



Media Discourses on Syrian refugees
Analysing the Guardian's representations through gender, religion
and age

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Disclaimer:

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Abstract

The Syrian refugees' migration to Europe became an important event; it is understood as the crisis for the European countries especially when it started in 2015. Media has been playing important roles to affect the readers' perception of the topic but also shapes the government's policy. Every news in the media has specific frames written by the different authors but also has a general frame representing the newspaper's own positionality affecting the perception of the refugees by its readers. In this research, I analysed the *Guardian* newspaper's news from 2014 to today, with focusing on both visual and textual sources. I looked at the role of age, religion and gender in refugee representations with an intersectionality approach. From securitization and Orientalism perspectives, there is a strong binary representation of refugees as either invaders who came to Europe to take jobs from its citizens, to change their culture and bring security threat as potential terrorists; or showing them as the vulnerable and weak, and put them in a pitying, victim position.

In the *Guardian* representation of women and children were similar and almost every news item about children's vulnerability. This may be to get attention to policy makers for policies needed to provide necessary conditions for refugees, or to get attention from the public to help and accept refugees. Male refugees in the newspaper are represented as non-aggressive and likable with their individual stories. The male refugee is represented in the solidarity with other refugees and they can be in the positive role to awake sympathy in the UK media to change negative perception and to resettle more refugees.

As Yazidi women; being sexual slave to ISIS is written with binary representation of non-Muslim women vs Muslim men with history of full of persecution from their Muslim rulers. On the other hand, being Muslim or non-Muslim women in the conflict has the same framing in the sense of difficulties they face from war and from their culture as conservative and patriarchal.

Relevance to Development Studies

The media is the most important thing to gather information by the citizens. Understanding the specific framing is important because representations of refugees coupled with specific political aims serve to increase xenophobia, Islamophobia and also damage refugees' security and dignity through journalism that does not follow ethical principles. This research analyses the representational differences of refugees' age, gender and religious group and shows the orientalist and securitized view on the Syrian refugees. Being women and children mean to be facing with structural discrimination by the oversimplified, stereotyped and Eurocentric view put them in victim position in the media.

Keywords

Refugee, refugee children, refugee women, refugee men, Syrian, framing, media.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Syrian refugees' migration to Europe became important event, it understood as the crisis for the European countries especially when it started in 2015. The media has been publishing many news related with the refugees that affects the public but also the government's policy because "media has symbiotic relations both with public opinion and government policy." (Jayasundara 2018: Session 2 Slide 12)

In this research the focus is on the UK based newspaper the *Guardian*, and its reporting on Syrian refugees. The *Guardian* is selected for several reasons. According to the Conversation (2016), the comparison between The *Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Sun* and *Daily Mirror* on their percentage of articles on the themes of humanitarian (elements) and humanitarianism as a (key theme) *Guardian* had the highest number of news on migration. The *Guardian* also defines itself as pro-refugee and argues that refugees who flee from conflicts need humane policy and solidarity. (Editorial 2017).

However, every news has specific frames in refugee news written by the different authors but also has general frame representing the newspaper's own positionality affecting the perception of the refugees by its readers. The specific frames on the refugees shape the people's thoughts on what is real through media news. According to the Silva et al. (2018) showing refugees suffers most of the time on the media; could neutralise and even normalise the situation, dehumanise them and generate insensitivity on their reality. (ibid, p.4)

1.1 Research problem

Karnik (1998) recommends; viewers should not sit passively but look news from outside to understand through gender, post-colonialism, sexuality, race, or social class' representation who benefits and who is excluded from the news.

Due to that, this research is concerned with media representations of Syrian refugees between the period from January 2014 to August 2018. Within Europe, flow of refugee is understood as a crisis, and security issue. There are specific frames applied for different age groups and gender which is very obvious in some news that put them within specific categories and change the reality understood by the readers.

In my paper, I found these different frames to understand the positionality of the newspaper. I chose the word refugees instead of migrants or asylum seeker to narrow the news I was searching, with being aware of the different terms like asylum seekers, migrants etc.

I analysed the *Guardian* newspaper's news from 2014 to today, with focusing on both visual and textual sources, looking at the role of age, religion and gender in their representations. I looked the news in the *Guardian* because it has rich visual and textual material and I did not need to subscribe to reach them. But second reason is the *Guardian* is known as tolerant and humanitarian newspaper and I want to analyse the news to see framing in both the text and visual sources to assess if its parallels with the general discourse on refugees or is distinct from it. I chose to start from 2014 instead of the time of Syrian civil war in 2011 to narrow the time with the starting of the refugee migration to Europe in the years of 2014-2015.

1.2 Contextual background

Europe has been a popular route for refugees who have been migrating and fleeing from conflict regions of North Africa and the Middle East in decades. In the 1970s Europe received economic migrants to work mostly to fill the necessity as workers in European labour markets. But in the last 5 years, the

most populous groups reaching Europe are the Syrian refugees who have been escaping from civil war. "Refugees are defined and protected in international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol as well as other legal texts, such as the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, remain the cornerstone of modern refugee protection." (Edwards 2015: 1) This refugee protection mechanism includes the legal framework from International Human Rights Law, International Refugee Law, Humanitarian Law and includes the rules like non-refoulement, provision of adequate living standard, protection from discrimination, provision of right to have free movement, right to work, access to justice and so on. (Nicholson and Kumin 2017)

Refugees have legal rights but the applicability of these rules by the state shows us the gap between international rules and the states' practices inside its borders due to many reasons including social, economic or political. These reasons increase the illegal routes for the refugees, unlawful border security protection, lack of basic service for the refugees and so on. According to the news I chose, some of the reasons to take actions against refugees by the country is anchored in believes such as that refugees are economic burden for the country, refugees will change the identity and culture of the country they settled, or many other political reasons that intersect or are justified with the economic and social reasons.

The first countries (that accepted most Syrian refugees) were the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt and Jordan. The EU has been preferred destination due to its proximity to the region and security for refugees. However, reaching Europe is not easy task; it includes dangerous routes both at sea and at the land, and is also expensive to afford. Even when people reached Europe, it may mean detention in the camp or temporary shelters until gaining refugee status.

At the beginning of the conflict in Syria, EU was not ready to open its borders. Several important aspects of refugees' images in European countries aided the rejection of refugees. One is related to Orientalism (Said 1978), used as a language in some media tools defining Middle Eastern population as a whole, and refugees specifically, as uneducated, uncivilized, with a conservative living style and impossible to integrate within Europe's identity represented through respect to human rights, equality between men and women, educated population, and other prerogatives of modernity. The other aspect is that; the refugees who escaped from conflict and traumatic events were often equated with radical Islamist groups that created terror in the region. (Murphy 2017) Some media, furthermore, described refugee as migrants who want to come to Europe to increase their economic wellbeing. (Cohen 2016)

From Securitization and Orientalism perspective, there is a strong binary representation of refugees as either invaders who came to Europe to take jobs from its citizen, to change their culture and bring security threat as potential terrorists; or showing them as the vulnerable and weak, and put them in a pitying, victim position. "Pity, here, is not the natural sentiment of human empathy but, rather, a historically specific and politically constituted principle for relating spectator and sufferer, with the former safely removed from the unfortunate condition of the latter." (Chouliaraki 2004: 190)

Stuart Hall (1997) argued that creation of knowledge is linked to power, and that representations not only assume the authority of 'the truth' but have the power to make themselves true. All knowledge, once applied in the real world, has real effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true' (p. 49). Thus, negative media discourses about Syrian refugees have to be examined, as they have power to declare 'the truth' about who the refugees are, why they come to Europe, and what they want to do in Europe.

According to Zunes (2017) especially after the September 11, 2001 terror attack in New York city by the Al Qaeda radical Islamic organization, Islamophobia started to increase globally and Muslims who live in Europe have been affected by European populist discourses spreading fear about Muslim refugee's different cultural and religious values. The far right, extremist and populist parties are on the rise all over Europe and we cannot say the reason for it is just because of migration of refugees but threats of radical political Islam and terrorism as well as economic crises may affect this predisposition. The representations of refugees coupled with specific political aims serve to increase Islamophobia and xenophobia.

After the image of dead body of Syrian boy Aylan Kurdi on the Turkish coast, Devichand (2016) writes that some changes in representations occur: news about the Syrian conflict started to increase rapidly, and the word 'migrants' was more often replaced by refugees.

1.3 Research questions

Main question:

What are the media frames of the *Guardian's* representation of Syrian refugees?

Sub-questions:

- What is the role of gender, age and religion in these representations?
- How are Orientalism and Securitization implicated in the *Guardian* representation of refugees?

1.4 Research Methodology

I specifically used The *Guardian* UK based newspaper to analyse both written and visual sources about Syrian refugees because it has rich visual and textual sources. I compared the adult and child Syrian refugee's different representation through different genders, and also different framing created by their religious background.

Media representation methods of categorization, framing and focalisation helped me to understand the language and the practice toward refugees in the newspaper. "The frames adopted by media to cover terrorism and the ones adopted by governments to report and respond to this type of action influence the society's perception of this activity." (Papacharissi and Oliveira 2008: 54) Related to categorization Leudar and Marsland's work talks about the creation of us vs them categorization in the media to justify the action on others. (2004)

The news analysing tools of categorization, framing and focalisation are the methods to understand the representation of the refugees but also the positionality of the author of the news and the *Guardian*. "The narrator is the one who tells the story, the one who sees, whose vision is transmitted to the reader...Readers have no direct access to the related events although we have the illusion that the events are displayed to us in an unmediated way. We can only see, know, and understand as far as the narrating instance permits it." (Meijer 1993: 375) Due to that, this written news is powerful to affect the readers' emotions on the subject, who is protagonist and antagonist, object and subject position according to language used in the news, what is excluded and included. Meijer (1993) adds the usage of focalisation, determines the power distribution in the news -who sees and who is seen, who talks and who is talked about- and positionality of the readers by the authors.

These media tools are also valid for the visual analysis of the pictures chosen by the news agencies. In the photography both vertical and horizontal angles, the subjects and objects of depiction, close or long shots, captions and text of the news, are all equally important to analyse the representation of the issue. Kress and Leeuwen (1996: 365-379) add that all these are meaningfully related to the culture and contains different meanings to the different symbols.

