

# Refugees in Dutch newspapers

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*A Critical Discourse Analysis on the portrayal of refugees during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement*

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# 1. Introduction

The European refugee crisis has been an issue that government officials, and policy makers have been occupied with since 2014. The figures that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR) have gathered show that in 2014, 283,532 migrants irregularly entered the European Union (EU). In the first half of 2015 the amount of displaced people increased by 83% in comparison to the same period in 2014, due to ongoing wars in Syria and Iraq which resulted in 137,000 refugees and migrants entering Europe.<sup>1</sup> For the whole of 2015 over one million refugees and migrants have entered Europe.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, in January and February 2016 already over 100,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece and Italy.<sup>3</sup> As a consequence of these large numbers of refugees and migrants entering Europe, many European countries found themselves struggling with infrastructures, economy, and policies.

As the refugee and migrant flow continues and people are increasingly being confronted with its consequences media outlets have the task and responsibility to cover events concerning the refugee crisis and respond to the positive, critical, and negative sounds that resonate within society. Moreover, media do not merely respond – they also shape these discourses. Therefore, the role and influence of mass media should not be underestimated.

The language that is used in newspapers in the coverage of the refugee crisis is determinative for the reader's responses, because words convey connoted and denoted meanings that can influence the ideas, beliefs and actions of readers.<sup>4</sup> Hence, newspapers (among other media outlets) and their journalists have great power. In this thesis, I want to problematize the objectivity of newspapers and analyze the portrayal of refugees in newspapers by investigating the use of language, the discourses that the different newspapers act within as well as the discourses that they maintain and create.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2015/7/5592b9b36/mediterranean-crisis-2015-six-months-refugee-migrant-numbers-highest-record.html>, UNHCR, 'Mediterranean Crisis 2015 at six months: refugee and migrant numbers highest on record', consulted on 10-03-2017.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-releases-global-migration-trends-2015-factsheet>, 'IOM Releases Global Migration Trends 2015 Factsheet', consulted on 10-03-2017.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-refugee-arrivals-top-100000>, 'Mediterranean Migrant, Refugee Arrivals Top 100,000', consulted on 10-03-2017.

<sup>4</sup> John E. Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis* (Hampshire and New York 2007) 47-49.

Previous research on the portrayal of refugees focused on English newspapers as these are the most accessible to an international public.<sup>5</sup> Therefore I intend to contribute to existing knowledge on this topic by focusing on Dutch newspapers. The Dutch newspapers that this research is concerned with are Telegraaf, Algemeen Dagblad, Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw. Also, I will focus on a time-period on which little research has been conducted yet, namely the introduction and implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement, as this can elicit particular - and possibly different - discourses on refugees.

I will conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) using Fairclough's method in order to provide insight into the relatedness of discourses to matters of discursive and social practices wherein power-relations are significant. I aim to compare the discourses in the different newspapers in order to determine in what way the background and category of the newspapers (quality or popular)<sup>6</sup> is related to the discourses that they maintain and construct. This way I can develop tools to understand how journalists and newspapers contribute to the construction of diverse discourses regarding the portrayal of refugees in the Netherlands. Furthermore, I will discuss the significant role of religion (and in particular Islam) in the discussion on and the portrayal of refugees in the Netherlands to see if and how this relates to the discussion on the EU-Turkey Agreement in the newspaper articles. In doing so, this study contributes to the field of refugee studies, religious studies and to studies concerning the construction of discourses.

In order to accomplish the objectives of this research as outlined above, the central research question with which this thesis is concerned is:

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<sup>5</sup> - Samuel Parker, 'Unwanted invaders': The representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Australian print media', *eSharp Issue* 23 (2015) 1-21.

- Sharon Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy: News Discourses and Asylum Seekers in Australia', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14 (2001) 169-186.

- Kieran O'Doherty and Amanda Lecouteur, "'Asylum seekers', 'boat people' and 'illegal immigrants': Social categorization in the media", *Australian Journal of Psychology* 59 (2007) 1-12.

<sup>6</sup> The classification of a newspaper as 'quality' or 'popular' implies value judgement and is therefore fairly debated. Quality is mostly related to the elite and the focus on 'real news' (and related to disciplines such as literature, art and culture), whereas popular is related to the mass and the focus on 'other news' (and related to disciplines such as show business). In practice it is a distinction that is also made and maintained by journalists. In social science this distinction is relativized and several other dimensions of newspapers are suggested. However, as the focus of this research is on the actions and influence of journalists, the quality-popular distinction that they make will be adopted in this research.

Irene Costera Meijer, 'Naar een goed journaal: Conventionele, populaire en publieke repertoires in de televisiejournalistiek', in: Jo Bardoel, Chris Vos, Frank van Vree and Huub Wijfjes, *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Third edition; Amsterdam 2009) 391-412, 396.

Nel van Dijk and Susanne Janssen, 'De reuzen voorbij: De metamorfose van de literaire kritiek in de pers sedert 1965', in: Jo Bardoel, Chris Vos, Frank van Vree and Huub Wijfjes, *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Third edition; Amsterdam 2009) 209-236, 211.

*What representations of refugees can be distinguished in the Dutch public sphere in the framing of the European refugee crisis by journalists (of diverse newspapers) during the introduction and implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement?*

In order to answer this central research question, I have formulated several sub-questions that narrow the focus of this research:

1. How do notions of language, discourse, power, and identity relate to each other?
2. What role do newspapers and journalists play in the construction of discourses?
3. What is the context wherein the EU-Turkey Agreement was developed and what were the responses to this Agreement in the Netherlands?
4. In what ways does the topic of religion (and in particular Islam) appear in the discussion on refugees and the EU-Turkey Agreement in the Netherlands?
5. What is the background of newspapers in the Netherlands?
6. What themes and categorizations of refugees can be distinguished in the different newspapers during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement?
7. How does the construction of these discourses relate to the background and categorization of the different newspapers?
8. What are possible implications of these discourses on the readership in the Dutch public sphere?

The sub-questions will be answered in the various chapters. In chapter 2 ‘Theoretical Framework’, multiple theoretical digressions are made that justify the assumptions that underlie this research. I will briefly discuss Critical Theory, Constructivism and Postcolonial Theory, arguing that these theories are the most appropriate frameworks through which to research the main question. In short, these theories provide insight into different aspects that are involved with newspaper reporting on refugees. I will use said theories to lay the foundation for the conceptualisation of the key concepts of this research, i.e. language, power, discourse, identity. The focus of this chapter is thus to answer the first sub-question. I will argue that these concepts are intimately related and that this is decidedly the case in the field of (print) media and journalism. In doing so, information will also be provided that answers sub-question two. Answering these questions will help to ascertain the influence of journalists and newspaper on the construction of discourses on refugees.

In chapter 3 ‘The controversy surrounding the European refugee crisis’ sub-question three will be taken up in order to provide a background for this research. Here, information will be provided on the refugee crisis itself. The issues with labelling the current situation a ‘crisis’ will be discussed. Also, the broader socio-political context will be examined, covering the developments that have led to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. This is

necessary as the articles of this research discuss this Agreement, which is a response to the refugee crisis. The controversy that surrounds this Agreement can elicit particular discourses on refugees. Therefore it is important to make clear what issues and developments form the basis of the disagreements and to provide insight into the discourse on refugees in the Netherlands. Furthermore, sub-question four will be answered by taking up the topic of religion when discussing the discourse on refugees in the Netherlands.

Chapter 4 ‘Methodology’ is concerned with the justification of the approach and method for this research. A Critical Discourse Analysis approach is chosen that encompasses the different dimensions of this research: textual, discursive and social practice, which are covered by Fairclough’s three-dimensional method. Furthermore, an outline of the data – newspaper articles - for this research will be provided. Additionally, I will discuss the period of pillarization and depillarization in the Netherlands that have been of influence on the characterization, style and focus of the different newspapers. This forms the important contextual/background information on the newspapers, with which sub-question five will be answered. This is necessary to be able to uncover a possible link between the different discourses and the background of the newspapers.

In chapter 5 ‘Analysis’ sub-questions six, seven and eight will be covered. The greater part of this chapter revolves around sub-question five. Each of the newspapers (and each of the articles) is discussed separately. Based on the textual data I will argue that three overarching themes can be distinguished: the refugee as human being, the dehumanized refugee and the unwanted invader. Within these themes different categories can be distinguished that journalists use to support the themes. The chapter will be concluded by a section on discursive and social practices. There, the main findings and differences concerning themes and categories will be discussed, which provides insight into the style and focus of each newspaper with which sub-question six can be answered. Moreover, sub-question seven will be answered by relating this information to possible implications that these discourses can have on the readership. By answering these questions I can link all the gathered information on journalists, newspapers, the EU-Turkey Agreement and the portrayal of refugees, which enables me to answer the research question.

In chapter 6 ‘Conclusion’ a summary of the argument of this research will be provided. I will argue that, based on the results of this research, more awareness should be raised to the implications of language use in Dutch newspapers on public discourse on refugees. Furthermore, I will highlight the theoretical and practical consequences of this research, and explore future research directions that arise out of this research project.



## **2. Theoretical digressions**

This thesis aims to analyse the portrayal of refugees in five Dutch newspapers during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. There are multiple assumptions that this research builds on, such as the existence and construction of different discourses, and the influence of newspapers on discourses. In doing so, the approach in this research can be said to be informed by Critical Theory and Constructivism, and, to an extent, in Postcolonial Theory. These theories demonstrate the power-relations in society that can become visible in language use, resulting in the construction of discourses wherein different identities can be constructed which can influence the way that the discussed matters are perceived and acted upon in public discourse.

In the following the underlying theories of this research will be explicated in order to justify the conceptualisation of key concepts in this research, such as the notions of language, power, discourse and identity. I will argue that these key concepts are intimately related and that this is decidedly the case in the field of (print) media and journalism. Therefore, said theories provide insight into different aspects that are involved with newspaper reporting. With the information of this chapter I will answer the first two sub-questions. Answering these questions will help to ascertain the influence of journalists and newspaper on the construction of discourses on refugees.

### **2.1. Theories at the foundation of this research**

The foundation of this research can be found in Social Theory. Social theories are concerned with society and therefore focus on social practice and social forces. There are various types of Social Theory to be distinguished, amongst others, Critical Theory, Constructivism and Postcolonial Theory that inform this research.

#### **2.1.1. Constructivism and Critical Theory**

Constructivism and Critical Theory are two distinguished approaches in social sciences. Both have characteristics that influence this research. The exact similarities and differences between these approaches are thoroughly debated by scholars. Caton describes the movements of Constructivism and Critical Theory as being intertwined: ‘They are each like balls of yarn, made up of strands that are individual and separate, yet twisted together and

generally moving in the same direction.<sup>7</sup> Caton stresses that Constructivism and Critical Theory are very much alike in that they both understand reality to be created and stress the agency of individuals. Hopf, in contrast, warns that Critical Theory and Constructivism are sometimes ‘misleadingly conflated’.<sup>8</sup> He explains that Constructivism has its intellectual roots in Critical Theory, which is a statement that also Price and Reus-Smit make, but argues that there are also some significant differences.<sup>9</sup>

The differences between Constructivism and Critical Theory center around the notions of ontology and research purpose.<sup>10</sup> Guba and Lincoln put forward a more nuanced view on these differences. They state that the ontology of Critical Theory, on the one hand, is a position of historical realism.<sup>11</sup> Meaning that what individuals understand to be reality is actually a distorted view as the structures have historically evolved. Critical Theory stresses that nevertheless the consequences of these structures are real. According to Parker Critical Theory is particularly concerned with the existence of power-relations in society, marginalized groups, and the construction of discourses.<sup>12</sup> Critical Theory (especially the second generation) attempts to deconstruct various discourses in order to uncover the operating practices that produce hegemony and injustice.<sup>13</sup> This in turn can lead to processes that can spark social changes, but in itself Critical Theory does not lead to revolutionary effects.<sup>14</sup> The emphasis on the notions of power and discourse is significant for distinguishing Critical Theory from Constructivism as well as for this research, because these notions provide insight into the subjectivity of newspapers and journalists, acting within discourses and producing discourses, and the influence of these dynamics on the Dutch public sphere.

Guba and Lincoln state that constructivists, on the other hand, reject the realist ontology of truth, and subscribe to a relativist ontology and the belief that one should speak of

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<sup>7</sup> Kellee Caton, ‘Between You and Me: Making Messes with Constructivism and Critical Theory’, in *Tourism Culture & Communication* 13 (2014) 123-127, 130.

<sup>8</sup> Ted Hopf, ‘The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory’, *International Security* 23 (1998) 171-200, 181.

<sup>9</sup> - Hopf, ‘The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory’, 181.

- Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, ‘Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism’, *European Journal of International Relations* 4 (1998) 259-294, 259.

<sup>10</sup> Caton, ‘Between You and Me’, 131.

<sup>11</sup> E. Guba and Y. Lincoln, ‘Competing paradigms in qualitative research’, in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (1998) 195-220, 205.

<sup>12</sup> Ian Parker, *Social Constructionism, Discourse and Realism* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi 1998) 17.

<sup>13</sup> Caton, ‘Between You and Me’, 130.

<sup>14</sup> Caton, ‘Between You and Me’, 130.

multiple realities that are constructed by the individuals and groups that are holding them.<sup>15</sup> Schwandt adds to this that, also in doing research, constructivists hold the belief that the results are rather created than found by the researcher, because a researcher is always biased.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, constructivists try to avoid hegemonizing the perspectives of the subjects of research.<sup>17</sup> Hence, Constructivism builds on assumptions, conceptual frames and methods that are already outlined in Critical Theory.<sup>18</sup> Price and Reus-Smit add to this that Constructivism has provided positive contributions to Critical Theory.<sup>19</sup> They explain that Constructivism realizes the promises of Critical Theory, because Constructivism questions all objectivity, also that of the researcher.<sup>20</sup>

In this research I want to stress the fallibility of the status quo, i.e. the views that the newspapers portray to be a reflection of reality. Furthermore, I want to emphasize the power structures involved in newspaper reporting, possible effects of particular language uses and provide insight into the construction of discourses. These theories underline the importance of the research question, because the manner wherein Dutch media discuss refugees can influence people's ideas and beliefs (and possibly actions) on this matter by constructing particular discourses on refugees. Consequently, these ideas can sink into public discourse across numerous contexts which can cause people to harbour prejudices and induce discrimination, which eventually can lead to, for example, precarious policy responses and exclusionary politics.

### **2.1.2. Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonial Theory is a critical theory that is also relevant with regard to this research as it emphasizes power-relations and the workings of the past on present issues of perspective and identity construction. As a critical theory Postcolonial Theory tries to shed light on the position of those that are being marginalized, the role of power, and uncover the values that are at play in certain discourses.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, Postcolonial Theory is concerned with the

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<sup>15</sup> E. Guba and Y. Lincoln, 'Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging influences', in: N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (Second edition; Thousand Oaks 2003) 253-291, 206.

<sup>16</sup> T. Schwandt, 'Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry', in: N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (Thousand Oaks 1998) 221-259, 253.

<sup>17</sup> - Caton, 'Between You and Me', 130.

- Guba and Lincoln, 'Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging influences', 260.

<sup>18</sup> Price and Reus-Smit, 'Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism', 283.

<sup>19</sup> Price and Reus-Smit, 'Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism', 261.

<sup>20</sup> Price and Reus-Smit, 'Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism', 288-289.

<sup>21</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York and Toronto 1979) 6.

matter of binary-oppositions, i.e. *Othering*, and its role in constructing identities. Hence, Postcolonial Theory emphasizes the flexibility of identity.<sup>22</sup>

Said attempts to explain the ways in which Western colonizers look upon the Orient. He argues that Westerners use their power to redefine Oriental *Others*.<sup>23</sup> Said introduces the term *Orientalism* to describe the socially constructed binary opposition that Westerners create between the Orient and the Occident, for, according to Said, ‘the construction of identity involves the construction of opposites.’<sup>24</sup> The resulting occurrence of stereotyping is due to a lack of knowledge, according to Said.<sup>25</sup> Note here the influence of Foucault’s idea that power and knowledge are intertwined (see also section 2.2.2. Power and discourses).<sup>26</sup>

The idea of Orientalism, the us-them binary relation and the construction of identities is exceptionally relevant in this research, because the European refugee crisis concerns non-European refugees who are entering Europe, which is a phenomenon on which European (here: Dutch) newspapers report. In doing so, refugees are grouped together as ‘the refugees’, which in itself is a notion that is prone to stereotyping. The European refugee crisis has confronted Europeans with refugees from outside Europe who are mostly unknown to citizens. Therefore newspapers, being a part of mass media, have a powerful position wherein they can contribute to filling a gap of knowledge, construct accounts of refugees wherein they ascribe particular identities to them, and influence existing ideas and beliefs. Therefore, Postcolonial Theory adds to this research in that it contributes to the understanding of the notion of constructed identities.

