Textual and visual analysis of the refugee crisis through four European newspapers

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Abstract

The refugee crisis is an ongoing challenge for the European Union. Refugees from the Middle East, the majority of them Syrians, are risking their own and their children’s lives, putting their money –both figuratively and literally speaking- on the chance of surviving the almost six-year long war in Syria.

The brutal death of thousands of refugees in the Aegean Sea’s waters was the reason why the EU mechanisms have started to mobilize seeking a solution. The ‘problem’ was not possible to be hidden under the carpet anymore. It was reaching the highly developed Europe’s doorstep.

The media coverage of the crisis has started to emerge in a greater extent throughout 2015, as a result of the ‘explosive’ increase of the refugee flows. In the beginning it was just a synthesis of innumerable personal tragedies, before it became an official European ‘problem’.

If we ‘leap’ through time and refer on today, we can observe that the massive death toll in the Mediterranean was only the starting point of a vicious circle, which is strongly related with developmental, political and communication issues.

Through this thesis my goal was to examine how four European newspapers (which represent both Europe’s North and South) have reported on the biggest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the World War II. What strikes me as a very interesting aspect is that the refugees, as representatives of the developing countries have come in the territory of the European developed countries. Therefore I believe that there is space for a wide development dialogue and I would like to examine at what point the media seized this opportunity to reflect on development issues, through their cover stories.

I have performed a combination of quantitative/qualitative methods of analysis. A full scale content analysis of 85 articles has been performed as the quantitative part and this was my primary research method. My secondary method of analysis was about the visual elements used by the newspapers and I have relied on semiotics to examine 141 photographs.
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INTRODUCTION

“Development is much more than just a socio-economic endeavour; it is a perception which models reality, a myth which comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passions”¹

Development issues are clearly attached to this crisis, as besides the Syrian refugees, who represent the 49% of those crossing the Mediterranean in 2015 -around half a million people were Syrians escaping the war in their country², 84% of those arriving in Europe came from the world's top ten refugee producing countries, “strengthening UNHCR's belief that most of the people arriving in Europe were fleeing war and persecution”³. Afghans accounted for 20% and Iraqis for 7%⁴, while refugees have also left Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria, Cambodia, Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and more.

The most common route was the following; From Syria to Turkey and then to Greece, including the journey through the Mediterranean Sea, despite the weather conditions.

Those who have survived, continued their journey through FYROM, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, before the ‘Promised Land’ of the Old Continent; Europe’s northern, developed countries, such as Austria, Germany and Scandinavia.

In the meantime, thousands of refugees had drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, including kids and even infants. The data presented by the UN Refugee Agency are indicative of the drama. The Mediterranean Sea arrivals for 2015 were more than one million (1.015.078), almost five times more than the same rates for 2014 (216.054). Which, in turn, was almost four times higher than 2013 (59.421)⁵.

A lot of emphasis and research have been put in the past about what is happening in the developing countries of the South. But now, as I have mentioned before, the developing countries somehow ‘came’ to the North, even though there are many differences among developing countries. An extremely large number or people from

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² UNHCR 2015
³ ibid
⁴ ibid
⁵ ibid
the developing countries have come to Europe in a very short period of time. Since
development is being studied extensively in the North, then this case seems as a great
opportunity for the European countries to explore the characteristics of the developing
countries at their own territory.

The thesis will provide an answer to the question: “How did Greek and English
newspapers cover the refugee crisis?”

The sub questions to probe this question are going to be:

1. How did the newspapers report regarding to individuals engaged to the refugee
crisis? Did they mostly focus on politics, aid assistance, the refugees themselves?

2. Was there follow-up material with an intention to facilitate understanding, or a
dialogue on proposed and realistic solutions about the crisis? Or was the reporting
sensationalist and even underpinning prejudice?

3. Was the reporting active or passive? Did the newspapers assume an active role in
preventing conflict or clashes, or did they regard themselves as decisively neutral
observers?

4. How have the refugees been treated in the newspapers reports? Was there any bias
noticed regarding the presentation of the refugees through the images used?

Before moving to the analysis, I will provide the theoretical framework on which this
study was based. Thinking around development, culture and communication, but also
the representation of refugees as “other” has got central role and it will be discussed
in chapter 1.

In chapter 2, I will describe how the whole research has been conducted, the
justification for the newspapers selection, the sample collection procedure, the
justification for selecting the two methods of analysis, but also the problems I have
faced. The analysis and discussion of the content analysis will be presented in chapter
3, while those of the semiotic analysis in chapter 4. The conclusion is presented in
chapter 5.
1. Theoretical Framework

1.1. Development

1.1.2. Exploring development

Development is an extremely complex notion and there is no such thing as a clear, solid and abiding definition. By providing a number of different thoughts on development, I will set the framework of this elusive notion with regard to my case study.

Existing in parallel realities is nothing new for the developed and developing world, but the current refugee crisis is another example of this coexistence and notions such as culture and international cooperation are key factors to this equation.

Nothing is taken for granted or settled for good. It is the evolution of development throughout the 21st century that makes it necessary for the relations between developed and developing countries to be examined thoroughly. Besides, development is “a moving target situated somewhere in between underdevelopment and post-development”6.

1.1.3. Development and International cooperation

Many arguments have been made in the past about the labyrinthine notion of development; that “there are numerous difficulties with defining its meaning”7, that it “seems to be impossible to pin down in a neat definition”8, or even that “its contours are so blurred that it denotes nothing – while it spreads everywhere because it connotes the best of intentions”9.

It is because of those complexities that it might be useful if a certain framework is set, depending on each analysis. In a general sense, development has been defined as a

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vague notion of societal and economic progress\(^{10}\) but is that really the case? The constantly evolving character of development has replaced progress with prevention as the objective of development\(^{11}\). This transition from one developmental objective to the other is reflected on the refugee crisis, as the EU is just trying to prevent the refugee crisis from expanding, instead of seeking possible solutions with potentials of creating progress.

The very taken-for-granted quality of ‘development’ leaves much of what is actually done in its name unquestioned\(^{12}\); with regard to the refugee crisis, several months have passed with EU countries trying to simply limit the refugee flows. What is important is that the crisis is not one country’s ‘problem’. The parameters are innumerable and international cooperation seems as an absolutely necessary prerequisite for creating progress and for having chances for any solution to be found.

The refugee crisis also has to be connected to reconceptualization of culture, as development studies is an area which “concerns itself with the myriad of intended and unintended changes which societies are undergoing in the process of modernization, and suggests ways of addressing the crises –poverty, disease, displacement, war, environmental degradation, repression- which this process produces”\(^{13}\).

It is common for post-development theorists to renounce the ideal scenario of creating a perfect world through developmental contributions (a thought that many developmental theorists have expressed in the past), as “development has evaporated and after some decades, it is clear that this field of knowledge is a treacherous, unexplored land\(^{14}\).

An effective way of dealing with any issue that has developmental characteristics attached is by taking into consideration the most relevant variables. In this case study, thinking around culture, migration and communication seem necessary, so that international cooperation can be achieved and a possible solution can be found. The


importance and relevance of all three of the above mentioned notions are separately discussed in the following chapters.

1.2. Migration

“Human beings have always moved in search of new opportunities, or to escape poverty, conflict or environmental degradation”15

The challenges of international migration are multiple but the difficulties that migrants are facing and the way that immigrant-receiving societies are responding to migrant flows are even greater.

Like every story, this too, has two sides. On the one hand, “the growth of transnational society and politics is a beneficial process, because it can help overcome the violence and destructiveness that characterized the era of nationalism” and on the other hand “migration can change demographic, economic and social structures, and bring a new cultural diversity, which often brings into question national identity”16.

Both arguments have their intrinsic importance but we have to take into consideration the specific characteristics of each case. In this case study, one thing that has to be underlined is that the examined period (September 2015) was also the apogee of the refugee crisis, hence there was no time for relying on theoretical inputs and historical contexts.

The main concern of all the engaged factors of this equation, political, developmental and communicational, was –or at least should have been- to prevent any more casualties during the journeys and then to find a vital solution; not to stop the refugee flows, because firstly “human beings have always moved in search of new opportunities, or to escape poverty, conflict or environmental degradation”17 and secondly because similar examples can also be depicted in Europe not too many years

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16 Ibid, p. 3-4
17 Ibid, p. 2
ago, as “at the beginning of the 1990s, the wars in Croatia (1991-1995) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) forced millions of refugees to flee from their countries.18

What seems clear at this point is that except from the big opportunity of the coexistence of developed countries with the representatives of the developing and/or underdeveloped countries who have arrived in Europe as refugees and migrants, there is also a financial opportunity; the existence of appropriate circumstances for this crisis to be transformed into a “win-win” case.

As Van Hear and Sorensen argue, mass arrivals may have short-term damaging effects, “however in the longer term the impacts of such mass arrivals may be more beneficial, particularly in terms of the economic, human and social capital newcomers bring with them”19. Since we are –mostly- dealing with “forced migrants”20, meaning people who did not have any other choice than seeking refuge away from their birth country, there is an opportunity to convert the refugee crisis’ disadvantages to major advantages.

“One approach is to reconceive refugees as a development issue rather than simply a humanitarian issue. Refugees have skills, talents and aspirations”21 and this social ‘heritage’ they bring with them can trigger a series of impacts in the receiving societies, such as “changes in local markets for food, housing, land, transport, and other goods, services and resource, changes in local labour markets, changes in the local economy and society wrought by the introduction of humanitarian assistance, demands on health care, education and other services”22.

Undoubtedly, there are disadvantages too; no matter the refugees’ motives, such large flows also impact the receiving societies.23 It is a fact that the examined refugee flows

21 BBC 2015
have increased during a very challenging financial era for Europe. “Immigration often takes place at the same time as economic restructuring and far-reaching social change. People whose conditions of life are already changing in an unpredictable way often see the newcomers as the cause of insecurity”⁴¹.

Besides the European Union in general, those impacts can be depicted in Greece, which was one of the main entry points for the refugees in the 2015 crisis but also before that, as “Greece is the Southern European country most often sought by refugees (especially Iraqis and Afghans arriving from Turkey)”⁴².

Moreover, Castles and Miller, referring to the “long boom” of migration to Europe, North America and Oceania, especially its’ second face, between 1945 and the early 1970’s, cite that some economists “have argued that immigration reduced the incentive for rationalization, keeping low-productivity firms viable and holding back the shift to more capital-intensive forms of production”⁴³.

However, their conclusion is clear; “Overall there is little doubt that the high net immigration countries... had the highest economic growth rates in the 1945-1973 period”⁴⁴. Of course the examined dates of this case study do not leave much space for describing the potential and possibilities –of any kind- that come along with the large refugee’s flows in Europe. But exactly because those urgent circumstances were occurring, it seems that no one can afford losing this great opportunity to turn the refugee crisis into a win-win case for both the refugees and the receiving countries.

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²⁷ Ibid, p. 105
1.3. Culture

“Culture is an arena of struggle”\textsuperscript{28} is what Pieterse notes about this also very complex and hard to be defined notion, while another thought on that discussion is the following: “It is not easy to pin down culture with a precise and singular definition”\textsuperscript{29}. In other words, the definition of “culture” depends on what is it under examination each time.