I use these tools to analyse news related to groups with different gender, age and religion. Even the majority represented group was Syrian refugees, some of the media text use the refugees coming from different countries together with Syrian refugees.

Selection of material was done through the use of key words: 'refugee', 'refugee children', 'refugee women', 'refugee men'. That meant that some texts were directly writing about lives of women, men and

children refugees, while others addressed many other themes – such as boat rescue operations, policies about refugees, pro-refugee and anti-refugee protests, and east-Europe and refugees - but conveyed them through images of vulnerabilities of refugees. Such representations correspond with the pro-refugee positionality of the *Guardian*, but at the same time it is important to see when and how gender, age and religion have been used in some of these stories – and not only in stories that directly focus on women, men and children - and especially if they were used to produce stereotypes.

Some of the news like Yazidi women news or children in the civil war were not directly about the refugees even I searched with the keywords of ‘refugee’ because the representation of Yazidis and children in the war in the Syria, followed by policy recommendation to refugee who are in the neighbourhood or EU countries. They used as a justification of the migration of refugees to change the perception of them as economic migrants.

In texts directly addressing news about men, children and women I chose the associated press photography. I chose the photos under the headline as a overall representative of the news. For the indirect use of men, women and children refugees’ section in the news, I chose the photo of the corresponded section which were also closest photos to that section.

I chose many news related with the refugees according to keywords of refugee, refugee men, refugee children, refugee women and so on. Some of the news were about general refugee issue that were not represented through any gender, religion or age group. In addition, I eliminated these news and I looked the others who had these specific groups’ representation.

1.5 Original contribution of this study

The child refugee in the media is mostly considered as vulnerable and news about them are touchy and very dramatic. Gender difference on child refugee is important but not that important like the adult refugee. The adult, especially in the category of young, adult, male refugee, has prejudice like being conservative, criminal, aggressive, while female adult refugee is portrayed as mother of many children, incapable of taking care of her family, uneducated and weak. “The suffering of Syrian refugee women is minimized to involuntary marriage in exchange for money, and the causes of this suffering are blamed on both the backward greedy men in the women’s families and on the Arabian men who are sexually obsessed with buying young girls.” (Alhayek 2014: 698) While other authors have conducted similar research, I have not seen research that has used the same methods -focalisation, framing and categorisation in the news sources- or focused on all three power relations- age, gender, and religion- as I have done.

1.6 Justification of the study

The media is the most important thing to gather information by the citizens. Specific political aim, subjectivity or biased news brings misinformation, wrong perception by the people to the topic. This can lead to bigger social issues by the large group of people to specific groups like Syrian refugees which could lead to aggression and racism toward them with the news that do not follow media ethics. “My aim has been to show how texts do not so much lead to violent acts, but are rather, in themselves violent acts.” (Meijer 1993: 377)

In my research paper, I chose to analyse UK media discourse with awareness of media’s huge impact on society. I chose the *Guardian* for its rich content related with refugee topic but also to see the newspaper with middle and upper-class audience who give importance to humanitarian problem and representation of refugees. Even so, there are different framings including stereotypical values or positive or negative images of refugee groups created through different textual and visual style of the images or the language used in the news.

Justification behind that was to see different representation methods through images and texts. To change the wrong perception, change the wrong language is vital, but also to have awareness about its roots is important. Kress write “The disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception has yet another effect: it causes social relations to be represented rather than enacted.” (2006: 364)

1.7 Scope and limitations

I chose UK based newspaper which was in English, and this may have limited my scope due to it being only one source with particular stance and only one language. The *Guardian* represents the middle or upper socio-economic British people with more international perspective than other popular newspapers. Their viewers have higher education level and understand that newspaper tells the refugee news in different ways with NGO or the MP’s references. But despite that, there are many news based on emotions that put refugee in a victim position and does not give enough direct reference from refugees (or gives direct voice to men more than women refugees) and give opinion of UK based NGO’s with lack of objective critics of UK’s policy on refugees. But my research shows that the *Guardian* represented male refugees in positive ways which is different than other newspaper’s framing of refugee men. Lastly, even though there is symbiotic relationship between readers and newspaper, in the paper, I cannot assume media’s specific impact on the society’s perception about refugees or how the media shaped by the society’s views on the refugees (because this is not within the scope of my research) but I only analyse the forms of representation within this newspaper.

1.8 Ethical and political choices and positionality of the researcher

In the current world system, states often see other states as potential enemy causing the massive armament and conflicts, creating huge military spending which could be used to improve human’s welfare and refugee’s conditions structurally. This state centric nationalistic view on security leads to securitization of the migration, xenophobic approach and shapes the media’s perception of refugee migration as threat.

Misrepresented news, damage refugee’s security and dignity through nationalistic ideology and ignores the rules of ethical journalism. Journalist has responsibilities to follow ethical media understanding to produce objective news which do not serve for specific groups and do not exclude some of the communities in the society with specific political purpose. To sum up, analysis of the newspaper was very interesting and helped me realize the bias in the media, but also helped me understand my own bias that I got through the news media industry without being aware of it.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Perspectives

2.1 The current state of the academic field

The media representation of refugees should be fair and inclusive to do ethical journalism. According to the Byrne (2016), news related to the migration reporting should include accurate facts, journalist should act independently and transparently, word usage for migration should be right, news should include the direct voice of refugees, victimization or the words describing refugees in dehumanizing ways should be avoided. Georgiou and Zaborowski (2017) gives important points in the coverage of refugee crisis. They say the news and campaign should be inclusive and give diverse voices and right information about refugees to improve oversimplified, stereotypical reporting.

Discourses of media about people from different regions, especially non-western ones, go back to long time. Western world's image on the East or South, but especially for the Middle East, mostly started with the Crusaders and explorer's notes in the middle ages. The Edward Said's *Orientalism* (2003) is the book that tells about stereotyping by the West about the Arab or Muslim world as barbaric and irrational, with aggressive men, sensual women, exotic places, backward society, and so on. He talked that this orientalism perspective has been taken place everywhere including media, books, movies, which created wrong representation of people from this region. Mills (2003) mention in her book about Foucault' about power to spread specific kind of knowledge and capability of people to produce their own knowledge about themselves. The powerful side in the close history was the Global North and knowledge produced in very Eurocentric and biased manner about the other civilizations.

Berry, Moore at al. (2016) tell why the European countries did not come with a concrete plan for the refugees at the beginning of a crisis in 2015. Social factors and economic factors were two different perspectives to this problem, and both were important to shape the perception of the refugee in the media. The economic factor is that economic crisis has been continuing in some countries. Diminishing of wages led to delay the planning for refugees and open borders to them. Social factors come from the power knowledge regimes, specifically focused on Edward Said's Orientalism continuing in some media sources including Guardian. Understanding the representation of the age, gender and religion of the refugees and the way it categorised, will be aided by Orientalism perspective.

Abu-Lughod (2008) mentions that the current 'War on Terror' with American intervention to Afghanistan was explained as liberating Afghan women from their oppressor, but this was based on the colonial rhetoric on Muslim women without considering their differences based on cultural, historical, or religious values.

Gerard's (2014) intersectionality analysis also looks at the categories and Winker (2011) talks that intersectionality needs both empirical and methodological analysis together to understand inequality structures:

We want to demonstrate in this approach how the interrelatedness of categories of inequality on various levels can be grasped and analysed as a part of the empirical research process. Starting out from a multi-level approach, we consider social structures, including organizations and institutions (macro and meso level), as well as processes of identity construction (micro level) and cultural symbols (level of representation). (Winker 2011: 52)

Intersectionality approach look at the different dimension of inequality categories and how these categories alleviate or deepen the inequality structures. In my research, to understand the practice of subordination through construction of the identities, symbolic representations in the media, representational difference of the refugee's age, gender and; religion are used.

Securitization perspective on refugee crisis is another important academic field to understand the reasons behind treatment of refugees and how it changes the representation of the them. Buzan (1998) explains securitization as a process of diverging the topic from daily politics to existential security threat for the country, that allows it to take extraordinary measures. Refugees are described in many European countries as security threat for the country. Watson (2009) criticize the implementation of refugee policies in Western states and claims that their approach towards migrants leads to destabilisation of the environment and bringing out humanitarian questions. Securitization process leads to understanding of humanitarian migration as a crisis and needed to apply restrictive procedure on migration by the state. Media representation of refugees through taking pictures of them with the police, image of refugee on the boat as arriving in the country illegally, writing refugees and border security issue together create perception about them as suspicious, criminal and dangerous actors. "Examining the securitization of migration at various border sites, book illustrates how inequalities incubated, producing and reproducing identities, norms, and even racial and sexual categories" (Gerard 2014: 14)

2.2. Specific theoretical perspective of this study

To understand the roots of the perception of the Middle East, non-Christians or other groups than Western European identity, I looked at the Foucault and Said's works on the hegemonic power and its production of knowledge which is biased, stereotyping, colonial discourse to non-western groups. Rettberg and Gajjala (2016) mentions that during the refugee crisis, media wrote about Middle Eastern men as aggressors, and their masculinity as threatening. They also note:

The photograph of the African child is familiar to Western eyes from charity campaigns and calls for compassion...The dry dirt and the starving people, naked or wrapped in blankets, could never be confused for an image of Europe. The men on the boat, on the other hand, are dressed as Europeans dress and look much like Europeans. The text and the juxtaposed images tell us we must fear these men and that they are not true refugees. (Rettberg and Gajjala 2016: 189)

Mutua (2011), points to the evaluation of the human rights movement with Eurocentric values, which started as a tool to save the victims from European savages such as Hitler or Soviet Communism, but then started serving the aim of universalizing the western hegemony and dominance. He adds the in the today's world, savage comes from non-western societies that blames each other as being against the rules of human rights. In addition, Wekker (2016) describes white Dutch society's denial on racism and the history as colonizer, and that it puts itself in an innocent position; but this shows the continuation of their colonial legacy as white Dutch are privileged to describe themselves upon their acts on others.

In this sense, looking at the production of knowledge through critical lenses is key to understand the categorisation created with questions who is protagonist and antagonist in the story, how is each group represented and why?

