THE VISUAL OTHERING OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE BRITISH NEWSPAPER MEDIA: AN INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This thesis explores how the British newspaper media use images to other refugees. While much has been written on media language, little work has explored media othering through visual means. The research that has been conducted in this field focuses on a small number of photographs from particular time periods. While important, the current literature is unable to provide a full understanding of how the mass media others refugees and how this othering differs depending on the intersecting socio-demographic characteristics of these groups. Furthermore, there has been limited research on how media audiences read images. My thesis addresses these research gaps by conducting an intersectional visual data analysis of 377 photographs of refugees in four British newspapers over a period of three years, and fourteen interviews with newspaper readers.

I find that intersectionality is crucial in understanding the British newspaper media othering of refugees, and that this othering is a continuation of the othering that was produced during colonialism. I argue, therefore, that the British media reproduces the racialised hierarchy that was used to justify colonisation. In this hierarchy, racialised men are represented as dangerous threats while racialised women and children are represented as vulnerable but only as long as they are passive and distant. Postcolonial othering is used to justify the government's restrictive border controls. Furthermore, I find that British newspaper readers broadly accepted the dominant framing of otherness in the media. Meanwhile, colonial amnesia also exists which shifts the responsibility for the refugees away from the West and towards the Middle East and Africa.

This research furthers knowledge in the field of media images of refugees. I have provided a full and in-depth understanding of how the media intersectionally others refugees. I have also added to the field by exploring how media audiences read these images.

Asylum; postcolonial othering; refugees; newspaper media; intersectionality; visual analysis

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Introduction

In September 2015, at the height of a large-scale influx of refugees to Europe associated with the conflict in Syria, a photograph of a young toddler named Alan Kurdi who had been found dead on a Turkish beach started to circulate on social media. Within hours it had gone viral and was picked up by the mainstream media. The photograph was met with both sympathy for the young, dead boy and outrage for the situation that he had been put in. Western governments including the United Kingdom pledged to accommodate more Syrian refugees and the numbers of donations and volunteers for refugee charities soared (Prøitz, 2018). This was, it seemed, a turning point in the representation of refugees. However, within just three months, and by the end of 2015, the anti-immigrant rhetoric that had previously been the norm in the mainstream media returned (Sirriyeh, 2018). This return to normal followed two events in Europe: the first being terrorist attacks in Paris, France in November 2015 and the second being allegations of sexual assault in Cologne, Germany on New Year's Eve 2015. Syrian refugee men were blamed for both of these incidents and the western media turned its attention back towards perceptions of threat (Sirriyeh, 2018).

In this thesis I interrogate such shifting representations of refugees in the British news media from an intersectional perspective. In this introductory chapter, I set out the aims of this thesis, explaining why it is important and how it will add to previous literature on the topic. I briefly discuss my research design before introducing the key arguments of this thesis. I finish this introductory chapter by explaining the structure of my thesis.

1.1 Why is it important to look at media images of refugees?

As the Alan Kurdi example discussed above shows, media images are critically important in public opinion formation on a given subject. This is particularly important when that subject falls beyond the typical everyday experiences of that public. In these cases, the public is reliant on the media for information (Greenslade, 2005). Media coverage of refugees and asylum seekers is a prime example of this. As Saxton (2003: p109) argues, "as the general public has limited contact with asylum seekers, the media play a powerful role in mediating public discourse concerning asylum seekers." Alongside this, the mainstream media have consistently been shown to act in the interests of the government by supporting harsh border and migration policies through the othering of refugees and asylum seekers (Nagarajan, 2013).

Mainstream news media reporting on refugees and asylum seekers in the UK is contextualised against a backdrop of increasingly restrictive policies towards these groups. In 2012, a set of policies commonly referred to as the 'hostile environment' began to be introduced, making it even more difficult for migrants to gain access to vital services such as

housing, healthcare, education and work, while increasing the risk of them being detained and deported (El-Enany, 2020). The introduction of these policies led to the 2018 Windrush Scandal where people from former Caribbean colonies who migrated to Britain following World War Two but were not given official documentation by the state, lost their rights to services that they had contributed to for decades and became at real risk of deportation. During the same period as the hostile environment, the UK voted to leave the European Union (EU) following a referendum in 2016 with scaremongering around migration playing a pivotal role in the Leave Campaign (Walter, 2019). Policy measures have resulted in the active deprivation of safe overland routes for refugees and asylum seekers leading to ever-more risky sea journeys and increasing deaths both in the Mediterranean and the English Channel (Davies et al, 2021), while the blame for these deaths is placed on dark-skinned smugglers and the asylum seekers themselves (Saucier and Woods, 2014). Furthermore, those who do survive the perilous journey to Britain are now at risk of being deported to Rwanda following a controversial offshoring agreement between the two countries as part of the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act (Balch, 2022).

In this context, the mainstream media continually justifies these restrictive policies through their negative reporting of refugees and asylum seekers. As Nagarajan (2013) argues "politicians and the press are locked in a cycle of ever-heightening anti-immigrant rhetoric." The relationship between these two groups is important with politicians and the media spending a large amount of time engaging with one another to set the news agenda, deciding how refugees and asylum seekers are represented and, ultimately, how they are treated (Davis, 2007). As the policies above show, this has a real impact on the lives of people seeking asylum.

An important aspect of the media's anti-immigrant narrative is the othering of refugees through tactics such as quantification (Crawley et al, 2016), natural disaster (Philo et al, 2013) and war metaphors (Saxton, 2003), using third person pronouns and separating the British readers ('us') from the refugees ('them') and consistently silencing refugee voices (Crawley et al, 2016).Not all refugees are othered though. Recent research on the media representations of Ukrainian refugees are much more likely to express the similarities between those refugees and the 'normal' population. Furthermore, the Kurdi photographs disrupted the dominant othering of refugees with the #CouldBeMyChild hashtag trending on social media alongside the story of the dead toddler. Therefore, the intersectional characteristics of the refugees and their context can play an important role in how they are represented in the media, and ultimately whether they are represented as 'others'.

I will now explore this media othering in more detail by giving a brief overview of the literature and showing how my thesis will contribute to this field.

1.2 A brief overview of the literature

The literature on images of migration in the media is relatively limited compared to the literature on language of migration in the media. This is with the exception of the Alan Kurdi photographs that have been well-documented, precisely because of the shift in the narrative which I have discussed above. The Alan Kurdi literature shows that the combination of his light-skin, young age and passivity through death were important in his representation as the 'good', innocent refugee (Szörényi, 2018). Other than the Alan Kurdi photographs, the main literature on images of migration in the media are predominantly focused on how dark-skinned men are represented as the 'bad', threatening asylum seekers (Batziou, 2011; Banks, 2011). Through looking at this literature we can see that there is a stark contrast between the visual representation of Alan Kurdi which took over the media spotlight for a short period of time and the visual representation of dark-skinned men which is the dominant portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers in the media (Sirriyeh, 2018).

The previous literature, therefore, is important. However, it is also limited because of its small scope. The focus of the literature is either on a particular group of refugees and asylum seekers e.g. Alan Kurdi (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016; Adler-Nissen et al, 2019, and others) or asylum-seeking men (Banks, 2011 and Scheibelhofer, 2017). Otherwise, the focus is on a particular event or time-period e.g. the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017) and the days following the Kurdi images (Wilmott, 2017) or during periods of policy changes in Greece and Spain (Batziou, 2011) and during the lead-up to the elections in Australia (Bleiker et al, 2013). In each case, we only gain a snapshot of the visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the mainstream media, usually during significant periods and times of 'crisis', leading to an incomplete picture.

Furthermore, as I have already briefly explained, the connections between media output and public opinion formation are important because the media may be the only source of knowledge about refugees and asylum seekers that the public have. However, public opinion formation is very rarely explored in the literature on migration in the media, again with the exception of the public responses to the Alan Kurdi images. This literature showed an outpouring of sympathy and a demand for Western governments to help Syrian refugees like Kurdi (Prøitz, 2018). Indeed, it was public and media pressure that led to state policies such as the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme (SVPRP) in the UK.

One particular example of research into audience responses is Höijer's (2004) work on 'human suffering' which focuses both on audience responses to violent news generally and

the Kosovo War in particular. Höijer's (2004) work is useful because it shows the importance of taking an intersectional approach to understanding the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers and how audiences interpret these representations. She finds that audience readings of the visual representations of refugees depends on the gender and age of the refugee with adult men treated with less sympathy than women, children and elderly refugees. Therefore, while there is a gap in the literature in terms of audience readings, Höijer's (2004) research shows that this is a significant field of exploration which will give us a better understanding of how the public respond to media images of refugees and asylum seekers.

I will now explore the aims of my thesis with a focus on addressing the gaps that I have identified in the literature.

1.3 My research aims

Through the literature review above, I have identified three gaps in the migration images in the media literature. The first of these is that while there has been some literature exploring how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the media, these have tended to be based on a small sample of images over a specific time-limited period. Secondly, while there is a consensus that the media plays a key role in public opinion formation on refugees and asylum seekers, there is very little research that explores this, and those that do again focus on only a small sample of images. Thirdly, by comparing the previous literature on the Alan Kurdi photographs and the previous literature on the photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African adult men, it is clear that these different refugees are represented in different ways by the media. However, there is limited literature which focuses on understanding how these representations differ by adopting an intersectional approach.

This thesis will resolve the gaps in the literature by providing a well-rounded understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the UK newspaper media and how newspaper readers create meanings from these representations.

To do this I will answer the following three research questions:

RQ1. How are refugees and asylum seekers visually othered in British newspapers?

RQ2. How does the gender, race and age of the refugee and asylum seeker shape their othering?

RQ3. What meanings do audiences attach to different visual otherings of refugees and asylum seekers?

By answering these questions, I will give a wide-ranging yet in-depth intersectional analysis of the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers, focusing on the different approaches used by photographers and editors of UK newspapers to other refugees and asylum seekers. I will now explore the methodology that I used to gather and analyse data in order to answer these questions.

1.4 My methodology

To answer my research questions, I used a novel three-stage process of data collection and analysis. Firstly, I conducted a content visual data analysis of 377 photographs of refugees and asylum seekers in four British newspapers over a three-year period. I coded the photographs using 20 variables to gain a full understanding of the representations in the photographs. Primarily, I coded for the age, gender and race of the refugee or asylum seeker. This is because, as the previous literature has shown, age, race and gender are key factors in the representation of both the Alan Kurdi photographs and the dangerous dark-skinned man photographs. Alongside this, photographs were coded to show the camera techniques used by the photographer, the behaviours of the refugee, and the context of the photograph. These were all based primarily on the literature surrounding this topic with other codes added following a pilot visual data analysis. My focus here was on understanding the most common representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the photographs.

Once I found these most common representations, I moved on to the second stage of my analysis: a semiological visual data analysis. This focused on exploring a sample of ten photographs selected randomly to show the most common representations found during the content visual data analysis. The purpose of the semiological visual data analysis was to explore these photographs in more depth. As discussed, research has focused on either an in-depth analysis of a small sample of photographs e.g. the Alan Kurdi photographs or a broad analysis of a larger, although still limited, sample of photographs of refugees and asylum seekers. However, through these two methods, I was able to focus on both breadth and depth in order to gauge a broader understanding of how the refugees and asylum seekers in my sample were visually represented and what this means in the context that these images are circulated. Through these two methods, therefore, I answered RQ1 and RQ2.

Following the content and semiological visual data analysis, a selection of 5 of the most common representations of refugees and asylum seekers were then shown to newspaper audiences to gain an understanding of how these audiences read and attach meanings to them. I did this through conducting fourteen interviews with newspaper audiences in the East Birmingham area. As I have explained above there has been very limited research exploring

the audience readings of these images. Therefore, this stage of my research was exploratory in nature and it made more sense to conduct a small number of in-depth interviews to gain initial insights into how newspaper audiences attach meanings to media images of refugees and asylum seekers. This, I believe, is an important stage in answering RQ3 and opens the door for future research.

1.5 Key research findings

My first key research finding is that using an intersectional lens is vital for understanding how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the media. Through exploring the intersectionality between age, race and gender, I have found key differences in how refugees and asylum seekers are othered. These socio-demographics are connected to issues of distance and agency with men of colour shown to be active and in proximity to western Europe, while women and children of colour are shown to be passive and distant.

My second key research finding is that these different ways of othering are based on colonial tropes with men of colour represented as threatening and uncivilised, while women and children of colour are represented as submissive and vulnerable. Meanwhile, white people are represented as either the saviours for the submissive women and children of colour or the protectors from the threatening men of colour. I argue that the media works alongside the government to reproduce colonial narratives of othering.

My third key research finding is that a colonial amnesia may impact on how newspaper audiences read images. While I found race to clearly be an important factor in refugee and asylum seeker representations during the content and semiological visual data analysis, race is rarely acknowledged by my interview participants. The reasons for this need to be explored further. My analysis took place prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Therefore, an area for further study could be comparing the findings from my data set of photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees and asylum seekers to photographs of White Ukrainian refugees and asylum seekers.

I will discuss these research findings in more detail at a later stage in the thesis. I will now explain the structure of my thesis.

1.6 Thesis structure

Following this introductory chapter, the second chapter of my thesis is a literature review. In this chapter I will explore the current literature in the fields of migration and the media before interrogating in more depth the existing research base on visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media. I will conclude by showing where the gaps in the literature lie and how this has shaped my research. The third chapter is my conceptual framework

where I will introduce the key concepts that have shaped this research: othering, intersectionality, postcolonialism and the western gaze. I will explain what each of these concepts are and how I will use them in my thesis. The fourth chapter is my methodology where I will explain in more detail how I conducted my three-stage data collection and analysis process. I will discuss each stage: the content visual data analysis, the semiological visual data analysis and the interviews. I will justify why the combination of these methods were the best option for this research and how they work together to produce a well-rounded understanding of the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media. The following three chapters will be my findings. My findings will be split into content visual data analysis, semiological visual data analysis and interviews. While these are three separate chapters, they will build onto one another to construct my key research findings. The content visual data analysis will show the most common visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers while the semiological visual data analysis will connect these common visual representations to the context of postcolonial British society. The interviews will then explore how newspaper audiences read and understand these visual representations. I will then summarise my thesis in a conclusion chapter where I will explore the importance of my research, how it adds to the current literature on migration in the media, and what questions it opens up for further research. Following this introductory chapter, I will now turn to my literature review where I explore the key literature that is available in the field of media and migration and the gaps that I seek to address through my research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the current literature in the field of media and migration. It is important to understand the context in which the media produces and circulates images of refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, I will begin by exploring representations of refugees, asylum seekers, and migration in the British context more generally. Following on from this, I will explore the representations of refugees, asylum seekers, and migration in the media, firstly through language, before shifting my focus onto visual representations. I will show that, while the current literature on media images of refugees and asylum seekers is useful, there are also clear limitations that need to be addressed. I will explain how my thesis contributes to closing the gaps in the literature by producing a wide-ranging yet in-depth intersectional analysis exploring both how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the media and how audiences read and interpret these representations. Understanding these media representations are important because, as I will show throughout this chapter, they have a real-life impact on the refugees and asylum seekers they are representing, predominantly through negative imagery in the media being used to justify the British government's restrictive border controls.

2.2 The anti-immigrant narrative

In order to make sense of the visual othering of refugees and asylum seekers in the British media, we need to understand the context in which this othering takes place. I will begin by presenting the terms refugee and asylum seeker using the official definitions produced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Following this, I will explore what these terms mean in practice in the current British context. I will argue that an anti-immigrant narrative has led to increasingly restrictive measures against migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, discussing the key measures over the past 10 years. I will, then, contend that these restrictive measures are a continuation of the racial othering that has existed since the period of the European empires.

In legal terms, a refugee is defined as an individual who

> Owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 1951/2020).

Meanwhile, an asylum seeker is a term that has come to be used over time to describe an individual who has requested refugee status and is awaiting a decision.

When the definition of the term ‘refugee’ was introduced in the 1951 Refugee Convention the typical refugee was an individual fleeing the Soviet regime during the Cold War. Today, the vast majority of those seeking refuge are from the Middle East and Africa (UNHCR, 2021). 72% of refugees are hosted in neighbouring countries and 83% are hosted in low- and middle-income countries. Furthermore, as of 2021, the UNHCR (2022a) reports that there are 27.1 million refugees and 4.6 million asylum seekers.[1] Two points are important here. Firstly, in legal terms, everyone has a fundamental right to seek asylum in another country. Secondly, the vast majority of those who are seeking refuge do so in neighbouring countries contradicting the dominant assumption that all asylum seekers, and migrants more generally, aim to travel to Europe (McMahon and Sigona, 2018). In the British case, people coming to the UK to seek asylum makes up 0.6% of the population (Migration Observatory, 2022a). The top five origin countries for asylum seekers to the UK as of 2021 were Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, Albania and Syria. Meanwhile, out of those given refugee status, “around three-quarters (76%) were citizens of Middle Eastern countries, and 17% were citizens of sub-Saharan African countries” with the vast majority (68%) being from Syria (Migration Observatory, 2022a).

Despite the low percentage of asylum seekers, Britain, and western Europe more generally, have introduced increasingly restrictive policies towards migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as part of an anti-immigrant narrative which presents these groups as a major problem through three separate but complementary narratives (Huysmans, 2000). Firstly, European governments and agencies produce a security narrative to argue that criminal behaviour such as terrorism, drugs trafficking and money-laundering is linked to migration into the EU. Secondly, they produce a culture narrative to argue that the cultures of the global South, and particularly Islam, are incompatible and threaten Western culture. Thirdly, they produce a welfare narrative to argue that migrants are exploiting the welfare systems of Europe and putting an intolerable strain on them. While these narratives, and the policies attached to them, are not explicitly racist, they are implicitly aimed at specific racialised groups who are represented as incompatible with the majority population (Kibria et al, 2014) For example, European governments use the security and culture narrative to other Muslim migrants while they use the welfare narrative to other Eastern European migrants. The consequence of these racial stereotypes is that different policies are created that directly focus on particular types of migrants with anti-terrorism laws focusing on Muslim groups and economic regulations focusing on Eastern European groups (Erel et al, 2016). Furthermore, the UK government and media represent Afro-Caribbean migrants using the security narrative, in order to justify strict policing measures against them (Keith, 1993). Therefore, as Kibria et al argue

> In an era of "color-blind" ideology, when it is normatively important to disavow racism, the explicit targeting of persons based on their "foreigness" rather than their skin color has been a prevalent strategy of nativist movements" (2014: p166).

In this twenty-first century anti-immigration narrative, as the origin countries of refugees have moved from Europe to Africa and the Middle East, the responsibility of labelling people as refugees has also moved from humanitarian agencies to western governments (Zetter, 2007) with a shift from resettlement to repatriation (Johnson, 2011). Refugee status, therefore, has become increasingly difficult to gain with acceptance or rejection primarily based on country of origin rather than a person's individual circumstances. This focus on country of origin means that migration policies are racialised with Erel et al (2016) arguing that the EU has become "a new, supra-national site of institutional racism." Furthermore, both western governments and the western media increasingly portray asylum seekers as 'bogus' (Sigona, 2014) 'economic migrants' (McMahon and Sigona, 2018) and use the 'unofficial' routes that asylum seekers use to enter European countries as evidence that they are 'illegal'. This is despite the fact that, as I have already explained, everyone has the right to claim asylum under the 1951 UNHCR Refugee Convention, meaning that there can be no such thing as an 'illegal asylum seeker' (Jones et al, 2017).

This anti-immigration narrative is racialised, with particular groups of migrants more susceptible to migration regulations than others. Kibria et al (2014) call this the 'race-immigration nexus' which they define as "a fluid and intertwined bundle of linkages between race and immigration, specifically among the institutions, ideologies and practices that define these areas" (p5). Using the United States as their case study, Kibria et al (2014) show that the race-immigration nexus is used by the US government to confirm their superiority while justifying restrictive and exploitative measures against specific racialised others who are viewed as 'bad' migrants, particularly Mexican migrants who they view as 'illegals' and Muslim migrants who they view as 'terrorists'. These negative racist stereotypes then have a real detrimental affect on the lives of the so-called 'bad' migrants, producing "a climate of fear and vulnerability" (Kibria et al, 2014: p47). As Keith (1993: p197) simply puts it, "racialization is of particular significance because it is one of the principal media through which subordination is produced and reproduced in an unjust society." I will now focus specifically on the anti-immigrant narrative in the European and British contexts.

2.2.1. The anti-immigrant narrative in the European context

EU countries opened their internal borders through the implementation of the Schengen Area in 1997 leading to freedom of movement between EU countries. However, this opening of *internal* borders depended on the tightening of *external* borders with the EU implementing strategies to restrict migration from outside the EU (Hampshire, 2016). In a series of policies

widely known as ‘Fortress Europe’, the EU has used multiple strategies to strengthen these external borders.

In 2005 the EU created Frontex, an external border agency which:

> Supports EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries in managing the EU’s external borders and fighting cross-border crime. With the newly created standing corps, Europe’s first uniformed service, Frontex is present in the places where European countries need support, working together with them for a safer, more secure Europe. (Frontex, 2022)

In these terms, Frontex gives the impression that Europe needs protecting from the dangerous, criminal threats that exist externally to it. Frontex’s budget has increased dramatically from €6 million in 2005 to €754 million in 2022 (Frontex, 2022). This gives the impression that this danger is increasing and that Frontex, as the protectors of Europe, are needed now more than ever. Frontex’s main role is to intercept refugees and asylum seekers attempting to enter Europe; as Kuschminder (2021) notes, during the pandemic alone Frontex refused entry into the EU to 40,000 people, predominantly through ‘pushback’ operations in the Mediterranean, forcibly blocking small boats and dinghies and returning them towards their country of departure. According to Kuschminder (2021), these pushbacks

> violate several laws, including the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, which states refugees cannot be returned to a country where they could be caused harm and the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits the collective expulsion of aliens.

In addition to pushback operations, Frontex plays a role in surveillance and monitoring through collecting data on the number of people travelling to Europe. However, as Sigona (2015) argues, these numbers are often inaccurate, with Frontex double-counting people who enter the EU at more than one point during their asylum journey. Again, this gives the impression that asylum seekers are a much larger issue than they are in reality.

Alongside its own external border agency, the EU has made a number of deals to extend their borders into non-EU countries through promises of funding or future EU membership (Isakjee et al, 2020). For example, in 2015 the EU made a deal with Turkey which included giving Turkey €3 billion to restrict migration. Meanwhile, in the same year, the EU funded the Moroccan government to build a fence in order to stop asylum seekers reaching Melilla, a Spanish city located in North Africa (Jones, 2016) and “provided €30 million in regional development programmes for North Africa and the Horn of Africa […] with the intention of curbing flows across the Sahara Desert” (Baldwin-Edwards et al, 2019). Alongside this, countries that wish to join the EU are required to “demonstrate the security of their external borders, particularly at airports and in their visa requirements” (Jones, 2016: p17). European governments also erect billboards in countries where they believe people might migrate to

Europe from in order to deter migration to their countries, such as British billboards in Vietnam (Gavard-Suaire, 2020). Ironically, as McMahon and Sigona (2018) find in the case of external borders erected throughout Africa, this has closed the door for traditional migration between African countries potentially leading to the EU being a more realistic migration destination.

The EU has continued to restrict the movement of those seeking asylum who do make it to Europe through the Dublin Regulation III 2013, which essentially means that a person must seek asylum in the first EU or Schengen country they enter. If they continue to travel to another European country, they can be sent back to this first EU or Schengen country. This is problematic for refugees and asylum seekers who enter Europe through countries that are shown to treat these groups poorly such as Italy and Greece (Jones, 2016). Furthermore, asylum seekers may wish to move on to countries in Europe where they believe they have better opportunities for the future (Ryan, 2015). The Dublin Regulation, therefore, is a violent, oppressive tool which leads to the harm of asylum seekers, both through making them stay in countries with poor human rights records and with lower opportunities and more chance of living in poverty. Furthermore, Jones (2016) also reported instances where asylum seekers self-harmed through burning their fingers to avoid providing their fingerprints in the first EU/Schengen country they entered – thus showing that the Dublin Regulations lead to physical self-harm. The Dublin Regulations show the power imbalance between the richer countries in northern and western Europe and the poorer countries in southern and eastern Europe with the rules meaning that those poorer southern and eastern European countries who have borders with Africa and the Middle East have to take on the burden of processing and resettling the majority of asylum seekers that enter the EU (Ryan, 2015).

Alongside the Dublin Regulation III that deports asylum seekers to the first EU and Schengen country they enter, the EU also deports asylum seekers back to their countries of origin through the use of safe country of origin lists and repatriation deals. These repatriation deals take on the same form as the external bordering deals discussed above with the EU giving funding to countries of origin to readmit those who have attempted to migrate to the EU. For example, in 2015 the EU provided African leaders with €1.8 billion to readmit these groups (Barbulescu, 2017). This is, of course, problematic as the asylum seekers left these countries because of concerns for their life. Furthermore, violence towards these groups in countries like Libya is well-documented (Kuschminder, 2021). The safe countries of origin list is also problematic as it produces a hierarchy based on the EU's decision about what counts as unsafe, with the EU being known to place those fleeing political persecution above those fleeing poverty (Jones, 2016).

The EU's restrictive external borders have led to the active deprivation of safe overland routes for refugees and asylum seekers, effectively forcing them to take ever-more risky sea journeys and, as a consequence, increasing deaths in the Mediterranean Sea. The UNHCR has estimated that 24,443 have died or gone missing in the Mediterranean Sea between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2021 (UNHCR: 2022b). At the same time, as Saucier and Woods (2014) note, both the media and politicians blame the smugglers and the asylum seekers themselves for these deaths, along with the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and volunteers who try to help bring asylum seekers to safety (Sigona, 2018). The deaths of refugees and asylum seekers are not unique to sea crossings. The deliberate removal of safe migration routes also explains the killing of 39 Vietnamese migrants by a trafficking gang in Essex in 2019; all 39 died by suffocation in the back of the lorry used to smuggle them into the UK. Furthermore, those who do survive these routes to reach Britain are highly vulnerable to exploitation (Gavard-Suaire, 2020). Elsewhere, approximately 37 migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa died trying to scale fences on the Moroccan-Spanish border in 2022 (Burgen, 2022). This scapegoating of smugglers, asylum seekers and charities leads to justifications for further restrictive measures which leads to even more unsafe routes and even more deaths (Dalakoglou and Alexandridis, 2015). Thus, this cycle cannot be broken unless European governments acknowledge that, as Jones (2016: p5) argues "the hardening of the border through new security practices is the source of the violence, not a response to it."

Regardless of these restrictive external measures, increasing anti-immigrant sentiment in many European countries has led to a Euroscepticism and a rise in support for far-right parties (Hampshire, 2016). In the British context, this ultimately led to the UK voting to leave the EU in 2016 following a referendum with politicians and media scaremongering around migration playing a pivotal role in the 'Leave Campaign' (Walter, 2019). Politicians and the media in the Leave camp blamed migrants for unemployment, housing shortages and NHS queues during this period (Jones et al, 2017). Indeed, the United Kingdom Independence Party's (UKIP) *Breaking Point* poster shown in Figure 1 (below) became one of the most memorable and controversial tactics in the Leave Campaign (Durrheim et al, 2018). The poster (Figure 1) showed a large number of young, Middle Eastern men entering Europe with the slogans 'Breaking Point. The EU has failed us all' and 'We must break free of the EU and take back control of our borders.' The murder of Jo Cox, Labour MP and campaigner known for her activism in favour of migrants rights and human rights, by the far-right extremist Thomas Mair in the lead-up to the referendum and in the days after the unveiling of the Breaking Point poster further emphasised the connection between hostility to migration and the drive to remove the UK from EU membership (Jones et al, 2017).

3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis

Figure 1: Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage standing in front of the Breaking Point poster (2016). Available: https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/talking-politics/214051/four-brexit-fibs-liesdamn-lies-and-the-eu-referendum-campaign/

2.2.2. The anti-immigrant narrative in the British context

In the national context, successive British governments have introduced policies to further restrict migration to the UK through creating both external and internal borders. Externally, the British government's focus has been on blocking the route through the English Channel from Calais in northern France to Dover in southern England which, as Isakjee et al (2020) argue, is a key route for those seeking to enter the UK to claim asylum. The British and French governments have made this movement as difficult as possible through a number of measures which include erecting fences and CCTV around both the port and the Eurotunnel, enforcing British immigration controls on people in Calais, ensuring a large police presence in Calais including riot police and border enforcement, violently destroying makeshift camps, known more commonly as jungles, that have been created by refugees waiting to cross the border and forcibly moving refugees further away from the border (King, 2016).

In a similar way to Frontex, the large police presence, especially riot police, and the extensive use of CCTV gives the impression that the refugees in Calais are dangerous criminals. The British government and the media have justified these oppressive measures as necessary for the protection of the nation (Maggs, 2019). For example, as King (2016) argues, the British government has justified the violent destruction of the jungles by arguing that their existence works as a pull factor for refugees. Their destruction, the British government argue, will stop refugees wanting to move to Calais. Of course, this is untrue. As Davies et al's (2021) interviews with refugees in Calais found, there are a multitude of reasons why refugees choose to travel to the UK, many of which are connected to the colonial connections between the UK and their country of origin. Therefore, in reality, these

oppressive measures will not stop people trying to travel to the UK to seek asylum, but it will make these journeys even more dangerous and deadly:

> If people have a will to migrate to Britain, they will do their best to find a way. And the British obsession with deterrence will only force them to take more dangerous and clandestine routes – formerly, it was through the Eurotunnel, and now it is the busy waters of the Channel (Maggs, 2019: p81).

Since 2014, 203 people have been reported dead or missing in the English Channel (Missing Migrants Project, 2022) although the number is likely to be far higher. Meanwhile, those stuck in Calais experience physical and mental health problems. For example, as Davies and Isakjee (2018: p215) report, a fifth of those living in the Calais jungle contracted scabies from poor sanitation while a lack of provisions leaves them hungry. Furthermore, instances of French police physically assaulting refugees are widely reported, including the use of tear gas during protests in 2015 (King, 2016).

Those who do make it safely to the UK are subject to further restrictions through internal border measures. These measures are based on the racist notion of migrants being "enemies within" (Solomos, 2003: p174). Internal border measures have existed for decades, however, in the past 10 years the Conservative government (both in coalition with the Liberal Democrats from 2010-2015 and as a majority party from 2015-present) have sought to further restrict the lives of migrants. Since 2012, the Home Office has introduced a set of policies with the aim, according to the then Home Secretary Theresa May in an interview with the Telegraph, "to create here in Britain a really hostile environment for illegal migration" (quoted in Kirkup and Winnett, 2012). The Home Office decided to name these policies the 'hostile environment' in order to reflect these aims[2]. Introducing the hostile environment at the 2012 Conservative Party Conference, Theresa May repeated the anti-immigrant narrative that has consistently been used to justify restrictive immigration policies:

> Uncontrolled, mass immigration undermines social cohesion. And in some places, it overburdens our infrastructure and public services […] And we must be honest about the fact that, in some cases, uncontrolled mass immigration can displace local workers and undercut wages (politics.co.uk, 2012).

In reality, the hostile environment has severely curtailed the rights of those seeking asylum in the UK with real detrimental consequences. For example, the hostile environment policies have made it even more difficult for migrants to gain access to vital services such as housing, healthcare and employment through requiring British citizens who are in certain positions such as landlords, doctors and employers to check and report the migration status of their tenants, patients and employees while imposing tough sanctions on those who do not complete these checks (El-Enany, 2020). As Jones et al (2017: p6) argue, through these policies, "borders have also come 'home', entering into domestic spaces" with British citizens

becoming internal border guards. For example, in 2016 restaurant-chain Byron collaborated with immigration officers to initiate an immigration raid at its restaurants, leading to the detention of 35 members of staff and the deportation of at least 25 of these (Cowan, 2021). Furthermore, the Home Office introduced the condition of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF), preventing asylum seekers access to a number of benefits including universal credit, housing benefit and child tax credit (Zocchi, 2021). With British immigration law meaning that this same group cannot access the job market, the status of NRPF leaves asylum seekers destitute.

Alongside losing access to vital resources, the current immigration laws also means that those seeking asylum are also at real risk of detention and deportation. "From 2009 to 2020, the number of people entering detention each year has ranged from around 15,000 to 32,000 […] reaching a peak of 32,447 people entering detention in 2015" (Silverman et al, 2021). Meanwhile, in the same period there has been 140,847 enforced deportations (Walsh, 2021). The British government has outsourced the running of detention and deportation to private security companies. The private security companies' focus on profit is important.

> As private companies receive a fixed sum from the government for each person they detain, any savings on that amount (for example, ways to avoid spending the whole amount on detaining that person) can be pocketed by the business – this is the 'profit motive' for providing cheap, inhumane living conditions for incarcerated people. (Cowan, 2021: p112)

These conditions include limiting access to medication and mental health support, providing substandard food, and paying detainees £1 an hour to cook and clean in the centres. Furthermore, these companies build detention centres in remote locations, provide limited access to the internet and restrict visitors access, effectively leaving those who are detained isolated from the outside world. Detainees are also not told when they will be released meaning that they are living in limbo. Because of these inhumane living conditions, self-harm and suicide is high among detainees. "While only 0.01 per cent of people die by suicide in the general population, in detention 36 per cent of deaths are self-inflicted" (Cowan, 2021: p106). Meanwhile, the lack of medical supplies means that some people's deaths in detention centres could have been easily prevented. The deportation of those who have lost their asylum case is also incredibly violent with detainees often being "handcuffed, or restrained with straps or a muzzle" (Cowan, 2021: p121). As well as being physically violent, these tactics are also humiliating for detainees who are treated more like dangerous animals than human beings. The case of the murder of Jimmy Mubenga who was killed by G4S guards during his deportation flight highlights the violence of these deportations (Goodfellow, 2020).

The hostile environment policies led directly to the 2018 Windrush Scandal where people from former Caribbean colonies who migrated to Britain following World War Two but were not given official documentation by the state, lost their rights to services that they had contributed to for decades and became at real risk of deportation (El-Enany, 2020). Indeed, Cowan (2021: p122) reports that "up to 164 members of the Windrush generation are known (and many more likely unreported) to have been detained or deported as part of the British government's soulless pursuit of deportation targets."

The then Home Secretary Theresa May also introduced Operation Vaken in 2013, another example of internal bordering. Operation Vaken included the racist 'Go home' vans which were driven around boroughs of London with a large proportion of ethnic minority people (Barnet, Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Ealing, Hounslow, and Redbridge) encouraging those who were 'illegal' to contact the Home Office to organise their repatriation or face arrest and deportation. In this case, it was migrants themselves that were expected to police their own movement through coercion and threat by the government (Jones et al, 2017). As Kibria et al (2014: p48) argues "since being undocumented does not carry an immediate visible marker, what the authorities turn to instead are proxies" and the locations of the 'Go home' vans were a clear example of racial profiling being with the government representing individuals as being undocumented because of their race. This is part of a wider institutional racism, where racist policing criminalises racialised minorities and migrant groups to justify oppressive policing strategies against these groups (Keith, 1993). More recently, Priti Patel's Home Office have agreed an offshoring agreement between the UK and Rwanda as part of the repressive 2022 Nationality and Borders Act meaning those who survive the perilous journey to Britain are now at risk of being deported to Rwanda (Balch, 2022).

Those who do gain refugee status are not immune to this internal bordering, with their cases being reviewed by the Home Office every five years (Garner, 2007). The case of Shamima Begum, the British schoolgirl who left the UK to join the Islamic State (ISIS), also shows that the citizenship status of those who are born in the United Kingdom but whose parents or grandparents are migrants is increasingly fragile (Ahsan, 2019). More generally, as Keith and Cross (1993) argue, people of colour are consistently treated as second-class citizens. Furthermore, the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 that killed at least 80 people, most of whom were racialised minorities, shows that the British government and those it employs to look after its public services place racialised minorities in harmful situations with little regard for their safety (El-Enany, 2017). Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO), who were in charge of the upkeep of Grenfell Tower, used the cheapest cladding on the tower with the purpose of making the tower more aesthetically pleasing to the White, wealthy community in the surrounding areas, ignoring the safety concerns from both the

tenants and the London Fire Authority (Bowie, 2017). Furthermore, as El-Enany (2017) reports, “there was only one stairwell, and no sprinkler or alarm system.” It was KCTMO’s scant regard for the safety of the racialised minorities that killed the residents of Grenfell Tower.

Successive government and the media have also focused demands for migrants to assimilate into British culture. For example, migrants are expected to prove their English proficiency (Erel et al, 2016), swear allegiance to the queen, take citizenship classes (Shukra et al, 2004), and even support the national sports teams (Solomos, 2003). Furthermore, Solomos (1993) also finds that when local authorities do put measures in place to tackle racial inequality such as introducing multiracial education, these are often subject to criticism by the media, the central government and, often also, the local white population. Meanwhile, when racialised minorities themselves speak up against racial inequalities, they are represented as ungrateful and unassimilable (Solomos, 2003). Alongside this ‘anti-anti-racism’ (Solomos, 1993), the government’s solutions to racially motivated attacks such as the 1958 Notting Hill riots (Small and Solomos, 2006) and, more recently the 2001 riots in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham (Shukra et al, 2004) have been focused on restricting migration and the need for racialised minorities to integrate, rather than focusing on tackling the racism these groups were subject to. As Solomos (1993: p152) argues “it is perhaps a sign of the nature of the present political climate that increasingly it is not racism which is presented as the central problem but ‘anti-racism’”.

Ultimately, racialised minorities are subject to institutional racism in all aspects of their lives (Keith, 1993). However, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are subject to particular forms of racism based on their migration status (Erel et al, 2016). This clear discrimination against racialised migrants all stems from the race-immigration nexus and ideas about who can claim to be British. Ultimately, as Small and Solomos (2006) argue, the powerful institutions in the UK such as the government and the media consistently conflate Britishness with whiteness:

> Central to much of the debates, often times explicit, often implicit, is the whole equation of Britishness and whiteness, of us and them: the notion that the real British people are white; that only this group has a real and legitimate right to be in Britain and that others are there at their tolerance. (Small and Solomos, 2006: p248).

I will now explore the colonial history of this narrative.

2.2.3. The colonial history of the current anti-immigrant narrative

While the modern British context is defined by increasingly repressive policies against refugees and asylum seekers, and migrants more generally, this anti-immigration narrative is nothing new. We should also remember that the responsibility for refugees shifted from humanitarian agencies to governments at the same time as those seeking asylum shifted from White Europeans to people of colour from former European colonies (Johnson, 2011). Therefore, I argue that we need to explore the colonial history of the anti-immigrant narrative in order to fully understand its current form. I will now show that, as Mayblin (2019: p30) argues

> Ideas of racial hierarchy, which were popularised, rationalised, and systemised during the enlightenment as a reaction to colonial encounters, continue to be drawn up today.

Indeed, as Kibria et al (2014: p3) argue, race itself is "a political project rooted in histories of western colonialism and imperialism." During the period of the European empires, White European colonialists produced a racial hierarchy which saw White European citizens at the top and people of colour from outside Europe at the bottom. Those at the bottom of the hierarchy were othered as "under-humanized, antidemocratic, backward, barbaric, and so forth" (Said, 1978/2003). In contrast, the White European colonisers at the top of the hierarchy represent themselves as the saviours of these barbaric groups (Spivak, 1988). The racialised hierarchy was continually used to justify the brutal invasion and colonisation of countries deemed to belong to the bottom of the hierarchy. Instead of calling them invasions, European imperialists called this colonisation a 'civilising mission' (Said, 1978/2003). White European colonisers argued that the colonisation of countries was for the colonised peoples' own good, despite the fact that European empires stole masses of wealth from the countries they colonised and brutally murdered, raped, kidnapped and exploited the countries' people (El-Enany, 2020). Furthermore, the White European colonisers silenced the views of the people that they colonised and the 'White saviours' acted as their spokespeople and experts (Spivak 1988). In the twenty-first century, western governments continue to use the same racialised hierarchy to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the western 'War on Terror' led by the United States of America (USA) (Abu-Lughod, 2002).

Meanwhile, the same western governments use the same racial stereotypes to block migration from those countries at the bottom of the racialised hierarchy. White privilege means that the movement of White people around the globe is, and always has been, relatively unrestricted while people of colour did not, and continue to not, have the same ease of access to travel, with their movement characteristically controlled (Ahmed, 2007). During the period of the empire, but more so since its decline, western governments have introduced increasingly restrictive immigration controls to curtail the movement of those at

the bottom of the racialised hierarchy. For example, while Britain was trying to preserve its empire, citizens of colonies were legally identified as citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies; however, following the demise of the empire (under the pressure of decolonizing forces in Africa and Asia), the UK government changed the status of these people from citizens to migrants, and placed increasing controls on their civic rights, including their right to movement (El-Enany, 2020). These controls have devastating effects, as we have seen above in the case of the Windrush Scandal. Yet White settler colonies have not been subject to the same restrictive regulations as current and former colonies whose populations are people of colour, emphasising the racism that the hierarchy was founded upon and continues actively to structure UK citizenship policies (Bhambra, 2017). It is therefore no surprise that the Home Office explicitly paraded the 'Go Home' vans around those London boroughs with high proportions of ethnic minorities, or that UKIP's *Breaking Point* poster, a key emblem of the Leave campaign, showed large groups of Middle Eastern men. All of these continue to produce the racialised hierarchy that has existed for centuries and caused devastation to the lives of people of colour.

It is important to understand the context in which the UK newspapers reporting on refugees and asylum seekers exist. I argue that a strong anti-immigration narrative exists in Britain and has done since the period of the British empire. This narrative is based upon the racialised othering that was used to justify colonisation during the imperial period. It is in this dominant anti-immigration narrative that the British media find themselves reporting on issues surrounding refugees and asylum seekers. In the following conceptual framework chapter, I will continue to argue that acknowledging the colonial history of Britain is vital in understanding the current visual othering of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK media. I will now move on to explore the role of the media in continuing this anti-immigration narrative and the tactics that they use to do this. I will argue that through selecting stories that corroborate the government's anti-immigrant narrative, the media is an active participant in extending an anti-immigrant agenda that has real detrimental effects on the lives of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants more generally.

2.3 Representations in the media

> The media surround us. Our everyday lives are saturated by the Internet, television, radio, movies, recorded music, newspapers, books, magazines, and more. (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014: p2).

As the title of Croteau and Hoyne's book *Media/Society* suggests, the media has become a core component of contemporary society. Deuze (2011) extends this argument even further by arguing that the media should be thought of as something that we live in, rather than with. As he argues, "our lived reality cannot be experienced separate from or outside of media"

(Deuze, 2011: p140). In the case of my research, I argue that the media has two important relationships: the first is with the general public and the second is with governments and politicians. I will now focus on the importance of each of these relationships more generally before moving on to talk about these relationships in terms of representations of migration, refugees and asylum seekers.

It is worth noting that the media I am referring to is the mass media, or mainstream media, defined by Croteau and Hoynes (2014: p8) as "media that reach a relatively large audience of usually anonymous readers." This is not to suggest that alternative medias are unimportant, particularly with the advent of the digital age and social media making it possible for ordinary people to become 'citizen journalists' (Wright, 2014). However, the mass media "continue to dominate its production and distribution" (Hodkinson, 2017: p10), using these digital advances to further widen their reach (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008). Newspaper journalists, for example, produce content that is suitable for both print and online platforms (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). Furthermore, the general public in the UK see the mass media as a more trustworthy source for following the news than social media. 67% believe that newspapers are accurate and 65% believe that newspapers are trustworthy. In comparison, 36% believe that social media is accurate and 35% believe that social media is trustworthy (Ofcom, 2020). Therefore, it remains important to focus on the role that the UK mass media plays in representing migration.

The explicit function of the media is to inform the general public about local, national and global news. The information power of the media is particularly strong when the subject that the media audience are reading about is a subject that is distant and separate from their everyday lives (Happer and Philo, 2013). Furthermore, Croteau and Hoynes (2014) take the media's function even further, arguing that media interactions contribute to people's understandings about their own place in society and how they compare their place to other people and institutions. However, the media does not provide information in a neutral manner.

> Media producers are highly selective with respect to what they include, and they present those elements which they *do* include in very particular ways. (Hodkinson, 2017: p5)

It is this power to select a certain view of the world that, as Hodkinson (2017) continues, gives the media influence over public opinion formation. These selections are driven by the second, more implicit, media function: to generate profit (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). Therefore, the media's tactic is to create sensationalised, emotionally charged stories that will grab the audience's attention and make them want to continue reading and pass the

story on to their families, friends and acquaintances (Greenslade, 2005). In Moeller's (1999: p19) words, "a 'big bang' – trumps almost all other kinds of news." Furthermore, Mills' (2016: p6) work on the publicly funded British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) argues that even in a media institution that is advertised as impartial "its journalism has overwhelmingly reflected the ideas and interests of elite groups, and marginalised alternative and oppositional perspectives." For Hall (2001), media producers also use codes that are easily understandable to their audience. Therefore, the media often repeat viewpoints that reflect the *"dominant cultural order"* (Hall, 2001: p169), although as Hall continues these viewpoints are not universal and can be contested. The UK newspapers also hold particular political viewpoints which affects both the news that the media produces (Wilks-Heng et al, 2012: discussed in Democratic Audit UK, 2013) and the audience's choice of newspaper (Smith, 2017). Therefore, newspapers while adhering to the dominant cultural order will also diverge based on their political persuasion:

> The mechanisms through which owners can, and do, interfere with or shape content to promote particular viewpoints are not difficult to identify; they range from directly dictating the line a newspaper should follow on particular issues, to appointing senior staff with a shared political outlook, as well as forms of indirect influence over the ethos of the organisation which may prompt journalists to engage in 'self-censorship'. (Wilks-Heng et al, 2012: discussed in Democratic Audit UK, 2013).

While I have argued that the media has an important role in shaping public opinion, it is important to also acknowledge that media audiences are not passive recipients who simply read and believe everything they see in the media. Instead, audiences actively read and interpret media messages forming their own opinions on the subject that they are reading about (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). Hall (2001) argues that there are three ways in which audiences can read images. First, the audience can adopt a dominant-hegemonic code where they accept the producers' preferred reading. Second, and conversely, the audience can adopt an oppositional code, rejecting the preferred reading and creating an alternative reading of the image. Third, the audience can adopt a negotiated code which is a midpoint between full acceptance and full opposition.

To interpret media messages, the audience will rely on the resources that they have at their disposal which "might include knowledge and information gained from personal experience, other people, formal education, or other media products" (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014: p24). Therefore, the media does not exist in a vacuum but, as I have argued earlier, must also be placed in the context of the society that the audience lives in. The audience-focused literature shows that it is important for us to explore how audiences respond to media images in order to gain a well-rounded understanding of media representations of refugees

and asylum seekers. I will return to this point again later on in this chapter when I discuss images of refugees and asylum seekers in the media.

As well as the public being active readers of the media stories, there are also instances where they can shape the media agenda itself. For example, it was the general public's sharing of the Alan Kurdi story on social media which led to it being picked up by the mainstream media (D'Orazio, 2015). This was significant as it shifted the media away from their usual anti-immigrant narrative (Adler-Nissen et al, 2019). It is, therefore, not entirely clear whether the media influences the general public or whether the general public influences the media. Instead, I would argue that there is a circular effect where both the media and the general public work in tandem to shape the agenda. However, as I have argued previously, the media have a particular level of influence when dealing with issues that are distant from the everyday lives of the general public such as those around refugees, asylum seekers and migration more generally. Here, the general public, often look to the media to gain an understanding of these issues and while social media has become a key tool for information-gathering, as the study by Ofcom (2020) suggests, the general public view mainstream media like newspapers as a more reliable source.

Alongside its relationship with the general public, the media also has a relationship with governments and politicians. As Van Dalen and Van Aelst (2014: p42) argue "a central aspect of politics is the struggle over issue attention." Gaining a reasonable amount of attention on an issue is vital for policy formation. This, for the authors, is where the media plays a pivotal role because it can focus attention on a particular issue through the repetition of stories. British political journalists interviewed by Van Dalen and Van Aelst (2014) argue that the British media have the third-highest agenda-setting power (following the Prime Minister and the Ministers) putting it ahead of political parties, MPs and interest groups. Furthermore, they see newspapers as having more agenda-setting power than television. Similarly, most of the British members of parliament (MPs) interviewed by Davis (2007) gave examples of legislation being created or changed because of media campaigns. Alongside this, as well as informing the public, politicians also use the news media to get information. Despite being sceptical about the truthfulness of the news, politicians still spend an enormous amount of time engaging with it. The MPs in Davis's (2007) research argue that politicians, and particularly shadow ministers, use news stories to raise issues in parliament and pressure the government to act. MPs further stated that they used news stories to gain an understanding of the opinions of other politicians, both inside and outside their own political parties.

Politicians are aware of the importance of the media spotlight and often conduct themselves with an awareness of how their behaviours will be perceived by the media. For example, politicians might stage a campaign with media attention in mind (Croteau and Hoynes, 2014). Former government ministers in Davis's research also argued that when creating or amending policies one of the key areas of discussion is how the news media will report on it. Therefore, "an 'anticipatory media effect' can be said to have developed as party leaders increasingly select issues and make policy decisions with future news headlines in mind" (Davis, 2007: p188). Furthermore, many MPs have good working relationships with particular journalists. This is a based on a cooperative relationship where "reporters need political information and comment, and politicians need publicity and to promote their policies" (Davis, 2007: p191). This relationship, therefore, emphasises Hodkinson's (2017) argument that journalists are not neutral when producing their news stories.