Culture has been considered as an “autonomous” notion, until it was made clear that the contact points with development not only existed, but they were of great importance. It is not an exaggeration to argue that with this coexistence, ‘from culture for development’ to ‘developing culture’ the notion of culture has played a major role during the social change process worldwide.

1.3.1. “Cultural turn” in Development and cultural capital

Pieterse’s references on the “cultural turn”\textsuperscript{30} seem very relevant for development communication and social change process. Development has being characterized by strict rules, which would eventually lead towards finance or other kind of growth. Even if this seems a quite simplistic description of development, it is actually accurate, as history has proven. But there was a point when the development field became multidimensional. As Pieterse notes, “this is the point of the cultural turn in development, the return of anthropology to development”\textsuperscript{31}.

To put it differently, the cultural turn happened when the notion of culture stopped being considered as a separate factor, unrelated to development. As it is pointed out by Schech and Haggis, “…culture... is, and has always been, central to our understanding of development process…”\textsuperscript{32}.

\textsuperscript{31} ibid, p. 160
The local cultural capital is related to the cultural turn and regarding to this case study, it is obvious that the local cultural capital of the refugees is “coming” to Europe with them. Pieterse points out, also referring to Griffin, that “cultural diversity and the mingling of different cultural flows (diasporas, migrants, travellers) have been potent ingredients in economic innovation and growth”\textsuperscript{33}.

This interplay between culture, social capital and economic growth constitutes a typical example of a development issue and is strongly related to the opportunity of creating a win-win case for both sides; the refugees and the receiving societies.

1.4. Communication

1.4.1. The goal and the ‘triangle’

\textit{“An intensified exchange of ideas among all sectors of society can lead to the greater involvement of people in a common cause. This is a fundamental requirement for appropriate and sustainable development”}\textsuperscript{34}

A very important factor in this case study is the role of communication, as the analysis was based on four newspapers. To be more specific, the interplay between the triangle “development – communication - social change”.

The development part of this equation has been explained in the previous section, through thinking around international cooperation, migration and culture. In this chapter, communication and its contact points to social change will be analyzed.

This discussion has a dominant position amongst academic writers. Pradip Ninan Thomas points out that “development communication / communications and social


change is about understanding the role played by information, communication and the media in directed and nondirected social change.”

What he argues about “role played... in directed and nondirected social change” is of high importance here, because it implies that a form of intervention is applied, something that also Karin Gwinn Wilkins underlines, as part of an argument on developing countries: “Communication for and about development, engaging intervention toward social change, integrates critical research with thoughtful practice towards social justice”.

Two distinctions have to be made here though; firstly, regarding to this study case, Syria (the country where the majority of the refugees have left from) was more a “second world country” and not a “developing” one, even before the civil war. Still, though, the “categorization” of Syria in the “development scale” is not of high importance. What is important is the communication-development interplay and the contact points to social change.

Secondly, it is common for development agencies to make interventions to promote social change, traditionally in the form of development aid from a donor to a recipient, even though a more dominant euphemism is that of “partnership”, which “focuses on the relations between ‘donors’ and ‘receivers’ – development aid is now conducted between ‘partners’”. On the other hand, if media are involved in a similar way, then this would have been a strategic use of media and no reporter would admit having any other motive than mere and impartial reporting.

Consequently, a question is arising; is there really a connection between communication, development and social change?

Servaes admits that there is heated dispute between scholars about what exactly ‘communication for development and social change’ is, but besides any differentiation, he argues that it is about the sharing of knowledge and this constitutes

a social process\textsuperscript{38}. Therefore, I believe that even if there is no intention by the media, they have the ability to affect the public opinion. Besides, “it is now a routine assumption in most societies that the media do have power”\textsuperscript{39}.

This reflection leads us to the next level, which is about the use of this media power, a topic John Corner has extensively argued about. A very interesting part of his thinking is about “soft power” and “power as a problem”. Explaining “soft power”, Corner argues that the media are contributing to the “way things are in society as a result of the perceptions they encourage, the information they provide and the feelings they generate”\textsuperscript{40}. Nevertheless, he cites that it does not have the same possibilities as military power for example, hence his characterization of power as “soft”.

Corner is also presenting “power as a problem”; “Nearly all ideas of ‘bad’ power have their grounding in perceptions about the distortion to either knowledge or values, or both, which the media introduce into general consciousness through their part in constructing the symbolic environment”\textsuperscript{41}.

This assumption is the reason why ‘communication’ has entered the ‘triangle’ mentioned in the beginning of this section. Nevertheless, the media’s ability to influence the public opinion is not enough, as “communication media are important tools in achieving this process but their use is not an aim in itself—interpersonal communication too must play a fundamental role”\textsuperscript{42}.

CFSC’s (Communication For Social Change Consortium) definition (2006) of this interplay is similar: “Communication for Social Change is a process of public and private dialogue through which people themselves define who they are, what they need and how to get what they need in order to improve their own lives”\textsuperscript{43}.

Therefore, the conclusion is that there is indeed an exchange of ideas between the media and the audiences, even though any connection to social change may not be intended by the media. Nonetheless, it is up to the receivers of the information, the

\textsuperscript{39} Corner, John (2011), Theorising Media: Power, Form and Subjectivity, Manchester University Press, p.15
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, p.14
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p.23
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, p.14-15
audience, to be sensitized and try ‘using’ this procedure in the most useful way, in order to achieve any kind of social change.

1.4.2 Agenda Setting

“Through their day-by-day selection and display of the news, journalists focus our attention and influence our perceptions of what are the most important issues of the day”44.

“All I know is just what I read in the newspapers”45. Maxwell McCombs provides this famous quotation of the American humorist Will Rogers which actually describes in a few words the enormous power the media have in influencing the public opinion.

A lot of things have changed since the days of Will Rogers, when the supremacy of the newspapers in the media sphere was indisputable, but ultimately, the concept is similar nowadays. As argued in the previous section, media can and do shape opinions and regarding to the public agenda “citizens deal with a second-hand reality, a reality that is structured by journalists’ reports about these events and situations”46.

The selection of the topics, their presentation and of course the ability of the media to influence the public opinion has come to be called the agenda-setting role of the news media47. The way media present their stories generates certain results. With or without any kind of intension, the fact is that choosing a way of presenting a story over another one, means that the generated result would be different than it would have been if the media had presented the story differently.

Undoubtedly, it is up to anyone’s critical thinking to decide about the importance of something that has preeminent position in the media. Especially nowadays, while the media landscape is extremely fast changing and the variety of different media keeps expanding, it is easier for the public not to be drastically influenced about any story

45 ibid
46 ibid
47 ibid
just because ‘the news have told so’. However, “over time the issues emphasized in news reports become the issues regarded as most important among the public. The agenda of the news media becomes, to a considerable degree, the agenda of the public”\textsuperscript{48}.

Therefore it does not seem arbitrary to argue that the media set the public agenda to a large extent. Regarding this case study, the huge media attention was beneficial for the refugee crisis per se. A large amount of the public was unfamiliar with the true extent of the crisis; therefore this attention was necessary in terms of finding a possible solution. This has been proven by the fact that right after this “refugee boom” in the European media in September 2015, European leaders have –finally- started dealing with the crisis in a more dynamic way.

Obviously a vital solution to the crisis has not been found immediately –and not until now to be specific; but this does not change the fact that this media boost was the first step in the direction of raising the public’s awareness around the refuge crisis. Besides, “journalists fulfill people’s innate desire to detect threats in the environment, keep informed about the world, and devise methods of dealing with these threats, possible or potential”\textsuperscript{49}.

1.4.3. Are the refugees “others” or not, after all?

Stereotyping, difference, otherness. Just a few words to describe how through representation, the meanings generated by the visual signs can create a framework of “difference”. This is also strongly related to the power of media we have above discussed about.

Several dimensions can work as the parameters for this procedure, such as gender, race, power, education, social class and so on, and there are many answers on the question why this portrayal of difference even matters.

Hall provides four of them, influenced by linguistic, anthropological and psychoanalytical scopes; “because it is essential to meaning; Without it, meaning could not exist”, “because we can only construct meaning through a dialogue with the ‘Other’”, “because culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system. The marking of ‘difference’ is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture” and because “the ‘Other’ is fundamental to the constitution of the self, to us as subjects, and to sexual identity”

The “meaning” holds a central position in this discussion and something that has to be underlined is that the “meaning can never be finally fixed”. Any meaning provided through representation can be shaped through innumerous interacting procedures, parameters, influences. Hall argues that every image undoubtedly carries its own meaning but it also does not provide meaning on its own. In the wider field of “difference” and “otherness” it acquires its meaning when it is examined in a wider context, or comparatively to other images, or even against other ones. This interplay between different images which eventually creates a broader meaning is called “inter-textuality” and it is a key-term.

Nevertheless, it is not of high importance to elaborate on which one of the abovementioned explanations is more accurate. The very concept of the ‘otherness’ is very often controversial. Dogra, while studying the messages employed by INGO’s to present the “Majority World” (MW) is very concerned about how the representatives of the MW are portrayed. According to Dogra, while there is a complete lack of examination of geo-political and historical connections which have created any kind of inequalities, “humanism” declares ‘we are one’; Nevertheless, “the same people are constructed as the “others”, different from ‘us’”.

But in this specific case study are the refugees really ‘others’? First of all, to put a label in a whole social group, automatically means that this group converts to a fully and completely homogeneous mass, which is not the case for any social group. Let
alone and especially regarding to this case study, the refugees seem anything but apathetic; “they move, they fight for their survival and a better life”\textsuperscript{54}.

Moreover, I find it very hard to assume that the refugees are completely ‘others’ in comparison to me or any other European citizen, simply because around 50\% of the refugees who have arrived by sea in the Mediterranean during 2015 were Syrian, according to the UNHCR\textsuperscript{55}. They flee because of the war but before that, Syria could not have been characterized as an underdeveloped country. “Syria is not a rich country, but it is not a poor country either: it ranks as a “lower middle income” according to the World Bank”\textsuperscript{56}. Hence any issues of difference between prewar Syria and –many– European countries are open to dialogue for the analysis part of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{54} Simon Behrman, (June 19, 2014) Accidents, Agency and Asylum: Constructing the Refugee Subject, Law and Critique 25, no. 3: p. 249
\textsuperscript{55} UNHCR 2015
\textsuperscript{56} Independent 2015
2. Methodology

The Methodology chapter provides a framework of the research, including the methodological techniques and the selection of my sample.

My perception of the media, and regarding to this case the newspapers, is that of an equation which consists of two distinct but interacting parts: the journalists and the audience. They both consist a prerequisite for each other. The audience seeks to be informed and the journalists strive to provide this information, as “no newspaper or broadcasting unit can succeed unless it strikes a chord with its audience and keeps in tune with them”\textsuperscript{57}.

On the one hand, many power relations are included within the media sphere and as a result, the criteria of objectivity and integrity often become shadowy. This seems as a constantly developing “threat” towards unbiased reporting, while the media landscape is continuously evolving, along with/because of technological progress.

Living in a world of ‘informational bombing’ makes it even more difficult for anyone to ascertain whether the receiving information is accurate or not. Besides, “the pace of daily journalism leaves little time for introspective contemplation”\textsuperscript{58} and consequently, it is only logic for the audience to be skeptical about the media strategies involved.