There is different framing to represent the child refugee and adult refugee, but also female refugee and the male refugee through their religion. Every category is represented differently but sometimes these representations interact with each other, based on specific representational strategies. I used categorization

tool to group actors with their acts and other characterizations to figure out groups to which they belong. After that, I looked at the framing and focalisation of the author who wrote the news and general representation of the newspaper.

Due to that, my research problem is how the Syrian refugees are represented through their gender, age and religion in the *Guardian*. I looked at intersectionality analysis and securitization of the media discourse on refugees through Orientalism lenses.

Chapter 3: Women And Children

3.1 Introduction

Women and children in the *Guardian* are represented in many news so they make the biggest section in my news sources. I chose different themes for women and children according to topic in the news but what I notice is they have many common representations both in text and photos.

Most of the representations of Syrian female refugees were about Yazidi women. The news mainly focuses on their life as a slave of ISIS and their distinct religion practices. We see the news about Yazidi women trying to desexualise themselves and their children through making themselves ugly and dirty to avoid being selected by ISIS fighters as sex slaves. Generally, news is written in an episodic way, focused on the emotions of the women through their life stories.

Women and children both have same themes about their lives inside of the refugee camp and the boat rescue operation. Their victimhood is the reason of their facing the risk of various threats, more than men. Enloe (1990), specify the women and children are feminised, grouped as 'womenandchildren', and in need of protection from men. She adds the war is gendered and 'fight for our women and children' is the notion that justifies war.

Overall, there is no much direct reference from children and women speaking themselves, unlike in the case of men' in the *Guardian*. The unaccompanied children are described as the most vulnerable ones who needed protection, especially in the refugee camp news. The news tries to get attention of the NGO's and UK government to settle more refugees living in these refugee camps.

In the news pictures, women and children are represented together as the most vulnerable ones who live through the gendered war. Some of the children directly look at the camera but women do not look directly and are framed with children, thus almost always offered to the viewers as an object, and as mothers. The exception of the stereotyping of women are the news about women' empowerment. On the other hand, we do not see them with the male members in the news (Tisdall 2018).

3.2 Refugee Women

Women themes are Yazidi women news, women's activism in Idlib and women's lives in the refugee camp. Women are represented as sexualised by the ISIS or other criminal groups and they face several dangers especially the sexual assault. On the other hand, even the news that criticises the approach of newspapers for representing Yazidi women through stereotyping and victimisation, continues with the same approach.

The women activism in Idlib is an extraordinary news, as it shows women in powerful and active position to save their community from airstrikes, educate other women or take part in the leadership. However, in almost every news, women tend to be shown in a traditional way such as they are placed together with their children, they walk to escape the Islamic terrorist groups, either in the boat with the children or struggle to live in refugee camp. Women are vulnerable to danger with being target or their children is targeted by other men.

We see binary representation of femininity versus masculinity in the context of war and migration. Muslim Islamic fighters as an aggressor and evil; non-Muslim Yazidi women as innocent and victims. Muslim and non-Muslim women together are the victim of masculinized war of male fighters but at the same time, victims of their own community and smugglers in the camp they live. According to the Dagtas this intersectional victimization "is matrix of domination includes colonialism, nationalism, racism and patriarchy." (ibid. 2018: 51)

Al Hayek (2014), looks at the media campaign created by the young Syrian activist to prevent forced marriages between Syrian women in the refugee camp and the men from Jordan and Saudi Arabia to exchange with money. She criticises the language of campaign and the global media's reaction on it as colonial and orientalist views that put women as victims of masculine Muslim culture and sexually aggressive Muslim men. Moreover, Al Hayek adds the lack of voice of these women and invisibility of women refugee activists who show the complexity and diversity of women's situation.

Like I explained in the introduction, one news is the exceptional with showing the activism and organization of women to inform their community in various platforms 'to save them' in the conflict area they live, but also 'to save themselves' from conservative cultural norms of their community. News continue with the information of increasing support from male members who started to see women activists' positive effect. "But because we are able to offer crucial services that male volunteers can't in our conservative society, such as caring for injured women and going into homes and schools, people started to realise the positive impact of our work. People now even want their daughters to join." (Tisdall 2018) Even this more positive news that talks of the increase of participation of women started with women's loss of male members; still women's work is framed as a domestic way, as they work in school with children and go homes to nurse other women because male cannot enter these areas because of their social norms. Even the pictures of these women are with other women and children, showing the limitation of women's roles. On the other hand, we know that women fighters from the Kurdish peshmerga forces; played active role to fight on the northern Syria which was not represented as much as the slavery of Yazidi women in the news according to my research.

3.2.1 Yazidi women: Slaves of ISIS?

One of the themes news presents is about the Yazidi women, and was the biggest part of the refugee women news sources. They started to be known in the last years related to the topic of ISIS's crime against the Yazidi community. Due to that, many news concentrated on Yazidi woman's tragedy as being slaves to ISIS. Jalabi gives the MP's video in the Iraq parliament which became popular as a Yazidi woman was in tears calling parliament and international community 'to save Yazidis from ISIS'. (2014: 1).

"The displacement of millions due to the ongoing war in Syria has alarmed the international public and drawn attention to the accompanying gender-based violence and religious persecution." (Dagtas 2018: 51) Yazidi women are in the news, as being in the need for help from outside but also from the people in their region. Abu Lughod (2002), points out that saving other women shows the superiority and post-colonial attitude of West to other cultures. She continues that West' looks at the women under Muslim rule as under oppression, despotism which tend to focus on the cultural traits and religious beliefs rather than the structural, political-economical explanations of the region. In the news related to Yazidi women, we see this narrative continues with remarking Yazidis lives under the centuries of oppression from their Muslim rulers, (Otten 2017) and ISIS's violence on them is just one of the cases from their anguish history.

"It points to the fact that where narratives of gender and war intersect, increasingly complex negotiations take place in the formation of political identities. Constructs of masculinity, femininity and heterosexuality are being negotiated and reformulated in contemporary warfare and political agency arises out of these negotiations." (Honor 1999: 9)

Honor adds, war is seen as masculine even when we see women as warriors; they are masculinised or their femininity is in the front. Therefore, she proposes to deconstruct the gender identities rather than trying to feminised the war. (1999)

Women are sex objects or mothers in the newspapers. Sex and violence are closely linked together and authors talks about ISIS members' justification of this attitude by seeing themselves as "holy warriors and non-Muslim women as the compensation." (Otten 2017:1) Moreover, this has pragmatic reason for

them as to have baby from Yazidi women and grow them as an ISIS fighter but also sexual slavery is used as attraction when recruiting ISIS fighters.

We see the theme of ISIS as Sunni Muslim male dominance on the non-Muslim women placed in the passive status trying to survive despite all the torture and rape they face. Otten (2017) says ISIS kidnap women and the girls as young as 8, children also are being taken and live with their mother in the prison. Yazidis' religion and ethnic background is mentioned in detail and the news says they are the last 700.000 left, due to the history of massacre and resistance. (ibid. 2017:1) They are "historically misunderstood community as devil worshippers" (Jalabi 2014) because their religion is non-Abrahamic, very eclectic from different believes and they are a closed community, awakening the curiosity as an exotic and embattled society.

Femininity and masculinity play an important part in the news. Otten (2017) mentions that many women try to make themselves dirty, dishevelled and ugly with using as on their body and hair but also bleeding their body to decrease their attractiveness to not be raped and sold by the ISIS (2017). Being married or not is important to be chosen by ISIS but being a non-Sunni is important too, as the story tells the Shia and Christian women are executed by the ISIS. The women also cut their daughters' hair to make them look like boys to save them from ISIS' retention. In the story woman named Khulka (30 years old) mentioned the because she has grey hair, this saved her from the rape.

Figure 1

"Slaves of ISIS: Long walk of Yazidi women" (Otten 2017:1)



Source: Rodi Said/Reuters

Displaced people from the minority Yazidi sect, fleeing violence from forces loyal to the Islamic State in Sinjar, Iraq. (Otten 2017:1)

Karnik (1998) says that what is told and what is left out of the image and theoretical argument of media imageries is related to socio-political realities. I chose to analyse the news' text first then the visuals and finally I analyse the visual and text together to understand the correlation in the representation. Title refers to Yazidi women as slaves of ISIS and their long walk to escape from this situation. In this sentence, we understood the ISIS violence on them is just one of the cases from their past life of oppression. Subtitle is "When Isis rounded up Yazidi women and girls in Iraq to use as slaves, the captives drew on their collective memory of past oppressions and a powerful will to survive." (ibid. 2017)

I benefited from Kress & Leeuwen (2006)'s visual analysis tools to look the image's act and the gaze, size of frame and social distance, involvement and the horizontal angle, power and vertical angle. In the picture we see one woman and the two children in the close shot that shows their half body. Because they do not look at the camera or smiling, we do not involve in their life but we see their face except one child held by woman; we understand their facial expression because it is close shots. In the picture, camera does not have exactly frontal angle. Due to that, we do not feel we are one of them, closely involved but observe their situation from distance. The vertical angle of the picture is on eye level so we cannot talk about hierarchy between viewer and the people. Behind the woman and children, we see people walk like them in blurry camera effect.

The framing of the photo is trying to show that these three people just one of the three among other Yazidi families. Overall, one woman and two children together are put in victim position and the angle of the picture cuts the woman's body objectifying her as a mother, framing their victimhood as a Yazidi women and children. It merges the past and present through the title and the news text that talks about their repeated history of violence and oppression they have been facing from the ISIS and the other Muslim rulers in their history.

In Jalabi (2014)'s news, we see Yazidi women's value reduced to sexual objectification for the compensation for the fighters and some women desexualised with being pregnant. But this is continued in their community as Yazidi women who escaped from ISIS are not accepted and some of them are even killed by their family due to honour killing. In the Yazidi religion, sexual regardless whether by forced or willingly with the non-Yazidi means banishment from the community. Therefore, women raped by ISIS are still seen as having lost dignity for themselves but also for whole Yazidi community, and they face structural dehumanisation.

Because Yazidis lost the most part of their population; this rule started to change with the Yazidi's supreme leader of Baba Sheikh's declaration that the woman who experienced rape can be accepted and protected by the Yazidi community. To accept these women, they start the religious ceremony which is very similar to baptism which they do for their children under the sacred white spring (Harrison 2017) that evoked for me the spiritual cleaning of the woman's sin, even though they were forcibly raped.