There is, therefore, an important relationship between the media and politicians with both institutions reproducing the same preferred readings around issues. Politicians take into consideration the media when they formulate their political campaigns, and the media rely on politicians to gain key information for their stories. What this means in terms of migration is that the anti-immigrant narrative portrayed by the politicians is also portrayed by the media. I will discuss this in terms of media representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the next section. Interestingly, however, while the political and media rhetoric is very similar, there has recently been some divergence in the types of migrants that the state focus on. As Allen et al (2017) argue, while the official government statistics argue that the largest groups of migrants are students, followed by family reunification, the vast majority of media and public attention is given to economic migrants and asylum seekers. Often this is because these groups are seen as 'good' migrants and therefore not newsworthy. This can have two effects. Firstly, the government policies to reduce migration which have focused on these largest groups (students and families) are often seen as inadequate and unnecessary for combatting migration by the media and the general public. Secondly, the media and the general public can influence the state's responses to the groups that they think are important (economic migrants and asylum seekers) leading to more restrictive measures against them such as the 'Go Home' vans and more recently the Nationality and Borders Act discussed above.

Through an exploration of the literature, I have shown the importance of media representations both in terms of public opinion formation and political agenda formation. Both of these factors are important in determining the treatment and experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. I will now focus in on how the media represents refugees,

asylum seekers and migrants in the media. Most of the literature in this field has focused on linguistic representations and so this is where I will turn to first.

2.3.1 Representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media

As I have already stated, the literature argues that the media's role as the provider of information is most powerful when the general public perceive the issue or subjects being discussed as distant and separate from their daily lives. Refugees and asylum seekers fall into this category, with many members of the general public having little or no contact with these groups in their day-to-day lives (Saxton, 2003). With the relationship between politicians and the media being a cooperative one, it is no surprise that "politicians and the press are locked in a cycle of ever-heightening anti-immigrant rhetoric" (Nagarajan, 2013). This anti-immigrant rhetoric is illustrated in Allen et al's (2017) findings that negative stories about migration are more than twice as likely to be produced by the UK media than positive stories. As I have already shown, politicians consistently other refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in order to justify increasingly restrictive migration policies and border controls. Now I will show how the media works with politicians by continuing this othering process.

Most of the literature on this subject focuses on the language the media uses to other refugees. First and foremost, Nagarajan (2013) finds that the media over-reports on issues of asylum and migration. This gives the impression that migration to the UK is much more prevalent than it actually is. Furthermore, the terms refugees, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants are used interchangeably to cast doubt on the genuineness of those who are seeking asylum and instead treating them as criminal (Saxton, 2003). This is emphasised through the repetition of the terms 'bogus,' 'failed' and 'illegal' asylum seeker (Philo et al, 2013; Blinder and Allen, 2016). Blinder and Allen (2016: p22) found that the British media also link these terms to terms such as "detention, deportation, and prison," further emphasising the criminality of the asylum seekers.

The media also uses quantification with a focus on the number of refugees and asylum seekers entering Europe or the United Kingdom. These numbers are often inaccurate and inflated to give the impression that the issue of migration is far larger than it actually is (Sigona, 2017). Quantification, therefore, is used by the media to suggest that the British government needs to control migration through restrictive measures (Crawley et al, 2016). Furthermore, the movement of refugees and asylum seekers towards the West are defined as a 'crisis' (Jha and Wani, 2017). Similarly, natural disaster metaphors such as 'wave,' 'flood' (Philo et al, 2013) and 'influx' (Haynes et al, 2006) and war metaphors such as 'invasion' (Saxton, 2003) and 'siege' (Jha and Wani, 2017) are consistently used by the

mainstream media to represent refugees and asylum seekers as a violent and threatening mass.

The media also dehumanise refugees and asylum seekers through their descriptions of them. As Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017: p623) find “refugees were predominantly described as groups in terms of their category membership: predominantly nationality (62% of all articles) and less so gender (24%) and age (27%). More personalized specifications, such as names and professions had the lowest frequency with 16% and 7%, respectively.” Furthermore, the reasons for the refugees having to leave their homes were also predominantly absent. As Wright (2014: p461) argues “few refugee news stories make the connection between ‘there’ and ‘here’: sympathetic coverage of those in far-off lands affected by disaster and war appears in stark contrast to the media treatment of those seeking asylum in the West.”

So far, I have shown that the threat of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants is based on their supposedly large numbers and their fraudulent claims. However, as Balabanova and Balch (2010) argue the media not only assign threat based on who the refugees are and how they arrive in the UK, but also how they supposedly behave when they do arrive:

> The media problematize immigration, linking immigrants and minorities with insecurity and disease, crime, rioting, drug use, sexual promiscuity, welfare sponging – and recently, religious fanaticism and terrorism. (Balabanova and Balch, 2010: p383).

Meanwhile, refugee voices are consistently absent from media reports (Crawley et al,2016). Instead, the voices of politicians who, as we have already seen, produce an anti-immigrant rhetoric in order to justify harsher border controls are promoted (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017). For example, in the lead up to the 2015 General Election, the media consistently quoted UKIP’s Nigel Farage in stories about migration (Crawley et al, 2016). Furthermore, British journalists identify themselves with their British citizen audiences through first person pronouns of ‘us’, ‘we’ and ‘our’ and separate themselves and their audiences from the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants who are presented in third person pronouns of ‘them’, ‘they’ and ‘their’ (Cheregi, 2015). Through this othering, the media represent these groups as “threats to national identity, culture or cohesiveness” (Allen et al, 2017: p4). This othering is exacerbated by the media consistently representing the experiences of migrants as ‘exceptional’, thus distancing them from the everyday lives of British citizens (Crawley et al, 2016: p6).

So, as we can see, the media repeatedly uses a range of tactics to create an anti-immigrant rhetoric based on the othering of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants more generally.

While the focus of this thesis is on the British media context, it is worth noting that these othering practices are also echoed in the global media (Allen et al, 2017). These media tactics are important because they complement the tactics of political actors while the media also present themselves to the public as information-givers.

Discussing the link between media representations and public perceptions, Crawley et al argue

> The media not only provides information but also represents events, issues and people in particular ways, influencing people's awareness of what is important and perceptions of who belongs in communities (2016: p12).

For Blinder and Allen (2016: p5) media representations "become sources of mental images of immigrants that members of the public hold." Indeed, Allen et al (2017) discussing the public perceptions of migration, argue that people often echo the information that the media provide. These perceptions are often in contrast to the official government statistics on migration (Blinder and Allen, 2016). For example, the public tend to over-estimate the number of migrants (Allen et al, 2017). Furthermore, Allen et al (2017: p10) argue that "when the British public thought of migrants as asylum seekers or labour migrants, official figures actually showed that students were the largest group at the time – but this group is rarely covered in the media." The focus of public concerns is also on 'illegal' immigration, again echoing media coverage of migration, despite the fact that the vast majority of migration to the UK is legal through family reunification or student visas (Blinder and Allen, 2016). Therefore, migrants are consistently criminalised by the media and, in turn, the public.

While there has been a vast array of literature on the linguistic tactics of the media, much less has been written about the visual tactics of the media. I will now turn to this. Firstly, I will explain why images are important in shaping representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media. Secondly, I will discuss the limited research that has been conducted on media images, focusing both on the content of the images and the audience responses to the images. Finally, I will evaluate the usefulness of this research and explore the gaps in the literature that my thesis will aim to close.

2.4 The importance of the visual

Before exploring the literature on media images of refugees and asylum seekers that is already available, it is important for me to establish why images are important. As John Berger argues, images are powerful information tools. In his 1972 book *Ways of Seeing* Berger begins by arguing that "seeing comes before words" (p7). With the exception of those born blind, Berger notes that we look and recognise people, objects and surroundings before we can speak.

Images continue to be important throughout our lives with Pink (2013: p1) stating that "images are indeed part of how we experience, learn and know as well as how we communicate and represent knowledge." Often, as Johnson (2011) argues, images are able to explain things in a way that language cannot, hence the well-known phrase *'a picture is worth a thousand words.'* In the first instance, it is the image, rather than words, that will catch the attention of an audience and later on it is the image, and not the words, that will remain in the audience's mind (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016). Wilmott (2017: p70) cites psychological studies that have found humans "recall 80% of what we see, but only 30% of what we read and 10% of what we hear." Furthermore, images are also able to connect to emotions more than words or statistics (Prøitz, 2018). The technological advances of the internet and the creation of social media has also led to a proliferation of images with four billion images being shared online every day (Prøitz, 2018: p549). Therefore, the consumption of images has become a daily practice for many people. Through this literature we can see that images are important because of their ability to quickly catch the audience's attention and remain in the audience's memory as well as connecting to the emotions of the audience more easily than language. Furthermore, in the digital age images have become more and more prevalent.

2.5 The visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the media

I will explore the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in two ways. Firstly, I will explore the image itself or the content of the image. Here I will be discussing what the image shows, looking at how the intersecting features of an image come together to create a particular representation of refugees and asylum seekers that makes sense to the British newspaper audience. Secondly, I will explore the audience of the images. As I have argued earlier, audiences are not just passive recipients of images. Instead, they actively interpret the images based on their previous knowledge and experiences. Therefore, it is not enough to just explore what the image shows but also how it is interpreted. I will now take each of these in turn, beginning by exploring the literature that looks at the content of the images of refugees and asylum seekers before turning to the literature that explores the audience of images of refugees and asylum seekers.

I will argue that this literature is useful as a starting point because it shows that the visual representations of refugees and asylums seekers is not a one size fits all category. Instead, these representations differ depending on who the refugee is and the circumstances of the photograph. This is also emphasised through audience responses to these images with different audiences responding to the same image in different ways, thus showing that they are active participants in the visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers. While these findings are useful, I will argue that the literature is limited in scope and does not

provide us with a well-rounded understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the British newspaper media.

In terms of the image itself, I argue that previous research focuses on a small number of images of particular groups of refugees from specific time periods, predominantly during times of 'crisis'. Therefore, we cannot gain a fuller understanding of how the media uses images to visually other refugees and asylum seekers on a daily basis or how the types of othering the media uses depends on the intersectional socio-demographics of the refugees and asylum seekers and the context in which they are photographed in. Furthermore, there is very little research on how media audiences read and interpret these images, despite a consensus that there is an important connection between the media and public opinion formation. I will explain these gaps further, after exploring the findings of the previous literature.

2.5.1. The image itself

To structure the exploration of the image itself, I will use Chouliaraki and Stolic's (2017) five visual typologies: visibility as empathy, visibility as threat, visibility as biological life, visibility as hospitality and visibility as self-reflexivity. Using these visual typologies, I will show how, by looking at intersecting features of the image, we can explore the different representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media.

Visibility as empathy

Although research into images of refugees and asylum seekers in the media is relatively new and limited, there is a wealth of literature on images of Alan Kurdi (Figure 2). This is because the Kurdi photographs were shown as a turning point in the imagery of refugees and asylum seekers. Mortensen et al argue that these photographs gained iconic status defined as

> Images… often credited with the ability to mobilise public opinion and influence political decision-making processes, due in no small part to their perceived emotional appeal and symbolical force (2017: p71).

3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis

Figure 2: Alan Kurdi, by Nilüfer Demir (2015). Available: http://100photos.time.com/photos/nilufer-demir-alan-kurdi

For Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) the Alan Kurdi photographs are a clear example of the visibility as empathy type, which they describe as privileging "intimate snapshots of individuals or couples, such as a crying child, a mother with her baby or a rescue worker in action." (p1168). The Alan Kurdi photographs fit here as they show an individual refugee, identifiable as a young child in Western clothing, lying passively on a Turkish beach which is used by tourists to relax and enjoy their holidays.

The focus on empathy rather than sympathy here shows the proximity between Alan Kurdi and the Western media and audience. As Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity concept argues, when refugees and asylum seekers are kept at a distance, we can feel pity towards them (see visibility as biological life) but when they are shown in proximity to 'us' in the West, this pity diminishes and is replaced by fear and suspicion (see visibility as threat). However, the Kurdi photographs problematises this (Szörényi: 2018). As Mortensen and Trenz (2016: p354), put it "'there' and 'here' collide in the images of Alan Kurdi."

> The photographs of Kurdi did not produce new information about the refugee crisis as such. What made the photographs so powerful were their ability to shift the epistemic terrain of the migration discourse from numbers and statistics to an identifiable human with a face, a body, and a life story (Adler-Nissen et al, 2019: p2)

Adler-Nissen et al's (2019) point here is important. The media, the public and politicians in the West had been aware of the Syrian refugee 'crisis' long before the photograph of Alan

Kurdi came to their attention and long after the photograph stopped being published and shared. However, as Bhambra (2017: p395) argues, the idea of a crisis is generally understood by the media and politicians as "the crisis *facing Europe,"* with the attention focused on the threat to European citizens and nations rather than the threat to those refugees and asylum seekers fleeing their countries. During the period of the Alan Kurdi photograph, this dominant narrative shifted, and the European media and politicians began to discuss the refugee crisis as a humanitarian tragedy (Mortensen et al, 2017). So, we have to ask, what is it about the photographs of Alan Kurdi that created this empathetic response? And why, when the Alan Kurdi photographs showed refugees in proximity to us, did we feel empathy instead of fear?

First and foremost, as the quote above by Adler-Nissen et al (2019) finds, the fact Alan Kurdi is shown as an individual, alone apart from the rescue worker, means that the audience of the photographs can connect to him. Lenette and Miskovic (2018: p116) argue that "focusing on one person allows viewers to connect at an interpersonal level, which can yield a bigger impact." This is particularly true when the individual is shown in distress. As Bleiker et al (2013: p408) argue "the photograph of an individual person in distress in any given disaster is more effective than accounts of the millions at risk or dying from that situation." This distress can be shown through clear negative emotions such as sadness, pain or despair (Bleiker et al, 2013). When an audience see photographs that clearly show these emotions, they can begin to feel like they understand how the subjects of the photographs are feeling. Meanwhile, Batziou (2011) argues that connection can be emphasised through the use of eye contact and close-up shots. In the case of Kurdi, while he does not show visible emotion and there is no eye contact, distress is clearly registered through his death and his position at the forefront of the shot means that we can see him and connect to him.

If we look at who Alan Kurdi is, we can see immediately that his young age is important for the visibility as empathy type. This is because, as Ticktin (2017: p577) argues "there is perhaps no more essential image of innocence than that of a child." Kurdi is not the only time that a child has been used as the emblem for a crisis. For example, in Australia it was the story of a 12-month-old baby known as Asha that led to protests about asylum seeker rights to medication and hospital treatment (Tonkiss, 2020), and Mortensen et al (2017: p80) found that newspaper stories featuring Alan Kurdi often also referenced "Nick Ut's 1972 'Napalm Girl' photograph taken during the Vietnam war, documenting a naked, severely burned nine-year old girl, Kim Phuc, running from a napalm attack." Furthermore, as Ticktin (2017) argues children are often used by NGOs to encourage donations to a specific cause. The innocence of the child relates back to their lack of agency in decision-making and their vulnerability in the hands of adults.

Research from both Höijer (2004) and Sirriyeh (2018) also argue that elderly people are seen as innocent and deserving of empathy. Again, this relates to their lack of agency through their frailty. Furthermore, Ticktin (2017) finds that the innocence of the child often extends to those around them, particularly to the maternal parent with innocence often being shown through images of mothers and children. This same extension of innocence, on the other hand, is often not given to fathers. Therefore, there is a gendered dimension to media representations of adult refugees. Indeed, in Wilmott's (2017) sample of photographs of asylum seekers in UK broadsheet newspapers, 88.24% of photographs of asylum-seeking women contained children, compared to 40.68% of photographs of asylum-seeking men. In political frameworks around refugees and refugee rights such as the UNHCR, women are often represented as an exceptional group who are particularly vulnerable and require special protection (Fiddian-Qasimyeh, 2014). Their exceptional position is often highlighted in relation to their stereotypical role as mothers. Often, as Enloe (1991: cited in Fiddian-Qasimyeh, 2014) argues, women are not represented as a group by themselves but are instead represented as 'womenandchildren'. Therefore, the media and political institutions represent women in the same way, as innocent and vulnerable carers. Furthermore, this focus on innocent mothers is because, as Ticktin (2017: p582) finds, "women are seen as without agency, docile, and in need of rescue" (see also Ehmer, 2017's research on US media depictions of Burmese refugees). As Ticktin (2017) continues, "men can rarely qualify as such" (p582). Indeed, in 2006 the United Nations set up a particular category based on these stereotypes: 'women-and-girls-at-risk." (Fiddian-Qasimyeh, 2014: p405).

However, while age is a crucial factor here, empathy towards the child is also racialised. Referring to the work on bell hooks, Ticktin (2017: p580) argues that "black children in the United States, particularly black boys [are] never allowed to be children." They lack access to this period of innocence and are less likely to receive an empathetic response. El-Enany argues this same point when exploring the Alan Kurdi photographs

> The images of black African bodies washed up on the shores of Europe's Mediterranean beaches last spring did not prompt an equivalent outpouring of compassion and charitable action (2016: p14).

While age is a factor in the visibility as empathy type, El-Enany (2016) argues that Alan Kurdi's light skin and western dress emphasised the connection between him and the White western media and audience. Although Alan Kurdi was a Muslim, the western media was able to ignore this because he was not wearing any visible markers of Islam. Indeed, Sirriyeh (2018) found that the western media used Alan Kurdi's clothes to emphasise his innocence. Therefore, the media humanised Kurdi unlike the bearded Muslim man or the veiled Muslim woman whose coded Muslimness "inhibit their humanisation" (El-Enany, 2016: p14).

While distance is reduced through the photographs of Alan Kurdi, this proximity is not viewed as threatening because of the passivity of the child.

> It is difficult to imagine a refugee less threatening than Alan Kurdi, and perhaps telling that the refugee the world most cares about is one who is already dead (Szörényi, 2018: p160)

It is, as Lenette and Miskovic (2018) argue, rare to see images of dead bodies in the media thus making the Alan Kurdi images even more salient. Indeed, Mortensen et al (2017) found that western newspapers often felt that they had to defend their decisions to publish the photographs of the dead child. Alan Kurdi's passivity is also shown in contrast to the activity of the rescue worker who is shown throughout the collection of photos approaching Kurdi, picking him up and taking him away. Therefore, we can still feel pity, and even empathy, for the refugee who is in proximity to us as long as they are shown as passive and lacking agency – in this case through death.

For Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017), there are positive and negative outcomes of the visibility as empathy frame in the Alan Kurdi photographs. On the one hand, empathetic photographs challenge those in the West to take responsibility for the suffering of those seeking asylum. The Alan Kurdi photographs demonstrated the failure of the West to protect Kurdi and, as the audience readings will show, this led to the media, public and politicians agreeing that the West should do more to help Syrian refugees. However, on the other hand, as Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017: p1168) argue "child imagery is held accountable for infantilising refugees; for depicting them predominantly as distressed, clueless and powerless." Furthermore, as Ticktin (2017: p577) argues, using children as the emblem of innocence, as those that need help and protection, "can also create a distinction between worthy and unworthy victims in these same events." Those who do not match these depictions of the worthy refugee (i.e., the individual passive child) are seen instead as unworthy, as not needing protection themselves but needing protecting from. This can include children themselves who problematise ideas of passivity and innocence, for example, through being child soldiers. In these cases, the language used to describe them often shifts from 'child' to 'youth' or 'teen' (Ticktin, 2017: p580). Predominantly though, these unworthy refugees and asylum seekers are adults, and adult men in particular. Meanwhile, White western audiences also view themselves as "empathetic saviors" (Papailias, 2019: p1062) to the worthy or genuine refugees. We will see this worthy/unworthy dichotomy in the visibility as biological life type, and even more so in the visibility as threat type.

Visibility as biological life

While visibility as empathy is based on individualism, visibility as biological life is focused on an unfortunate mass (Boltanski, 1999).

> Images that depict a 'mass of unfortunates' on fragile dinghies or in refugee camps situate refugees within a visual regime of biological life – a field that reduces their life to corporeal existence and the needs of the body. (Chouliaraki, and Stolic, 2017: p1167).

Here, we can see that this is in direct contrast to the individual story of Alan Kurdi. Instead of seeing these refugees and asylum seekers as individual humans with their own stories and complex experiences of migration, massification means that these refugees and asylum seekers are dehumanised through anonymity (Lenette and Miskovic, 2018). They are simply shown as a large group of bodies in a vulnerable position. As Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017: p1168) explain, the news photograph in this typology "simply registers the facts of their [the refugees'] existence and offers minimal context for their suffering." This minimal context also strips these refugees and asylum seekers of any claim to human rights (Wilmott, 2017). Therefore, the empathy towards the individual refugee shifts to sympathy towards the large group of asylum seekers which as we have already seen is important for the politics of pity. The western media and audience acknowledge that these unfortunate others are in a vulnerable position while also dismissing their responsibility to help them and the West's role in their suffering.

While the fragility of the boats that Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) describe above might be shown by some to represent the visibility of biological life typology, I argue in the following section that these boats often actually represent the visibility of threat typology. This is because, regardless of their fragility, the boats represent agency and proximity.

Visibility as threat

Visibility as biological life moves towards visibility as threat when the large group of refugees and asylum seekers move towards the West. There is a consensus that this is the group most commonly portrayed in the Western media (Batziou, 2011; Bleiker et al, 2013; Wilmott, 2017). Indeed, as Adler-Nissen et al (2019: p18) argued, during the period of the Alan Kurdi photograph, "there were plenty of images of refugees trying to board overfilled trains and filling the streets that acted as 'counter-images' to 'Kurdi'." Here, in contrast to the previous two typologies, these refugees and asylum seekers are shown as having agency, through their active behaviour of travelling.

As the distance between the refugee or asylum seeker and the audience is reduced and their agency is increased, there is also a change in who they are. As Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017: p1169) argue "instrumental in the mobilisation of fear is the shift from imageries of the

child towards… young men with dark skin who appear to trespass ‘our’ own space.” Not only does age play a factor in the visibility as threat type, but this threat is also gendered and racialised. Indeed, Mortensen et al (2017: p83) found that the western media and audience who critiqued the focus on Alan Kurdi, argued that “refugees are primarily young men, not children, as the photographs would lead us to believe.” Furthermore, some media outlets and members of the general public began to blame Kurdi’s father for his death with claims that he himself was a smuggler (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016). Through this accusation, western governments were able to justify more stringent border controls and shift the blame for Kurdi’s, and other refugees and asylum seekers’, deaths away from themselves and towards these ‘dangerous’ men of colour (Sirriyeh, 2018).

The contrast in the media reporting of innocent child and threatening man came to prominence when the shift from empathy back to threat occurred just three months after the Kurdi photographs came to light. This media shift was centred on two events in Europe. In “November 2015 terrorist attacks took place in Paris and a Syrian passport was found at the scene. A few weeks later, on New Year’s Eve, a number of women were sexually assaulted in a public square in Cologne in Germany. In both cases it was alleged that people who entered Europe in the refugee flows were among the perpetrators” (Sirriyeh, 2018: p58).

The starkness of this contrast can be shown in a cartoon that appeared in the controversial French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo during this time. The cartoon, based on the sexual assaults in Germany, showed two men chasing women with the caption “What would the little Aylan have grown up to be? A groper in Germany.” In the corner of the cartoon is a smaller drawing of Kurdi’s body on the beach to remind the audience of the iconic photograph. While it is important to take this image with a pinch of salt given Charlie Hebdo’s reputation for being outrageous, as Sirriyeh (2018: p61) argues “on the cusp of adulthood, refugee young people lose their protective cloak of child ‘vulnerability’” and become viewed as a threat. This is particularly true for males. Through this cartoon, the passive child’s innocence is problematised through his gender.

Scheibelhofer (2017: p100) found that Austrian politicians and media used “notions of dangerously foreign masculinity” to justify restrictive border controls. This followed a softening of the borders in the aftermath of the death of 71 asylum seekers found in the back of a vehicle on an Austrian highway in 2015. Here, again, in a similar vein to the Kurdi photographs, passivity through death allowed empathy towards refugees and asylum seekers. Meanwhile, a media shift towards active and dangerous masculinity was needed to justify the hardening of borders. Furthermore, this threat was also racialised with a focus on dark-skinned Muslim men and the security and cultural dangers associated with this group,

including the threat to women with Austrian politicians and media reporting extensively on the New Year's Eve assaults in Cologne. Therefore, the western media and government use the innocence of women to emphasise the danger of men of colour. Indeed, in Austria the focus was not only on the threat to 'our' women but also to 'their' women, echoing Spivak's (1988) notion of saving brown women from brown men that was introduced by white colonisers during the height of the European empires.

Similarly, race and religion played a key role in the negative media and political representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the Czech Republic and Hungary during the same period (Tyler, 2018). In this case, Tyler (2018) found that, the Muslimness of the refugees and asylum seekers was used to justify the separation of these groups from the Czech public through detention and deportation, maintaining distance regardless of physical proximity. The British media and politicians also use this focus on dangerous dark-skinned men coming into proximity with the West to problematise issues of migration. Indeed, as I have already noted, it was a stereotypical image (Figure 1) of a large number of young, Middle Eastern men entering Europe that was controversially used by Nigel Farage's UKIP to campaign for Britain's exit from the EU. (Durrheim et al, 2018). As Maneri (2021: p16) argues "the more the pictures lean towards a narrative of invasion, fear, and danger… the more skin darkens." As we can see from the Breaking Point photograph, UKIP use a large number of men of colour to represent the supposed threat of mass migration as a consequence of EU membership. Massification, as Bleiker et al (2013) state, often leads to anonymity where we are unable to see the facial features of the asylum seekers. While in the visibility as biological life type this means that we cannot connect to them, so we pity them from a distance, in the visibility as threat type this lack of connection and anonymity leads to suspicion. Bleiker et al (2013: p404-405) found that 66% of images portrayed asylum seekers in either medium or large groups, while only 6% showed individual asylum seekers and only 2% showed an individual with recognisable facial features.

Similarly, Wilmott's (2017: p73) research into UK broadsheet newspaper photographs found that 63.88% showed Syrian refugees in medium or large groups compared to 13.38% that showed them as individuals. Furthermore, 48.49% were long-distance shots compared to 17.73% close shots (p74). Batziou's (2011) research into Greek and Spanish newspaper photographs of migrants also found that the vast majority of shots were medium or long-distance. Therefore, the camera distance emphasises the anonymisation and subsequent loss of connection through large groups. Furthermore, in 79.26% photographs in Wilmott's (2017: p74) sample, "refugees are not smiling or looking into the camera." Meanwhile, Batziou (2011: p47) found that 86.7% of Greek and 78% of Spanish photographs showed migrants as expressionless. As I have already argued, emotion and eye contact are vital for

connection between the audience and the subject. Therefore, this lack of emotion and eye contact further exacerbates the lack of connection, and the othering of the subjects. For Wilmott, the lack of eye contact is particularly important because it places the western media and audience in a position of power over the subjects:

> In framing the image, the photographer has power over the refugees, a power that is offered to us, the viewers of the image. The refugees are subjected to an unreturnable gaze: We can see them, we can appropriate them, but we can escape their gaze (Wilmott, 2017: p75).

This power dynamic is further emphasised by Maneri (2021) who argues that in the vast majority of instances photographers take photographs of migrants without their permission, often at a distance so the migrant is unaware that they are being seen and pictured.

As Scheibelhofer (2017: p102) argues the media's anonymisation of these 'others' leads to the depiction of "people with individual histories and hopes for a life in safety as a dangerous mass moving towards a seemingly defenceless country." This idea of defencelessness against a dangerous mass, thus, emphasises the government's dominant narrative of the need for strong, restrictive measures (Lenette and Miskovic, 2018). In other words, the humanity of refugees and asylum seekers diminishes when the media shows them in large groups and instead "we see an abstract and dehumanised political problem" (Bleiker et al, 2013: p411).

As Banks (2011) shows it is not always necessary for the media to show men of colour in large groups in order to view them as a threat. Firstly, smaller groups of asylum seekers can also be shown as a threat when they are partly hidden or blurred – "shadowy strangers" (Banks, 2011: p301). This partial obscuration of the bodies leads to suspicion of deviant behaviour because the audience cannot be aware of exactly who these people are or what they are doing. This suspicion of deviant behaviour is then proved through criminal mugshots or scenes of arrest where asylum seekers are photographed as individuals. The proof of criminality is regardless of the fact that in many instances it has not been determined whether the person photographed is actually guilty. "The mug shot verifies our stereotypes, prejudices and anxieties, and is depicted as making visible the very essence of the individual" Banks (2011: p294). Therefore, while obscuration is important for the threat type in the first instance, hyper-visibility is important for it here. Banks' findings are important because they show that while individual photographs generally lead to the visibility as empathy typology, this is not always the case (also discussed in section 6.2.2). It is important, therefore, to understand the context of the photograph as well as how many people are in it.

Context can include objects, other people (non-refugees), locations and visible behaviours. While the proximity of Alan Kurdi was counter-acted by his passivity, as the Breaking Point photograph shows, in the visibility as threat type the issue of proximity is emphasised through media images that show large groups of racialised men actively moving towards the West. Bleiker et al (2013), for example, found that in the majority of Australian newspaper photographs of asylum seekers, the photographs often show large groups travelling on boats. Meanwhile, in a Finnish newspaper, photographs of the 'refugee crisis' most commonly represented refugees as large groups in transit (Martikainen and Sakki, 2021). The western media use the proximity and the agency that these men of colour have to travel towards the West as proof that they are not genuine. For example, discussing the exclusion of men from the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme (SVPRP) created in 2015 in the aftermath of Alan Kurdi's death, Sirriyeh (2018) found that the UK government justified this exclusion by pointing to the men's ability to travel.

> Through completing their journeys to Calais, the 'fit' 'young' men not only evidenced that their suffering was not serious (they had been able to move and had not died), but that they were also at fault. Instead of being passive and therefore innocent, they exerted their agency and took control. (Sirriyeh, 2018: p104-105)

As well as photographing them as actively travelling towards the West, Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) also argue that the media photograph men of colour enacting aggressive behaviours such as rioting. Returning to the gendered representations of threat, Wilmott (2017: p77) found that of the media photographs depicting asylum seekers protesting, being arrested, or being involved in violence, 60% contained only men compared to 6.67% containing only women. Meanwhile, of those showing illegality or travelling, 43.33% contained only men compared to 13.33% containing only women. For Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017: p1169), these "refugee visualities of aggression and violence legitimise civic dispositions of proactive protection." Yet again, the western media and governments are able to use the photographs of aggressive, active men in the visibility as threat typology to justify restrictive border measures.

Further to this threatening behaviour, Banks' (2011: p301) research into news stories about asylum seekers in nine UK newspapers found that "images of police officers, border controls, detention centres and military personnel also feature and may be significant in shaping asylum as an issue of security as opposed to an issue of humanity" (see also Batziou, 2011). These particular non-refugees and locations emphasise the illegality of the asylum seekers, who are shown in relation to visible indicators of crime and deviance. This is in contrast to the rescue worker in the Alan Kurdi photograph who is shown as a visible indicator of protection and aid. Furthermore, as Wilmott (2017) adds, these interactions show the otherness of refugees and asylum seekers because they are shown with groups of

authority figures that ‘normal people’ would never interact with. Often, in Wilmott’s (2017) sample, the media show the authority figures at the front of the shot with the asylum seekers behind them. This is significant because the media photographs separate the audience from the asylum seekers, while showing the authority figures as “protecting ‘us’ from ‘them’, thereby re-establishing fear of the ‘Other’” (p76). The idea of asylum seekers being outside the norm is emphasised in Wilmott’s research by the fact that only 3.68% of the sample showed refugees with the general public (p75). The visibility of threat is also emphasised in Martikainen and Sakki’s (2021) sample through objects such as fences and barbed wire, which depict the refugees as threats that need to be stopped and contained at a distance for ‘our’ protection.

Furthermore, Banks (2011) also finds that the clothing that asylum seekers wear and objects they carry can add to this visibility as threat type. For example, in a photograph of two male asylum seekers, Banks (2011) notes that a designer hooded jacket and an iPod can be shown as indicators of both danger and bogusness. This is because by wearing designer clothing and owning an iPod, the asylum seeker is presumed not to be needy and therefore to be bogus. Meanwhile, the hoodie is, as Banks (2011: p304) notes, “associated with street crime, anti-social behaviour and why such individuals are to be avoided, especially in public places.” Furthermore, the hoodie adds to this obscuration of the facial features which Banks finds is an important indicator of threat. For Banks, this could even lead to suspicion that the asylum seeker stole the iPod. This discussion of clothing will be continued on page 76.

The visibility as threat type is particularly important because, as I stated earlier, it is the most common typology used in western mass media images of refugees and asylum seekers. For Bleiker et al (2013: p412), the repetition of these types of images is powerful because, by constantly bombarding western audiences with photographs of threatening groups of dark-skinned men, the media “bring this fear – created and artificial as it might be – to life.”

Visibility as hospitality and self-reflexivity

While the first three visual typologies focus on the refugees and asylum seekers themselves, the next two visual typologies focus on other groups. Visibility as hospitality focuses on images of pro-refugee movements and protests, predominantly involving European citizens with very few images in this type including refugees or asylum seekers themselves. Visibility as self-reflexivity meanwhile focuses on two non-refugee groups: a) the celebrity saviour (see Section 6.5.2) and b) social media users who recontextualize images of refugees and asylum seekers. This recontextualization became prominent in the immediate aftermath of the Alan Kurdi photographs (Mortensen, 2017).

These visibility as hospitality and visibility as self-reflexivity typologies are less important to my research because, as Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) argue, often refugees and asylum seekers are not included in these photographs. This goes back to who is given voice and whose voice is silenced. Through the visibility as hospitality type, voice is given to pro-refugee demonstrators and through the visibility as self-reflexivity type, voice is given to either celebrities or social media users who have de- and re-contextualized the photographs. In both instances, the refugees are "spoken about, rather than speaking, refugees gain visibility but they are not the ones in control of it" (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017: p1171). As I will show Section 6.5.2 on White saviours, this can be incredibly problematic. With regards to the social media edits, Mortensen (2017: p1151) argues that "the appropriations that decontextualize the Kurdi figure shift attention away from the specific instance of the drowning and the context of the 'refugee crisis' to evoke a general register of emotionality such as solidarity and mourning." By losing the context of the death of Alan Kurdi, the West's responsibility for his death is ignored. While there were some social media remediations that showed western responsibility, by placing Kurdi's body in the centre of the European Union flag for instance, the most popular remediations were those that decontextualized Kurdi by showing him peacefully sleeping in a bed or as an angel with wings.

There are some instances where refugees and asylum seekers are given voice through imagery. For example, Burrell and Hörschelmann's (2019) exploration of the PositiveNegatives animated comic strip showing the lives of three Syrian men from their point of view challenged many of the ideas that the media portray. They show the banality and ordinariness of these men, as well as the extraordinariness of their experience. While this is a great example of a counter-narrative, these counter-narratives are few and far between. They are particularly absent in the mainstream news media, instead shown here in a small independent comic.

By exploring the visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the media using Chouliaraki and Stolic's (2017) visual typologies, we can see that the mainstream western media represent refugees and asylum seekers in different ways depending both on who they are (age, race, gender) and their circumstances (relating to distance and agency). While these representations differ, they are all similar in that the focus is on othering the refugees and asylum seekers.

2.5.2. The audience of images

As I have already suggested, there has been little research looking at the audience responses to media images of refugees and asylum seekers. Despite this limited research, audience readings of the Alan Kurdi photographs have again received a lot of attention. This is unsurprising given the huge public awareness surrounding the photographs. As D'Orazio (2015) argues, at its peak, there were 53,000 tweets per hour discussing the Kurdi story around the world.

Researchers found that the visibility as empathy type was emphasised through both the political and public responses to the Kurdi photograph. With regards to the general public, Prøitz (2018) found that both donations and volunteers to refugee charities increased dramatically in the immediate aftermath of the Alan Kurdi photograph. For Burns (2015: p39) "it is this relationship between viewing and doing – that is the most striking element of the public discourse about the Kurdi image." More generally, the language around migration during this period changed with social media users focusing on 'refugees' rather than 'migrants' in the immediate aftermath of the Kurdi photograph (D'Orazio, 2015). Meanwhile, in a similar vein to the media representations, the public focused on Kurdi as an individual refugee child with a name and a back story (Rogers, 2015) and the UK public used the Kurdi images to urge the government to do more to help Syrian refugees (Vis, 2015).

As a consequence of the media and public pressure, western politicians pledged to welcome Syrian refugees (Sirriyeh, 2018). This was true of the British government who introduced the SVPRP. However, as I have already noted, the government's focus was on resettling those deemed most vulnerable, namely women and children with disabilities or in need of medical help. Meanwhile, the government excluded young active men from this scheme. Overall, the actions of politicians to help refugees was also shown to be much less than their initial promises. As Burns (2015: p39) argues "it would seem that the political figures joined in with the wider discussion about the Kurdi photograph, as not to do so appeared politically unacceptable, but that their responses were framed in relation to the public outcry, rather than an accurate reflection of their own shift in attitudes."

As it has already been argued the visibility as empathy type relies on a perceived connection between the subject (the refugee or asylum seeker) and the audience. In the case of Alan Kurdi, this was clearly seen through the *#CouldBeMyChild* hashtag that trended on social media in the immediate aftermath of the photographs (El-Enany, 2016). Using this hashtag, western parents compared their children's lives to Alan Kurdi's death. Papailias (2019:

p1050), for example, found that audiences contrasted Alan Kurdi's dead body to "the pulsing life of their own children asleep in 'warm European beds'." Indeed, as I mentioned earlier, social media remediations picked up on this contrast by recontextualising Alan Kurdi as a sleeping child in bed. Furthermore, Sirriyeh (2018) found that parents posted photographs of their children happily playing on the beach to show what Alan Kurdi's childhood should have been like – he should have been playing on the beach, not dead on the beach. Particular aspects of the image, namely Kurdi's shoes, were also used to represent childhood innocence with Twitter users imagining Kurdi's parents helping him put on his shoes, just as they had done with their own children (Procter and Yamada-Rice, 2015). As well as connecting their own children to Alan Kurdi, many audience responses also focused on their own emotions of witnessing the Kurdi photographs. For example, social media users talk about crying when seeing the photographs (Sirriyeh, 2018). Another response was for the public to show themselves as actively doing something to help refugees (El-Enany, 2016).

These responses are important because, as Mortensen and Trenz (2016: p352) argue, "this follows the common pattern of emotional observers putting more emphasis on their empathetic and immediate reaction than the specificity and implications of the situation depicted." Therefore, the context of the Kurdi photograph became lost in the audience readings as the focus shifted towards the audience's own lives and emotions. For Papailias (2019: p1061), "critics charged that the emphasis on common human vulnerability to pain, suffering, and loss buttresses 'white innocence' about colonial histories, state racism and contemporary geopolitical complicities." In other words, this idea of *#CouldBeMyChild* ignored the structural reasons of why it was not western European children who were forced to flee their countries and take risky sea journeys, and why it was in fact children of colour from previously colonised countries.

Alan Kurdi re-humanised refugees and asylum seekers, as we can see through another popular hashtag *#HumanityWashedAshore* at the time (Papailias, 2019). However, as it has already been shown, this was dependent on Kurdi's body being westernised. As El-Enany (2016) talked about, empathy in the media was reliant on Kurdi wearing western clothing, Mortensen and Trenz (2016) also found a similar notion in social media user's responses to the photographs. As they argue, "several [Reddit] users underscore the "nearness" of the situation, which might, for instance, be constructed by the fact that the toddler was not being dressed in any "eccentric" or "exotic" way, but rather like western (in this case Australian) children" (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016: p354). The public also compared Kurdi to Polish refugee children during World War 2, again connecting Kurdi to a particularly western example of refugeehood (Vis, 2015).

Furthermore, while the Alan Kurdi photograph received an empathetic response, this was not always the case. Rettburg and Gajjala (2016) found a backlash to the empathy which, emphasised through the social media hashtag #RefugeesNOTWelcome, focused on the idea that Syrian refugees were primarily adult men. This again shows that only some refugees are shown as deserving empathy and protection, while others (namely men of colour) are shown as dangerous and need protecting from.

Other than the Alan Kurdi photographs, there has been limited research exploring audience readings of media photographs of refugees and asylum seekers. Both Olesen (2019) and Tyler (2018) looked at responses to individual photographs. Olesen's (2019) research focused on a photograph in Danish newspapers which depicts a young Middle Eastern refugee girl and a White Danish policeman sitting down and playing together on a road in Denmark. While the photographs of Kurdi were generally met with public sympathy, Olesen (2019) found that this photograph was met with starkly contrasting viewpoints. While some social media users praised the policeman for playing with the child, others viewed him as irresponsible. Meanwhile, Tyler (2018) explored audience comments on a photograph in the Daily Mail of a refugee child being 'inked' by police in the Czech Republic, in a tactic reminiscent of the Nazi branding of Jewish prisoners in concentration camps during World War Two. While some readers reacted with outrage, Tyler (2018) found that many of the comments justified the branding of the refugee child, even arguing that more should be done to brand them. Some of these comments focused on a dehumanisation of refugees where comparisons to animals who are branded by farmers were used to justify the branding. The key difference between these two images and the Kurdi image is that the children have more agency through being alive. Therefore, this shows that passivity is important for the visibility as empathy trope. When this passivity is diminished, the empathy towards the refugee is problematised.

Höijer's (2004) research gives a more comprehensive analysis of audience readings of media images of refugees and asylum seekers. Her research explores how media audiences in Sweden and Norway read television footage of human suffering. Höijer (2004) found that generally audiences agree with the producer's preferred readings of refugees and asylum seekers. While both children and the elderly are shown sympathy, middle-aged men are seen as unworthy of compassion. They are expected to be fighting against the enemy instead of seeking refuge. She also found that the audience member's socio-demographics alter their readings of the footage: "women react with compassion more often than men, and elderly people much more often than younger people" (p519). Furthermore, while Swedish citizens accepted the television footage as depicting reality for Kosovo-Albanian refugees,

Serbian migrants argued that this footage had been staged for propaganda. Höijer's (2004) research highlights the importance of talking to people from different socio-demographics and with different experiences.

2.6 The gap

Through this literature review, I have shown that the current research in this field is useful for beginning to understand that refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in different ways and that these variations are based on who the refugee or asylum seeker is and the circumstances in which they are photographed. Furthermore, Höijer's (2004) research, in particular, shows that the audiences actively interpret photographs of refugees and asylum seekers, using their own knowledge and experience of the subject to create an understanding of the photographs. While this literature is therefore a useful starting point, I argue that it is limited in scope and unable to provide us with a well-rounded understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in the British newspaper media. I will now explore this gap in more detail and show how this thesis will address the gap.

As I argue above the literature is useful to an extent, however the scope is limited. This is true both of the literature on the image itself and also the literature on the audience of the images. In terms of the image itself, the focus of the literature is either on a particular group of refugees and asylum seekers e.g., Alan Kurdi (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016; Adler-Nissen et al, 2019, and others) or asylum-seeking men (Banks 2011 and Scheibelhofer, 2017). Otherwise, the focus is on a particular event or time-period e.g., the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017) and the days following the Kurdi image (Wilmott, 2017) or during periods of policy changes in Greece and Spain (Batziou, 2011) and during the lead-up to the elections in Australia (Bleiker et al, 2013). In each case, we only gain a snapshot of the visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the mainstream media, usually during significant periods and times of 'crisis', leading to an incomplete picture.

With regards to the audience of the image, while the media literature shows an important connection between media output and public opinion formation, this is very rarely explored in terms of media images of refugees and asylum seekers. The exception to this is the audience readings of the Alan Kurdi photographs. This literature showed an outpouring of sympathy and a demand for Western governments to help Syrian refugees like Kurdi. Indeed, it was public and media pressure that led to state policies such as the SVPRP in the UK. One particular example of research into audience responses is Höijer's (2004) work on 'human suffering' which focuses both on audience responses to violent news generally and the Kosovo War in particular. Höijer's (2004) work is useful because it shows that audience

responses differ depending on who the refugee is with adult men treated with less sympathy than all other types of refugees. Therefore, while there is a gap in the literature in terms of audience readings, Höijer's (2004) research shows that this is a significant field of exploration which will give us a well-rounded picture of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the media and public consciousness.

My thesis will widen the scope of the existing literature significantly both in terms of the image itself and the audience of the image. Firstly, while the current literature on the image itself only gives us snapshots of the visual othering of refugees and asylum seekers based on very specific events at times where issues of migration and asylum are more salient, my thesis will focus on a broad three-year period to give a wider overview of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the everyday media context. I will achieve this through conducting a content visual data analysis exploring the most common visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in British newspapers followed by a semiological visual data analysis exploring what these common visual representations mean in the current British context. I will use an intersectional analysis in this approach, by exploring how these visual representations differ depending on the age, race and gender of the refugees and asylum seekers as well as the context in which they are photographed. Secondly, I will explore how British newspaper audiences interpret these common visual representations, opening the door to understanding how audiences actively read and understand images of refugees and asylum seekers. I will achieve this through conducting interviews with British newspaper readers. I will explain these methods in more detail in chapter 4.

2.7 Conclusions

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the literature exploring the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media. I have shown that media images are important because of their public opinion formation and policy formation functions. The literature focusing specifically on media images of refugees and asylum seekers shows that different groups of refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in different ways and that this is dependent on both who the refugee or asylum seeker is and the circumstances of the photograph. It also shows that media audiences play an active role in interpreting these images. However, I argue that this literature is also limited due to its small scope, only providing us with snapshots of these representations rather than a well-rounded intersectional understanding. I have shown that I will address this limitation through providing an overview of the different ways in which refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered over a three-year period and how audiences read these images.

In the next chapter I will discuss the concepts that drive this thesis. I will explore my two key concepts of othering and intersectionality, defining both of these concepts and explaining how they are important for this research. I will also explore two sub-concepts that are important for understanding the othering concept – postcolonialism and the gaze – and how these two sub-concepts are important for understanding the type of othering that we will see throughout this research.

Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I provided an overview of the literature exploring the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media. I identified the gaps in the literature that I aim to close in this thesis: namely that we are unable to get a full understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the British media because of the limited scope of previous research. In the following two chapters (the conceptual framework and methods), I will explain how I have conducted my research to address these gaps. In this chapter I am going to explain my conceptual framework by introducing and justifying the key concepts that I will use for my research.

The first major concept for my research is othering. I will begin by explaining where the concept of othering comes from and why it is important for my topic. I will then move on to talk specifically about how postcolonial and decolonial theories can help us to understand the history behind the othering of refugees and asylum seekers. The second major concept for my research is intersectionality. I will explain that by understanding intersectionality we can see how different groups are othered in different ways. Finally, because my focus is on images, I will also bring in the concept of the gaze and in particular the western gaze.

3.2 Othering

As I have shown in the literature review, both the western media and politicians use an 'us' and 'them' rhetoric as part of their anti-immigrant narrative. Through this othering of refugees and asylum seekers as distinctly different from the western populations, the media and politicians are able to justify the restrictive border measures to protect 'us' from 'them'. Therefore, when thinking about the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media, it is important to understand these representations as instances of othering. To understand othering, I will first discuss the origins of othering in philosophy. I will then discuss how the concept of othering has been brought into the social sciences to explain social inequalities. I will then focus specifically on the othering that is important to my thesis – the othering of people from the non-Western world who, as I have discussed in the previous section, make up the vast majority of refugees and asylum seekers. During this section I will bring in postcolonial and decolonial theories to show that we should understand the othering of refugees and asylum seekers in the twenty-first century media as part of a longer othering process that was used to justify colonialism in the period of the European empires.

Othering first appeared in the field of philosophy through the work of Hegel (1807/1977) who argued that all human beings have a self-consciousness. This self-consciousness means

that in order to understand ourselves, we must understand ourselves in connection with, and in comparison to, other people. Power is important in Hegel's work. He argues that it is those in powerful positions in society that are able to view themselves as superior to others who they view as inferior. For Hegel, and for those using Hegel's othering concept, it is this superior/inferior dichotomy that leads to practices of domination and submission throughout society.

Othering has become an important concept in the wider social sciences through the works of prominent scholars such as Stuart Hall, Stanley Cohen and Jean Baudrillard. In his work on *The Spectacle of the 'Other',* Hall (1997) argues that othering is an important device used by those in power to 'fix' meaningful representations on to the other.

> We should really write, **white**/*black,* **men/***women,* **masculine/***feminine,* **upper class/***lower class,* **British/***alien* to capture this power dimension in discourse (Hall, 1997: p235: emphasis in original).

These otherings come to be seen as the preferred meanings and are repeatedly use to 'fix' the powerless groups in their position in society. Thus, people are reduced and fixed to specific categories based on their socio-demographics and depending on whether a person's socio-demographics matches those of the powerful or powerless group will determine whether they are accepted or excluded from 'normal' society. For Baudrillard (1994) this creation of preferred meanings has become increasingly important in a postmodern world. As Baudrillard argues we now live in a 'hyperreal' world, in which we are constantly bombarded with information, particularly through the media, that we can only access representations of reality, rather than reality itself.

> The media and the official *news service* are only there to maintain the illusion of an actuality, of the reality of the stakes, of the objectivity of facts (Baudrillard, 1994: p38: emphasis in original).

Therefore, while powerful institutions such as the media represent otherness as being based on natural differences, as part of reality, actually it is based on who has the power to decide who belongs and who is othered (Hall, 1997). Indeed, in a similar vein to Hegel's philosophical argument, Baudrillard (1994) argues that there is a need for the 'other' to act as an opposition in order to justify the 'reality' of the powerful group.