But even if we momentarily leave this ‘negative scenario’ aside and assume that no interests whatsoever are involved, there are still some ‘blurred’ spots on how media operate and this is directly related to the audience. It is likely for the same story to be presented in many different ways throughout various media, depending on each ones’ target group, as “it is impossible to select and compose news without a conception of the target or intended audience”\textsuperscript{59}.

On the other hand and besides those –and many other- downfalls, audiences do search out trustworthy information through the media. The newspapers might stand as a

\textsuperscript{57} Hetherington, Alastair (1985) News, Newspapers and Television, Palgrave Macmillan UK, p. 21
\textsuperscript{58} ibid, p. viii
\textsuperscript{59} Richardson, John (2007), Analysing Newspapers, An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 1
constructed public space, but within this vivid public sphere, there are plenty of opportunities for the audiences to actively participate. By doing so, except from taking action, they are also contributing to promote the most fundamental principle of our society, which is democracy; because “for democracy to happen, citizens must be able to encounter and talk to each other. They need access to each other to develop their collective political efforts, and contexts in which they can act together”\textsuperscript{60}.

2.1. Newspaper selection

The North/South bipolar within Europe with regard to the current financial/refugee crisis holds special interest since, on the one hand, Europe is facing a financial crisis which has severely affected Southern Europe and on the other hand Northern European countries have become the most desirable final destination of thousands of refugees from the Middle East. This duplex European crisis has put Europe against difficult challenges therefore I have selected two newspapers from the European “South” and two from the European “North” to examine the phenomenon under question.

Following up on what Hemer and Tufte\textsuperscript{61} have asserted, namely that “the communication sphere becomes an essential medium through which individual participants and players identify, interpret and represent their social and cultural wants and needs. In doing this, they begin to shape development itself”, my research goal is to examine how these four newspapers have reported on this very serious crisis, within this global/local framework, combined with the financial and refugee crisis which Europe faces. As I have said in the research questions, I seek to ascertain to what extent have the newspapers intended to provide in-depth information, aimed in setting the foundations for a deeper understanding of the crisis.

The newspapers selected for this research are “Kathimerini” and “Avgi” from Greece and “The Daily Telegraph” and “The Guardian” from the UK (the two British

\textsuperscript{60} Dahlgren, Peter (2009), Media and Political Engagement, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.114
newspapers have sister papers, published on Sundays; “The Sunday Telegraph” and “The Observer”).

For the reasons mentioned below, Greece and the UK, as well as the particular newspapers, seem an extraordinary combination in terms of how the newspapers of those two countries of both the European North and South have reported on the refugee crisis.

Greece and the UK were selected as news reporting countries for several reasons. Firstly, since one of the methodological decisions was to examine the complete reports of the newspapers, these two countries were the most obvious choices given the researcher’s linguistic capacities.

Secondly, Greece and the UK are believed to be “representative” cases of the North/South divide within Europe. Greece was by far the most common refugee entry point into Europe with 851,319 out of the 1,008,616 arrivals to Europe by sea in 2015 according to the UNHCR data. This obliges Greece to face the refugee crisis at its doorstep, combined with the financial crisis which the country has been undergoing since 2008.

Britain, on the other hand, is both geographically and legally “away” from the crisis. Geographically because the country faces a considerably small number of refugee arrivals in comparison to other countries. David Cameron, the British Prime Minister, has announced on September 7th, 2015, that “the UK is now planning to resettle up to 20,000 refugees from the Syrian region over the next five years”.

Legally because the UK is not a signatory of the Schengen Agreement that establishes the “zone where 26 different European nations, acknowledged the abolishment of their internal borders with other member nations and outside, for the free and unrestricted movement of people, goods, services, and capital”.

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62 UNCHR 2015  
63 House of Commons Library 2016  
64 Schengen 2015
Nevertheless, the two countries do have something in common as both of them have been standing for a while with ‘one foot out’ of the European Union’s door. Greece has been struggling with austerity measures since 2008 and the ‘ghost’ of ‘Grexit’ hovers over the country. On the other hand, there is the imminent threat of ‘Brexit’ as a referendum will be held in the UK on June 23, 2016 on whether Britain should leave or remain in the European Union.

After concluding on the national contexts to be taken into account for this research, the final selection of the newspapers was done based on their political stance; “Kathimerini” (GR) and “The Daily Telegraph” (UK) both have centre-right political alignment, while “The Observer” (UK) is centre-left and “Avgi” (GR) is a leftist newspaper.

2.2. Sample Selection

This research has been concentrated on news reports from September 2015 and four newspapers have been examined. The selection of the dates was made based on three decisive factors:

The first one was the death of Aylan Kurdi, the 3 year old boy from Syria who drowned in the Turkish shores, along with his 5 year old brother, their mother and at least seven more on September 2nd. This tragic incident was not of course a unique case. People drowning in the seas during 2015 (3.771 were dead/missing according to the UNCHR data\textsuperscript{65}) was daily reality for the refugees, but still the Aylan Kurdi’s case have triggered a wide mobilization by the media. Most likely because there have been photographs published, showing the 3 year-old, lying dead on a Turkish beach, near Bodrum. The brutal image of the dead 3 year-old child has increased the ‘significance’ of the refugee crisis, regarding to the newspapers’ reports. After all, “for all the communication media, the repetition of a topic day after day is the most

\textsuperscript{65} UNHCR 2015
a powerful message of all about its importance\textsuperscript{66} and I would like to examine how the newspapers have presented this tragic story.

Secondly, the EU mechanisms were mobilized on September (partly because of the case of Aylan Kurdi), as EU summits had been called regarding the ‘refugee crisis’. I would like to examine at what point the media have presented (more extensively) stories on how the leadership of Europe has tried to respond to the situation, or about particular measures that have been taken by the EU.

The third factor, is that during September 2015, the flows of the refugees moving to Europe highly increased, followed by the decision of some developed countries in Northern Europe (i.e. Germany or Sweden) to start accepting refugees. The majority of the refugees had been making clear that their final destination was not any of the southeastern European and Balkan countries through which they were transiting (i.e. Greece, Italy or FYROM) but countries in the ‘more developed’ European north, such as Germany, France, Austria and Scandinavian countries. It seems important to examine how the newspapers have reported on the mass refugee arrivals on EU North’s countries.

At this point, I would like to justify my choice of limiting the research between September 1st and September 20\textsuperscript{th} 2015, instead of the whole month. Given the fact that I wanted to examine the complete articles and not only -for example- the titles I have decided that a more limited timeline would have been a realistic goal for my project.

Moreover though, there is another reason for this decision and it is related to the first factor I have above mentioned, the death of Aylan Kurdi. As I have already argued, this incident has triggered a wider mobilization on the media’s reporting. I looked through all the issues of August 2015 and found out that The Guardian and the Daily Telegraph have presented no more than 5 and 7 refugee crisis related articles respectively during this period on their front pages.

Avgi and Kathimerini had presented almost three times as many articles related to the refugee crisis on their front pages in August. To be precise, both newspapers had a

refugee crisis related article presented on their front pages in 19 out of the 31 days of August 2015. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of them had a local perspective; for example everyday problems affecting the Greek society, and more specifically the islands, as a result of the refugee flows throughout the whole year. Besides, the positioning of those articles was clear evidence of how important have been considered by the editors. Mostly small pieces at the bottom of the front pages were presented, which means that the refugee crisis throughout August was not considered (by the newspapers) as a topic of priority.

It was only after the September 2015 exponential increase of flows that the four newspapers started presenting the refugee crisis as a European issue more intensively and prominently.

This justification was about before September 1st. As for the end of my timeline, the 20th of September, the justification is related to politics. On that day, national elections have been held in Greece, while on September 12th 2015, Jeremy Corbyn was elected as Leader of the Labour Party in the UK. Therefore, around September 15th and especially after the 20th, the four newspapers had concentrated their news coverage on politics, giving less space on the refugee crisis on their front pages.

A last note on sample selection is should be made with regard to the ‘related articles’. Cottle and Hansen underline the term “the unit of analysis” referring to the procedure during which the analyst is including (or excluding) parts of the content for the analysis. In this case study, it was very common that the four newspapers had the refugee crisis featured as their main news story on some days, but near the end of the text presented on the front page it was indicated to the reader that more articles related to this theme were featured inside the paper. It was a conscious decision that such ‘related articles’ would not be examined in the context of this research. Of course front page space allocation is an important issue and it would not be possible for all the articles of the day to be featured on the front page, but the fact that a final choice had to be made is an important indicator in itself. Those in charge of the decision-making process in the four newspapers had decided that something else was more important than those particular pieces; hence it would be featured on the front page.

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instead. After all, the usage of the photographs and the texts, but also the optical adjustments of the front pages are all messages towards the newspapers’ audiences.\textsuperscript{68}

2.3. Data collection

After selecting the four newspapers in the two countries of interest and having concluded on the dates within which I would be carrying out the article retrieval, I proceeded to collect and examine different types of articles (main news stories, other news stories, interviews or opinions) that were related with the refugee crisis and I have decided to rely only on the front page reports of the newspapers, which “orient their readers to the world”.\textsuperscript{69}

Access to the material for this research was a key issue. Living in Greece was an advantage regarding to the Greek newspapers. The editors-in-chief of the two Greek newspapers were contacted with a formal request to grant me full access of the issues needed for this research. Thankfully, both “Avgi” and “Kathimerini” were very cooperative, promptly approving my request.

On the other hand, it seemed simpler to get access of the British newspapers’ material through an online source. Firstly, retrieval of the articles through the official websites of the newspapers was attempted, but accessing the full articles of issues dated several months ago was not always an option. After an online research, I have found two reliable online sources, kiosko.net or pressreader.com. As described in their websites, kiosko.net "is a visual daily press directory that gives access to the world's largest news sites and displays a readable image taken from today's frontpage cover of each newspaper"\textsuperscript{70} and pressreader.com “delivers an endless stream of top news stories to read, discuss and share”\textsuperscript{71}.

Those websites provide indeed an archive section but still this only works if you are looking for issues of the last week. Eventually, I devised a workaround in order to

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, p. 216
\textsuperscript{70} kiosko.net
\textsuperscript{71} pressreader.com
access past issues by simply changing the dates of the issues in the url link and by doing so I have gained access of the British newspapers too.

2.4. The two methods of analysis

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods has been used for the analysis of the collected material and the term ‘meaning’ holds preeminent position at this point.

2.4.1. The quantitative part

The primary analytical method is a content analysis of the front page articles of the selected newspapers for the specific sampling dates. According to Overton and van Diermen, there are four primary means for an analyst to collect quantitative data: “Through observations, questionnaires, structured interviews and the use of secondary data”\(^\text{72}\). For my analysis, I relied on the first one, as a central aspect of my analysis is to count the newspapers data and through observation, I was able to collect the data that meet the analysis’s requirements.