Figure 2

"I was sold seven times: the Yazidi women welcomed back into the faith." (Harrison 2017:1)



Source: Alessandro Rota for the Guardian

Women celebrating their return from Isis captivity in a new ritual at a shrine in Lalish, northern Iraq.
(Harrison 2017:1)

We see the title of the picture mentions the Yazidi women's exclusion until the revolution on their religion decided to receive them back the community. Subtitle is "Captured and raped by Isis fighters, Yazidi women fear rejection on their release. Now they are learning to heal thanks to a revolution in their religion." (Harrison 2017:1) Description of women includes passive verb to define Yazidi women, focus on their vulnerability and after the tragedy they experience, they are showed in waiting position to be accepted by their society especially from male figure of Yazidi religious leader. Al Hayek (2014), writes about the difference between the refugee women's experiences on the screen and in reality, and she criticises the media for not giving enough representation of women resistance and strength.

In the picture, group of women, one man and two children can be seen from the back. Nobody looks at the camera so we do not see their faces. The photo's angle with some degree means that we involve to their life but because we just see their backs from above, that there is no social interaction and invitation to engage. We look 'down' on them, and observe their life as an outsider, divided into 'we' and 'them'.

The picture is compatible with the news' content and the title which are talking about the process of Yazidi women's slavery, escape and acceptance into their community after all the exclusion they faced. In the picture, they are entering their temple for religious ceremony. White headscarf symbolises the innocence, purity despite the sexual slavery that lead community to see them as 'dirty'. There is one man with the red headgear accompanying the women and children. The vertical angle of the picture which is above the eye level gives us higher hierarchy because we see them from upper angle. It is not a long-shot or blurry, so we can see some details such as Arabic writings on the building, but we are still far from, and above them.

3.2.2 Women activism: 'What we have been through has made us stronger'

The second theme of the refugee women is from Tisdall (2018) about women's empowerment in Idlib, a city in northern Syria, surrounded by different forces that make the city like a 'killing box'. People cannot run away from the city but also fight between the regime and the radical Islamic fighters who settled in the city; threaten the civilian's daily life. Because many male members of the family are lost, killed or died, women's leadership started to increase in different forms. Tisdall (2018) says Idlib's civil society is the best chance for free and democratic institutions.

Women take roles as first aid nurses, in clothes recycling, with sewing skills, leadership programmes, radio workers, run awareness campaign to inform community to protect themselves from airstrikes, chemical attacks and so on. According to the news, their active participation brings positive impact to the community, changes the norms of the conservative society they live in. "We have a desire for living, achieving and being independent" (ibid. 2018: 1)

These women do not just try to survive under the regime's airstrike and fundamentalist group's attacks but also fights to change their conservative and patriarchal society that does not let them be part of the public environment. "What we have been through has made us stronger. If people stayed at home to grieve, life could have stopped a long time ago. Life won't stop: we need to keep going and working" (Tisdall: 2018:1)

Dagtas (2018) mentions that understanding of Muslim or non-Muslim women from Middle East as being oppressed either by terrorist or by their men; justifies white, Global North and Christian thought for the sake anti-immigrant narrative and; superiority of their culture and even justifies their intervention as the humanitarian one.

Figure 3

“Amid Syria’s horror, a new force emerges: the women of Idlib.” (Tisdall 2018:1)

Amid Syria’s horror, a new force emerges: the women of Idlib

With husbands, sons and fathers dead or missing, women have been unwittingly thrust into the spotlight. Their resilience and innovation could point a way forward



▲ A volunteer offers medical help at a women’s centre in Idlib, Syria. Photograph: Courtesy of Syria Civil Defence

Source: Courtesy of Syria Civil Defence

“A volunteer offers medical help at a women’s centre in Idlib, Syria” (Tisdall 2018:1)

The news subtitle is ‘With husbands, sons and fathers missing, women have been unwittingly thrust into the spotlight. Their resilience and innovation could point a way forward’. (ibid. 2018: 1)

Tisdall (2018) notes that because of the war and the loss of the male figures in the family, women can take active roles in the public ‘unwittingly’ -and thus gives the impression that these women’ active roles would not be that way under the different conditions. On the other hand, inside the text we understood women have ambition to work and want to take leadership roles especially with positive changes and feedbacks from the people. Women’s depiction in the news; always with the other women or children, in the class or in the house of other women, offering first aid are still in traditional women’s roles set up under the hegemonic masculine narrative.

The photo accompanying news; is taken in the living room inside a house. One woman is taking blood pressure of the other woman because of first aid service she does. They do not look at the viewer and they do not smile but just focus on the act. It is medium shot and angle shows the profile of women. We are not invited to involve their activity but can observe the details of the environment and their face. The vertical angle is higher than eye level so we are ‘above’ them again, and this gives us the higher hierarchy as a viewer to understand their environment.

Because Tisdall (2018) talks about traditional values that prevent women being seen with other men in public space, we do not see it either. Maybe the news tried to be careful about the women in the photos, there, while active, women are not in leadership position and are shown in limited roles, in limited space-woman-to-woman or women-to-children. Thompson (2007) talks about the armed conflict seen as the male sphere and men in the decision making in the “war and power politics.” (437) On the other hand, women take role in the internal political activism related with peace-building or in the community

security role such as being part of NGO's, protests and so on. In this sense, even though Tisdall (2018) talks about civil society initiative in Idlib as the chance to create more democratic and inclusive society, women are still represented as civilians doing one of the classical women's jobs (nursing) and giving service. Still, this particular news and photo are putting women in less victimized position than other news.

3.2.3 Life in a refugee camp: Deprivation, Rape and Hope

The third theme is from the two news by Mark Townsend (2016 and 2017) about women, young girls and children's challenging situation in the refugee camps. Women in some refugee camps especially unaccompanied ones, are forced to have sex with the gangs or smugglers who have access to camp. Unaccompanied minors face the same risks.

Inside the camp, most given item is adult nappies to women because they are afraid to go toilet at night due to risk of rape. (Mark Townsend: 2017) Women and children are described in the news as the target because they are seen as the most vulnerable. The children face assault (both male and female ones) and majorities are Syrian except two Moroccan children who were raped. In one of the cases, child's mother was afraid to report rape or call the police. Both news about sexual assault on the women and children are in the refugee camps of Dunkirk in France and Softex camp in Greece. Women refugee face two risks at the same time; being raped by the smuggler or their children's is being raped. The news repeatedly mentions the refugee's dreams to go to the United Kingdom to take citizenship and blame the United Kingdom for not taking more refugees as promised. (Townsend 2016)

The article of Gerard (2013), includes the securitization as the topic about refugees and migrants and its effect especially on the women refugees. She notes how relation between securitization of the migration of refugees through border control system, security guards, and refugee camps increase the vulnerability of the life of refugees through choosing dangerous routes.

Securitization was related through emphasizing the negative side about migration to the country by policy agenda of government and media telling it as an 'issue'. When we think about securitization, refugees are seen as bringing existential threat to UK, and that is why UK government and EU takes extraordinary measure such as make a deal with Turkey about preventing refugees come to Europe and UK. Due to that, it increases refugees' vulnerability with this securitization perspective demanding the strict border control. "Securitization heightens exposure to harm for illegalized travellers and aligns poorly with the humanitarian emphasis of the international legal refugee protection framework" (Gerard 2013 : 355) In this sense, we see the themes of refugee camps, boat rescue operation, security guards and police with the refugees also represented in the *Guardian*, because refugee migration securitized as a topic.

Figure 4

“Women and children endure rape, beatings and abuse’ inside Dunkirk’s refugee camp”

(Townsend 2017:1)



Source: Andy Hall for the Observer

“The Dunkirk camp holds up to 2,000 of whom an estimated 100 are unaccompanied minors”.

(Townsend 2017:1)

Even though the news title is about women and children; we do not see any women and children (and we do not know if men in the picture are underage youngsters who lives in the camp). The subtitle is about the UK’s decision affecting the child refugees’ future. The text is about the unaccompanied minors in the camp. Due to that, the four people close to camera may be unaccompanied minors photographed from the back to avoid their identification by the viewers. But they are in the passive position just standing and looking at the camp. This can be the signal of their dilemma of staying in the dangerous camp, hoping to resettle by the UK or going back to their dangerous country, and some of them already went back according to the news. The vertical angle is again higher than eye level, giving us the authority over them. The picture may be trying to put residents of the camp in weaker position to increase sympathy to their victimhood, as it also shows the cribs in refugee camp easily accessible and unprotected, as Townsend mentions in the news: camp lacks security and authority to avoid the entrance of smugglers. (2017)

So why is the text about unaccompanied minors presented with the title about rape of women? In the sense of indirect news, Gerard (2013) gives examples about women’ vulnerability in the refugee camp to talk about refugees risking their lives by their transit journey to access Europe. Women’ vulnerability is actually used to refer to the vulnerability of refugees as a whole. She adds that the pregnant women are accepted as the most vulnerable because the health issues they may have. Sexual violence to women or sexual service by the women to be able to cross the border are another vulnerability for them. So women (and as we will see, children) serve as symbols of overall vulnerabilities of refugees, and rape remains as the symbol of women’s most terrible experience. But when the media uses vulnerability of women to symbolizes something else it also consolidate the understanding of women as the vulnerable and weak, women’s fertility as natural and their sexual objectivization as normal.

Gentleman (2015) writes about refugee' resettlement in the UK by giving a woman refugee's life story: Nor (32) joined the peaceful unarmed demonstrations against the Syrian regime in 2011. She was arrested due to the fact that her name was on the list of those who joined the anti-government protests. She was kept for 6 weeks and tortured including electrocuted, hung upside down and beaten with the cable. She fled to Lebanon and after to the UK with her family. She says she didn't face racist behaviour even though she lives in the white area and neighbours are very friendly to her.