Hall (1997), exploring the racial othering in popular culture, therefore argues that it is the people in positions of power and powerful institutions such as the media that have the ability to 'fix' meanings upon the less powerful people. Thus, as Hall (1997: p239) argues, the racial othering of Black people by the White western powers was repeated throughout the three

periods where the West came into contact with Black people: during the transatlantic slave trade, during European colonization of Africa and during the migration of colonised people towards the West post-World War 2. While White western powers used these preferred meanings to justify slavery and colonisation during the first two periods, they continued to use the same preferred readings to justify strict border controls and policies against colonised people trying to live in the West. For Hall (1997: p250), these preferred readings of Black people continue today through the representations of "the 'mugger', the 'drug-baron', 'the yardie', the 'gansta-rap singer'," being used by predominantly White institutions such as the police to justify violence against these groups. Meanwhile, museums continue to produce preferred meanings about the Black 'savages' who were colonised by the White 'explorers' which are represented as evidence of the reality of the past (Baudrillard, 1994: p8).

Cohen (2002) also shows this privileged othering in action through the case of the Mods and Rocker youth movements who were consistently othered by the media and police as violent and deviant 'folk devils' in the 1960s which Cohen saw as a continuation of othering young working-class boys that already existed throughout history. This othering, for Cohen (2002: p1), leads to a moral panic where "a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests." These moral panics have real detrimental effects on those groups who are othered with the media and police using the panic to justify extreme social control over these groups such as increased police surveillance of such groups and harsher punishments with law enforcers moving from local to national police, and even the Home Office playing a role. This extreme social control then led to further othering of these groups again justifying stringent measures, leading to a cycle of media and police othering and a self-fulfilling prophecy for the Mods and Rockers. While Cohen focuses on the police and media othering of working-class boys, he argues that these same methods of authoritative institutions creating folk devils and moral panics can be applied to other scenarios with powerless and marginalised groups including refugees.

This concept of othering has therefore become an important way of understanding and challenging relationships in society from Karl Marx's (1867/1965) work on class inequalities to Simone De Beauvoir's (1949) work on gender inequalities. For social scientists, therefore, by understanding othering as a process of power relationships, we can challenge these fixed readings of those who are represented by the powerful as others. For our purposes, it is the othering of people from other nations that are important to understand. Indeed, a number of scholars exploring western media representations of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants have used othering as a conceptual framework to drive their research. I will now explore this field of research in more detail.

3.2.1 Media othering of refugees and asylum seekers

Othering has been used as a conceptual framework to explore the media representations of refugees and asylum seekers by a number of scholars across various countries including Australia (Hoenig, 2009), Germany and Portugal (Himmel and Baptista, 2020), France and Bulgaria (Kamenova, 2014), New Zealand (Greenbank, 2014), Britain (Bailey and Harindranath, 2005) and Ireland (Haynes et al, 2006).

As Haynes et al (2006) and other scholars argue, the media other refugees and asylum seekers as a large, homogenous mass that are distinctly different to the national citizens. Through this othering process, the media both demonise the refugees and asylum seekers while also affirming the superiority of the national citizens. Furthermore, scholars show the media othering as based on the race and religion of the refugees and asylum seekers with racialised Muslim refugees and asylum seekers particularly prone to media othering (Hoenig, 2009; Himmel and Baptista, 2020). As Himmel and Baptista (2020: p184), exploring racialised othering in the German media argue, “this discourse frames Germany as not being Muslim, or Islam as not being German, even though Muslim people reside in the country.” In other words, the media not only other refugees and asylum seekers, but also German citizens who are Muslim.

Media othering that demonises refugees and asylum seekers is based on representing these groups as economic, security, cultural and health threats (Kamenova et al, 2014). Furthermore, Hoenig’s (2009) research that explores media representations of lip sewing, a form of protest involving stitching together human lips, in Australian detention centres finds that the Australian media used this protest tactic to other refugees and asylum seekers as barbaric. Meanwhile, on most occasions, the media actually ignore the barbarity of the Australian government who are placing the refugees and asylum seekers in horrific conditions in the first place. In more sympathetic news stories about refugees and asylum seekers, the media still other these groups. This time instead of seeing them as a threat, refugees and asylum seekers are othered as either exotic spectacles or child-like victims (Greenbank, 2014).

Scholars drawing on the othering conceptual framework find that the media also other refugees and asylum seekers through silencing them, with the vast majority of media stories about refugees and asylum seekers not including the voices of these groups (Hoenig, 2009). Even when the media do quote refugees and asylum seekers, they use so-called expert voices such as politicians, lawyers, medical experts (Hoenig, 2009) and aid workers (Greenbank, 2014) to back up their claims. As Hoenig (2009) explains, by doing this, the

media are diminishing the credibility of the refugee voices by arguing that they need to be backed up by western people in positions of power.

By othering refugees and asylum seekers, the media also affirm the supposed superiority of the White national citizens who are represented as distinctly different and better than the refugees and asylum seekers. For example, in the media stories of lip sewing, Hoenig (2009: p5) argues that "the Daily Telegraph story of rescue constructs the reader as a "good Australian" repelled by the "barbarism" of the lip sewing and horrified by the asylum seekers' abuse of children and therefore supportive of the Minister's attempt to save them." In contrast, Hoenig (2009) argues that in stories that do criticise the Australian government for their treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, the media still work to re-affirm the inherent goodness of the white Australians, and thus their superiority, by showing the Australian public as compassionate and morally conscious.

This media othering, as Bailey and Harindranath (2005) argue, is used to justify and protect the concept of national sovereignty and the nation-state during a period of globalization. Focusing on news coverage of asylum seekers on BBC and Channel Four, Bailey and Harindranath (2005) argue that the British media other asylum seekers as 'illegal' and 'bogus' and that this othering is used to justify national borders. Furthermore, they argue that the media othering "seems to follow the government agenda rather than challenging it" (Bailey and Harindranath, 2005: p280). Therefore, as I have argued in the literature review, the media and the government work collaboratively to other refugees and asylum seekers and produce the anti-immigrant narrative that is used to justify strict border controls.

It is worth noting that, in a small number of cases, both Haynes et al (2006) and Himmel and Baptista (2020) found instances of the media challenging the dominant othering of refugees and asylum seekers and humanising these groups. However, as Haynes et al (2006), explains these humanising stories are limited and therefore are not enough to challenge the dominant othering of refugees and asylum seekers in the media.

In a similar way to the literature review, I find that the research that explores the media othering of refugees and asylum seekers focuses on media language, with media images largely ignored from these discussions. Furthermore, while the scholars discuss the media representations of refugees and asylum seekers in terms of racialised othering, they do not extend on where this racialised othering comes from or how it interacts with other forms of othering. For my thesis, I will also explore racialised othering by focusing on the dichotomy of the notion of the 'superior' British media, politicians and audience and the 'inferior'

refugees and asylum seekers predominantly from the Middle East and Africa that, I argue, shape the visual othering of these refugees and asylum seekers in the British media. However, I argue that to understand the othering of these groups, we need to understand the history of the Western othering of people from the Middle East and Africa.

I will now do this through exploring the work of prominent scholars in the fields of postcolonialism and decolonialism who argue that racist othering during the period of the European empires can help us to understand the treatment of, and experiences of, the refugees and asylum seekers from former colonial countries[3]. Following this, in section 3.3 I will argue that to fully understand the media othering of refugees and asylum seekers, we need to use an intersectional analysis which focuses not only on racialised othering, but also how it intersects with gendered and aged othering.

3.2.2 The colonial history of othering

I argue that the othering rhetoric used by the European empires to justify the colonisation of countries racialised as not White continues to be used by the British media today to produce the anti-immigration narrative that justifies the British and European government's brutally restrictive border controls. To make this argument, I will explore the works of key postcolonial and decolonial scholars and how their work is critical for my research.

Postcolonial and decolonial scholars have slightly different origins and aims. Postcolonial scholars have their origins in the Middle East and Africa, while decolonial scholars have their origins in Latin America. Furthermore, postcolonial scholars focus on making visible the persistence of colonialism in today's world, while decolonial scholars focus on the actions of reversing colonialism and re-establishing the histories, values, beliefs and livelihoods of those communities who have been colonised. I will mostly focus on the work of postcolonial scholars because my research focuses on the continuation of the European empire's othering rhetoric and how this is used by the British media to produce the anti-immigrant narrative that is targeted primarily against refugees from the Middle East and Africa. Having said this, much of the decolonialist arguments are inter-related with postcolonialism. Indeed, as Bhambra (2014: p119) states, "both emerge out of political developments contesting the colonial world order established by European empires." Therefore, I will also draw on the works of decolonial scholars through the works of Fanon and Quijano.

The historical othering of people from colonised countries during the period of the European empires is well-documented among postcolonial scholars. For example, in *The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives,* Spivak (1985) draws on three texts written during the period of British empire in India to show how British imperialists who were part of the East India Company othered Indian natives in order to justify the colonisation of India.

Meanwhile Said (1978/2003) explores how scholars continued this othering of colonised people through the creation of the school of Orientalism. Furthermore, Hall (1997) notes how ideas around superiority and inferiority were used to justify the slave trade. What is important for my research, and what I have already drawn attention to in my literature review, is that the imperial tactics of othering that were used to justify colonialism during the period the European empires continue to be used by the politicians and the media in former imperial countries today. These politicians and media use the othering tactics both to justify the continuing invasion of countries, primarily in the Middle East, and to justify increasingly restrictive border controls against people from formerly colonised countries. I will now discuss what these othering tactics were and continue to be. Through understanding these tactics, we can see how the current British newspaper media others refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from former colonial countries, in order to continue the anti-immigrant narrative.

First and foremost, in line with Hegel's definition of othering, the focus of postcolonial othering is the West's production of a racial order in which those from majority White, western countries are represented at the top of the racial hierarchy (superior) while those from countries that are racialised as not White and not western are represented at the bottom of the racial hierarchy (inferior) (Mayblin, 2019). In the western psyche, those who are at the bottom of the racialised hierarchy possess traits that make them inferior to the superior West. The West, for example, is represented as modern, enlightened and developed while the East is represented as primal, behind-the-times and developing (Bhabha, 1994). These traits, according to the school of Orientalism that Said (1978/2003) explores, are universal to all people in the 'inferior' countries and they are unchanging. In other words, in western arguments, the traits that made people in colonised countries inferior during the period of empire are the same traits that make their ancestors inferior during the period of postcolonialism.

While the West create the notions of otherness, those who are represented as 'other' are continually silenced (Spivak, 1988). This has been a tactic since the period of colonialism where the West were, and continue to be, viewed as the only experts on the people from colonised countries. During colonialism it was the imperialists that were the experts on the colonised people (Said, 1978/2003). The silencing of these colonised people also worked in tandem with the destruction of traditional systems, laws, beliefs, histories and values of the natives of colonised countries (Spivak, 1988). Meanwhile, the killing of the native people of colonised countries through violence, forced labour and diseases brought over by the imperialists added to this destruction (Quijano, 2007). As I have argued in the literature review, we continue to see the silencing of refugees from former colonial countries. In

modern society, the western 'experts' are celebrities and politicians who are continually quoted in media stories of refugees and are allowed to talk about the refugees as well as on behalf of them.

The persistence of the western racialised hierarchy and the simultaneous silencing of those who are deemed to be at the bottom of the hierarchy has led to the dehumanisation of racialised people. These people are described by those in the West as not quite human, often through zoological terms (Fanon, 1963/2001), natural disaster terms (Philo et al, 2013) or as anonymous numbers through quantification (Sigona, 2017). In the western psyche, as Butler (2006) argues, the bodies of racialised people are not acknowledged as living, and therefore violence that is committed to these bodies is justified as necessary for the protection of the western living bodies – those who are humanised. Butler (2006) finds that the idea of non-lives is used by western powers, particularly the USA, to justify military inventions such as the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the violent abuse of inmates in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. As the literature review earlier finds, the dehumanisation of refugees also leads to violent border restrictions that have deadly consequences.

This othering not only has an effect on the western audience but also on the racialised subjects themselves. Fanon (1952/2008) argues that the constant dehumanisation of colonised people through violence and deprivation by the European empires led to an inferiority complex, where colonised people accepted their inferiority. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/2008) Fanon shows that Black people try to escape this inferiority complex through striving for whiteness. However, in White, western eyes, even if Black people adopt White values, speak how White people speak and marry into White families, they are never quite White enough. For decolonial scholars, it is this superior/inferior dichotomy that was produced by the western powers through colonial othering that needs to be radically challenged and the histories, values and systems of former colonial countries need to be re-established and embraced (Quijano, 2007). As Fanon (1952/2008: p80) argues, "the black man should no longer have to be faced with the dilemma 'whiten or perish,' but must become aware of the possibility of existence."

Taking a postcolonial approach is important both in understanding migration flows (Davies et al, 2021) and the racist treatment of migrants. For the purposes of my research, I have focused on this second point. Postcolonial and decolonial scholars argue that racist othering has played a vital role in ensuring the continuing dominance of the White, western world over the non-White, non-western world. Exploring the colonial history of othering is important for my research because the refugees who are the subjects of the British media images are othered in the same ways that their ancestors were throughout the period of the British, and

European, empires. By drawing on imperial tactics of othering, the media are able to justify both western intervention in the former colonial countries in the Middle East and Africa, while also confirming the need for restrictive border controls to stop people from former colonial countries entering Britain. In this thesis, I will continue to draw on the othering tactics that were described here to show how the British newspaper media visually other the refugees and asylum seekers in my sample.

3.3 Intersectionality

While the western othering of those from different nations is the primary focus when thinking about refugees and asylum seekers, it is important to note that these groups are not all othered in the same way. Indeed, as the current literature on media representations of refugees and asylum seekers that I have discussed in my literature review shows, men of colour are particularly demonised as threatening while women and children are othered as passive and vulnerable. As I have already argued, the current literature is limited by not having both the breadth and depth to enable a well-rounded understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the British newspaper media. Part of my research's strive for well-roundedness includes gaining an understanding of how different refugees and asylum seekers are othered in different ways. Intersectionality is a key concept that I can draw on to achieve this.

Yuval-Davis (2011: p6) defines intersectionality as "a metaphorical term, aimed at evoking images of a road intersection, with an indeterminate or contested number of intersecting roads" where social divisions along gender, race, age, religion amongst others can determine how we see the world and how the world sees us. It is, as Yuval-Davis (2011) contends, necessary to look at all of these social divisions together to determine a person's experience in society.

Intersectional scholars primarily discuss gender and race as the primary social divisions because the concept of intersectionality was created by Black feminists, and in particular the Combahee River Collective established in 1974, as a critique against feminism that initially focused on White, middle-class women's experiences and against the anti-racist movement that initially focused on the male experience. Indeed, Crenshaw (1989) who coined the term 'intersectionality' did so to argue against the absence of a legal apparatus for Black women who are victims of crime. She argued that there was only legal apparatus for gender-based injuries which focused on the privileged White woman or race-based injuries which focused on the privileged man, with Black women excluded. For Crenshaw (1989: p140), "the focus on the most privileged group members marginalizes those who are multiply-burdened and obscures claims that cannot be understood as resulting from discrete sources of

discrimination." Understanding people as having intersectional characteristics, or multiple privileges and multiple burdens, is vital to understanding processes of power and experiences of privilege and discrimination. While the focus has been on understanding the intersections of race and gender, as Yuval-Davis (2006) argues, Black women are not a homogenous group and other intersections need to be considered when discussing them (such as class, for instance).

Women of colour have continued to use an intersectional lens to voice their experiences of oppression. For example, Zakaria's 2021 book *Against White Feminism* argues that mainstream western feminism continues to hold on to assumptions based on White middle-class women's experiences, while ignoring the racial and class privilege attached to them. For Zakaria (2021), there is a division between these White, middle-class, highly educated women who are shown as the 'experts' on feminism, and women who have lived experience of feminism but are not given the voice to speak about it because they are multiply-burdened. This returns to the silencing tactic that I have discussed earlier where there exists a hierarchy of voices – with White, middle-class feminists having the power to speak on behalf of all women. This is an idea that I will return to later on when thinking about White saviours (in section 6.5.2), but for now it shows the importance of taking an intersectional approach. Only focusing on gender leads to a feminism that only benefits a sub-section of the population while a large proportion are side-lined through multiple discriminations including race, migration status and class. For Zakaria (2021), and for many intersectional feminists, White women need to understand their own White privilege and how it influences the feminist agenda and challenge this in order to recentre women of colour's experiences and provide them with the platform for the voices to be heard; a decolonisation of feminism.

Through my research, I extend intersectionality's focus on women of colour, to focus on different groups of refugees and asylum seekers with a variety of intersectional socio-demographics as well as other factors (e.g., the distance/proximity of the refugees and asylum seekers). Because my research is focusing on images of refugees and asylum seekers, the subjects are already marginalised by their 'outsider' status. Korteweg (2017) has used an intersectional approach to problematise immigrant integration policies and laws, arguing that these are based on racialised and gendered assumptions that work to produce categories of people who are othered as not belonging. In my thesis, I will also use an intersectional framework of analysis to do this, but with a focus on the otherness produced by the media. I will be looking at whether the gender, race, and age of those already marginalised by their immigration status affects the ways in which they are visually othered in the British newspaper media. This means that I am also using an intersectional perspective to explore the othering of men of colour (one of the groups that intersectional

feminists argue are privileged). I do this, not to dismiss the argument that intersectionality is important for understanding the experiences of women of colour and indeed I will discuss the othering of women of colour in this research (see section 6.3), but to show that through an intersectional analysis we can see how other groups such as men of colour continue to be oppressed through a postcolonial structure of otherness. Additionally, experiences of different groups of people and their treatment changes throughout contexts, cultures and historical periods (Brah and Phoenix, 2004). Therefore, I will explore if and how the othering of refugees and asylum seekers change over the time period of my research as well as how the context of the photographs changes how these groups are othered.

3.4 The gaze

In my literature review I explained why it is important to look at images in order to fully understand how refugees and asylum seekers are othered in the media. In this section I will introduce a key concept that is important to understanding how images are produced and consumed: the gaze. I will explain what the gaze is, why it is important for my research and how it connects to the intersectional othering of refugees and asylum seekers. Importantly, I will argue that the power of the gaze relies on distance between the western gazers and the racialised 'others' being gazed at.

The concept of the media gaze came to prominence through the work of Laura Mulvey. In her work *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema in Film: Psychology, Society and Ideology,* Mulvey (1975) uses two psychoanalytic concepts, Freud's 'castration complex' and Lacan's 'mirror stage', to describe how female characters in Hollywood films become spectacles for both the male characters and the audience. In basic terms Freud's castration complex argues that a child sees their mother as lacking due to the absence of a phallus. Boys then establish themselves as dominant over the mother while girls view themselves as subordinate through their lack of phallus. This female subordination is reflected in sexual desires with the woman seen as an object of sexual display for the pleasure of the dominant man. Alongside the castration complex, Mulvey (1975) also employs Lacan's 'mirror image' which argues that the first time a child recognises and mis-recognises their own image is important for the constitution of the ego. Mulvey (1975) uses these concepts to describe how the audience of Hollywood films identify with the male lead character in a film because he embodies the audience member's mirror self-image. Meanwhile the female character is objectified and subordinated. In this way we can see that the women in Hollywood films are seen as the inferior others.

The gaze, then, describes a "one-way subjective vision" (Kaplan, 1997: xvi) where the active subjects (the media producers and audiences) are able to look at the passive objects (those

being photographed or filmed), but where the passive objects do not possess the same luxury. In other words, the gaze is part of the power relations associated with othering. While the focus of the gaze has traditionally been on gendered power imbalances, the gaze has also been extended to racial power imbalances. I will now focus on the western gaze and how this is used to represent refugees and asylum seekers, and more broadly those racialised as non-White and non-western.[4]

3.4.1 The western gaze

Again, we can better understand the western gaze that permeates the media photographs of refugees and asylum seekers in the modern-day by looking at the establishment of this gaze during the period of the European empires. Maxwell (1999) argues that during the colonial period, the western gaze was established in two ways: through the production and consumption of photographs of colonised people in their native countries and through live exhibitions where colonised people were brought over to the West to be gazed at by western audiences. The imperialist purpose of colonial photographs and exhibitions was to justify and celebrate the European empire. These western exhibitions dehumanised colonised people by exposing them to the same gaze that had traditionally been held for animals and plants. Treating colonised people in the same ways as animals and plants emphasised their alleged primitiveness. It also justified the colonisation of their native countries through showing the colonised people as uncivilised and dangerous.

> Exhibition managers also exploited time-worn myths about practices such as cannibalism and prostitution, through which the colonized were portrayed as flouting the taboos associated with civilization (Maxwell, 1997: p2).

Similarly, anthropologists working in colonised countries produced ideas of the inferiority of the racialised 'others' compared to White western citizens. In anthropologist photographs, the body itself was used to show their inferiority. As Hall (1997: p249) argues "black people were reduced to the signifiers of their physical difference – thick lips, fuzzy hair, broad face and nose, and so on." Therefore, the colonial photographs and exhibitions worked in much the same way as the othering tactics explored earlier, by reinforcing the racialised hierarchy where those racialised as non-White and non-western were viewed as dangerous, uncivilised and barbaric. Exhibitions were well-attended. For example, 27 million people attended the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924-25 (Maxwell, 1999: p1). They were also supported by powerful people including the Royal Family and members of parliament who were keen to continue the British empire's colonial project. Therefore, the western gaze had an influence over the British and European psyche.

This one-way subjective gaze can clearly be shown in Maxwell's (1999) example of the 'native villages' that were created at the exhibitions:

> The fact that the native villages and the people from the colonies were required to remain stationary while hordes of Britons were hauled past in railway carriages created the impression that the colonies existed solely for Briton's pleasure, that their natural resources and remarkable scenery belonged to the British people by right (Maxwell, 1999: p35).

Here the western audience are given power through their ability to gaze at and objectify the colonised people who in turn have to keep still and silent. The colonised people are there to simply put on a show for the western audience. Meanwhile, the photographs taken by anthropologists were incredibly intrusive with colonised people being forced to strip naked and pose for the camera while averting their eyes (Maxwell, 1999). Indeed, as I have already mentioned in the literature review, the lack of eye contact between the photographed 'others' and the audience represents the power imbalance of the gaze. The audience can look at the 'other' without the 'other' returning the gaze (Batziou, 2011).

The western gaze is also present in photographs of deaths from war or poverty. Sontag (2004: p61) finds that "the more remote and exotic the place, the more likely we are to have full frontal views of the dead and dying." When those that have died are from places that are racialised as non-White and non-western, these people are photographed with their faces showing and the audience are able to see all the gory details. However, when the person that has died is from the West itself, photographers treat them with more dignity, perhaps with their faces turned away or covered up. In other words, yet again, racialised people are objectified through the western gaze, even during their deaths. As Sontag (2004: p62) continues "the ubiquity of those photographs and those horrors, cannot help but nourish belief in the inevitability of tragedy in the benighted or backward – that is, poor – parts of the world." However, as Sontag (2004) also points out this is dependent on whether western countries can be blamed for the deaths. When this is the case, such as the Gulf War in 1991 or the Falklands War in 1982, the government prohibits the media from sharing images of the dead.

Because the power of the gaze is based on it being a one-way process (the audience can gaze at the 'other' without the 'other' returning the gaze), this relies on there being a distance between the gazers and the 'other' being gazed at (Kaplan, 1997). Boltanski's 1999 book *Distant Suffering, Morality, Media and Politics* is relevant here. In this work Boltanski (1999) argues that distance between an unfortunate mass and fortunate spectators is needed for a politics of pity to ensue. In the West people primarily see the suffering other through media and NGOs rather than direct interaction thus creating this distance.

Boltanski (1999) notes three reactions to distant suffering

1. Denunciation where blame is placed upon those accused of causing the suffering

2. Sentiment which places the emphasis on a benefactor that is helping the suffering
3. Aestheticism which focuses on the images and those who have produced and disseminated them

In each case the focus is away from the suffering other who are shown as an unfortunate mass of people, and instead the focus is on the actors that either cause the suffering, help those who are suffering or document the suffering.

Distancing is important because it creates a distinction between 'them' (the unfortunate mass) and 'us' (the fortunate spectators) – a key tactic of othering. The fortunate spectators can pity the unfortunate mass but also feel relieved that they do not belong to them. Furthermore, this distance also means that the vast majority of the time the structural reasons for the unfortunate masses condition are often overlooked. Even in the denunciation reaction the focus is on a clear and obvious cause of suffering, often taking the form of an individual (for example, an evil dictator or a terrorist group), rather than on wider structural issues (for example, the legacies of colonialism or the effects of capitalism). Therefore, western audiences can often ignore their country's role, for example through colonial relations, in the violence caused to the unfortunate mass.

> So far as we feel sympathy, we feel we are not accomplices to what caused the suffering. Our sympathy proclaims or innocence as well as our impotence (Sontag, 2004: p89).

However, when the distance between the fortunate spectator and the unfortunate mass is reduced the pity towards them diminishes. Instead, they become seen a threat – the dangerous others entering our space.

> It is inherent in a politics of pity to deal with suffering from the standpoint of distance since it must rely upon the massification of a collection of unfortunates who are not there in person. For when they come together in person to invade the space of those more fortunate than they and with the desire to mix with them, to live in the same places and to share the same objects, then they no longer appear as unfortunates (Boltanski, 1999: p12).

Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity has been used by scholars to understand the western representations of, and responses to, refugees and asylum seekers, finding distance a key indicator of these representations and responses (for example, see Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017; also discussed in the literature review, section 2.5.1). However, it has also been challenged by Szörényi (2018) who argues that the politics of pity (and indeed even a politics of compassion) can still ensue when refugees are in proximity to the West, but that this is dependent on refugees holding certain characteristics: namely that they are shown as individual passive children. She uses Alan Kurdi, the dead toddler whose body was washed up on a Turkish beach, as the ultimate example of pity despite proximity. This again shows

the importance of taking an intersectional approach to understand how different refugees and asylum seekers are othered in different ways.

We can already see the conditions of the gaze being played out in the media representations of refugees and asylum seekers that I discussed in the literature review. Refugees and asylum seekers (predominantly women and children) who are represented as passive, and kept at a distance from the British audience, are represented as objects of pity. Whereas the refugee and asylum-seeking men who are represented as active and coming into proximity with Europe are represented as dangerous and threatening – a problem that needs to be controlled. In my research, I will compare the western gaze on different groups of refugees and asylum seekers – showing how the gaze changes dependent on who the refugee is and what context they are photographed in. I will also explore the consequences of the western gaze further by gaining an understanding of how British newspaper readers interpret the media images of refugees and asylum seekers in my sample.

3.5 Conclusions

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the key concepts that have shaped my thesis. I have shown that the superior/inferior dichotomy of othering has played an important role in the treatment of racialised people from non-western nations since the periods of empire and the slave trade. I have also explained that this othering continues to be played out today, and my research will show this in the context of the British newspaper media representations of refugees and asylum seekers. Because the focus of my research is on visual representations, I show that the western gaze is the distinct type of othering that I will be focusing on. However, while the othering is racialised because of its focus on refugees and asylum seekers from the Middle East and Africa, I also adopt an intersectional approach by focusing on how racialised othering intersects with aged and gendered othering.

In the next chapter I will discuss the methods that I have used to achieve my research aims. I will argue that a novel three-stage process of content visual data analysis, semiological visual data analysis and interviews has enabled me to gain a well-rounded understanding of the visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media.

4. Methods

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2 I identified the gaps in the current literature that I aimed to resolve through my research. I argued that the small scope of the previous research projects and the lack of inclusion of audience understandings means that we cannot gain a full understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the British newspaper media. In Chapter 3 I identified the conceptual lens that I used to resolve this gap. I argued that intersectional othering with an emphasis on postcolonialism and the western gaze will help gain the full understanding that my research desires. In this chapter I will focus on the methods which I used to carry out my research. I will begin by stating my research questions (RQs) before arguing that a three-stage process of content visual data analysis, semiological visual data analysis and interviews are needed in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the British newspaper media visually other refugees and asylum seekers. Throughout this chapter I demonstrate how the combination of these methods will address the gaps in the literature by providing a more well-rounded understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in the British newspaper media.

4.1.1 My research questions (RQs)

I will now introduce the RQs that I will answer in my thesis. My RQs are guided both through the gaps in the literature and also my conceptual framework. As I argued in the previous chapter, intersectional othering is the key conceptual lens which offers the best opportunity to understand more fully how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the British newspaper media. Therefore, all my RQs focus on othering while RQ2 is specifically about intersectional othering. My RQs are as follows:

RQ1. How are refugees and asylum seekers visually othered in British newspapers?

RQ2. How does the gender, race and age of the refugee and asylum seeker shape their othering?

RQ3. What meanings do audiences attach to different visual otherings of refugees and asylum seekers?

I will shortly explore each of the three-stages of my research method. However, before doing this, I will briefly discuss the ontological and epistemological framework that has guided my research.

4.2 Notes on ontology and epistemology

Before I discuss my three-stage research methodology in more detail, I will briefly discuss the ontological and epistemological position which has guided this research.

As Bryman (2016: p4) argues

> Methods are not simply neutral tools: they are linked with the ways in which social scientists envision the connection between different viewpoints about the nature of social reality and how it should be examined.

In other words, to understand why we choose certain methods in our research, we need to explain how we understand the world and how we make sense of it. In the social sciences there are two broad ontological positions: a foundationalist ontology which argues that there is a reality which exists out there and an anti-foundationalist ontology which argues that actually reality is socially constructed (Furlong and Marsh, 2007). These ontologies then have an impact on what kind of knowledge we can gain about the world (or our epistemological position). Social scientists following the foundationalist ontology argue that we can gain objective facts about causal relationships which exist 'out there' in the world (positivism). Meanwhile, social scientists following the anti-foundationalist ontology, argue that, because there is no 'objective reality', we can only know about the world through people's subjective experiences of it (interpretivism or constructivism) (Furlong and Marsh, 2007).

Generally, the foundational ontology/positivist epistemology is associated with quantitative methods while the anti-foundational ontology/interpretivist epistemology is associated with qualitative methods (Bryman, 2016). Therefore, because of my use of both quantitative and qualitative visual data analysis as well as qualitative interviews, it is even more important for me to explain my ontological and epistemological position. While the first stage of my research involved a content visual data analysis, I argue that I follow an antifoundational ontology and a constructivist epistemology. I follow the constructivist argument that

> reality is socially constructed, but while it is individuals who construct the world and reflect on it, there [*sic*] views are shaped by social, political and cultural processes (Furlong and Marsh: 2007, p190).

Importantly, Furlong and Marsh (2007: p191) continue by arguing that

> We are not claiming that such researchers do not acknowledge that there are tables/mountains/institutions and so on. Rather, they contend that this 'reality' has no

social role/causal power independent of the agent's/group's/society's understanding of it.

It is this argument that guides my research. Crucially, Bevir and Rhodes (2005: p178) cited in Hay (2011: p174) argue that "interpretivism 'does not prescribe a particular methodological toolkit for producing data. Instead, it prescribes a particular way of treating data of any type'." Thus, while I initially use a quantitative method, I sought to understand what the combination of the codes in these images produced through the content visual data analysis mean in the British context and how the British newspaper media construct refugees through a combination of the codes, as well as how newspaper audiences interpret these images through their own experiences and understandings of the world. As I argue in my literature review, the media does not simply select images at random. They select images that can be used to construct certain representations of refugees, often those which follow the preferred readings (Hall, 2001). Furthermore, newspaper readers further interpret these images. Therefore, refugees are constructed twice in this process. My use of quantitative methods is therefore an initial first step in an in-depth process of interpretive analysis.

Importantly, as I acknowledge in more detail below in section 4.6, I also construct the social world, and this affects the way that I understand the images in my sample. As Bryman (2016: p15) argues "there is a double interpretation going on: the researcher is providing an interpretation of others' interpretations." While I try to reduce the amount my interpretation affects the results of this research through using literature to guide me, asking my supervisors to double-code a sample of my images, and through keeping the interviews as unstructured as possible, I will inevitably have some effect on the results of the research.

I will now explore the three-stages of my research method. I will take each of these stages in turn; starting with content visual data analysis, followed by semiological visual data analysis, and finishing with interviews. While I take these as three separate sections I will show throughout how these methods complement each other.

4.3 Content visual data analysis

4.3.1. Why choose content visual data analysis?

Content visual data analysis is the process of "counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined population of images, and then analysing those frequencies." (Rose, 2016: p88). As Rose (2016: p86) argues content analysis is often used to analyse mass media data because of its ability to "address the sheer scale of those media." In other words, content analysis can be used to analyse large samples of data, showing observable

patterns and trends within this data. While this originally focused on analysing language, as Rose (2016) argues, more recently the same reasoning has been provided when analysing images. Furthermore, Lutz and Collins, who produce a content visual data analysis of 594 photographs in the *National Geographic* magazine article argue, content analysis allows

> discovery of patterns that are too subtle to be visible on casual inspection and protection against an unconscious search through the magazine for only those which confirm one's initial sense of what the photos say or do (1993, p89).

In other words, content analysis allows us to gain a more rigorous understanding of what the photographs are showing. By counting the different variables in the photographs, we can come to understand how these variables combine to create particular representations. In this way, content visual data analysis allows me to take an intersectional approach by exploring how representations of refugees and asylum seekers are shaped through the intersecting characteristics in the photographs. Therefore, when thinking about how refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in British newspapers (RQ1) and how these otherings are shaped through gender, age and race (RQ2), content visual data analysis allowed me to start to answer these questions through looking at key patterns and trends in a large sample of photographs. This could then be followed by a semiological visual data analysis, that looked more deeply at what these patterns and trends mean for representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the postcolonial British context (see section 4.3.1). That is to say, content visual data analysis gives us breadth which is then followed by semiological visual data analysis that gives us depth.

To conduct my content visual data analysis, I followed the stages set out by Rose (2016: p88-97):

1. Finding the sample of images
2. Devising categories for coding
3. Piloting the codes
4. Editing the codes based on the pilot study
5. Coding the full sample (at this stage as will be explained below I did also edit codes when it became clear that some needed categories adding, for example)
6. Analysing the results

4.3.2 The Sample

I selected the sample from four newspapers: Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Mirror. I chose these four newspapers because they represent a mix of broadsheet (The Telegraph, The Guardian) and tabloid (Daily Mail, The Mirror) publications and a mix of political positions with the right-leaning Daily Mail and The Telegraph and the more liberal

The Guardian and The Mirror. This ensures that they represent a range of political positions and newspaper type preferences among readers. Each of these newspapers are sold in paper form, can be read online and have social media pages (Twitter and Facebook) that audiences can interact with.

Newspaper	**Twitter followers (As of 24/08/22)**	**Facebook likes (As of 24/08/22)**
Daily Mail	2.7 million	16.5 million
The Guardian	10.6 million	8.4 million
The Telegraph	3.2 million	4.5 million
The Mirror	1.3 million	3.2 million

Table 1: Social media followers as of 24/08/2022

Through their social media pages, newspapers are able to promote their news stories and invite readers to click on to their websites to view the stories in full. We can see through Table 1 that newspapers have a large social media presence with, for example, the Daily Mail having 2.7 million Twitter followers and 16.5 million Facebook likes. In comparison, in December 2021 the Daily Mail, who had the highest paper-copy sales, circulated 902,110 newspapers (Watson, 2022). As Watson (2022) argues "physical paper sales have been falling as consumers increasingly turn to online news outlets." While the sale of paper-copies of these newspapers has declined, as Gabrielatos and Baker (2008: p9) argue, "increasing online availability of newspapers potentially extends the influence described above to young people (aged 16-24), who tend to prefer the internet over newspapers and television as their source of news." Indeed, Watson (2022) finds that the most common way to read newspapers is now through smartphones. Because of the large number of people interacting with and accessing newspapers online, I used the online version of each of the four newspapers to access my sample of photographs.

I chose the time period of three years between January 2018 and December 2020 for my sample. At the time of analysis this was the most recent three-year period meaning that the photographs studied were the most common visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the current period. Furthermore, during this period there have been ongoing refugee flows with the number of refugees and asylum seekers steadily rising from 29.4 million in 2018 to 30.4 million in 2020 (UNHCR, 2022a). In all three of these years, Syria was the country with the highest number of refugees and Turkey was the country hosting the largest number of refugees. This reiterates the point that most people seeking refuge do so in neighbouring countries. In all three years, Germany was the only European country in the top five host countries for refugees. Despite the continued presence of refugees from Syria,

as I have argued earlier, much of the literature has focused on the 2015 'Syrian refugee crisis' (e.g., Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017) and the aftermath of the Alan Kurdi photographs (e.g., Adler-Nissen et al, 2019). Therefore, by choosing this three-year period, I will look at how refugees and asylum seekers are represented during a time when refugee flows are ongoing but the 'crisis' language used by the media, politicians and academics has reduced, adding further insight to the literature which has focused on the Syrian refugee crisis. Furthermore, by using a three-year period I will be able to see which types of refugee and asylum seeker photographs penetrate the daily lives of British newspaper readers instead of simply focusing on 'iconic' images such as the Alan Kurdi photographs. By choosing a three-year period, therefore, I will be able to gain a breadth of photographs focusing on a prolonged period. I will also be able to see if there are any ebbs and flows in the number and type of images used to represent refugees and asylum seekers over time.

For the content visual data analysis stage of my research, I wanted to gain a representative sample of newspaper images that I would be able to make generalisations from regarding how British newspapers visually represent refugees and asylum seekers (Seale, 2018). Therefore, for the content visual data analysis, I undertook probability sampling.

> A probability sample – which is generally regarded as more likely to provide representativeness – is one in which each person in the population has a known (usually equal) chance of being selected. (Seale, 2018: p156).

While Seale (2018) is talking about individual people as data here, I changed 'each person' to 'each image' in the population to understand my sampling process for the content visual data analysis. The sampling technique that I chose was systematic sampling, where every nth number (in my case 10th photograph) is selected from a list (Bryman, 2016). This was because I wanted to ensure that I chose photographs which showed the variation over time and were representative of the whole three-year period. I will now discuss how I went about finding my sample.

Firstly, as Seale (2018: p160) argues, it is important to gain the overall sample of the population you wish to study – or the "sampling frame". In my case, the population was photographs of refugees and asylum seekers in my four newspapers over my three-year period. To find the photographs, I did an initial search of the four newspapers using Nexis. Because the focus of my research is to understand how refugees and asylum seekers are represented through photographs, I chose articles where the headline contained the word 'refugee', 'refugees', 'asylum seeker' or 'asylum seekers'. As previous research shows, the words refugee, asylum seeker and migrant are used interchangeably. Indeed, both politicians and the media have used the terms economic and illegal migrants to delegitimise the genuineness of the claims of people crossing the Mediterranean to seek asylum and to

justify stricter measures against these groups and the humanitarian groups that are trying to help them (Sigona, 2018). Therefore, by excluding 'migrant' from my search I am inevitably missing some of the photographs of refugees and asylum seekers. However, by focusing on 'refugee/s' and 'asylum seeker/s', I am ensuring that I have relevant photographs for my sample, as not all of those described by the newspapers as 'migrants' will be refugees or asylum seekers. Furthermore, my focus is on media representations and so it is important for me to look at who the media represent as refugees and asylum seekers as well as how they represent these groups. Once I found these articles, I then searched for them on the relevant website in order to see the photographs. I saved any photographs which appeared to show one or more refugee/s and/or asylum seeker/s. These photographs made up my initial sample. Any photographs that did not contain one or more of these groups were excluded at this point.[5]

Using this method, I found 3768 photographs (2064 Daily Mail, 1066 The Guardian, 336 The Telegraph and 302 The Mirror). To make the sample size more manageable and ensure that there was time and capacity to do the visual data analysis thoroughly, I selected a 10% sample. Because I wanted to ensure that photographs were chosen that still showed the variation over time and accounted for the discrepancies in sample size for each newspaper, I sampled every 10th photograph in date order using the systematic sampling method that I described earlier. Therefore, my sample for the content visual data analysis was 377 photographs (206 for Daily Mail, 107 for The Guardian, 34 for The Telegraph, 30 for The Mirror).

4.3.3 The Coding Process

For the content visual data analysis, I constructed a coding framework deductively from the literature (Rose, 2016). Previous research, shown in Chapter 2, has already noted some of the key ways that refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in the media. Therefore, it was important to use this research as a starting point for my codes. I will describe this framework in more detail shortly. Following the initial creation of these codes, I selected a random sample of 10 images as a pilot to test them. Following the pilot I edited, deleted, and created relevant codes. This was an important stage of the coding process because, as Rose (2016: p93) argues, it is here that "further codes might suggest themselves from the familiarity you already have with this particular set of images." I selected a second sample of 10 images and repeated the process.

I then used these codes on the full sample of 377 images. Some of the codes had pre-selected categories and I added categories into these codes while going through the coding process e.g., in the 'race' code the category I added 'South Asian' as I coded a photograph

containing South Asian refugees. I left other codes open to write in anything e.g., objects. In the next stage of the coding process, I grouped the codes that were left open into categories as I will explain shortly. I did my initial coding on Microsoft Excel. This enabled me to edit codes during the coding process – an option that is unavailable in other analytical programs. Once I had grouped these codes, I then transferred them onto SPSS for the purposes of analysis.

Codes

Because the focus of RQ1 and RQ2 was to understand how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in British newspapers and how the gender, race and age of the refugee and asylum seeker shape their representation, I formed codes with these questions in mind. As I have already explained, these codes were based on the previous research that I discussed in the literature review.

Who are the refugees?

Because I have a focus on the intersectional and postcolonial othering of refugees and asylum seekers, the first way in which I coded the photographs was by looking at who the refugees and asylum seekers were. I did this by focusing on their age, gender and race as the literature shows these are important factors in the media othering of refugees and asylum seekers.

Age

As the literature review has shown, while children and elderly people are regarded as vulnerable (Höijer, 2004), young and middle-aged adults are treated as more threatening (Sirriyeh, 2018). The photographs were therefore coded to reflect this:

Child; Adult; Elderly; Unclear and combinations of two or more of these categories (e.g., Child & Adult or Child & Adult & Elderly)

Gender

Similarly to the previous code, previous literature found that while women are shown as passive and vulnerable, men are often shown as active, threatening and 'bogus' (Wilmott, 2017). I therefore initially coded photographs through the traditional gender binary: man and woman.[6] However, when coding photographs that included children, I realised that it did not seem to make sense to code them as man or woman so new codes were added to reflect this (boy/girl). Furthermore, when very young children were photographed their gender was not always clear, so I added an 'unclear child' category:

Man; Woman; Boy; Girl; Unclear Child and combinations of two or more of these (e.g. Man & Woman or Man & Woman & Boy & Girl)

Race

Again, the literature has shown light-skinned European-looking refugees and asylum seekers are shown as more innocent and more deserving of being rescued. Meanwhile, those who are not White and western are 'othered' and treated as more threatening (El-Enany, 2016). I initially coded photographs to reflect this binary: light skin versus dark skin. However, during the pilot coding it became obvious that these categories were too subjective, and I expanded these categories to reflect the diversity of the refugees and asylum seekers photographed, leading to the following codes:

White Northern European; Black African; Hispanic; Middle Eastern; South Asian and combinations of two or more of these (e.g. Black African & Middle Eastern or White Northern European, Black African & Middle Eastern)

Because the focus of my research is on intersectionality, I then grouped these three codes together to create an 'AgeGenderRace' code. After the initial coding it was clear that there were very few photographs where refugees and asylum seekers were coded as elderly. This is perhaps not surprising given that by nature of seeking asylum, refugees and asylum seekers will have to travel and many elderly people may not be able to do so. Therefore, at this point, I decided to focus on the adult/child dichotomy. Because the gender group was already split in this way (e.g. man/boy, woman/girl), the codes for gender and race were grouped together to create this new AgeGenderRace code.

How does the photographer choose to take the image?

In this next set of codes, I focused on how the photographer took the image. I did this by looking at the various camera techniques that were used in each of the images. As I argued in my conceptual framework, the western gaze is an important tactic for postcolonial othering based on creating a power imbalance between the western audience and the racialised subject of the photograph (Hall, 1997). Therefore, I used both the findings in the previous refugee literature as well as John Izod's (1991) book *Reading the Screen* to explore whether the western gaze exists in the media photographs.

Group Size

As I have already shown in the literature review, refugees and asylum seekers are treated with compassion when they are shown as individuals (Lenette and Miskovic, 2018), with the exception of mugshots (see Camera Distance below). In contrast, large groups are

dehumanised and often constructed as threatening (Bleiker et al, 2013; Wilmott, 2017). Because of the solid rationale for Bleiker et al's (2013) group sizes, the use of their codes in Wilmott's (2017) research and to see whether the patterns that they have both found is the same for my sample of images, I coded the group size in the same fashion as they have done.

Group Size	**Definition**
Individuals	1 person
Small groups	2-3 people
Medium groups	4-15 people
Large groups	16 or more people

Camera Angle

Izod (1991) explains that camera angles can be an important factor in establishing positions of power. When the audience are shown as looking down at the refugee or asylum seeker, the audience are shown in a position of power over the refugee. Meanwhile, if the refugee or asylum seeker is looking down at the audience, the refugee is shown in a position of power over the audience. To explore whether these ideas of domination and submission exist in my sample of photographs, I coded the camera angle using Izod's (1991) explanation.

Camera Angle	**Definition**
High	"one in which the camera looks down at him" (p57)
Normal	The refugees/asylum seekers are shown at the same height as the audience – neither is looking down at the other.
Low	"places the character apparently above the viewer" (p57), with the refugees/asylum seekers looking down at the camera

Camera Distance

In a similar vein to the group size the literature has shown that, close-up portraits tend to evoke empathy (Batziou, 2011). Meanwhile, the audience lose connection with the refugees

and asylum seekers in the long shots, and the refugees themselves become dehumanised with the audience's focus moving to the other aspects of the image e.g., the location (Izod, 1991; Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). In order to code the photographs of refugees and asylum seekers in British newspapers, I used the seven distances in Izod's (1991) work.

As I mentioned with regards to group size, mugshots are an exception to the rule. While close-up photographs create empathy and connection, mugshots, on the other hand, create a distance between the person in the mugshot and the audience. Instead, the audience view the person in the mugshot as a threat to their society and as distinctly different to them as law-abiding citizens (Lashmar, 2014). A large part of this is because of the lack of emotion in a mugshot (Banks, 2011). As Bleiker et al (2013) argues emotion is important for connection. I will discuss this further below when I introduce the emotions code. However, for now, it is enough to explain why I have separated close-up photographs into close-up mugshots and close-up (excluding mugshots).

Distance	**Description**
Extreme long shot	"subject… takes up a very small part of the frame. The setting dominates the picture" (Izod, 1991: p49)
Long shot	"The camera remains distant, but not so far off… A standing actor fits completely within the frame." (Izod, 1991: p49)
Medium long shot	"The frame line now cuts off a small part of the subject" (Izod, 1991: p49) E.g. feet/ankles cut out of frame.
Medium shot/Mid-shot	"The subject or actor and its setting occupy roughly equal areas… About half the subject is excluded." (Izod, 1991: p53)
Medium close shot	"the subject… now dominates frame space, the setting can still be seen… the lower frame line now passes through the chest of the actor." (Izod, 1991: p53)

Close-up (excluding mugshot)	"The camera stands so close to that actor that it obtains a head-and-shoulders shot… subject now takes almost all the frame space." (Izod, 1991: p55)
Close-up (mugshot)	Follows the same rules as the close-up (excluding mugshot) but following what Finn (2009: p2) calls, "the formal conventions" of the mugshot: "frontal, clear, showing head and shoulders, and, where possible, with no facial expression."
Extreme close-up	"only a part of the face is seen… There is room for nothing else." (Izod, 1991: p55)

Focus and Lighting

As I have already discussed, Banks (2011) found that one of the key ways in which asylum-seeking men are shown to be deviant was through obscuration. If the audience cannot see the refugee or asylum seeker clearly, this creates suspicion towards them – we cannot see them, we cannot see fully who they are or what they are doing, therefore we become apprehensive about them (Banks, 2011). While I did not explore this in the initial coding, when going through the full sample of images I became aware that obscuration was clear in a small number of images, and this was achieved in two ways: through blurring the refugees and asylum seekers and through placing them in darkness. I coded the photographs to reflect these in the following ways:

Focus

Are the refugees in focus?	**Description**
Yes	The refugees are in clear focus
No	The refugees are blurred
Yes & No	If there are multiple refugees, some of these are in focus and others are blurred

Lighting

Are the refugees in darkness/shadow?	Description
Yes	The refugees are in darkness/shadow
No	The refugees are in light
Yes & No	If there are multiple refugees, some of these are in light and some are in darkness/shadow

What is the refugee doing?

Displaying Emotions

Emotions, as Sirriyeh (2018: p21) argues

> are not purely biological, or produced and contained internally within the person's brain and body. Instead, they are social and relational, produced in patterns of relationships that the embodied individual engages in over time in the social world.

In other words, people are socialised to express certain emotions in different circumstances. For those people who are socialised to express the same emotion towards an object, person or event, this can create shared collective emotions (Ahmed, 2014). Politicians, for example, are very aware of the importance of shared emotions. As Sirriyeh (2018) argues politicians often exclaim that they are feeling the same emotions as the general public. For example, Nigel Farage during the Brexit campaign and Donald Trump during his presidential campaign both used emotional narratives of feeling fear and anger towards migrants in order to foster support from communities who were also expressing these emotions (Sirriyeh, 2018). In the same way, shared emotions can also be found between the refugees in the media photographs and the audience looking at the photograph. Indeed, as I have explained in the literature review, images that show refugees displaying visible emotions are important in creating a connection between the refugee and the audience (Bleiker et al, 2013).

Shared emotions, however, are exclusive. As Ahmed (2014) explains in the anti-immigrant narrative, the shared emotions of a community, such as Britain, are directed against an 'other' that is shown as threatening the community. In the cases of Nigel Farage and Donald Trump above, they pitted the White, British and American communities against migrants of colour who were represented as threatening the former group. Simply put, collective emotion is also a form of othering. The 'others' are not shown as displaying the same emotion as the community. Indeed, if we bring mugshots back into the conversation, it is precisely the lack of emotion on the face of the person in the mugshot that means that the audience cannot connect to them (Banks, 2011).