The key-issue is the meaning, the conclusion that is produced by the newspapers’ articles, but this part can be seen as problematic. I have argued before and it is important to be underlined once again, that the criterion of objectivity is often being jeopardized because relations of power are an integral part of the communication sphere. Critiques against content analysis are based on a similar argument, as through statistics the meaning is being constructed. It is not based on math or science, but on the criteria applied for each research study. Therefore, even though it comes up as objective, simultaneously this objectivity “depends on the legitimacy of the questions asked”\(^\text{73}\).

Consequently, it is not possible for a content analysis to be fully objective, because the criteria set by the analyst are based on his/her subjective judgment. After all, “how far is it possible to pin down the meaning of any text, whether it be the meaning as

intended by the producers of texts or the meaning as it is ‘read’ and understood by the consumers/recipient of texts?”74.

2.4.2. The qualitative part

The secondary method was a qualitative analysis of the visual elements with regard to those articles, informed by thinking on semiotics. What pictures do the newspapers use for their cover stories? Do the newspapers try to ‘sell’ their story through the use of evocative photographs? What meanings are produced through such visual representations? Have the newspapers presented the refugees as “others”? Those are the main questions I wished to find the answers for, while -once again- the meaning that is produced through the selection of the photographs is important.

“Qualitative data is often said to be subjective, not representative and prescribed in text”75 and consequently the meaning and the objectivity were the reasons for a heated dispute to be created regarding to the importance and acceptance of the ‘quantitative-based’ content analysis.

But “this is wrong. Qualitative methods can provide powerful insights into the world. They can be used effectively with people or places we think are familiar to us, as well as in situations somewhat removed, geographically and otherwise, from our own”76.

Like I have said in the quantitative part, objectivity is not my first priority, as a researcher sets his/her own criteria for any analysis. Therefore, I have used content analysis and semiotics, a quantitative/qualitative combination, to take advantage of their mutual strengths, because there is no point and even no accurate way of searching and counting the objectivity levels in any analysis. An analyst can never examine everything that can be examined; therefore the choices that the analyst makes contain subjective elements.

2.5. About Content Analysis of front page-featured articles

Content analysis, which is “by definition a quantitative method”\(^\text{77}\) was my central research method. Even though quantitative methods have been less favored in cultural studies, quantification can produce several useful insights. Content analysis which Bernard Berelson described as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”\(^\text{78}\) presented me with an optimal means to reach conclusions on the newspapers’ reporting on the refugee crisis.

I have performed a full scale content analysis, relying on the six key steps that are presented in “Mass Communication Research Methods”\(^\text{79}\). Those steps are: “definition of the research problem”, “selection of media and sample”, “defining analytical categories”, “constructing a coding schedule”, “piloting the coding schedule and checking reliability” and “data preparation and analysis”.

The two first steps have already been analyzed; the “definition of the research problem” has been set by the research questions, while the “selection of media and sample” has been analyzed in the beginning of this chapter.

Moving forward, the two next steps -“defining analytical categories” and “constructing a coding schedule” are two dimensions of the same ‘step’ in content analysis\(^\text{80}\), while once the categories have been chosen, they have to be organized in a codable system. This system will be analyzed in the very next chapter (“the coding schedule”).

Before moving to the analysis of the newspapers’ data, I have tested the coding schedule sheet with a sample of articles (two out of the four newspapers), as the fifth step of the content analysis indicates\(^\text{81}\), something which has proved to be very helpful in order to the final formation of the coding schedule.

\(^{78}\) Ibid, p. 94
\(^{79}\) Ibid, p. 98
\(^{80}\) Ibid, p. 116
\(^{81}\) Ibid, p. 118
Finally, for the statistical analysis\textsuperscript{82} I have used spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel) as the options for summarizing any categories’ or sub-categories’ results are very useful for the analysis.

2.5.1. The coding schedule

The analytical categories in any analysis depend on the scope of the research. However, there are a number of categories which will tend to be standard in any content analysis, namely “identifier categories”\textsuperscript{83}. Some of them which I have included in this project are; the date of publication; the type/genre classification (main news story, other news story, opinion, interview); the protagonist factor (whether there are references on individuals); the medium (which newspaper does the text appear on); the position within the medium (only those ones that are on the front-page); the stance of the articles (adopting a positive/negative/neutral rank) and others\textsuperscript{84}.

The same coding schedule has been filled for the four newspapers individually, between September 1\textsuperscript{st} and the 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2015 and it consists of six categories.

The first category (included in the first column of the Table 1 below) indicates the date of the article, while the second one (presented in the second column of Table 1) has four options: “Main news story”, “Other news story”, “Opinion” and “Interviews”. In the third column the number of occurrences is noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Type of article</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9/2015</td>
<td>Main news story</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other news story</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opinion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
DATE       & Type of article      &         \\
1/9/2015   & Main news story      & 1       \\
           & Other news story     & 0       \\
           & Opinion              & 1       \\
           & Interviews           & 0       \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

Table 1

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid, p. 106
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid, p. 106-107
The third category refers to the individuals that are mentioned in the articles and is presented in Table 2 below. “Country leaders”, “Politicians”, “Representatives of NGO’s”, “Representatives of EU and International Institutions”, “Refugees (by name)”, “Local Authorities” and “Other” are listed in the first column, whereas in the second column the occurrence of those individuals is listed, and the third column measures how many times have those individuals been named.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Number of individuals</th>
<th>Number of references inside the articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country leaders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of NGO's</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of EU and International Institutions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees (by name)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authorities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

At this point I would like to clarify something about the total results section, which is at the end of the coding schedule. While counting the data throughout all days of the selected period, it was common that some of the individuals came into view more than once. For example, Angela Merkel was mentioned in an article of September 1st, but she might have been mentioned on articles of other days too. As her name was mentioned, it meant that it had to be filled in each day’s data counting, but it also meant that it should not have been counted more than once in the final counting. For that reason I have returned in my notes, where I have marked every single data that has appeared in my research and I have counted how many country leaders have been mentioned within the 20 days of my timeline, and the same procedure has been followed for every sub-category. Of course this is not the case for the third column of the “individuals”, because this one measures how many times the individuals have been mentioned.

Another part that needs clarification is that that prior the data analysis I had decided to include at least three options at this category; Politicians, international Institutes and
refugees. After I have read the articles, I have concluded that there had to be a distinction between “country leaders” and other kind of politicians (e.g. ministers or representatives of political parties).

Moreover, due to the results I have separated the categorization of “representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations” and “representatives of EU and International Institutions” (e.g. the European Commission, the UN etc).

Lastly, the “Local Authorities” and “Other” options had also been added after I had read the articles, because a significant amount of those elements came up in the newspapers’ reports.

The identification of those individuals is a very useful piece of information that can aid the production of conclusions for this research. Each one of them has been duly noted but not included separately at this point for the sake of manageability and readability of the table. I will return to those individuals, however, in my analysis of each newspaper separately.

The fourth category is about the ‘opportunity’ I have talked about in the presentation of this paper, meaning the co-existence of the developed countries with the representatives of the developing and/or underdeveloped countries within the European Union. This is the most important category that will prove whether or not the newspapers have opted to engage in a wide dialogue on development and social change issues around the issue of the refugee crisis through the selection of the articles that were featured on their front pages.

“Asylum/Refugees absorption” by host countries, “NGO’s activity”, “Humanitarian Aid” and “Proposed Solutions” are the four options in the first column of Table 3.
The second column is the most crucial one. Its title is “Number of appearance as part of a wider dialogue” and by this, my wish was to examine to what degree have the newspapers reported on the four options in depth. The inclusion of merely a quote, a simple reference or a statement someone has made were not enough to be included in this column. This column would have been filled only if thorough and in depth dialogue has been made about the four options. Before reading the articles I was thinking that an analysis, an interview, an opinion article, an article that contains proposed solutions or something similar would have been enough to be included here. I was looking for something more than just a typical reference which has been retrieved through press releases.

The third column is about exactly the opposite. It measures the “Number of appearance just as part of the reportage”.

The fifth category, presented in Table 4 below refers to the “stance” the newspaper is taking. A)Towards the refugees and B)Towards the EU countries. “Positive”, “Negative” and “Neutral” are the three options. Once again there is no separate categorization for any country that might come up in the articles, but this will be made clear in the final analysis, whenever it seems important.
The sixth and last category refers to the visual representation of the crisis. The first column represented in Table 5 indicates the seven thematic options, which are “Children”, “Journey”, “Fences/Closed borders”, “Conditions”, “Politicians”, “Tension” and “Other”. The second column indicates the number of the photos that appear on the front page, while the third column is about the themes that are presented at the front pages. Similarly, the fourth column is about the number of the photographs inside the paper and the last column refers back to the same seven themes.

Table 5

All the above mentioned categories have a “Total” aggregation cell at the bottom of each column.
In the analysis/discussion chapter, the first five categories have been examined for the quantitative part (content analysis) and the sixth category has been examined separately, for the qualitative part (semiotic analysis).

2.6. About Semiotic Analysis of visual material

The refugee crisis per se might be one thing, but its representation by the selected media is a wholly different one. “Representation is the production of meaning through language”\(^{85}\) and this is a key component if we wish to understand what the audience of the four newspapers is receiving through the visual material presented. Through those meanings, the readers are mentally building a concept of the refugee crisis and this is what we will be examining through the semiotic analysis of the photographs used in the examined articles.

Many key-terms have been used in just a paragraph though, therefore it is important to decode them, before we proceed to the actual analysis.

Representation is related to the way that media are “transformative, not so much mirroring reality but instead ‘representing’ it”\(^{86}\). This is exactly the case in this project. The newspapers provide a representation of the refugee crisis for the readers and this procedure “involves the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things”\(^{87}\).

According to Hall there are three accounts through which language is used to represent the world; the reflective (mere reflection of an already existing message), the intentional (the language expresses only the meaning which for example a writer wishes to provide) and the constructionist (the meaning is constructed in and through language)\(^{88}\). Regarding to the analysis of the photographs, the constructionist

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\(^{86}\) Lewis, David; Rodgers, Dennis & Michael Woolcock (2014) Popular Representations of Development: Insights from novels, films, television and social media. London: Routledge, p. 4


\(^{88}\) Ibid, p. 15
approach to representation is very relevant and especially one specific model of this approach; the semiotic.

It is obvious that the language can be expressed in a written or an oral way, but also visual images, when used to express meaning are considered as language\textsuperscript{89}. Those visual signs are called “iconic signs”\textsuperscript{90}.

Meanings, however, may be meaningless if we don’t take under consideration the socio-political framework within which they are being produced. Dogra, while studying the messages and imagery employed by International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) to represent the “Majority World” in campaigns towards the British public in the “Developed World”, notes that “any comprehensive and dynamic study of public messages needs to explore the entire ‘representational’ field, which encompasses the message, its origins, its reception and the inter-relations among these elements”\textsuperscript{91}.

Another important factor is what Rose refers to as “invisibility”. “What is not seen or said… can be as productive as explicit naming”\textsuperscript{92}. The production of meaning can occur even when something is missing from a photograph but maybe is implied. For example a tragedy in the Mediterranean could have been presented with a photograph which only shows the ocean instead of showing for example washed up human bodies at the shores.

Gillian Rose’s “Visual Methodologies” is a very interesting tool regarding to semiotics, which is the “general approach to the study of signs in culture, and of culture as a sort of ‘language’”\textsuperscript{93}. Rose argues that the “sign” is the most important component of semiology\textsuperscript{94}. Signs create meanings and most of the semiotologists argue that anything which has a meaning can be analyzed through its signs.