"There are hundreds of people in the camps who have been wounded, or raped, or tortured, who need to be taken care of. The situation is so bad that people are risking their lives, drowning trying to get to Europe. This is only because the EU countries are reluctant to do more. Germany is doing better, people tell me support there is very good. I am shocked that the UK didn't take more people like me." (Gentleman 2015:1)

Even though *Guardian*, joins in the criticism of the lack of refugee resettlement policy of UK, it is interesting to notice that there is no any criticism of the negative attitude of UK citizens toward refugees. All the stories are about positive and helpful UK citizens. On the other hand, while the news highlights Germany's better approach to the refugee resettlement, it mentions that attacks against refugees in Germany started to increase. Nor's story is told to attract attention to build better refugee policy to legalize their coming to UK, to prevent their dangerous routes and improve living conditions in camps.

Figure 5

"Syrian refugees in the UK: 'We will be good people. We will build this country.'"

(Gentleman 2015:1)

Syrian refugees in the UK: 'We will be good people. We will build this country'

Four million people have left their wartorn homeland - the UK has offered shelter to just 187, leaving more to risk their lives getting here on unsafe boats or smuggled in lorries. Two of those welcomed here recount their journey

● [Syrian refugees: the dangerous sea journey to Europe - video](#)



▲ Nor (pictured with her baby daughter) is one of only 187 refugees who have been accepted into the UK through an official resettlement programme. Photograph: Christopher Thomond for the Guardian

Source: Christopher Thomond for the Guardian

"Nor (pictured with her baby daughter) is one of only 187 refugees who have been accepted into the UK through an official resettlement programme". (Gentleman 2015:1)

Title of the news of Gentleman (2015), talks about Syrian refugees' survival through passing dangerous route when escaping from conflict and quote them saying they will be good people for the UK. Under the title, it talks about the lack of resettlement policy of UK.

Nor is shown on the photo as a shadow with her baby child. This news both visually and as a text, define the life story of the Nor as a representative of the refugees. Because choosing woman as a representative, in particular with the child figure, evokes vulnerability and victimhood of refugees. The

Guardian and the author Gentleman try to change the negative stereotype about refugees as dangerous or free-riders, stressing their contribution to the UK and their assistance to other refugees.

The reason for picturing Nor and her child as shadows may be so as not to put them in dangerous position by identifying their face as she has in the past joined Syrian anti-regime protests. The photo has a playful atmosphere, Nor lifting her baby and rejoicing about their new life in the UK. Because it is 90 degree the picture put the viewers as the observer. It is medium shot and we can see the whole of the baby' and half of Nor's body so we are not socially distant to them. The picture is vertical angle shot on eye level, making them equal with the viewers not as the refugees who wait to resettle in a weak, vulnerable position both in the picture and in the text. At the same time, depicting them as shadows makes them unreal, as well as marginal to the UK as a nation and as a society.

MacKenzie (2009) gives the example from Sierre Leone female soldiers' de-securitization during the post-conflict period even as they played important role in the armed conflict. He adds;

“In effect, roles that are depicted as natural for women during conflict are often associated with their reproductive capacities and their ability to nurture, cooperate, and sustain life. Instead of soldiering, women's primary roles during conflicts tend to be described as “wives, girlfriends, and mothers, waiting for their soldiers to return and caring for wounded.” (MacKenzie, 2009: 247)

In my news related with the women refugees, we see do not see such as clear-cut differences in employing masculinity and femininity as binary representation of women as passive and peaceful vs. men are aggressive and active. Women are depicted as victims, as symbols of victimization of all refugees, but also as active, even if only in 'feminine' domains of helping other women and taking care of population. Non-refugee men- especially ISIS men are masculine figures in the news who are aggressive and threatening, and so are men belonging to Syrian regime, rebels and other Islamic fundamentalist groups. The *Guardian* tries to separate male refugee showing young, unaccompanied male minors as needy, passive and innocent. As the next section will show, small children are depicted through most traditional images of suffering and innocence, and as such -like women- also used to symbolize overall suffering of refugees.

3.3 Refugee Children

Child refugee news in *The Guardian*, took big section. Some of the news are about the events' effects on the child refugees directly and others talks about refugee's problems through mentioning its effect on the child refugee as an indirect way. Representing the event with placing the children's picture to the head of news is very common so children's photo accompany texts about the boat rescue operation, refugees who do not have adequate standard of living or the issue related with the men and women refugees. Many of those news are also written and emphasized with the plight of children refugees. The reason for that is in the western understanding of children as weak and most vulnerable ones, especially when it comes to the non-accompanied minors. Zarzycka (2017), mentions children's face in the media can be used to increase empathy of domestic or global actors for the aid giving aim, to build peace keeping between aggressors and also to build dialogue with policy around conflict. Because the child is a face of need, vulnerability, innocence; media also show them with their scars, crying, sad or happy mood to increase awareness to arrange right policy on the refugee. We see women and children are the vulnerable, passive and open the danger more than the male refugees. And this appears to be especially so when the child is the girl:

“Photographs of female children rely strongly on cultural misconceptions of gendered and geopolitical differences; poor, indigenous and displaced communities are frequently feminised and constructed as childlike, helpless, immature, erratic. In humanitarian discourse and in the media rhetoric, “womenandchildren” becomes compound noun, grounded in the closeness of the association between children and women, racial minorities, the poor and refugees with the result of these groups are infantilized.” (Zarzycka 2017:39)

In *Guardian's* representations we will see that there are many male children who is also represented as vulnerable especially their risk of facing with sexual assault in the camp. But in general children's faces or texts about children, as well as texts that used the symbolism of children's vulnerability while addressing other themes are very frequent in *Guardian*. Children are used to show the differences of rich and poor, peace and war, innocent and criminal, civilians and military and make these visible to the privileged people to feel responsibility for fund raising or put pressure on government to change its policy.

3.3.1 EU refugee policy and the boat: 'Biggest human tragedy since the WW2'

News about Alan Kurdi, the 3-year-old boy drowned on the coast in Turkey has increased interest towards the tragedy of the Syrian refugees. After this event happened, European Union policy on refugees and the media started to change through supportive direction, and grassroot organizations about the refugee rights started to increase. According to Kingsley (2016) who wrote the news in *The Guardian* after two days of this event, Germany, UK and Canada promise to accept more refugees. On the other hand, promise on the number of refugees did not mean that the countries will keep it, as many took much fewer refugees than the promised number. One of the reasons of it, is the rise of right-wing party's pressure on the government of the country according to Kingsley (2016).

Syrian taxi driver Mohammad in the northern Greece says “Alan may have died at sea, he says, but really there is no difference between him and the thousands of children now dying [metaphorically] here in Greece” (Patrick Kingsley: 2016:1). Helena Smith (2015) give details to *The Guardian* about the Alan Kurdi, his brother and five more children in the same boat who shared the same death like him. This shows the tragedy of the children and extremely dangerous route refugees take in order to be able to continue their life in Europe.

There are discussions on how the children should represented on the media. Zarzycka (2017) says without considering the rights of children and just to serve for humanitarian interest, some pictures may include sensational topics like victimhood, poverty, war. That carries the risk to stereotype; or humiliate

the depicted child. Sometimes the photos of children are staged images or just a background. Some of the picture imply the differences of child's miserable life and richer country's living standard that has wide gap. She adds the Alan Kurdi's picture was used on the social media with deleting the body and/or putting different backgrounds that she says was "converting photography into piece of sentimental visual currency." (Zarzycka 2017: 42)

Figure 6

"The death of Alan Kurdi: one year on, compassion towards refugees fades." (Kingsley 2016:1)



Source: AP

"A police officer carries the lifeless body of Alan Kurdi, who found lying face-down on a beach near the Turkish resort of Bodrum". (Kingsley 2016:1)

The title of the news repeats name of the dead noting that the hope toward the long-term compassion for refugees is going to be lost within just a year from his death. Kingsley (2016) claim that many governments in the Europe started to take more refugees into their countries and started different policy to avoid the refugee's transportation through the Mediterranean Sea after this tragedy happened. Both Smith (2015) and Kingsley (2016)'s news have the same picture of Alan Kurdi, but the focus of the texts are not children refugees. Rather, the texts are about the EU leaders' policy decisions on the refugees, blocked Balkan routes from Hungary, the conditions in the refugee camps and exposure to the police brutality. Kingsley (2016) ends the news with the deadlock in EU-Turkey deal to stop refugee's passing through Turkey to Greece.

The picture is shot from the profile of the policeman who holds Alan Kurdi's corpse. The picture tries to show the tragedy of the refugees who want to access Europe through the sea due to strict border control because of blocking their legal passage. It shows this tragedy through giving example of Kurdi and other children and refugees who will continue to die if the precautions are not taken by the EU. It is long (wide) shot so the viewers can see the sea and the full body of the child and the Turkish police. The vertical angle of the picture is more or less to the eye level of the viewer, maybe a bit higher. And while that would imply that there is no hierarchy between the viewer and the actors, because it is long shot, it keeps the viewer from being too close to the depicted protagonists, so the viewer is socially distanced from their situation – the policeman and the dead boy. We do not see the child's face but we can see his lifeless feet showing his vulnerability and we can understand the cameraman want to show the tragedy of them to increase awareness to the situation.

3.3.2 Life in the camp for most vulnerable ones: The unaccompanied children

In the news, women and children (both boys and girls) in the Dunkirk and the Softext camp face daily threats from gang and smugglers. They are the target of violence due to their vulnerability especially the unaccompanied children. MacKenzie (2009), point out, the women and children are put in a same box as the losers, slaves, exposed to forced labouring, mental and physical abuse and also kidnapping because of over-classification.

In the news, (Townsend 2017) some of the children as young as 7 years are raped and one girl of them returned to the country of origin. A six years old boy is raped and his mother is afraid to report to the police. “In the camp, children are call little steaks. Because they are appetisers and vulnerable to trafficking.” (Townsend 2017:1) In the both news the person who gives the information about Dunkirk and Softext says that the refugee who lives there want to go to settle and take citizenship in the UK. He writes Theresa May (the UK Prime Minister) should have definite, clear plan to fulfil the promise to the eligible refugees and EU should talk about their safe route and should implement sanctions for this vulnerability of the children.

Figure 7

“Sexual assaults on children’ at Greek refugee camps.” (Townsend 2016:1)



Source: International Rescue Committee

“A refugee site of Idomeni on the northern border of Greece is now evacuated and empty”.