## **2.2. Key concepts in this research**

### **2.2.1. Subjectivity of language**

Whereas traditional theories are explanatory in nature, seeking to explain a certain event or occurrence, Critical Theory is emancipatory in nature. The goal of Critical Theory is not merely to explain, but to investigate and become aware of dominating constructs within society wherein the category of objectivity is considered to be lost. Reasoning, Horkheimer argued, has become a subjective tool.<sup>27</sup> Critical Theory, therefore, directly opposes the ideas of the Enlightenment scholars, such as Locke, Hobbes, and Descartes, who believed that there actually existed something like objective reasoning.

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<sup>22</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 332.

<sup>23</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 46.

<sup>24</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 332.

<sup>25</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 48.

<sup>26</sup> Dino Franco Felluga, *Critical Theory: The Key Concepts* (London and New York 2015) XI.

<sup>27</sup> Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York 1947) 4.

Subjective reason has enormous consequences, because of which, according to Horkheimer, our language has also changed.<sup>28</sup> This change is the result of the so called 'linguistic turn', which Wittgenstein initiated.<sup>29</sup> Language, like reason, is losing its objective characteristics and becomes a tool that is used to attain the subjective goals of an individual and shape reality.<sup>30</sup> Therefore language enacts identity.<sup>31</sup> When discussing (print) media this idea can be applied to journalists who, as Richardson states, use language as a tool to form a particular message that can maintain or transform social realities and beliefs. Moreover, in language the identity of the author and newspaper is enacted.

### 2.2.2. Power and discourses

Power relations and discourses are of utter importance with regard to Critical Theory and this particular research. Habermas, who led the second generation of critical theorists, understands discourse as the shared linguistic background and the critical procedures that make dialogue possible in the first place.<sup>32</sup> His focus then is on communicative action and power.<sup>33</sup> Like Habermas, also Foucault does not believe in power-free communication.

Whereas traditional theories have an understanding of power that Foucault conceptualizes as *negative power*, he opposes this to a type of power that he understands as *positive power*. On the one hand, *negative power*, according to Foucault, is the kind of power that has negative effects in that it excludes, censors, or conceals. *Positive power*, on the other hand, is the kind of power that produces reality and domains.<sup>34</sup> Even though both forms of power exist, the difference between the two should be acknowledged according to Foucault. By doing so he is able to demonstrate the inherent relation between power and discourse, which serves as a foundation for this research as it includes the social and political dimensions that are involved in media communication.

Foucault's conception of discourse is adopted in this research and is a necessary condition for a possibility of positive power.<sup>35</sup> Foucault emphasizes that discourses are formed by certain forces. He defines discourses as ways of knowing and structuring the world

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<sup>28</sup> Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 11.

<sup>29</sup> Daniel Kolak, *Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (Houston 1998).

<sup>30</sup> Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 22.

<sup>31</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 11.

<sup>32</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston 1984) 275.

<sup>33</sup> Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, XXX.

<sup>34</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York 1975) 194.

<sup>35</sup> Torbjörn Wandel, 'The Power of Discourse: Michel Foucault and Critical Theory', *Cultural Values* 5 (2001) 368-382, 371.

through language.<sup>36</sup> Hence, a functionalist definition of discourse that follows Wittgenstein's ideas on the linguistic turn. More specifically, discourses structure the interconnection of knowledge and power at a specific place and time.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, each historical period is made up of different discourses. Each discourse, then, has its own history of emergence and therefore each discourse has its own assumptions and rules. It follows that what is considered to be knowledge in a certain discourse, does not have to be considered as knowledge in another discourse. Knowledge then is the encompassing notion of the ideas, assumptions and rules that are accepted in a particular discourse.<sup>38</sup>

Foucault's definition of discourse, emphasizing the interconnection of power and knowledge in every individual's use of language in a particular context is relevant for this research on three levels:

- 1) Foucault's understanding of power has consequences for Critical Theory as a project that is committed to fighting (negative) power. In researching this traditional understanding of power, critical theorists use the different fields within social sciences and humanities - psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, et cetera - to critique society and pursue emancipation. However, Foucault argues, that these sciences are also structures of power.<sup>39</sup> This is not per se a problem (hence, *positive power*), but in doing research this should be acknowledged: when researching discourses, one also finds oneself within particular discourses. Critical Theory then should be understood as acknowledging the influence and presence of power, which is already emancipatory, rather than about fighting it.
- 2) Secondly, positive power concerns journalists and newspapers, with which this research is concerned, who act within particular discourses. Taking into account the presence of power and the press's occupation with language, one should view such media outlets as taking part in discourses. Each discourse, and in the case of this research each newspaper, has its own history of emergence and therefore its own assumptions and rules as is mentioned in the above.<sup>40</sup>
- 3) Thirdly, newspapers do not merely act within particular discourses, they are also able to produce discourses, for example, on refugees and the European refugee crisis.

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<sup>36</sup> Felluga, *Critical Theory*, XI.

<sup>37</sup> Felluga, *Critical Theory*, 67.

<sup>38</sup> Felluga, *Critical Theory*, 85.

<sup>39</sup> Wandel, 'The Power of Discourse', 371.

<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that a newspaper can take part in multiple discourses. A newspaper is not per se limited to one particular discourse.

Therefore newspapers are never neutral, as there can be no such thing as non-discourse, according to Foucault. Objectivity, as described by Horkheimer, has disappeared and has been replaced with subjective reason.<sup>41</sup> Language, like reason, has become a tool to send across a message that fits the discourse that it acts within.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the people that read the newspaper articles also find themselves in particular discourses that influence their interpretation of the articles.<sup>43</sup> The risk lies in the fact that an individual does not per se have a reason to question the language that is used and the message that is carried across. When it comes to newspapers this is even more so the case because readers choose to read a particular newspaper, believing that that newspaper delivers them the most relevant news items and ideas.

Foucault's understanding of positive power is necessary for this research, as this research focusses on what discourses on refugees are created by the different Dutch newspapers. I assume the idea that media outlets have a certain power because of social and political dimensions and that they can deploy this by using a particular style of language to bring across a certain message.

### **2.2.3. Identity construction**

Media outlets have the ability to construct discourses and thus the potential to create and transform social realities.<sup>44</sup> This constructivist position is also concerned with the concept of identity, more specifically, the multiplicity and changes of identity. The understanding of a dialogical, contextual identity (or rather: identities) goes against an understanding of one static identity. Not only are individuals thought to have multiple identities, these identities are also flexible so that even in one setting one can appeal to multiple identities.<sup>45</sup> The dynamic roots of identity are embedded in power relations and therefore interesting from a critical theorist perspective.

Grotevant puts forth a relevant distinction between different domains of identity, i.e. *chosen identities* and *assigned identities*. *Chosen identities* are those components of identity

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<sup>41</sup> Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 4.

<sup>42</sup> Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 22.

<sup>43</sup> Marianne Jørgensen and Louise J. Philips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi 2002) 69.

<sup>44</sup> Héctor Grad and Luisa Martín Rojo, 'Identities in discourse: An integrative view', in: Rosana Dolón and Júlie Todolí (ed.), *Analysing Identities in Discourse: Discourse approaches to politics, society and culture* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia 2008) 3-28, 5.

<sup>45</sup> Grad and Rojo, 'Identities in discourse', 5.

that arise out of choices by individuals that are made available to them in their social contexts.<sup>46</sup> There is, however, not an unlimited supply of choices to make. Restrictions can result based on personality, abilities, (sub)culture, and family. *Assigned identities* are those components of identity that involve no aspect of choice or control, such as gender and ethnicity. People are assigned to certain genders, ethnicities, but also to certain classes, sexualities, religions, etcetera. Hence, the influence of Postcolonial Theory. As part of their identity, however, individuals must construct meaning around these components nonetheless. That way assigned components of identity, according to Grotevant, provide context for the chosen components of identity. Hence, *assigned identities* are ascribed to persons, whereas the *chosen identities* are achieved.

The concept of *assigned identities* is most relevant as this can be linked to power and the media, as discussed in this particular research. ‘Power relations can structure the subject position and forms of identity in play.’<sup>47</sup> The structuring of forms of identity (by power relations from outside the individual) is equivalent to assigning identities. *Assigned identities* are more complex than the examples that Grotevant briefly discusses, i.e. class, gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity: assigning identities can be linked to prejudices – racism, sexism, and other sorts of discrimination. People can be assigned identities that they themselves do not agree with. Newspapers have a great platform wherein journalists can respond to such sounds and also possess the power to influence their audience, the readers. In the production of discourses, as discussed previously, the press has the ability to describe the refugee crisis in particular ways and, consequently, to describe the refugees involved in a particular way. Hence, the choices that are made by the press not only result in the construction of discourses, but also in assigning identities to refugees that fit within those discourses.

### 2.3. Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the theories that form the foundation of this research as well as the conceptualization of the key concepts that build on these theories and are used in this research. I have demonstrated that these concepts - language, discourse, power and identity - are intimately related in Foucault’s definition of discourse as ways of knowing and structuring the world through language.<sup>48</sup> Also, I have argued that these concepts are important with

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<sup>46</sup> Harold D. Grotevant, ‘Assigned and Chosen Identity Components: A Process Perspective on Their Integration’, in: G.R. Adams, T.P. Gullotta, R. Montemayor, *Adolescent Identity Development* (Newbury Park, London and New Delhi 1992), 73-90, 76.

<sup>47</sup> Chris Weedon, *Identity and Culture: Narratives of Difference and Belonging* (New York 2004) 10.

<sup>48</sup> Felluga, *Critical Theory*, XI.



regard to the field of (print) media and journalism, because language in newspaper articles is used as a tool (by journalists and newspapers) to bring across a particular message that can influence the readership and their beliefs and ideas on society as well as of the place of themselves and others in society.

These theories are the most appropriate frameworks through which to research the main question, because they ascertain the need to critically investigate the construction of discourses on refugees in Dutch newspapers. I have argued that the manner wherein refugees are discussed is not without consequences and can influence people's ideas and beliefs (and possibly actions) on the refugee crisis. The ideas that are put forward in newspapers can sink into public discourse across numerous contexts which can cause people to, for example, harbour prejudices and induce discrimination, which eventually may lead to precarious policy responses and exclusionary politics.

In the following chapters I will problematize the objectivity of newspapers and critically analyze the portrayal of refugees in newspapers by investigating the discourses that the different newspapers act within as well as the discourses that they maintain and create. Firstly, it is necessary to provide more information on the refugee crisis itself and the different responses to it in the Netherlands. Also, I will pinpoint existing issues in scholarly debate with regard to terminology that concerns the refugee crisis.

### 3. The controversy surrounding the European refugee crisis

In this chapter the background for this research will be outlined. Firstly, I will provide background information on the refugee crisis and problematize the terminology that concerns the discourse on this crisis. Engaging in scholarly debates concerning terminology and refugees will allow me to provide more critical analysis on some of the claims being made in the newspaper articles that form the data of this research. Secondly, I will discuss how several regulations of the EU are put under pressure, which provides insight into the European debate on dealing with the crisis. This provides a socio-political background building up to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. Thirdly, the responses to the refugee crisis and the Agreement in the Netherlands will be discussed, this provides a background to the discourse on refugees in the Netherlands.

#### 3.1. The European refugee crisis

Since 2014 the pace at which large numbers of people become displaced has increased rapidly.<sup>49</sup> The figures that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR) have gathered, as mentioned in the introduction, show that in 2014 283,532 migrants irregularly entered the European Union (EU). In 2015 this amount increased to over one million refugees and migrants.<sup>50</sup> The speed of this acceleration is illustrated by the finding that in January and February 2016 already over 100,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece and Italy.<sup>51</sup>

The cause of this crisis can be found in new situations of conflict, such as in Syria, Iraq, Burundi, but also in situations of ongoing conflict, such as in Afghanistan and Somalia. Religious persecution has been identified as an important factor for people to flee their countries. Especially the rise of ISIS and the Assad regime have contributed to this. The conflicts have caused increasing flows of irregular migration to Australia, North America and Europe. The land and sea routes that the displaced people take to reach these destinations are, however, dangerous. IOM has reported many migrants either missing or dead, which is why it has launched the Missing Migrants Project that tracks arrivals and fatalities worldwide.

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<sup>49</sup> Erin K. Wilson and Luca Mavelli, 'The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Beyond Conceptual and Physical Boundaries', in: Luca Mavelli and Erin K. Wilson (eds.), *The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Secularity, Security and Hospitality in Question* (London 2016) 1-22, 2.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-releases-global-migration-trends-2015-factsheet>, IOM, 'IOM Releases Global Migration Trends 2015 Factsheet', consulted on 10-03-2017.

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-refugee-arrivals-top-100000>, IOM, 'Mediterranean Migrant, Refugee Arrivals Top 100,000', consulted on 10-03-2017.

Figures of IOM show that since 2014 (until June 2017) 14,000 lives have been lost in the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>52</sup> This number is significantly higher than in previous years: in 2012 500 people were reported dead or missing in the Mediterranean Sea and in 2013 600.<sup>53</sup>

### 3.1.1. 'Crisis'

The fact that the situation is called a 'crisis' is not related to the number of refugees, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD argues that 'Europe has the proven capacity and the experience to find means to deal efficiently and appropriately with large migration movements.'<sup>54</sup> It is also not a 'crisis' in that it was unexpected, because it is a result of developments over several years wherein refugees have been struggling. The fact that many countries found themselves struggling with infrastructures, economy, and policies and so on is, according to Kingsley et al, due to Europe not realising the scale of the crisis in time.<sup>55</sup> They argue that 'the crisis is only a crisis because of the European response to it. EU countries have spent all year debating and procrastinating about an appropriate solution to Europe's biggest refugee movement since the second world war.'<sup>56</sup> Before I will discuss some of the responses in Europe to deal with this situation, it is necessary to define and explain the difference between 'refugees', 'migrants' and 'asylum seekers'.

### 3.1.2. 'Refugees', 'asylum seekers' or 'migrants'?

In public debate the terms 'refugees', 'migrants' and 'asylum seekers' are often used interchangeably. It is, however, important to make a difference between these terms that are used to ascribe identities. The legal definition of the term 'refugee' is established in the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees (1951). Article 1 explains that this term applies to persons whose application for asylum has been approved, based on 'a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social

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<sup>52</sup> <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>, IOM, 'Missing Migrants Project', consulted on 10-07-2017.

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/pbn/docs/Fatal-Journeys-Tracking-Lives-Lost-during-Migration-2014.pdf>, IOM, *Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost during Migration* (Geneva 2014) 20.

<sup>54</sup> OECD, 'Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?', *Migration Policy Debates* 7 (2015) 1-15, 11.

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/04/syrian-refugee-crisis-why-has-it-become-so-bad>, Patrick Kingsley, Mark Rice-Oxley and Albert Nardelli, 'Syrian refugee crisis: why has it become so bad?', consulted on 10-07-2017.

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/04/syrian-refugee-crisis-why-has-it-become-so-bad>, Patrick Kingsley, Mark Rice-Oxley and Albert Nardelli, 'Syrian refugee crisis: why has it become so bad?', consulted on 10-07-2017.

group or political opinion.<sup>57</sup> There are no unitary legal definitions of ‘asylum seeker’ and ‘migrant’. According to UNHCR and OECD ‘asylum seeker’ refers to a person who has formally applied for asylum, but whose request has yet to be completed or processed.<sup>58</sup> This definition can differ per country. In the Netherlands one must register as an asylum seeker, then one can sign the asylum application.<sup>59</sup> Hence, an asylum seeker can still be denied the legal status of refugee.

When using the concepts interchangeably, the UNHCR argues, attention is taken away from specific legal protections that refugees are owed under international law, ‘such as protection from refoulement and from being penalized for crossing borders without authorization in order to seek safety.’<sup>60</sup> This, UNHCR states, can lead to undermining public support for refugees, but also for the institution of asylum which is already much debated in the period of the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. Note here that the UNHCR already considers some people to be refugees, even before their asylum requests are granted. They argue that ‘refugees’ are ‘persons fleeing armed conflict and persecution.’<sup>61</sup> Hence, there is no consensus on the use of these different terms.

The use of the term ‘migrant’ is also debated. The term ‘migrant’ is often used as an umbrella term. The OECD, in agreement with the UN definition, defines a ‘migrant’ as ‘anyone moving to another country with the intention to stay for a minimum period of time (i.e. it excludes tourists and business visitors).’<sup>62</sup> This includes refugees and asylum seekers. The OECD distinguishes between: long-term migrant that can travel freely, labour migrants, family migrants and humanitarian migrants.<sup>63</sup> Whereas the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) contrasts economic migrants and refugees, by arguing that economic migrants leave their country voluntarily for reasons of economic gain,<sup>64</sup> it is the question of whether making such a clear distinction is in fact possible. Research by the Overseas Development Institute

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<sup>57</sup> <http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBV0001002/1956-08-01>, ‘Convention relating to the status of refugees’, consulted on 10-07-2017.