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid, p. 19
“This general approach to the study of signs in culture, and of culture as a sort of ‘language’, which Saussure foreshadowed, is now generally known by the term semiotics.”

Ferdinand de Saussure’s thinking is fundamental; the sign is the basic unit of language and it consists of two parts; the form (the actual image) and the idea shaped in your head with which this form was associated. He called the first element the “signifier” and the second one the “signified”. The signified is the general concept, for example “an animal which can fly”. The signifier is the image attached to the signified; in this case the word “bird”. Those two elements combined are forming the “sign” which afterwards can be analyzed and interpreted. Rose notes that this distinction is crucial to semiology because it means that the relation between the signified and the signifier is not inherent but instead can be questioned.

Similarly to Saussure’s thinking, Roland Barthes has called the first descriptive level, the level of “denotation” and the second one the level of “connotation” but he has taken the thinking around representation one step forward. He argued that a proper semiotic analysis requires a clear description of the different steps through which meaning is produced and that representation takes place through two separate but linked processes.

In the first the “signifier” (the element of the picture) and the “signified” (the concept) are merged to form a “sign” with a simple, denoted message, but at the second level, this completed message is linked to a second set of signifieds about broader ideological and/or cultural meanings. Barthes calls this second level of signification “the level of myth”.

This brings us again to how the newspapers have represented the refugee crisis by using images and the analysis of the photographs. This procedure was based on the above mentioned examples about semiotic analysis, and specifically on Saussure’s

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96 Ibid, p. 31
99 Ibid, p. 38
100 Ibid, p. 39
(signifier/signified) and Barthes’ (denotation/connotation/level of myth) thinking but also to the discussion around “otherness” which was presented in the theory part.

The two next chapters of this paper will be about the analysis and discussion of the results. In terms of convenience, the analysis of the data has been made along with the discussion. Considering the number of categories and sub-categories, it would seem chaotic and confusing to present only the results for all the four newspapers and then a separate discussion part, in which I would have to keep going back and reminding each result that I am referring to.

The 3rd chapter is the analysis/discussion about the results of the content analysis and the 4th chapter is the analysis/discussion about the semiotic analysis of the photographs used by the newspapers.
3. Content Analysis

3.1. The Guardian

The Guardian provided the smallest sample for this research, as within the timeline of twenty days in September 2015, at least one refugee crisis-related article was presented on the front page of twelve issues.

Nevertheless, on September 3rd and 4th, two articles about this theme were presented on the front page, which strengthens the argument that the death of Aylan Kurdi (on September 2nd) had triggered wider media coverage.

Out of the fourteen articles in total, six were the newspapers’ main story. Among these, five were published between the 2nd and 7th of September – another element that relates to the media ‘boost’ after Kurdi’s death. Seven articles have been counted in the “other news story” section, while one interview was also been published.

Moving on to the “individuals” category, The Guardian was the only newspaper to have the most counted data in a section other than the political one. The most cited sub-category was that of the “others”, as thirty-nine were listed and have been mentioned forty-nine times. The data regarding “country leaders” and “politicians” combined (thirty-six) are less than the total amount of the “others” sub-category. To be more specific, some of those, were the Cardinal Vincent Nichols, head of the Catholic Church in England; Nilufer Demir, the photographer who took the pictures of Aylan Kurdi; a video cameraman sent by Dogan (a Turkish News Agency) to monitor the beach, as well as some of the 100 leading British cultural figures who have signed a statement calling for the UK to take in more refugees and branding the British government’s response to the European refugee crisis “too little, too late” (this article was published on September 11th). Some of them were the famous actor Benedict Cumberbatch, the director Joe Wright and Sir Anish Kapoor, a British-Indian sculptor.

The sub-category of “refugees” was the second most cited one, as thirty-six individuals had been mentioned seventy times. Aylan Kurdi was cited the most (fifteen times), while his father, Abdullah, has been referenced three times. As for the rest of this sub-category, all of them were refugees whose personal stories, including their narratives of their dangerous journey to Europe, were presented by The
Guardian. Moreover, the newspaper had also mentioned refugees who didn’t make it through the journey, like Aylan’s brother, Galib, who was also found dead at the Turkish shores.

While less “country leaders” have been mentioned (twelve) it is interesting that this sub-category was by far the first in the column which counts the references (ninety two). To be precise, UK’s Prime Minister, David Cameron, has been mentioned forty five times, which is almost half of the total amount of the references. This shows that in terms of politics, The Guardian has reflected mostly on the local element of the “Global/Local” bipolar, which was mentioned in the methodology part. Germany’s Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has been mentioned fourteen times; the Hungarian Prime Minister, Victor Orban twelve times; Austria’s Chancellor, Werner Faymann and Syria’s President, Bashar al-Assad were mentioned six times each. Some of the most rarely mentioned country leaders, were the French President, François Hollande, Spain’s Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy and the president of Czech Republic, Miloš Zeman among others.

The subcategory of “politicians” also had high mention rates (twenty four individuals with forty three references). UK’s shadow home secretary, Yvette Cooper, was mentioned eight times and the German Interior Minister, Thomas de Maizière, five times. A few other individuals were ambassadors, members of the UK Parliament, mayors, foreign ministers etc.

Fifteen representatives of “EU and International Institutions” were mentioned a total of sixty two times. Among those was Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission (seven times), while representatives of the UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) were the most referenced ones (fourteen times). Representatives of The Refugee Council and Unicef, were also mentioned, as well as António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (five times).

The result for the representatives of the NGOs is quite interesting, as only five individuals were mentioned for a total of twelve references (representing the Human Rights Watch, Save the Children, the Red Cross, World Food Program and Citizens UK. This means that all of them have been mentioned at least twice throughout the fourteen articles. Given the fact that the NGOs are considered to be an important stakeholder in the refugee crisis, this result is unexpected.
Ten representatives of “local authorities” have been mentioned thirty three times. These were exclusively representatives of many European countries’ police, coast guard, army and fire departments. In sum, 141 “individuals” have been referenced 361 times in the third category of the coding schedule.

The next category, “development-related issues” is about whether the newspapers have presented material with an intention to promote understanding, the dialogue opportunities and possibly solution proposals. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, this part is the most important in order to ascertain whether the newspapers have gone beyond just apposing facts and numbers or, instead, providing information that can help the readers in shaping a deeper understanding of the refugee crisis. The results were disappointing; references about the four options were 116 in total but just fifteen of those were listed in the second column, which indicates “the appearance as part of a wider dialogue”.

Interestingly enough, fourteen out of the fifteen references were found in just one article; that of September the 7th, in which António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees presented some alternatives on how humanitarian aid could be more effective, but also proposed some possible long-term solutions on the refugee crisis.

The last one was found on an article the next day (8th of September), as a solution proposed by the UK’s Prime Minister. David Cameron said that more refugees could come to Britain, if the UNHCR’s agencies could quickly identify refugees and process their asylum applications.

In the third column, which counts the “appearance just as part of the reportage”, most references were about “asylum-seekers’/refugees’ absorption” (sixty mentions), while “humanitarian aid” was second. (twenty-four mentions) Once again the references about “NGOs’ activity” were far fewer than expected (only three), while the “proposed solution” were fourteen. In most cases all those references were quotations of people who were talking about asylum rights, or humanitarian aid, or a possible solution.

Regarding to the fifth category, this of “stance” (towards the refugees and the EU countries), it was made clear that The Guardian had a positive attitude towards the
refugees. Each one out of the fourteen articles was put in the “positive” option (positive stance towards the refugees), which is a proof (at least regarding to the article texts) that this newspaper has undeniably adopted a favorable attitude towards refugees.

As for the European countries, the results are different. Zero articles have been put in the “positive” option, while six out of the fourteen were “negative” and the rest were “neutral”. It is interesting to mention that three out of the six negative articles were against David Cameron who –prior to the death of Aylan Kurdi- was declaring that the UK would not accept a large number of refugees, but after the tragic death of the Syrian 3-year old, had announced that 20,000 Syrian refugees would be accepted in Britain within five years. The rest of the articles were against EU in general and specifically against those countries (for example Hungary) that have decided to unilaterally close their borders, to prevent refugee arrivals. Overall, The Guardian’s reporting was (pro)active regarding the refugees (the newspaper had a positive attitude towards them) and more passive towards the EU countries.

3.2. The Daily Telegraph

The Daily Telegraph had clearly presented more articles than The Guardian, as at least one refugee crisis-related article had appeared on the front pages of seventeen issues, throughout the 20-day timeline. The only time when more than one relevant article was presented on the front page, was on September 4th, once more connected to Aylan Kurdi’s death.

The “main news story” of the newspaper was dedicated to the refugee crisis in eight out of the seventeen issues and the same number was also counted for the “other news story”, while one opinion article and one interview were also published.

This is the first interesting conclusion, because as I have argued in the methodology part, Britain was geographically and legally ‘removed’ from the refugee crisis, hence it was not anticipated that the refugee crisis would have been the newspapers’ “main news story” so often.
The second interesting conclusion that arises from the data of the Daily Telegraph is that, unlike The Guardian, the second British newspaper has put emphasis on the political aspect of the refugee crisis. Most references were about the sub-categories “Politicians” and “Country Leaders” as thirty six and seventeen individuals had been mentioned respectively. Nevertheless, the frequency of references was by far the highest for the “Country leaders” category (153), while the politicians had been mentioned sixty-one times.

The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, had been mentioned seventy five times, while the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel and Andrzej Duda, Poland’s president, had been referenced twenty-five and sixteen times respectively. Syria’s President, Bashar al-Assad was mentioned eight times, Viktor Orban, the prime minister of Hungary six times, while leaders of other counties were mentioned less often. Among those were the Presidents of the US, Russia and France, Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin and François Hollande, the Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras and others.

George Osborne, the British Finance Minister and Jeremy Corbyn, the hard-Left candidate were mentioned seven times, while Nigel Farage, the leader of the Eurosceptic and right-wing populist UK political party Ukip was mentioned four times. The remaining thirty three “Politicians” have been mentioned one to three times. Some of them were British, German and Canadian MP’s, mayors of European cities, European foreign and interior ministers, chairmans of various British committees and others.

Once again NGO representatives were mentioned far less than expected. Only a “Red Cross worker” was mentioned once, on September 18th, as part of the reportage about the organization’s work at train station in Zagreb, Croatia.

In the “refugees” sub-category nineteen individuals have been mentioned forty nine times. Interestingly enough, Aylan Kurdi is not the most mentioned one (eleven references), as his father, Abdullah Kurdi has been mentioned sixteen times. This is because on September 4th, the 3 year-old’s father gave an interview, describing the harrowing details of the journey during which he has lost his wife and two kids. Galib, Aylan’s older brother, was mentioned four times and their mother, Rehana, was mentioned twice. The other fifteen refugees had been mentioned once (except one 5
year-old, named Hamza, who was mentioned twice), as the Daily Telegraph was presenting a series of personal stories about the crisis.