However, audience responses and levels of connection to refugees and asylum seekers who are displaying emotion can differ depending on the type of emotion being displayed. As King (2013) argues, emotions can be split into positive emotions (such as happiness or excitement) and negative emotions (such as sadness or anger). Viewing positive emotions can, in turn, make audiences feel positive while viewing negative emotions can make audiences feel negative. Displaying emotions is inherently gendered with scholars such as Way et al (2014) arguing that in western patriarchal culture displaying emotions is a sign of weakness and femininity. Therefore, men and boys are expected to remain emotionless. Indeed, in the research conducted with adolescent boys, Way et al (2014: p242) quotes one of the participants as saying that it "might be nice to be a girl, then you wouldn't have to be emotionless." So, while displaying emotions is important for connections and the creation of shared communities in the western context, in this same context men are expected to remain emotionless. Furthermore, when men and women do display emotions, these emotions also differ.

> Women are more likely to express happiness, warmth and fear, which helps with social bonding and appears more consistent with the traditional role as primary caregiver, whereas men display more anger, pride and contempt, which are more consistent with a protector and provider role (Dowthwaite, 2018).

Therefore, when I looked at the photographs of refugees in the media, I expected to find gendered differences in this variable. To explore this further, I looked at photographs to see whether there were emotions present and which emotions these were:

Emotion	**Description**
Yes	The refugees show visible emotion
No	The refugees do not show any emotion or we are unable to see their faces so unable to see any emotion
Yes & No	If there are multiple refugees, some of these show emotions and others do not.

The type of emotion was kept as an open category during the initial coding, giving space for me to write any emotions that were visible. I then grouped emotions together on SPSS.

- *Happy/Smiling/Laughing*
- *Sad/Crying*
- *Angry/Shouting*
- *Tired*
- *In Pain/Discomfort*

- *Concentrating*
- *None*

Eye Contact

As Batziou (2011) has argued, again with the exception of mugshots, eye contact leads to greater empathy while lack of eye contact breaks this connection and leads to a power play where the audience can look at the refugees and asylum seekers, without them being able to look back. As I have argued in the conceptual framework it is this power imbalance that is crucial for the western gaze (Maxwell, 1999). I used the following codes in order to explore whether this power dynamic exists in my sample:

Eye contact	**Description**
Eye contact	Looking directly into camera
No eye contact but eyes visible	Able to see subject's eyes but not looking at the camera
Eyes not visible	Eyes either closed, covered, obscured, subject looking down, or only back of person visible.

Combinations of two or more of these were also coded e.g. *eye contact & no eye contact but eyes visible* or *eye contact, no eye contact but eyes visible & eyes not visible.*

Behaviour

As Szörényi (2018) has explained the media represent refugees as innocent when they are photographed as displaying passive behaviours which suggest a lack of agency. However, when refugees show active behaviours, this lack of agency, and therefore the innocence of those behaving, are problematised (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). This is often dependent on what the behaviour is. For example, Boltanski's (1999) research shows that active behaviour which leads to proximity between the West and the refugees and asylum seekers (for example, through them travelling) are more threatening than active behaviours which are kept at a distance (for example, children playing in a camp). Therefore, I coded behaviours firstly as active/passive and secondly as type of behaviour.

Behaviour	Description
Active	The refugees are shown participating in active behaviours e.g. travelling, protesting, playing
Passive	The refugees are shown participating in passive behaviours e.g. sitting, lying down, watching others
Active & Passive	If there are multiple refugees, some of these are showing active behaviours and others are showing passive behaviours
Unclear	It is unclear what behaviours the refugees are undertaking e.g. if the photograph is a close-up of a refugee's face, it is often unclear what behaviour they are participating in.

Similarly, to the emotion codes, I initially left the type of behaviour open so that I could write down all behaviours and then I grouped similar ones together. Overall, I found 49 different behaviours, 34 grouped under active behaviours and 14 grouped under passive behaviours. The final code was 'none' to represent the unclear behaviours.

Who/What/Where – Where are the refugees/asylum seekers photographed, who with and what with?

As well as discussing who the refugees and asylum seekers are, what they are photographed doing and the camera techniques used to capture their image, it is also important to understand what they are photographed with. Unless photographs are taken as close-ups, it is impossible to not look at the context of the photograph and interpret the people in the images based on this context. This includes what clothes the refugees or asylum seekers are photographed wearing, where they are photographed, who (other than refugees or asylum seekers) they are photographed with and what objects are in the photograph with them.

Objects

Everyday objects are often dismissed as unimportant aspects of our lives. However, researchers such as Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020) and Harris et al (2020) have noted how objects carry a symbolic weight. We need to go beyond the object as just a banal thing and see it as a symbol in order to understand how we perceive them. In the literature review, for example, Martikainen and Sakki (2021) argued that objects such as fences and barbed

wire suggested the threat of refugees and asylum seekers while Banks (2011) argued that objects such as iPods suggested their bogusness. To explore the objects in my sample of photographs I initially left the category open-ended, enabling me to write in any objects that were shown. Once this was completed, I then grouped objects together into umbrella codes, based on the symbols that these objects represent in British society. I placed some objects in more than one code if they could be seen to represent more than one of these symbols. For example, I coded tents under the 'precarious life' and the 'containment' code.

Objects	**Description**
Transit	E.g., Luggage, vehicles, boats
Precarious Life	E.g., Tents, blankets/sleeping bags, aid package
Containment	E.g., Barbed wire/fencing/border, tents, official signs
Works/Skills/Achievement	E.g., Sewing machine, apron, medals/trophies/certificates
Play	E.g., Children's toys, musical instruments, football/goalposts
Danger/Threat	E.g., Handcuffs, weapons, fire/smoke
Domesticity	E.g., Furniture, photographs/photoframes, piles of clothes
Identification	E.g., Barcode scanner, lanyards/name badges, papers/documents
Voice	E.g., Microphones/megaphones, protest signs, mobile phone
Education	E.g., Schoolwork, books, stationary
Other	Any other object that does not fit in with any of the other coding groups.

There were also combinations of these codes *e.g. Transit & Precarious Life.*

Clothing

A further object that was coded is the clothing that the refugee or asylum seeker was wearing. In Goffman's (1959/1990: p34) work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,* he argues that the appearance of individuals "function at the time to tell us of the performer's social statuses." Clothing, Goffman (1959/1990) explains, is one of the things that makes up an individual's appearance. It is one of the first things that we notice when we see a person. I coded the refugees and asylum seeker's clothing in several ways. The first of these is whether they were wearing Western or Islamic clothing. El-Enany (2016) argues that part of

the reason for the outpouring of sympathy towards Alan Kurdi was because he was wearing western clothing which evoked a sense of empathy, including the use of the hashtag *#CouldBeMyChild.* As part of the postcolonial othering of racialised people, Islamic clothing is represented as symbolic of otherness and non-belonging (Zakaria, 2017). Abu-Lughod (2002) argues that those who are dressed in Islamic clothing do not receive the same empathetic response as those dressed in Western clothing, and instead they are treated with suspicion and fear, particularly since the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and the 2005 terrorist attacks in London. Furthermore, when photographs show women wearing Islamic clothing, the Western media and political powers often use this to represent the oppression of Muslim women by Muslim men (MacDonald, 2006). As Spivak (1988) shows, this representation has existed since the European empires. Therefore, I firstly coded clothing based on whether it was Western or Islamic.

Western

Islamic

Western & Islamic

Unclear

Further to this, I also coded clothing based on whether it was casual or smart. If, as Goffman (1959/1990) states, clothing can be used to identify an individual's social status then the choice of clothing is important for us to understand how the audience perceives the refugees and asylum seekers photographed. In Western culture, smart clothing is often perceived as a mark of status, success and belonging. As Peluchette et al (2006) and others explain, smart clothing is often desired in the workplace environment and is perceived to give off a good impression. In contrast, casual clothing, although often adopted by many people in everyday life, can sometimes give off the impression of deprivation which can add to the anti-immigrant narrative of asylum seekers being a burden on the welfare system. In the case of refugees and asylum seekers, casual clothing can also symbolise transit as refugees and asylum seekers who are travelling are more likely to be dressed in warm and comfortable attire. Therefore, I initially coded clothing in the casual/smart binary to reflect this. However, when coding the photographs, it became clear that I needed to add further codes to represent other forms of clothing. These were religious dress, which returns back to the Islamic clothing, and uniform (predominantly school uniforms) which also represent belonging.

Casual

Smart

Religious Dress

Uniform

Unclear

Combinations of these groups were also included *e.g., Casual & Smart or Casual, Smart & Religious Dress.*

Hoodie

A particular piece of casual clothing with a negative symbolic weight is the 'hoodie'. Kinney's (2016) book *Hood* starts by simply arguing that "we all wear hoods" (p1). Because of their practicality and comfort, hoodies are a popular clothing choice, and this is particularly relevant for refugees and asylum seekers who, by their nature, might be spending a lot of time outdoors or travelling. However, although it is a universal garment, Kinney finds that the symbolic meaning of a hood can change dependent on the context, and in particular dependent on the person wearing the hood. While some people can just be described as a person wearing a hood, other people are described as a 'hoodie'. As Kinney (2016: p98) argues this is a type of dehumanisation which "conflates the garment and the person wearing it" and sees this person as a danger.

> The "hoodie" is young, male, working class, and/or poor. In the UK, he's often of African or Afro-Caribbean descent, sometimes white or Asian. In the US, he's usually Black, often Latino, and assumed to wear the hoodie for nefarious, antisocial purposes (Kinney, 2016: p98).

Because of the symbolic weight given to the hood, and the findings in previous literature that certain groups of refugees and asylum seekers are often portrayed as threats (namely adult men of colour), it was important to explore this as a specific code. Therefore, as well as the code that distinguishes casually-dressed refugees and asylum seekers from smartly-dressed ones, I separately coded whether the refugees and asylum seekers photographed were hooded:

Yes

No

Yes & No

Unclear

Location

As the previous literature finds, the location that refugees and asylum seekers are photographed in and the people that they are photographed with add to their representation. Wilmott's (2017) research found that asylum seekers are often photographed in locations (e.g., near borders (Bleiker et al, 2015)) and with people (e.g., police and border guards (Batziou, 2011)) who are outside the realm of normal everyday life for western people, adding to their otherness and potential threat. To explore whether these representations of

otherness are present in my sample, I coded the photographs based on their location and whether there were any 'non-refugees' present.

I initially left the location code open so that any location that was shown could be written in. Following this, I grouped locations together in a similar process to the objects code explained earlier. Again, I placed some locations in more than one group e.g., refugee camps were placed in both the 'precarious life' and 'containment' categories.

Location	**Description**
Containment	E.g., border, camp/tent, detention centre
Precarious life	E.g., bombed area, camp/tent, in derelict building
Transit	E.g., border, in vehicle, on boat/in sea
Criminality	E.g., courtroom, detention centre, mugshot (plain background)
Work/Education	E.g., school/college, office, sewing workshop
Domesticity	E.g., bedroom, kitchen, outside house/on driveway/doorstep
Leisure	E.g., bar/restaurant/café, playground, shop/shopping centre
Voice	E.g., conference room/stage, red carpet, TV set
Unclear	E.g., unclear, unclear but outdoors, unclear but indoors
Other	Any locations that did not fit in the above groups

There were also combinations of these codes *e.g. Transit & Precarious Life.*

Non-Refugees

Similarly to the locations category, the non-refugees category was left open so that I could write in any non-refugees that were present. Overall, there were 15 non-refugee categories including an 'unclear' group. The unclear group was important in this category because it was not always clear who was a refugee or asylum seeker and who was not just by looking at images.

Most of the 15 categories had small counts (7 out of the 15 non-refugee categories only had 1 count). Only two categories had more than 5 counts: police/border guard/security = 16 and celebrity = 11. Therefore, the vast majority of photographs contained no other people but as I will explain later in Section 6.5, the non-refugees that were photographed are important in framing the representations of refugees and asylum seekers and therefore it was necessary to keep this code for the analysis stage.

Writing

Obradović-Wochnik and Bird's (2020) visual research into signage along the Balkan Route show the power of writing in controlling the movement of refugees and asylum seekers travelling across Europe. As they argue "maps, flyers, posters, directions, signs… are treated as 'little nothings'… but when considered in relation to the European Union (EU) border governance, can shed light on micropolitics and macrostructures" (Obradovic-Wochnik and Bird, 2020: p42). While writing was not a code in the initial production of the coding framework, it became obvious during the pilot coding that writing can also add to the representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the photographs.

I left the writing code open so that I could add any writing that was shown in the photographs. Following this initial coding, I then grouped the writing. For example, if there were signs in the photographs, anything that was written on the sign was added into the initial code, but during the grouping stage, I then grouped these signs into 'directed protest signs' which were protest signs which directly address a country or organisation e.g. 'EU', 'United Kingdom', 'UN' and 'non-directed signs' which did not directly address a country or organisation and were more generic e.g. 'please help us', 'we want freedom'. Similarly, to the 'non-refugees' code above, the vast majority of photographs did not contain any writing, however, for those photographs where there was writing, this was a central part of the visual representation of the refugees and asylum seekers and so it was necessary to keep this code for the analysis stage.

I also coded photographs using a unique ID number, as well as their newspaper and date so that I could easily identify where each of the photographs came from.

4.3.4 The analysis

The focus of this research, as I have discussed earlier, is to gain a fuller understanding of how refugees and asylum seekers are visually othered in the British newspaper media. Therefore, the first stage of the analysis was to explore which refugees and asylum seekers are most commonly photographed. Using the AgeGenderRace code, I found the ten most common groups of refugees and asylum seekers (see Table 2). At this stage, because my

focus was on the most common representations, I excluded any other photographs of refugees and asylum seekers, reducing the sample from 377 to 252.

Age Gender Race shortened

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Middle Eastern man	69	18.3	18.3	18.3
	Middle Eastern child	38	10.1	10.1	28.4
	Black African man	28	7.4	7.4	35.8
	Middle Eastern man&woman&child	22	5.8	5.8	41.6
	Unclear	21	5.6	5.6	47.2
	Black African woman	18	4.8	4.8	52.0
	Middle Eastern woman	18	4.8	4.8	56.8
	Middle Easten woman&child	15	4.0	4.0	60.7
	Middle Eastern man&child	13	3.4	3.4	64.2
	Black African child	10	2.7	2.7	66.8
	Other	125	33.2	33.2	100.0
	Total	377	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: 10 most common groups of refugees/asylum seekers

Once I reduced the sample to only the most common groups of refugees and asylum seekers, I moved my focus to how each of these groups were represented and the differences between the representations of these groups. Using frequency tables and cross-tabulations on SPSS, I explored each of these groups with reference to the codes listed above. In this way, I was able to see how each group was represented based on the camera techniques of the photographer, what the refugees were photographed doing, where they were photographed and who and what they were photographed with. I was able to explore the differences between these groups and understand how the intersections of age, gender and race affect how refugees and asylum seekers are visually represented in British newspapers.

A key discovery, that I will discuss in more detail in the following chapter, is that while race was important in the initial discussion of who was most commonly photographed (Black African and Middle Eastern over other groups), when discussing the different ways in which the top 10 groups of refugees and asylum seekers were represented, it was gender and age which seemed to make the difference (e.g. Middle Eastern and Black African men were photographed in similar ways, while Middle Eastern men were photographed in different ways to both Middle Eastern women and Middle Eastern families). Race, therefore, is an overarching factor in the othering of refugees and asylum seekers as I have explored in the

conceptual framework chapter. Meanwhile, gender and age are factors that determine the different types of othering that the western media subject racialised refugees and asylum seekers to. Therefore, when choosing the most common representations to explore further in the semiological visual data analysis, I based these on the different gender and age categories and how they were most commonly represented:

- The Criminal Man
- The Muslim Woman
- The Genuine Distant Family

As I discussed earlier, the non-refugee category also proved to be important. Race, yet again, plays a key role here. In line with the work of Spivak (1988) and others discussed in the previous two chapters, the racialised 'other' (the Middle Eastern and Black African refugee) were contrasted with the White, western non-refugee. Therefore, I chose a fourth group of photographs for my semiological visual data analysis:

- The White Saviour versus The White Border

I will now discuss the importance of my semiological visual data analysis and how I undertook it.

4.4 Semiological visual data analysis

4.4.1 Why choose semiological visual data analysis?

While content visual data analysis was a useful starting point in gathering analytical data about my large sample of 377 photographs, as Rose (2016) argues, content analysis can only take us so far in understanding what the visual representations mean in real, everyday life. The results of the content visual data analysis then "need interpreting through an understanding of how the codes in an image connect to the wider context within which the image makes sense" (Rose, 2016: p99). The content visual data analysis could tell us what the most common combinations of codes were, but to understand what these codes mean and the consequences of these codes, I needed to link these to postcolonial British societal representations and understandings. Again, while content analysis can give us breadth, semiology gives us depth.

Semiology is, put simply, "the study of signs" (Rose, 2016: p107). Using semiology, therefore, I can treat each of my variables as signs. Semiology is based on Barthes' (1977) notion of denotive and connotive signs. Denotive signs are based on describing the sign while connotive signs are based on higher level meanings gained from understanding the context of the sign. While my content visual data analysis focused on denotive signs, my semiological visual data analysis focused on connotive signs.

Thinking about the age variable as an example, Dyer (1997) quoted by Rose (2016: p115) argues that when looking at the age of the subject in an image, we should ask “what is the age of the figures in the photograph meant to convey? Innocence? Wisdom? Senility.” These symbols are based on the meanings and interpretations in the society that the image appears – the connotive. For example, with regards to age, as I have already shown in the literature review, the child has been the symbol of innocence since the Victorian era in western societies (Ticktin, 2017). Intersectionality is also important in semiology because, as Rose (2016: p120) argues, “signs work in relations to other signs”. Therefore, when looking at the media images of refugees and asylum seekers in my sample I needed to explore how the variables intersected to create meaning. To do this I will be using a combination of syntagmatic signs, where “signs gain their meaning from the signs that surround them in a still image” (Rose, 2016: p120) and paradigmatic signs where, “signs gain their meaning from a contrast with all other possible signs” (Rose, 2016: p120). Returning to the age example, Ticktin’s (2017) work uses syntagmatic signs when she intersects race and age to show that it is White children who are given the privileged status of the innocent child, while Black children are often not treated as children at all and simply as young adults. Meanwhile, Sirriyeh (2018: p61) uses paradigmatic signs when she argues that adults and those approaching adulthood “lose their protective cloak of child ‘vulnerability’.” Because they are no longer children, they are no longer represented as innocent.

Importantly, those who take a semiological approach focus on the importance of the ideological meanings of photographs with ideology being “those representations that reflect the interests of power” (Rose, 2016: p107). Therefore, we return to the dominant anti-immigrant narrative that has been collectively established by the western media and governments. Returning to my conceptual framework then, the British newspaper images of refugees and asylum seekers in my sample have to be understood in reference to the power relations that produce the postcolonial othering and the western gaze which is dominant in British society. Through connecting these images to current British society and the dominant anti-immigrant narrative that is produced and reiterated by the powerful mainstream media and politicians, I can move my analysis from a descriptive one towards an explanatory one. I will now explain what my semiological visual data analysis looked like in practice.

4.4.2 The sample

The purpose of the content visual data analysis was to gain an overview of the most common visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media. As I will show in the following chapter, the results of the content visual data analysis showed four key representations: the criminal man, the Muslim woman, the genuine distant family, White border versus White saviour. The purpose of the semiological visual data

analysis was to explore in more depth what these representations mean in the current British society in which the newspaper photographs are circulated by the newspapers and seen by the newspaper readers.

Rose (2016) argues that semiologists often choose images that are conceptually interesting with a lack of focus on their representativeness. However, I was able to resolve this limitation through combining the semiological visual data analysis with the previous content visual data analysis. In other words, I ensured that the photographs that I chose to analyse for the semiology stage were based on the four key representations that I note above. Therefore, while my images are conceptually interesting, they are also representative. I chose ten photographs that illustrate the four key representations. I chose each photograph at random based on the necessary qualities that it needed to include. I will now go through each of the four representations and explain how I chose the photographs for my semiological visual data analysis sample.

The criminal man

For the adult men refugees, I found that they were predominantly represented as criminals. The media's criminalisation of adult men was done in two ways. Firstly, they were photographed travelling 'illegally', primarily through boats. Therefore, I included all photographs where the location was 'on boat/in sea' and the age/gender/race was 'Middle Eastern man' or 'Black African man' in my sample. Using a random number generator[7], I chose one photograph from this sample to analyse. Secondly, the criminal adult man was represented through proof of criminality, primarily through mugshots. Therefore, I included all photographs where the camera angle was 'close up mugshot' and the age/gender/race was 'Middle Eastern man' or 'Black African man' in my sample and randomly chose one of these photographs.

The Muslim woman

For the adult women refugees, I found that the vast majority of this group were photographed wearing a combination of Western and Islamic clothing, thus indicating their religion. For this group the most common representation was of passivity. Therefore, I included all photographs which combined 'Middle Eastern woman' or 'Black African woman' and, 'western and Islamic' clothing and 'passive' behaviour and I randomly chose one of these photographs to analyse. One of my key discoveries, as I will discuss in section 6.3.2, was that during the period of time that Shamima Begum returned back into the British media, political and public consciousness, the type of clothing that the Muslim woman was photographed wearing changed from a combination of western and Islamic clothing towards Islamic clothing only. Therefore, I chose to explore this change further and how the change

in clothing changed the overall representation of the Muslim woman. To do this I chose two images based on the sample of photographs which included women in full Islamic dress. The first of these photographs was of Shamima Begum herself. While Begum was not thought of as a refugee, she was photographed in a refugee camp meaning that her photograph became part of my overall sample through the headline 'ISIS bride Shamima Begum's three-week-old baby Jerah dies after 'turning blue' following lung infection at Syrian **refugee** camp' (Brown writing for The Daily Mail, 2019: emphasis my own). This meant that the photograph of Begum was part of my sample. Furthermore, while Begum herself was not thought of as a refugee, my content visual data analysis showed that it was her reappearance back into the British consciousness that led to the change in representation for adult women refugees in my sample during this period. Therefore, I believe that it is important to understand how Begum herself was represented and so I selected this photograph to explore. The second of the photographs was a randomly selected photograph that combined 'Middle Eastern woman' or 'Black African woman' and 'Islamic' clothing so that I could understand how Muslim women who were not Begum were being represented at this time.

The genuine distant family

For children and families which combined adults and children, my content analysis found that these groups were represented as genuine and distant in two ways. Firstly, families were photographed in precarious conditions, and in particular in camps. Therefore, to explore this representation I included all photographs which included the location 'camps' and the age/gender/race groups 'Middle Eastern man&woman&child', 'Middle Eastern woman&child' and 'Middle Eastern man&child' in my sample. I randomly chose one photograph from this sample to analyse. Secondly, children (on their own or only with other children) were photographed with objects that suggested childhood, namely 'play' and/or 'education' objects. Therefore, I included all photographs which included a combination of the 'Middle Eastern child' or 'Black African child' categories and the 'play' or 'education' objects categories in my sample and randomly selected one of these photographs.

White saviour versus White border

As I noted earlier, the first three themes for the semiological visual data analysis were based on the different representations of the gender and age groups. Meanwhile, this final group is based on the racialisation of refugees of asylum seekers as people of colour compared to the whiteness of non-refugees. Therefore, my focus was on the non-refugee category. I found that the two main non-refugees were police/border guard/security and celebrities. So, to explore the 'White saviour', I chose a random photograph from the sample of photographs

where the non-refugee was ‘celebrity’. To explore the ‘White border’ concept, I chose two photographs. Firstly, I randomly selected one photograph from my sample of photographs where the non-refugee was ‘police/border guard/security’. However, as Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020) argue, there does not need to be the physical presence of a border guard for us to see that a space is a border or for an asylum seeker’s movements to be controlled. Therefore, to explore this idea of the ‘White border’ further, I also randomly selected a photograph from a sample of photographs where there were no non-refugees, but the location was coded as ‘border’.

4.4.3 The analysis

Following their selection, I analysed each of the ten photographs semiologically to explore their connotive signs. I achieved this by using relevant literature and sources to explore what the intersectional variables found in each photograph means in the current western and British context. While this is discussed briefly in the content visual data analysis chapter, in the semiological visual data analysis chapter, the discussion is much more in-depth. I continue to focus on postcolonial othering in the semiological visual data analysis through referencing literature that places a colonial lens on the intersecting variables found in the ten photographs.

Once I had analysed each of these photographs semiologically, I then selected five of the photographs for the interviews. These five photographs, as I will discuss below, were used to show interview participants the most common visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in order to gain an understanding of how the participants read and understood these images. I will now discuss the importance of my interviews and how I conducted them.

4.5 Interviews

4.5.1 Why interviews?

Through the visual data analysis, I was able to answer RQ1. How are refugees and asylum seekers visually othered in British newspapers? and RQ2. How does the gender, race and age of the refugee and asylum seeker shape their othering? However, as I have argued in my literature review and through the concept of the western gaze, RQ1 and RQ2 only give us a partial understanding of what the media representations of refugees and asylum seekers mean in the current British context. To gain a fuller understanding, we need to also explore how British newspaper audiences actively read and understand these images. In this section I will show how qualitative interviews with a small sample of fourteen participants were conducted to answer RQ3. What meanings do audiences attach to different visual otherings of refugees and asylum seekers?

Byrne (2018: p219) describes qualitative interviews as “in-depth, loosely or semi-structured interviews… They are often used to encourage an interviewee to talk, perhaps at some length, about a particular issue or range of topics.” As I have already argued, with the exception of the Alan Kurdi photographs, there has been very little research conducted that explores how audiences actively read and understand media images of refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, while quantitative interviews, in which there are a list of set questions with a limited number of possible answers, may be useful “when you already have some idea of what is happening with your sample in relation to the research topic” (Fielding and Thomas, 2011: p247), this is not the case for my research. Instead, because there is very little work done on this subject, I cannot make assumptions about what the audience readings of the images of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper media will be. Therefore, qualitative interviews, where I can be as open-ended as possible are much more useful because, as Fielding and Thomas (2011: p247) argue they “are valuable as strategies for discovery.” While I was able to use a top-down deductive approach for my content visual data analysis based on the literature of visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the media, this was unavailable for audience readings and instead I used a bottom-up inductive approach.

> Open-ended and flexible questions are likely to get a more considered response than closed questions and therefore provide better access to interviewees’ views, interpretations of events, understandings, experiences and opinions (Byrne, 2018: p220).

These are all factors that are important in understanding the audience readings of British newspaper images of refugees and asylum seekers. I wanted to understand not only what participants think of the image but why they think the way they do, how do they come to understand the image, what aspects of the image are seen as important for their understanding of the image and how do different aspects of the image intersect to produce their overall reading of the image. Because this stage of my research is exploratory in nature, I have not focus on providing generalisable data in the same way that I have done for my visual data analysis. Instead, I chose to gain in-depth illustrative data from a small number of interview participants.

> In some circumstances, a representative sample may not be desirable, because the study is aiming at something different. Typically, this is where not much is known about a subject, and the investigation therefore has an exploratory feel to it, or is devoted to the development of novel theories or other types of insight, in which case sampling becomes *purposive.* (Seale, 2018: p166: emphasis in original).

My interviews are a start in addressing the absence of research exploring audience readings of media images of refugees and asylum seekers. However, they are limited to the extent that there are not enough of them to gain generalisability. I can only show how my small

sample of interviewees understood the photographs, but I cannot say that this reflects the understandings of British newspaper readers more generally. This is something that I, and other researchers, can continue to develop further in the future through more large-scale interview projects.

Initially, I chose focus groups as the method for answering RQ3. However, I changed this to one-to-one interviews after a discussion with a colleague who pointed out that we often interact with newspapers alone (i.e., when we read a newspaper article online this is often a solo activity). This relates to the spaces and practices of audiences that Rose (2016: p39-40) discusses. As she argues, audiences might interpret images differently depending on where they are, who they are with, how they are seeing the image, and what else they are doing while seeing the image. With regards to reading the newspaper, while some might choose to discuss newspaper articles with others, audiences predominantly read newspapers, and newspaper images, on their own. Therefore, because the activity of reading the news is a solo one, it made more sense to conduct solo one-to-one interviews to reflect this activity. I will now discuss how I gained my sample of photographs and my sample of newspaper interviewees.

4.5.2. The sample of photographs

For the interview stage of my research, I reduced the sample of ten photographs from the semiological visual data analysis down to five. Using five photographs ensured that the most common representations of refugees and asylum seekers were able to be discussed while also ensuring that the sample was realistic – to ask participants to discuss ten photographs would have been too time-consuming and it may have been put off them off taking part in the research in the first place.

The five photographs were:

1. Genuine, distant families represented by families in a refugee camp (Photo 6)
2. Travelling man and white border were combined and represented by men standing by Calais border sign (Photo 10)
3. White saviour represented by children with celebrity (Photo 8)
4. Proof of criminality man represented by man in mugshot (Photo 2)
5. Muslim woman represented by passive veiled woman by bed (Photo 3).

I showed the photographs to interview participants in the order described above. I did this to help participants ease their way into the discussion of photographs. As the literature review and the visual data analysis findings chapters show, in the western psyche the photographs towards the end of the sample list are deemed as more emotional than the earlier

photographs. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) argue that interviewees can initially feel apprehensive, and it can take some time for them to settle in. To allow time for participants to relax into interviews Leech (2002: p666) states that "you should aways move from the nonthreatening to the threatening." In the case of my photographs, the more emotive photographs are those which are more threatening for respondents, while the less emotive ones were less threatening. If I placed these emotive photographs at the beginning of the interviews, while interview participants were feeling apprehensive, this could be off-putting.

4.5.3 The sample of interviewees

I chose my sample of interview participants from East Birmingham. Birmingham is a diverse city with 42.1% of residents classing themselves as not White (Birmingham City Council, 2011). The largest of these groups are Pakistani (13.5%) and Indian (6%). Furthermore, 22.2% of residents are born overseas. Therefore, we can expect to find participants who have encountered both people of colour and migrants, and others who do not have this experience, giving us a range of different experiences and viewpoints. By focusing on East Birmingham, I was able to gain respondents from an area with a strong majority of White British residents (Sutton Coldfield) and an area with a more diverse population (Erdington). Because my focus was not on gaining a large sample of representative data, there were not enough respondents to compare the two areas. However, I am able to gain perspectives from those living in a predominantly White area and those living in a more racially diverse area. In the future I would like to explore the differences between those participants from Birmingham (a city with a diverse population) to participants from more rural areas with lower diversity.

The sampling technique I used for the interviews is what Seale (2018: p167) calls the 'volunteer sample.' I advertised my research on social media and any newspaper readers in the East Birmingham area who saw the advert and were interested in taking part were able to contact me. I did this through writing posts on Facebook groups that were directed at East Birmingham residents asking them to take part in my research project. By using social media, I was able to contact a large number of people in a short period of time. As Table 1 shows a large number of people interact with the newspapers via their social media channels, although this was not a requirement for participants. Furthermore, as my research took place in the height of the Covid-19 pandemic where many aspects of life moved online, using the online method of social media to gain participants was the most realistic and safe way.

Following the initial social media campaign, I also used snowball sampling – asking interview participants if they could recommend anyone else for the interviews. Snowball sampling, as

Seale (2018), argues are particularly useful when trying to recruit participants from hard-to-access groups. Leighton et al's (2021) research also used the combination of social media and snowball sampling to gain participants for their research into undergraduate nursing student's experiences of learning online. They argued that snowball sampling was particularly useful to gain participants during Covid-19. Because student's learning had moved online, the researchers could not access their sample through educational settings, making them a hard-to-access group. Therefore, recruiting through social media and snowball sampling offered them an alternative access route. This was also true for my respondents. While, previously, I might have been able to access respondents through face-to-face interactions in the East Birmingham area, this was particularly difficult during the Covid-19 pandemic. While initial recruitment through social media gave me ten respondents, through using snowball sampling I was able to gain a further four respondents taking my total up to fourteen. Furthermore, three of the four respondents gained through snowball sampling were in the two highest age groups (51-60 years and 61-70 years). As Croteau and Hoynes (2014) find, younger people are more likely than older people to engage with the media online, including social media. Therefore, older newspaper readers are harder to access by using social media alone.

There is no definitive answer to the question of how many qualitative interviews is enough. Indeed, in the National Centre for Research Method's (NCRM) paper *How Many Qualitative Interviews is Enough?* (Baker and Edwards, 2012), answers varied from 1 to 100, with a consensus among researchers that it depends on the project. Practically, because my research is a three-stage process with interviews being a smaller, exploratory stage, I did not have the capacity and nor was it my aim to produce large-scale data from a large sample of interviews. Instead, the exploratory nature of my research meant that a smaller number of in-depth interviews was more suited to the task of answering RQ3. Many of the research experts who were quoted in Baker and Edward's (2012: p5) project argued that data saturation, where "evidence is so repetitive that there is no need to continue" should be the aim. To a degree, this is what I found in my research. In the final few interviews, I was finding that participants were expressing similar readings of the photographs as those that had been interviewed before them. Therefore, it felt that the data I was gaining was emphasising the key audience readings I had already found, rather than providing different perspectives. This repetition of audience readings is important in itself as it shows their dominance in interpretations of visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK newspaper media.

Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Race
Alison	Female	51-60	White British
Colette	Female	31-40	Other White background
Connor	Male	18-30	White British
Craig	Male	18-30	White British
Dianne	Female	61-70	White British
Ellen	Female	31-40	White English
Grace	Female	51-60	White British
Jasmine	Female	51-60	White and Asian
Martin	Male	61-70	White British
Nadiyah	Female	51-60	Asian Pakistani
Rebecca	Female	31-40	White British
Sandra	Female	51-60	White English
Stacey	Female	31-40	White British
Tanya	Female	31-40	White British

Table 3: Socio-demographics for interview participants

As we can see from Table 3, there were a range of age groups represented by the participants but what is striking is the disproportionate number of White English/British women who chose to participate (8 out of 14). I did alleviate this slightly through the snowball sampling by gaining Jasmine (White and Asian female) and Martin (White British male). However, it is still important to note that the vast majority of my participants were White English/British and women. Therefore, although I argue above that I reached data saturation, this was very much data saturation about the views of a particular sub-section of newspaper readers. Höijer's (2004) research, referenced in the literature review, found that different sub-sections of the population do read media images in different ways. So, while the purpose of the interviews is to be illustrative rather than generalisable, in future research it will be important to explore the views of those who adhere to different socio-demographic groups. Significantly, while intersectionality has been a key aspect of my research in my visual data analysis, I was unable to conduct intersectional analysis on the interview participants. This is something that I would like to address in the future.

Having said that, studying a majority White participant population means that I could explore the western gaze that, as I argued in the conceptual framework, is a dominant form of

postcolonial othering in western societies such as Britain. Through my sample, I am able to see how the western gaze manifests in White British participants' discussions about refugees and asylum seekers who are racialised as people of colour. I am able to explore if the racialised hierarchy (Mayblin, 2019) is present in their readings of the photographs or whether this racialised hierarchy is rejected. What I actually found, as I will discuss in more detail in Section 7.4, is that a colour-blindness existed in the discussions of refugees and asylum seekers where "'race' often is viewed as something that doesn't matter any more" (Garner, 2007: p5). The race of the refugees and asylum seekers was only briefly mentioned in a small number of incidences during my interviews. As I discuss in my findings, this is significant because it ignores the colonial history of the racialised hierarchy that continues to affect the lives of both privileged White people and underprivileged people of colour.

4.5.4 Ethical considerations

It was critically important to ensure that my research was ethical and that there was no risk of harm to either the interview participants or myself. I will now detail the importance of ethics in sociological research and how I ensured that my work adhered to the ethical standards of both my university and the British Sociological Association (BSA).

> A central issue in academic discussion of research ethics is the relationship between the individual and the social world, with consideration being given to how the imposition of the research on individuals (with their consent or otherwise) can be balanced with the benefit of making the world a better place to live in. (Ali and Kelly, 2018: p46).

In other words, as social researchers we have to ensure that no harm comes to our research participants, while also conducting research that can have a positive impact on society. The emphasis on conducting ethical research has become more prevalent in contemporary society, with research ethics committees being set up in the UK to monitor this. For sociologists in the UK, the BSA's 2017 Statement of Ethical Practice offers guidance on how to conduct ethical research and the ethical considerations that must be in place before conducting research. As the BSA argues (2017: p5) "sociologists have a responsibility to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research." Therefore, when conducting social research, it is important that the rights and safety of participants are taken into considerations at all stages. I followed the guidance in the BSA 2017 Statement of Ethical Practice and gained ethical approval from the Aston University Research Ethics Committee prior to conducting my research.

One of the most important ways to ensure that research participants are protected is through informed consent:

> As far as possible participation in sociological research should be based on the freely given informed consent of those studied. This implies a responsibility on the sociologist to explain in appropriate detail, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be distributed and used (BSA, 2017: p5).

Prior to the interview, I e-mailed each participant an information sheet and consent form to complete (see appendices 1 and 2). This information sheet and consent form was approved by the Aston University Research Ethics Committee. The purpose of this was to ensure that participants knew exactly what the research was about, how I was going to conduct it and how I was going to use the data.

Anonymity and confidentiality are also important ethical considerations and as the BSA (2017: p6) statement explains "research participants should understand how far they will be afforded anonymity and confidentiality." Through the information sheet, and at the beginning of the interview, I informed participants that their interview would be recorded and that recordings would be kept on a password-protected computer and would be deleted once the interview had been transcribed and the transcriptions checked for accuracy (point 31 of the BSA 2017 Statement). I informed participants that they could withdraw from the research at any time prior to publication (point 22 of the BSA 2017 Statement) and that their identities would be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms (point 31 of the BSA 2017 Statement). All participants were required to read the information sheet, ask me any questions, and sign the consent form before the interview could begin. I also double-checked participants were happy to be recorded before I started the recording itself.

I conducted all interviews virtually via Zoom or Microsoft Teams (depending on the preference of the participant). Interviews were conducted during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic at a period where face-to-face interviews were unsafe and impractical (Saarijärvi and Bratt, 2021) Therefore, online methods allowed me to conduct my interviews in an environment which was safe both for myself and my participants. As well as the practicality during Covid-19, virtual interviews are also useful for a number of reasons. As Janghorban et al (2014: p1) argue "the online interview has overcome time and financial constraints, geographical dispersion, and physical mobility boundaries, which have adversely affected onsite interviews." A virtual interview is convenient for the participant, reducing both time and cost barriers related to travelling for a face-to-face interview. Furthermore, participants might also feel more comfortable and at ease in their own home and it reduces the risk of harm coming to myself, the researcher.

As Saarijärvi and Bratt (2021: p395) argue, "Zoom is commonly used due to its user friendliness, possibility to share the screen to show visual information, and ability to record the interview." It is for these reasons that I chose Zoom as my main method for conducting

virtual interviews. The screen sharing application was particularly useful as I was able to instantly share the images that I wanted the participants to discuss. Having said this, two of the participants requested to use Microsoft Teams instead and so I accommodated for this. Both of these respondents and myself have sufficient experience using Microsoft Teams so there were no issues with regards to user friendliness. I sent each participate an individual e-mail with a link to access their Zoom or Microsoft Office room for the interview. This meant that nobody else could have access to the link to the interview room. I also password-protected the Zoom rooms with only myself and the participant having the password. This further ensured the privacy and anonymity of the participants.

4.5.5 The interview itself

As well as the information sheet and consent form, I also sent participants an initial questionnaire (see appendix 3) to gauge the demographics of the audience (Table 4) and their relationship with newspapers. Recording these demographics was important for the research as one of the key focuses of this research is on intersectional socio-demographics and how these affect the representation and interpretations of refugees and asylum seekers. While listing these demographics could be seen as reducing the anonymity of the interview participants, because of the large population in East Birmingham, I would argue that it would still be nearly impossible to identify participants based on these demographics.

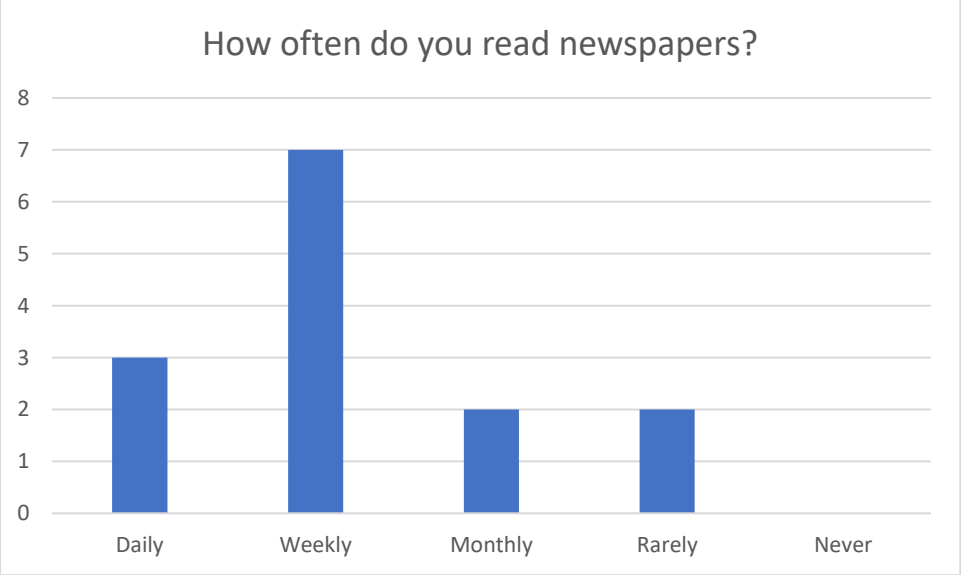

Chart 1: How often do you read newspapers?

Half of the participants said that they read newspapers on a weekly basis. Three said that they read newspapers daily, two said monthly and two said rarely. Therefore, the majority of my participants had regular interaction with the British newspaper media, increasing the

likelihood of them having seen newspaper images of refugees and asylum seekers previously.

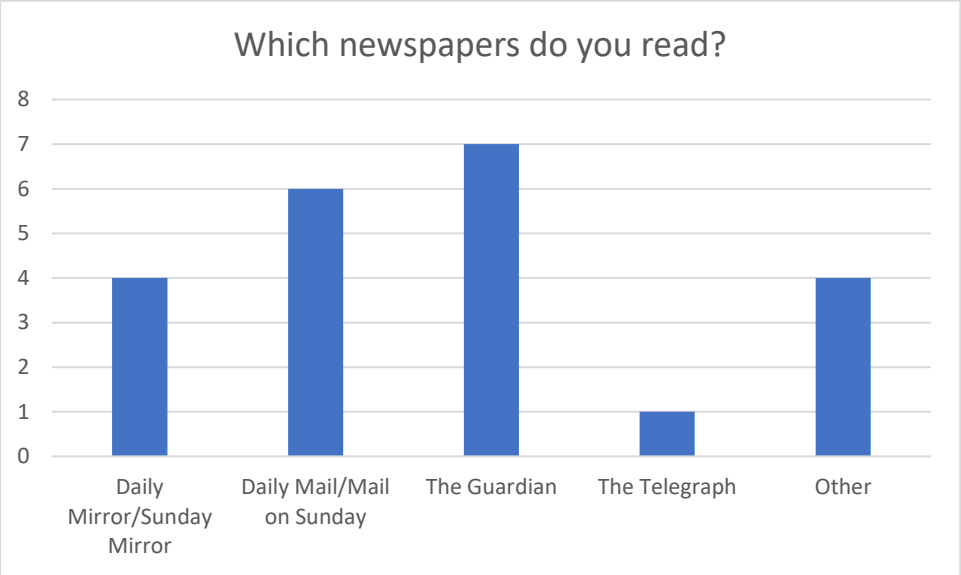

Chart 2: Which newspapers do you read?

The most popular newspapers to read among participants were The Guardian (seven readers) and the Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday (six readers). Therefore, the range of newspaper type (broadsheet/tabloid) and political positions (liberal/right-leaning) were covered by my participants. Four people said that they read newspapers other than those that were on the list. These were: The I (2), The Metro (1) and The Sun (1). Of those participants who chose more than one newspaper, the most common combination was Daily Mirror/Sunday Mirror and The Guardian.

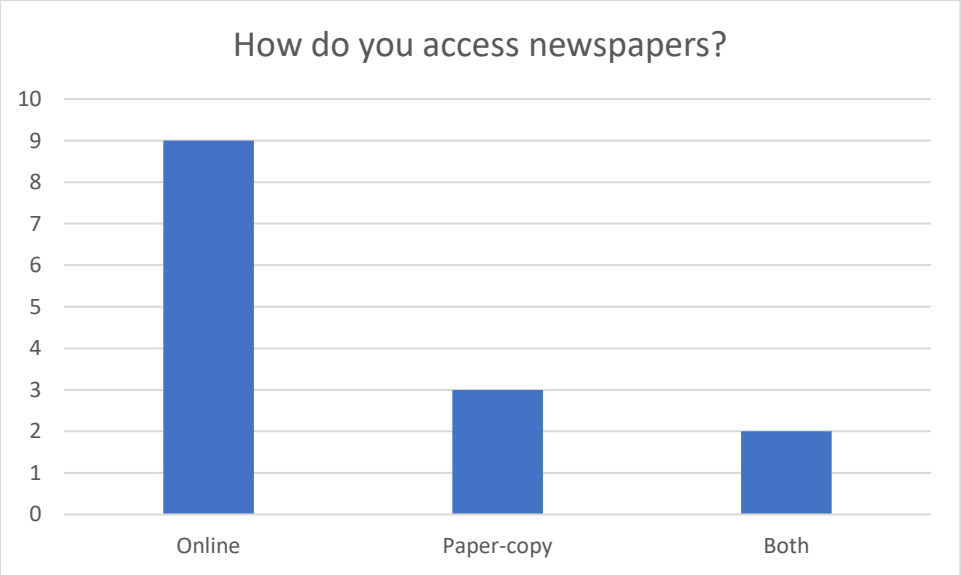

Chart 3: How do you access newspapers?

The large majority of participants accessed newspapers online only (nine out of fourteen) with a further two accessing newspapers both through online and paper copies. Out of the three who access newspapers via the paper copy, two of these were the participants gained through snowball sampling showing that the snowball sampling was successful in gaining participants that might not otherwise have been accessed through online means.

Once I had completed the initial questionnaires, explained the purpose of the research again and answered any questions, the main bulk of the interview (the discussion of the five photographs) could begin. As I have noted earlier, I showed the five photographs in the same order to each of the participants. Apart from this structure, the rest of the interview was relatively unstructured with me asking interviewees to simply talk through each of the photographs (see interview guide in appendix 4).

> Qualitative interviewing tends to be flexible, responding to the direction in which interviewees take the interview and perhaps adjusting the emphases in the research as a result of significant issues emerging in the course of interviews (Bryman, 2016: p467).

As I have already argued my interviews were exploratory in nature, therefore the approach discussed above by Bryman (2016) was important for my research. If participants were unsure about where to start, I gave them some ideas: what do they think the photo shows, how does it make them feel, are there any particular words that come straight to mind when they see the photo?

I then prompted and probed participants based on the answers that they gave. As Fielding and Thomas (2011: p251) argues prompting and probing "is all about encouraging respondents to give an answer and as full a response as the format allows." For example, in my interviews, if participants said that certain words came to mind when looking at the photograph, I asked them to expand on this – why these particular words? Through this method I was able to gain a fuller understanding of what the particular words meant to participants, how they related the words to the photographs and why they choose those particular words over others. Through using a flexible, relatively unstructured interview technique, participants were able to take the conversation in the direction that they felt was important to them. As the literature review argued earlier, audiences of photographs are active agents that give meaning to the images that they are viewing. By using qualitative interviews, I was able to explore these meanings rather than making premature assumptions (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

To conclude the main bulk of the interview, I asked participants whether these photographs were what they expected to see when looking at refugees and asylum seekers in the media. Through this question participants were able to draw all of their discussions about the

separate photographs together as well as giving an insight into what they understand refugees and asylum seekers to be and how they understand the media reporting of refugees and asylum seekers. I then asked participants if they had any final questions and comments, reminded them that they could email me at any time, and thanked them for taking the time to participate.

4.5.6 The coding process and analysis

I saved all the interview records as the pseudonym of the interviewee and sent them to a third-party to transcribe. Once transcriptions were returned, I checked them against the original recording and, when I was satisfied that the transcripts matched the original recordings, I deleted the recordings.

In comparison to the top-down approach of coding prevalent in my content visual data analysis, I used a bottom-up approach when coding the interviews. While I created the codes for the content visual data analysis based on the previous literature, as already mentioned, there is a limited amount of literature on audience readings of visual representations of refugees and asylum seekers. Thus, the interviews were exploratory in nature. Because the focus of the interviews was to gain an understanding of how audiences read the images and the relatively unstructured approach of the interviews allowed participants to take the conversation into the direction that they found most relevant, I conducted a thematic, inductive analysis "where the analysis is located within, and coding and theme development are driven by, the data content" (Braun and Clarke, 2022: p9).

Having said that, because the focus was on the intersectionality of age, gender and race, I already knew that these would be three of the key themes to look at. Therefore, I did not make preconceived predictions about what to look for except that I needed to code for age, gender and race. Instead, as Braun and Clarke (2022) suggest, the first phase of my analysis involved reading through the transcripts several times, familiarising myself with each one and beginning to note similarities and differences. Through this method I came up with key themes and debates. I then coded each of the interview transcripts with these themes in mind (see appendix 5). I analysed each photograph individually before looking at them in comparison to one another. Through this method, I was able to see similarities and differences in the discussions of each photograph more clearly.