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- <http://www.unhcr.org/asylum-seekers.html>, UNHCR, ‘Asylum-seekers’, consulted on 11-07-2017.

- OECD, ‘Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?’, 4.

<sup>59</sup> <https://ind.nl/en/asylum/Pages/Asylum-seeker.aspx>, Immigration and Naturalisation Service, ‘Asylum seeker’, consulted on 11-07-2017.

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/latest/2016/3/56e95c676/refugees-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html>, UNHCR, ‘Refugees’ and ‘Migrants’ – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)’, consulted on 15-06-2017.

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>, UNHCR, ‘UNHCR viewpoint: ‘Refugee’ or ‘migrant’ - Which is right?’, consulted on 13-07-2017.

<sup>62</sup> OECD, ‘Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?’, 4.

<sup>63</sup> OECD, ‘Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?’, 4.

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/europes-migration-crisis>, CFR, ‘Europe’s Migration Crisis: An escalating migration crisis is testing the European Union’s commitment to human rights and open borders’, consulted on 13-07-2017.

(ODI) argues that ‘the reasons why asylum-seekers and economic migrants choose to make the dangerous journey to Europe are often similar and a person may fit both of these categories at the same time.’ One of the common motivations they have deduced from the research material is the search for a secure livelihood.<sup>65</sup> Several media outlets have therefore chosen to eliminate the term ‘migrant’, because it is used as an inaccurate umbrella term and does not cover the urgency of the situation. Malone, editor for Al-Jazeera, argued that the term ‘dehumanises and distances.’<sup>66</sup> O’Doherty and Lecouteur explain that any description is a construct and that it at best can signify a part of the aggregation, therefore they stress that such labels should not be considered as natural categories.<sup>67</sup> In addition, Wilson and Mavelli state that the categories that people ascribe to those who are most directly affected by the crisis do not necessarily fit the frames and narratives of the people in question.<sup>68</sup>

### **3.2. Dealing with the crisis in Europe**

The European refugee crisis has put the EU and several of its policies under pressure. In this section I will reflect upon the Schengen Agreement, the Dublin III Regulation and the EU-Turkey Agreement.

#### **3.2.1. The Schengen Agreement**

In 1995 the Schengen Agreement was implemented, which resulted in the gradual abolition of passport checks at common borders.<sup>69</sup> This Agreement allows that ‘any person, irrespective of nationality, may cross the internal borders without being subjected to border checks.’<sup>70</sup> There are, however, some occasions wherein national authorities can resort to police checks or temporarily can reintroduce border control at the internal borders. The circumstances under which these measures are allowed are subjected to strict rules.<sup>71</sup> At the time that this

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10485.pdf>, Clare Cummings et al, ‘Why people move: understanding the drivers and trends of migration to Europe’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/editors-blog/2015/08/al-jazeera-mediterranean-migrants-150820082226309.html>, Barry Malone, ‘Why Al Jazeera will not say Mediterranean ‘migrants’’, consulted on 13-07-2017.

<sup>67</sup> Kieran O’Doherty and Amanda Lecouteur, “‘Asylum seekers’, ‘boat people’ and ‘illegal immigrants’”: Social categorization in the media’, *Australian Journal of Psychology* 59 (2007) 1-12, 2.

<sup>68</sup> Wilson and Mavelli, ‘The Refugee Crisis and Religion’, 5.

Also see: S. Elizabeth Bird, *The Audience in Everyday Life: Living in a Media World* (New York and London 2003) 89.

<sup>69</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen_en), ‘Schengen Area’, consulted on 20-04-2017.

<sup>70</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen_en), ‘Schengen Area’, consulted on 20-04-2017.

<sup>71</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen_en), ‘Schengen Area’, consulted on 20-04-2017.

Agreement was signed, it merely concerned seven EU states, including the Netherlands. Nowadays most EU states are included in the Schengen Area, except for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Croatia, Romania and the United Kingdom.<sup>72</sup> These countries obtain an opt-out because the Schengen Agreement also involved the Schengen Acquis (rules) being incorporated into EU law. Moreover, there are also non-EU states that have joined the Schengen Agreement: Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.<sup>73</sup>

The European refugee crisis has had a great impact on the EU and the Schengen Agreement. This is a situation that led several countries think to create a disorder which would in turn make the crisis worse. During the persistent refugee crisis many anti-EU sentiments were expressed. This was the case in, among other countries, Great Britain, where the topic of migration was a key consideration during the referendum that has led to its official exit from the EU (Brexit) on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2017.<sup>74</sup> Also in scholarly debate concerns were expressed regarding the EU and the Schengen Agreement. Fijnaut states that the Schengen Agreement is a fragile system and argues that the European Parliament has not paid enough attention to the serious risks to Schengen, due to the poor quality of the rules involved in this Agreement, the lack of control on cross-border operations and the lack of legal aid for suspects during such operations.<sup>75</sup>

The Netherlands has chosen a so called constructive-critical attitude in the EU and finds that the EU should limit its remit to welfare, freedom and safety.<sup>76</sup> Like in many other countries the refugee crisis has evoked a considerable amount of debate in the Netherlands as not everyone agrees with the EU's ideas concerning the intake of (the amount of) refugees, the granting of asylum, and border control. Already in 1993 Nijsingh, a senior member of the Royal Marechaussee, argued that the Schengen Agreement was an idealistic system, exemplified by the inability of the system to sufficiently cope with the great amount of migrants in the period after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union.<sup>77</sup> During the current crisis PVV and Groep Bontes/Van Klaveren advocate leaving the EU and the

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<sup>72</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/europese-unie/vraag-en-antwoord/welke-landen-zijn-schengenlanden>, 'Welke landen zijn Schengenlanden?', consulted on 20-04-2017.

<sup>73</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen_en), 'Schengen Area', consulted on 20-04-2017.

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/brexit-role-migration-upcoming-eu-referendum>, Will Somerville, 'Brexit: The Role of Migration in the Upcoming EU Referendum', consulted on 25-08-2017.

<sup>75</sup> Fijnaut, 'The Refugee Crisis: The End of Schengen?', *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice* 23 (2015) 313-332, 316-317.

<sup>76</sup> This constructive-critical attitude of the Netherlands is historically quite consistent. It is, however, possible that this attitude will alter in the future depending on which party is in power.

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/europese-unie/inhoud/nederland-en-de-europese-unie>, 'Nederland en de Europese Unie', consulted on 20-04-2017.

<sup>77</sup> C. Nijsingh, 'Grenzeloos Optimisme', 40 *Ons Wapen* (1993) 5–10, 9.

Schengen Agreement.<sup>78</sup> Even though there are other political parties that are critical of the EU and the Schengen Agreement, they do not express the need to actually leave the EU.

### 3.2.2. The Dublin III Regulation

Besides the Schengen Agreement, there is another agreement that is relevant concerning the European refugee crisis, namely the Dublin III Regulation.<sup>79</sup> The Dublin III Regulation was implemented in July 2013. This is a regulation that determines which Member State is responsible – the first country of entry - for the examination of the asylum application, by taking into account multiple criteria, running from ‘family considerations, to recent possession of visa or residence permit in a Member state, to whether the applicant has entered EU irregularly or regularly.’<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the Dublin III Regulation ‘contains sound procedures for the protection of asylum applicants and improves the system’s efficiency.’<sup>81</sup>

In contrast, Hurwitz argues that the Dublin system is neither fair nor efficient, because, among other issues, the criteria for allocation are too rigid, which causes concerns for family reunification and humanitarian protection, and illegal entry in one of the Member States is difficult to prove in the current system.<sup>82</sup> Moses adds to this that the first-country criterion limits asylum seekers to most accessible southern European countries, which are still in a precarious position due to the Eurozone crisis.<sup>83</sup> In line with these concerns the European refugee crisis has put a strain on many Member State’s asylum systems, including the Dublin III Regulation and the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the European Commission has proposed to revise and replace these systems. In May 2016 they

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<sup>78</sup> <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:h-bBAph4c2EJ:https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document%3Fid%3D465d0937-5963-4de5-b1d8-1fde2a3e8c6e%26title%3DDebat%2520naar%2520aanleiding%2520van%2520de%2520uitspraken%2520van%2520de%2520staatssecretaris%2520van%2520Veiligheid%2520en%2520Justitie%2520over%2520de%2520instroom%2520van%2520asielzoekers.docx+%&cd=1&hl=nl&ct=clnk&gl=nl>, ‘Debat naar aanleiding van de uitspraken van de staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie over de instroom van asielzoekers’, consulted on 13-07-2017.

<sup>79</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), ‘Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin)’, consulted on 09-05-2017.

<sup>80</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), ‘Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin)’, consulted on 09-05-2017.

<sup>81</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), ‘Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin)’, consulted on 09-05-2017.

<sup>82</sup> Agnès G. Hurwitz, *The Collective Responsibility of States to Protect Refugees* (Oxford and New York 2009) 125.

<sup>83</sup> Lauren Moses, ‘The Deficiencies of Dublin: An Analysis of the Dublin System in the European Union’, *Policy Analysis* 6 (2016), 1-16, 9.

<sup>84</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), ‘Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin)’, consulted on 09-05-2017.

have presented a draft proposal for the so called Dublin IV Regulation, that aims at a more transparent and effective Dublin System.<sup>85</sup>

### 3.2.3. Managing the crisis? The EU-Turkey Agreement

Shortly before this proposal of the Dublin IV Regulation was presented an important deal was closed to control the irregular migration flow from Turkey to the EU – the EU-Turkey Agreement. The EU-Turkey Agreement aims at providing ‘organised, safe and legal channels to Europe.’<sup>86</sup> To achieve this a plan of action is developed that aims at supporting Syrians, restoring public order and ending human suffering (by breaking the business model of people smugglers).<sup>87</sup> The core principle of this Agreement entails that new irregular migrants or asylum seekers that cross from Turkey to the Greek islands, will be returned to Turkey after an assessment of their asylum claims. A so called ‘1:1 mechanism’ is installed, which means that for every Syrian that is returned to Turkey, another Syrian is resettled to the EU. Also, Turkey will take measures to support Syrian refugees and to prevent future illegal migration via (new) sea and land routes.

To accomplish these goals, a funding of €3 billion is disbursed to Turkey.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, an additional €3 billion will be provided by the EU once the commitments have been met by Turkey and resources are used to the full.<sup>89</sup> Also, the EU has agreed on lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens, ‘provided that all benchmarks have been met.’<sup>90</sup> The EU-Turkey Agreement was agreed upon by the EU Heads of State or Government and Turkey on 18 March 2016, hence in the midst of the refugee crisis. One year on, the Agreement has proven its effectiveness, according to the European Commission. The evaluation of the EU-Turkey Agreement by the EC states: ‘Irregular arrivals have dropped by 97%, while the number of lives lost at sea has decreased equally substantially.’<sup>91</sup> Figures of IOM confirm this finding. Even though 5000 people drowned attempting to cross the Mediterranean, which is a

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<sup>85</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), ‘Country responsible for asylum application (Dublin)’, consulted on 09-05-2017.

<sup>86</sup> European Commission, *EU-Turkey Statement: One year on* (Brussels 2017) 1.

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/migratory-pressures/countries-origin-transit/eu-turkey-statement/>, ‘EU-Turkey Statement’, consulted on 19-05-2017.

<sup>88</sup> - <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/migratory-pressures/countries-origin-transit/eu-turkey-statement/>, ‘EU-Turkey Statement’, consulted on 19-05-2017.

- <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/>, ‘EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016’, consulted on 19-5-2017.

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/>, ‘EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016’, consulted on 19-5-2017.

<sup>90</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/>, ‘EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016’, consulted on 19-5-2017.

<sup>91</sup> European Commission, *EU-Turkey Statement: One year on* (Brussels 2017) 1.



35 percent increase compared to 2015, 83 percent of these deaths took place before the implementation of the Agreement.<sup>92</sup>

In contrast, Spijkerboer, questions the causal connection between the EU-Turkey Agreement and the decrease of arrivals and deaths, because the amount of arrivals and deaths was already decreasing prior to the Agreement.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, he argues that the Agreement harms fundamental values of the EU, such as the protection from refoulement and collective deportation.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, Barbulescu states that the introduction of EU quotas – the resettlement and relocation quotas - is the most controversial EU measure in response to the refugee crisis in terms of human rights and the ability of the involved countries to act as a political union.<sup>95</sup> Human rights organisations Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI) argue that Turkey cannot be categorized as a safe country for refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>96</sup> Reports of HRW and AI demonstrate push-backs, violence, unlawful detentions and deportations of refugees to dangerous countries (Syria and Iraq).<sup>97</sup> Together with UNHCR they have withdrawn from providing humanitarian aid in Greece after the Agreement was implemented as a means of protest.

### 3.3. Responses in the Netherlands

To many the EU-Turkey Agreement seemed like an impossible plan to implement in the midst of the crisis. Accordingly, many critical thoughts were put forward in society and in many cases these critical viewpoints are still present. Artsen zonder Grenzen, Amnesty International and VluchtelingenWerk are NGOs in the Netherlands that have declared their opposition to the Agreement.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/gmdac\\_data\\_briefing\\_series\\_issue\\_8.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/gmdac_data_briefing_series_issue_8.pdf), IOM, 'Migrant deaths and disappearances worldwide: 2016 analysis', consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>93</sup> Thomas Spijkerboer, 'Fact Check: Heeft de EU-Turkije deal het aantal migranten en grensdoden naar beneden gebracht?', *Internationale Spectator* 4 (2016), 1-10, 5.

<sup>94</sup> Spijkerboer, 'Fact Check', 9.

<sup>95</sup> Roxana Barbulescu, 'Still a Beacon of Human Rights? Considerations on the EU Response to the Refugee Crisis in the Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Politics* 22 (2017) 301-308, 304.

<sup>96</sup> - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/03/03/qa-eu-turkey-deal-migration-and-refugees>, HRW, 'Q&A: The EU-Turkey Deal on Migration and Refugees', consulted on 14-07-2017.

- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/03/the-eu-turkey-deal-europes-year-of-shame/>, AI, 'The EU-Turkey deal: Europe's year of shame', consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>97</sup> - <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/11/23/turkey-syrians-pushed-back-border>, HRW, 'Turkey: Syrians Pushed Back at the Border', consulted on 14-07-2017.

- Amnesty International, *Europe's Gatekeeper: Unlawful Detention and Deportation of Refugees from Turkey* (2015) 13.

<sup>98</sup> - <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/actueel/nieuws/update-eu-turkije-deal-gesloten>, VluchtelingenWerk, 'Update: EU-Turkije-deal gesloten', consulted on 14-07-2017.

Also in political debate there has been a fair amount of discussion on this Agreement, these debates mostly focus on the intake of refugees in the Netherlands. Populist party PVV spoke out against the intake of (Islamic) refugees and incited citizens to protest, which took place in Oranje and Woerden.<sup>99</sup>

In public debate the discussions on refugees and the EU-Turkey Agreement went in different directions, as demonstrated by Kennisplatform Integratie & Samenleving.<sup>100</sup> On the one hand, like in political debate, the intake of refugees was criticized. Refugees were argued to be privileged in getting housing and jobs, resulting in some citizens that found themselves in difficult situations feeling ignored.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, according to Lucassen and Van Houtum, the coinciding of the intake of refugees, the occurrence of several terrorist attacks in Europe and the announcement of IS that they were sending terrorists along with the refugees, evoked unrest and fear.<sup>102</sup> Note here the link that is put forward between Islam, terrorists and refugees. In line with this idea, Casanova states that in Europe ‘immigration and Islam are almost synonymous.’ He argues that ‘The immigrant, the religious, the racial, and the socio-economic disprivileged “other” all tend to coincide.’<sup>103</sup> Van der Valk explains that in the Netherlands religion - instead of nationality, ethnicity or status - has become the key factor in ascribing group identity.<sup>104</sup> Lucassen and Van Houtum specify that the idea exists that ‘the Islam’ is embodied by migrants.<sup>105</sup> PVV, known as an Islamophobic party, acts upon this discourse and has increased in popularity during the refugee crisis.<sup>106</sup>

On the other hand, positive opinions are put forward in society. A discussion sparked on the human rights of refugees and several social citizen organisations promoted solidarity, the protection and aid for refugees. Moreover, multiple organisations spoke out against the Islamophobia that is interwoven in the refugee discourse, arguing that nuance is needed on

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- [https://www.artsenzondergrenzen.nl/weigeringEUgelden?gclid=COK\\_yNiFi9UCFcOfGwodGIEBbQ](https://www.artsenzondergrenzen.nl/weigeringEUgelden?gclid=COK_yNiFi9UCFcOfGwodGIEBbQ), AzW, ‘Artsen zonder Grenzen weigert hulp gelden Europe uit protest tegen asielbeleid’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.kis.nl/artikel/verzet-tegen-vluchtelingen-toen-en-nu>, KIS, ‘Verzet tegen vluchtelingen, toen en nu’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.kis.nl/blog/de-omstreden-vluchteling>, KIS, ‘De omstreden vluchteling’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.kis.nl/blog/de-omstreden-vluchteling>, KIS, ‘De omstreden vluchteling’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>102</sup> Henk van Houtum and Leo Lucassen, *Vorbij Fort Europa: een nieuwe visie op migratie* (Amsterdam 2016) 10.