Jean-Claude Juncker was the most mentioned individual of the “representatives of EU and International Institutions”, as the president of the European Commission’s name had been mentioned nineteen times out of the fifty eight total references of sixteen individuals. Rob Wainwright, the director of Europol (Europe’s cross-border policing body) was mentioned six times, while Guy Verhofstadt, the former Belgian Prime Minister leading the liberal bloc in the European Parliament, was mentioned five times. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General; Donald Tusk, the Polish president of the EU; Martin Schulz, the German socialist speaker of the European Parliament; Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU official in charge of immigration and other officials were also listed in this sub-category with no more than three to four references each.

In the “authorities” sub-category thirteen individuals were mentioned thirty nine times. All of them were police officers and military members of various EU countries (Austria, FYROM, Germany, Denmark, Croatia, Hungary, France and Britain).

Finally, in the “others” sub-category, fifteen individuals were referenced twenty nine times. Amongst them was the Queen of England, Elisabeth; the Prince of Wales, Charles; Jihadi John (a British Arab alleged to be the person seen in many videos of the extremist group ISIL showing the beheadings of a number of captives throughout 2014 and 2015); Reyaad Khan (a British jihadist who has been killed in Syria by UK forces) and others.

In sum, 117 “individuals” have been referenced 390 times in the third category of the coding schedule.

In the “development-related issues” category, the results were even more disappointing for the Daily Telegraph. Even though this newspaper has presented more articles than The Guardian, the total sum is by far smaller. Ninety four references were made in this crucial category and only one was placed in the second column, which is the most important, in terms of a deeper dialogue around the refugee crisis. On September 5th, in the only opinion article presented by the Daily Telegraph, the newspaper’s columnist, Bryony Gordon, argued that the empathy shown on social
media about the refugees is not enough and underlined that this mobilization should turn into a movement, so that a viable solution could be found.

In the third column, were only the references as part of the reportage are counted, the findings are the following: fifty nine references about “asylum/refugees absorption”, just one for “NGO’s activity”, twenty about “humanitarian aid” and fourteen about “proposed solutions”. It is clear that the Daily Telegraph’s reporting had little intention to facilitate a deeper understanding of the crisis as the presented stories about the key-issues of the refugee crisis were limited and only presented information retrieved through press releases.

Finally, the fourth category, which presents the “stance” of the newspapers, also provides interesting results. Even if there were no “negative” articles counted towards the refugees, still there are eight articles which had a neutral approach and ten positive ones. Given the fact that the refugee crisis’ impact has produced a lot of tension in Europe (for example the closing of the borders; the significant rise of many far-wing political parties throughout 2015; the increase of racist behavior against the refugees), I would have expected from a newspaper of the European North (where notions of democracy and freedom are, or should be, non-negotiable) to adopt a clear and undisputable perspective in favor of the refugees.

In addition to that, the results about the stance towards the EU countries are even more striking. Only six articles were against the EU’s policy and twice as many more were counted in the “neutral” option.

All six of the “negative” articles were against David Cameron, regarding to his declarations about the refugee crisis and especially his hundred and eighty degree turn after the tragic death of Aylan Kurdi. “His stance was controversial even within his own party” (September 3), “In a marked shift in tone, the Government is preparing plans to resettle the refugees fleeing Isil jihadists in the region in an attempt to fulfil its “moral obligation”” (September 4), “But this humanitarian crisis doesn’t end with David Cameron rolling over and opening up the doors to Britain” (September 5), are a few examples of how The Daily Telegraph has criticized the British Prime Minister.

While the EU’s incapability of finding a vital solution that could have been accepted by all its members was undeniable, the Daily Telegraph has adopted a neutral role
regarding to the EU. The reporting was passive and there is no sign to prove that this newspaper has tried to actively prevent potential conflict or clashes (between for example refugees and the police, or between refugees and the citizens of European receiving societies).

3.3. Avgi

Avgi has presented at least one refugee crisis related article on sixteen issues throughout the examined timeline. On September 5th and 6th, two and three articles were presented in the front page respectively; one more indication that Aylan Kurdi’s death has contributed to the increase of media coverage. On September 13th, the Sunday edition of the newspaper had also presented three articles on the front page.

What is striking is that even though Avgi is a leftist newspaper (to be precise it is considered as an ally of the leftist Greek Government of SYRIZA), the refugee crisis was not even once featured as the “main news story”. Fourteen articles have been put to the “other news story” section, while five opinion articles and two interviews were also presented (twenty one in total).

One hundred and nine “individuals” were mentioned three hundred and twenty three times, out of which twelve “country leaders” (fifty one references) and forty four “politicians” (ninety one references); which shows that like the Daily Telegraph, Avgi has focused mostly on politics. The most often mentioned country leader was the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel (fourteen times), while the President of Greece, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, and Vassiliki Thanou-Christophilou (a Greek judge who served as caretaker Prime Minister of Greece from 27 August to 21 September 2015, in the run-up to the 20 September 2015 elections) were mentioned ten times each. The references of Hungary’s, Czech Republic’s and Slovakia’s Prime Ministers, Victor Orban, Bohuslav Sobotka and Robert Fico (seven in total) were highly anticipated, as those countries had a central role in the surge of closed internal borders within the European Union.

Ioannis Mouzalas, the Greek Alternate Minister of Immigration Policy was the most reference “politician” (fourteen times), while Sigmar Gabriel, the Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy and the 17th Vice Chancellor of Germany followed with seven references. The majority of the individuals in this category were Greek
politicians, as well as mayors of Greek islands, but also of European cities. It is clear at this point that Avgi had reflected more in the “Local” issue, instead of the “Global”.

In the analysis of the British newspapers, I have argued that the reporting about representatives of NGO’s was unexpectedly limited. I was expecting that (the leftist) Avgi would have referred more extensively on the NGO’s, given their intense mobilization and operations, especially in the Greek islands. This was not the case though; only the Red Cross (twice) and two Greek NGO’s have been referenced (in fact the two Greek NGO’s were mentioned in one of the two interviews, were members of the NGO’s were presenting their aims and goals).

Twenty one representatives of “EU and International Institutions” were mentioned ninety eight times, with European Commission's President, Jean-Claude Juncker, being the most referenced one (fifteen times). Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU official in charge of immigration and Frans Timmermans, the First Vice-President of the European Commission were cited thirteen and ten times respectively as both of them have been visited the Greek island Lesbos (the major refugee entry point into Europe) to review the operations of the Greek authorities. Donald Tusk, the Polish president of the EU, Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General and Martin Schulz, the German socialist speaker of the European Parliament were often mentioned (seven, five and three times respectively), but also representatives of the UNHCR and Frontex (the EU agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders) were referenced a lot (eight and nine times respectively).

The data collected about the category of “refugees” also seem limited. There were only nine mentions and Aylan Kurdi is at the top of the references (six times). His brother, Galib, their mother, Rehana and their father, Abdullah are next (three, three and one reference respectively). Besides the Kurdi family, another one is being cited (the father, the mother and their three kids). Those results are probably the biggest surprise until now. While Avgi’s focus on politics was massive, the reporting about the refugees, their identities and their stories were typical. Taking into consideration the political stance of the newspaper and the actual reporting on the human factor of the refugee crisis, makes the final outcome contradictory.
Eleven representatives of the “local authorities” have been mentioned forty times; all of them police officers (Austria’s, Hungary’s, Germany’s, Serbia’s and Croatia’s) but most of them Greeks. Six out of the eleven representatives were members of the Greek police, Coast Guard and Special Forces and have been cited in more than 50% of the total amount (twenty two times).

Finally, ten individuals have been placed in the “others” sub-category, with no significant variation in terms of the total references, which were twenty one. One of them, Anthi Karaggeli was an interviewed individual (in one of the two interviews presented by the newspaper) who described how –along with other volunteers- have managed to create a facility center for the settlement of refugees in the Greek suburb, Eleonas.

Regarding to the third category, “development-related issues”, a significant difference is for the first time noticed. Avgi is the newspaper with the most data (twenty one) placed in the crucial second axis. Eleven references about “humanitarian aid” (all of them found in the interview of Anthi Karaggeli) and ten about “proposed solutions” provided a deeper dialogue on proposing realistic solutions, which is a strong indication that this newspaper had put more emphasis in trying to facilitate understanding of the refugee crisis, even though all of those references have been made in just three articles.

Regarding to the “proposed solutions” category, the first one was published on September 6th, through an opinion article signed by Rena Dourou, the Regional Governor of Attica. Rena Dourou has made seven proposals on how the refugee crisis could be solved, including the absorption of the refugees in the Greek economy, cooperation with the Authorities of Cyprus with an intention to accelerate the asylum procedures and ways of wiping out the very lucrative business of refugee smuggling.

The second one was an interview with Bernd Kasparek, an activist from Bordermonitoring.eu who proposed the creation of a new pan European asylum system, along with a new European border guard and the absorption of the refugees in European Union in favor of both two sides of this equation.

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The third one was another opinion article signed by Dimitris Christopoulos, the vice president of the “International Federation for Human Rights” (“Fidh”, which is an international human rights NGO federating 178 organizations from 120 countries\textsuperscript{102}). Mr. Christopoulos has argued that the refugee crisis has created a great opportunity, as now the European conservative elites seem ready to cooperate with the radical ones, in order for a workable solution to be found.

The fact that all those references of the “important” second column have been found in only three out of the twenty one articles is disappointing because Avgi is a leftist newspaper and anyone could expect more than that. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the fact that this newspaper has provided significant follow-up material (one third of the total sum were opinion articles and interviews) in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the refugee crisis, has created a space for dialogue and eventually – through its articles- has proposed realistic solutions, instead of just quoting anyone who has proposed a solution.

Furthermore, in the third column where “appearances just as part of the reportage” are listed, there have been fifty five references about “asylum-seekers’/refugees’ absorption”, only two for “NGO’s activity”, nine about “humanitarian aid” and seventeen about “proposed solutions”.

Moving on to the fourth category, there is no surprise about the newspaper’s stance towards the refugees (twenty one positive, 0 negative, 0 neutral). What come as a surprise are the eleven “neutral” articles towards the EU countries. As I have argued in the Daily Telegraph’s analysis, the negative impacts of the refugee crisis have – largely- been caused by the EU’s nerveless policies. Therefore it was anticipated that a leftist newspaper (notably a Greek one and while Greece has faced the vast majority of the refugee flows) would have adopted a more critical attitude against the EU. The fact that the “neutral” articles are the majority was unexpected if not disappointing.

Ten articles were “negative” and the majority of them critical towards the Hungarian government, for Viktor Orbán’s decision to close the country’s borders. The 50% of

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the total negative articles were referring exclusively to Hungary; for example “with another decision in the heat of the moment, Viktor Orbán has announced the construction of a new fence in the borders with Croatia” (September 17th). Four articles were also negative against Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary for the “closed borders” policy and the title of the article published on September 16th is indicative; “Iron Curtain 2” (the imaginary boundary which has divided Europe into two separate areas from the end of World War II in 1945, until the end of the Cold War in 1991). Finally, there is also a negative critique against Germany (September 15th) regarding to the imposed restrictions on the country’s borders with Austria.

