into two categories: 1) 'crime and order' framing; 2) homogenizing as one deviant group. Both of these were reinforced by the camerawork and social distance from forced migrants.

#### *'Crime and order' framing as a de-contextualised deviant group*

The key finding was that forced migrants were barely identified as different individuals or diverse groups; they were homogenized as one, with a focus on their deviant actions. According to Al Jazeera News (2015, 3rd Aug), there were assumed to be many ethnicities with different individual purposes, from seeking asylum to economic migration. However, the findings of this research demonstrated that they were not treated as diverse individuals

but as a homogeneous deviant group, focusing in detail on their attempt to cross the border to the UK. Cohen conceptualised the relationship between images and the stigmatisation of groups. According to Cohen (1972), in the initial stage of the labelling process, emotive symbols were used to provide a composite stigma attributable to persons (1972: 54). As he explained, 'News is a condition of structural conduciveness for the development of a hostile belief which, in turn, has to sensitize the new crowd' (ibid.: 163). In this respect, it is worth emphasizing this pattern, in which the identity and the motivations of forced migrants are oversimplified, amplifying violence or deviant behaviour.



Images #5- Reuters' Calais camp

Analysing their camerawork better captured this particular intention. The picture (images # 6 and 7) below demonstrated intentional camerawork. By using stark bright-dark contrasting lighting, migrants were intentionally portrayed in a negative tone. It skilfully reduced the identical faces, which functioned to set up a precondition for labelling them as one homogeneous group. This technique, which is known to create a mood of anxiety and tension, has long been adapted by conventional 'noir and horror' genres in order to increase anxiety (Blaser & Blaser, 2008). A photographic composition is another factor that purposely creates negative sentiment. In image #6 below, oblique camera angles created different sentiments from the use of a standard camera angle. Following the noir film convention, it created more anxiety by focusing on their deviance.

Overall, this finding concurs with Innes' previous study (2010) which demonstrated that 'the asylum seekers were portrayed as a homogeneous group that created the illusion of a unitary actor that is compatible with traditional understandings of security. International refugee law was written with individual security, particularly that of the persecuted person, in mind' (Innes, 2010: 461). From these camerawork patterns, this research also supported Bank's analysis (2010) in process of deviance: 1) faceless and de-identified strangers; 2) implicit

stigma and spoiled identities; 3) unmasking deviance. This pattern also conformed to Cohen's analysis in the process of 'folk devil' (1972) in a way that stigmatization of migrants as such took place in a repetitive process, which may lead to moral panic.



Images#6 – Purposeful camera work (oblique angle and high angle)



Images #7– Purposeful camera work (Using lighting contrast)

### *Constructing the 'others' and the visibility of forced migrants as human*

The increasing number of asylum seekers amplifies the strength of 'the other' in terms of the threat to societal identity (Innes, 2010: 471). As shown in image #8 below, their identities were constructed as similar to the conventional terrorist figure type. The stereotypes of the Islamic world as a threat have been well documented by much scholarship (Falmy, 2004; Rane et al.; 2014; Verschueren, 2012). In contrast to their self-proclaimed impartiality and objectivity, AP and Reuters failed to create a variety of agendas or separate identities for forced migrants in their photographic news coverage. However, at the same time, they oversimplified the forced migrant issue by labelling them as a threat to society.



Images#8- Stereotypes of the other

This stigmatisation was more noticeable when analysing the change in the distance between photographers and migrants in the two different camps. In contrast to the pattern of Syrian

refugee camps, in which the majority of the photographs captured the faces of the refugees, whether in close-ups or full-shots, AP and Reuters widely used long-shots from long distance in the case of Calais. This raises a question of on-location media practice and ethics. Even without being close to them, how could they define the proper distance and identify their individual backgrounds? The importance of the distance should not be ignored in that photographers are unable to identify the people without being close to them. This perspective was supported by Shoemaker and Reese's argument (1991) that media content is influenced by journalists' socialisation and attitudes, by the various standardised routines for organising the media and by many forces outside of the newsroom. In this process, the distance between photographers and migrants has an impact on the characteristics of representing the other. In addition to the selection of main actors, or the distance, another major tendency was to focus on the poor living conditions. It is crucial to construct 'the other' to separate the human condition of spectators from that of sufferers (Chouliaraki, 2006: 109).

As already explained in the results of the content analysis, the invisibility of women holds its significance. In contrast to the pattern of the Syrian camp, in which women and children predominantly appeared in AP and Reuters photographs, in Calais, the main actor has changed to male adults. More noticeably, no woman was shown in the Reuters' photographs during the research period. This pattern revolved around the double marginalisation of women, and concurred with the findings of the refugee studies, stressing that 'the primary images of asylum seekers and refugees were male' (Freedman, 2007: 18) Freedman asserted that the motivation of female refugees is diverse and that they suffer from the gender-related persecution in the process of migration, and in the camps (ibid: 35-68). The UNHCR (2015) has also demonstrated that approximately 50% of refugees are women and that women have more complex problems in forced migration.