<sup>103</sup> José Casanova, ‘Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration’, in: Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (eds.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe* (Cambridge 2016) 65-92, 76.

<sup>104</sup> Ineke van der Valk, *Islamophobia in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam 2015) 16.

<sup>105</sup> Van Houten and Lucassen, *Vorbij Fort Europa*, 13.

<sup>106</sup> Ineke van der Valk, *Islamophobia in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam 2015) 41-48.

diversity within Islam to overcome prejudice and discrimination.<sup>107</sup> Hence, what becomes visible in the Netherlands is a discourse on refugees wherein the distinction between the ‘good Muslim’ and the (radicalized) ‘bad Muslim’ prevails. Mamdani warns for such a narrative, because it takes away the agency of Muslims and simplifies identity.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, Wilson and Mavelli argue that this narrative draws on Orientalist assumptions, which are prevailing in European approaches toward refugees, including in the Netherlands.<sup>109</sup> This finding supports Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s argument that a distinction is often made between ‘good refugees’ and ‘bad refugees’.<sup>110</sup> This distinction will be paid more attention to in the analysis.

### 3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has provided insight into the complex debate on the refugee crisis and the EU-Turkey Agreement. This Agreement has caused much critique on the side of human rights agencies. Also, the discourse on refugees in the Netherlands has been outlined, which demonstrated diverse responses, ranging from support to fear. In doing so, I have also shown that the debate on refugees in the Netherlands is linked to Islamophobia. The described critical viewpoints are also reflected in the press.<sup>111</sup> The views of the different newspapers on the EU-Turkey Agreement will be further discussed in chapter 5, to which this chapter provides background information. In the following chapter the methodology of this research will be explicated and the contextual background of the Dutch newspapers that form the data of this research will be discussed.

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<sup>107</sup> <https://www.kis.nl/artikel/wat-worden-de-maatschappelijke-trends-2016>, KIS, ‘Wat worden de maatschappelijke trends in 2016?’, consulted on 14-07-2017.

<sup>108</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, ‘Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism’, *American Anthropologist* 104 (2002) 766-775, 766.

<sup>109</sup> Wilson and Mavelli, ‘The Refugee Crisis and Religion’, 6.

<sup>110</sup> Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘The Faith-Gender-Asylum Nexus: An Intersectionalist Analysis of Representations of the ‘Refugee Crisis’’, in: Luca Mavelli and Erin K. Wilson (eds.), *The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Secularity, Security and Hospitality in Question* (London 2016) 207-221, 210.

<sup>111</sup> For example:

- <https://www.trouw.nl/opinie/de-vluchtelingendeal-met-turkije-werkt-nauwelijks~a454afe5/>, editors, ‘De vluchtelingendeal met Turkije werkt nauwelijks’, consulted on 11-05-2017.
- <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/03/19/5-gevolgen-van-de-turkijedeal-7461779-a1551045>, ‘Vijf gevolgen van de Turkijedeal’, consulted on 11-05-2017.
- <http://www.volkskrant.nl/buitenland/video-zo-staat-het-er-nu-voor-met-de-vluchtelingendeal-met-turkije~a4476221/>, editors, ‘Video: zo staat het er nu voor met de vluchtelingendeal met Turkije’, consulted on 11-05-2017.

## 4. Methodology

This chapter is dedicated to the outline and justification of the research method that is used in this particular research. A qualitative research is chosen as this research aims to provide insight into the discourses on refugees that are produced by Dutch newspapers during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. This can only be uncovered by using a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative approach that is aimed at providing statistical data and does not take into account contextual information that is necessary to answer the research question of this thesis.

Similar studies to this one that also focussed on the portrayal of refugees in (print) media have been conducted using different methods, all of which were either based on Framing Theory or Critical Discourse Analysis. Both of these approaches are types of discourse analysis. In the following I will elaborate on these two approaches. Also, I will explain why I have chosen to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis and the diverse methods of this approach that have been used in similar research. An outline of the specific method and the research data that I have used in conducting this research. This chapter will be concluded by outlining the contextual background of the newspapers that are of concern to this research.

### 4.1. Framing Analysis versus Critical Discourse Analysis

Framing Analysis (FA) is built around the notion of frames. There is no consensus about the disciplinary tradition wherein the notion of frames is rooted, but scholars agree that Goffman was one of the first scholars to put forward a general theory of framing, which he referred to as Frame Analysis.<sup>112</sup> He defines frames as ‘schemata of interpretation’ that enable people to understand otherwise meaningless events as something meaningful.<sup>113</sup>

Gitlin was the first sociologist to apply Goffman’s understanding of frames to media. He argued that within media one can also uncover frames, which are often unspoken and unacknowledged, but which ‘organize the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports.’<sup>114</sup> He continues by conveying the following definition: ‘Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely

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<sup>112</sup> Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston 1974).

<sup>113</sup> Goffman, *Frame analysis*, 21.

<sup>114</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1980), 7.

organize discourse, whether verbal or visual.<sup>115</sup> Entman acknowledges the issues that Gitlin has put forward. In addition to this, Entman provides a more detailed account in his definition of the framing of particular ways in which mass media can influence an audience:

*To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.*<sup>116</sup>

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has much in common with FA. Underlying both approaches are several assumptions: the construction of news by journalists is subjective and news can have an impact on individual and societal level. Therefore both can be used in analysing textual data in media. Also, it should be noted that both have a multidisciplinary foundation and should not in themselves be understood as methods: within CDA and FA a variety of angles and methods can be distinguished.

Even though CDA and FA share many common features, there can also be distinguished several differences. FA methodologies are more focussed on the linguistic and textual roots of data, which implies a more micro-analytical focus, whereas CDA is more macro-analytical focussed: the goal of CDA is to explore the use of language as a form of social practice, taking into account the notions of discourse and power, which have an important place in this research. The general principles of CDA are summarised by Titscher et al., based on the work of Wodak (who will be discussed in the following):

- *CDA is concerned with social problems. It is not concerned with language or language use per se, but with the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures.*
- *Power-relations have to do with discourse, and CDA studies both power in discourse and power over discourse.*
- *Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse. Every single instance of language use reproduces or transforms society and culture, including power-relations.*
- *Language use may be ideological. To determine this it is necessary to analyse texts to investigate their interpretation, reception and social effects.*

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<sup>115</sup> Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 7.

<sup>116</sup> Robert M. Entman, 'Framing: Toward Clarification of Fractured Paradigm', *Journal of Communication* (1993), 51-58, 52.

- *Discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context. At a meta-theoretical level this corresponds to the approach of Wittgenstein, according to which the meaning of an utterance rests in its usage in a specific situation.*
- *Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. Critical analysis implies a systematic methodology and a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations.*<sup>117</sup>

Key notions within CDA are thus: discourse, language, power, society. Hence, the rootedness of CDA in Critical Theory and Constructivism. Fairclough and Wodak have provided a more extensive definition of discourse, that explains that discourse should be viewed

*[...] as a form of social practice. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical [or] a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them.*<sup>118</sup>

Note here that CDA adopts the functionalist definition of discourse (see also chapter 2) that is used in this research. Moreover, Richardson explicitly explains that CDA is concerned with identities as the identity of the producer [of a newspaper article], who is responsible for the content and the context of the articulation, is intimately related to the meaning of a newspaper text (or argument). Therefore, he states: ‘language use enacts identity.’<sup>119</sup> It should be noted, however, that in the case of journalists, the identity of the newspaper is most prominent in the articles instead of the (personal) identity of the journalist, because an article always has to be run by the editorial board.

Language is also related to the notion of power, thence the influence of Foucault as discussed in chapter 2. How a story is written down by journalists and transformed into an article is in the hands of the journalist (and the editorial staff) of a newspaper. Language, especially in opinion articles, is key in conveying a certain point of view (of a specific person, social group or institution). This way, journalism plays an important role in the establishment of (what is considered to be) knowledge in a particular discourse.<sup>120</sup> Language, then, does not merely reflect reality, but also constitutes and is constituted by ‘reality’.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, the decision is made to press release certain stories over others. Even the place of the article, on

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<sup>117</sup> Ruth Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse* (London and New York 1996), 17-20.

<sup>118</sup> Ruth Wodak and Norman Fairclough, ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’, in: T. A. van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse as Social Interaction* (London 1997) 258-284, 258.

<sup>119</sup> Richardson, *Analysing newspapers*, 11.

<sup>120</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 36.

<sup>121</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 33.

the front page or somewhere in the middle, is significant. Hence, there are all sorts of decisions being made wherein the identity of a newspaper shows through.

Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that some people have a more powerful position in society than others. Even though the position of the media is fairly debated since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the professional writers and journalists that have produced the opinion pieces that form the data for this research have a great platform and journalism still is a powerful genre of communication because it has social effects.<sup>122</sup> Journalists can influence and shape readers' understandings, attitudes and opinions of society, of their place and role in society, and of the place and role of others in society.<sup>123</sup>

## 4.2. CDA methods

There are many types of CDA, thus methods differ greatly based on the aims of the research and the data that is used. Most often mentioned are the names of Fairclough, Wodak, and Van Dijk, who each use a different method within CDA. However, they all have in common the idea that language shapes and is shaped by society.

Norman Fairclough is considered to be one of the founders of CDA and is specifically concerned with how CDA is useful in the link between textual data and power, but also the social and cultural changes in society that are connected to both. Mass media in particular has an important place in Fairclough's work, as he understands media institutions to be a site of power and struggle, unlike the neutral party that they often proclaim to be.<sup>124</sup> Media, Fairclough argues, actually have a mediating and constructing role, in which their use of language has the power to influence discourse.<sup>125</sup>

Ruth Wodak has developed a method for a discourse-historical approach.<sup>126</sup> This approach follows the principle of triangulation. This entails the use of different approaches and methods, and using a variety of empirical data and background information.<sup>127</sup> The 'historical' part of this approach lies in its interest in the diachronic change of discourses.

Teun A. Van Dijk promotes a multidisciplinary approach and is, like Fairclough, focussed on text in media discourse. Other than Fairclough, Van Dijk's approach mainly

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<sup>122</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 13.

<sup>123</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 29.

<sup>124</sup> Ruth Wodak, 'What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its developments', in: Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi 2001) 1-13, 6.

<sup>125</sup> Wodak, 'What CDA is about', 7.

<sup>126</sup> Ruth Wodak, 'The discourse-historical approach', in: Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi 2001) 63-94, 64.

<sup>127</sup> Wodak, 'The discourse-historical approach', 65.

concerns socio-cognitive psychology.<sup>128</sup> This approach is focussed on text comprehension, mental representations and processes of language users when they produce, encounter, and comprehend discourse. Van Dijk's interest is in developing 'a theoretical model that will explain cognitive discourse processing mechanisms.'<sup>129</sup>

More similar studies to the one that I am conducting, focussing specifically on the representation of refugees in newspapers during the European refugee crisis, mainly use a discursive psychology method. Best known is the research of Parker on the representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Australian press, and those of Pickering and O'Doherty & Lecouteur that focus on social categorisation in descriptions about people entering Australia.<sup>130</sup> Discursive psychology, according to O'Doherty and Lecouteur, allows for 'the critical examination of marginalising discourse and taken-for-granted categorisations.'<sup>131</sup> In accomplishing that goal, they focus on two questions: 'how is a particular description made to appear factual, and what purposes are achieved by representing reality in this way.'<sup>132</sup>

In this research, Fairclough's approach to CDA is adopted, because in contrast to the more theoretical approaches of Wodak and Van Dijk (among others), Fairclough's approach provides a more accessible method. Furthermore, whereas the discursive psychology method also allows for the critical examination of social categories that constitute particular discourses, it is not sufficient in covering the objectives of this research, as this research aims to cover multiple areas that discursive psychology is not concerned with. This includes the role of journalists and the background of newspapers, their relatedness to the reporting on refugees and the consequences that this has for the public sphere. These are areas that can be covered using Fairclough's method.

### **4.3. Fairclough's three-dimensional approach**

Fairclough uses the term CDA both for being a branch of discourse analysis as well as for the method that he has developed.<sup>133</sup> His approach concerns a three-dimensional framework,

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<sup>128</sup> Wodak, 'What CDA is about', 7.

<sup>129</sup> Wodak, 'What CDA is about', 8.

<sup>130</sup>

- Samuel Parker, 'Unwanted invaders', 1-21.

- Sharon Pickering, 'Common Sense and Original Deviancy', 169-186.

- O'Doherty and Lecouteur, "'Asylum seekers", "boat people" and "illegal immigrants"', 1-12.

<sup>131</sup> O'Doherty and Lecouteur, "'Asylum seekers", "boat people" and "illegal immigrants"', 4.

<sup>132</sup> O'Doherty and Lecouteur, "'Asylum seekers", "boat people" and "illegal immigrants"', 5.

<sup>133</sup> Norman Fairclough, 'Critical discourse analysis as a method in social scientific research', in: Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (ed.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi 2001) 121- 138, 121.



wherein he pays attention to textual analysis, analysis of discourse practice, and analysis of social practice. Textual analysis is less concerned with linguistics in themselves: vocabulary, grammar, semantics etcetera, and more with the function of the use of the different elements (also in relation to their direct involvement in recreating and resisting power structures in society).<sup>134</sup> Richardson explains three sorts of functions: representations (ideational function), identities and social relations (interpersonal function), cohesion and coherence (textual function).<sup>135</sup>

The discursive practices of news discourse, following Fairclough, involve ‘various aspects of the processes of text production and text consumption.’<sup>136</sup> The focus here is thus on the embeddedness of the text and its relatedness to these described social conditions [production and consumption].<sup>137</sup> In this research, the producer refers to the newspaper (and its journalists and editorial board) and the consumer to the readers.

Social practices, Fairclough argues, should be involved when one wants to do a complete critical discourse analysis. This dimension concerns the insights of the previously mentioned dimensions, but views these ‘in relation to the wider society,’<sup>138</sup> i.e. the social ‘reality’ and the relation to power. Hence, the relation of the text to society is relevant for answering questions about the context in which the article is produced and what it says about society.

In covering these three dimensions of analysis, this study contributes to the field of refugee studies as well as to studies concerning the construction of social categories, by conducting a critical discourse analysis (using Fairclough’s approach) and comparing how the press of several Dutch newspapers have discursively constructed accounts of refugees during the European refugee crisis. This way I will provide insight into how media contributes to the construction of diverse discourses concerning the portrayal of refugees in the Netherlands. In doing so, I will demonstrate that there can be distinguished three overarching themes of refugees that are recurring in the data: the ‘refugees as human beings’, the ‘dehumanized refugees’ and the ‘unwanted invaders’. Within these themes, I will distinguish multiple categories, such as the ‘refugee as prisoner’, the ‘desperate refugee’ and the ‘rightful refugee’, which support the themes.

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<sup>134</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 38-39.

<sup>135</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers* Richardson, 38.

<sup>136</sup> Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London 1995a) 58.

<sup>137</sup> Richardson, *Analysing newspapers*, 39.

<sup>138</sup> Richardson, *Analysing newspapers*, 42.

## 4.4. Data

### 4.4.1. Five newspapers

In this research articles are analysed that each have been published in one of the five newspapers. These five newspaper are chosen based on the print runs of the five most read and paid for Dutch newspapers over the period 2015 Q2 t/m 2016 Q1 (distinguishing ‘totaal betaalde gerichte oplage’, i.e. total of paid for targeted print runs (TBGO) and ‘totaal verspreide oplage’, i.e. total of spread print runs (TVO)):

1. De Telegraaf (TBGO 408.191, TVO 462.417)
2. Algemeen Dagblad (TBGO 332.789, TVO 384.587)
3. De Volkskrant (TBGO 222.471, TVO 260.172)
4. NRC Handelsblad (TBGO 140.586, TVO 151.039)
5. Trouw (TBGO 89.600, TVO 106.502)<sup>139</sup>

### 4.4.2. Ten articles

The articles are accessed through LexisNexis, an online databank that gives access to over 36.000 international news and business sources.<sup>140</sup> The database contains over 75 Dutch publications.<sup>141</sup> In the interest of this research the focus will be on the top five Dutch national newspapers. The articles that will be used are those that result from the search for ‘vluchtelingen’ (refugees).