I manually identified the relevant themes and codes. Following this, I entered these codes into NVIVO which is a widely used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) (Bryman, 2016) and I coded each of the interview transcripts on this software. NVIVO is a useful tool because it is easier to see which codes are used the most and at which parts of the transcript meaning I was able to quickly see which codes were used the

most for each photograph. As Bryman (2016: p602) argues “the researcher must still interpret the data, code, and then retrieve the data, but the computer takes over the manual labour involved (wielding scissors and pasting small pieces of paper together, for example).” It also made it easier to code sections of texts with multiple codes without this being messy and confusing. Finally, using NVIVO meant that I had a copy of all coded transcripts available on my computer, and rather than having a paper-copy, these transcripts were more secure and backed-up.

One key concern about using NVIVO is that when retrieving coded data, the context in which the code appeared may be lost (Bryman, 2016). To combat this, I over-coded i.e. I did not just code a single word but whole sentences, sometimes whole paragraphs and occasionally my question to the participant, to ensure that the context in which the comments were made were clear. I also had codes for which photograph the participant was discussing so that it was always clear what photograph the comments related to.

Through this thematic, inductive approach I was able to explore how audiences interpreted the images, how their discussions were based on the age, gender and race of the refugees and asylum seekers but also on other factors that they felt were important. This added to the visual data analysis and allowed me to understand, not just how the media represent refugees and asylum seekers through images, but how the audiences understand these images and what meanings they attach to them.

4.6 A note on positionality

As I have discussed, intersectionality is a key concept that I have drawn upon throughout this study. Therefore, I need to reflect on my intersecting characteristics in order to understand my own research process.

> Values intrude in all phases of the research process – from the choice of a research area to the formulation of conclusions. This means that the social researcher never conducts an investigation in a moral vacuum: he or she is influenced by a variety of presuppositions that in turn have implications for the conduct of social research. (Bryman 2016: p141).

From a positivist position subjectivity is something that should be minimised, however as Braun and Clarke (2022) argue, subjectivity in qualitative research is something that should be valued, as long as we are aware of our subjectivities and how they shape our research. This is where reflexivity comes in.

> Reflexivity involves critical self-scrutiny on the part of researchers, who need, at all stages of the research process, to ask themselves about their role in the research… It involves acknowledging that the researcher approaches the research from a

> specific position and that this affects the reflection on the impact of the researcher on the interaction with the interviewee (Byrne, 2018: p224).

Understanding my positionality is important for all stages of the research process. However, it is particularly important for understanding the interview process as this is the part of my research where I am directly coming into contact with participants. To understand my positionality, I need to understand who I am. Firstly, I am a British citizen and therefore I have no experience of seeking asylum. Secondly, I am a White woman which, as I have argued, contrasts with the large majority of the refugees and asylum seekers. Indeed, only 4 out of 377 photographs showed White women refugees or asylum seekers. All four of these photographs are of the same refugee woman who is praised for integrating in the UK and becoming 'Miss Manchester' after fleeing Kosovo as a young child. Thirdly, I have grown up and live in a multicultural city, Birmingham, and have had some contact with refugee communities. Finally, I am a sociology student and I have extensively studied migration and the media as part of my undergraduate and masters degrees as well as during this PhD. All of these things mean that I will interpret the images in a certain way, primarily through the intersectional othering conceptual framework that I have discussed in Chapter 3, and these interpretations may be similar or different to the audience interpretations of the images. Furthermore, this will also position me in a power dynamic to participants as I obtain the role of interviewer/researcher and they obtain the role of interviewee/researched. Having said that, I have consistently used relevant literature to aid my understanding of the British newspaper images of refugees and asylum seekers and I have used a relatively unstructured approach when conducting interviews to allow audiences interpretations to come through.

4.7 Conclusions

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the methods that I have used in my thesis. I have explained that through using a three-stage approach, combining content and semiological visual data analysis with interviews, I am able to understand both how the British newspaper media visually other refugees and asylum seekers and how newspaper audiences interpret these otherings.

Media images are important tools in the othering of refugees and asylum seekers and, as the literature in Chapter 2 has argued, they can impact both political and public feeling toward these groups. Through this process, media images have a real impact on the everyday lives of refugees and asylum seekers. While there is substantive research on the language used in the media to present this group, the number of studies exploring media images are still relatively limited, although they have been growing since the photographs of Alan Kurdi were published in 2015. There is even less research discussing media audience

readings of these photographs. In this thesis project I aim to close this gap through a wide-ranging yet in-depth intersectional analysis of a large sample of photographs from both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers in Britain and audience readings of some of these photographs.

The focus on intersectionality is important. Not all refugees and asylum seekers are presented in the same way. A hierarchy of vulnerability exists, for example, where White children are placed at the top and adult men of colour at the bottom (Sirriyeh, 2018). To understand how gender, age and race affect the representations of refugees and asylum seekers and who is the most commonly photographed refugee and asylum seeker is important because it aids our understanding of the treatment of these groups, not just by the media themselves, but also by policymakers and the public. For example, with the media mostly publishing photographs of Middle Eastern men (Table 2), the group that the West place lowest on their hierarchy of vulnerability, the British government can use this to justify the anti-immigrant rhetoric and the ever-harsher policies towards refugees and asylum seekers.

In the following three chapters I will discuss the findings of my research. Chapter 5 will discuss the findings of the content visual data analysis where I will show the most common representations of refugees and asylum seekers in the British newspaper images. Chapter 6 will expand on what these common representations mean in postcolonial Britain through the semiological visual data analysis. In Chapter 7 I will discuss the findings of the interviews and how newspaper audiences actively read and understand these dominant newspaper images. I will bring the findings of each of these stages together in Chapter 8.

From now on the subjects in the photographs will be defined as ‘refugees’. The terms ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’ are used interchangeably in the media, alongside other terms such as ‘illegal immigrants’ (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008). This interchangeability means that I had to search for both refugee/s and asylum seeker/s for my sample. However, the interchangeability is problematic because these different statuses have a very real impact on the rights of the people they are describing and the public feeling towards them. The term ‘asylum seeker’ in particular has become an extremely loaded term in the western psyche, often associated with threat and illegality, although of course, as we know, there can be no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker (Bailey and Harindranath, 2005). Therefore, while using both the terms ‘refugee/s’ and ‘asylum seeker/s’ was necessary up to this point, when discussing the photographs in the findings, I choose to use just the term ‘refugee/s’.

5. Content Visual Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explained the three-stage methodological process that I have used to address the gaps in the literature. I showed that by using a combination of content and semiological visual data analysis and interviews, we can gain a wide-ranging yet in-depth understanding of the ways in which the British newspaper media visually other refugees and asylum seekers. In this chapter I will focus on the findings of the first stage of this three-stage process: the content visual data analysis. I will begin by exploring who the most common groups of refugees are in the photographs. I will do this through analysing the intersectional characteristics of age, race, and gender. Following this, I will explore how these common groups of refugees are othered in the photographs. I will begin by looking at group size, moving on to camera techniques and then looking at how the refugees are represented through emotion, eye contact, behaviour, and clothing. I will finish by looking at what objects and non-refugees they are photographed with, where they are photographed and what writing or symbols can be seen alongside the refugees in the photographs.

5.2 Which refugees were most commonly photographed?

I began by exploring who the refugees in the photographs were. Because of my focus on intersectionality, I did this by exploring who the most common groups of refugees photographed were in terms of their age, gender and race. Table 4 shows that, by combining age, gender and race, the most common groups of refugees in the photographs were Middle Eastern man (69), Middle Eastern child (38) and Black African man (28). Other common groups were Middle Eastern man, woman and child, unclear, Black African woman, Middle Eastern woman, Middle Eastern woman and child, Middle Eastern man and child and Black African child.

Age Gender Race shortened

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Middle Eastern man	69	18.3	18.3	18.3
	Middle Eastern child	38	10.1	10.1	28.4
	Black African man	28	7.4	7.4	35.8
	Middle Eastern man&woman&child	22	5.8	5.8	41.6
	Unclear	21	5.6	5.6	47.2
	Black African woman	18	4.8	4.8	52.0
	Middle Eastern woman	18	4.8	4.8	56.8
	Middle Easten woman&child	15	4.0	4.0	60.7
	Middle Eastern man&child	13	3.4	3.4	64.2
	Black African child	10	2.7	2.7	66.8
	Other	125	33.2	33.2	100.0
	Total	377	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Age, gender and race combined

In terms of race, therefore, only Middle Eastern and Black African groups are represented in the newspaper photographs. This reflects the fact that the vast majority of people seeking asylum in the world and seeking asylum in Britain are from the Middle East and Africa (Migration Observatory, 2022a). Middle Eastern refugees (175) were much more commonly photographed than Black African refugees (56). This, again, reflects the fact that three out the five most common origin countries of people seeking asylum were in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq and Syria) (Migration Observatory, 2022a).

Interestingly, since 2019, Venezuela has been second on the list of people seeking asylum worldwide (UNHCR, 2022a). Meanwhile, Albania was the fourth most common origin for people seeking asylum in Britain in 2021 (Migration Observatory, 2022a). However, in my sample, only 5 photographs showed South American refugees, while 13 photographs showed White European refugees. The British newspaper media's lack of interest in the Venezuelan refugees could be explained by the fact that almost all Venezuelan refugees either remain in South America or travel to the USA to seek refuge (Lorenzi and Batalova, 2022). This shows the importance of proximity, or potential proximity, of refugees and how this relates to media selection of stories. Because Venezuelan refugees are not travelling towards the UK or Europe, they may not be seen as newsworthy. However, this does not explain the lack of British media interest in Albanian refugees. This could, therefore, reflect the importance of race in producing the anti-immigration narrative with stories of 'bad' migrants consistently focusing on people of colour (Kibria et al, 2014). I will discuss this racialisation by exploring how media representations of the small sample of White European

refugees differ from the dominant representations of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees in Section 5.4. It is important not to overstate this at this stage though because, as I have already argued above, the vast majority of people seeking asylum in the UK are from the Middle East and Africa.

Gender and age are also important factors here. Men were much more likely to be represented than women. 132 photographs in these top ten groups contained at least one man compared to 73 which contained at least one woman. Adults were also much more likely to be photographed than children. 133 photographs contained only adults compared to 48 photographs which contained only children. 50 photographs contained both adults and children. Men and women were only depicted together when there is also a child, or children, in the photograph. This shows that men and women are only photographed together when they are photographed as parents. It is also worth noting that these groups only contained Middle Eastern refugees. Black African refugee groups only depicted either men, women or children and not a combination of two or more of these.

Already, then, we can see that the British newspaper images in my sample correlate with the literature that suggests the media focus on adult men of colour (Bleiker et al, 2013; Wilmott, 2017). Meanwhile children who, as the literature review shows, are the group most likely to be treated with empathy (Ticktin, 2017), are photographed much less. Therefore, we can already see that the groups that have been most commonly subject to othering since the period of the European empires, are the groups that are most commonly photographed in my sample.

Age Gender Race shortened

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Middle Eastern man	69	27.4	27.4	27.4
	Middle Eastern child	38	15.1	15.1	42.5
	Black African man	28	11.1	11.1	53.6
	Middle Eastern man&woman&child	22	8.7	8.7	62.3
	Unclear	21	8.3	8.3	70.6
	Black African woman	18	7.1	7.1	77.8
	Middle Eastern woman	18	7.1	7.1	84.9
	Middle Eastern woman&child	15	6.0	6.0	90.9
	Middle Eastern man&child	13	5.2	5.2	96.0
	Black African child	10	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	252	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Age gender and race combined excluding 'Other' category

I grouped the less common age/gender/race categories (those with less than 10 counts each) together in to an 'Other' category. Because my thesis focuses on the most common visual representations of refugees, I will now exclude these less common groups from my research. Therefore, my sample reduces from 377 to 252 (see Table 2).

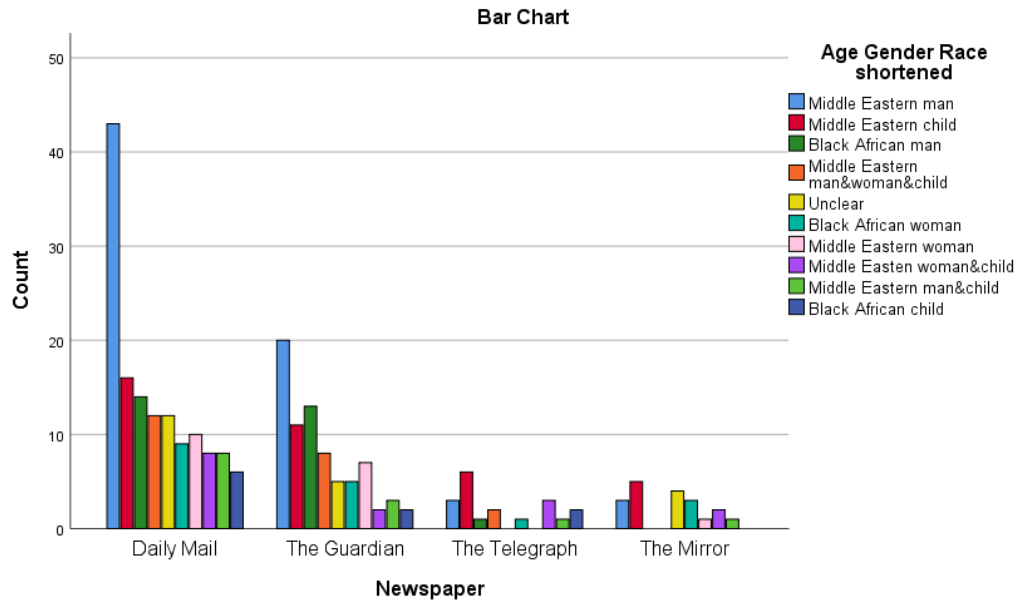

Chart 4: Age gender and race of refugees by newspaper

5.2.1 The 'unclear' group

Before I move to focus on the main groups listed above and comparing them to one another using the various codes from my framework, it is worth understanding the characteristics of the photographs that have been labelled unclear.

Firstly, 9 out of 21 of the photographs were taken as extreme long shots meaning that we can only see the refugees far into the distance of the shot and it is difficult to see any of their distinguishable features. As I explained earlier, long-shots anonymise the refugees with the location becoming the primary focus of the photographs (Izod, 1991). When looking at the location and objects for this group we can see that the most common location was 'in boat/on sea' and the most common object was 'boat'. Therefore, these photographs showed the active movement of the refugees. Returning to the literature review, this representation correlates with the visibility as threat typology that Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) introduced where dehumanised refugees are represented as travelling towards the West. Furthermore, 5 of the photographs were taken at a high angle which means that the photographer, and

consequently the audience, are looking down at the refugees. Again, this adds to the anonymity of the refugees. Unless the refugees look up this often also means that we cannot see their distinguishable features, instead just seeing tops of heads. This also represents the key power dynamic of the western gaze where 'we', the audience, can look down at 'them', the refugees. Anonymity was also produced in almost half of the photographs (10 out of 21) through a lack of focus with refugees either blurred or in darkness.

Otherness is clearly established in the photographs of the 'unclear' group. While the audience of the photographs have the power to look at the 'others', they cannot build a connection with them because of the anonymity of the refugees. There is a distance produced between the refugees and the audience. Anonymity, as Banks (2011), argues also leads to suspicion. Add this anonymity to the representation of this group as actively travelling by boat, which is also presented as threatening in the western psyche (Wilmott, 2017), and we can see that the 'unclear' group represent the 'threatening other' category; a category that has existed since the period of the European Empires.

Because my research focuses on intersectional othering, I will now explore the groups in my sample where the refugee's age, gender and race has been coded. Therefore, at this stage, I will remove the 'unclear' group from my sample, reducing it down from 252 to 231 (126 Daily Mail, 71 The Guardian, 19 The Telegraph, 15 The Mirror).

5.3 How were the refugees represented?

Now that I have established the most commonly photographed refugee groups, I can explore how these groups were represented and how these representations differed based on the intersectional characteristics of age, race and gender. I will begin by looking at group size, moving on to camera techniques and then looking at how the refugees were represented through emotion, eye contact, behaviour, and clothing. I will finish by looking at what objects and non-refugees they were photographed with, where they were photographed and what writing or symbols can be seen alongside the refugees in the photographs.

5.3.1 Group size

The large majority of photographs of refugees in this sample showed individual refugees (52%) followed by medium groups of 4 to 15 refugees (25%), small groups of 2-3 refugees (15%) and finally large groups of 16 or more refugees (8%). As Chart 5 shows, each of the groups where there was a possibility that the photographs could be of a lone refugee (i.e., not adult and child groups) showed them predominantly in this way.

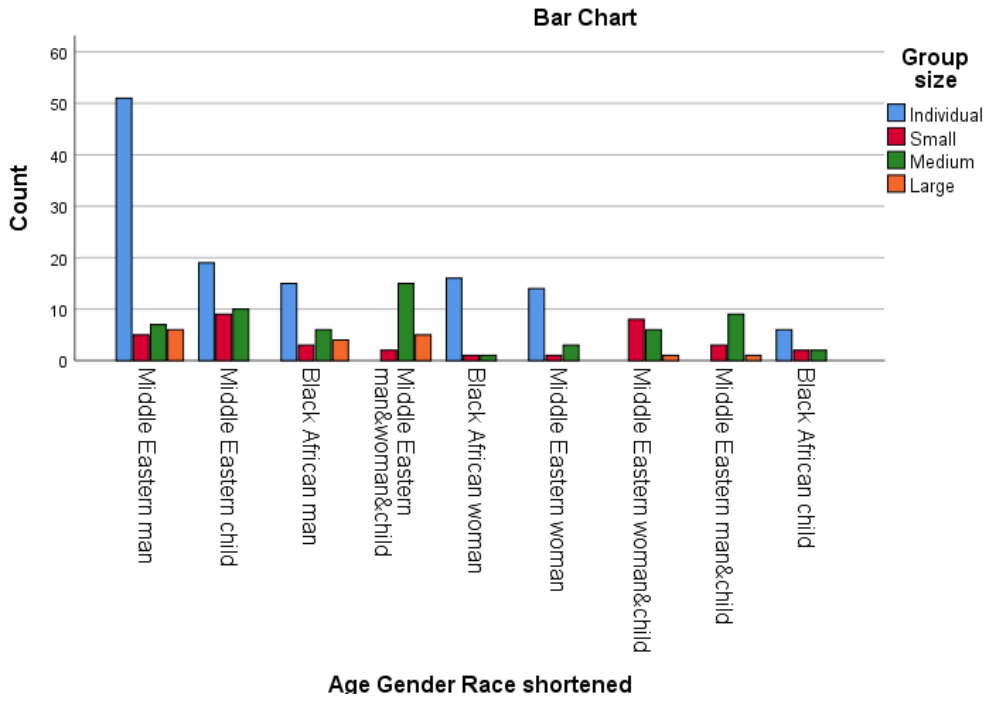

Chart 5: Group size by age, gender and race

When looking more specifically at the other size groups, however, we can see that there were gender differences in the group sizes. The photographs containing only women (Black African woman and Middle Eastern woman categories) were never shown in large groups. Apart from the large majority of photographs that showed Black African women as individual lone refugees, 6% were shown in small groups and 6% were shown in medium groups. There were slightly more medium groups of Middle Eastern women (17%), but nevertheless this was still a small figure compared to those that showed them as individual lone refugees.

In contrast, 9% of photographs of Middle Eastern men showed them in large groups and 14% of photographs of Black African men showed them in large groups. In both of these cases, the percentage of large groups was smaller than the percentage of medium groups (10% Middle Eastern men, 21% Black African men), but larger than the percentage of small groups (7% Middle Eastern men, 10% Black African men).

In a similar way to the representation of the women only categories, Middle Eastern and Black African child/ren were never shown in large groups. As already stated, for both groups they were primarily photographed as individual, lone refugees. 26% of Middle Eastern children were photographed in medium groups and 24% were photographed in small groups. For Black African children, 20% were photographed in medium groups and 20% were photographed in small groups.

The other groups were combinations of adults and children, and therefore it is impossible for any of these groups to depict individual, lone refugees. Middle Eastern men, women and children were primarily photographed as medium groups (68%). A following 23% were photographed as large groups and 9% were photographed as small groups. Again, we can see a gender difference when comparing Middle Eastern men and children and Middle Eastern women and children. While both categories contain 1 photograph each depicting a large group, Middle Eastern men and children are primarily photographed as medium groups (69%). This is in contrast to photographs of Middle Eastern women and children which primarily depict them as small groups (53%).

While the majority of the photographs in this sample depict individual lone refugees, by delving deeper into the analysis I have shown that there is a gendered difference in the group size of the refugees photographed. Photographs containing men were more likely to show them in larger groups than photographs containing women. This is important because, as Bleiker et al (2013) explain, the larger the group, the more dehumanised the people in the group become and the more likely that they are represented as dangerous threats. Therefore, I argue that othering through massification (Lenette and Miskovic, 2018) is much more common for adult male refugees.

5.3.2 Camera techniques – camera distance

The vast majority of photographs of refugees were taken as long shots (51%), followed by midshots (28%) and close shots (21%). Out of the long shots, 5% were extreme long shots, 27% were long shots and 19% were medium long shots. Out of the close shots, 13% were medium close shots and 8% were close up. There were no extreme close shots.

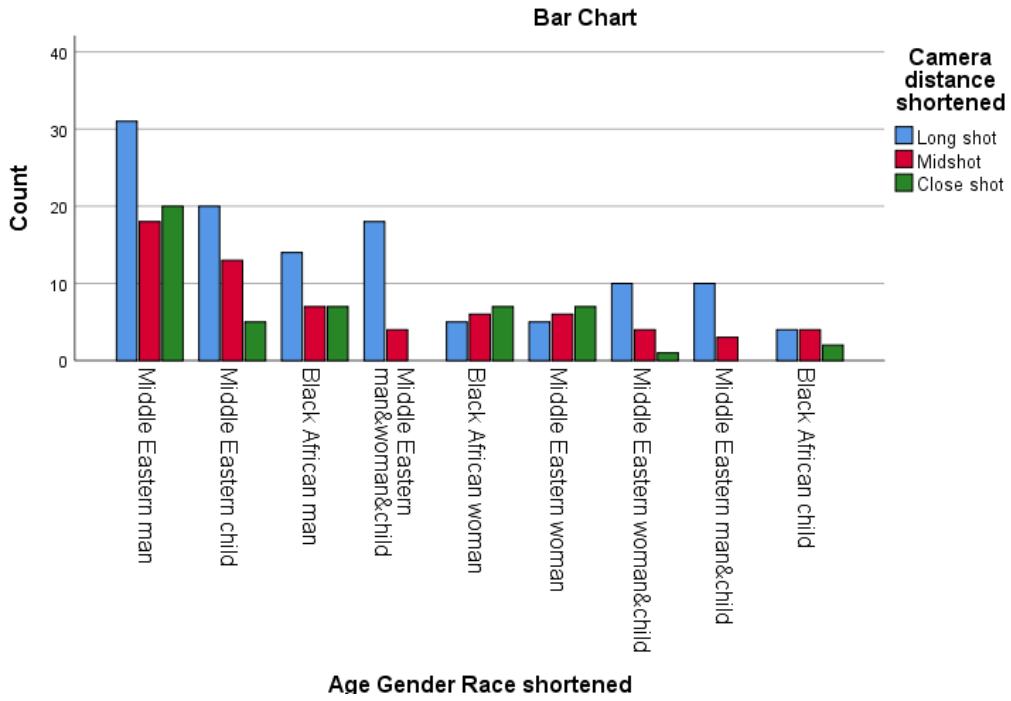

Chart 6: Camera distance by age, gender and race

By looking at Chart 6, we can see that there was a gendered difference present in the camera distance of the photographs. While most of the refugee groups were photographed at a long distance, both of the women only groups were most commonly photographed as close shots (39% for Middle Eastern women and Black African women), followed by midshot (33% for Middle Eastern women and Black African women). The choice of camera placing for photographs of women only was in direct comparison to the camera placing for photographs of men only. For both Middle Eastern men and Black African men, the dominant camera distance was long shots (45% and 50% respectively). The next most common camera distance for Middle Eastern men was close shots (29%), while the remainder of photographs for Black African men was split evenly between close shots and midshots.

While the use of close shots for photographs of adult men might suggest that these photographs humanise them, it is important to note that 6 out of the 20 close shots of Middle Eastern men (or 30% of the close shots) were mugshots. Overall, there were 7 mugshot photographs in this sample and they all contained men (6 Middle Eastern and 1 Black African). These photographs, therefore, are more related to threat than the humanising close shots (Banks, 2011).

For photographs of children only, the camera placing was most similar to those of men only photographs. This is in contrast to the group size variable where children were most similar to women. 53% of photographs of Middle Eastern children were taken as long shot photographs, followed by 34% taken as midshots and 13% as close shots. For Black African children, 40% were long shots, 40% were midshots and 20% were close shots. By looking more closely at the long shot photographs of the men only groups and the child only groups, we can see that there were no extreme long shot photographs of the children, however 19% of the long shot photographs of Middle Eastern men and 7% of the long shot photographs of Black African men were extreme long shots.

Again, when looking at the categories where there is a mixture of adult and child refugees, we can see that there was a slight gendered difference in their representations. For each of the three groups we can see that the majority of the photographs were taken as long-distance shots (82% for Middle Eastern man, woman and child, 67% for Middle Eastern woman and child, 77% for Middle Eastern man and child). However, while Middle Eastern men, women and children and Middle Eastern men and children were only photographed as long shots or midshots, we can see that for Middle Eastern women and children 7% of photographs were taken as close shots. While this is a small percentage it adds to the previous finding that photographs containing adult men were more likely to be taken at a longer distance compared to photographs where men were excluded and women are included.

Using long shot photographs to create distance between the refugee and the audience is an important othering technique. In a similar vein to group size, when photographs are taken at a long distance, the focus is more on the location of the refugees and less on the refugees themselves (Izod, 1991). Again, the refugees become anonymised and dehumanised. It is more difficult for an audience to connect with the refugees when they are shown as further away. Adult men, in particular, are othered in this way. They were much more likely to be photographed as long shots than adult women. Children were also more likely to be photographed as long shots. However, when separating the long shots into extreme, long, and medium, we can see that 26% of photographs of men were extreme long shots (the most dehumanising shot) while there were no extreme long shots of children. The othering of adult men through distancing correlates with the othering of adult men through massification in the previous section.

5.3.3 Camera Techniques – Camera Angle, Focus and Lighting

The vast majority of photographs (94%) were taken at a normal angle, meaning that the photographer was at the same height as the refugee being photographed. Of the 6% that were not taken at a normal angle, 4% were taken at a high angle where the photographer, and consequently the audience, are looking down at the refugee. 2% were taken at a low angle where the photographer and audience are looking up at the refugee. Of the 9 photographs that were taken at a high angle, 5 were of Middle Eastern men, 2 were of Middle Eastern men and child/ren, 1 was of Black African men and 1 was of Middle Eastern women. Of the 5 photographs that were taken at a low angle, 2 were of Middle Eastern men, 2 were of Middle Eastern children and 1 was of Middle Eastern women and children.

When looking at focus, the vast majority of photographs of refugees were not blurred (94%). Only 6% of photographs showed one or more of the refugees in the photographs blurred. Similarly, the vast majority of photographs of refugees were not in darkness or shadowed (97%). Only 3% of photographs showed one or more of the refugees fully or partially in shadow or darkness. Of the 13 photographs that had at least one refugee out of focus, 8 of them were Middle Eastern men, 2 were Middle Eastern women, 2 were Middle Eastern men, women and children and 1 was Black African men. Of the 7 photographs that had at least one refugee fully or partially in darkness, 3 were of Middle Eastern men, 2 were of Black African women, 1 was of Middle Eastern children and 1 was of Black African children.

Here, we can see, that camera techniques such as angle, focus and lighting were less important in this sample of photographs than the camera distance. This was perhaps because those who were photographed at a high angle, blurred or in darkness were already categorised as unclear.

5.3.4 Displaying emotion

The vast majority of photographs (81%) showed refugees as emotionless. However, there was a gendered difference in those who were displaying emotion with women much more likely to be photographed expressing emotion than men. 44% of Black African women and 33% of Middle Eastern women were photographed expressing emotion, compared to 14% of Black African men and 16% of Middle Eastern men.

The child only groups were more likely to be photographed displaying emotion than men but less likely to be photographed displaying emotion than women (20% Black African children, 21% Middle Eastern children).

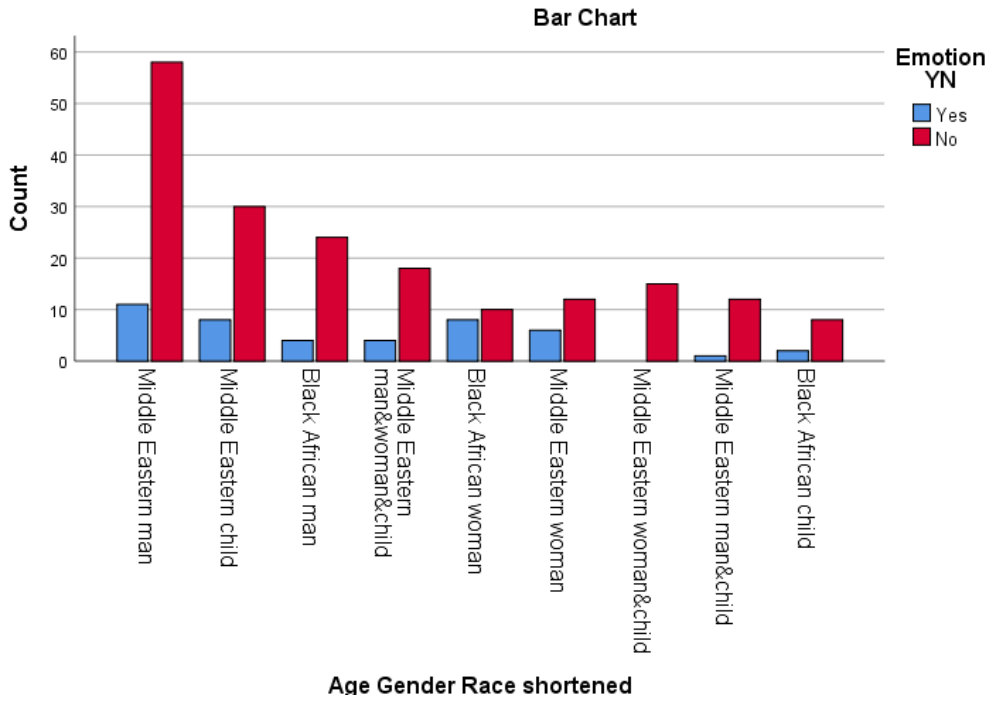

Chart 7: Emotion by age, gender and race

The refugee groups where there were combinations of both adult and child refugees were the least likely to show emotion (0% Middle Eastern women and children, 8% Middle Eastern men and children). Middle Eastern men, women and children were more likely to show emotion than men only groups but less likely than women only and child only groups (18%).

With all groups, when emotions were displayed, these tended to be 'happy/smiling/laughing'. For the adult women groups, the groups that displayed emotion the most, 33% Black African and 22% of Middle Eastern women were photographed as 'happy/smiling/laughing'. The only other emotion that Black African women were photographed displaying was 'sad/crying', while one photograph of Middle Eastern woman was 'sad/crying' and one was 'angry/shouting'. For the adult men groups, 13% of Middle Eastern were 'happy/smiling/laughing' while 3% were photographed 'in pain/discomfort.' 14% Black African men were photographed as 'happy/smiling/laughing.'

For the child only groups, 16% of Middle Eastern and 10% of Black African children were photographed as 'happy/smiling/laughing'. The further 5% of Middle Eastern children were photographed as 'in pain/discomfort' while the further 10% of Black African children were photographed as 'concentrating'. Middle Eastern men, women and children were photographed as 'happy/smiling/laughing' in 14% of photographs and 'angry/shouting' in 4%

of the photographs. Meanwhile the 8% of photographs where Middle Eastern men and children were photographed displaying emotions, the emotion was 'happy/smiling/laughing'.

Displaying emotions is seen as important for creating empathy between the audience and the subject being photographed. We can relate to those who display emotion and so without these emotional displays the connection is lost (Bleiker et al, 2013). Therefore, by showing refugees as emotionless in the vast majority of photographs, the distancing strategy of othering is presented again. Again, there is a clear gendered difference here with adult men much more likely to be othered in this way compared to adult women. This is perhaps unsurprising given that in western cultures showing emotion is a sign of femininity, while men are expected to be emotionless (Way et al, 2014). The image of the emotionless man further adds to the distance between the adult man and the audience that has already been established through group size and camera distance.

5.3.5 Eye contact

The majority of photographs did not show any eye contact from the refugees (65%). 26% of the photographs showed all of the refugees in the photograph making eye contact, while 10% of the photographs showed at least one refugee making eye contact and at least one refugee/asylum seeker not making eye contact with the audience.

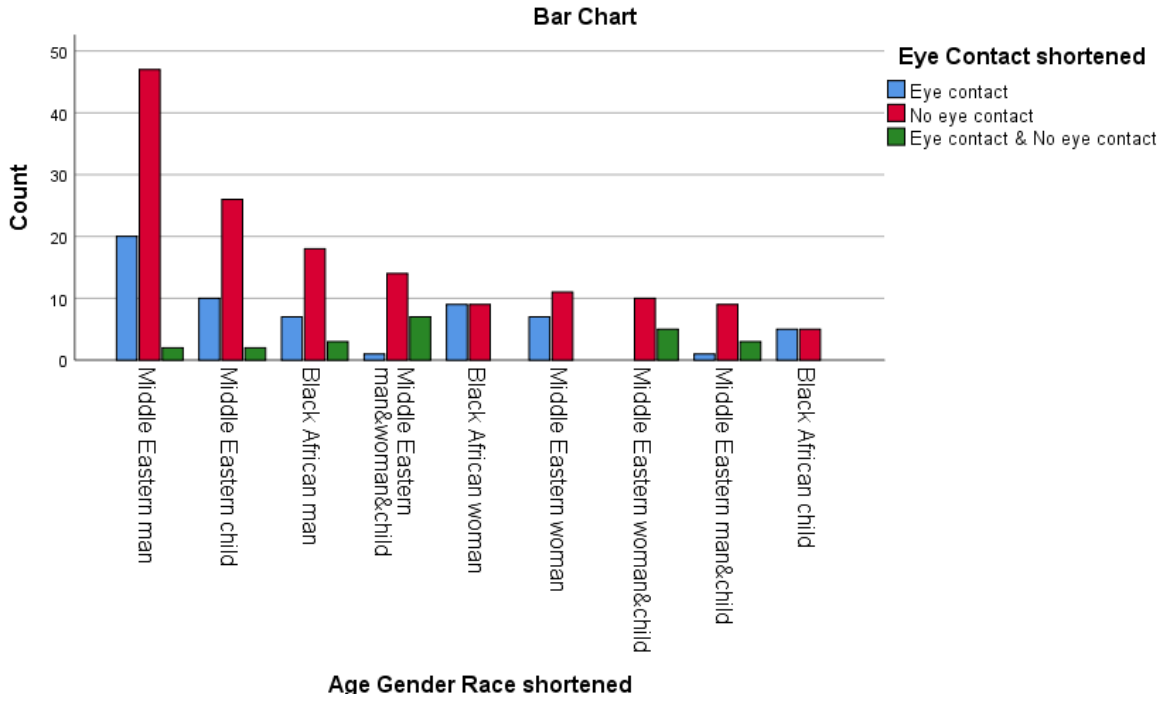

Chart 8: Eye contact by age, gender and race

Black African refugees were more likely to be photographed with at least one refugee making eye contact, compared to Middle Eastern refugees who were more likely to be

photographed not making eye contact. 68% of photographs of Middle Eastern men contained no eye contact compared to 64% of Black African men, 61% of photographs of Middle Eastern women contained no eye contact compared to 50% of Black African women, and 68% of photographs of Middle Eastern children contained no eye contact compared to 50% of Black African children.

Again, when comparing genders, women were more likely to make eye contact. 39% of photographs of Middle Eastern women showed at least one refugee making eye contact compared to 32% of Middle Eastern men. 50% of photographs of Black African women showed at least one refugee making eye contact compared to 36% of Black African men. 33% of Middle Eastern women and children showed at least one refugee making eye contact compared to 31% of Middle Eastern men and children. 36% of photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children showed at least one refugee making eye contact.

The lack of eye contact, as Batziou (2011), argues is an important othering technique – both through the loss of connection between the refugee and audience, and also because of the power dynamics where the audience can look at the refugee through the privileged western gaze without the refugee gazing back. With the exception of Black African women and Black African children who were photographed half of the time with no eye contact and half of the time with at least some eye contact, the vast majority of photographs of refugees show them as not making eye contact with the audience. Again, there is a gendered difference in eye contact among refugees in my sample with men less likely to be photographed making eye contact. This time there is also a racialised difference with Middle Eastern refugees less likely to make eye contact with the audience than Black African refugees. In other words, Middle Eastern men and children are subject to the western gaze the most in my sample through lack of eye contact.

5.3.6 Behaviour

Overall, 59% of the photographs showed the refugees engaging in passive behaviour and 41% showed the refugees engaging in active behaviour.[8] The most common passive behaviours were standing stationary, posing for a photograph and sitting, while the most common active behaviours were travelling and walking towards or away from the camera.

When looking at the overall percentages for active and passive behaviours I found that there were no clear gendered, racial or aged patterns. Photographs containing both adult and child refugees were the most likely to show active behaviour (59% for Middle Eastern men, women and children, 54% for Middle Eastern men and children and 50% for Middle Eastern women and children).

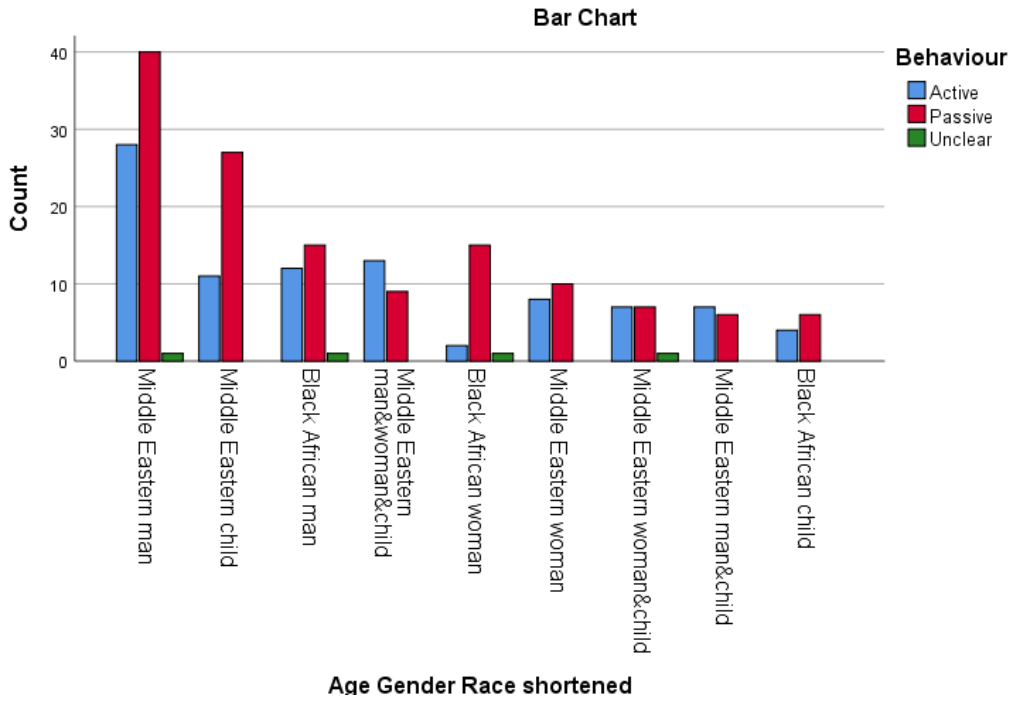

Chart 9: Behaviour by age, gender and race

Black African women photographs had the lowest percentage of active behaviours (12%), significantly lower than the Black African men photographs (44%). This corresponds with the literature that suggests that women are much more likely to be portrayed as lacking agency than men (Ticktin, 2017). However, if we look at the Middle Eastern groups, Middle Eastern women photographs were slightly more likely to show active behaviours (44%) than Middle Eastern men photographs (41%). Both child only photographs were less likely to show active behaviours than all other groups with the exception of Black African women (Middle Eastern child 29% and Black African child 40%).

If we look more closely at the types of active behaviours presented in the photographs, however, we can see a gendered difference. For both Middle Eastern men and Black African men, the most common behaviour was travelling. In contrast, none of the photographs of Middle Eastern women and Black African women showed these groups travelling. Instead, the most common active behaviour for Middle Eastern women was walking towards the camera and the most common active behaviour for Black African women was talking into microphones. This gendered difference correlates with Bleiker et al's (2013) research which argued that media images predominantly show men travelling towards the West.

There is also a clear generational difference with playing being the most common active behaviour for both child only groups. Only 1 of the photographs of Middle Eastern children

showed travelling and none of the photographs of Black African children showed travelling. When looking at the adult and child combination groups the most common active behaviour was adults holding children. This shows the relationship between the adults and children in the photograph where the adults were portrayed as the caregivers to the vulnerable children. This active behaviour was more common in the photographs of Middle Eastern women and children (46%) than Middle Eastern men and children (23%) showing the representation of the maternal bond (Ticktin, 2017).

Behaviours can be associated with levels of agency and therefore can determine whether a refugee is deemed to be a threat or vulnerable. In the literature review, Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) argued that the active behaviour of travelling represented threat when those who are travelling are refugees. Meanwhile, passivity was a key factor in the innocence of the Alan Kurdi photographs (Szörényi: 2018). This correlates with Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity where the western gaze becomes threatened when the refugees that the audience are gazing at come into proximity to the West. Therefore, adult men are most likely to be othered as threats through their behaviour. Meanwhile the active behaviours of both the women, child and family groups are deemed more innocent. For the Black African women group their active behaviour of 'talking into microphones' is an empowering one and goes against the othering tactic where 'White saviours' are shown as talking on behalf of refugees. However, while this active behaviour is empowering, it is important to remember that the Black African woman group are most likely to be photographed as passive.

5.3.7 Clothing

I split clothing into two variables. The first of these was western versus Islamic clothing. Overall, the majority of photographs showed refugees wearing western clothing (62%). When refugees are photographed wearing Islamic clothing this is often as a mixture of both western and Islamic clothing (17%), rather than Islamic clothing only (9%). In 12% of the photographs, it is unclear whether refugees were wearing Western or Islamic clothing. Chart 10 shows that there was a gendered difference with women far more likely to be photographed wearing Islamic clothing compared to their male counterparts. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the veil is the most commonly worn piece of clothing representing Islam (Zakaria, 2017). While there is also male Islamic clothing, this is much less commonly worn than the veil. This also explains the dominance of a combination of western and Islamic clothing over solely Islamic clothing as Muslim women were often photographed wearing Western clothes with an Islamic veil.

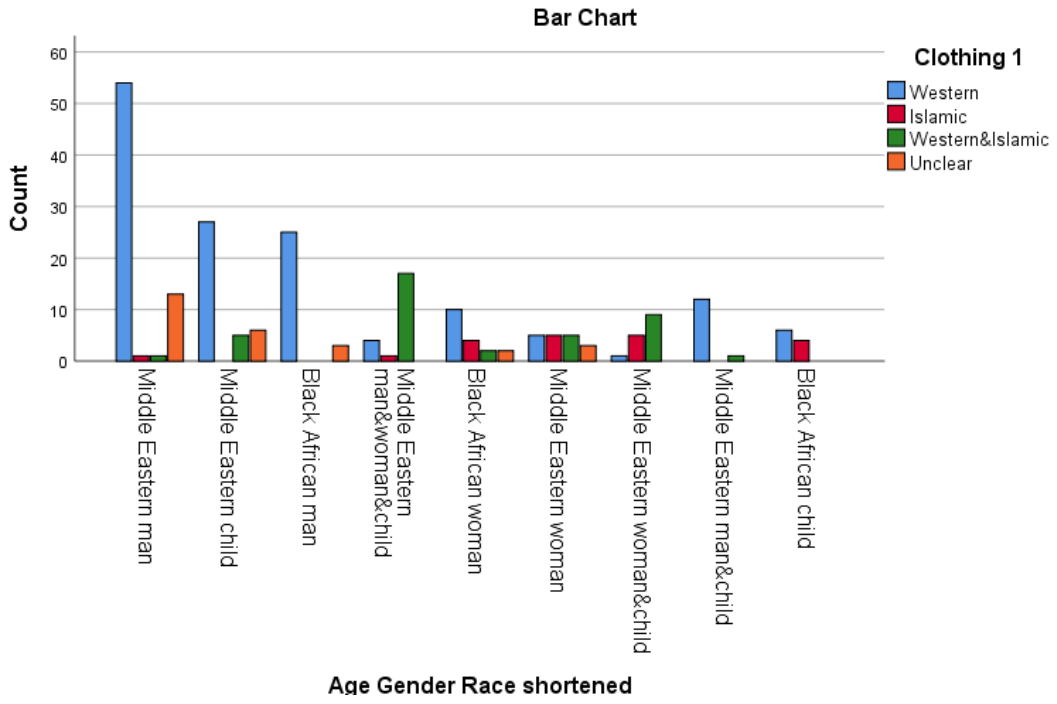

Chart 10: Western vs Islamic clothing by age, gender and race

Only 1% of photographs of Middle Eastern men showed the refugees wearing Islamic clothing with a further 1% showing them wearing a mixture of western and Islamic clothing. Meanwhile none of the Black African men were shown wearing Islamic clothing. By contrast 56% of Middle Eastern women were shown either wearing Islamic clothing (28%) or a combination of Islamic and western clothing (28%). Black African women were still more likely to be photographed wearing Western clothing only, however 33% were shown either wearing Islamic clothing (22%) or a combination of Islamic and western clothing (11%).

This trend continues when we look at the adult and child groups. In 8% of photographs of Middle Eastern men and children there was a combination of western and Islamic clothing. Meanwhile 93% of photographs of Middle Eastern women and children showed refugees in either Islamic only (33%) or western and Islamic clothing (60%). 82% of photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children showed refugees in either Islamic clothing only (5%) or western and Islamic clothing (77%).

Children were also more likely to wear Islamic clothing than adult men. 40% of Black African children were shown wearing Islamic clothing, while 13% of Middle Eastern children were shown wearing a combination of western and Islamic clothing.

El-Enany (2016), when discussing the outpouring of sympathy towards the photograph of the dead body of Syrian toddler refugee Alan Kurdi, argues that part of the reason that he

received this outpouring of sympathy was because of his light-skin and western dress. She questions whether the same attention and sympathy would have been given to the dead child in the photograph if he was dressed in Islamic clothing or had darker skin. As she argues “coded images of Muslims inhibit their humanisation. The Islamophobia that thrives in European societies today means that rather than compassion, they elicit feelings of apprehension and fear” (El-Enany, 2016: p14). In western societies, the veil, as a symbol of Islam, is a symbol of otherness. This otherness is based on the western assumption that the veil represents the repression of women’s rights and the oppressive religion of Islam (McDonald, 2006). Therefore, in these photographs, women refugees are othered due to their religion and its visibility through the veil.

The second aspect of clothing that I coded is casual versus smart dress. Overall, the vast majority of refugees were dressed in casual clothing (68%). Refugees were photographed wearing smart clothing in 9% of these photographs. Uniforms also represent a form of belonging either in work or educational settings. Uniforms were present in 5% of photographs. The remaining 19% of photographs have been coded as other and consist of photographs where it is unclear whether the clothing being worn is casual or smart.

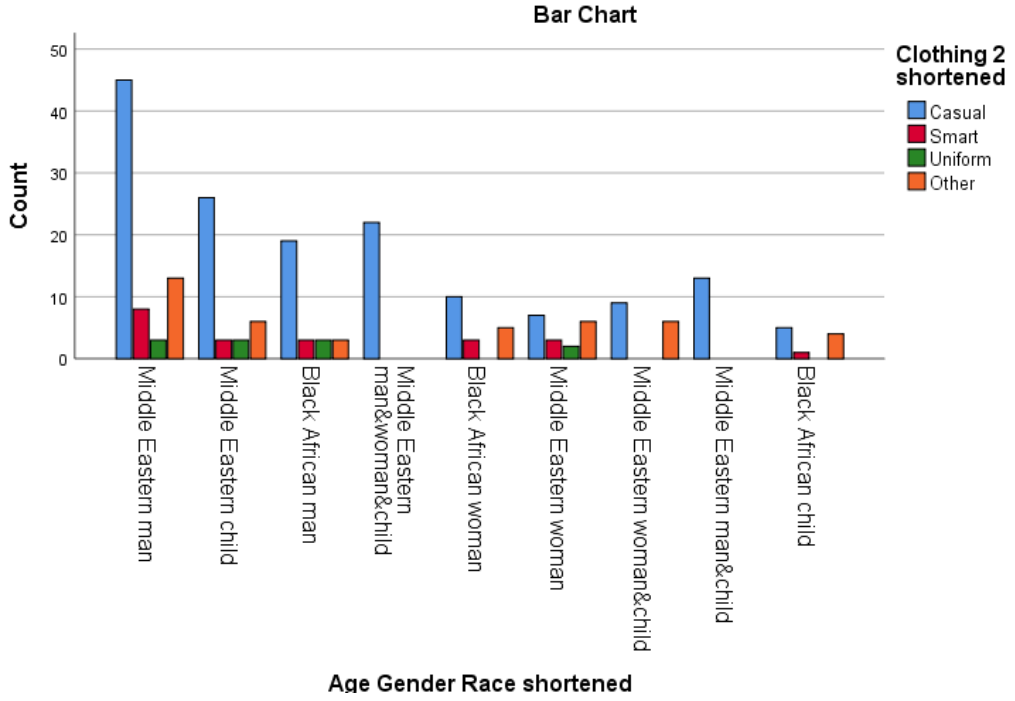

Chart 11: Casual vs Smart clothing by age, gender and race

We can see that there was a gendered difference in the clothing that refugees were photographed wearing with men only groups more likely to be wearing casual clothing than

women only groups. 65% of Middle Eastern men and 68% of Black African men were photographed wearing casual clothing, while 39% of Middle Eastern women and 56% of Black African women were photographed wearing casual clothing. If we look specifically at the 'hoodie', men were also more likely to be photographed wearing hoodies than women. 23% of photographs of Middle Eastern men showed at least one refugee wearing a hoodie and 29% of photographs of Black African men showed at least one refugee wearing a hoodie. In contrast, only 6% of photographs of Middle Eastern women and 6% of photographs of Black African women showed at least one refugee wearing a hoodie.