3.4. Kathimerini

Kathimerini has presented at least one refugee crisis related article in 17 issues, but is by far the most ‘productive’ of all the four newspapers, in terms of the total amount of articles, as thirty two had been published overall. In only seven issues there was only one relevant article on the front page, while the influence of ‘Aylan Kurdi’s death’ factor is clear regarding to Kathimerini too. Between September 3rd (the day after his death) and September 6th, ten articles have been placed on the front page, which is almost the one third of the total amount.

The first interesting result is that five times the refugee crisis was the newspaper’s “main news story”, while as I have pointed out before, the leftish Avgi had not even one “main news story” published about this topic. The vast majority were “other news stories” (seventeen), while there were also nine opinion articles and one interview published.

The resulting data of the second category provided no surprise in terms of the most cited theme and similarly to The Daily Telegraph and Avgi, Kathimerini has focused mostly on politics.

Thirty six individuals have been counted on the “politicians” sub-category and have been cited sixty seven times. The mayor of Lesbos, Spiros Galinos, was the most referenced one (ten times); this is not surprising taking into consideration the massive refugee flows that this island had faced during the summer of 2015. Ioannis Mouzalas, the Greek Deputy Minister of Immigration Policy was the runner up with seven references and Sigmar Gabriel, the Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy
and the Vice Chancellor of Germany was cited four times. The remaining thirty three politicians have been referenced one to three times and the vast majority of them were Greek politicians; amongst them Panos Kammenos, Greece's Minister of National Defence, the mayor of Athens, George Kaminis, the mayors of the islands Kos, Samos and Leros, George Kyritsis, Michael Angelopoulos and Micael Kolias, respectively. Apart from the Greek politicians, Børge Brende the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, his Hungarian counterpart, Péter Szijjártó, but also Jorge Fernández Díaz, the Minister of the Interior of Spain had been mentioned among others.

Angela Merkel was by far the most cited of the 12 “country leaders” (twenty times) and the Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán was referenced thirteen times. Nicolas Sarkozy, the former French President was mentioned three times, while Austria’s Chancellor, Werner Faymann and the President of Greece, Prokopi Pavlopoulos were cited twice. The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, the US and Syria’s Presidents, Obama and Assad and also Vasiliki Thanou (the caretaker Prime Minister of the Greece prior to the national elections of September 20th) were cited once each.

Once again the NGO’s representatives are the less mentioned ones as five individuals (among those members of the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders) have been cited eight times.

Twenty representatives of “EU and International Institutions” were cited fifty eight times and Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU official in charge of immigration was the most referenced (eleven times). Officials of the European Commission (fourteen times), UNHCR (four times), Frontex (three times) were often mentioned, while António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Donald Tusk, the president of the EU and Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General are following (three, two and two times respectively).

Aylan Kurdi was once more in the center of attention on the “refugees” sub-category with thirteen citations, while his brother, Galib (three) their mother, Rehana (two) and their father, Abdullah (two) were following. The remaining eleven individuals have been mentioned (mostly) as part of the newspaper’s reporting on the refugees who have arrived in the Greek islands.
There were fifteen representatives of “local authorities” mentioned, but with a high level of citations (ninety one). Members of the Greek Police, Navy and Army represent more than 50% of the references (fifty eight) which was to be expected, as the operations of the Greek authorities related to the refugee crisis within the examined period were continuous and intense. Moreover, members of the Hungarian police are also frequently cited (eleven times) something also expected, as the tension after Hungary has closed its borders was constantly increasing. Police officers and army forces members from other countries (Turkey, FYROM, Croatia, and Germany) represent the rest of the sample.

Within the “others” sub-category, many individuals (twenty eight) had been referred to thirty six times. Among those is Petra Laszlo, the camerawoman for Hungarian news agency N1, who was recorded tripping refugees and kicking their children as they ran for their lives across the Hungarian border. Aylan Kurdi’s aunt, who lives in Canada, was also mentioned, as well as many photo reporters and members of a Greek ship’s crew which was appointed by the Greek government for the transportation of thousands of refugees from the Greek islands to the capital, Athens.

In sum, 130 “individuals” have been referenced 348 times in the third category of the coding schedule.

Moving on to the third, crucial category; the second column, which is related to the creation of opportunities for a deeper dialogue, has thirteen inputs (twelve of them about “proposed solutions” and one about “asylum/refugees absorption”). This result does not meet the expectations of the analysis for two reasons. Firstly because all the thirteen references have been made in just three articles (of two different issues); and secondly because as I have said, Kathimerini has presented the most articles about the refugee crisis within the twenty days’ timeline, therefore the ratio between the three articles with potentials to trigger a wider dialogue and the thirty two articles in total, is not satisfying.

The first one of those, was an interview of Dimitris Papadimitriou, President of the Migration Policy Institute (a nonprofit think tank dedicated to analysis of the movement of people worldwide103) on September 6th. Mr. Papadimitriou, arguing on

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possible solutions, has underlined the need of massive investments in the refugee producing countries, so that there would be no need for migration movements, but also in the first countries of reception, namely Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey were almost four million Syrian refugees have been absorbed. Mr. Papadimitriou has also provided the only data about the “asylum/refugees absorption” sub-category, referring to the EU’s quota scheme to relocate 160,000 refugees throughout the bloc in two years.

The second one was published the same day and it was an opinion article signed by the professor of International Law at Panteion University, Angelos Syrigos. Among others, the professor had argued that the first step towards a solution must be the accurate identification of all the newcomer refugees, so that the Greek authorities could provide mostly the Greek islands with everything that would be needed by the local authorities. The second step, according to Mr. Syrigos is the immediate repatriation of the economic migrants and the third one is the faster recognition of the refugee identity for the Syrian citizens, so that Greece can absorb more EU funds.

The third one was an opinion article, signed by the Executive Editor of Kathimerini, Alexis Papahelas, on September 16th. Mr. Papahelas has made a similar argument to Mr. Papadimitriou’s, regarding a possible solution. He argued that the EU has no other option than to intervene and seek a political solution for Syria and Libya’s crises and then provide resources for the two countries’ reconstruction.

Overall and besides the fact that there were only three articles with an intention to facilitate understanding, we have to acknowledge that Kathimerini has provided the highest number of possible solutions (twelve) in comparison to all four newspapers. Additionally, the eighty eight counted references about the third axis of this category, the one of “appearance just as part of the reportage” are the following; fifty eight about “asylum/refugees absorption”; just two for “NGOs activity”; twenty one about “humanitarian aid” and seven about “proposed solutions”.

Finally, the “stance” results of this newspaper are clear evidence that Kathimerini has regarded itself as a decisively neutral observer. More than two thirds (twenty three) of the articles were “neutral” towards the refugees, while less than one third (nine) were “positive”. The “negative” option has again filled with a zero (maybe the only thing in
common about the four examined newspapers). Concerning the stance towards the EU countries, nineteen of the articles were “neutral”, while eleven of them were “negative” and only two positive (in favor of the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel).

To be precise, five out of eleven negative articles were against European Union in general. Some examples are the following: “The quite mad confrontation of the refugees by the European countries continues” (September 2nd). “We certainly cannot forget that this crisis is the result of myopic, senseless decisions made by European leaders” (September 2nd). “This photograph (referring to the photo of Aylan Kurdi in the Turkish shores) can become the symbol for the failure of the European migration policy” (September 4th). “EU’s diplomacy has been pathetically insufficient” (September 6th).

Two articles were also negative for the Greek government of SYRIZA; “The Greek government has proved to be very insufficient in dealing with the migration-refugee crisis” (September 3rd) and “SYRIZA’s blame for the explosive increase of the illegal entries in the country is indisputable” (September 6th) were the exactly parts of the articles.

“If some people consider the refugees as human beings and some others as Muslims, Viktor Orbán is clearly placed in the second category” was a negative critique against the Hungarian Prime Minister (September 19th), while another one was against Angela Merkel; “while in many European cities demonstrations have been occurring with the common slogan “welcome refugees”, the princess of Europe was raising a prohibitive wall, “temporary” she says” (September 15th).

Similarly to the rest newspapers, Kathimerini has adopted a neutral attitude and has not been critical enough, when referring to the EU countries.
4. Semiotic Analysis

In total, 141 photographs have been used by the newspapers within the 20 days’ timeline, out of which 40 have been presented on the front pages and the rest 101 on the inside pages of the newspapers, accompanying the examined articles.

In contrast with the analysis of the texts, in this part each newspaper was not examined separately. Given the fact that this was my secondary method of analysis, I have decided that it would have been better to examine the four newspapers together; Even though this was the qualitative part, it seemed interesting to also count how many pictures were representing each one of the seven thematic sub-categories. However, in this qualitative part, I did not want to restrict the analysis around numbers, but around each sub-category, by crosschecking the photographs of the four newspapers. The final results of “The Guardian” and “Avgi” are presented in the below table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE GUARDIAN</th>
<th>Photographs</th>
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<th>Themes</th>
<th>Number of photos inside the article</th>
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Table 6
The final results of “The Daily Telegraph” and “Kathimerini” are presented in the below table 7.

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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographs</th>
<th>Number of photos on the front page</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Number of photos inside the article</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences / closed borders</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

The final results for all the four newspapers combined are presented in the below table 8 (percentages have been estimated to the closest integral).
### Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographs</th>
<th>Number of photos on the front page</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number of photos inside the article</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>28,00%</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td>24,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>24,00%</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td>24,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences / closed borders</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,00%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>22,00%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td>21,00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8,00%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,00%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1. First sub-category / Children

Dogra, while studying the representations of the “Majority World” through messages and imagery employed by International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) in campaigns towards the British public in the “Developed World”, has found that the most popular characters in INGO’s messages were children\(^{104}\).

This is also the case for this analysis, as “children” is the most popular sub-category both in the front pages’ photographs (28%), but also in those inside the newspapers (even though in the second occasion it has the same quota -24%- along with “journey”).

Dogra argues that “children are the ‘development candy’ of INGOs’ messages”\(^{105}\) and likewise we can argue that in this case study, children are the ‘emotional candy’ of the newspapers’ photographs. UNHCR’s data\(^{106}\) about the arrivals in Europe by sea throughout 2015 show that 58% of the refugees were men, 17% were women and just 25% were children. However, “children” is the most popular sub-category in this

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\(^{105}\) Ibid, p. 33

\(^{106}\) UNHCR 2015
research, which is clear evidence that the newspapers were aiming to achieve an emotional result in order to promote their articles. If we look on the data of the photographs inside the newspapers, we can see that children are not the most popular theme in two occasions (The Daily Telegraph and Avgi) but regarding to the front pages, which are the “spearhead” of any newspaper, children were the most popular theme in all four newspapers (even if in some cases other sub-categories have had the same data counted; but not more).

It was not a surprise that photographs of Aylan Kurdi were used extensively by the newspapers in their front pages.

Photo 1/Avgi 3-9-15

Photo 2/Avgi 4-9-15

Photo 3 / The Daily Telegraph 4-9-15
Moreover, other pictures portraying children have been used in the front pages of all the four newspapers and their aim for an emotional outcome is again clear.
4.2. Second sub-category / Journey

“Journey” was the second most popular theme in photographs, both on the front pages and inside the newspapers (24%).