Two articles are selected from each newspaper, amounting to a total of ten articles. This concerns articles that fall within the category opinion articles. These articles can be columns, editorials or op-eds. I chose to focus on opinion articles, because in these articles the opinion and focus of the journalists, editors and newspaper is expressed most clearly, which allows me to conduct thorough research on the discourses that the newspapers act within and produce. Reader comments that are published in the newspapers are not taken into account, because even though the decision is made by the editorial staff to include a comment or letter the use of language is that of the reader and not of a professional writer.

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<sup>139</sup> <https://dundasbi.reports.nl/Dashboard/591f8b44-7cb2-4662-ab32-d26872aa849c?e=false&vo=viewonly> through [www.nommedia.nl](http://www.nommedia.nl), consulted on 07-01-2017. NOM (Nationaal Onderzoek Multimedia) is a foundation that is responsible for delivering the reach numbers for newspapers and magazines in the Netherlands.

<sup>140</sup> <https://internationalsales.lexisnexis.com/pages/Research-databases-articles>, ‘Nexis: the ultimate research database at your fingertips’, consulted on 20-03-2017.

<sup>141</sup> <http://www.lexisnexis.lu/english/products/company-dashboard-for-government.page>, ‘LexisNexis Company Dashboard for Government’, consulted on 20-03-2017.

Articles are chosen that discuss the EU-Turkey Agreement and focus on refugees, as this research is mostly concerned with the portrayal of refugees. The EU-Turkey Agreement is significant in this matter as it can elicit particular discourses on refugees. This deal is a major policy response to the European refugee crisis that is unprecedented. As such, the response is illustrative for particular discourses on refugees in the public sphere. Furthermore, the response of newspapers is, in turn, significant for elucidating how they respond to these discourses, what discourses they act within, and what discourses they (re)create (and the possible influence on the readership).

The time frame wherein the articles are selected is the beginning of March until mid-April 2016. It was in this period that the agreement was developed, the agreement was signed (18 March 2016), and the deal was implemented (4 April 2016). These criteria resulted in the following selection of articles per newspaper:

#### Telegraaf

- ‘Advertenties’ (3 April 2016)
- ‘Traangas tegen vluchtelingen’ (11 April 2016)

#### Algemeen Dagblad

- ‘Deal met Turkije snijdt illegalen snel de pas af’ (9 March 2016)
- ‘Brussel moet druk houden op Turkije’ (4 April 2016)

#### Volkskrant

- ‘Geen deal met Turkije’ (18 March 2016)
- ‘De prijs van duivelspact met Turkije is hoog’ (11 April 2016)

#### NRC Handelsblad

- ‘Realitycheck: vluchtelingen blijven vluchten’ (19 March 2016)
- ‘De Turkije-deal heeft een lelijk gezicht’ (31 March 2016)

#### Trouw

- ‘Het woord oplossing is misplaatst bij de vluchtelingendeal met Turkije’ (9 March 2016)
- ‘Hulporganisaties houden terecht vast aan vluchtelingenverdrag’ (26 March 2016)

Each of the articles above is in accordance with the criteria. Although it was intended to include one article of the period prior to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement and one article of the period after, this was not possible for Telegraaf. Nevertheless, I have selected those articles in which opinions of the journalists, editors and newspapers are

expressed most elaborately. The entire articles can be found in section 7 ‘Appendix’. In the following I will provide a contextual background on pillarization and depillarization of the newspapers that are of concern to this research. This is necessary as this influences the characterization, style and focus of the different newspapers and allows me to uncover a possible link between the portrayal of refugees and the background of the newspapers.

### **4.4.3. Contextualizing Dutch newspapers**

#### **4.4.3.1. The pillarization period**

Pillarization in the Netherlands was triggered by Abraham Kuyper’s Anti-Revolutionary Party that was founded in 1879. Pillarization is the structural division of a society in multiple groups on the basis of denomination or socio-economic background.<sup>142</sup> The vertical differentiation between denominations is horizontally divided into multiple social classes. The division in denominational and social background eventually led to the distinction of four main pillars: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Liberal, Socialist.<sup>143</sup>

The central idea to pillarization was the sphere of the state not intermixing with the spheres of social life.<sup>144</sup> This idea resulted in the constitution of the first pillar: the Protestant pillar. The Protestant and the Roman Catholic pillars were the first two pillars and the only confessional pillars. The Protestant pillar was more focused on sphere sovereignty than the Roman Catholic pillar. The Roman Catholics had an unequal position in the Netherlands wherein they were tolerated. By constituting their own pillar they had the opportunity to form a more united party.<sup>145</sup>

Socialists formed the third pillar, which was non-confessional and focused on equality.<sup>146</sup> Whereas liberals were principally against the constitution of pillars, they eventually did constitute a pillar to form a stronger union that focused on freedom.<sup>147</sup> The socialist pillar consisted more of the lower middle and lower classes and the liberal pillar

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<sup>142</sup> Paul Dekker and Peter Ester, ‘Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization: Empirical Trends in Dutch Society 1958-1992’, *Review of Religious Research* 37 (1996) 325-341, 328.

<sup>143</sup>

- Post, *Pillarization: an analysis of Dutch and Belgian society*, 23-24.

- A. Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek* (Amsterdam 2007) 30.

<sup>144</sup> Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*, 29.

<sup>145</sup> Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*, 30-31.

<sup>146</sup> Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*, 3.

<sup>147</sup> Lijphart, *Verzuiling, Pacificatie en Kentering in de Nederlandse Politiek*, 3.

more of the upper middle and middle classes.<sup>148</sup> Both pillars were smaller and less strictly organized than the confessional pillars.<sup>149</sup>

Each pillar had its own social institutions, such as: political parties, broadcasting stations, schools, sports clubs, and newspapers.<sup>150</sup> This situation led to scenarios wherein people from one pillar did not have to have personal contact with people from other pillars, because their (confessional) institutions were completely separated. The phenomenon of pillarization can be found in various countries, of which the Netherlands is just one. The period of pillarization in the Netherlands does not have clear boundary lines, but can be said to be present between 1870-1960.<sup>151</sup>

#### 4.4.3.2. Pillarization of newspapers

As was briefly mentioned in the previous section, newspapers were also part of the pillarization process in the Netherlands. Mass press emerged at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Each newspaper was loyal to a specific pillar (and political party).<sup>152</sup> The newspapers that are of concern to this research (Telegraaf, Algemeen Dagblad, Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad, and Trouw) were categorized in the following pillars: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Liberal.

The two confessional newspapers in this research are, or rather have been, Trouw and De Volkskrant.<sup>153</sup> Trouw was an orthodox Protestant national newspaper and was founded in 1943 (hence, during the Second World War), then called Oranje-Bode, by members of the Dutch Protestant resistance.<sup>154</sup> De Volkskrant was a centre-left Roman Catholic newspaper and was founded in 1919.<sup>155</sup> NRC Handelsblad and Algemeen Dagblad were considered to be Liberal newspapers.<sup>156</sup> Algemeen Dagblad was founded in 1946. It is a national newspaper with a regional focus. This focus mostly concerns The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht.<sup>157</sup> These cities are known for their large immigrant communities.<sup>158</sup> It has no confessional

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<sup>148</sup> Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Second edition; Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1975) 23.

<sup>149</sup> Dekker and Ester, 'Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization', 328.

<sup>150</sup> Dekker and Ester, 'Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization', 328.

<sup>151</sup> Harry Post, *Pillarization: an analysis of Dutch and Belgian society* (Michigan 1989) 144.

<sup>152</sup> <http://www.nias.knaw.nl/news-events/news/pillarization-depillarization-and-the-press-in-dutch-society>, Huub Wijfjes, 'Pillarization, Depillarization and the Press in Dutch Society', consulted on 15-04-2017.

<sup>153</sup> Jos van der Lans and Herman Vuijsje, *Lage landen, hoge sprongen: Nederland in de twintigste eeuw* (Wormer 2003) 106-107.

<sup>154</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/overons/>, 'Over ons', consulted on 14-04-2017.

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/de-geschiedenis-van-de-volkskrant~a614928/>, 'De Geschiedenis van de Volkskrant', consulted on 10-04-2017.

<sup>156</sup> Van der Lans and Vuijsje, *Lage landen, hoge sprongen*, 95.

<sup>157</sup> The MEDIVA Project, *Newspaper evaluation sheet* (Fiesole 2009) 1.

<sup>158</sup> The MEDIVA Project, *Newspaper evaluation sheet* (Fiesole 2009) 1.

background and, according to Lijphart, belonged to the Liberal pillar.<sup>159</sup> NRC Handelsblad is an exceptional case as it originated in 1970, hence after the period of pillarization. Nevertheless, NRC Handelsblad should be mentioned here as it is a fusion of Algemeen Handelsblad (1828) and Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant (1844).<sup>160</sup> During the pillarization these newspapers were part of the Liberal pillar.<sup>161</sup> Telegraaf was founded in 1893 and did not belong to any pillar, it is a popular newspaper that is aimed to amuse the public.<sup>162</sup>

The relationship between press and politics (in the spectrum of mediatizing politics and politicizing media), and the role and influence of mass press during the pillarization period in the Netherlands is debated. Lijphart argues that media was steered by politics to keep politics pacified and resulted in consensus (politicization of media). Wijfjes and Vos also acknowledge this aspect,<sup>163</sup> but claim that Lijphart ignores the other functions that media had in the pillarized period. Additionally, Wijfjes emphasizes the role of media in mobilisation of the political backing, as well as in identity conformation (and bad-mouthing the ones of others) and consolidation, which resulted in the opposite from pacifying politics (mediatization of politics).<sup>164</sup> Hence, according to Wijfjes media was also able to create and sustain a stronger polarization within society, which actually counteracts Lijphart's argument of pacification.<sup>165</sup> Whereas Lijphart merely focusses on the part of politicizing media, Wijfjes warns us not to underestimate the dynamic and interactive relationship between mediatizing politics and politicizing media.<sup>166</sup>

#### 4.4.3.3. Depillarization and the press

Whereas, pillarization refers to 'a social construction in which ideology, social organization, individual identification and political attitudes and behaviour are structurally interlinked.'

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<sup>159</sup> Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation*, 45.

<sup>160</sup> <https://www.nrcmedia.nl/geschiedenis-nrc/>, 'Geschiedenis NRC', consulted on 17-04-2017.

<sup>161</sup> Van der Lans and Vuijsje, *Lage landen, hoge sprongen*, 95.

<sup>162</sup>

- <https://www.tmg.nl/nl/telegraaf/>, 'De Telegraaf', consulted on 14-04-2017.

- Van der Lans and Vuijsje, *Lage landen, hoge sprongen*, 96.

- Bernadette Kester and Martijn Kleppe, 'Persfotografie: Acceptatie, professionalisering en innovatie', in: Jo Bardoel and Huub Wijfjes (eds.), *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Second edition; Amsterdam 2015) 53-76, 60.

<sup>163</sup> Chris Vos, 'Van propagandist tot prettige huisgenoot', in: Jo Bardoel and Huub Wijfjes (eds.), *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Second edition; Amsterdam 2015) 99-122, 103.

<sup>164</sup> Huub Wijfjes, *Media, zuilen en pacificatie: een dynamisch historische relatie* (Den Haag 2015) 7.

<sup>165</sup> Wijfjes, *Media, zuilen en pacificatie*, 9-10.

<sup>166</sup> Wijfjes, *Media, zuilen en pacificatie*, 10.

Depillarization ‘loosens the ties between pillar, ideological identity, and political attitudes and behaviour.’<sup>167</sup>

During the Second World War the idea arose that the Netherlands, instead of being divided into pillars, should be united. This idea was called the *doorbraakgedachte* (which literally translates to breakthrough-thought), aiming to unite progressives from all the distinguished pillars.<sup>168</sup> It was only after the 1960s that the process of depillarization took off. Depillarization, Wijfjes argues, should be understood as the transition of a distinction in heavy communities (that constitute the different pillars) into a fragmentation into lighter communities that built on the remainders of the old communities.<sup>169</sup> Hence, even though each newspaper went its separate way its roots within the distinguished pillars remained.

The press became more independent and Dutch society more mediatized, because of the more autonomous and critical stance of the press toward politics.<sup>170</sup> This shift of power is significant for this research as it is at this point, when the press is gaining independence, that the press acquires greater power to put forward critical opinions and construct discourses. Wijfjes links this understanding of press media to the theoretical concepts of *agenda setting* (determining what topics readers should be concerned with), *priming* (determining what aspects of these topics are to be considered most important), and *framing* (determining the way in which readers think about particular topics), which are used in political communication science and are relevant in this research as well, as it builds on the assumption of the construction of discourses by press.<sup>171</sup>

Dries van Agt, who was the Minister of Justice from 1971 until 1977 and grew up during the pillarization period, tried to contain the increasing amount of independency of the different newspapers during the early 70s. Trouw described Van Agt’s relationship with the media as both arduous and traumatizing, because he was thought to negate the new mediatized period.<sup>172</sup> He was someone who would gather the chief editors of the different newspapers in his office after, in this case, the Moluccan attempts to take Queen Juliana

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<sup>167</sup> Dekker and Ester, ‘Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization’, 331.

<sup>168</sup> Nelleke Bakker, Jan Noordman and Marjoke Rietveld-van Wingerden, *Vijf eeuwen opvoeden in Nederland: idee en praktijk, 1500-2000* (Assen 2006) 521.

<sup>169</sup> Wijfjes, *Media, zuilen en pacificatie*, 6.

<sup>170</sup>

- <http://www.nias.knaw.nl/news-events/news/pillarization-depillarization-and-the-press-in-dutch-society>, Huub Wijfjes, ‘Pillarization, Depillarization and the Press in Dutch Society’, consulted on 15-04-2017.

- Kees Brants, ‘Van medialogica naar publiekslogica? Verschuivende verhoudingen tussen journalistiek, politiek en publiek’, in: Jo Bardoel and Huub Wijfjes (eds.), *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Second edition; Amsterdam 2015) 237-254, 251.

<sup>171</sup> Wijfjes, *Media, zuilen en pacificatie*, 10.

<sup>172</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/home/van-agt-en-zijn-haat-liefde-relatie-met-de-media-a0dffcc7/>, Willem Breedveld, ‘Van Agt en Zijn haat-liefde relatie met de media’, in *Trouw*, consulted on 15-04-2017.

hostage, to ask them to keep this information to themselves and the chief editors obeyed.<sup>173</sup> The politicization of the media, however, did not hold and is even unthinkable nowadays.

Whereas newspapers had been the voice of the different pillars, they now transformed themselves (or disappeared) into media that was aimed at a broader public.<sup>174</sup> This, however, did not mean, as mentioned before, that they left their roots behind. The focus of each newspaper changed, but they each still had their own characteristics. This change of focus for the greater part concerns the confessional newspapers (Trouw and Volkskrant). Furthermore, also the base on which the newspapers are distinguished has changed, as there are no pillars anymore. The new distinction is based on quality and the readership's education. Trouw, Volkskrant, and NRC Handelsblad are considered to be quality newspapers. Algemeen Dagblad and Telegraaf are newspapers that fall into the popular category.<sup>175</sup>

Trouw loosened itself from its orthodox Protestant background in the late 1960s and targets a non-elitist readership that is critical and has an open stance.<sup>176</sup> They explicitly state that they want to 'remain a newspaper rooted in a Christian tradition,' and to be 'a source of contemplation and inspiration for everyone, churchgoer or not, who feels a need for moral and spiritual orientation.'<sup>177</sup> Their main interests lie with democracy, sustainability, and all forms of religion, philosophy and belief. In doing so, they do not merely aim to comment on these issues, but to find solutions to societal problems.<sup>178</sup>

Volkskrant loosened itself from its Catholic background halfway through the 60s. It became a left-wing newspaper from 1960-1990. After that period it moved more to the right side of the political spectrum.<sup>179</sup> Nowadays it is a newspaper that targets a young, well-off, higher educated readership.<sup>180</sup> Its focus shifted to complete financial-economic reporting, but also art, culture, literature, politics and science have an important place in this newspaper.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Rutger Bregman, *Met de kennis van toen: Actuele problemen in het licht van de geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2012) 156.

<sup>174</sup> Dekker and Ester, 'Depillarization, Deconfessionalization, and De-Ideologization', 330.

<sup>175</sup> Nel van Dijk and Susanne Janssen, 'De reuzen voorbij: De metamorfose van de literaire kritiek in de pers sedert 1965', in: Jo Bardoel, Chris Vos, Frank van Vree and Huub Wijfjes, *Journalistieke cultuur in Nederland* (Third edition; Amsterdam 2009) 209-236, 211-217.

See also chapter 1 Introduction (footnotes)

<sup>176</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/home/trouw-nieuws-verdieping-en-gids~aba22715/>, 'Trouw – nieuws, verdieping en gids', consulted on 15-04-2017.