We can see this gendered difference continue in photographs of adults and children with Middle Eastern men and children shown in casual clothing in 100% of the photographs and with at least one wearing a hoodie in 38% of the photographs. In contrast, Middle Eastern women and children were shown in casual clothing in 60% of the photographs and with at least one wearing a hoodie in 20% of the photographs. 100% of the photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children show refugees wearing casual clothes and 41% show at least one refugee in a hoodie.

When comparing children only photographs to adult only photographs, Middle Eastern children are more likely to be photographed in casual clothing (68%) and wearing hoodies (26%) than either Middle Eastern men or Middle Eastern women. Black African children, however, are less likely to be photographed wearing casual clothing (50%) and hoodies (0%) than their adult counterparts.

While White, western people often wear casual clothing such as the hoodie in everyday life, as I explained earlier, the meaning of this clothing changes when it is worn by people of colour, and especially men of colour (Kinney, 2016). Therefore, casual clothing in these photographs can often be used to represent refugees in transit (they are more likely to wear comfortable, casual clothing when travelling) and destitution (often refugees are given casual clothing as part of aid packages). In contrast, smart clothing is most likely to suggest that the refugees are economically secure, established and belong to western society (Peluchette et al, 2006). Meanwhile, in the western psyche, refugee men of colour wearing hoodies are represented as threatening (Kinney, 2016). Therefore, adult men are also othered through their clothing. This otherness is based on the non-belonging established through casual clothing. They are represented as poor and on the move. This is used in the welfare narrative to argue that these refugees will be a burden on the welfare system (Huysmans, 2000). Furthermore, the hoodie is used to argue that these refugees are dangerous and threatening (Kinney, 2016).

There is a clear gendered difference in the clothes that refugees were photographed wearing. Men were more likely to be wearing casual clothing including hoodies, meanwhile women were more likely to be wearing Islamic clothing, most commonly veils. This adds to the gendered representations of the threatening hooded man (Kinney, 2016) and the subordinated veiled woman (Zakaria, 2017). However, as I will show later (section 6.3), Muslim women can also be represented as threatening when they are photographed in full Islamic dress.

5.3.8 Objects

70% of the photographs contained at least one object. Of the 10 object themes precarious life and containment were the most common, both being present in 20% of the photographs. The next most common were transit objects (16%), followed by domesticity (11%). Voice objects were present in 9% of the photographs, play in 7%, danger/threat in 5%, identification and work/skills achievement in 3% and education in 1%. The three most common themes (precarious life, containment and transit) are unsurprising given the nature of being a refugee and having to leave their country of origin to escape persecution, attempting to travel to a safe country and being blocked and contained along the way.

When looking at the different groups of refugees, we can see that both Middle Eastern men and Black African men were most commonly photographed with objects which suggest transit (19% and 21% respectively). For Middle Eastern men the most common object suggesting transit was luggage. Meanwhile for Black African men the most common object suggesting transit was boats. This correlates with the groups most common behaviour being travelling, again adding to the idea of the threatening active refugee man coming into proximity with the West (Bleiker et al, 2013). Objects suggesting containment and precarious life were the next most common for both of the man only refugee groups.

The women only groups differed in their most commonly photographed objects. Black African women were most commonly photographed with objects which suggest domesticity (22%). This emphasises the traditional notion of women as homemakers and caregivers (Walby, 1990). These objects included bowls, cups and cutlery and furniture. These objects, however, are also quite basic. The objects listed are often those that are provided by western charities (e.g. Comic Relief), therefore they could also represent the White saviour trope with the racialised women shown in locations with basic objects, suggesting their poorness and their need for western intervention (Bell, 2015).The next most common object groups were those which suggested containment and voice.

For Middle Eastern women objects that suggested containment (17%) and voice (17%) were most common in these photographs. Microphones/megaphones, mobile phones and protest signs all suggested voice for these groups. Meanwhile barbed wire/fencing/border and tents/tarpaulin suggested containment. Ticktin (2017) argues that women are often portrayed as passive and lacking agency, therefore it is interesting that objects suggesting voice is more common in photographs of women than men. However, this can also suggest an editorial decision to dehumanise the man while humanising the woman through giving her voice. Transit objects scored low for the women only groups (0% Black African women, 6% for Middle Eastern women) compared to the men only groups. Therefore, while women are more likely to be given voice, this voice is still contained at a distance, and women are not portrayed as travelling towards the UK.

Children were also represented slightly differently. For Black African children the most common objects suggested play (30%) and domesticity (30%). Objects included furniture and photographs/picture frames for domesticity and children's toys, football/goalposts and chessboard/pieces for play. These objects suggested childhood with children in an environment that looks like home playing with toys. Middle Eastern children on the other hand were most commonly photographed with objects suggesting precarious life (24%) and containment (24%). The most common object for these photographs was tents which suggests the genuineness of the Middle Eastern child refugees and their distance from us. Objects that suggested play were also common in this group (16%).

Over half of the photographs for the three adult and child groups suggested precarious life (64% Middle Eastern men, women and children, 62% Middle Eastern men and children, 53% Middle Eastern women and children). This was followed by a smaller but still significant percentage of photographs that showed containment objects (45% Middle Eastern men, women and children, 46% Middle Eastern men and children, 27% Middle Eastern women and children). For all of these groups the most common objects were tents/tarpaulin. Again, this suggests that when photographs contain families of refugees these are most commonly represented as genuine, vulnerable and kept at a distance.

Overall, when looking at objects we see a clear gender and age distinction between adult men only groups who were most commonly photographed with objects that suggest actively travelling, and all of the other groups who were most commonly presented as remaining distant. This emphasises the rhetoric of the dangerous man illegally entering the UK while the innocent, genuine women and children are contained in refugee camps (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017; Wilmott 2017). Therefore, through objects, we see Boltanski's (1999)

distance/proximity dichotomy at work where women and children are othered as objects of distanced pity, while men are othered as objects of fear getting closer.

5.3.9 Location

In 30% of the photographs the location was unclear. For those where the location was clear precarious life was the most common group (18%), followed by containment (16%) and transit (13%). Therefore, the top three locations were the same as the top three objects. Leisure was shown in 8% of locations, domesticity in 7% and criminality in 6%. Finally, work/education was shown in 4% of the locations and voice was shown in 2% of the locations. Again, the commonality of precarious life, containment and transit is unsurprising given that the people in the photographs are seeking asylum.

Again, there was a clear gendered difference in location. Middle Eastern men were most commonly photographed in locations which suggest criminality (17%). The most common locations for this group were mugshots (plain background) and detention centres. Other common locations were those which suggest containment (14%) and those which suggest transit (13%). Black African men were most commonly photographed in locations which suggest transit (25%). While they were less likely to be photographed in locations suggesting criminality (7%), when it comes to refugee men, as the literature review has shown, they are often reported as illegally entering the UK (Jones et al, 2017). Transit still suggests criminality in those instances. Therefore, men were most commonly photographed in locations which emphasised that they were dangerous and should be feared, especially when shown as coming into proximity with the West through travelling (Bleiker et al, 2013).

In contrast, women were most commonly photographed in locations which suggest domesticity (11% for Black African women and 17% for Middle Eastern women) and leisure (11% for Black African women and 17% for Middle Eastern women). These locations were more positive than those which suggest criminality and transit. Instead, domesticity and leisure suggest belonging and everyday life activities, making us able to connect with the female refugees more. Domesticity also emphasises the gendered stereotype of women as homemakers and carers (Walby, 1990). For these groups locations suggesting domesticity were bedroom/room in house or outside house/on driveway/doorstep/in garden. Leisure locations included shop/shopping centre and swimming pool.

Children only groups were photographed in different ways. The most common location for Middle Eastern children were places which suggested precarious life (26%) and containment (21%). Alternatively, Black African children were most commonly photographed in locations

which suggested work/education (30%). The locations for adult and child groups were similar to the Middle Eastern children group. For each of these groups the most common location was those which suggest precarious life (55% for Middle Eastern men, women and children, 27% for Middle Eastern women and children and 54% for Middle Eastern men and children). This was followed by containment (45% for Middle Eastern men, women and children, 20% for Middle Eastern women and children and 31% for Middle Eastern men and children). When looking at these groups we can see that transit was more common in adult and child groups when the adult, or one of the adults, was male. Locations suggesting transit were shown in 23% of photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children and 23% of photographs of Middle Eastern men and children, compared to 7% of photographs of Middle Eastern women and children. For all of these groups except for Black African children the most common location was camp/tents. For Black African children the most common location was education centre.

Overall, there was a gendered difference in the locations refugees were photographed in. Men only groups were photographed in locations which suggest threat and illegality while women only groups were photographed in locations which suggest belonging and everyday life. Child/ren only and family groups were most commonly photographed in locations which suggest precarious lives and therefore vulnerability and genuineness, with the exception of Black African child/ren who were most commonly photographed in locations which suggest work/education. Therefore, yet again, it is adult men that are othered as threatening the West through their location. Meanwhile, women, children and families are in locations that are deemed as safe for the western audience because they are not shown as actively travelling towards them. Therefore, women, children and families are othered through their distance, passiveness and containment.

5.3.10 Non-refugees

The majority of refugees were photographed either on their own or with other refugees. Only 22% of all of the photographs showed people who were not refugees alongside the refugees. This emphasises the refugees as being outside the realm of normal life and distant from ‘us’, the general public (Wilmott, 2017). The most common non-refugees in the photographs were police/border guard/security (7%), celebrity (5%) and rescue workers/aid workers (2%). Unclear non-refugees made up 2% of the photographs and all of the other groups of non-refugees made up 1%.

Men were most likely to be photographed with police/border guard/security (10% for Middle Eastern men, 14% for Black African men) meanwhile none of the photographs of women

included police/border guard/security. Furthermore, if we look at the adult and child combination groups 8% of Middle Eastern men and children were photographed with police/border guard/security compared to 0% of Middle Eastern women and children. 5% of photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children included police/border guard/security. Looking at the child only groups 8% of photographs of Middle Eastern children included police/border guard/security compared to 0% of Black African children photographs. This suggests that Middle Eastern children are more likely to be racialised as a security threat, correlating with the securitisation of Muslim groups from the Middle East since the 9/11 terror attacks (Abu-Lughod, 2002).

Men were also more likely to be photographed with celebrities than women, but this was less often than they are photographed with police/border guard/security. 3% of photographs of Middle Eastern men and 11% of photographs of Black African men included celebrities. None of the photographs of women only included celebrities. 9% of photographs of Middle Eastern men, women and children and 8% of photographs of Middle Eastern men and children included celebrities compared to 0% of Middle Eastern women and children. 8% of photographs of Middle Eastern children included celebrities compared to 0% of Black African children.

Therefore, as we can see men are more likely to be photographed with non-refugees and these are most commonly police/border guard/security. Again, this adds to the visibility as threat type, showing these men as illegal and dangerous (Wilmott, 2017). This is compared with the women refugees who were shown as distant, and therefore were able to be the recipients of pity (Boltanski, 1999). So, once more, men are othered as dangerous threats while women are othered as distant victims who have little or no interaction with the West.

5.3.11 Writing/Symbols

The vast majority of refugees were photographed without writing/symbols (76%). Of those photographs that did contain writing/symbols the most common were branding (7%) including branding on clothes and also on billboards/shop fronts etc. Following this were humanitarian logos (6%), police/border force logos (4%), signs (3%) and identification numbers on tents (3%). Signs were split into directed protest signs which called out a country or organisation, for example ‘Where is United Nations?’ (1%) and non-directed signs with more generic messages such as ‘We want freedom’ (2%).

While all of the groups were more likely to be photographed without writing/symbols, men who were photographed with writing/symbols tend to be photographed with police/border

force logos, again, emphasising their threatening nature (9% for Middle Eastern men and 4% for Black African men). Criminality was also shown through photographs of CCTV footage where the date, time and camera number were visible (3% for Middle Eastern men and 4% for Black African men). Women, by contrast, were most commonly photographed with branding/advertising (11% for Middle Eastern women and 6% for Black African women). This again shows mundane, everyday life where we are surrounded by branding and advertising.

Child only groups were most commonly photographed with humanitarian logos (13% for Middle Eastern children and 20% for Black African children). This suggests their vulnerability and genuineness and correlates with the objects and locations suggesting precarious life. Black African children were also photographed with drawings that they had done (20%), suggesting childhood activities and correlating with the play objects. There were no stand-out writing/symbols for any of the adult and child groups. Instead, a number of writing/symbols were each given one count.

Overall then, while the vast majority of photographs do not show any writing/symbols, those that did display a gendered difference where men are represented with writing/symbols which suggest threat and illegality while women are represented with writing/symbols which suggest everyday life. Child only groups were most often represented as genuine and vulnerable through humanitarian logos. Therefore, by looking at this variable, men are othered as threats and children are othered as victims being helped by White saviours. Meanwhile, women are less likely to be othered through being shown with writing/symbols that suggest everyday life.

5.4 A comparison with White Northern European refugees

While race is an important factor in initially determining which refugees are photographed most often, when we look at the differences between the most common groups gender becomes the defining characteristic. With the exception of the eye contact code, and slight variations in some of the other variables, Middle Eastern and Black African refugees are generally represented in similar ways and this most often depends on whether they are men or women.

This lack of racial difference, as the conceptual framework suggests, is because both Middle Eastern and Black African groups are othered in ‘White’ European societies. To understand this further, I bring back in the small number of photographs of White Northern European refugees that are in my sample. Overall, there were thirteen photographs of White Northern

European refugees. Five of these were adult men, four were adult women, two were adult men and women, one was woman and child/ren and one was child.

While the photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees primarily showed them as long shots, the most common camera distance for White Northern Europeans was midshot (41%). Furthermore, none of the photographs of White Northern European refugees were blurry or in darkness. Therefore, we can clearly see the refugees in the photographs. This is important for connecting to the refugees and also lessens their threat because we can clearly see what they are doing. Connection is also emphasised through the majority of photographs showing White Northern European refugees as individuals (69%) or in small groups (23%).

As the literature review earlier has shown, connection is also established through showing emotions and making eye contact. While the vast majority of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees (81%) were shown as emotionless, this was much more even for White Northern European refugees. 54% were shown emotionless, while 46% were shown with emotion. In all of the photographs where refugees were shown with emotion, the emotion was 'happy/smiling/laughing'. Showing these refugees with emotion adds to our connection with them while showing them with a positive emotion lessens their threat. Our connection is also emphasised through eye contact. While only 26% of photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees showed them making eye contact with the audience, this went up to 62% for White Northern European refugees. Eye contact is also important for reducing the power relationship between audiences and refugees. When refugees do not make eye contact with us, as Batziou (2011) argues, this leads to a power relationship where the audience has the power to look at the refugees without it being reciprocated. However, this power relationship is reduced in the majority of photographs of White Northern European refugees through the use of eye contact. Therefore, while Middle Eastern and Black African refugees are subject to the western gaze, this does not occur with White Northern European refugees.

Furthermore, the power of the audience is also reduced through the camera angle. Similarly, to the photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees, the large majority showed White Northern European refugees at a normal camera angle (85%). However, the other 15% were taken at a low angle which, as Izod (1991) explains, gives the subject a position of power over the audience who are looking up at them. Meanwhile, none of the photographs were taken at a high angle. Therefore, the White Northern European refugees were always shown either on a level playing field or in positions of power.

The clothing of White Northern European refugees suggests a sense of belonging. All but one photograph showed White Northern European refugees in Western clothing. Furthermore, 62% of photographs showed White Northern European refugees in smart clothing, compared to only 9% of photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees. As suggested earlier, smart clothing suggests both belonging and economic security which again lessens the sense of threat. Therefore, White Northern European refugees are again connected to the western audience through their choice of clothing.

So, race does not seem to differ much between Middle Eastern and Black African refugees. However, we can see through comparing these groups to the small sample of White Northern European refugees, that Middle Eastern and Black African refugee groups are much more likely to be racialised as others. Meanwhile, audiences are given a sense of connection towards White Northern European refugees who are shown as belonging.

5.5 Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored the findings of my content visual data analysis. I have found that while race plays an overarching factor in the media othering of refugees, gender in particular, and also age determine how the refugees are othered. The British newspaper media most often other refugee men as criminal. They are more likely to be photographed in larger groups, at a longer distance, and with less visible emotion than women, adding to their dehumanisation. Threat is displayed through clothing, active behaviours, objects and locations that suggest travelling. Meanwhile, men are also more likely to be photographed in mugshots and with police, border guards and security which suggest proof of criminality. Therefore, similarly to the research by Wilmott (2017), the refugee men in my sample are othered as illegal and dangerous threats coming into proximity with the West.

Women, by contrast, are photographed in a much more humanising way. They are more likely to be photographed in close shots, displaying emotions and eye contact. Often women are photographed with behaviours, objects, locations and writing/symbols which suggest domesticity and everyday life. This makes it easier to connect and empathise with these women. However, they are still photographed at a distance from the West and so while they are shown as having more voice than men, this voice is kept contained, away from the West (Boltanski, 1999). The majority of women are also othered from the western audience through their Islamic dress (Zakaria, 2017). This is a key factor in the representation of the refugee women, which is not extended to the refugee men or children. Therefore, while

women are shown as more human, they are othered through their distance as well as through their religion.

Children and family groups (adult and child/ren) are photographed in similar ways. Children are often shown as playing, emphasising normal childhood, while adults are often shown caring for children. They are often photographed living precarious lives through the use of locations, in particular the refugee camp, and objects, therefore showing family groups as genuine and vulnerable (Ticktin, 2017). This shows that age is an important intersecting characteristic and that the way an adult is represented changes depending on whether they are with other adults or with children. Meanwhile, while there is a clear gendered difference between adults, this difference diminishes with children. Again then, while refugee children and families are shown as more human, they are still othered through their containment at a distance and their precarious lives.

When comparing newspapers, we can see that for the Daily Mail in particular, and also for The Guardian, the Middle Eastern man category was over-represented in these newspapers. 31% of Daily Mail photographs were of Middle Eastern man/men only. The next highest category was Middle Eastern child/ren which made up 12%. For The Guardian, Middle Eastern man/men made up 26% followed by Black African man/men (17%). Therefore, while Daily Mail and The Guardian are at opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of newspaper type and political position, they both represented refugees as primarily Middle Eastern men. For The Telegraph and The Mirror, the most common category was Middle Eastern child/ren (32% in The Telegraph and 26% in The Mirror). While the Daily Mail and The Guardian are on opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of newspaper type and political affiliation, there is very little difference in their visual representations of refugees. For example, both other adult men of colour predominantly through long shots, lack of emotion and being photographed with objects and locations that suggest transit and/or criminality, meanwhile they both represent women as domestic and distant, with both newspapers more likely to photograph women in Islamic dress and in locations that suggest containment.

To explore these gender and age differences further, I will now focus on a small sample of photographs which I randomly picked through the methods that I explained in the previous chapter to represent these dominant representations:

1. The Criminal Man
2. The Muslim Woman
3. The Genuine Distant Family

As I have argued, race is an overarching factor in the representations of refugees with all of the top 10 groups of refugees racialised as Middle Eastern or Black African. This is despite the fact that during the period of the analysis, the second highest proportion of refugees were from Venezuela. While Middle Eastern and Black African refugees were represented in similar ways, through exploring these representations in comparison to White Northern European refugees, I have shown clear racialised differences. This is based on otherness and belonging with Middle Eastern and Black African refugees much more likely to be othered, while White Northern European refugees are represented as belonging. To explore the racialised othering of refugees further, I have included a fourth group of photographs which contrast the racialised refugee and the White non-refugee while also focusing on the distance/proximity dichotomy which is clearly important in my findings:

4. The White Saviour versus The White Border

My content visual data analysis is important because it shows the media's role in intersectionally othering refugees. It shows that while all of the Middle Eastern and Black African refugees in my sample are othered, this othering takes on different forms depending on the gender and age of the refugees. This is significant because these media representations have a real-life impact on the refugees. With the vast majority of photographs representing racialised men, this shows that British newspaper audiences are being bombarded with images that suggest the criminality and threat of dangerous refugee men. Meanwhile, those kept at a distance in precarious conditions are shown as the 'good' refugees. I will explore these meanings in much more detail in the following chapter. I will use existing literature to explain what these media representations mean in the postcolonial British context and how the media's intersectional othering of Middle Eastern and Black African refugees is used to justify the anti-immigrant narrative that drives the British government's restrictive border controls.

6. Semiological visual data analysis

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored the findings of the content visual data analysis. I found that intersectionality was a key factor in the othering of refugees with Middle Eastern and Black African refugee men othered as criminals, Middle Eastern and Black African refugee women humanised through their emotion, eye contact and objects that suggested domesticity, but othered through their Muslim religion and distance, and Middle Eastern and Black African children and families humanised through objects that suggested normal childhood and domesticity but othered through their distance and precarious situation. While Middle Eastern and Black African refugees were othered in similar ways, by comparing them to the small number of White Northern European refugees I showed that their otherness is in contrast to White belonging. Through the content visual data analysis, I found four key groups to bring over to this semiological visual data analysis:

1. The Criminal Man
2. The Muslim Woman
3. The Genuine Distant Family
4. White Saviours versus White Borders

In this chapter I will delve deeper into what this othering means through a semiological visual data analysis of each of these groups. While my content visual data analysis can establish what the key media representations of refugees are, a semiological approach is needed to really understand what these representations mean in the postcolonial British context in which they are produced, circulated, and read. In other words, my content visual data analysis produces denotive, descriptive data, while my semiological visual data analysis produces connotive data, where I can explore the deeper meanings behind the data (Barthes, 1977). Through my semiological visual data analysis, I will show that the media's intersectional othering of refugees is nothing new. Instead, I will show that it is a continuation of the othering produced by White, western powers and institutions since the period of the British, and European, empires.

6.2 The criminal man

In my content visual data analysis, I found that refugee men were represented as criminal in two ways: through 'illegal' forms of travel and through proof of criminality via mugshots. As I have already explained in section 4.4.2, I randomly selected two photographs for the criminal man typology based on the findings of the content visual data analysis. The first of these randomly selected photographs (Photo 1) is of refugee men shown travelling via boat. The

second of these randomly selected photographs (Photo 2) is of proof of criminality through mugshots of refugee men. I will now explore the meanings behind each of these photographs through my semiological visual data analysis.

6.2.1 Boats and the 'Black Mediterranean'

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 1: Photograph taken from The Telegraph on 31 March 2019. Available: UN warnings after Calais child refugees went on hunger strike over delayed UK transfers (telegraph.co.uk) [9]

Photo 1, taken from The Telegraph on 31 March 2019, represents the dangerous and threatening dark-skinned men illegally entering 'our' space (Bleiker et al, 2013). We can see a medium group of Middle Eastern men on a small unsafe-looking dinghy in the middle of the sea. The audience are looking down at the men who are looking up at the camera, showing a power-play. One of the men is shouting and waving an object up to the camera while the other men are watching, perhaps he is signalling for help, or he could be construed as shouting aggressively. While they are looking up at the camera, the eye contact and therefore the connection between audience and subject is disrupted by the slight blurriness of the photograph. The men are wrapped up, many of them are wearing either hoods or hats which also obscures their faces from us. In this way they are dehumanised and the location of the photograph becomes more important than the individuals.

Boats are the most common mode of transport represented in the photographs of Middle Eastern and Black African men in my sample. They are also the most common mode of transport in the overall sample. This coincides with Bleiker et al's (2013: p411-412) research into the Australian media which often depicts asylum seekers as "a mass of mostly 'Arab' looking men on a boat, thus feeding into a discourse of fear that portrays asylum seekers of different colours as a potential threat to Australia's identity and stability."

These results are not surprising given the fact that in the western imagination boats have become synonymous with the threat of the 'illegal' migrant (Sigona, 2018), despite the fact that these dangerous boat journeys are often the only way for refugees to travel given the British and EU's active deprivation of safe overland routes (Maggs, 2019). The western media and governments use images of refugees on small vessels similar to the one in Photo 1 to justify stronger border controls as a necessary precaution to reduce this movement (Davies et al, 2021). However, as Ansems de Vries (2021) argues these stronger border controls actually have the opposite effect. Therefore, there is a circular effect with strong border controls leading to refugees taking risky sea journeys, and then these risky sea journeys being used to justify even more strong border controls. For example, as Davies et al (2021: p5) discuss Britain "operates a policy of carrier sanctions whereby ferry and train operators, airlines, and haulage companies would be fined if they allowed someone without legal travel documents to enter the country using their services." Importantly, legal documents are reserved for those in the 'global North' who can enter the UK relatively easily. Therefore, those without legal documents who are forced into the hands of smugglers and unsafe routes are those from the 'global South'. This, as Davies et al (2021) explain, is a continuation of the European empire's racialised hierarchy where imperialists could move freely, while colonised peoples' movement was restricted. As a result of the increase of these unsafe routes across the Mediterranean Sea and the English Channel, Britain's border has expanded to the offshore, into the sea, and we have seen an increasing naval militarization (Isakjee et al, 2020).

The western governments and media justify tougher border restrictions by representing Middle Eastern and Black African men as threatening and illegal. As Davies et al (2021: p2308) argues the naval militarization following the 2020 boat crossings "was matched by the deployment of a distinctly militarized discourse and social media campaign, in which people crossing the Channel in unseaworthy boats were portrayed as an invading "threat" or criminal menace rather than potentially vulnerable individuals fleeing direct and structural violence." In Photo 1, this threat is further emphasised through the anonymity of the refugee men whose faces are blurry and covered by their hoodies and hats. While the British government and media represent the refugees on the boats such as those in Photo 1 as

illegal immigrants, almost all of those who survive the boat crossings to the UK in 2020 claimed asylum (Davies et al, 2021). Furthermore, McMahon and Sigona's (2018: p506) interviews with people who crossed the Central Mediterranean by boat during 2015, found that "the most common motivations for leaving places of origin were related to insecurity and a lack of safety."

The western governments and media represent the 'threatening' Middle Eastern and Black African men in two ways: the 'callous people smuggler' and the 'migrant queue jumper' (Sirriyeh, 2018: p79). As Sirriyeh (2018: p79) argues this draws on the idea of the "dangerous Southern man". Women and children, on the other hand, are not represented in these terms and are in fact represented as victims of the dangerous Southern man (see section 6.3.1). While the British government continually restrict safe, legal routes to the UK, they simultaneously shift the blame for migrant and refugee deaths in the Mediterranean onto dark-skinned smugglers (Sirriyeh, 2018). As Saucier and Woods (2014: p71) put it "black hands appear to be the cause today of black death, not white ones". Often this has resulted in the British government using obscure maritime laws to criminalise the refugees on board the small boats: "If someone who is aboard such a vessel, then, touches the tiller, oars, or steering device, they are liable to be arrested under anti-smuggling laws." (Davies et al, p2318).

The western representation of the dangerous boat crossings made by 'illegal' migrants excludes the colonial history of these boat crossings and what, Danewid (2017) inspired by Paul Gilroy, terms the 'Black Mediterranean'. As Danewid (2017: p1680) argues we must "place the contemporary migrant crisis in the context of Europe's constitutive history of empire, colonial conquest, and transatlantic slavery." As Saucier and Woods (2014: p6) continue "antiblack violence in the Mediterranean basin has its roots in the earliest racial slave trade in which Italian merchants funded Portuguese raiders across the Mediterranean Sea and down the Atlantic coast of Africa". Through this historical perspective we can see the movement of racialised bodies through the Mediterranean Sea is nothing new and nothing spontaneous. Instead, this movement is a continuation of European colonialism. The Mediterranean basin, therefore, is a site of power for European nations; a site of power that has consistently been used throughout history to exploit and endanger non-White, non-European lives. Furthermore, as Davies et al (2021) find, immigration and border controls were first tested in the colonies, and specifically at the port cities such as Mumbai. As El-Enany (2020) argues these controls paved the way for the immigration controls that would come into effect at mainland Britain's borders in years to come (see section 6.5.3).

The media's representation is of people from the global South "having arrived in Britain 'suddenly', 'unpredictably' and 'unexpectedly'" (El-Enany, 2020: p145). However, as El-Enany continues, these arrivals are entirely predictable if we delve into the historical colonial ties between their country of origin and Europe. As Danewid explains

> Libya and Eritrea were Italian colonies until 1947; Somalia was ruled by Italy and Britain until 1960; Syria was a French protectorate under the Mandate System until 1946; Britain invaded and occupied Afghanistan three times until formal independence in 1919 (2017: p1680).

By erasing the history of colonialism from the contemporary discussions of migration to Europe, both the European media and European governments are able to solidify "the belief that the Mediterranean crisis originates outside of Europe – and that Europe, as a result, is an innocent bystander" (Danewid, 2017: p1680). In this way, Middle Eastern and Black African men actively travelling to Europe are successfully represented as "dangerous classes" that need to be policed through brutal, and often deadly, border restrictions (Saucier and Woods, 2014: p58). Simultaneously, European governments claim that stronger border restrictions deter people from making the perilous journey, although in reality they have the opposite effect. As Davies et al (2021: p2322) argues, "the Channel has become, then, yet another site for the symbolic and material manifestations of the deadly afterlife of colonialism."

Through a semiological analysis of a photograph of refugee men on a boat (Photo 1), I have shown that both the British media and the government use these images to represent refugee men as illegal and threatening, therefore justify stronger border controls. The government suggests that these border controls will reduce the number of threatening refugee men travelling to Britain, whereas in fact they simply make their journeys much more dangerous. Meanwhile, by representing the movement of refugee men towards Britain and Europe as a spontaneous crisis, the British media and government simultaneously ignore the colonial ties between Britain and Europe and the refugee's country of origin, and further ignore how the movement of racialised bodies via boat was a critical part of the transatlantic slave trade and European colonialism.

6.2.2 Surveillance and categorisation: Using mugshots as proof of criminality

While Middle Eastern and Black African men in boats are predicted to cause danger to our communities if they make it to Britain, criminal mugshots are used as proof of their danger (Banks, 2011).

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 2: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 7 August 2018. Available: Asylum seeker who raped student in Hull is jailed for 16 years | Daily Mail Online

The instantly recognisable form of the mugshot is based on its supposed simplicity. As Photo 2 demonstrates, we see a head-and-shoulders shot of the criminal, in this case a Black African man, who looks directly into the camera. The individual is not displaying any emotion which, as Bleiker et al (2013) argue, is important for connection. The photograph is close-up so that we can see nothing else in the frame and the background is plain grey. There are no personal belongings and nothing to identify the character of the individual photographed except for their face. In this way the photograph is deliberately decontextualised (Lashmar, 2014).

While we do not know for certain the circumstances in the photograph without reading the story alongside it, in the western mind this decontextualised image suggests the criminality of the refugee man. First used in the nineteenth century, as Finn (2009: p1) argues, "the police mug shot has become an icon in contemporary visual culture." Indeed, mugshots have become the key indicator of criminality because they are instantly recognisable and are readily available to the general public through the media (Lashmar, 2014). In this way the audience are surrounded by photographs that prove the criminality of both individuals and social groups (in this case Middle Eastern and Black African male refugees and asylum seekers). As Banks (2011: p306) argues "whether or not the individual has been found guilty and convicted of the offence is likely to matter little as the emotionally loaded mug shot is typically associated with someone who has already been determined guilty."

To understand the purpose of the mugshot, I will explore the context in which it came into being. As Lashmar (2014) explains, the nineteenth century saw a significant amount of change through the industrial revolution, technological advancements and the expansion of the European empires. The industrial revolution and advancements in transport led to increasing urbanisation in countries like the UK. This meant that it was easier for people to move, most of whom moved on mass to the newly developed big cities. This also meant that it was easier for criminals to move and escape making it more difficult for the police to capture and keep track of them. The solution lay in another invention of the time – the camera (Carney, 2010). For the first time the police had photographs of criminals which they could pass among different police forces. As Carney (2010) explains, when the mass media print was introduced around the same period, these photographs could also be viewed by the whole population and criminals could be surveilled by both the police themselves and the general public.

The explicit purpose of the criminal mugshot was identification. As Finn states this served two functions:

> One, it could be used to keep an individual under surveillance while not in police custody; two, the archived photograph could be used as evidence of an individual's criminal identity if he or she were arrested at a later date and gave a false name to avoid increased penalties associated with recidivism (2009: pxviii).

As Rose (2016: p122) states "there is a sense in which the camera is an instrument that records what was in front of its lens when the shutter snapped." It is therefore believed that the photograph accurately and objectively identifies the individual. Indeed, those who were arrested also believe this and as Finn (2009) argues it was, and still is, common for those who have been arrested to twist and turn in order to avoid getting a clear photograph taken. The power of the visual to identify criminals is also seen through a number of other visual techniques used by the police force, such as CCTV images (Hayward, 2010).

Identifying individuals as criminal through mugshots also has another function – to shame. The mugshot was introduced in a period where the physical act of branding criminals was declining. The mugshot meant that individuals could still be branded and shamed but in a different, and arguably more powerful, way (Lashmar, 2014). The power of the mugshot was, and continues to be, its reach due to the mass circulation of newspapers. Previously, prisoners could only be shamed by those directly in front of them who could see the brand on their skin. The introduction of mugshots in the mass media meant that the branding of these new criminals reached audiences far and wide. As Carney (2010: p21) argues "our own age of 'naming and shaming' in and through the image was born at this moment." The

mugshot was used not only to shame the criminals but to emphasise the power of the police who have caught and branded the criminal individual (Finn, 2009).

So far, I have shown how the mugshot has been used to identify and stigmatise individual criminals. However, the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of the modern school of criminology with its focus on criminal anthropology and positivism (Horn, 2003). Through this school of criminology mugshots became a way of classification whole groups as well as identifying individuals. The key difference with the modern school of criminology, championed by the work of Cesaire Lombroso, was its focus on the body as an object of study. While the classical school of criminology focused on the specific crimes committed, the modern school of criminology focused on the specific bodies committing crimes (Horn, 2003). “According to Lombroso, criminality could be read directly from the body and, by extension, captured in its visual representation” (Finn, 2009: p3). By looking at images of criminals, criminal anthropologists believed that we could begin to see patterns in which bodies committed crime. The most dangerous of these bodies, according to Lombroso, was the ‘born criminal’ who is destined to commit crime and cannot be reformed.

As Finn (2009: p17) states “a chief result of the work of Lombroso and contemporary criminologists was to provide a scientific basis for existing theories on society and social structure.” Therefore, modern criminologists used science to justify the current hierarchies in society and the exclusion of certain groups. As was mentioned earlier, these developments took place at a time when European colonialism was at its peak. The rhetoric of the dangerous dark-skinned savage that justified colonialism was also influential to the image of the criminal: “The result was a new conception of the criminal subject. As nonwhite, non-Western, sexually deviant and animalistic, his or her criminality was readily apparent on the skin” (Finn, 2009: p19). It was also important for criminal anthropologists to link White, European criminals to non-European ‘savages’ by showing their resemblance. (Horn, 2003). It is worth remembering that those who were in the position to categorise criminals were “higher class, usually well-educated and mostly men and all white” (Lashmar, 2014: p70).

Therefore, returning back to postcolonial othering, we can clearly see here, that White criminal anthropologists used mugshots to emphasise the racialised hierarchy that had been produced by the European empires to other racialised people as born criminals. This racist othering through mugshots can still be seen in my sample with the Black man in Photo 2 being presented as criminal. As Banks (2011: p294) states “mug shots or images of asylum seekers under apprehension for criminal offences substantiate the true nature of such groups and individuals.” The media, therefore, presents mugshots such as Photo 2 as proof that racialised refugee men that we see on boats travelling to the UK are dangerous and

must be blocked from entering, thus justifying stricter border controls and harsher punishments. “The asylum seeker, as we expected, is not a friend but an enemy and our failure to act has resulted in the victimisation of Britain and/or its citizens” (Banks, 2011: p305).

Overall, then, the content visual data analysis showed that the British newspaper media other Middle Eastern and Black African men as criminal in two ways: through illegal travel, primarily in boats, and through proof of criminality, primarily through the use of mugshots. Through the semiological visual data analysis I have explored these otherings in more depth, finding that the British newspaper media othering of racialised refugee men echoes the European imperialists othering of racialised men during the period of colonialism. Where, during the period of the empires, these representations were predominantly used by Britain and other European countries to justify the invasions of ‘uncivilised’ countries, they are now used by these same countries to justify ever harsher border controls to stop refugees from current and former colonial countries entering Britain and Europe. This representation is important because, as I have already shown in the content visual data analysis, it is predominantly refugee men of colour that are represented in UK newspaper photographs. Therefore, it is the criminal man of colour that British newspaper readers are most likely to see.

6.3 The Muslim woman: Victim or threat?

In the content visual data analysis, I showed that a large proportion of refugee women in my sample were photographed wearing clothing that is synonymous with Islam, predominantly through the veil. Here I explore the media representations of veiled Muslim women in more depth, arguing that they are represented in two ways. Firstly, I will show that they are represented as submissive and vulnerable victims of oppressive Muslim men. Secondly, I will show that they can be represented as threats, in particular as terrorists, although this representation is rarer. I will argue that the first representation is dependent on Muslim women being kept at a distance from the West and showing passive behaviour. When Muslim women are shown as actively coming into proximity with the West, the representations shift from victim to threat.

I will explore this shift in my sample within the context of Shamima Begum, the British-born Muslim woman who, in 2015, left Britain to join ISIS when she was a teenager. Begum returned to the headlines in February 2019 when she was found in a refugee camp trying to return to Britain. As I will show, during this period the visual representation of Muslim refugee women moved from submissive and vulnerable to dangerous and threatening. This is despite the fact that Begum herself was not a refugee. Prominent to this shift was the move

from Muslim women being dressed in a combination of Islamic and western clothing to solely Islamic clothing (see Chart 12). Therefore, while MacDonald (2006: p8) argues that the media "rarely differentiate between styles of Muslim clothing", I argue that in this instance the difference between the headscarf combined with Western clothing and full Islamic dress such as the chador, niqab or burka are important in the distinction between submissive and threatening Muslim women.

Chart 12: Islamic clothing on women

6.3.1 The Muslim woman as a passive victim

Photo 3 shows an archetypal image of the submissive Muslim woman. The lone Middle Eastern woman is photographed sitting on the floor. She has her head covered and is wearing black long-sleeved clothing. The rest of her body is covered by a dark blue blanket. She has her knees tucked into her chest with her hands on top and her head leaning on her hands. Her gaze is down towards the ground. While the woman's head is covered, importantly we can see her face and register her emotion. We can feel pity towards this woman, firstly because we can see that she is visibly upset, but also because she is sat in a passive non-threatening position. As Ticktin (2017: p582) argues the innocence of racialised women is based on their passivity; "they are seen as without agency, docile, and in need of rescue." In the background we can see a bunk bed which the individual is leaning on. There is a duvet on the bottom bunk where we might assume the woman is sleeping. The top bunk appears to be empty adding to the feeling of the woman as alone. The bedding is plain blue and the walls behind are also plain except for two plug sockets. The photograph has been coded as domesticity because of the bedding, however the plainness of the room suggests that perhaps this is not the woman's home, and this adds to the feeling of pity that we have towards this woman who is shown as lost and alone.

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Photo 3: Photograph taken from The Guardian on 15 July 2019. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/15/it-is-like-a-slow-death-seriously-ill-nauru-refugees-remain-trapped-amid-delays

In the western imagination the veil has become the key symbol of Islam (Allen, 2015). This, as Zakaria (2017: p108) argues is because "the veil, whether it is a full- or half-face veil or a headscarf, is one of the most visible symbols of Muslim identity." Therefore, the veil provides a visible indicator of the Muslimness of the woman in Photo 3. This is despite the fact that veils are also used in Jewish, Christian and Hindu practices (MacDonald, 2006). Because of this visibility veiled women are predominantly the victims of Islamophobically motivated attacks (Allen, 2015). While the veil renders Muslim women visible, they also simultaneously make them invisible. As Allen (2015: p300) argues "because veiled Muslim women become the symbol of Islam and Muslims, so the individualities and particularities are reduced and duly essentialised within that same symbol." The individual women then become homogenised and therefore dehumanised; they are only seen in the context of their veil. For example, Allen's (2015) research discusses White British Muslim women who are mistaken for Afghani and Pakistani women because of their dress. The symbol of the veil becomes more important than any other feature of the woman, including in this instance, nationality and race.

Scholars exploring the veil have agreed that the traditional stereotypical representation in the West is of veiled Muslim women as oppressed by Muslim men (Eltantawy, 2013; Alhayek, 2014; Al-Hejin, 2015). Using Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity, we can argue that the western media and politicians other Muslim women as objects of pity while simultaneously othering

Muslim men in particular and Islam more widely as objects of denunciation by representing them as the persecutors of the pain that Muslim women experience. Because the Western media show a supposed victim of violence (the Muslim woman) and a perpetrator of violence (the Muslim man), this adds to the idea that the West need to intervene; that Muslim women cannot liberate themselves without the guidance of the White civilised Westerner (Spivak, 1988). Indeed, western powers have repeatedly used this rhetoric since the colonial period, with European imperialists arguing that the veil was a key indicator of the oppression of women (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Zakaria 2017). More recently, the same rhetoric has been recycled by western powers in the USA and Europe to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the 'War on Terror' following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York. As Abu-Lughod (2002: p784) explains, during the War on Terror the western media offered images that "worked to artificially divide the world into separate spheres – recreating an imaginative geography of West versus East, us versus Muslims, cultures in which First Ladies gave speeches versus others where women shuffle around silently in burqas."

Importantly, by framing these invasions as saving Muslim women, western powers are able to ignore their roles in the oppression of Muslim women.

> One of the most successful, if devious, means of repressing any acknowledgement of rapacious intent was to construct colonial or imperial interventions as missions to rescue women from the brutality and oppression signified by the veil (MacDonald, 2006: p9).

The physical and structural harm towards civilians in Muslim countries, including women, during colonisation and the more recent Western invasions are justified as necessary in order to free the oppressed Muslim female population (Hirschkind and Mahmood, 2002).

By focusing on the veil and the process of unveiling as the ultimate sign of liberation, western powers and the western media ignore more pressing structural issues facing Muslim women. Khiabany and Williamson (2008: p82), discussing Afghan women's organisations, argue that "their priorities are more basic – feeding their children, becoming literate, and living free from violence, a violence that is both domestic and international in its manifestations." Furthermore, the obsession with the oppressive veil ignores the various reasons why Muslim women actively choose to wear the veil and their differing experiences as veiled Muslim women (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Khiabany and Williamson, 2008).

Zakaria (2017) also argues that the process of unveiling can often be a violent one where powerful western countries force their ideals upon Muslim women. As MacDonald (2006: p9) states "the metaphoric desire to "unveil" alien cultures by "laying them bare" and bringing them into conformity with the ideological norms of the dominating power has a long discursive history amongst Western colonialists and imperialists." In other words, the invasion of Muslim

countries and the unveiling of Muslim women is often part of an act of western power and domination rather than of genuine care towards the women. However, the voices of Muslim women are routinely ignored (Piela, 2013) with the spotlight continually returning back to the oppressive veil and the insistence on western intervention to liberate Muslim women by unveiling them (see also section 6.5.2). As Hirschkind and Mahmood (2002: p352-353) succinctly put it “a Muslim woman can only be one of two things, either uncovered, and therefore liberated, or veiled, and thus still to some degree, subordinate.”

What is important to remember here is that the British media’s archetypical image of the submissive victim is based on Muslim women who are at a distance and show no signs of actively coming anywhere closer to us (see the passivity of the Muslim woman in Photo 3). The victimisation is used as a justification for the West to go over ‘there’ and intervene, not for ‘them’ to come to the West. As I will now show, when Muslim women are represented as in proximity and exercising agency, the pity western audiences feel towards them can turn to fear (Boltanski, 1999). The British media, public and politicians no longer treat the Muslim women as passive victims. Instead, they are treated as active threats. While much of the previous literature links the full Islamic dress (i.e., burka, niqab or chador) with submission, in my sample of images, I argue that the British newspaper media use the full Islamic dress to portray the threat of the Muslim woman.

6.3.2 The case of Shamima Begum: From victim to threat

Photo 4 shows Shamima Begum holding her baby who we now know is dead. She is wearing a chador and is facing the camera. While she is dressed in full Islamic clothing, the choice of the chador means that we can see her face clearly. It is important for the audience to be able to identify that this individual is Shamima Begum, and this photograph contrasts with most of the other photographs of Middle Eastern women in this period where they are photographed in burkas or niqabs (see photo 5). The British media often contrast the photograph of Begum in the chador with the CCTV image from 2015 when she left the UK to join ISIS. In that image Begum is dressed in western clothing with an Islamic headscarf. Therefore, by contrasting these two photographs we are shown that Begum no longer conforms to western norms and is thus an external threat. In the background of the photograph are white tents, the closest of which we can see is emblazoned with the UNHCR logo. This suggests the location of this photograph is a refugee camp. There is also clothing hanging up on washing lines, which alongside the tents, suggests that there are people living here.

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Photo 4: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 8 March 2019. Available Shamima Begum's son has died in ISIS refugee camp, her lawyer claims | Daily Mail Online

Shamima Begum first made headlines in 2015 when, alongside two schoolfriends, she left her home in Bethnal Green to join ISIS in Syria. Initially, as Farnham (2019) explains, British media coverage victimised the teenage girls as being the prey of grooming gangs. During this period, the girls "victimisation relies on either an external Other (a "bad" and foreign Muslim man), or an internal Other (their family), to be held accountable for the girls' extremist Islamic radicalisation." (Farnham, 2019). This representation very much agrees with the submissive Muslim woman stereotype where Muslim women are represented as victims of oppressive Muslim men, meanwhile western societal factors that could have played a role in drawing the girls to ISIS are ignored. However, when Shamima Begum returned back to headlines in 2019 after being found in a refugee camp trying to return to the

UK, the media had stripped her of the submissive victim stereotype (see photo 4). Instead, the British media and the government represented Begum as a threat and someone who needed to be excluded from British society, with the then Home Secretary Sajid Javid even stripping her of her citizenship.

The threat of Shamima Begum correlates with the western representation of the threat of the fully veiled Muslim woman that came into existence following the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent 'War on Terror'. While the western media and governments represented Muslim women in Middle Eastern countries as submissive and in need of saving, they represented Muslim women that came into proximity with the West as threatening terrorists (Zakaria, 2017). Through these tactics, the British, and western, media and governments expand the security narrative that traditionally demonises men of colour as dangerous threats to include a specific group of women – Muslim women who are fully veiled in proximity with the West. Therefore, as Boltanski (1999) argues, pity turns to fear and unveiling now becomes seen in the West as a way of protecting western citizens rather than liberating Muslim women.

Indeed, a number of veil bans have come into force throughout the western world (Zakaria 2017). While the United Kingdom has not banned the veil, we have seen instances of senior politicians calling on Muslim women to be unveiled including Jack Straw in 2006 when he was the then Labour leader of the Commons, arguing that Muslim women wearing niqabs was threatening community relations (Khiabany and Williamson, 2008). This western notion of the threat of the veil and the insistence on unveiling in order to reduce threat again emphasises the supposed racial hierarchy where western practices are shown to be the ideal. As Hirschkind and Mahmood (2002: p350) argue "the implicit suggestion is that any departure from Western culture and political norms becomes a threat to all aspects of our lives, from our political system to our private pleasures."

Photo 5, which appeared in the Daily Mail during the same period that Shamima Begum returned into the headlines, shows a medium group of women and children. The four women are dressed in niqabs and none of them are facing us. Therefore, in contrast to the photograph of Shamima Begum, these individuals are anonymous to us.

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 5: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 12 March 2019. Available: Iraq agrees to take back 20,000 ISIS wives and their children being held at refugee camps in Syria | Daily Mail Online

This anonymisation contrasts with the submissive victim portrayal in Photo 3 where we could clearly see the individual's face and her emotion and therefore develop sympathy for her. There are also three children in the photograph; two of which are being carried by the women and one of which is sitting leaning against one of the women with her eyes closed. The colourful clothing of the children is in contrast to the black niqabs. As Piela (2013: p784) argues, niqabs can come in different shapes and colours, however "mainstream photographs of niqabis are dominated by black… often composed so that women's silhouettes merge into a homogenous, dehumanized, monochromatic background, emphasizes this contriving signification of niqabis as a 'silent mass.'" While the women are dehumanised into a silent mass, the children are individualised, and their innocence is portrayed through their bright clothing. The location looks like a derelict building, and we can see some illegible red writing or graffiti on the brick wall. Discussing a previous image with a similar background, Piela (2013: p784) argues that "the background, composed of a weathered brick wall and a dusty road, intensifies the impression of gloom and suggests poverty and civilizational backwardness, typical ways of framing the Oriental Other." The threat of the Muslim woman is exacerbated by her supposedly uncivilised living conditions which are differentiated from the civilised West.