(Townsend 2016:1)

The picture above with the subtitle: “Charities claim youngsters and women are too afraid to leave tents after dark at government run-camps” (ibid. 2017:1), shows us the danger to women and children in this Softext camp. Inside the news, the text is about assault on women, youngsters and children who all face life with the danger. However, the main title of the news mentions just the word ‘children’ to attract more viewers to the news and/or to appeal to viewers’ sentiments about vulnerability and unprotected children. In the explanation of the picture, it says another refugee camp, became empty but it gives no explanation why is the camp emptied.

In the picture, we see bright yellow coloured teddy bear toy in the centre of the picture. Because the news and the title relate sexual assaults on the children, the extreme vulnerability is already established. Otherwise, many news agencies do not show face of the children due to risk of identification. Instead of it, here, teddy bear as a toy of children in the camp; symbolises the childhood, vulnerability and innocence, abandoned in the dirt. There is cardboard box in the back of the picture and other stuff left from the refugees who were living there. Because it is long-shot, and also $\frac{3}{4}$ degree to the teddy bear, we can see the background details of the stuff placed in the soil but we do not see any buildings. This gives impression that; this camp was placed far away from the human dwellings, in some remote place. Vertical angle of the teddy bear as the central object of the picture is below to eye level so we can see other toys from above which gives power to us. Teddy bear and other toys representing their lost childhood, 'innocence' as the cultural norm and their losing their childhood with experiencing refugee plight as well as sexual assault. Other stuff left from refugees gives impression of their lost hopes for bright future with settling to Europe. In this sense, gaze of the teddy bear looking towards (though not directly into) the camera and smiling is an image mocking reality of refugee life disappointment of hopes and dreams of secure and happy life in Europe.

The other news is about the 1000 of refugee children stranded in the Serbia on their way to Hungary or Croatia and Austria, sleeping almost in the open air at minus 15 degrees Celsius, without necessary supplies in conditions and violent treatment by the security guards at the border crossings. Even though Serbia is not the member of EU, Slawson says; "1600 case of illegal push backs from Hungary to Croatia, violently back to Serbia; becoming dumping zone; worst humanitarian crisis in Europe" (2017:1)

Like in the other news we do not see just Syrian but also Moroccan, Afghan and Iraqi refugee children share the problems like no beds, no heating in an abandoned house they try to heat themselves with burning rubbish, which creates toxic fumes. Save the Child says 46% of the refugees are children and %10 of them unaccompanied." (Slawson 2017: 1) In the same news, refugees do not just have problem with their living conditions but also dog bites, mafia and police's stealing their money and exposing them to violence. Unaccompanied minors' face various dangers already highlighted in the other news.

Figure 8

"Thousands of refugee children sleeping rough in sub-zero Serbia, says UN." (Slawson 2017:1)

Thousands of refugee children sleeping rough in sub-zero Serbia, says UN

Refugee facilities in Belgrade, where it is -15C, have been described as 'worse than the jungle in Calais' by aid workers



▲ Refugees burn rubbish to keep warm. Photograph: Andrej Isakovic/AFP/Getty Images

Source: Andrej Isakovic/AFP/Getty Images

"Refugee burn rubbish to keep warm." (Slawson 2017:1)

This news is mainly about the refugee's routes to reach Germany through the Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia border. As Hungary closed its border refugees were forced to stay in the places that do not have adequate condition for them. In Serbia, there is not enough food, heater or accommodation

so refugees - many of whom are unaccompanied children - try to survive under the sub-zero weather conditions through burning rubbish that creates health hazard.

While the text has “children” in the title, on the photo there are no recognizable children, except maybe one. Depicted male figures could be young teenage boys, but they are bundled in blankets and thus unrecognizable. We see them burn rubbish to heat themselves in the snowy weather. The angle of the picture is not frontal but we see them with some degree with long-shot. We do not involve into their lives but observe them from outside. Because they do not look at the camera, there is no demand to the viewer. The vertical angle is not clear cut, as it is not clear whether the cameraman is squatting to take the picture, or the angle is due to distance, but the group is offered to the viewers as object to look at, from the distance. The purpose of the picture may be to tell descriptively - to document - the harsh environment and the refugees’ situation to survive, supporting the text. We can see the abandoned house in the back that the news mentions children living there to protect themselves. What looks like group of 5 male refugees sit in front of the fire, except one of them is standing turning his back to the camera. Their faces are not identifiable and their exact age is also ambiguous. Some of them looks young but explanation of the picture is refugees instead of the children due to that there may have other age groups.

In both news, we see the children as the ones who need most help and in the vulnerable position to sustain their basic needs and security. The news repeats the EU needs to take necessary actions to save the children’s lives most.

3.3.3 Child in the civil war: ‘We are losing a whole generation of children.’

Zarzycka (2017) says that the representation of the face in the media plays role to tell the figure’s ‘mind, soul, spirit and emotion,’ (p. 40) and continue as the face also builds relation with the viewers to tell similarities and differences, closeness and distances, exposure and consolidation. In this sense, the face of the children refugees in the media generally used to attract powerful people’s reaction and help to the situation of all refugees. The same is with children in the wars – they symbolize plight of all war victims.

The image in the media of one child sitting alone with dazed eyes and blood on his face in the ambulance in the Aleppo was another picture that became popular. The child was 5-year-old Omran Daqneesh pulled from regime led airstrike rubble. (Hunt, 2016) This news represents the reason of refugee’s migration upon showing the desperate situation of the children in the war. Image shared by the social media more than 1000 times to put pressure on the European leaders to come up with definite social and political resolution plan firstly for the refugees who escaped from the civil war.

The other news written by Kareem Shaheen (2017) is about the boy’s family’s interview for the regime-controlled TV channel. It notes that the father gives importance to country’s reputation, and to the armed forces, telling the story of boy’s recovery. Shaheen mentions it was unclear if the interview had been coerced because Syrian government carried out similar disinformation to the people if they speak out against the rebel’s crimes. (2017)

Figure 9

“Boy in the ambulance: shocking image emerges of Syrian child pulled from Aleppo rubble.”

(Hunt 2016:1)

Boy in the ambulance: shocking image emerges of Syrian child pulled from Aleppo rubble

Boy shown covered head to toe with dust was injured in airstrike on rebel-held district on Wednesday

Warning: this article contains images that readers may find distressing



▲ In this still taken from video provided by Aleppo Media Centre, a child sits in an ambulance apparently after being pulled out of a building hit by an airstrike. Photograph: Aleppo Media Centre

Source: Aleppo Media Centre

“A child sits in an ambulance apparently after being pulled out of a building hit by an airstrike.” (Hunt 2016:1)

The picture is from the Hunt (2016)’s news article about the Omran Daqnesh, Syrian child who survived the airstrike in Aleppo. The picture shows the desperate life of children because they do not have any role in the war but face its consequences every day. In the subtitle it is written: “boy shown covered head to toe with dust was injured in airstrike on rebel-held district on Wednesday” and continue with the warning of “this article contains images that readers may find distressing” (Hunt 2016: 1)

The picture is frontal angle, the child directly looks at the camera without any facial expression probably under the shock from the airstrike. His wound on his face with blood and his body with dust are fully visible in the picture. It is long shot so we can see his face and background as he is sitting in the ambulance car. He is engaging with the viewers directly in frontal angle. Looking at the viewer means that there is message, a demand for engagement. It is on eye level and there is no hierarchy with the viewer. It is worth pointing to the difference with the photo of Alan Kurdi. The theme is similar as showing the vulnerability of the children in shocking way to solicit pity or empathy. Both boys are shown as innocent, caught between the politics of the grownups. These photos of children, as claimed by the Hunt (2016), try to increase awareness for the necessary urgent humanitarian actions, to convey message related to situation in Syria for civilians, and to protect refugees and resettle them.

Almost every news item about refugees in *Guardian* also mentions, children’ vulnerability. This may be to get attention to policy makers for policies needed to provide necessary conditions for refugees, or to get attention from the public to help and accept refugees. Some of the news like Fotiadis et al. (2016) are about refugees’ difficult living conditions, and mention the children’ in only one sentence. He says that decision taken by independent court in Greece to stop application of the EU-Turkey deal is separate from Greek government and; would increase the migration of refugees from Turkey to Greek islands although living conditions there are very poor. UNHCR and also other human rights group announced that; from the beginning they were against the EU-Turkey deal that accepts Turkey as safe country for refugees due to lack of necessary social, judicial status and labour conditions of the refugees living there. The news remarks the high rate of child labour activity of refugees and the lack of access to some refugee camps in Turkey by NGO workers and journalists.

Figure 10

“Syrian refugee wins appeal against forced return to Turkey.” (Fotiadis, Smith and Kingsley 2016:1)



Source: Dimitar Dilkoff/AFP/Getty Images

“A makeshift refugee camp near the Greek village of Idomeni.” (Fotiadis, Smith and Kingsley 2016:1)

The news is about the EU-Turkey refugee deal which is about forbidding refugee’s transition through the sea, to avoid their entrance to the Europe from Turkey. Three-person appeals tribunal in Lesbos, stopped this decision due to the rights guaranteed to refugees under the Geneva Convention, which was not applied in Turkey.

Subtitle of the news by Fotiadis et al. (2016) is about the Greek independent court’s decision on the EU-Turkey deal. In the picture we see the refugee camp at Idomeni in Greece. There are a few children who are close to the camera. The tents give a signal of the place as refugee camp. Again, there is a woman holding a child – a common representation of both women and children refugees. The photo is wide (long) shot and due to that, we can see other refugees. Woman who holds the child is seen from the side, offered as an object of gaze. Child on her knees directly looks at the camera with crying face. Child demands attention, empathy or awareness about their refugee life from the viewers. Other girl hold doll in her hands, while women and men behind stand in a group. Camera is close to eye level so we do not look at the refugees from above. Even though other children and adults do not look at the camera, and we do not see them in a frontal angle; camera’s focus on this one child who looks directly at us is sufficient to tell children’ and refugees’ story.