<sup>177</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/home/trouw-nieuws-verdieping-en-gids~aba22715/>, 'Trouw – nieuws, verdieping en gids', consulted on 15-04-2017.

<sup>178</sup> <https://www.trouw.nl/overons/>, 'Over ons', consulted on 14-04-2017.

<sup>179</sup> <http://www.volkskrant.nl/opinie/remarque-en-bolkestein-schrijven-elkaar-is-de-volkskrant-te-links~a3240775/>, Philippe Remarque en Frits Bolkestein, 'Remarque en Bolkestein schrijven elkaar: 'Is de Volkskrant te links?', consulted on 17-04-2017.

<sup>180</sup> <https://www.persgroep.nl/merk/de-volkskrant?cookie=1>, 'De Volkskrant', consulted on 17-04-2017.

<sup>181</sup> <https://www.persgroep.nl/merk/de-volkskrant?cookie=1>, 'De Volkskrant', consulted on 17-04-2017.



As mentioned previously, NRC Handelsblad originated in 1970 after fusing together Algemeen Handelsblad and Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant. The liberal stance remained, which is illustrated by the motto that has been adopted from Algemeen Handelsblad: *Lux et Libertas* (referring to Enlightenment philosophy and Liberty).<sup>182</sup> NRC Handelsblad argues that it has a liberal stance in that it turns against traditional power structures of governmental authority and churches. Moreover, it claims to fight for civil rights and free trade.<sup>183</sup> NRC Handelsblad focusses on the topics of politics, economy, opinion and art. Furthermore, it is the most internationally oriented of the newspapers discussed in this research, as it has the largest foreign network of correspondents.

Algemeen Dagblad now is a newspaper that targets families. The main focus of Algemeen Dagblad is on region, sports, and entertainment.<sup>184</sup> During the 60s and 70s the newspaper experienced growth, but in the 80s it suddenly lost a large amount of its readership. To overcome this loss, Algemeen Dagblad tried to transform itself into a quality newspaper, which they did not succeed in as they lost even more readers. Algemeen Dagblad has ever since been considered as a popular newspaper that can be placed in the same category as Telegraaf, but distinguishes itself in its greater focus on sports. Its focus on region has become even greater in 2005 when Algemeen Dagblad attempted to fuse with seven regional newspapers: Rijn en Gouwe, De Dordtenaar, Rotterdams Dagblad, Haagsche Courant, Utrechts Nieuwsblad, Goudsche Courant and Amerfoortse Courant. As a popular newspaper Algemeen Dagblad has been more successful than as a quality newspaper.<sup>185</sup>

Telegraaf takes pride in its popularity and great diversity of target groups. Its focus is on sports, finance, and entertainment. Furthermore, it has multiple separate sections: DFT, Telesport, and in the weekend Vrij and VROUW. These sections focus on, respectively, finance, sports, traveling and living, positive and inspiring stories. Telegraaf publishes regional editions in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht.<sup>186</sup>

Hence, each newspaper has a different focus. Trouw pays more attention to religion and philosophy, NRC is more internationally oriented. Volkskrant is a newspaper targeting well-off, higher educated readers. Algemeen Dagblad and Telegraaf pay more attention to regional news. Whereas Algemeen Dagblad has a greater focus on sports, Telegraaf has a greater focus on lifestyle topics.

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<sup>182</sup> <https://apps.nrc.nl/stijlboek/2-onze-beginselen>, 'NRC Stijlboek: Onze beginselen', consulted on 14-04-2017.

<sup>183</sup> <https://apps.nrc.nl/stijlboek/2-onze-beginselen>, 'NRC Stijlboek: Onze beginselen', consulted on 14-04-2017.

<sup>184</sup> <https://www.persgroep.nl/merk/ad>, 'AD', consulted on 17-04-2017.

<sup>185</sup> <http://ad.abonnement.nl/>, 'Algemeen Dagblad', consulted on 19-04-2017.

<sup>186</sup> <https://www.tmg.nl/nl/telegraaf>, 'De Telegraaf', consulted on 14-04-2017.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have justified the use of a CDA approach for this particular research. Even though similar research that focuses on the portrayal of refugees in newspaper articles has opted for a discursive psychology method, I have chosen to use Fairclough's three dimensional method because this also allows me to look into the social practices - the role of journalists and the background of newspapers, their relatedness to the reporting on refugees and the consequences that this has for the public sphere - which discursive psychology does not take into account.

Furthermore, I have outlined the specific data, newspaper articles, of this research. In addition I have provided contextual information of the concerned newspapers. I have explained that most newspapers belonged to a specific confessional or social pillar. After the pillarization period Trouw (Protestant), Volkskrant (Roman Catholic), and NRC Handelsblad (Liberal) have become characterized as quality newspapers and Telegraaf (Liberal) and Algemeen Dagblad (no pilar) as popular newspapers. I will use this information in the analysis to explore possible links between the background and characterization of each newspaper and particular portrayals of refugees.

## 5. Analysis

The different articles that form the data of this research are subjected to the CDA approach as put forward by Fairclough. In the following, the analysis of this data is discussed thematically. The greater part of the analysis covers the textual analysis. Herein, relevant extracts from the articles will be analysed based on word-choice, naming and reference, and the occurrence of predication, modality, presuppositions, and rhetorical tropes (such as hyperboles, metaphors, metonyms, neologisms, and puns).<sup>187</sup> Subsequently, in section 5.6 ‘discursive and social practices’ a comparison is made between the different newspapers based on the patterns and differences that result from the textual data. Using that information a link is made to discursive and social practices, which provides insight into the possible implications that the use of these themes and categories can have on the readership.

Three overarching themes recur in the data: the ‘refugees as human beings’, the ‘dehumanized refugees’ and the ‘unwanted invaders’. Within these themes, multiple categories will be discussed that support the themes, such as the ‘refugee as prisoner’, the ‘desperate refugee’ and the ‘rightful refugee’. Furthermore, I will look into the word use with regard to the descriptor of the persons in question (hence, naming and reference) separately, i.e.: refugees, migrant, immigrant, asylum seekers, illegals, and so on.

Also, attention will be paid to the use of water-metaphors in the discussion of refugees. Previous research that I have conducted, which concerned a quantitative, conceptual analysis on the portrayal of refugees, demonstrates that water-metaphors frequently appear in reporting on refugees in Dutch newspaper. This research included 987 articles of five newspapers that had been published over multiple time periods. Statistical data of the content of the articles was analysed and in several cases supplemented by a discourse analysis. This research showed that water-metaphors were often used as descriptors of refugees and the great quantity of refugees entering Europe.<sup>188</sup> Because the use of water-metaphors objectifies human beings this is understood as dehumanizing and can be linked to the dehumanized refugee theme in this thesis. Furthermore, because this thesis concerns a more thorough discourse analysis of newspaper articles, I can conduct a more meticulous analysis of the use of water-metaphors.

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<sup>187</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 46-74.

<sup>188</sup> Astrid Stoker, *The European refugee crisis: a content analysis on the portrayal of refugees in Dutch press* (Groningen 2017) 9.

The different themes will be distinguished based on the occurrence of several characterizations and categories:

1. The ‘refugees as human beings’ theme is characterized by the occurrence of emotions, behavioural traits, morality and agency. Agency, here, is the capacity to formulate and pursue life plans, to deal with challenges and threats to one’s life plans.<sup>189</sup> Hence, agency concerns the aspects of having a will and the ability to take action. I will make a distinction between different categories that support this theme, namely ‘desperate and violent refugees’, ‘victimized refugees’, ‘rightful refugees’, ‘refugees as prisoners’ and ‘refugees as non-criminals’.
2. The opposite of the ‘refugees as human beings’ theme is the ‘dehumanized refugees’ theme wherein human characteristics are absent. These refugees are characterized by the lack of human characteristics. Hence, there is an absence of emotions, behavioural traits, morality and agency. Moreover, in the ‘dehumanized refugees’ theme refugees can be described as things or sub-/non-human beings rather than humans. This also concerns the description of refugees as objects (of exchange), resulting in refugees being described as subjected to matters of (re)distribution and division. Also, the use of water-metaphors to describe (the great amount of) refugees stands out in this theme.

It should be noted that the description of refugees in a dehumanizing manner can be used in combination with the ‘unwanted invader’ theme, but also the ‘refugee as human being’ theme. The context and interpretation of the readership are determinative in this case.

3. The ‘unwanted invaders’ theme is informed by Parker’s research on the representation of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Australian newspapers.<sup>190</sup> Refugees are positioned in this theme as actively unwanted, because they pose a threat or are considered to be criminals.

In the following paragraphs I will discuss the findings that are prevalent in the data. Each article is provided with a brief summary after which the themes and the categories that are related to these themes are discussed using exemplifying extracts or summarized translations

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<sup>189</sup> Marjo Buitelaar, ‘Constructing a Muslim Self in a post-migration context. Continuity and discontinuity with parental voices’, in: M. Buitelaar & T.H. Zock (eds), *Religious Voices in Self-Narratives. Making Sense of Life in Times of Transition* (Berlin 2013) 241-271, 242.

<sup>190</sup> Parker, ‘Unwanted invaders’, 6.

from the original articles. After this part of the analysis, the findings and differences between the newspapers will be extracted and related to discursive and social practices. It is relevant to keep in mind that neither the themes nor the variable categories that support these themes are mutually exclusive and that they can overlap at times. Furthermore, they can be used differently by each writer and in each newspaper.

## **5.1. Telegraaf**

### **5.1.1. ‘Advertenties’ (3 April 2016), author: Caspar van Tongeren**

In this article correspondent Van Tongeren discusses four main problems that he notices regarding the EU-Turkey Agreement: violent and furious refugees, registration procedures that are not yet completed, ‘the Turks’, and the people smugglers. In his reporting Van Tongeren mostly engages in the ‘unwanted invaders’ theme, which is combined with the ‘refugees as human beings’ and ‘dehumanized refugees’ theme.

#### **Unwanted invaders**

The following extract exemplifies the unwanted invader theme that prevails in this article. Van Tongeren talks about the day of truth, by which he refers to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. This is a day of truth, he states, explicitly for the refugees, which means that things will change for them. Van Tongeren states that it is hoped that the refugees will be sent back to Turkey, because of increasing problems. He does not specify who the hoping people are, therefore this concerns a generalizing statement. It could refer to EU officials, but also to European citizens. As an example of the increasing problems, he explains that the desperation grows among refugees because of the forced return. This, Van Tongeren says, is expressed in an increasing amount of fights.

*Morgen wordt de dag van de waarheid voor de EU, Turkije en vooral voor de vluchtelingen. Dan wordt het akkoord van kracht dat de EU en Turkije een paar weken terug sloten en worden de eerste vluchtelingen vanuit Griekenland weer teruggestuurd naar Turkije. Hoopt men. Want de problemen waar men voor staat nemen met de dag toe. Zo groeit onder de vluchtelingen de wanhoop over hun gedwongen terugkeer wat zich uit in steeds meer gevechten.*

Here, Van Tongeren describes that the increasing problems cause people to hope that refugees will be returned to Turkey. This results in the positioning of refugees as actively unwanted, which is emphasized by the use of the adjectives ‘gedwongen’ (forced) and ‘steeds meer’ (increasing).

#### **Refugees as human beings**

##### Desperate & violent refugees

In the last sentence of the above extract Van Tongeren is able to construct an account of refugees that is both sympathetic to refugees, but also portrays them as violent. Moreover, he causally relates these two characterizations to each other.

Van Tongeren speaks of ‘wanhoop’ (desperation) that grows among refugees and relates this to an increasing amount of fights. He does not specify whether these fights occur between merely refugees, between refugees and professionals concerned with the ‘gedwongen terugkeer’ (forced return) or others (for example, volunteers). This is a significant transitive action verb process, because the fights are described as a passive construction without agents.<sup>191</sup> However, the remainder of the sentence leads to the implication that these fights concern merely refugees as no other persons or groups are mentioned, which can be an incorrect finding as this is not explicitly made clear in the sentence. This may have been a choice made by Van Tongeren for reasons of space, but can also be a chosen construction that implies that the fights are a direct consequence of the desperation among refugees and therefore concern merely refugees. In doing so, refugees are portrayed as desperate and because of that also violent.

Firstly, Van Tongeren constructs an account of refugees as desperate, which supports the theme of the refugee as human being and can trigger feelings of sympathy among readers. Secondly, Van Tongeren exercises a criminal metaphor as a rhetorical device to emphasize the violent character. In constructing a causal relationship between these characterizations, Van Tongeren produces a discourse wherein a refugee is positioned as actively unwanted and ‘as someone to be fearful of.’<sup>192</sup> The theme of the refugee as human being, wherein the reader is invited to sympathise with refugees, is overshadowed when this theme is connected to the theme of the unwanted invader by using the category of the violent refugees.

The violent refugees category is taken further when Van Tongeren states that 600 migrants have broken through ‘scheermesjes-prikkeldraad’ (razor barbed wire) of the camp on Chios and went to a nearby harbour to ship themselves to the mainland:

*Eergisteren braken 600 migranten door het scheermesjesprikkeldraad rond hun kamp op het eiland Chios en ging op weg naar de nabije haven om zich in te schepen richting het Griekse vasteland. Onduidelijk is hoe men die woedende menigte in bedwang wil houden, laat staan hoe ze op een schip naar Turkije te krijgen.*

Van Tongeren uses this example to support his statement that it remains unclear how to control this ‘woedende menigte’ (furious crowd). Moreover, numbers are used (600) to

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<sup>191</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 58.

<sup>192</sup> Parker, ‘Unwanted invaders’, 6.

strengthen this category of violent refugees.<sup>193</sup> He adds to this that it will be even more difficult now to get them on a ship to Turkey. The unwillingness of the migrants that Van Tongeren describes and the goal ‘to get them on a ship’, is illustrative for the unwanted invader theme.

By describing them as an uncontrollable group of people that is furious and that is capable of violence and breaking through fences, Van Tongeren supports the aspect of uncontrollability and the extreme desperation that inform the violent category within this article. This is even more emphasized by the mentioning of razor barbed wire, as this is painful and harmful to every being, but is evidently not sufficient to keep the refugees inside the camp. In describing migrants this way, Van Tongeren, evokes the idea that they are sub-human or even animalistic, uncontrollable and possibly dangerous.

### **Dehumanized refugees**

#### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

Van Tongeren also makes a connection between the themes of the refugee as human being and the dehumanized migrants.

*Ankara schijnt volgens de UNHCR niet alleen Syriërs weer terug te sturen naar hun land, maar ook Afghanen, Irakezen en Iraniërs. Zonder een deugdelijk track-and-trace systeem raken de teruggestuurde migranten ergens in Turkije 'de weg kwijt', zo luidt de niet ongegronde vrees.*

Van Tongeren describes the concern of the UNHCR that migrants will ‘de weg kwijt raken’ (get lost). He adds to this his judgement that this concern is ‘een niet ongegronde vrees’ (a not unfounded fear), by which he puts forward the rightness and authority of the UNHCR on this matter. The fear of people getting lost can be understood to support the refugees as human beings theme.

Van Tongeren connects this to his implicit and dehumanizing argument that a sound track-and-trace system is needed. Rather than a concern for the refugees’ welfare and livelihood this can also be understood to express a security concern. It is not clear whether the UNHCR uses this terminology in their statement, but there are no quotation marks which makes it seem that this is the word choice of Van Tongeren himself. Van Tongeren’s use of

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<sup>193</sup> Also see Parker, ‘Unwanted invaders’, 6.



words is interesting: a track-and-trace system usually concerns products or items and not human beings, which can constitute the impression that the migrants are helpless goods or potentially dangerous, because it is unclear what they are doing.

### **Descriptors**

It stands out that Van Tongeren does not always take into account the legal difference between the concepts of 'refugees' and 'migrants'. In the beginning of the article he describes the 'refugees' at the camp as desperate, i.e. the refugee as human being. He continues to discuss the problem of fights, however, by using the concept 'migrants', i.e. the violent migrant. This categorization, however, does not hold when looking at the rest of the article. Concerning the second problem that Van Tongeren discusses, he refers to 'the migrant.' This second problem refers to the registration procedure of 'migrants' and the system in Greece that is 'zwaar overbelaste' (heavily overburdened) by 'refugees'. He supports this statement by mentioning the number of 51.000 'vluchtelingen' (refugees). Hence, Van Tongeren here uses the word 'migrant' when it concerns the official registration, which is the correct legal term as it is not yet determined at that stage whether a person is considered to be a legal refugee. However, he describes the same group of people (migrants) as 'refugees' when he states that they are heavily overburdening the system, which he supports by mentioning the number of the great amount of refugees. The term 'migrant' is used again when Van Tongeren discusses those people that are being sent back to Turkey. Hence, the concepts 'refugee' and 'migrant' are at times incorrectly used interchangeably and there cannot be distinguished a solid characterization of each of these concepts.