The two global news agencies again failed to provide a wide range of migrant issues, and limited the visibility of forced migrants. On a practice level, as extreme long shots dilute the forced migrants' identities, their visibility becomes more vulnerable. This orientation was more recognisable in Reuters' work, in which the ratio of extreme long shots reached over 80%. As a news agency that covers more of the socio-political context of the UK, Reuters' far greater use of long-shots coincides with the invisibility of individuals, in particular, women. This tendency of Reuters was comparable with AP's portrayals of individuals in Calais (See image# 9). Given all together, the material proximity of 'the other', which inextricably influences the cognitive closeness, induces a change in Western spectators' perception of forced migrants, from distant Oriental sufferers to threatening 'the others'. In this regard, the mediation between spectator and sufferer is political space (Chouliaraki, 2006: 22).



Images #9– AP’s portrayals of individuals

## CONCLUSION

By combining quantitative and qualitative analysis, this research has examined the extent to which geographical proximity has an impact on the ways the global news agencies’ represent forced migrations. Following the reported Syrian refugees’ scenario route to Europe, this study compared the visual portrayals of two different forced migration camps in order to explore the news agencies’ morality of defining the proper distance between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Consequently, this research raises questions with regard to power, geography, and identity. This is, from Silverstone’s perspective, the philosophical issue of universalist-relativist interpretation, involving ‘judgement that goes beyond the self to include the other’ (2007: 7).

The findings of this research are as follows:

- In the coverage of distant suffering, the main actors taken in the photographs were women and children, while, by contrast, male adults were highly visible in the near-border case. This finding coincided with the previous colonial discourses surrounding Orientalism in the former case and ‘folk devil’ framing in the latter case.

- In a remote refugee camp, eye contact frequently took place, which implies that the distance between the photographers and the refugees was relatively closer. More close-up shots supported this pattern. By contrast, in covering the Calais camp, the use of long shots with a zoom lens was more recognised. This implies a change in the position of the photographers, which was further away than in the Syrian camps when they covered distant suffering.
- In terms of action types, refugees in the Syrian camps involved typical daily occurrences such as children playing outside, or women watching TV while in Calais the forced migrants are increasingly depicted as a homogeneous and violent group. This tendency was reinforced by intentional camerawork such as using oblique angles or extreme contrasting lighting in some cases.
- The facial expressions of forced migrants in the two camps demonstrate the tonal difference in the photographs. More smiling faces are noticed in the Syrian refugee camps in contrast to the invisibility of facial expressions in the Calais case.

From the findings of content analysis, it is observed that when forced migrants came near to the UK, their various identities became invisible and fell into the position of a homogeneous deviant group. Consequently, the tone of images changed from positive or pathetic to a threatening tone.

Overall, in this analysis, the on-location media practice, which created the major differences, was diverse, from the selection of people on camera to the social distance between photographers and sufferers. In this respect, the mediation between spectator and sufferers is a political space in which asymmetrical power relations are embedded not only inside photographs but also outside photographs.

Combined with visual analysis, these findings supported the previous refugee and deviance studies tackling the issue of representing 'otherness'. In the qualitative analysis, when the agencies depicted remote sufferers, there was a clear distinction between 'us' and 'them'. In the fence-surrounded camps, refugees were decontextualised and portrayed as having an ordinary life. This was particularly identifiable in the coverage of World Refugee Day on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, when a famous Western actress, Angelina Jolie visited the camp. Children in Western style fashion enthusiastically walked hand in hand with Jolie in a controlled situation. More importantly, there was a stark contrast in images between the First World woman and the Third World women. While Jolie displayed her professional brisk confidence in the camp, the refugee women waited for her hopelessly behind the steel fence as if she would rescue them. This contrast was reinforced by intentional camerawork. As Said (1978)

argued, images served to support the imaginative geography that distinguishes between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

This tendency to depict Oriental sufferers transitioned to more deviant-centric approaches according to the change in geographical proximity to the UK. In covering forced migrants in Calais, whether they were or were not asylum seekers, or men or women, they were portrayed as a homogeneous deviant group. Following Joffe’s (1999) argument, ‘the other’ is socially constructed as a risk in the face of new danger in contrast to the human rights’ guidelines stressing that labelling illegal immigrants as people who have a well-founded fear of persecution is prohibited (Phillips, 2011:2). ‘Images are a place where collective social action, individual identity and symbolic imagination meet the nexus between culture and politics’ (Harvey, 1992: 3). Moreover, as Cohen argues (1972), images are emotive symbols that stigmatize a certain type of group. In an era of forced migrant crisis in which migrants are more vulnerable to global risk, it is, thus, imperative to explore the global media’s ‘boundary work’ that defines the proper distance between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

However, this research’s analysis (n=273) was by no means exhaustive. It is hoped that further research will continue to explore the global news media’s representation of forced migrants by tracing all the way from refugee camp to asylum in the First World.

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