As noted already, children are mentioned and depicted even in the texts that do not actually focus on them. Another news that mentions children is about refugees’ dangerous route to escape from war, where special vulnerability of children is mentioned, as a method to strass the overall plight of refugees on the move. In the news, Kingsley (2016) highlights the reference from MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station)’ worker saying he doesn’t want to let the children washing up on the beach like the Kurdi brothers. He argues that saving them and not allowing them to cross the sea is our “collective responsibility”. (Kingsley 2016: 1)

The article notes that the refugees’ story shows the EU and UN’s policy to prevent the migration of refugees through Mediterranean Sea failed, because there was lack of security and suitable living conditions in the EU neighbourhood countries of Turkey and Jordan which the refugees first arrive. Thus, they continue travel to EU, across the sea and land, despite the dangers and increasing hostile behaviours of European citizens toward refugees. 15-year-old Mohamed - who saved from the boat- worked in a

sweatshop to earn money in Turkey to cross the sea. In the news, Mohamed's youngest brother, eight-year-old Aref, and elder two which are Abdelrahman and Amina, were saved from the almost sunken boat with other children and women. (Kingsley 2016)

The rise of right-wing politicians in Europe like the Orban, the prime minister of the Hungary, who banned the refugee's travelling to Germany via his country, and other European countries with the border security reason has created additional danger for refugees according to news. Kingsley (2016)'s news is gives impressions that bureaucracy's complexity, internal politics of European states on refugees EU's refugee policy's ethical questions and its consistency with the human rights law will take long time to be realized.

Figure 11

“Help, we're sinking': aboard a refugee rescue boat in the perilous Greek seas.” (Kingsley 2016)



Source: Sean Smith for the Guardian

“Rescued refugees are set ashore on Agathonisi.” (Kingsley 2016)

Kingsley's (2016) news about the dangerous route of the refugees through the sea and talks about lack of living conditions for refugees both in Turkey and Greek islands stressing that those are consequence of lack of resettlement in the European countries. Due to that, refugees need to pass borders illegally and live under terrible conditions in the refugee camps.

The picture shows the boat of the MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station) safeguard' saving the refugees from sinking in the sea. The picture's angle is $\frac{3}{4}$ degree and the people at the back are also shown $\frac{3}{4}$, i.e. we see bit more of them than the frontal angle. We see couple of children and women saved from the boat and they do not smile due to the fear they experienced. On the front, we see the woman and her daughter in the representative position of the refugees who are rescued from the boat. Even there are couple of men in the behind; they are not clear and women and especially children stand close to the camera but do not look at it. The angle shows us to see them without feeling 'I could be in the same position' but still allowing us to feel sadness for their situation. Because it is a mixture of medium and long shot, we can see many details about the boat, rescue team and the other people who survived from the boat. This picture represents one of the rescue operations for refugees which supports the Kingsley's (2016) news text about the boat sinking and its risk for the lives of children. But showing small children – with or without women/mothers – is definitely an element of symbolizing vulnerability of all refugees, not only the specific children in question.

Chapter 4: Refugee Men

4.1 Introduction

The *Guardian* news focused on the Syrian male refugees is contradicting the classical representations of dangerous (Middle Eastern) men. Often men, are represented with their families, especially with their children. Some of the news directly tell their individual, very personal stories which is very different than news about women and where the stories were seldom about individuals, and more about women's experiences as a community. In the pictures, male refugees directly look at the camera with close or medium shot, again, unlike women who never look at the camera. In the news related with the boat rescue and refugees experience in the streets of Paris, we see again the individual story of men and we understood the story of women and children indirectly, from the story of men. Male refugee has more direct reference than others and is represented bringing positive contribution to the country they settle in.

According to Akrab (2016) after the Cologne sexual attacks and Paris terrorist attacks, refugees' image in the media was represented negatively and after that, attacks on refugees increased in Germany. Akrab (2016), warns the media to not generalise the problematic- aggressive and sexist - behaviours and attitude of some refugees to all of them. In this sense, the *Guardian*, represents refugee men very positively, with extra emphasis on their positive changes and quotes to say they will not be "drug dealers." (Gentleman, 2016) There is effort to talk about their victimhood like the boat rescue operation (Kingsley 2016), abuse in the street of Paris especially represented with male refugees (Townsend 2018) or Abdul Mohsen who is kicked by the female Hungarian camera operator near the border of Hungary in the news of Kassam (2016). Refugee men also tell their journey about coming to Europe through talking about their family.

In the photos refugee men communicate with viewers directly looking straight into camera, smiling, in close shot, or they are represented with the women and children together. In this sense, the *Guardian* tries to deconstruct the image of male refugees as negative and to build positive image through building opposite narratives to the Orientalist ones, i.e. against the West's stereotypes of Middle Eastern men.

Zarzycka (2017), talks about cultural shift in the representation of masculinity like warrior, individual, hegemonic change to "vulnerability, care-givers, mourners, survivors." (p. 23)

"This trend suggests a cultural shift in which caring and compassion may be seen as permissible (even volatilized) aspects of masculinity under war. Nonetheless, the persistence of masculine permeability is a cultural assumption underlying conflict; war remains a particularly effective theatre in which to articulate masculinity." (Zarzycka 2017: 23)

4.1.1 Refugee helping refugee: 'contributing to the culture of Britain'

According to news of Khomami (2018), Imad Alarnab was the famous chef in the Damascus before civil war began and lead to bombing of two of his restaurants. He fled to many countries and arrived to UK as a refugee. With the help of charities, he opened pop-up restaurants and he succeeded. The rest of the news focus on how his cooking helped to fund Hope Hospital in Aleppo and saved thousands of people through his restaurant of Imad's Choose Love Kitchen. He cooks using his mother's recipe. We learn she died 2 months after his arrival to the UK as a refugee. Help Refugees organization has lots of volunteers helping Imad's restaurant. So, the text shows refugees contributing to the British culture and helping the people who need help the most, and offers example of refugee men as reliable, hardworking people.

Figure 12

“How Syrian refugee chef's London kitchen is helping Aleppo hospital.” (Khomami 2018:1)



Source: Martin Godwin for the Guardian

“Imad Alarnab at Imad’s Choose Love Kitchen in Columbia Road, East London. Two of his restaurants in Syria were bombed.” (Khomami 2018:1)

News represents Imad Alarnab positively both with telling about his contribution to UK culture and helping the hospital to save people’s lives in Aleppo hospital. He continues to be chef in the pop-up restaurant which became popular in London. We see similar narrative in the photo. He directly looks at the camera and smile to the viewer, in almost frontal angle, at the centre of the photo. We are immediately involved in his life because he looks directly at us offering us food - the most welcoming gesture in many societies. The picture is on eye level and we are equal with him in the sense of power. He shows his happy life in the UK with smiling to us. This is middle shot so we can see him, his food and the environment together. In the background of the photo there is table with plates, thus we are almost invited into his kitchen, the plates are on the table, everything is looks clean, with bright lights and good decoration. We just need to step into the photo and join him. There was no photo of a woman with such an open, welcoming attitude. Putting the text and photo together, the news tries to give positive image of Syrian male refugee through telling his positive, heart-warming, individual story. He is symbolizing the other male refugees that can contribute to the UK, can be beneficial and adapted citizens in the new country.

4.1.2 Violence from other culture? Cologne Sexual attacks and male refugees

The fear has been increasing among refugees because refugee welcoming organization may face backlash due to the sexual attack in the Cologne at New Year’s Eve of 2015. With the far-right parties and some media giving misinformation; public view on the refugees started to be negative. (Akrap, 2016:1) He highlights that after the Paris attacks; media choose negative and violent news related to the refugees, and 200 attacks against refugees happened in a year in Germany (p.1). Akrap (2016) fears that the speeches from Refugee Welcome group as they felt exploited, abused or cheated is not the right reaction for the survival of this spirit. That speech included statement such as: “Just like every child, every refugee is an individual. Not every refugee will study hard and become a doctor. No, some refugees will get drunk on New Year’s Eve and make a whole lot of mess.” (Akrap 2016:1) While this is true, Akrap concludes that it will not work with the people who do not want to have this welcome culture and are, prejudiced. They do not want to hear about the new comers’ mistakes and will feel fear and insecurities which would lead to the end of welcoming culture in Germany.

Figure 13

“Germany’s welcome for refugees has to survive the Cologne attacks.” (Akrap 2016:1)



Source: Felix Huesmann/Demotix/Corbis

“German Wilkommenskultur (welcome culture) survived largely unscathed, caring for refugees and teaching freedom and democracy.” (Akrap 2016:1)

Akrap (2016); says there were other suspicious people than asylum seekers in Germany, and we should not generalise this attack to all of them. Germany’s welcome culture for refugees should continue to prevent racism toward them.

In the picture, we see pro-refugee protestors holding banner having text like welcome, respect and solidarity. Some demonstrators are looking at the camera and some are looking away. We see diverse group of people, demanding support for refugees. We can be one of them, support them and try to change the images of refugees in the media and society. They look us at the eyes, there is no hierarchy, they look clean and educated people who shows the example of freedom and democracy. The photo is very compatible with the text of Akrap (2016) who remarked if we want real democracy in the Germany, we should not obey the right-wing groups who attack the refugees but fight for the plurality and humanity in the German society by joining the refugee welcome group.

4.1.3 Refugees on the road: ‘I want to use my story to encourage people’

The refugee Abdul Mohsen became famous when the Hungarian journalist Petra Laszlo’s tripped up him and his son when they were running from the police near the Hungarian border. Laszlo apologised for her act but she said it was self-defence decision on that moment. “I am not heartless, racist, children-kicking camerawoman she insisted.” (Kassam: 2016:1) Mohsen and his children were mentioned in the passive form like “tripped up by camera operator”, “was crying”, “was worried” while the female camera operator was described using the active verbs form: “stuck out her foot”, “apologised”, “considering suing him” and so on. Due to these, gender and having child plays important role that we see the representation between camerawoman from Hungary and the refugee man with a child from Syria. Hungary is here represented with the symbol of Hungarian camera women who behave aggressively to the Mohsen and his child who are the symbol of refugees.

Abdul Mohsen's story is told: he and his two children live in the Madrid and his wife and two other children are still in the refugee camp in Turkey. He was the football coach in Syria so Spanish football academy invited him to work as a coach. He is quoted: "I want to use my story to encourage people to help the refugees but also the Syrians who are prisoners of a war they can't flee from." (Kassam 2016: 1) He works in the Cénafa football team acting as the bridge between the Arab and Spanish football worlds. So, a refugee man is represented with his child and his aim to build bridge in the country he settled, emphasizing the positive image as they are the symbol of refugees especially the other refugee men is showed as the victim of war.