### **Conclusion**

In this article Van Tongeren mostly engages in the 'unwanted invaders' theme, which is combined with the 'refugees as human beings' and 'dehumanized refugees' theme. He constructs an account of refugees that are desperate and violent. Moreover, Van Tongeren emphasized the great amount of refugees that are now subjected to the Agreement and burdening the system. Van Tongeren therefore mainly portrays refugees and the refugee crisis as uncontrollable.

### **5.1.2. ‘Traangas tegen vluchtelingen: kritiek op grenspolitie Macedonië’ (11 April 2016), author: editors abroad**

In this article the editors abroad condemn the ‘disgraceful’ situation at the Macedonian border and criticize the border police because of this.<sup>194</sup> The editors mostly engage in the ‘refugees as human beings’ theme, which they combine with the ‘unwanted invader’ theme.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

##### Desperate & violent refugees

The editors describe that refugee-issues are still causing problems (metonym), despite the agreement between Turkey and the EU. This is exemplified by the description of a situation in Greece (Idomeni) where ‘honderden vluchtelingen bestormden [...] de grensovergang met Macedonië’ (hundreds of refugees stormed the border with Macedonia), which led to severe fights with the Macedonian police.

*Honderden vluchtelingen bestormden zondagochtend in Griekenland bij Idomeni de grensovergang met Macedonië. Het kwam tot hevige gevechten met de Macedonische politie. De wanhopige mensenmassa rende over een veld naar het hek op Macedonische bodem en wierp stenen. De veiligheidstroepen aan de grens gebruikten onder andere traangas en rubber kogels om de menigte te weren. Ook werden de hen toegeworpen stenen teruggegooid.*

The refugees in question are described as a desperate mass of humans, and their actions described as running and throwing rocks. They are positioned opposite to the safety troops at the border that used tear gas and rubber bullets to hold off the crowd. This extract supports the unwanted invader discourse by using and connecting the subthemes of the violent and desperate refugee. This is even more so the case because of the positioning of the refugees opposite to authorities that are described as ‘safety troops’ as safety is understood to be positive and violent actions against it as negative and threatening. However, in the next

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<sup>194</sup> The situation at the Macedonian border has received a lot of media attention. At the end of 2015 the Macedonian border barrier was erected (on its border with Greece), which consists of razor-topped fences. The construction hereof is a response to the refugee crisis. This blocks refugees from transiting through the Balkan-route to other European countries. Many refugees and migrants are therefore stranded in the transit camp in Idomeni (in Greece, near the border with Macedonia), resulting in tensions and rioting.

<https://www.iom.int/news/iom-monitors-greece-fyrom-border-amid-security-concerns>, IOM, ‘IOM Monitors Greece-FYROM Border Amid Security Concerns’, consulted on 10-07-2017.

sentence the editors emphasize that the ‘toegeworpen stenen’ (casted rocks) were also ‘teruggegooid’ (thrown back). The difference in word use, ‘casting’ and ‘throwing’, is significant as the latter is more linked to a violent action than the first. From this point onward, the violent aspect is more connected to the border police and the refugees are portrayed as wounded victims. This is where the theme of the refugee as human being prevails.

### Victimized refugees

The editors use the organisation ‘Artsen zonder Grenzen’ (Doctors without Borders) as a metonym when describing what they have experienced at the borders: dozens of wounded as a result of the use of tear gas and rubber bullets. Most of them suffered from breathing problems. By not counteracting, critiquing or questioning this statement of Doctors without Borders, the editors put this organisation in an authoritative position. They support this by explaining that the organisation has spread pictures of the wounded through Twitter, which implies that this serves as evidence for the case in question.

The editors describe that the Macedonian authorities keep the border strictly closed and do not allow anyone to enter, which seems to be a tautology and is used by the editors to emphasize an obstinate attitude of the Macedonian authorities and is even more emphasized by the use of the adjective ‘strikt’ (strictly). The editors add to this that the living conditions of the migrants in Idomeni are exceptionally bad, implying that this is due to the attitude of the Macedonian authorities. They support this idea by stating that Greece had lots of critique on the neighbouring country, implying Macedonia.

The editors add to this an extensive statement of the so described informant of the Greek government George Kyritsis, which makes the quote more personal and more influential. In this quote he speaks of the tear gas, rubber bullets and sound grenades that are used against a vulnerable group by which he refers to the migrants, which he condemns as a ‘gevaarlijke en betreurenswaardige actie’ (dangerous and regrettable action) that is carried out by the Macedonian authorities. Here, the victimized refugees are positioned opposite from the condemned Macedonian authorities. Following this sentence, is a sentence wherein the editors pay attention to an opposing statement, saying that Skopje (Macedonia’s capital) says that tear gas was also used on the Greek side. By using a shorter sentence and a metonym, ‘Skopje says’, this can be understood as a less personal and influential statement. The editors recreate a situation of finger pointing, wherein it is clear that they agree with the statement that is put forward by Kyritsis more, than the one of Skopje because of the use of more extensive

information with regard to Kyritsis. This is also reflected in the subtitle of this article, that states: Critique on border police Macedonia.

The editors end the article by arguing that Idomeni, together with the other Greek islands, is a 'schandvlek' (disgrace) for the European migrant-issues. Hence, the editors do not take a side, but they condemn the inhumane situation in itself. They support this argument by stating that the facilities are 'allerbelabberds' (greatly miserable) for 'de stroom mensen' (the stream of people).

## **Dehumanized refugees**

### Water-metaphors

The construction 'stream of people' is a metaphor that emphasizes the great amount of people, where no beginning and no end can be detected. Such a metaphorical framework can shape the reader's understanding of the situation and emphasize the greatness and seriousness of the situation. Moreover, a stream is difficult to control.<sup>195</sup> It should be noted that using such a water-metaphor is also dehumanizing with regard to refugees and can be understood by the readership as threatening.

## **Descriptors**

The editors describe that 11.000 refugees and migrants have gathered at the border with Macedonia. Hence, the editors make a distinction between refugees and migrants. However, two sentences later they describe this same group as 'gathered migrants'. Also, in the rest of the article these concepts seem to be used interchangeably. It stands out that refugees are described as a desperate mass of people that get into fights, whereas migrants are referred to as a vulnerable group, even though both concepts refer to the same group in Idomeni. This makes it seem like the editors characterize both groups differently. This is also the case when the editors use 'vluchtelingenproblematiek' (refugee-issues) and 'migrantenproblematiek' (migrant-issues) to describe the same issues. The word use surrounding these concepts is interesting, as the refugee-issues are said as still causing problems, whereas migrant-issues are described as suffering from the disgraceful situation in Idomeni and the Greek islands. Hence, refugees are characterized as desperate and violent, whereas migrants are referred to as a vulnerable group that suffers in a disgraceful situation.

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<sup>195</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 67.

## **Conclusion**

The editors of this Telegraaf article also depict refugees as desperate and violent, which links this category to this newspaper more strongly. In this article, however, more attention is paid to the portrayal of refugees as victims. Hence, in this article the editors are more involved in the theme of refugees as human beings than that of refugees as unwanted invaders.

## 5.2. Algemeen dagblad

### 5.2.1. ‘Deal met Turkije snijdt illegalen snel de pas af’ (9 March 2016), author: Frans Boogaard, Marc Guillet en Bob van Huet

In this article editors Frans Boogaard, Marc Guillet and Bob van Huet discuss the different interests of several parties regarding the refugee crisis: the refugees, the people smugglers, human rights organisations, jurists, European Parliament and the House of Representatives of the Netherlands. The authors mostly engage in the ‘refugees as human beings’ theme, which they combine with the ‘unwanted invader’ and ‘dehumanized refugees’ theme.

#### Refugees as human beings

The following extract exemplifies the theme of refugees as human beings that prevails in this article. The authors talk about refugees and refer to them by using the words ‘deze mensen’ (these people).

*Bij de vluchtelingen zelf is er weinig reden tot juichen na deze principe-deal tussen de EU en Turkije. „Deze mensen willen helemaal niet naar Turkije, ze willen naar Europa, naar Oostenrijk, België, Frankrijk,” zegt Eduard Nazarski.*

The authors describe that there is little reason for the refugees to cheer after the principle-deal between the EU and Turkey. A quote of Eduard Nazarski is used to support this statement, who the authors describe as the director of Amnesty International Nederland who was at the camp in the border area between Greece and Macedonia. Using the personal name of someone who the authors additionally describe as the director of an organisation, puts this person in an authoritative position. His quote describes the refugees at the camp as people who do not want to go to Turkey. Not only does this contribute to the theme of refugees as human beings because he describes refugees as people, but also because he connects the aspect of having a will to them.

#### Victimized refugees

The people at the camp are described by Nazarski as living in ‘erbarmelijke omstandigheden’ (pitiful conditions).

*„De grenzen zijn daar dicht, maar ondanks de erbarmelijke omstandigheden is niemand van plan daar weg te gaan. Hoe kunnen ze nu zeggen dat Turkije een veilig land is. Vluchtelingen zijn daar al eerder slecht behandeld.”*

Nevertheless, Nazarski states, they do not want to leave. He shows his understanding of this unwillingness by asking how they can say that Turkey is a safe country and explains that refugees have been treated badly before in Turkey. In phrasing his statement this way, he seems to consider the possibility that this may occur again. He does not specify who ‘they’ are, but it most probably refers to those behind the EU-Turkey Agreement, which he criticizes and of which the refugees have become victims.

### Rightful refugees

An enlarged part of the text of the article states: ‘Juristen en asiëdeskundigen denken dat terugsturen in strijd is met het Europees recht.’ Here, jurists and asylum experts are quoted, stating that returning is in conflict with European law. The fact that this concerns an enlarged part of the text and is printed in uppercase, emphasizes the content of this part. This implies that the authors understand jurists and asylum experts to be morally authoritative parties in the debate on the refugee crisis. In creating such a hegemony in the content of the article, it is clear that the authors attach most value to the discourse of the refugee as human being that is portrayed as a victim in this crisis and of the EU-Turkey Agreement. This is even more emphasized when multiple organisations are mentioned that support this idea (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, UNHCR).

### **Unwanted invaders**

Another theme that comes to the fore in this article is the refugee as an unwanted invader, by engaging in the category of the threatening refugee. This theme is also combined with the dehumanized refugee theme.

### Refugees as threat and criminals

The second bullet point of the article is aimed at answering the question whether or not ‘het probleem van de vluchtelingen’ (the problem of the refugees) is solved now. The formulation hereof, the refugees being a problem, is significant for the continuation of the text, wherein the focus is on finding a way out of the asylum crisis and measurements that are being taken to keep refugees from entering Europe by force.

*De drukke 'Balkanroute' is nu feitelijk gesloten voor grote groepen migranten en vluchtelingen. Dat geeft Europa voor het eerst zicht op een uitweg uit zijn asielcrisis. De vluchteling die toch nog probeert zijn bestemming te bereiken, wordt niet alleen teruggestuurd, maar krijgt ook een kruisje achter zijn naam. Oorlogsschepen van de NAVO gaan intensiever patrouilleren op de Egeïsche Zee. De slagkracht van Frontex - dat de buitengrenzen bewaakt - wordt versterkt met de Europese Grens- en Kustwacht. Op de Middellandse Zee zetten EU-lidstaten extra schepen in tegen smokkelaars.*

Here, the authors state that the refugee that still tries to reach their destination 'wordt niet alleen teruggestuurd, maar krijgt ook een kruisje achter zijn naam' (will not only be returned, but also gets a criminal record).<sup>196</sup> Hence, a refugee is portrayed not only as a threat, but also a criminal. The authors speak about warships from NATO that will patrol more intensively, the strengthening of Frontex's impact force with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. These measurements are defence mechanisms: defence mechanisms that defend people from matters or persons that are unwanted and should actively be removed. This supports the theme of the unwanted invader.

## **Dehumanized refugees**

### Water-metaphors

The theme of the unwanted invader is supported by the use of the dehumanized refugee theme that is engaged in by the use of water-metaphors. The authors speak of a fear for the 'toestroom van vluchtelingen' (inflow of refugees). Using such water-metaphors evoke the idea that the situation is uncontrollable and possibly threatening, like the use of the word 'migratiestromen' (migration streams). This is even more emphasized when the authors adds the amount of 'al' (already) 6000 asylum seekers.

### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

The authors of the article also engage in the category of refugees as objects when stating: 'vluchtelingen worden volgens een met de Verenigde Naties afgesproken verdeelsleutel verspreid over de EU' (refugees will be spread over the EU in accordance with the

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<sup>196</sup> 'krijgt ook een kruisje achter zijn naam' literally translates as 'also gets a cross/x-mark behind his name', in Dutch this is an expression which implies getting a criminal record.



distribution key as agreed on with the United Nations). The spreading of refugees in accordance with a particular distribution key takes away the aspect of agency and portrays refugees as subjected to distributional practices which dehumanizes them.

### **Descriptors**

In this article ‘refugees’ are put opposite to ‘economic migrants’. However, this concerns a complex situation that I have described in chapter 3. Moreover, the latter group of people is also referred to in the title of the article by using the concept ‘illegals’. This concept can be understood as dehumanizing and will be discussed further in section 5.6. ‘Discursive and social practices’.

The authors acknowledge a legal difference between ‘migrants’ and ‘refugees’ throughout the article. The concept ‘asylum seekers’ is used in this article to describe everyone seeking refuge in Europe, this includes both migrants and refugees.

### **Conclusion**

The authors mostly engage in the ‘refugees as human beings’ theme by portraying those that have arrived in Europe as victims and having rights. They combine this theme with the unwanted invaders theme by depicting refugees that come to Europe as a threat and criminals, which is emphasized by referring to several defence mechanisms. The opposition between the portrayal of those that are already in Europe and those that attempt to reach Europe is striking in this article and illustrates the overlap in themes when portraying refugees.

### **6.2.2. ‘Brussel moet druk houden op Turkije’ (4 April 2016), author: Natasja de Groot**

In this article De Groot, editor, argues that Brussels should continue pressuring Turkey. In doing so, she describes the inhumane treatment of refugees and argues for a humane approach, by referring to human rights and moral duties. The main theme that De Groot engages in in this article is that of the refugee as human being. The other themes are absent in this article.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

The refugee as human being theme immediately stands out in the first sentence of the article when De Groot talks about Lesbos where the ‘ontreddering, paniek en chaos zullen groot zijn’ (disorganization, panic and chaos will be greatly present). These are states of being that are closely related to emotions of people and to desperation. De Groot does not specify, however, whether this concerns (merely) refugees, aid groups or others. The use of these concepts, on the one hand, may generate compassion and support. On the other hand, however, these concepts depict a situation that is out of control, which can evoke fearfulness. The same applies to the use of water-metaphors, like ‘grip krijgen op de vluchtelingenstroom’ (getting a grip on the refugee stream) in this article.

#### Refugees as non-criminals

De Groot emphasizes the refugee as human being theme when stating: ‘Voor de duidelijkheid: dit zijn geen criminelen. Het zijn mensen die oorlog of armoede zijn ontvlucht en de oversteek hebben gewaagd in de hoop een veilig heenkomen te vinden’ (To be clear: they are not criminals. They are people that have fled war or poverty and dared crossing, hoping to find a safe shelter). Here it becomes clear that criminals are considered by De Groot to be the opposite of refugees that are here described by the concept ‘people’. Moreover, in explicitly stating that these refugees are not criminals, De Groot shows her awareness of the category of the criminal refugee and speaks out against it by referring to refugees as human beings.

Furthermore, De Groot emphasizes the distinction between refugees and smugglers by stating that it is evident to protect the European borders against smugglers and argues that it is just as evident that refugees need to be treated humanely. Hence, De Groot describes the smugglers as unwanted invaders rather than the refugees, whom she states are in need of humane treatment.

### Victimized refugees

De Groot explains that Ankara has a questionable reputation when it comes to respect for human rights and states that Amnesty (International) has published a report that says that Ankara ‘zou onder dwang Syriërs uitzetten naar het noorden van Syrië’ (would return Syrians to the north of Syria by force). Amnesty is portrayed as an authoritative organisation in this article, supported by the fact that they provide proof for the case in question in the form of a report. The fact that refugees are said to be returned by force supports the idea of the victimized refugee.

### Rightful refugees

De Groot uses the above statement to support the following sentence, that contains her argument: ‘Het is van groot belang dat Brussel druk zet op Turkije om afspraken na te komen en ook zelf doet wat het belooft’ (It is of utter importance that Brussels pressures Turkey to respect the deals and does what it has promised). To accentuate the importance of this statement, De Groot adds that we have the moral duty to provide a safe shelter for people in need. This last sentence indicates once more the refugee as human being and as a victim in need of help.

### **Descriptors**

In this article De Groot merely refers to ‘refugees’.