The threat of the fully veiled Muslim woman, particularly those wearing the niqab or burka where almost all of the face is covered, as is the case in Photo 5, is based on power

dynamics and the notion of visibility versus invisibility. Returning once again to the western gaze, Batziou (2011: p49) argues that photographers, and consequently the audience of photographs, are in a powerful position over those being photographed because ""'we' can look at 'them' undisturbed, we can observe and examine the 'others' and appropriate them." As Zakaria (2017) argues we live in a surveillance society where those who hold the power (the West) can keep watch and hold control over others. Islamic dress such as the niqab and the burka problematise the traditional power relations associated with the western gaze precisely because they are able to keep the Muslim woman underneath it invisible. Indeed, as Zakaria (2017) explains, this invisibility and anonymity is one reason why Muslim women may choose to wear the veil. She notes that "invisibility can be a means of altering the power dynamic of a particular environment in a way that cedes control to women who may not otherwise have it" (Zakaria, 2017: p55). In these cases, Batziou's (2011) statement is reversed as Sotsky (2013: p797) states "the veil creates a power dynamic in which wearers can gaze without being fully exposed to others."

It is no wonder then that the western media, who rely on the western gaze to re-iterate the dominant representations associated with the anti-immigrant narrative, treat these groups of Muslim women with suspicion and fear. The media use the anonymity and invisibility of the fully veiled women to add to their perceived threat – we cannot identify these women; we cannot know their intentions therefore we must be suspicious and fearful of them. This is similar to the finding by Banks (2011) who, as I mentioned earlier, found that the media used photographs of male asylum seekers with their faces and/or bodies obscured, and therefore anonymous, to emphasise the possibility of deviant behaviour. Consequently, in order to restore the western gaze these Muslim women have to be unveiled.

This invisible threat was important in the context of Shamima Begum. As Chart 12 shows, during the period that Begum re-emerged in the UK media, the same media shifted their visual representations of refugee Muslim women by photographing them in full Islamic dress such as Photo 5. Two-thirds of the newspaper photographs of women (12 out of 18) in full Islamic dress show women in burkas or niqabs where only the women's eyes are visible. The other six photographs, including two of Shamima Begum, showed women in chadors where the women's face is almost fully visible. That most of the women in the photographs were wearing niqabs or burkas, such as those in Photo 5, added to the sense of threat through anonymity that simultaneously worked alongside the notoriety of Shamima Begum who had to be identifiable.

The case of Shamima Begum also highlights the importance of the intersections of age, gender and race in the representation of Muslim women, as well as how these intersect with distance and dress. The media's victimisation of Begum when she first left the UK to join ISIS was based on her being a brainwashed schoolgirl. However, now that she is an adult who has had children of her own, Begum has moved from the innocent child to dangerous adult. Added to this is the gender dimension with the media representing Begum as going against the western stereotypical imaginations of femininity and instead being a 'bad mum; a woman whose actions have led to her child's death. As Labenski (2019) argues "at no point in the reporting of her story was there a concern for the children that she lost, rather it served as a reinforcement of the ways in which she had defied her gender."

Begum's race also played a part in this representation as an external threat. While Shamima Begum was born, raised and radicalised in the UK, the fact that she was Middle Eastern and had a family connection to Bangladesh (even though she had never been to Bangladesh nor had Bangladeshi citizenship), meant that the media and the government could represent her as not British enough (Ahsan, 2019). This representation led the then Home Secretary Sajid Javid to strip Begum of her British citizenship, much to the applause of the media and some of the general public. As Ahsan (2019) argues "this sets a worrying precedent that the penalty is higher for those born of immigrants who commit certain crimes, than it is for white Britons." While Begum was undoubtedly British, her race and religion meant that she was represented as not deemed British enough.

In the content visual data analysis, I showed that the British newspaper media predominantly other racialised refugee women through their Islamic dress. Through the semiological visual data analysis, I have shown that the British media and government use this Islamic dress to produce two contrasting representations of Muslim women and that these contrasting representations are reliant on agency and distance. As Nazeer (2018) writes, "there are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, many of whom are pioneering women doctors, lawyers, architects and politicians, but we never see any of them on screen." Instead, the British media represent Muslim women through a dual construction: submissive victims or security threats. I have shown how the British newspaper media shift between these constructions depending on their, and the British government's, agenda.

Whether the British media classifies a Muslim woman as a submissive victim or security threat depends on distance and agency. When the British media represent a Muslim woman as passive and distant, they are able to employ a politics of pity, where the western media and its audience see the individual as an oppressed victim of Muslim men and in need of western help. In this representation, the western media are able to work alongside western

governments to justify the devastating invasions of non-Western countries. However, when the British media represents a Muslim woman as active and in proximity to the West, pity moves to fear, and the western media and its audience see the individual as an external threat who must be kept out. In my sample, the British newspaper media represented innocence and victimhood through an Islamic headscarf with western clothing while threat was represented through full Islamic dress. The threat of the full Islamic dress is related to the way that it challenges the traditional power imbalance of the western gaze. In both cases the western media's focus is on the unveiling of Muslim women despite calls from Muslim women themselves about the diverse reasons that they choose to wear the veil. Indeed, it could be argued that Shamima Begum and her lawyers picked up on this unveiling when, in a UK media interview in September 2021 where she asked for her British citizenship to be reinstated, Begum took on an image which is acceptable in the west by wearing a vest top showing her shoulders and a baseball cap with her long hair down and straight.

The western obsession with the veil has real detrimental effects for Muslim women throughout the world. With the British government and the media representing the veil as a symbol of 'oppressive' Islam, Muslim women are far more likely to be the victims of verbal and physical Islamophobic attacks by far-right activists and white supremacists. For example, UK service 'Tell MAMA,' a phoneline for Muslim people to report Islamophobic attacks, found that 80% of the recorded Islamophobic incidents in public spaces targeted veiled or other visibly recognisable Muslim women (Allen, 2015: p292). With regards to the treatment of refugees, the British government, with help from the British media, use the threat of the Muslim terrorist and the alleged repressive practices of Islam to justify increasing border controls.

6.4 The genuineness of distant families

In contrast to the active criminal refugee man, through my content visual data analysis, I found that when adults were photographed with children, the British newspaper media represented them as genuine refugee families. I found that this genuineness was shown in two ways. Firstly, the media showed refugee families contained at a distance in precarious conditions, namely in refugee camps. Secondly, refugee children themselves were shown as innocent and genuine through being photographed with symbols of childhood such as toys. I will now discuss both of these representations, using Photos 6 and 7 as illustrations.

6.4.1 The Camp

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 6: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 10 January 2019. Available: British ISIS family 'captured hiding among refugees in Syria' | Daily Mail Online

Photo 6 shows a group of women and children in a camp. The photograph is taken at a long-distance so we cannot see distinguishable features of the refugees but those that we can see seem to be Middle Eastern. The distance that the audience feel from the refugees in this photograph is reinforced both by the longshot of the photograph and also by the barbed wire that is at the forefront of the photograph which separates the audience from the refugees. Barbed wire has commonly been used as a containment method since the establishment of camps. For Barder (2016), as barbed wire was initially used to contain cattle, using barbed wire for camps has the effect of dehumanising the refugees. Furthermore, western governments often use barbed wire at border crossings (as in Photo 10) and in prison settings thus criminalising the refugees (Lenette, 2017). Therefore, through showing the refugees on the other side of barbed wire to the audience, the media emphasises the need to contain refugees. While they are contained in the camps the western audience can feel pity for them, however if they escape and start moving towards the West this pity will turn into fear precisely because the western media and governments criminalise the refugees (Boltanski, 1999). The Daily Mail headline also criminalises the refugees in the photograph with the threat that the adult women that the audience can see may be ISIS brides. Indeed, there are two women fully veiled in the centre of the photograph with, as I explored in Section 6.3.2, the western media and governments using the full Islamic to represent Muslim women as security threats.

The refugees are shown to be walking and standing along a pathway with a large number of uniform tents either side of them and also in the background. The number of tents emphasises the idea of a large-scale crisis and thus the importance of the refugees being contained and not moving *en masse* to the UK. The uniformity of the tents also serves to dehumanise the refugees, showing them as one large group rather than individuals with unique stories (Lenette and Miskovic, 2018). There are blankets on the barbed wire which could have been put there to give the residents of the camp some privacy. We can also see clothes hanging on a line. This mundane, everyday task is in stark contrast to the exceptional conditions that the refugees find themselves in (see also Drainville and Saeed, 2013). Also visible are large telephone masts and wires stretching above the camp. This could be an example of the slow violence that Mayblin (2019) discusses, where refugees are subject to potentially hazardous conditions and both the barren land and dull skies add to the gloominess of this photograph. Furthermore, as Lenette (2017: p6) argues "images of refugees living in inhospitable conditions can convey strong connotations of poverty and low socioeconomic status, which can also be associated with risk factors leading to deviancy and criminal behaviour."

While Folkers and Marquardt (2016) explain that tents by their nature allow for mobility, throughout history western powers have actually used camps full of tents to control and restrict the mobility of certain groups of people. In the western psyche the most prominent example of this was the concentration camps set up by the Nazis to contain Jews, and other groups deemed undesirable, during World War Two. However, the use of the camp has a much longer history with European empires using camps to contain the movement of racialised populations during colonialism (Davies and Isakjee, 2018). What we see in Photo 6 then is a repetition of the containment of racialised populations by western powers that has existed since the period of the European empires. However, this time the containment is done under the guise of westerm humanitarian intervention (Ramadan, 2013).

These similarities are emphasised, as Mayblin (2019) argues, by the fact that those who are contained in refugee camps are predominantly people of colour from former European colonies. As Davies and Isakjee (2018: p215), in their findings from the informal camps in Calais, argue "it is not insignificant that all fifteen nationalities we located in the camp were from countries that were once subjugated by European rule." Through containment, western powers use refugee camps as spaces of exclusion where they trap people who have been forced to leave their origin countries at a distance, in similar ways to the colonies and plantations centuries before. In Obradović-Wochnik and Bird's (2020: p53) research of camps along the Balkan Route, European governments also maintained this distancing by

ensuring that camps are “set well away from urban or commercial centres… indicative of how attempts are made continually to segregate refugee populations from local populations.”

As I have already noted, camps are also often spaces of violence, and in particular slow violence where:

> The bodies of those who are excluded are not simply killed by (or in the name of) the sovereign, however, they are allowed to die in the name of prioritising a clearly defined society of the deserving or legitimate populous (Mayblin, 2019: p39).

Slow violence can take the form of abandonment where refugees are left in unsanitary, overcrowded camps with little food, water, heating or medical care (Davies and Isakjee, 2018). In the case of Photo 6, slow violence takes the form of unsafe telephone masts and wires. This kind of slow violence is in contrast to the more visible forms of violence that takes place at borders (see Section 6.5.3). Simultaneously, western powers subject refugees to surveillance “through techniques of vision, headcounts, situation reports and the management of space and movement” (Ramadan, 2013: p68). Again, as Mayblin’s (2019) quote above shows, slow violence and control relates to colonialism as it is those who are placed at the bottom of the racial hierarchy that are continually subject to these measures.

Because the media photographs show people in refugee camps as contained at a distance and passively waiting, the British government, media and public can feel sympathy for the refugees while also ignoring their responsibility towards them (Boltanski, 1999). In Johnson’s exploration of the photographs used by the UNHCR, she finds that

> These images are of a woman and child fleeing war and persecution, placed next to an appeal for financial support but not, it must be recognised, next to an appeal to the public to pressure their governments to increase the number of refugees they accept for resettlement. (2011: p1017-1018)

Therefore, the containment and passivity of the refugees in the camps is important for creating sympathy (Szörényi, 2018). I will discuss this more in Section 6.5.2 where distancing is emphasised by the White saviour.

Overall, through using Photo 6 as an illustration, I have shown that the genuineness of refugee families is reliant on their containment at a distance through the refugee camp. This distance is achieved in Photo 6 through the long distance shot and the barbed wire which separates the audience from the refugees while simultaneously keeping the refugees contained. Tents represent the temporariness of the situation of refugees in camps – this is not supposed to be their permanent residence. They are in a state of waiting, either to return to their origin country or to move onwards. However, as Ramadan’s (2013) work on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon finds, refugees can be stuck in these situations for decades. While the British newspaper images show adults and children together as

contained and passive in order to establish genuineness, the genuineness of children is dependent on them conforming to the western norms of childhood. I will now move on to discuss this representation.

6.4.2 The innocence of childhood

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 7: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 10 June 2018. Available: Shocking photos reveal Syrian refugee children as young as six working on the streets in Lebanon | Daily Mail Online

Photo 7 shows a Middle Eastern girl with her back to the camera holding a windmill toy. She is dressed in red clothing and her toy is multi-coloured. The colourfulness of the child and her toy is in stark contrast to the greyness of the location in the background. It looks as though she is standing at the side of a road with a grey building on the other side. There is a blurred car driving past her; the blurriness suggesting that it is driving at speed which indicates a dangerous environment for the child who it seems is looking at the toy in her hand. In the bottom-left corner of the photograph we can see that this photograph was originally published by the NGO 'International Rescue Committee'. This adds to the genuineness of the child who seems to be being supported by a humanitarian organisation.

As I have already argued in the previous section, the British newspaper media show adults as genuine when they are photographed with children. This is because, as Ticktin (2017: p577) argues, "there is perhaps no more essential image of innocence than that of a child."

In the British mindset, children have been the emblem of vulnerability, dependency and passivity since the Victorian period. The British media show children as without agency and therefore are able to represent genuine refugees (Sirriyeh, 2018). Thus, it is child refugees that the media, the government and the general public give the most sympathy to, as we have seen in high-profile cases such as Alan Kurdi (Adler-Nissen et al, 2019) and baby Asha in Australia (Tonkiss, 2020).

The British newspaper media often show the innocence of child refugees through photographing them with objects that symbolise western childhood such as toys and children's clothing (see Photo 7; Ryan and Tonkiss, 2016). These representations of childhood are often juxtaposed with the exceptional circumstances and environments that the child finds themselves in (Sirriyeh, 2018). Therefore, the British media often compare child refugees to British, and western, children. This comparison was clear after the death of Alan Kurdi where #CouldBeMyChild started trending on social media platforms (El-Enany, 2016) and newspaper journalists often compared Kurdi's body on the beach to European children playing in the same location (Sirriyeh, 2018).

It is important to remember that the passive child was not always the ideal, genuine refugee. When the 1951 Refugee Convention was first created the ideal refugee was the active, political man defecting to the West from the Soviet Union. However, as the origin of asylum seekers shifted towards the global south, the representation of the genuine refugee also shifted from active man to passive woman and child (Johnson, 2011).

> Thus, while in the past children struggled to be recognised as refugees because of their perceived lack of political engagement, this reinterpretation of the refugee identity means that young child refugees are now *the* image of the deserving refugee. (Sirriyeh, 2018: p60: emphasis in original).

Portraying children as the most genuine refugees has the consequence of infantilising refugees (Greenbank, 2014) and juxtaposing them with dangerous adults, particularly active adult men who, as a result, cannot be genuine refugees (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). As Ticktin (2017: p582) explains "we see that innocence is part of a conceptual apparatus that demarcates human kinds, purporting to value the most naïve, the most inactive, the most childlike." Again, this infantilising relates to the lack of agency that child refugees are perceived to have and the western media often vilify those that go against this stereotype. For example, Ticktin (2017) argues that the western media and governments often refer to child soldiers or children who are shown to be actively crossing borders as 'youth' or 'teens,' instead of as children. Furthermore, as Sirriyeh (2018: p61) when child refugees reach their 'teenage' years, particularly when the refugees are teenage males, the media representations shift from emblems of innocence to emblems of threat.

Overall, I have shown that the British newspaper media often represent families and children as genuine refugee groups. The genuineness of refugee families is based on their containment and passivity, with the media most commonly showing them contained in camps at a distance and with little chance to move onwards. Meanwhile, passive children shown through western representations of childhood are often used as the symbolic refugee against which everything is compared. This was clearly shown in the western media representations of Alan Kurdi (Szörényi, 2018), whose genuineness was contrasted with his father, who in the days after Kurdi's death was rumoured to be a people smuggler and therefore responsible for his son's death (Sirriyeh, 2018). Genuine refugees must be shown to be passive, lacking any agency and therefore innocent and vulnerable. They are represented in the British media as completely dependent on the West who are shown to be the caring adult; a technique that was reinforced during the period of empire and continues to be reinforced in the postcolonial British society. Meanwhile, when children move to adulthood and their behaviour simultaneously moves from passive to active, the British media start to represent them as threats, particularly if they are male, as I have already shown in Section 6.2. I will now compare the genuine refugees to the non-genuine refugees through the media photographs of the White saviour and White border.

6.5 White Saviour versus White Border

In the previous sections I have focused on how the British newspaper media other refugees differently based on their gender and age. I will now discuss how the British newspaper media represent refugees of colour as racialised others. As I explained in the content visual data analysis, refugees are predominantly shown as either Middle Eastern or Black African. In contrast, non-refugees are predominantly shown as White. Using ideas of whiteness and White privilege I will explore how non-refugees are predominantly depicted as White saviours (Photo 8) or White borders (Photo 9) and how their presence emphasises Middle Eastern and Black African refugees as either victims or threats. I will revisit Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity concept to discuss how the saviour/victim and border/threat constructions are based on ideas of distance and proximity. However, to start I will reintroduce the racialised hierarchy that I discussed in the conceptual framework.

6.5.1 Whiteness

To understand the concept of whiteness and White privilege I return again to the period of the European empires where a racialised hierarchy was produced with White Europe depicted at the top of the hierarchy and non-White continents depicted at the bottom (See Section 3.2.2, El-Enany, 2020). While race, and the racialised hierarchy, is often taken-for-granted, as Lewis (2004: p629) argues, we must remember that "race is not something with

which we are born; it is something learned and achieved in interactions and institutions. It is something that we live and perform. It is not a set of traits but it is the product of social interaction."

Since empire, race has been constructed and naturalised by powerful White actors and institutions to justify the invasion of non-White, non-European countries, while simultaneously constraining the movement of people from those countries (Said, 1978/2003). Categorising people as belonging to different races is, therefore, a process of domination. As Mayblin, talking about the introduction of the racialised hierarchy during colonialism, argues

> Lest we forget that those doing the categorising were white men, often slave owners, and those being categorised as occupying the lowest rungs in the taxonomy of humanity were enslaved people of colour. (2019: p31-32).

This categorisation continues to be done by White actors and institutions including western states and the media. While much research focuses on the disadvantaged position of people of colour, in this section I will focus on the privileged position of the White non-refugees in my sample of photographs. My change of focus coheres with a growing literature on whiteness and White privilege in sociology. As Lewis (2004: p624) argues "too often sociological research engages whites in conversations about race only to ask them about their opinions about others." The race of White people is thus deemed as invisible and race is seen as something that White people do not engage with. However, we must understand White bodies as racialised bodies in the same way that the Middle Eastern and Black African bodies are in my sample of photographs but also as fundamentally different because of the privileged way that White bodies are racialised (Garner, 2007). As Lewis (2004: p624) argues "whether all whites have self-conscious racial identities may or may not matter as much for their life chances as external readings of them as white."[10]

I will now explore two forms of White privilege in the representation of refugees and asylum seekers: firstly, the White saviour celebrity who is represented as the voice of distant 'genuine' refugees of colour and, secondly, the White border and border guards who are represented as the protectors from dangerous refugees of colour who are coming into proximity with the West.

6.5.2 The White saviour

Photo 8 shows Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie standing behind a wooden lectern adorned with the UNHCR logo and with numerous microphones in front of her looking out towards the crowd which includes Middle Eastern child refugees and members of the media.

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 8: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 28 January 2018. Available: Angelina Jolie calls on world powers to end Syrian war | Daily Mail Online

Angelina Jolie is the central focus of the photograph with all other people in the photograph facing her (except for the one child who is looking at a member of the media in the centre-left of the photo and the one child who is looking towards us, but whose face is partly obscured in the far-right of the photograph). The audience do not have eye contact with the refugees which, as we have already established, is important to build connection. Indeed, only one of the celebrity/refugee photographs showed a refugee giving eye contact. The lighting of the photograph also emphasises the centrality of the celebrity in this photograph. The numerous microphones in front of Angelina Jolie show that she is speaking both to the crowd immediately in front of her but also to a distant audience who, we can expect, will receive her message through the media. This is typical of the White saviour image where the White actor is the voice for the distant people of colour (Greenbank, 2014).

While Jolie holds an active role, standing on the lectern and talking into the microphones, the child refugees are shown to be passively standing and watching. Because the celebrities are presented as White saviours, the refugees that they are photographed with need to be presented as vulnerable people that need to be saved but also kept at a distance and this is shown here through their passivity. Only two of the celebrity/refugee photographs show active behaviour from the refugees and in both of these cases the refugee are Black African adult men concurring with the idea of the active, threatening male.

As Section 6.3 on the Muslim woman has already explored, the idea of White western intervention to 'save' people of colour was established during the colonial period to justify the brutal invasions by European empires. This rhetoric continues to play out with the western governments justifying their invasions of Middle Eastern countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq as saving submissive Muslim women and children from Muslim men. The concept of the White saviour is also plays out in the visual representation of refugees and asylum seekers in my sample with the image of White celebrities visiting refugees and asylum seekers predominantly in camps.

Celebrity White saviours have been a common feature in the twenty-first century. There is an increasing media and public interest in the private lives of celebrities and they are often judged by what they do off-screen as well as on-screen (Bell, 2015). Discussing Angelina Jolie, Littler (2008: p238) argues that "the roles of charity-giver and humanitarian are not just presented as separate or add-on roles, but as profoundly *interwoven* with the roles of mother, carer, actress and celebrity." Therefore, philanthropy has become a part of a celebrity's brand image and particularly for female celebrities. In the media there is a consistent stream of White celebrities visiting 'poverty-stricken' parts of the world while doing campaigns for charity. Talking about celebrity philanthropy in Africa, Bell argues that

> Celebrity can cut through the inertia of bureaucracy and governmental politicking, using social, symbolic and economic capital to draw affluent consumers and influential people to the social ills that define Africa in the western mind (2015: p127).

In this way, celebrities such as Jolie in Photo 8, act as authority figures by using their platform to bring particular social issues into the mainstream media and public consciousness.

Photo 8's representation of the celebrity having voice while refugees are kept silent and passive is one of the key issues of the White saviour complex. As Bell (2015: p131) argues "these artists follow a long colonial tradition of speaking for the Other that tends to make the nameless, faceless Third-World Other a blank recipient of their goodwill." By the White, western celebrity silencing the people in countries like Africa where Comic Relief and other charity campaigns are aimed, the colonial tropes of these countries being primitive, uncivilised and in need of western intervention persists, meanwhile the celebrity who is the centre-of-attention receives praise for their role in saving these people, taking on the benefactor role in Boltanski's (1999) work.

Through talking for the refugees/asylum seekers, the White western celebrities and the aid organisations that they represent decide what the silenced people need or, as Hinsliff (2017) states, they are guilty of "impulsively stepping in to help versus listening first to what people might actually want." Furthermore, celebrities often choose charitable campaigns which suit

their brand image. This can be problematic because, as Littler (2008: p243) argues, “celebrity and corporate cleaving to areas that are deemed to be “safe” topics for their fanbase or consumer constituencies mean that crucial issues are not tackled early enough.”

Importantly, White celebrities, aid organisations and the media that report these stories, deem these ‘safe’ topics as ‘safe’ because they ignore the structural reasons behind the poverty in nations such as Africa and the Middle East which can be traced back to colonialism (Mayblin, 2019). Instead, as Bell (2015: p138) argues, the White saviour celebrities use a “racialized ‘post-race’ stance [which] serves to maintain a neocolonial footprint on the continent and also posits individualistic responses to deep structural problems,” such as in Madonna’s charity work in Malawi which argues that “individual strength and perseverance will help Malawi transcend a culture of victimhood” (Bell, 2015: p134), while simultaneously ignoring the deep structural issues caused by the British empire during colonisation. NGOs such as Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) also use this tactic, prioritising those who are “considered innocent – pure, outside politics, outside history, indeed, outside time and place altogether” (Ticktin, 2017: p581). ‘Safe’ topics also often revolve around providing aid for distant refugees and asylum seekers rather than encouraging the movement of these people towards the West (Johnson, 2011). In other words, continuing with the colonial objective of White saviours, the White celebrities and charities focus on intervening ‘over there’ rather than ‘over here’. As refugees are shown moving towards the West, the non-refugee changes from the White saviour to the White border.

6.5.3 The White border

Photo 9 shows a clash between a large group of Middle Eastern refugees and Greek border guards. The audience are on the sign of the border guard. This is significant as it shows the audience being protected by the border guards who have their back to them from the refugees whose faces we can see. The large number of refugees compared to the smaller number of border guards also emphasises threat. The refugees are holding up signs written in English which are aimed at European countries. One of the signs in the background, for example, is directly addressed to the European Union and United Nations. Other signs are asking for freedom which suggest that the refugees are currently trapped as they are trying to cross through Europe. While there is no overt violence happening in the photograph, the fact that the border guards are wearing gas masks and holding shields suggests that there might be a violent clash between the two groups.

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 9: Photograph taken from The Telegraph on 3 February 2020. Available: Babies and children tear gassed during refugee protest on Greek island of Lesbos (telegraph.co.uk)

We cannot see the faces of the border guards. This is quite typical of the photographs of the White border where the border guards are kept anonymous. While, as I have noted, anonymity of refugees is used to ensure we cannot gain a connection with them, in this instance the anonymity of border guards could be used to show their power to keep their identities confidential. Because of this anonymity we cannot say that the border guards themselves are White. However, we do not need the border guards to be White for us to see this as a White border. This is because western European nations exercise their White privilege by pushing their White borders to the peripheries of Europe and beyond. The EU, for example, give funding to poorer nations or promises of EU membership in exchange for border controls (Obradović-Wochnik and Bird, 2020). As Isakjee et al (2020) argues, this enables the violence that refugees experience at the hands of border guards to be kept at a distance and obscured from view so that western European countries can continue to be viewed as liberal, just and fair while denying their role in the violence.

While they have come to be deemed as natural, borders, and the exclusion of certain people from certain nations, have been constructed over time by White, powerful actors. (Obradović-Wochnik and Bird, 2020). White privilege means that the movement of White people around the globe is relatively unrestricted (Ahmed, 2007). As I have argued this has existed since the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism where White men from European empires were able to travel and colonise ‘faraway’ countries and continents under the guise

of the White saviour. During the same period people of colour did not, and continue to not, have the same ease of access to travel with their movement consistently controlled. During the slave trade, as Davies et al explain:

> Enslaved people were sorted and categorized at transatlantic ports, inspected and documented through branding, wanted posters, and slave logbooks in a manner that preceded and shaped the invention of paper documentation and the passport. (2021: p2313)

The White border, therefore, has existed for centuries. However, it was during the period of decolonisation where empires were being defeated that the White border that we see today in Photo 9 came into existence. For example, while Britain was trying to preserve the empire, they identified colonial people as citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies, however following the demise of the empire, Britain changed the status of these people from citizens to migrants and placed increasing controls upon them (El-Enany, 2020). Since then, western governments have put increasingly stringent laws in place to deny people from former colonies entry to Britain and other European countries as well as White settler colonies such as Australia and Canada. We have recently seen with the 2018 Windrush Scandal the devastating effects this has had (See Section 2.2.2).

The British government has focused these strict immigration laws on restricting the movement of people of colour, with White settler colonies not being subject to the same regulations. As Bhambra (2017: p403) succinctly notes “it should be clear, the issue was never simply mobility, but rather the colour of those who moved and the direction in which they moved.” This is particularly important when thinking about refugees. As Davis et al (2020) explain, the British government introduced stricter policies against refugees at the same time as the nationality of those seeking asylum shifted from White Europeans to people of colour from former colonies in the Middle East and Africa. This shift saw the introduction of terms such as ‘bogus’ asylum seeker in the British media and the media argued that these groups should be excluded from western societies rather than included.

British and European governments and media continue to use the colonial rhetoric of people of colour as uncivilised, barbaric, backwards and threatening to justify the racist White border and the violence that people of colour experience at these borders (Isakjee et al 2020). Meanwhile, the colonial connections between Britain and the origin countries of the refugees are conveniently forgotten (El-Enany, 2020). Through this two-step process the White border and the White border guards come to be seen as necessary protection of the West from dangerous racialised others, as in Photo 9. In this way, the White borders of today are an extension of the racist controls that White imperialists placed on people of colour during the periods of the European empires (Davis et al, 2021).

Furthermore, as Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020) argue, there does not need to be the physical presence of a border guard for an audience to see that a space is a border or for a refugee's movement to be controlled. Photo 10 shows that objects such as signs, fences and barbed wire are enough to represent the White border in the media.

[3rd party photograph removed from open access version of thesis]

Photo 10: Photograph taken from Daily Mail on 12 September 2019. Available: Calais migrant camp is cleared out by French police again | Daily Mail Online

In Photo 10 we see four refugees on the roadside by large metal fencing with barbed wire. In the centre of the shot is a sign saying 'Calais'. As Isakjee et al (2020: p1759) state "for over 20 years, Calais in northern France has been a transit site for refugees travelling to the UK to seek asylum." Therefore, Calais is a significant White border in the British psyche. While the French representation of Calais in the photograph is of a village of flowers, the British representation is much more sinister, with Calais representing the threat of the active 'bogus' asylum seeker breaking into Britain (King, 2016).

This idea of 'breaking into Britain' is emphasised by the high fencing and barbed wire in the background of the photograph. As Garner (2007: p152) states, "in Europe, as in Australia, the bureaucratic response to immigration has been to erect taller and more effective fences, to attempt to position the racialised Others asking to be let in at greater distance from us." Barbed wire fencing, as Barder (2016) explains, has a dual effect: firstly, of controlling movement and secondly, of dehumanising the people that it controls. Initially barbed wire was used to control the movement of animals and by using barbed wire to control refugees, western governments reduce refugees to the status of animals (Barder, 2016). Through the

government's dehumanisation of the refugees, the audience no longer feel a connection towards them and instead are able to see them as threats which the audience must be protected from. The fact that we cannot see the faces of the refugees also emphasises the lack of connection (Bleiker et al, 2013). However, we can tell that they are adult men (with the exception of the individual in the red hooded coat) which emphasises the threat of the active male. The men are wearing rucksacks and carrying black bin liners, suggesting that they have got all of their belongings and are ready to travel.

The increasingly strict White borders have had a devastating effect on the lives of people of colour. As Davies et al explains

> Ever stronger border infrastructure, diminishing hopes of gaining asylum in the EU, and the state-enforced squalor that displaced people are exposed to in the port towns of Calais and Dunkirk have led to an increasing number of desperate attempts to reach the UK by any means possible. (2021: p2308).

The White border has led to increasing numbers of deaths (section 2.2; Mayblin 2019). The western media do not place the blame for these deaths on the aggressive anti-immigration laws or the increasingly dangerous White border but on the refugees themselves and smugglers who are again racialised as people of colour (Saucier and Woods, 2014). It is important to note that while the media represent the White border as external to Britain, the White border continues to operate internally with law enforcement continuing to stop Black African and Middle Eastern bodies (Ahmed, 2007), the Home Office preventing asylum seekers from working (Mayblin, 2019), and even the status of refugee has become temporary as "an individual must have his/her case reviewed every five years with a view to return to the country of origin" (Garner, 2007: p152).

The racialised hierarchy that came into being during the period of the British empire still exists today and is used to represent refugees from non-White nations as uncivilised and backward while White western nations are represented as civilised and modern. White privilege occurs in two ways in the representation of non-refugees in my sample: through the White saviour who is the expert voice on the people of colour and the White border who is the protector of White people from the threat of people of colour. Again, the focus is on distance with saviour/victim shifting to border/threat the closer these people of colour are to the West (Boltanski, 1999). It is also important to acknowledge how gender intersects with these ideas of whiteness with the majority of White saviour celebrities being female while the majority of White border guards that we can see are male. These play into the traditional gender roles of the caring mother figure and the protective father figure.

6.6 Conclusions

In the previous chapter I explored the findings of my content visual data analysis. From my content visual data analysis, I found four dominant representations that warranted further attention. These were the criminal man, the Muslim woman, the genuine distant family, and White borders versus White saviours. In this chapter I have explored these four dominant representations in-depth using a semiological analysis to gain an understanding of what these media representations mean in the context of the postcolonial British society in which they are circulated and viewed.

I have found that the British newspaper media clearly uses postcolonial othering in their dominant representations of refugees. In other words, the media continues to other refugees in the same way that White imperialists othered colonised people during the period of the European empires. The media, therefore, plays an active role in reproducing the racialised hierarchy that was used to justify the brutal invasions of Middle Eastern and Black African countries during the period of the European empires. The media's postcolonial othering follows a long tradition of othering racialised groups differently depending on their gender and age. I have shown that the media othering of men as criminal and threatening and women and children as passive and innocent in my sample follows the same tactics as the White people and institutions during the period of the European empires. Furthermore, these tactics are based on the distance/proximity dichotomy with innocence depending on distance and being diminished when refugees are shown coming into proximity with the West.

In the postcolonial period that we currently live in, the British newspaper media use the colonial racialised hierarchy to justify western government interventions in countries where the majority of the population are people of colour, and particularly where the majority of the population is Muslim. Meanwhile, they also simultaneously use the same hierarchy to justify the blocking of safe passages for people from those countries trying to enter Britain and Europe. This has a real detrimental impact on refugees who are forced to take drastic and often fatal measures to reach safety in Britain or to stay in unsanitary and dangerous conditions in refugee camps for years with little chance of resettlement.

The content and the semiological visual data analysis have provided me with a wide-ranging and in-depth understanding of how the British newspaper media other refugees. However, this does not tell the whole story. In the next chapter I will explore the findings of my interviews with fourteen newspaper readers to gain an understanding of how they read and interpret the British newspaper media images of refugees.

7. Interviews

7.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters I have explained the findings of my visual data analysis. I have shown that through a combination of content and semiological visual data analysis, we can gain an understanding of how refugees are visually othered in the British newspaper media (RQ1) and how this visual othering is dependent on the age, gender and race of the refugee (RQ2). While these findings are critical, they do not tell the full story. This is because the success of the media's anti-immigration narrative depends on their audience and how they actively read and understand the images that are put in front of them (Hall, 2001).

In this chapter I will explore the findings from the fourteen interviews that I conducted with British newspaper readers. As I have explained there is a lack of research focusing on the audience responses to media images of refugees and asylum seekers. These interviewees were all from East Birmingham, an area that is more diverse than large parts of the United Kingdom but that also has areas like Sutton Coldfield whose population is largely White. The vast majority of my interviewees categorised themselves as White British. Therefore, while these interviews are exploratory in nature and do not claim to be representative of all British newspaper readers, they do offer an insight into how predominantly White newspaper audiences from a relatively diverse part of the UK adopt a western gaze in their understandings of media images of refugees, thus far missing in the existing research base. The chapter will be split into four sections (plus a conclusion) which are based on the four key conclusions that I have drawn from my analysis:

1. Refugees as 'others'
2. A hierarchy of 'genuineness'
3. The absence of race
4. Questioning the media

7.2 Refugees as 'others'

Participants consistently othered refugees by referring to refugees as 'them' and the participants themselves as 'us'. This was the case for all of the photographs with the notable exception of Photo 3 which I will come onto later in this section.

7.2.1 Refugee families in camp

While participants expressed sympathy for refugees when looking at the photograph showing the families in the refugee camp (Photo 6) and the photograph showing the refugee children with Angelina Jolie (Photo 8), this sympathy did not turn to empathy with

participants also distancing the lives of the refugees from their own lives. This is a common tactic, as I have already explained, in Boltanski's (1999) politics of pity.

In participant discussions of the families in the refugee camp photograph, comments such as "this is not something you'd wish for your own family or children" (Colette) and "you just kind of think about if you were a woman with a child in that situation, how horrible it would be" (Rebecca) were quite common. Here, participants are expressing sympathy for the refugees in the photograph while also showing that this is very different from their own situation. The distance between the participants and the refugees continues to be established in the reading of this photograph with participants assuming that the location of the refugee camp is somewhere far away from the UK (Tanya, Rebecca) and with comments about the Middle Eastern patterns on the blankets (Colette) and the Muslim dress of the women (Alison). For Alison, the barbed wire in the front of the photograph was also proof that the refugees were the 'other,' and that 'they' needed to be kept separate from 'us'. Furthermore, for Jasmine the fact that we could not see the faces of the refugees, in particular the children, added to the distance: "it's not as emotive as some of the… I think I react more, anyway, to the images of children's faces and things, because it hits home, doesn't it?" Jasmine could not connect with the refugees because she could not clearly see their faces, therefore she was able to distance herself emotionally from their situation.

With participants distancing themselves from the refugees in the photograph, they also distance the responsibility for them. While comments such as "something needs to be done about that" (Sandra) were common, none of the participants stated that the responsibility should fall on the UK.

> You know, look at bloody Saudi Arabia – excuse my swearing – you look at Qatar and Abu Dhabi, super rich, Muslim countries. Why aren't they helping out their fellow Muslims and helping to rebuild Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan (Dianne).

For Dianne the responsibility towards Middle Eastern refugees is not former European empires but other Middle Eastern countries who are deemed to share a similar culture, in this case through religion, to those countries. The focus is on repatriating refugees rather than aiding their movement to the West. Therefore, despite the large Middle Eastern population in East Birmingham, Dianne represents Britain as a White country, distancing herself not only from the Muslim refugees photographed but also from the Muslim people in her diverse area of the UK. Similarly, to the German newspaper media discussed by Himmel and Baptista (2020), Dianne constructs a specific idea of 'us' as well as 'them' – that 'we' in Britain are not Muslim.

7.2.2 Refugee children with White saviour

In their discussions of the refugee children with Angelina Jolie, the participants distanced themselves from the refugees by focusing primarily on Angelina Jolie herself. All of the participants started their discussion of this photograph by talking about Angelina Jolie and what they thought about her, with the refugee children being a secondary thought. This, as I have already shown in section 6.5.2, is common in the white saviour trope with the focus being on the white celebrity actively talking on behalf of the passive refugee (Bell, 2015).

Participants opinions of Jolie were generally positive with words such as 'hope' and 'help' being quite common:

> I think that the picture, the way that is has been taken, I look at it and I see somebody fighting for hope. That's what comes out. The picture's dark and the clouds are grey, lots of shadows in front of the picture, but the way that the sun has just shone on her, she's this beacon (Alison).

For Alison the composition of the photograph with Jolie being in the centre of the photograph with the light shining directly on her gives the impression that she is giving the refugees hope. Alison describes a situation where the refugees are in darkness, representing the darkness of their lives, and Jolie is able to provide light, as a saviour. Many of the participants picked up on their prior knowledge of Angelina Jolie as proof that she is genuine.

> Isn't she also famous for having like loads of children and children coming from different countries? She might also be looking like she's not just talking the talk but walking the walk kind of thing. That might give her more credibility (Colette).

Because she has adopted children from refugee-sending countries Jolie is seen as a legitimate voice for refugees. She is often presented by participants as genuine, caring, passionate and concerned, and being devoted to the cause that she is representing. However, three of the participants questioned whether the photograph was publicity for Jolie rather than the refugees she was speaking on behalf of. Two of these, though, still acknowledged Jolie as a "good woman" (Tanya) who is "obviously trying to help them" (Rebecca). Therefore, as we can see, the discussions focused on Angelina Jolie and her actions, while the refugee children were seen as less important even though the focus of the interviews were on representations of refugees.

7.2.3 Refugee men near Calais sign

The participants also othered the refugee men in the photographs they were shown, however while refugee children and families were othered as objects of pity, the refugee men were othered as threats to the participants and their country. In the photograph of the

adult men near the Calais sign (Photo 10), most participants focused on the Calais sign and what it meant in terms of Britain. Indeed, every participant associated this photograph with attempts to enter the UK, often using the 'us' and 'them' rhetoric of "they're coming over here" (Tanya). As both Connor and Nadiyah explain without the sign for Calais, they would not have associated the people in the photograph with asylum seeking.

For some of the participants, this othering of the refugee men led them to feel threatened. The Calais sign was often contrasted with the sign underneath which described Calais as the Village of Flowers. For many they thought this sign was ironic given the location of the photograph – the dead grass, the barbed wire fencing and the British perception of what happens in Calais. Most participants picked up on the barbed wire as a sign of separation between the refugees and themselves. 'Keeping them out' was a consistent theme in the analysis of this photograph.

For Dianne the threat of these men is on the welfare state, and in particular housing, which she sees as already in short supply. By saying that 'there's hardly any good housing for ordinary families,' Dianne is pitting the refugee men against 'ordinary' British families who, it is inferred, should be getting priority on good housing. Therefore, not only are the refugee men othered as different to British people, they are also othered as inferior, thus emphasising the racialised hierarchy (Mayblin, 2019). Furthermore, participants argued that they did not feel emotion towards this photograph because these were adult men rather than women and children.

> But it's not probably as thought provoking as the one before. Because, as we said, because it's men. Seems really bad. But you don't look at it and think, "Oh." Because there's no children there as well (Rebecca).

Therefore, as Rebecca shows, the participants were able to distance themselves emotionally from the refugee men in the photographs.

7.2.4 Refugee man in mugshot

In the mugshot photograph of the Black African adult man (Photo 2), participants instantly identified it as a mugshot with many of them questioning and guessing the crime they assumed the refugee had committed.

> So that to me, is… is he a criminal? Has he done something wrong? Could he have been arrested for trying to get into the country? Could he have done something when he's got in? That image to me speaks criminal, because of the so-called mugshot. Yeah, that speaks criminal to me. (Ellen).

Because participants knew that the person in the photograph was a refugee, some of them asked whether his crime was illegally entering the UK. While others guessed whether he had committed a crime once he was in the UK with guesses ranging from petty theft to murder.

Rebecca, identifying the Hull Daily Mail copyright, questioned whether the crime had been committed in Hull. Only two participants stated that it could also be a passport photo or some other form of identification. However, even for these two participants, mugshot was their first response.

Some of the participants explained why they identified the photograph as a mugshot.

> It's what I'd think is a mugshot. It's just a grey background. It's just a straight face, staring forward. It's what I'd associate when you see the Mail and people have been arrested and stuff (Connor).
>
> The background's grey and he's just got a black t-shirt on and, like I said, you can't see anything else, what's he doing. It's like those profile pictures that you see on criminal dramas and stuff like that, crime dramas (Rebecca).

Both Connor and Rebecca use their previous knowledge of reading the Daily Mail and watching crime dramas to explain why they identified the photograph as a mugshot and identified some of the stereotypical features of one (grey background, straight-face, head-and-shoulders shot, plain clothing). Therefore, participants instantly other the refugee man as a threat through his alleged illegality and the assumption is that he has committed his crime either in the UK or on his way to the UK, therefore consolidating that the threat is to the British public.

> I bet he was one of those people that was in those camps, managed to escape and broke into England. Then ended up not wanting to integrate, but just taking from this society and killed somebody (Alison).

Here Alison others the refugee by using the culture narrative (the refugee man did not want to integrate), the welfare narrative (instead he just wanted to take) and the security narrative (and he killed somebody). The refugee, therefore, is not only represented as different to the British population, but as a threat to it.

7.2.5 Can Emotion Challenge Distance?

While participants used othering techniques to distance themselves from the refugees in the four photographs discussed above, they seemed to challenge this distance when looking at the photograph of the refugee woman sitting on the floor beside a bed. Participants used words such as 'heart-breaking', 'sad', 'concerned' and 'worried', showing that they had an emotional reaction towards the refugee in this photograph. Participants also showed a sense of connection with the participant.

> I couldn't connect to any of the other photographs. Even this one, even though I want to try and distance myself from it and I don't understand why I want to distance myself from it, but I do. I want to distance myself, but I can't. This is the one that I connect with (Alison).

Even for Alison, who was the participant most hostile towards the refugees in the other photographs, she feels a sense of connection to the woman in this photograph. She cannot help but connect with her. Indeed, many of the participants wanted to know more about the refugee asking questions like 'Where is she now?' (Dianne), 'Where's her family?' (Tanya), 'What's she come from?' (Sandra). Many participants also stated that they wished they could help her. While in their discussions of the families in the camp photograph some participants said that they hoped they got help, but distanced themselves from that help, in this photograph participants said that they, individually, wanted to help.

> It makes you want to just go and hug her. Really just makes you want to go and hug her, even if she can't communicate with her because of the language, a hug is universal (Sandra).

For Sandra, the connection between her and the refugee could break any barriers between them, such as a language barrier and she wanted to physically connect with the person in the photograph, which is the opposite of the distancing techniques that were used in previous photographs. For both Craig and Alison, the connection was due to the humanness of the photograph. Furthermore, both Tanya and Rebecca said their connection to this refugee was emphasised because both themselves and the refugee were young women, creating a sense of empathy towards her.

For some of the participants the connection was also based on the lack of anything else to focus on in this photograph.

> So, it makes you focus on her and she's just withdrawn and sad, and she just looks desperate, doesn't she? Desperately sad. Because there's not much in the image, you just focus on her (Stacey).

For Stacey, and for others, the fact that we can see the face of the refugee and the fact that she is shown on her own, as an individual, is important for creating a connection. In this way, this photograph is similar to that of the mugshot. However, it gets an entirely different response. While the refugee woman as an individual is important for connection, this connection is not extended to the individual refugee man in the mugshot. Therefore, it is the emotion displayed by the refugee woman that leads to a connection.

Overall, in most of the photographs, participants othered the refugees and established a distance between the lives of the refugees and their own lives, while also often viewing their own lives and themselves as superior to the inferior lives of the refugees in the photographs. However, this distance was challenged in the photograph of the refugee woman who was visibly showing emotion, making her 'more human'. In this photograph, participants wanted to know more about the refugee's individual circumstances and stated that they wished they could help her. Therefore, a connection between the refugee and the participants was

established through the universal understanding of emotion creating an empathetic response from the participants (Sirriyeh, 2018).

7.3 A hierarchy of genuineness

Participant discussions of the refugees in the photographs centred around their genuineness. Participants seem to form a hierarchy of genuineness with the refugee women, children and families generally being described as genuine refugees, while the participants questioned the genuineness of the refugee men. As I will show, the hierarchy of genuineness was based around the distance and passivity of the refugees in the photographs.

7.3.1 The genuine refugees

7.3.1.1 Refugee families in camp

Participants agreed on the genuineness of the refugee families in the camp. Their genuineness was primarily based on the location of the photograph which was viewed as a negative environment with comments such as overcrowded, unsanitary, dirty, unsafe and devoid of character and colour. The poor conditions of the refugee camp added to the genuineness of the people in the photograph, as Martin says, “it’s just people who are in a situation where they’re living where they wouldn’t choose to be, through none of their own fault.” Indeed, many of the participants related the people in the photographs to people who were currently fleeing Afghanistan after the Taliban resurgence.

The fact that the photograph seems to show families, and particularly women and children, adds to their genuineness.

> So, especially the fact that you see… like that little girl in the middle of the picture. She’s about four or five, something like that. So, if you’re a parent and you’re going to take your kids into that environment, how bad is it that you’ve had to go there, and that’s the better option? (Connor).

Participants often described children as innocent and not deserving the situation they were in. Some participants asked about whether children have access to education, as well as access to food, water, and aid. In contrast to the genuineness of the women and children who are visible in the photograph, some of the participants questioned where the fathers were. For Dianne, “these women, to me, have been abandoned by their menfolk because they’re all on these boats.” Therefore, the genuineness of the refugees is established through ideas of containment and waiting. Meanwhile, even when they are absent from the photograph, the genuineness of refugee men is questioned.

> So for me, it's making me think they must be coming over legally or however you want to define it and being housed there and then transferred. Whereas obviously, if you come over illegally it's much more dangerous, isn't it? (Tanya).

Here Tanya is suggesting that those who are genuine and 'legal' are those who are passively waiting, and it is these people who will be granted refugee status. There was a difference in opinion about the temporariness of the camps with some arguing that this was a stopgap before the refugees moved onward while others argued that, in reality, these could be more permanent. But for both groups the idea was of the refugees passively waiting in the camp. The containment of the refugees was also established through the fencing at the forefront of the photograph.

> Well, it just looks like a load of people crammed in and they're fenced in, because you can see the fence at the bottom. So it's almost like they're trapped, and they can't escape. (Craig).

Words such as 'trapped', 'contained', 'enclosed, 'cut off' and 'stuck' were all used in the responses to this photograph. For most of the participants, the barbed wire fencing was a sign of the genuineness of the refugees. However, for Alison this added to the threat of those who were being contained.

> I suppose as well, because it's the barbed wire and everything around it, it's almost like the thought criminal, is because they're caged in. That's what it's representing. That they are not the salt of the earth. That they are bad people that are having to be caged in, monitored and isolated and kept away from the normal population of good people. Until we judge them and find them wanting or not.

While most of the participants talk about the people in the photographs as genuine victims, as Alison's comment shows, they were sometimes, although rarely, represented as potential threats to the 'normal' and 'good' British population.

For Dianne genuineness is dependent on age

> And, hopefully, they won't be radicalised. That's what would be my worry, that they will see things that we can't imagine. And 10 years down the line, when they go into their teen years, what will they be like?

While they are children, then, the refugees are shown as innocent and in need of saving. However, as children grow up to be teenagers, we can see the idea of them turning into threats clearly in this example (Sirriyeh, 2018). Indeed, Dianne continues by saying "they seem quite gentle. But how long that will last for in this sort of environment, don't know." Therefore, as the children become teenagers and adults, their genuineness reduces and their threat increases. For Dianne the responsibility to ensure that the children do not become radicalised falls onto the mothers – again distancing the UK from the problem.