One of the most powerful photographs was published by the Daily Telegraph on September 7, inside the newspaper.
A six year old boy has just arrived at Dortmund railway station in Germany and he looks happy. Following Saussure’s thinking, we can argue that the “signifier” is the boy and the signified is what the boy represents; which is the arrival to this town. Those two elements combined, form the “sign” but Barthes’ thinking can also applied here; this “sign” is the first and complete denoted level, but there is also a second set of signifieds about a broader meaning. The word “Germany”, printed in the boy’s shirt represents the safety of the European “promised land” after an extremely dangerous journey. This second level is the “level of myth” for this photograph.

The next day, on September 8, Avgi has published a similar photograph, also inside the newspaper.

A five year old girl has arrived with her father at a train station in Germany and the above mentioned semiotic “translation” seems exactly the same about this photograph. This time, the level of myth is “written” on a piece of paper, instead of on a t-shirt.

4.3. Third sub-category / Fences – Closed borders

This theme was the fourth most popular on the front pages and holds the third place inside the newspapers (9% in both cases). On September 18, Avgi has published the following photograph (inside the newspaper).
A father with his son represent the first, descriptive level (the “signifier”), while the “signified” is the powerful message they create; while being “stuck” at the railway tracks, they find the courage to escape their hard daily routine and enjoy some carefree moments, while people around them also seem to participate.

On the same day, Kathimerini’s front page was presenting the following forceful photograph.

Photo 11 / Avgi 18-9-2015

Photo 12 / Kathimerini 18-9-15
The fences at the Hungarian borders are the “signifier”, while the “signified” is the decision of some European countries to close their borders to prevent more refugee flows. Once again, Barthes’ thinking can be depicted here. In this case, the “level of myth” is created through the sign with the flag of the European Union, placed next to the fences. The broader meaning which is connected to politics, is that EU’s solidarity has had –after all- expiration date.

4.4. Fourth sub-category / Conditions

“Conditions” was the third most popular sub-category regarding to the front pages (22%) and the second most highlighted theme inside the newspapers (21%).

Two photographs published by The Guardian (both inside the newspaper) are indicative. The first on was published on September 2 and shows a mother, covering her sleeping child with a blanket, inside a train which is the “signifier”.

The “signified” is the long journey both of them are making in order to avoid danger in their country and to persue a better life in Europe. However, the “level of myth” that arises from this photograph, is the strong family bonding; the for granted and endless protection of the child by the parent.

The second photograph, published on September 14 is even more intense. In this case, the message is so powerfull that it seems unnecessary to argue about the “signifier” and the “signified” which are obvious and similar to the previous photographs’. A father is swimming and carrying his baby, right afte their boat had sank and nothing seems possible to stop this man from protecting his child. Once again, the
unconditional and unlimited parent’s love towards the child constitute the “level of myth”.

4.5. Fifth sub-category / Politicians

“Politicians” was the less popular theme both on the front pages’ photographs (just 2%) but also on those inside the newspapers (6%). On September 15, the Daily Telegraph has published the following photograph (inside the newspaper).
The “signifiers” are easily depicted; a man, two women and one kid, while the “signified” is the general concept that is built which is: “The British Prime Minister is talking with refugees”. Those two elements are forming the “sign” which in this case is the British government’s plan for the resettlement of up to 20,000 refugees from the Syrian region over the next five years.

On September 11, Kathimerini had presented the following photograph on the front page.

![Photo 16 / Kathimerini 11-9-15](image)

Three men are taking pictures with a woman (“signifiers”) outside the Berlin’s Asylum Service headquarters. The wider concept that is created (“signified”) is that three refugees, who have arrived safely in Germany, are taking a picture with the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel.

Applying Barthes’ thinking, the combined “sign” is the first, denotive level, but the second one, the connotation level is that which carries a broader meaning and it is related to “otherness”. A common argument about the refugees was that they don’t need protection and being taken care of because they have got smartphones and wallets full of money. An argument which has being expressed from common people to the US Presidential candidate, Donald Trump, who has asked “why do refugees have cell phones?” during a campaign rally in Arizona.

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107 RightWingWatch 2015
“Before the European Union suspended crude imports in September 2011, Syria produced about 380,000 barrels a day”\textsuperscript{108} and “just 10,000 barrels a day in 2014”\textsuperscript{109}. Therefore and besides the devastating war effects, pre-war Syria was not even close to be characterised as under-developed. Fortunately, there were also “voices” to defend the refugees; “Stop shaming Syrian refugees for using cellphones”\textsuperscript{110} “No, cellphones are not a luxury for Syrian refugees”\textsuperscript{111}; but also to explain “how smartphones are helping refugees in Europe”\textsuperscript{112}, who “use messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Viber and Line to communicate with loved ones back home”\textsuperscript{113}.

The “level of myth” in this case is produced by the “selfie” which the refugees are taking with Angela Merkel who has welcomed them in Germany. It promotes a powerful message which is that refugees are not ‘others’ in comparison to the rest European citizens and nothing is wrong when they are using their cell phones, because “for asylum seekers a cellphone is a bridge to the future and the past”\textsuperscript{114}.

4.6. Sixth sub-category / Tension

The “tension” theme had low results both on the front pages and inside the newspapers (8% each). On September 5, Kathimerini had presented the following photograph on the frontpage.

![Photo 17 / Kathimerini 5-9-15](image)

\textsuperscript{108} Bloomberg 2015
\textsuperscript{109} BBC 2015
\textsuperscript{110} DailyDot 2015
\textsuperscript{111} Washington Post 2015
\textsuperscript{112} CNBC 2015
\textsuperscript{113} Time 2015
\textsuperscript{114} Al Jazeera America 2015
It shows clashes between around 1,000 Afghan citizens and police forces in Lesbo’s port which are the “signifiers” elements. The “signified” concept is the confrontation which has created in many European countries, after the decision to close the borders and hence the “entrapment” of thousands of refugees in countries which have not been their desired final destination.

On September 18, the Daily Telegraph has published the following photograph, inside the newspaper.

![Photo 18 / The Daily Telegraph 18-9-15](image)

Similarly to the previous phorograph, the “sign” created by the “signifiers” (clashes of people) and the “signified” (tension in Europe) is easily depicted. Once again Barthes’ thinking can be applied in this case; the “sign” is the “denotation” level, while the broader “connotation” level can be “translated” as a metaphor; the police barrier which the refugees are pushing can be compared to the wider “barrier” EU countries have used to prevent massive refugee flows, by building fences and imposing restrictions on the borders. This wider ideological “translation” is the “level of myth” for this case.
4.7. Seventh sub-category / Other

This theme had also low rates (7% on the front pages and 8% inside the newspapers). One example of this thematic sub-category, is the following photograph, published by Avgi on September 13.

![Photo 19 / Avgi 13-9-15](image1)

This photograph shows Bernd Kasparek, an activist from Bordermonitoring.eu, and was published as part of the Kasparek’ interview.

On September 18, The Guardian has published the following photograph (inside the newspaper) which is a map of the area around Croatia, Serbia, Hungary and Romania.

![Photo 20 / The Guardian 18-9-15](image2)
The map provides information for entry points which the refugees are using, for clashes and also fences in specific borderlines.
5. Conclusion / Answers to research sub-questions

In the beginning of this thesis, I have argued that the refugee crisis has created space for a wide developmental dialogue, because the refugees, as representatives of the developing countries have come in the territory of the European developed countries. The most important expectation of this project was to examine how the four newspapers have reported about this coexistence but also about the opportunities for turning this massive crisis into a win-win case for both the refugees and Europe.

The main research question of my thesis was:

How did Greek and English newspapers cover the refugee crisis?

This was going to be probed by a series of sub-questions:

1. How did the newspapers report regarding to individuals engaged to the refugee crisis? Did they mostly focus on politics, aid assistance, the refugees themselves?

In general, the reporting was superficial and over-focused on politics. The Aylan Kurdi’s death was one of the most crucial factors regarding to the selection of the examination timeline and even though this horrifying incident has triggered a wider media attention, it seemed that it has been shortly ‘forgotten’.

Besides Aylan Kurdi and his family, the focus on the human factor of the refugees has been unexpectedly undervalued as the references about people who found themselves with a future full of uncertainty ‘in a heartbeat’, have just been supplementary to articles full of political extensions.

In the meantime, factors which have had a leading role within the ‘refugee crisis equation’ (such as humanitarian aid, volunteers and NGO’s activities) were also underrepresented.

2. Was there follow-up material with an intention to facilitate understanding, or a dialogue on proposed and realistic solutions about the crisis? Or was the reporting sensationalist and even underpinning prejudice?
The third category of the coding schedule would have been the absolute ‘guide’ in order to ascertain whether my expectations have been met about this sub-questions.

Unfortunately the results have not fulfilled my expectations. In the third column, where “references just as part of the reportage” were placed, the total result of the four newspapers was 365. In the second, crucial column, which was about whether the newspapers have presented material with an intention to promote understanding, the dialogue opportunities and possibly solution proposals, the result was just 50.

I cannot argue that the four newspapers’ overall reporting was underpinning prejudice, but on the other hand I also cannot argue that, in total, the reporting has been presented to the audience with an intension to facilitate a deeper understanding of the situation.

3. Was the reporting active or passive? Did they assume an active role in preventing conflict or clashes, or did they regard themselves as decisively neutral observers?

In a general sense, the reporting was passive. The four newspapers have adopted positive stance towards the refugees generally, but this is something which anyone would expect.

What was not expected was the passive approach towards the EU counties. I have said that before, but it is important to be repeated; the EU leadership is largely responsible for the fact that even now, a stable solution has not been found yet. Many months after the examined period, the borders are still closed, the EU – Turkey refugee deal seems fragile, while thousands of refugees are trapped in countries which they have never intended to settle. I was expecting a heated critique about EU’s obstructiveness, which was not the case.

4. Have the refugees been treated as ‘others’ in the newspapers reports? Was there any bias noticed regarding the presentation of the refugees through the images used?

Overall, the representation of the refugees through the photographs used can be characteruized as sensationalist and seeking emotional outcomes. The children were overrepresented, as they were highlighted 78 times in the total of 141 photographs and
the newspapers’ intention to exploit their innocence in order to earn “emotional” points was clear.

Moreover, what is interesting is that even though politics had a leading role in the content analysis of the articles, the visual representation of the politicians was highly insignificant. The conclusion is obvious here; the newspapers might have been focusing on politics in their articles, but a crying baby is a much “stronger” image than for example David Cameron.

On the other hand, we have to acknowledge that the newspapers could have promoted more the photographs of “tension” for the same reasons, but they haven’t. It is indisputable that tension had a leading role in Europe, especially after the borders closing, therefore the low rates of this theme (8% on both front pages and inside the newspapers) must be credited on the “pros” side of the newspapers’ visual representation of the refugees. Similarly, the “fences/closed borders” theme could also have provided “strong” and emotional photographs, but this was not reflected in the final results (9% on each occasion).

To sum up, I believe that the priorities of the newspapers were totally different regarding to the texts and the visual representation of the refugee crisis. The human factor has been widely ignored in the articles, and simultaneously over presented in the photographs.

Word count: 17,891 (excluding tablets and photographs)
6. References

Books and Journals


Websites


http://bordermonitoring.eu/


http://www.dailydot.com/opinion/syria-refugees-cell-phone-use/