Figure 14

"Stories of 2015: Syrian refugee tripped by Hungarian camera operator." (Kassam 2016:1)



Source: Maria Arranz for the Guardian

"Osama Abdul Mohsen was invited to Spain with his family to resume his career as a football." (Kassam 2016:1)

In this photo Abdul Mohsen looks directly into the camera, without smiling but has a pleased face representing his life in Europe. On the other hand, he is sad for other refugees who are not happy in their life in Eastern Europe especially in Hungary, refugees suffer negative state and population attitudes toward them. It is frontal angle and because he is looking to the camera, he is demanding that we socially involve in his life and the life of other refugees through this evoked sympathy towards his individual story. The ball represents his current career as the coach which is a positive image as contributing to the society with working in Spain. It is a close shot and we have equal eye level so we do not have authority over him and we are socially close to him.

This image strengthens the *Guardian's* framing of male refugee as non-aggressive, desexualized, vulnerable but steady, family men, who will be good citizens for the country in which they settle. Despite the frontal angle with eye level and vertical angle, we cannot say the photo aims to prevent the separation of us and him, but it certainly aims to show him as an ordinary man, just like the neighbour who just came back from playing football with his kids. He communicates with the viewer to say UK need to settle more refugees as it was mentioned in the text.

Townsend (2018), claims that refugees live under very rough conditions including physical attacks and sexual violence on the street of Paris, so their only hope is to be able to reach the UK. The refugees; Sudanese (29) and, Afghan man (29) told their experience and said that some refugees even killed themselves because of these abuses. The news says, the number of people who lived in the street increased due to Calais camp's closure and many settlers of camp tried to claim asylum from the UK instead of from France. "Among those interviewed were 58 children, many of whom remain on the street despite claiming to be, or having been accepted as, underage." (Townsend 2018 :1) Even though the

refugees in this story are all male, news depicts them as vulnerable, especially mentioning children's vulnerability.

Figure 15

“Migrants tell of abuse and violence on the streets of Paris.” (Townsend 2018:1)



Source: Yoan Valat/EPA

“Migrants at a makeshift camp blanketed by snow at the Saint-Martin canal in Paris.”

(Townsend 2018:1)

The news title is about abuse and violence to ‘migrants’ in the street of Paris according to new study. In the subtitle instead of the word ‘migrants’, ‘refugee’ is the word used. Townsend (2018), points out refugee men’s rough experiences through directly quoting them. The photo has a very long-shot without focusing on any particular person, though some are present. The angle is from high above, and the viewer looks down on the place and people. We are looking at their desperate condition in the freezing weather from above.

Because there is nobody demanding anything directly from viewers, there is social distance between ours and their life. We do not have any engagement or invitation from camera and we have power in this picture.

Jalabi (2014), talks about the Yazidi religion and culture. He mentions why they are targeted by ISIS and adds how many Yazidis are killed ‘with 40 children between them’ (Jalabi 2016: 1) The news continues with the factual information about population and history full of massacres under their Muslim rulers. The news end with the videos of “Iraqi women Yazidi MP cries like save Yazidis from ISIS to international community and Iraq” (Jalabi 2016:1) In addition, Baba Sheikh, Yazidis religious leader’s quote saying Yazidis’ life and religion are threatened by Islamist fundamentalists. This news is, different than one about Yazidi women in as much as there is not specific mention of Yazidi women’s experience.

Figure 16

“Who are the Yazidis and why is Isis hunting them?” (Jalabi 2014:1)



Source: Safin Hamed/AFP/Getty Images

“An Iraqi Yazidi family that fled the violence in the northern Iraqi town of Sinjar, sit at a school where they are taking shelter in the Kurdish city of Dohuk.” (Jalabi 2014:1)

Under the main title is; “The Iraqi ethnic and religious minority descends from some of the region’s most ancient roots and face executions for a reputation as devil worshippers.”, “In Iraq, there is no peace for Yazidis”, “US intensifies efforts to rescue stranded Yazidi refugees.” (ibid. 2016:1)

We see general theme of the news as the vulnerable Yazidi communities threatening by Islamic fundamentalists. It has the meaning as the Yazidis who are mystical, closed community. Especially about the sentence “no peace for Yazidi, US efforts to rescue Yazidis” and also “misunderstood community as devil worshippers” are the example of image created as their romanticised vulnerability. They are needed to be saved against the evil Islamic fundamentalists. The news; victimizes Yazidi community as a whole rather than focusing on women’s stories about sexual slavery and kidnapped children.

In the picture, the closest person is the male Yazidi looking directly to the camera without smiling. Other people, especially women and children, are present in the background, sitting on the floor. We can understand the place is school in Dohuk and they fled from Iraqi town Sinjar. (Jalabi 2016) Because the photo is not frontal, we do not feel we are one of them but feeling the ‘we’ and ‘them’ distinction. But because he looks directly at the camera in very close-up shot, he demands something from us: maybe awareness, or help for Yazidi situation. The man looks elderly, and surrounded by women and children can be assumed to be authoritative figure of his family. The camera’s vertical angle is little bit above his eye level so we can see his face closely but also the other women and children in the background, and have power over them. We can socially involve in their life as protagonists or hero to change the Yazidi’s situation.

Figure 17

“Syrian refugees in the UK: We will be good people. We will build this country.”

(Gentleman 2015:1)



Source: Christopher Thomond for The Guardian.

“Before, life was constant for us, without dangers. Then the war began. Within eight months everything changed.” (Gentleman 2015:1)

Zarzycka (2017), says in the photographs of the refugee communities, absence of young men is common. Therefore, Mohammed is young men trying to convince British society and the government that refugees, especially male ones, will be good citizens. He works in the UK and like his story, the photo shows him in a positive narrative. He wears good shirt, pants and shoes, looking clean and chic which is opposite to general image of the male refugees who looks in ragged clothes with beard. The picture tries to prove that refugees are not strangers to the culture of the UK. The news repeats the need to settle more refugees in the UK to save them.

In this picture, the young male refugees who looks to the other side to the camera may represents his hopes about his future. It is long shots so we can see his background mainly blue sky, green grass and some buildings through showing his full body in the front. The picture signifies him as confident young men who build good life and good hopes about his future thanks to Britain who settled him and his family. His shoes are white and his shirt is pink which is also opposite to the other male refugees which we used to see them in dark clothes. We can see that the *Guardian* try to construct non-aggressive and likable, desexualised masculine images on the young male refugees. The male refugee is represented in the solidarity with other refugees and he shows they can be in the positive role to awake sympathy in the UK media to change negative perception and to resettle more refugees.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This research paper has focused on the *Guardian's* framing of the Syrian refugees and their age, gender and religion in the representation. The representation of Syrian refugees through being female or male, children or adult or belonging to specific religious identity is framed differently, and sometimes the same frame is used to define different groups. Intersectionality helped me to understand the different representation based on different groups to which refugees belong, while ideas about securitization and orientalism alerted me to the dominant representations of male and female refugees.

The *Guardian* position itself as humanitarian and liberal news agent without specific political stance; its readers known as middle or upper-class UK citizens. Readers and newspaper have symbiotic relations affecting each other in the framing of news. In this sense, representation of refugees defined as they are victim of Syrian civil war so they need humanitarian aid and resettlement from the EU countries but mainly from UK. Due to that, they prefer to use the narrative of vulnerability of refugees.

There were different representations in every news depends on the authors, but the main framing still remained similar: women and children as vulnerable; men as non-threatening, family oriented, bringing positive contribution to the society they settled in.

The *Guardian* tried to change men's negative image in the media which depict them as dangerous, irrational, aggressive, especially after the Paris terror attack and Cologne sexual attack. Securitisation of the migration of refugees has been ascribed to the state – UK and EU – because of their stringent rules and agreement with Turkey, and was not used by *Guardian* to represent the refugees as a threat. The stories that reflected securitization in the news were about the boat rescue operation, refugee transit through East Europe and security guard's brutal intervention to avoid refugees' entrance. Contrary to securitization discourses, *Guardian* represented refugee men people who escaped from armed conflict, who are victim of war and faced with xenophobia in the new, host country.

Still, we see some aspects of Orientalism applied in the stereotyping representation of women and children as innocent victims of war, faced with sexual assaults and trafficking in the refugee camp. This is especially the representation of Yazidi women. Being sexual slave to ISIS is written with binary representation of non-Muslim women vs Muslim men with history of full of persecution from their Muslim rulers. On the other hand, being Muslim or non-Muslim women in the conflict has same framing in the sense of difficulties they face from war and from their culture as conservative and patriarchal. This narrative of, women faced with oppression from their men in their society and need help from outside is formed by Orientalist perspective and still takes place in the newspaper. It is important to point however that there were also stories about women actively engaged in support of their communities and other women, but very much within dominant understandings of femininity.

The *Guardian* wrote some of the news directly to represent the stories of women, children or male refugees, and some of the news use the victimhood of children indirectly to increase sympathy to all refugees. About the direct stories of refugees, male refugees were represented mostly with their individual life stories and pictures, directly looking at the camera. On the other hand, women tended to be represented with their children as a community. Children, tended to be represented through gender neutral lens, both boys and girls experiencing the sexual assault. Unaccompanied minors are showed as the most vulnerable ones.

Indirect news focused on refugee policy to use women's and children's victimhood to increase awareness about refugee's situation as a whole. This news includes indirect references to children and women' facing danger, a need to increase living standard for all refugees in the camps, to put pressure on the government to constitute effective refugee resettlement policy in the country or to prevent their illegal transit on the Mediterranean Sea.

Men have been showed with their family, especially emphasizing their children. They have been directly quoted telling their stories, even when the picture shows the children in the front. This framing contains different meaning than representation of 'women and children'. The *Guardian*, use few 'men and children' to desexualise the male refugees and give them non-threatening, reliable image, focusing on their faces to increase trust-worthiness and likability (contrary to the women presented with their bodies) and to challenge and change the UK' policy to increase refugee resettlement.

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Appendices

List of analysed texts and photos from the Guardian

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