Some participants praised the refugees in the photographs for their resilience, saying that they felt like the photograph showed a community who were getting on with their lives in exceptional circumstances, for example through the clothes on the washing line. Some also praised the people for trying to keep their privacy through covering the fences with blankets, although for Alison this added to her suspicion of the people: “that makes me think, ‘Well, what are they hiding?’”

Therefore, the genuineness of the refugee families was dependent on their location – both in that it was a precarious place which participants believed that they would not be living in unless they had to, but also, importantly, because the refugees were contained at a distance, shown to be waiting in a ‘legal’ manner. The idea of threat was assigned to those who might ‘break out’ and actively try and move towards the UK rather than passively wait in the refugee camp. Furthermore, participants generally agreed on the genuineness of women and children, the absent adult men were represented as non-genuine threats.

7.3.1.2 Refugee children with White saviour

Participants spoke of the genuineness of the children with Angelina Jolie. For participants, it was their young age that proved their genuineness. Words such as ‘innocent’ and ‘vulnerable’ were used and often the children in the photographs were compared to western ideal stereotypes of childhood.

> I mean, look at the age of the children there as well. These children should be in school, shouldn’t they? Or out playing with their friends. My goodness they’re standing at some kind of rally, having to take on that information at their age (Sandra).

Some of the participants focused particularly on the child in the centre-left of the photograph who was facing the camera. Because the participants can see his face, they can see his expression, they could connect more to him.

> I mean, look at his face, there, he’s got like an old man’s face. He’s got like a really hard face for such a young boy. What he must have seen. It’s just awful (Dianne).

For both Sandra and Dianne, the expression on the child’s face and the situation the children are shown in contrast to where they expect children of that age to be and to the stereotypical notions of childhood as happy, innocent times. This, as I mentioned earlier, is also an othering technique. Craig also picked up on this, arguing that the fact that the child we could see looks unhappy adds to the genuineness of his plight.

For participants the genuineness of the child refugees was emphasised by the presence of Angelina Jolie and also by the visible charity logo who Jolie was assumed to be speaking on behalf of. Furthermore, three of the participants pointed out that the children’s clothing

looked like it had been donated, again emphasising genuineness. All of these things (Jolie, UNHCR logo, charity clothes) were shown as symbols of safety: “They seem to be in a better place” (Nadiyah); “that looks like United Nations, is it? So hopefully they’re the lucky ones” (Dianne). While the location of the photograph is not immediately clear, some participants guessed locations that suggested genuine refugees such as camps and Afghanistan.

Four of the participants pointed out that one of the child refugees is holding a mobile phone. For these participants, the presence of a mobile phone led to them reflecting on their own perceptions of what genuineness looks like.

> This is probably ridiculous but I wouldn’t have thought that young refugee boys would have like an iPhone, or something like that… I feel like, because obviously when people talk about refugees and what you think about it, it’s that their poor. But they’re not actually. It’s not actually that they’re poor, it’s just that they’re pushed out of their countries (Rebecca).

For Rebecca the presence of a child refugee with a phone led her to reflect on what she thought a refugee was. While initially her image of a refugee was someone who was poor, the phone had made her change her perception of refugee to those who were forced to leave their countries regardless of their economic status. Craig made similar comments and reflected on this by relating the child’s position to his own.

> The same, if it happened over here, just say it all booted off, you can guarantee everyone’s taking their phone. Everyone’s taking some nice clothes. Everyone’s taking their stuff. It’s going to be like, “Oh. Well. If I can only take one thing.” Your phone is probably the one thing you would take, because it’s got everything on it.

In this way, Craig built a connection with the refugee child starting to see him as similar to himself but put in a position where they have had to escape. As I will show later, in my discussion of the refugee men near the Calais sign, this same acceptance of genuineness is not afforded to refugee men.

The presence of children was simultaneously contrasted with the absence of adults, and many of the participants questioned where the adults were. Here there was a disagreement about the absence of adults. For some participants they suggested that perhaps instead of there being no adults present at all, these adults were simply behind the camera and out of the way of the shot. Meanwhile, for other participants, such as Dianne, the absence of adults was shown as proof of the genuineness of the children in the photographs, with these participants asking whether the children were orphans.

> But they all look like orphans or lone children. Do you think that? And then, luckily, they’ve been found and gathered together, and they see this like western woman and so they think, “Oh my God, I’ve made it” (Dianne).

Here, Angelina Jolie as a western woman is shown to be a saviour for these children who have been on their own without a maternal figure. Again, Jolie's status as a mother is picked up by participants as an important one for these children who now have someone that they can look up to. Therefore, the presence of Angelina Jolie emphasised the genuineness of the refugee children. Some of the participants also talked about the presence of the children emphasising the genuineness of Angelina Jolie as an ambassador. Colette, for example, argued "I think if she was doing the exact same work but for like adult men, she'd get a lot less good rep out of it or like good publicity coming out of it".

So far in this thesis, the gender of adult refugees has been acknowledged as an important factor in their representation. However, in this photograph only Rebecca and Dianne talked about how the children were all male and even then, they did not extend on whether this was significant. Therefore, while with adults, gender is important to representations, for children their young age trumps their other characteristics. Children here are seen as genuine and features that could question their genuineness (the mobile phone) are justified. Furthermore, the presence of a white celebrity and charity logos are further proof of their genuineness.

7.3.1.3 The passive refugee woman

As well as participants building a connection with the refugee woman in Photo 3, they also never questioned her genuineness and words such as 'fled' were common.

For participants the genuineness of the refugee woman is proved through her display of emotion. Negative emotions such as 'hopeless' (Dianne), 'despair' (Alison), 'distressed' (Martin), 'heartbroken' (Grace), 'beaten' (Jasmine), 'desperately sad' (Stacey) and 'lonely' (Colette) are used to describe the refugee. Sandra and Dianne also picked up that the emotion she could be displaying could be relief to have finally reached some form of safety. These emotions led to sympathy towards the refugee and a sense of her genuineness. For Tanya, for example, the refugee's emotions were proof of her vulnerability. Her body language was also picked up on by some of the participants who emphasised her passivity alongside the emotions listed above: "She just looks, by her body language, obviously her posture, her head down. She looks desperately sad" (Stacey). The refugee's passive body, then, added to her genuineness.

The genuineness of the refugee was also emphasised by the location of the photograph with participants most commonly guessing that she was in a refugee camp. The blankness of the walls and the lack of personal belongings added to the sadness of the photograph and confirmed to participants that the refugee was somewhere away from home.

> It's just how it looks in the background, just like plain white walls and the practicality of having the plugs right beneath the bed. And yeah, there are no

> personal belongings anywhere, there are no personal pictures, there's not even a teddy or anything on the blanket, you know what I mean, not even a book or nothing. So it looks very impersonal. So that's what makes me feel like that's not her home or, at least, not her permanent home, like she's somewhere (Colette).

This added to the genuineness of the refugee and the fact that she had probably had to escape in a hurry and leave her belongings behind. Some participants also pointed to the empty upper bunk of the bunkbed as proof that she was alone.

> I'm guessing that would be maybe at a camp somewhere, but I feel like the way the picture is taken, nothing on the walls. It's designed to make it look like she's in prison, like she's just trapped in that space with nowhere to go (Connor).

For Connor, the lack of items in the room also added to feelings of containment, that she is somewhere that she cannot escape, and some participants talked about her waiting: 'How long has she been there for? How long will she be there for? (Dianne).

Connor questioned whether he would feel the same if it was a man in this photograph.

> I feel like if it was a man just sitting there, I would probably think it's somebody in a prison cell, but because it's a woman, I just, yeah… the way, obviously your mind gets twisted when you see different things in the media. I automatically wouldn't think she's a criminal. I'd just think, "Okay. Refugee. She's stuck in a camp. She's obviously gutted about something. She has maybe lost her family, or lost her kids or something like that, or knows that there's no way out at the minute" (Connor).

For Connor the fact that the refugee is a woman adds to her genuineness. He argues that if this was a man, he would think that the location was a prison but because it is a woman, he automatically thinks that this is a refugee camp. He argues that this is because his 'mind gets twisted' by media representations which predominantly see men as bogus and criminal and women as genuine and innocent. I will return to this discussion of the media later on.

Overall, then, participants never questioned the genuineness of the refugee woman. Her sadness was consistently drawn upon as a key indicator of her genuineness. Furthermore, her location, lack of belongings and the fact that she was photographed alone emphasised this. As Connor argues, the gender of the refugee was also important with refugee women represented in the media as genuine, while refugee men are represented in the media as 'bogus'. This perception of the 'bogus' refugee man was also picked up in the participant readings of the refugee men near the Calais sign and the refugee man in the mugshot. I will now move on to discuss how participants questioned the genuineness of the refugees in these two photographs.

7.3.2 The non-genuine 'migrants'

7.3.2.1 Refugee men near Calais sign

Participants questioned the genuineness of the refugee men photographed near the Calais sign on three counts: their means of travel, their gender, and the objects they were carrying.

Firstly, their genuineness was questioned, as mentioned earlier, by their means of travel. While the refugees in the camp were shown to be legitimately passively waiting for help, these refugees were shown to be actively trying to get to the UK, using their own agency: "They look ready to go, to travel to their next destination." (Stacey); "They're young, fit men, single men. Just ready to move" (Grace). For Dianne, the innocence of the refugees is lost as they move: "I think you have to lose it to survive when you're making your way across Europe." Calais, in particular, emphasised the 'illegality' of the movement. As Martin explains "it's become synonymous with the UK press for camps of people from other parts of the world, who are intending by whatever means to get to the UK." The 'whatever means' comment made by Martin was repeated by other participants, and participants often associated the refugees in this photograph with illegality, contrasting them with the legality of the refugees in the camp. As I argued in the literature review, this 'illegal' mode of travelling has consistently been used to question the genuineness of refugees, despite the fact that there can be no such thing as an 'illegal' asylum seeker (Jones et al, 2015). Two participants disagreed with the majority however, suggesting that the people in the photograph look like they are queueing, implying a more structured and legitimate means of movement.

Secondly, the participants questioned the genuineness of the refugees in the photograph account of their gender. Most participants picked up on the fact that the people in the photograph are men. A few questioned the age and gender of the person in the red coat, however, as Nadiyah said "I don't know if the person in the red coat is a lady? So, in my head it's all men there." Without being able to verify the identity of the individual in the red coat, the assumption is made that the subjects in the photograph are all male. Many of the participants shared this view and they raised questions about why it was 'always men' travelling while women and children were stuck in camps. Participants often overestimated the number of male refugees: "But 90% of them are men, aren't they?" (Dianne).

Comments questioning whether these men were genuinely fleeing their countries were common.

> So, in this picture, obviously the men are sent forward, where they're clearly – well, I'm not going to say clearly – but they may be looking to prosper themselves and it's not necessarily because of fleeing for their lives in their own country. Whereas in the other picture, these are families that their whole life has been threatened, and they've lost everything (Stacey).

Stacey contrasted the genuineness of the families in camps to question the genuineness of the men. She argued that instead of 'fleeing for their lives', they may actually 'be looking to prosper themselves'. Therefore, the men in the photograph move from refugees to economic migrants. Indeed, as Connor said, "I wouldn't even picture those people necessarily as refugees." As I showed in the previous section, the idea of the men as economic migrants rather than refugees led to comments about their threat to the British economy and welfare system.

Thirdly, participants questioned the genuineness of the refugees by focusing on the objects they were carrying and the clothes they were wearing. In this instance, there was some disagreement. For some of the participants the black bin liners were a sign that the people in the photograph were genuine refugees

> Look at them, their life is in a black bag. They're carrying their life in a black bag. You ask me to pack my life up quickly, within the next half an hour, hour, what do you do? (Sandra).

For Sandra, and others, the black bin liners suggest that this is all that they have had time to pick up implying the haste at which they have had to leave their homes. Sandra feels empathy towards the men questioning what she would do in their situation. For those who recognised the black bin liners as a sign of genuineness they often used words such as desperation.

While the black bin liners were a sign of genuineness for some, for others they were a sign of threat

> If you look at what we normally use for black bin liners, it's rubbish. We put our rubbish in a black bin liner and we get rid of it. That's their worldly belongings and it's in a black bin liner. Therefore, it's rubbish and they're trying to bring that into the UK (Alison).

For Alison the black bin liners work as a symbol for those carrying them. If the bin liners represent dirt and rubbish than this is extended to those carrying it. Others stated that the bin liners could come to represent the people's 'poorness' (Rebecca), 'a burden' (Dianne) and 'second class citizens' (Colette). In this way, while the black bin liners did show that the refugees were genuine, this was not always a reason to 'let them in', instead this could be the exact reason to 'keep them out'.

In contrast to the genuineness of black bin liners, other participants discussed the clothing of the refugees and their rucksacks as signs that the refugees were not genuine

> I don't know if this is nice to say or not, but when I look at people in England that are homeless I always look at their shoes, because I would think if you're truly in need your shoes wouldn't be clean. And I can see really white trainers and a really decent coat and obviously rucksacks and things like that (Tanya).

For Tanya, and others, the cleanliness and quality of the clothing was proof that the people in the photograph are not people in need. By comparing the men in the photograph to homeless people, Tanya shows that her idea of a refugee is someone who is poor and living in poverty. This idea of refugees being associated with poverty is a common one and anything that goes against this rhetoric is used as a proof that these people are not genuine. This ignores those refugees who have not fled from poverty, but because of, for example, conflict and that those who often make it to the UK are those with the money to do so. However, as I have already noted, the mobile phones in the photograph of the refugee children with Angelina Jolie were not picked up by participants as proof that those refugees were not genuine. Instead, in the instances where participants discussed the mobile phones, they were actually used to problematise the stereotypical image of the poor refugee. Therefore, there was a clear age difference in objects and proof of genuineness/non-genuineness.

Overall, then, the genuineness of the refugees at the Calais border was questioned. This was through assumptions of 'illegal' travel to Britain, the fact that the refugees were men and the objects they were carrying. While passively waiting in a camp was a legitimate behaviour for refugees, actively travelling towards the UK was seen as illegitimate. Again, this returns to the idea of distance and passivity as proof of genuineness and proximity and agency as proof of illegality.

7.3.2.2 Refugee man in mugshot

As I have already discussed, participants automatically assumed that the refugee man was a criminal through focusing on the stereotypical features of a mugshot. This criminality was used to question the genuineness of the refugee with some arguing, in a similar way to the refugees at Calais, that the refugee man could have been arrested for 'illegally' entering Britain. This focus on illegality again questioned the legitimacy of the refugee when compared with those photographed passively waiting in official camps. Meanwhile, as the quote from Alison in section 7.2.4, suggests those who assumed the refugee man had committed a crime once in Britain questioned the intentions of his decision to come to Britain in the first place.

With little else to look at in the photograph (e.g., no location, no signs, no objects, no other people) the focus of the participant readings of the image were based on the individual's face, and in particular his lack of emotion. As Connor, and many others said, this lack of emotion led them to identifying this as a mugshot. For most of the participants this was proof again of his illegality and therefore emphasised that the refugee in the photograph was not a genuine refugee, but a criminal.

However, a small number of participants felt that the fact he was emotionless proved his genuineness. These participants expressed sympathy for the person, while questioning what he must have been through and seen for him to have no emotion.

> He looks dead in the eyes. But I suppose, that's his way of coping with what he's seen, the trauma (Dianne).

Three of the participants argued that he looked sad. However, even the participants who initially felt sympathy for the refugee also expressed their fear of him. For Dianne, she worried that the dead-look in his eyes was proof that he had been radicalised and questioned whether it was too late to rehabilitate him.

> But I would not like to meet him walking down the street, awful as it sounds because he would scare me because of what he's witnessed. I don't know whether he's beyond help (Dianne).

Similarly, Rebecca who said that "he has sad eyes" also acknowledged that "he looks a little bit scary." Therefore, while these participants believed in the genuineness of his plight, they questioned the genuineness of his actions.

Rebecca also used the race of the refugee in the photograph to question his genuineness

> This isn't my thought, by the way. I think sometimes when you think of refugees, a lot of people think of them as Indians, or that sort of nation, like Afghanistan. To me, he looks like he might be Black. He's got like obviously afro-hair and stuff like that. Which you don't kind of associate as much, maybe. Especially like recently, in the media, with what's going on with refugees.

Although Rebecca dismissed her thought before she even said it, she discussed how the media stories focus on refugees from the Middle East (e.g., Afghanistan) and so when people see a black man he might not necessarily be seen as a genuine refugee. I will come back to this point in section 7.4.

Overall, participants questioned the genuineness of the refugee in the mugshot on account of his criminality. The main focus of discussion was the lack of emotion on his face. While this is shown by some as evidence of the genuineness of the refugee, the vast majority of participants viewed this as further emphasis of illegality.

By exploring the participant's hierarchy of genuineness, we can see that this genuineness is gendered and aged with participants viewing the women, children and families as genuine while questioning the genuineness of the adult men. We can also see that ideas of genuineness also focus on distance and agency, with genuine refugees shown as passive and at a distance, while the refugees who are shown in proximity with Britain and where they

are assumed to have engaged in (committed a crime) or be about to engage in active behaviour (travelling to Britain) are described by participants in terms of illegality and threat.

7.4 The absence of race

While participants picked out age and gender as key factors in their discussions of the photographs, discussions of the race of the refugees were largely absent. The mugshot photograph was the only photograph where participants explicitly discussed the race of the refugee. For some participants they simply acknowledged that the photograph was of a black man and moved on. However, for others they associated his race and gender with unfair representations, both in the media and society more generally.

For example, Tanya started by saying "I don't know if his picture is more provoking because he's a Black young man." When I asked her why, she responded:

> I just think they get much more of a bad rep, don't they? Like you would, I'm not saying *you* in particular, but society would potentially look at that and think he's potentially done something wrong or maybe he's in the paper because of a crime or something like that.

While Tanya talks about society generally, as I have already mentioned, Grace discusses this in terms of the media specifically, saying "If this is a picture you see in a newspaper, it's quite often a Black man that you see looking like that.". Furthermore, as I illustrated earlier, Rebecca uses the race of the refugee in the photograph to question his genuineness because for her the stereotypical representation of refugees is of Middle Eastern people rather than Black people. This is significant because it shows that the media representations of refugees are racialised, however only Rebecca and Grace pick this up.

Other than the participant's discussion of race in the mugshot photograph, race was not explicitly discussed in any of the other photographs. However, there were hints that the participants had noticed and acknowledged the race of the refugees in the other photographs. For example, in both the photograph of the refugees in the camp and the refugees with Angelina Jolie, some participants talked about Afghanistan, showing that they had noticed that the refugees were Middle Eastern. Furthermore, when Dianne was othering the refugees in the camp through shifting the responsibility for them onto Middle Eastern countries, she acknowledged the race of the refugees as Middle Eastern and implicitly othered them from her own race, and the race of what she viewed Britain more broadly, as White and western.

In the photograph of the refugee children with Angelina Jolie, two of the participants assumed that the children were Muslim, and discussed the religion as the context to explore the absence of mothers and the presence of Jolie

> In different religions, as such, especially in the Muslim religion, mothers are worshipped by their children. They're seen as, basically, sacred to them. They always love their mothers (Stacey).

Here, Stacey assumes that the children are Muslim based on the photograph. This could be because of their race or because of prior knowledge about the religion of refugees in general. She did not establish why she believed the children were Muslim.

Therefore, while participants openly discussed the gendered and aged representations of refugees, they were less open in discussing the race of the refugees. There are a variety of reasons for this. Firstly, there could have been the assumption that most, or all, refugees are people of colour and therefore that there is no need to pick up on race. As I have shown in the content visual data analysis, all of the top refugee groups were Middle Eastern or Black African, therefore this fact could have just been taken for granted. Alternatively, race could be a taboo subject that participants chose not to discuss. Almost all of my participants identified themselves as White, therefore they could have felt uncomfortable talking about race and racism. As Rebecca showed in photograph 4 when she starts her discussion of race with 'this isn't my thought, by the way', Rebecca wants to distance herself from ideas of race. As Lewis (2004: 624) argues

> Despite the key role whites have played historically in the original construction and the replication of racial categories, they often claim today to be beyond race – to be color-blind and not to think about race.

We can see this taking place in the participant readings of the photographs, where race is seen as something unimportant to their understanding of refugees. This colour-blindness is part of the colonial amnesia that El-Enany (2020) explores, where White Europeans ignore the joint colonial histories which leads to refugee-sending countries being countries with primarily people of colour and former European colonies. Therefore, through producing colour-blind narratives of the media photographs of refugees, the participants were unable to acknowledge the postcolonial ties between Britain and the refugees that are photographed in the British media. Again, therefore, colour-blindness is part of the othering that creates a distance between the Western media audiences and the refugees. The lack of diversity in my sample is a limitation here. By having predominantly White British participants, I am unable to see whether it is their race that affects their understandings of the photographs. Further research would need to be done with a more diverse sample, including refugees themselves, to see if race becomes an important factor for discussion amongst people of colour and whether colour-blindness is dominantly used by White participants. Having said this, it is worth nothing that Nadiyah and Jasmine, the two participants that categorised themselves as Asian Pakistani and White and Asian respectively, also did not discuss race.

7.5 Questioning the media

Through othering refugees and producing a collective hierarchy of genuineness, participants mirrored the anti-immigrant narrative represented by the British newspaper media. However, the participants did not simply consume these images. Instead, they occasionally questioned the media strategies, and they questioned how the media shape their own assumptions. At times, some participants expressed frustration with the anti-immigrant narrative displayed in the media. In other words, the audience actively read, interpreted and also questioned the media representations of refugees. I will now show instances where this was the case.

When discussing their readings of the photographs, participants often talked about how their assumptions were based on their previous experience with the media. As I have already discussed, both Connor and Rebecca relate their assumptions that Photo 2 is a mugshot to previous mugshots that they have seen either in the newspaper media or in television crime dramas. Furthermore, when Connor talked about how he assumes the refugee woman is in a camp, while if it was a man he might assume it was a prison, Connor said 'obviously your mind gets twisted when you see different things in the media.' Therefore, Connor is expressing that previous media representations have led him to this assumption, whether it is true or not.

Some participants, when discussing the photographs of the refugee children with Angelina Jolie, questioned the media's intentions. Some raised concerns about what the media would pick up on from Jolie's speech and whether they would focus on her rather than on the subject that she was talking about.

> I mean, the whole Brangelina thing is, if that's who I think it is, that begs the question that is the subject as important to the press as the person expressing their particular wishes? In so much that are they taking the fame of the person and the celebrity of that person to be more important than their views? And also possibly the very important topic about which they wish to speak? (Martin).

Martin expressed concern that the presence of a well-known celebrity might distract viewers from the cause that she is talking about, not through Jolie's fault but through the representation of the event in the media. Here, then, Martin was explaining some of the problems of the white saviour narrative (Bell, 2015). However, Colette argued that even if the media are only there because of Jolie's celebrity status, at least she is getting the message about the plight of the refugees out there.

Furthermore, while some participants saw the absence of adults as proof of the genuineness of the child refugees, others questioned whether this was a media strategy in order to create a more emotive reaction to the photographs.

> Children are always going to set people off more. That's what I said, I wonder if they were there more on purpose, do you know what I mean, than accident or coincidence? (Tanya).

These participants suggested that perhaps instead of there being no adults present at all, these adults were actually hidden behind the camera and kept out of the way.

Colette also questioned the media strategies when discussing the photograph of the mugshot. She argued that when the media photograph refugees as individuals, this is predominantly done for negative stories such as the proof of crime. Grace, discussing the same photograph, also agreed that the media choose particular people for negative stories. In her case, she argued that the media use Black men for criminality stories.

A small number of the participants also expressed their frustration with the media reporting only men trying to travel to the UK. For Colette, "the problem is, I think, by showing like huge groups of men to some particular groups, they tend to think, 'Oh we're being invaded by all these… you know.'" She continued by arguing that if the media showed more women and children in these scenarios the public opinion could shift to a kinder one. Therefore, Colette and others argued that the threatening man is over-reported in the media and that this has the effect of creating fear among the general public.

Through these instances, we can see that the participants, instead of simply being passive consumers of the media photographs, occasionally questioned the media's intentions and strategies and their own assumptions as a result. This shows that, as Hall (2001) and Rose (2016) argue, to understand media representations, we must understand how they are read and interpreted by media audiences. Having said that, while there were instances of participants challenging dominant media representations, this was a far smaller proportion of the data than that which accepted the dominant media framings.

7.6 Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored the findings of my interviews with British newspaper readers. I have shown that media audiences actively read and understand media photographs, using past experience to aid their understanding. I have shown that the participants, in a similar way to the media, othered the refugees in the photographs by showing the refugees as distinctly different to the participants themselves. However, I have also shown that this difference was diminished when participants viewed a photograph of a refugee woman who was displaying clear, visible emotions. In this case, participants felt a sense of empathy and connection with the refugee. I have also shown that, in a similar way to the media, the participants drew up a hierarchy of genuineness based on gender, age, agency and distance. While passive women and children photographed at a distance were discussed as

genuine, refugee men photographed in proximity and potentially active were discussed as non-genuine. Furthermore, I have shown that while participants acknowledged the aged and gendered differences in media representations of refugees, they very rarely discussed the race of the refugees and how this adds to the othering of the refugees. I explore some reasons why this may be the case, and ultimately argue that colour-blindness exists in British society with White people actively ignoring race. I show how problematic this is because it ignores the postcolonial racialisation that links Britain to the refugees from the Middle East and Africa. While both the othering and the hierarchy of genuineness seemed to re-produce the media's anti-immigrant narrative, I have also shown instances where the participants questioned the media strategies, intentions and, as a result, their own assumptions. Through this, I illustrate that media audiences are not simply passive consumers of news, but actively interpret and question media photographs.

In the next chapter I will conclude my thesis. I will bring together my findings from Chapters 5,6 and 7, showing how my findings address the gaps in the literature, and ultimately discuss the importance of my findings. I will show that the British media use postcolonial othering to re-iterate the British government's anti-immigrant narrative and justify the ever-harsher border controls that have a real-life, detrimental effect on all refugees. I will show that this postcolonial othering is based on the intersectional characteristics of the refugee's race, age and gender. I will also illustrate that, for the most part, the media audience in my sample used similar othering strategies when discussing the images of refugees. However, I will also argue that this is not always the case and, at times, media audiences actually problematised the anti-immigrant narrative. After exploring my findings, I will also suggest some avenues for future research.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explored the findings of my interviews, arguing that with some exceptions the audience actively other refugees in similar ways to the British newspaper media while simultaneously ignoring how this othering is based on the racialised hierarchy that has existed since the period of the European empires. In this eighth and final chapter, I will bring together the findings from my content and semiological visual data analysis, as well as my interviews to argue that the postcolonial British newspaper media continues to other people of colour, using the techniques produced during the period of the British and European empires. I will argue that the media's postcolonial othering is important because it reproduces and justifies the British government's anti-immigrant narrative which has a real detrimental effect on refugees of colour.

8.2 Why is an exploration of media images of refugees important?

In the British context, the mass media plays a crucial role in informing the public about issues of migration, often being the main source of information that the public have on refugees (Saxton, 2003). Furthermore, as Van Dalen and Van Aelst (2014) show, the media has a cooperative relationship with politicians, often helping to set the political agenda and reproduce dominant narratives. With successive British and European governments consistently producing an anti-immigrant narrative, the mass media is critical in reproducing this narrative and justifying it through the othering of refugees (Nagarajan, 2013). While the language used by the media to produce this anti-immigrant narrative is well-documented (e.g. Balabanova and Balch, 2010, Philo et al, 2013), there is still limited literature on how the media uses images for the same purpose. As Pink (2013) argues this limited literature is despite the fact that images play an important role in shaping our knowledge of the world. Furthermore, in comparison to language, images are much more likely to catch the attention of audiences and stay in their minds much longer (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016). Images have become even more important in the current digital age with the production and consumption of images playing a vital role in the daily experiences of most people (Prøitz, 2018).

8.3 What does the previous literature show and what does it miss?

As I have already argued, in comparison to the literature on the media's linguistic representations of refugees, the literature on the media's visual representations of refugees is relatively limited. The literature that does exist primarily focuses on two groups. Firstly, there exists a wealth of literature on the Alan Kurdi photographs that shows how the dead Syrian toddler is represented as the 'good' refugee type (Adler-Nissen et al, 2019, Szörényi,

2018). Secondly, and conversely to the Alan Kurdi photographs, the previous literature explores how refugee men of colour are represented as the 'bad' refugee type through photographs which show them as a threatening and dangerous group (Banks, 2011, Wilmott, 2017). Therefore, the previous literature shows that media images other refugees in different ways depending on who they are and the context in which they are photographed. However, the previous literature is limited because of their small scope with scholars focusing only on a particular group of refugees (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016, Scheibelhofer, 2017, etc) or on a particular event (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, Batziou, 2011, etc). Because of this limited scope we can only gain a snapshot of how media images other refugees, meanwhile the everyday othering tactics are absent from the refugee images in the media literature.

Furthermore, while Hodkinson (2017) and others show that there is a connection between the media and public opinion formation, with the exception of the Alan Kurdi photographs (Prøitz, 2018), how the public read and interpret media images of refugees are largely absent from the literature. However, Höijer's (2004) research on audience responses to news photographs of refugees show that audiences read images of refugees differently depending on the socio-demographics of the refugees. Therefore, this shows that it is important to understand how media audiences read and understand media images of refugees, and the importance of intersectionality in these readings.

Through exploring the literature review, I have identified three gaps. Firstly, the literature is based on a limited scope of media images of refugees. Secondly, audience readings are absent from the media images of refuges literature. Thirdly, while comparing literature on Alan Kurdi photographs to literature on refugee men of colour photographs, shows that the media other refugees in different ways, these intersectional differences are rarely explored.

8.4 My research aims

I have resolved these gaps in the literature by producing a wide-ranging and in-depth intersectional analysis of the visual representations of refugees. Through this analysis I have produced a much fuller understanding of how the British newspaper media visually others refugees and how audiences read and create meanings from these otherings. I did this by answering the following RQs:

RQ1. How are refugees and asylum seekers visually othered in British newspapers?

RQ2. How does the gender, race and age of the refugee and asylum seeker shape their othering?

RQ3. What meanings do audiences attach to different visual otherings of refugees and asylum seekers?

8.5 My conceptual framework

To answer my research aims I drew upon an intersectional othering framework. I argue that postcolonialism is important for understanding the othering of refugees of colour as a continuation of the British, and European, imperial powers othering of people of colour during colonialism. Because of my focus on images, I have shown that the western gaze is the crucial othering tactic that the British media employ through the production and circulation of photographs and the audience employ in their reading and interpretation of photographs. I have also shown that while racial othering is crucial to the media representations of refugees, the fact that different refugees of colour are represented in different ways proves that we need to look at the media images through an intersectional lens focusing on both the gender and age of the refugees and the context that they are photographed in.

8.6 My methods

I used a novel research method by combining the three normally separate methods of content visual data analysis, semiological visual data analysis and interviews. To answer RQ1 and RQ2 I first conducted a content visual data analysis of 377 photographs of refugees from four British newspapers over a three-year period. I coded the photographs using 20 variables, providing me with a vast amount of data. Because of my focus on intersectionality, I first coded the refugees in the photographs by their age, gender and race. I then also coded photographs based on camera techniques, the behaviours of the refugees, who and what they are photographed with, and where they are photographed. These codes were all created based on the previous literature with changes made after the pilot coding. Through the content visual data analysis, I was able to gain a breadth of data regarding the most common representations of refugees in my sample of photographs.

To understand what these common representations meant in real-life, I conducted a semiological visual data analysis. I used ten randomly selected photographs which represented the most common representations found through the content visual data analysis. I used literature to explore what these representations mean in the context of postcolonial British society. Through the semiological visual data analysis, I was able to add depth to the breadth created through the content visual data analysis. While the previous literature has focused only on a small sample of refugee images from particular events, through my method I gained a fuller understanding of how refugees are visually othered in

the British newspaper media and how this othering changes depending on the age, gender and race of the refugees.

Following the visual data analysis, and to answer RQ3, I conducted interviews with newspaper audiences to gain an understanding of how they read and interpreted these common media representations. As I have already argued, there has been very little research conducted that explores how media audiences read media images of refugees. This is despite the fact that it is widely acknowledged that audiences are not simply passive recipients of images, but actively engage with and interpret these images, attaching their own meanings and experiences to the photographs (Hall, 2001; Rose, 2016). I conducted fourteen in-depth interviews where I showed participants five photographs that represented the most common media representations of refugees and asked them to give their readings of the photographs. Because the current literature on this topic is very limited, the interviews were exploratory in nature therefore these interviews gave me initial insights into how British newspaper audiences read images of refugees. I hope that this will open the door for future research.

8.7 Key conclusions

My first key conclusion is that while all refugees are othered, not all refugees are othered in the same way. These differences are based on the intersections of age, race and gender. Therefore, an intersectional analysis is crucial for gaining a fuller understanding of how refugees are visually othered in the media. Both the newspaper media and the audience represented racialised women and children as genuine refugees, with passivity, containment and distance being important in these representations. Visible displays of emotion were also important in emphasising the genuineness of the refugee woman of colour. In contrast, both the newspaper media and the audience questioned the genuineness of racialised men of colour who were shown as active and in proximity with Britain. This is significant because the vast majority of media photographs of refugees are photographs of racialised adult men. Therefore, refugees are predominantly represented as active threats coming into proximity with the West. This imagery is used to justify the restrictive border controls which have a real detrimental, and often fatal, impact on refugees. Meanwhile, the media represents the ‘good’ refugees as distant and passive. Therefore, they shift the responsibility for refugees away from the British government and the public despite the postcolonial connections between the origin countries of refugees and Britain.

My second key conclusion is that the newspaper media tactics of othering are continuations of the imperial othering produced during colonialism. The White, western media, in a similar way to the White imperialists and institutions during the period of the British empire,

represent men of colour as dangerous, uncivilised and barbaric and women and children of colour as submissive, vulnerable and in need of saving. Meanwhile, White institutions and people are represented as either the saviours of submissive women and children of colour or the protectors from the dangerous men of colour. In this way, the media in twenty-first century Britain reproduces the colonial racialised hierarchy with White people at the top and Black and Middle Eastern people at the bottom (Mayblin, 2019).

While I have argued above that race is a critical factor in the media othering of refugees, my third key conclusion is that race is rarely acknowledged by my interview participants. Participants often made assumptions based on the race of the refugees in the photographs, however race was only explicitly mentioned in comments about the mugshot photograph. Meanwhile participants openly discussed the gender and age of the refugees throughout the interviews. While I cannot know for sure, this could point to the colonial amnesia that is persistent in British society. As I have argued above by disconnecting the lives of the refugees from the colonial histories that connect Britain to countries in Africa and the Middle East, the interviewees are able to ignore Britain's responsibilities towards the refugees. Indeed, during the interviews, participants shifted the responsibility for Middle Eastern refugees to other Middle Eastern countries.

Overall, I have found that both the British newspaper media and its readers reproduce the concept of the racialised other that was produced during the period of the British empire. At the same time, they also ignore the historical and current role Britain, and other western powers, have played in the origin countries of refugees. Through reproducing the western anti-immigrant narrative, the British media works alongside the government to justify restrictive border controls and the hostile environment policies. This is because, as Nagarajan (2013) argues, "politicians and the press are locked in a cycle of ever-heightening anti-immigrant rhetoric." Therefore, British media othering has a real, detrimental impact on the lives of refugees, as well as migrants and racialised people more generally. This othering can have catastrophic, and sometimes fatal, consequences. By clearly showing the media's racist othering, I hope that my thesis will go some way towards challenging these representations.

8.8 Limitations and areas for future research

While I have tried to gain as full an understanding as possible regarding how refugees are visually othered in the British newspaper media, there are limitations to be aware of. In particular, when searching for the sample of images to be used in the visual data analysis, I have focused only on newspaper stories which include 'refugee/s' and/or 'asylum seeker/s' in the headline. However, as Sigona (2018) argues, the media also commonly use terms

such as ‘economic migrant’ and ‘illegal migrant’ to describe people seeking asylum. Therefore, I inevitably will be missing some of the representations of refugees by excluding those terms from my search. Furthermore, only photographs that included one or more refugee/s were included in my sample. This means that photographs which accompany stories about refugees but not including refugees themselves are excluded from my sample. These images are still important for understanding refugeeness. For example, a photograph of political leaders discussing refugees is important for showing the politicisation of the issue. While my focus was on how media visually represent refugees and asylum seekers themselves, future research could explore how these photographs which do not include refugees are used to add to these representations.

Because my interviews are exploratory in nature, focusing on in-depth discussions with a small sample of participants, there are limitations to how fully I can answer RQ3 (What meanings do audiences attach to different visual otherings of refugees and asylum seekers?). In particular, while an important aspect of my visual data analysis has been the focus on intersectionality and how intersectional characteristics affect the representations of refugees, the vast majority of my participants identified themselves as White British. Therefore, I was unable to conduct an intersectional analysis of these interviews. However, Höijer’s (2004) research showed that participant’s intersectional characteristics played a key role in their understanding of ‘human suffering’. Instead, my interviews predominantly focused on the western gaze which could have affected the findings of my interviews. For example, one of the key findings was a clear absence of discussions around race in the interviews. This could be attributed to White privilege and the colour-blindness attached to this (Lewis, 2004). Furthermore, while my participants were from East Birmingham, because of the small sample I was unable to explore whether this location played a role in their understandings. Therefore, future research should explore larger samples of participants to increase generalisability and also to enable an intersectional analysis to be conducted on the interviews. Finally, because of the relatively unstructured nature of my interviews, it could be difficult for me to replicate the findings of my interviews in the future. Having said that, there is some structure to these interviews in the order of the photographs shown to the participants which could be repeated.

My sample of photographs was taken from 2018 to 2020, and therefore was before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Scholars have already begun to acknowledge the differences between western representations of the White Ukrainian refugees compared to western representations of the Middle Eastern and Black African refugees that make up my sample. Britain’s postcolonial othering of refugees of colour can clearly be seen in the preferential treatment given to White, Ukrainian people fleeing the Russian invasion since February

2022. The UK has provided Ukrainian people with visas to enter Britain safely and legally, granting 105,000 visas in the second quarter of 2022. Meanwhile, Afghan refugees fleeing the Taliban are forced to take the risky sea routes on small, unsafe boats. (Migration Observatory, 2022b). Britain is not an isolated case. For example, Su (2022) argues that while the Polish government has received global praise for helping Ukrainian refugees, just months earlier it was condemned for violent pushbacks of Middle Eastern and African refugees. Indeed, African and Indian international students living in Ukraine have reportedly been subject to violence and discrimination at European borders which White Ukrainian nationals have been allowed to pass through peacefully and with little trouble. Furthermore, the media has contrasted Ukrainian refugees to Middle Eastern and African refugees:

> Ukrainian refugees have been described as 'white,' 'intelligent,' 'educated', 'civilized,' 'middle-class,' 'well-dressed,' and, most importantly, unlike refugees from 'Iraq and Afghanistan'. These media descriptions clearly echo the descriptions that White imperial powers used to describe themselves and contrast themselves with the racialised 'others' during the period of the European empires. (Su, 2022).

Meanwhile, the British general public also clearly show preferential treatment towards Ukrainian refugees with 70% of Morini and Hudson's (2022) survey respondents agreeing that we should let refugees from Ukraine stay in the U.K. while only 50% agree that we should let refugees from Afghanistan stay in the U.K. The vast sums of donations toward Ukraine also mirrors this preferential treatment (Eise, 2022). I hope to add to this work by conducting research into how the British newspaper media and its audience visually represent White Ukrainian refugees and comparing these representations to those in my current sample. I would be particularly interested to see whether newspaper audiences acknowledge race in their interviews when they are looking at photographs of both White Ukrainian refugees and Middle Eastern and Black African refugees.

Notes

1. These numbers are significantly lower than the 53.2 million internally displaced people, those who remain in their countries of origin.
2. Following the Windrush Scandal, the Hostile Environment was changed to the Compliant Environment. However, the name Hostile Environment has stuck in the media and public spheres and as Zocchi (2021) argues "behind the name, little has changed."
3. I am not suggesting that racism and racial violence did not exist prior to colonialism. Indeed, Geraldine Heng's (2011a, 2011b) two-part article finds that many of the racial othering tactics that were seen throughout the colonial period and today in the postcolonial period existed in Europe during the Middle Ages. The othering during that period was particularly based on religion with Jewish and Muslim populations shown as fundamentally different, inferior and dangerous to the majority Christian populations, and this is a pattern we see throughout colonialism. Meanwhile, today Muslim populations in particular are also othered in this way, this time seen as fundamentally different, inferior and dangerous to the majority secular populations. Alongside religious differences, Heng also finds that differences were also based phenotypes and particularly on skin colour. For example, the devil was consistently portrayed as black during this period, expressing the danger of the black man in particular. Furthermore, white bodies were represented as noble, superior and courageous "while the men of Africa,

possessing black faces, short bodies, and crisp hair are 'cowards of heart' and 'guileful'" (Heng, 2011a: p316). However, as Mayblin and Turner (2021: p54) argue, while a racist hierarchy existed during the Middle Ages, this was intensified during the colonial period where "European ideas of inferior peoples were turned into absolute notions of racial differences which became central to the organization of capitalism."

4. While I am now moving on to discuss the racialised Western gaze, because of the intersectional nature of this research the male gaze will continue to be important in understanding the gendered differences in the othering of refugees and asylum seekers.
5. Photographs accompanying stories about refugees and asylum seekers but not necessarily including these groups in the photographs are still useful for understanding refugeeness e.g., photographs showing political leaders talking about refugees. However, these photographs are beyond the scope of my thesis. My focus is, instead, on how the refugees and asylum seekers themselves are visually represented.
6. While I acknowledge that the gender binary is problematic, this was chosen because previous literature has shown that the difference in representations of refugees and asylum seekers is often based on this traditional gender binary and therefore needed to be coded in this way.
7. I randomly chose all ten of my photographs for the semiological visual data analysis using RANDOM.ORG - True Random Number Service
8. There were four photographs where because of the close-up nature of the photographs it was unclear whether the refugees photographed were engaged in active or passive behaviours. I have taken these four photographs out of the sample for this section, so they do not skew the percentages.
9. I have labelled the photos in my sample as 'Photo X' instead of 'Figure X' to show them as separate to the photographs already discussed in the literature review.
10. As my research is based on an intersectional perspective, I acknowledge that individuals experience the privilege of whiteness in different ways based on other characteristics such as class, gender, age and religion. Having said this, as Lewis (2004: p628) argues, white people still experience privilege as opposed to people of colour because "all whites have access to the symbolic capital of whiteness."

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10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: Information sheet (Approved by the ethics committee)

Visual Representations of Refugees/Asylum Seekers in British Newspaper Media

Participant Information Sheet

Invitation

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study.

Before you decide if you would like to participate, take time to read the following information carefully and, if you wish, discuss it with others such as your family, friends or colleagues.

Please ask a member of the research team, whose contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet, if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information before you make your decision.

What is the purpose of the study?

We are interested in understanding how audiences respond to images of refugees/asylum seekers that are presented in British newspapers.

Why have I been chosen?

You are being invited to take part in this study because:

You are an adult living in either Sutton Coldfield or Erdington.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form and complete a short initial questionnaire. Following this you will be asked to discuss a sample of images of refugees/asylum seekers taken from British newspapers over the past three years. The interview will take between 45 minutes to 1 hour.

With your permission we will video record the interview. You will be asked to turn your audio on but it is optional whether you turn your camera on. The recording will be typed into a document (transcribed) by the researcher. During the transcription process any names that have been used will be replaced with a pseudonym. The video recordings will be destroyed as soon as the research team have analysed the information in them to answer the research

question. We will ensure that anything from the analysis of the videos that is included in the reporting of the study will be anonymous.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

If you do decide to participate, you will be asked to sign and date a consent form. You would still be free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason prior to publication.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes. A code will be attached to all the data you provide to maintain confidentiality.

Your personal data (name and contact details) will only be used if the researchers need to contact you to arrange study visits or collect data by phone. Analysis of your data will be undertaken using coded data.

The data we collect will be stored in a secure document store (paper records) or electronically on a secure encrypted mobile device, password protected computer server or secure cloud storage device.

To ensure the quality of the research, Aston University may need to access your data to check that the data has been recorded accurately. If this is required, your personal data will be treated as confidential by the individuals accessing your data.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

While there are no direct benefits to you of taking part in this study, the data gained will help to advance knowledge in the field of sociology.

What are the possible risks and burdens of taking part?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages from taking part in this study.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of this study will be used in Hannah Ryan's PhD thesis.

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals and/or presented at conferences. If the results of the study are published, your identity will remain confidential.

A lay summary of the results of the study will be available for participants when the study has been completed and the researchers will ask if you would like to receive a copy.

Expenses and payments
The interviews will take place via Zoom therefore there will be no expenses.

Who is funding the research?

The study is being funded by Aston University

Who is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study?

Aston University is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study was given a favorable ethical opinion by the Aston University Research Ethics Committee.

What if I have a concern about my participation in the study?

If you have any concerns about your participation in this study, please speak to the research team and they will do their best to answer your questions. Contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet.

If the research team are unable to address your concerns or you wish to make a complaint about how the study is being conducted you should contact the Aston University Research Integrity Office at research_governance@aston.ac.uk or telephone 0121 204 3000.

Research Team

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Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet. If you have any questions regarding the study please don't hesitate to ask one of the research team.

Aston University

Aston University takes its obligations under data and privacy law seriously and complies with the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and the Data Protection Act 2018 ("DPA").

Aston University is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study. Aston University will process your personal data in order to register you as a participant and to manage your participation in the study. It will process your personal data on the grounds that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest (GDPR Article 6(1)(e). Aston University may process special categories of data about you which includes details about

your health. Aston University will process this data on the grounds that it is necessary for statistical or research purposes (GDPR Article 9(2)(j)). . Aston University will keep identifiable information about you for 6 years after the study has finished.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible.

You can find out more about how we use your information at www.aston.ac.uk/dataprotection or by contacting our Data Protection Officer at dp_officer@aston.ac.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

10.2 Appendix 2: Consent form (Approved by the ethics committee)

Visual Representations of Refugees/Asylum Seekers in British Newspaper Media

Consent Form

Name of Chief Investigator: Hannah Ryan

Please initial boxes

1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Information Sheet (PG_REC_F, Version 1, 06.09.2021) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected.	
3.	I agree to my personal data and data relating to me collected during the study being processed as described in the Participant Information Sheet.	
	I understand that if during the study I tell the research team something that causes them to have concerns in relation to my health and/or welfare they may need to breach my confidentiality.	
4.	I agree to the interview being audio recorded and to anonymised direct quotes from me being used in publications resulting from the study.	
5.	I agree to the interview being video recorded, knowing that I have the option to turn off my camera.	
6.	I agree to my anonymised data being used by research teams for future research.	
7.	I agree to my personal data being processed for the purposes of inviting me to participate in future research projects. I understand that I may opt out of receiving these invitations at any time.	
8.	I agree to take part in this study.	

Name of participant _____ Date _____ Signature _____

10.3 Appendix 3: Initial questionnaire for interview participants

Initial Questionnaire:

Before we get started with the interview, could you please answer all the questions on this questionnaire to determine your demographics and newspaper readership.

Highlight the answers that apply to you.

Demographics

1. **Gender**

Male

Female

Other

2. **Age**

18-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

70+

3. **Ethnicity**

White

English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British

Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Roma

Any other White background, write in:

_____

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed or Multiple background, write in

_____

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background, write in

_____

Black, Black British, Caribbean or African

Caribbean

African

Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background, write in

_____

Other ethnic group

Arab

Any other ethnic group, write in

_____

Newspaper readership

4. **How often do you read newspapers?**

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Rarely

Never

5. **What newspapers do you read? (You can tick more than one)**

Daily Mirror/Sunday Mirror

Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday

The Guardian

The Telegraph

Other, write in

_____

6. How do you access newspapers?

Online

Paper-copy

Both

10.4 Appendix 4: Interview guide

Interview Guide

1. Introduce myself and my research – as part of this research we are looking at how audiences read and respond to a small number of refugees and asylum seekers.
2. Make sure that participant has read the information sheet and signed consent form
3. Explain purpose of the interview – as part of this research we are looking at how audiences read and respond to a small number of refugees and asylum seekers. There is no right or wrong answer – we want you to feel comfortable to be as open and honest about what the photographs mean to you.
4. Are there any questions before we begin?
5. Double-check interviewee is happy for me to turn on the tape recorder

Turn on tape recorder

Part 1: Go through initial questionnaire with participant. Share screen so that they can see the answers and highlight on word document the answers that they give.

Introduce each photograph one-by-one and ask the participant to discuss. (What do they think the photo shows, how does it make them feel, are there any particular words that come straight to mind when they see the photo?)

Part 2: Based on the participant's discussion of each photograph ask them some prompting questions/ask them to elaborate certain points. E.g. if they come up with the word criminal, why do they think this person is a criminal? What in the image shows criminality?

Part 3: To conclude the discussion, participants should be asked if these were the kinds of photographs that they expected to see. Why/why not? What else did they expect to see?

6. Final comments: Does participant have anything they would like to add before we finish up?
7. Thank participant for their time and thoughts – tell them to keep hold of the information sheet and if they have any questions about the research to send me an email on the email address at the bottom.

Turn off tape recorder.

10.5 Appendix 5: Themes and codes for interview analysis

Themes	Codes
Photo number	Photo 1; Photo 2; Photo 3; Photo 4; Photo 5
Age	Age
Gender	Gender
Race	Race
Religion	Religion Clothing
Genuine	Genuine Passive behaviour Location Clothing Non-Refugee Victim Objects
Not Genuine	Not Genuine Active Behaviour Location Clothing Non-Refugee Threat Objects
Otherness	Otherness Lack of emotion
Connection	Connection Emotion
Containment	Containment Location Objects