### **Conclusion**

In this article De Groot engages in the theme of refugees as human beings by portraying them as victims and having rights. Moreover, she explicitly speaks out against the portrayal of refugees as criminals, which is referred to in the other article of *Algemeen Dagblad*, and, in doing so, engages in the category of the refugee as non-criminal. Hence, a link between refugees and criminals stands out in this particular newspaper.

### 5.3. Volkskrant

#### 5.3.1. ‘Geen deal met Turkije’ (18 March 2016), author: Arnout Brouwers and Henk Müller

In this article Arnout Brouwers, historian and chief opinion writer, and Henk Müller, opinion correspondent, discuss the juridical and moral problems that result from the EU-Turkey Agreement. These problems, according to them, should lead to the decision that the EU withdraws from the deal with Turkey. In discussing this they rely mostly on the theme of the refugee as human being.

#### Refugees as human beings

##### Rightful refugees

Brouwers and Müller refer to the High Commissioner of the UN, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty (International) as authoritative institutions.

*De Hoge Commissaris van de VN, Human Rights Watch en Amnesty vragen zich af of de overeenkomst rechtmatig is krachtens de Conventie van Genève uit 1951, die bepaalt wat een veilig toevluchtsoord is, en krachtens het Europees Verdrag voor de Rechten van de Mens dat massale uitzettingen verbiedt.*

The mentioning of the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees that determines what is a ‘veilig toevluchtsoord’ (safe haven) and the European Convention on Human Rights that ‘massale uitzettingen verbiedt’ (prohibits mass expulsion) supports the argument that there are juridical problems with the EU-Turkey Agreement. The naming of a total of three institutions as well as two conventions strengthens the statement of Brouwers and Müller. By paying attention to the rights of refugees they build on the theme of refugees as human beings.

##### Victimized refugees

The refugee as human being theme is more emphasized when Brouwers and Müller discuss the moral problems that result from the EU-Turkey Agreement that criticize Erdogan and refer to the ‘fundamentele waarden’ (fundamental values) of the EU. To add strength to their argument they describe the urgency of the situation as a humanitarian disaster that threatens Europe and civilians are distressed, because of the more than a million refugees last year, and this year a ‘whopping’ 150 thousand. The threat of a humanitarian disaster is strengthened by mentioning the number of refugees and using adjectives like ‘ruim’ (more than) and ‘maar

liefst' (whopping). The adjective 'humanitarian' emphasizes the theme of refugees as human beings.

Hence, the juridical and moral problems that result from the EU-Turkey Agreement are supported by the theme of the refugee as human being that is used to argue against the deal. This is accentuated again in the last sentence of the article, that states that European leaders have to ensure that the deal meets the requirements of European and international right as well as the moral values of the EU.

## **Dehumanized refugees**

### Streams and dams

Brouwers and Müller state that money is needed to 'de stroom vluchtelingen in te dammen' (build a dam around/against the stream of refugees). The use of such water-metaphors may generate compassion and support, as the metaphors are encapsulated by the refugee as human being discourse. However, someone may also interpret these concepts as depicting a situation that is out of control, which can evoke fearfulness.

## **Descriptors**

The people that are returning from Greece to Turkey are described as 'people' in this article. After the registration and receiving the correct paperwork the ones that are allowed to enter Europe are described as (Syrian) 'refugees'. Hence, the complete group with which the EU-Turkey Agreement is concerned, is referred to as people, of which only a part is legally considered to be refugee. In doing so, Brouwers and Müller use the legal definition of refugee and use this consistently throughout the article. Moreover, by referring to the whole group as 'people' they bypass the concept 'migrants', which is often used in these instances.

## **Conclusion**

Brouwers and Müller portray refugees in this article as rightful and victimized, in doing so they refer to several human rights organizations in order to support the theme of refugees as human beings that prevails in this article.

### **5.3.2. ‘De prijs van duivelspact met Turkije is hoog’ (11 April 2016), author: Frans-Willem Verbaas**

In this article Frans-Willem Verbaas, who is described as an asylum lawyer, states that the ‘prijs van duivelspact met Turkije is hoog’ (price of the devilish pact with Turkey is high). He argues that the speed at which the rule of law and moral principles are thrown overboard is terrifying and embarrassing, and that the world, thanks to the Turkey-deal, has become much grimmer. In supporting these statements Verbaas mostly relies on the refugee as human being theme.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

##### Victimized refugees

Verbaas criticizes the EU-Turkey Agreement, by stating that until recently I believed I was living in a fairly civilized country. He supports this statement by explaining the situation that refugees are in, which is meant to counter the idea of a ‘fairly civilized country’:

*Of op politici die het verdrinken van vluchtelingen in de Middellandse Zee alleen wijten aan meedogenloze mensensmokkelaars, en niet aan westerse maatregelen om mensen te beletten naar Europa te vluchten.*

Verbaas describes the current situation where refugees are drowning in the Mediterranean Sea. He criticizes the statement of politicians that this is merely due to ‘meedogenloze mensensmokkelaars’ (relentless people smugglers), and not due to Western measures that prevent people from fleeing to Europe. In critiquing politicians and policy Verbaas builds on the theme of refugees as human beings and the category wherein refugees are portrayed as victims.

##### Rightful refugees

Verbaas continues his argument in a sarcastic manner. He does not explicitly refer to refugees, but the relatedness to refugees is implied in the sentence as it directly follows up the above sentence:

*Maar gelukkig was er altijd nog de Europese Unie, een samenwerking tussen beschaafde landen die mensenrechtenverdragen hadden ondertekend en een Grondrechtenhandvest in het leven hadden geroepen. De EU heeft nu een soort*

*duivelspact gesloten met Turkije, waar het staatshoofd zich in rap tempo ontwikkelt tot een dictator in Midden-Oosten stijl, de persvrijheid afschaft en oorlog voert tegen de Koerden*

Here, Verbaas states that ‘gelukkig’ (luckily) there was always the EU, which he describes as a collaboration between ‘beschaafde landen’ (civilized countries) that have signed human rights conventions and have created a charter of fundamental rights. The sarcasm hereof becomes clearer when Verbaas states: ‘Op de Griekse eilanden maakt de Europese Unie haar debuut als mensenrechten-schender’ (On the Greek islands the EU makes its debut as a human rights violator). Verbaas supports this statement by referring to two rights of refugees that are not being met as ‘judges or lawyers are nowhere in sight.’ Moreover, Verbaas refers to multiple findings of Amnesty International to argue against Turkey’s status as safe third country and calls the Turkish idea to create safe areas in the north of Syria that are controlled by Islamic militias ‘deprimerend’ (depressing).

#### Refugees as prisoners

The theme of the refugee as human being, as rightful and a victim, in this article is also connected to the category of the refugee as a prisoner.

*Inmiddels zijn vluchtelingenkampen op Lesbos, Chios en Kos omgebouwd tot detentiecentra waar erbarmelijke omstandigheden heersen, en een aanzienlijk deel van de gevangene vluchtelingen bestaat uit kinderen.*

Here, Verbaas describes the refugee camps as detention centers where ‘erbarmelijke omstandigheden heersen’ (pitiful conditions prevail) and the majority of the ‘gevangene’ (imprisoned) refugees consists of children. By using an adjective like ‘pitiful’ and ‘imprisoned’, and relating these to children, Verbaas can evoke emotions of pity with the readership. In doing so, he contributes to the refugee as human being theme wherein refugees are portrayed as victims and unjust prisoners.

#### **Dehumanized refugees**

##### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

The theme of the dehumanized refugee is referred to in a cynical manner. Verbaas puts forward the question: How cynical can it become? by which he refers to the situation that

results from the EU-Turkey Agreement that he describes as follows: ‘elke Syriër die vanuit Turkije Europa bereikt terug moet naar Turkije, in ruil voor een andere Syriër die uit Turkije naar Europa mag komen’ (every Syrian that reaches Europe from Turkey has to go back to Turkey, in exchange for another Syrian that is allowed to enter Europe from Turkey). In explaining the deal in this manner Verbaas refers to refugees as objects of exchange that need to be given permission to enter Europe, as to reflect what this deal actually entails according to him. In using such sarcasm, the refugee as human being theme of the article is strengthened.

### **Unwanted invaders**

Also, Verbaas pays attention to the unwanted invader theme which he seems to condemn by using the same sarcastic tone that is described in the above: ‘Maar dan wel tot een maximum van 72 duizend per jaar. Van de 4.8 miljoen Syriërs in het Midden-Oosten!’ Verbaas explains that the EU-Turkey Agreement has a limit of 72 thousand per year. His condemnation hereof becomes clear in the following sentence, wherein he seems to imply that 72 thousand is a very small part of the total of 4.8 million Syrians in the Middle-East. Moreover, he adds strength to this last sentence by ending it with an exclamation mark.

### **Descriptors**

Verbaas refers mostly to ‘refugees’ in this article. He refrains from using the term ‘migrants’ to describe the group that has crossed to Europe and refers to them as ‘people’. When discussing legal procedures he refers to these people as ‘asylum seekers’.

### **Conclusion**

Also in this article of Volkskrant refugees are mostly portrayed as human beings, more specifically as victims and having rights. Another category that is used and intimately linked to the other categories is that of refugees as unjust prisoners. The unwanted invaders and dehumanized refugees themes are referred to in this article, but by using sarcasm they actually supports the overall theme of refugees as human beings.



## **5.4. NRC Handelsblad**

### **5.4.1. ‘Realitycheck: vluchtelingen blijven vluchten (19 March 2016), authors: Maarten den Heijer, Jorrit Rijpma and Thomas Spijkerboer**

This article is written by Maarten den Heijer, professor international law, Jorrit Rijpma, associate professor European law, Thomas Spijkerboer, professor migration law. In this article they argue that solutions for the refugee crisis are unrealistic by discussing four system flaws in the European asylum policy. In doing so, they mostly rely on the refugee as human being theme. They put forward two pieces of advice that are described as follows: on the short term to sit on the blisters,<sup>197</sup> on the long term to revise the asylum policy thoroughly.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

The refugee as human being theme in this article is visible in many places and is supported by multiple categories. Den Heijer et al discuss the correct housing of a solid number of refugees. Furthermore, they argue that the European asylum system has to be ‘redelijk’ (reasonable) for member states as well as for refugees.

#### Victimized refugees

Den Heijer et al refer to refugees as victims by referring to a specific incident: ‘Bovendien is Turkije van geen kanten veilig. De laatste keer dat Turkije werd veroordeeld voor onmenselijke behandeling van een asielzoeker, dateert van 15 december vorig jaar’ (Moreover, Turkey is nowhere near safe. The last time that Turkey has been convicted for inhumane treatment of an asylum seeker dates back to 15 December last year). In discussing the inhumane treatment of an asylum seeker this person is portrayed as both a human being and a victim.

#### Rightful refugees

Den Heijer et al discuss the escaping from the rule of law and describe the example of fishing people out of international waters and sending them back (‘pushbacks’). They describe this example to support their argument that states have to behave as correctly outside their territory as inside it. Moreover, Den Heijer et al equate this example with Guantanamo Bay and the Russian secret service who, Den Heijer et al state, think that an opponent is allowed to

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<sup>197</sup> This is part of a Dutch expression ‘wie zijn kont brandt moet op de blaren zitten’ that literally translates as ‘when you burn your butt, you need to sit on the blisters’, which means to own up to consequences.

be killed with polonium in London (referring to Alexander Litvinenko). This violent example emphasizes the argument that one cannot legally send refugees back.

Furthermore, Den Heijer et al refer to human rights in relation to the treatment of asylum seekers: ‘De Griekse asielprocedure bleek uiteindelijk zó beroerd dat het in strijd met de mensenrechten is om asielzoekers erheen te sturen’ (the Greek asylum procedure turned out to be so bad that it contravened human rights to send the asylum seekers there). This causes Den Heijer et al to argue that the asylum system is still ‘oneerlijk’ (unfair) toward asylum seekers. Moreover, they stress that ‘vluchtelingen hebben niet alleen formeel recht op bescherming. Ze hebben daar ook dringend behoefte aan’ (refugees do not only have a formal right to protection. They also have the urgent need therefor). Besides the right to protection, Den Heijer et al stress that refugees also have the right to flee from violence and oppression. This emphasizes the portrayal of the refugee as a human being that is rightful.

Also, Den Heijer et al emphasize the juridical rights of refugees concerning their return, explaining that sending people back at the border is only allowed if (1) the neighbouring country is safe and (2) they have been offered the opportunity to apply for asylum in individual (appeal) procedures.

### Refugees as resistance fighters

Related to the rightful refugee category is the category of the refugee as a resistance fighter. Den Heijer et al refer to this when they state that asylum seekers, like member states often have a ‘groot en redelijk belang bij om het systeem te frustreren’ (great and reasonable interest in frustrating the system). In describing the asylum seekers’ interests as reasonable they portray them as human beings rather than unreasonable beings that would act in a senseless manner. Den Heijer et al explain that asylum seekers will continue acting in this manner due to the inequality of the national asylum systems. Nevertheless, they condemn these actions, which they support by the statement ‘regels zijn regels’ (rules are rules) and if they do not abide by the rules, they argue, member states and asylum seekers need to be forced to do so.

### **Unwanted invaders**

Den Heijer et al argue that ‘de interne onevenwichtigheden, de overspannen verwachtingen van de grens, en het reisverbod voor vluchtelingen moeten van tafel’ (the internal imbalances, the overwrought expectations of the border, and the travel ban for refugees need to be rejected). In doing so, they speak out against the idea of the refugee as an unwanted invader.

Nevertheless, in this article, Den Heijer et al do pay attention to this theme as they emphasize the topic of borders that is closely related to this theme:

*Uit alle macht wordt gepoogd te voorkomen dat zij hier kunnen komen: visumverplichtingen, luchtvaartmaatschappijen moeten vóór vertrek documenten controleren, doorreislanden worden onder druk gezet om ook visumverplichtingen in te voeren.*

Here, Den Heijer et al describe that with might and main it is attempted to ‘voorkomen dat zij hier kunnen komen’ (prevent them coming here). As examples they describe measures like visa requirements and paper work. Moreover, Den Heijer et al explain the risk of a travel ban, namely that refugees were forbidden to leave their country, causing a more chaotic and probably bigger migration stream than when Syrians would have been given the opportunity to escape. Den Heijer et al argue that this problem is an internal flaw of the system that continuously is being built on instead of being taken care of.

## **Dehumanized refugees**

### Water-metaphors

Den Heijer et al refer to a ‘migration stream’ in the above quote. As discussed previously, this can have different consequences: it can be understood as generating compassion and support, or fearfulness. The context of chaos and the explanation of the risk of a travel ban for refugees indicates the latter.

### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

Dehumanization also appears when Den Heijer et al state that the Syrian refugees are the first stress test for the European asylum system. Here refugees are portrayed as non-human means to test the asylum system rather than, for example, refugees as human beings in need of protection or unwanted invaders that need to be kept out.

Furthermore, Den Heijer et al speak about ‘het herverdelen van asielzoekers’ (the redistribution of asylum seekers), ‘als asielzoekers conform Dublin verdeeld zouden worden’ (if asylum seekers would be distributed in accordance with Dublin), ‘het verdelen van vluchtelingen’ (the distribution of refugees) and ‘de teller voor verdeling’ (the numerator for distribution). Moreover, they state ‘Per kerende post moeten bootvluchtelingen worden teruggestuurd, in ruil waarvoor sommige Europese landen sommige Syriërs uit Turkije

zouden opnemen' (boat refugees have to be sent back by return mail, in exchange for which European countries will take up some Syrians from Turkey). Speaking about boat refugees as postal packages and as objects of exchange concerns the theme of the dehumanized refugee as the aspect of agency (of refugees) is taken away.

### **Descriptors**

Den Heijer et al use diverse concepts to describe the subjects involved in the refugee crisis. It stands out that the concept 'boat refugee' is merely used in a dehumanizing context. Furthermore, the concept 'asylum seeker' is often mixed up with the concept 'refugee'. There is no specific context wherein each of these concepts is used. Hence, the legal distinction between these concepts is not consistently taken into account as they are used interchangeably by Den Heijer et al.

### **Conclusion**

Den Heijer et al portray refugees in this article as victims, having rights, and as resistance fighters. Especially the latter category emphasizes the aspect of agency, which reinforces the theme of refugees as human beings. Objectifying refugees by referring to them as objects of exchange, however, contributes to the dehumanized refugees theme. Hence the themes of refugees as human beings and that of dehumanized refugees are both referred to in this article, but seem to counteract each other. However, the dehumanized refugees are referred to in the context of the implications of the Agreement, which the authors condemn. Therefore the reference to this theme can be understood as contributing to their condemnation of the Agreement, reinforcing the overall portrayal of refugees as human beings.

#### **5.4.2. ‘De Turkije-deal heeft een lelijk gezicht’ (31 March 2016), author: Wil Eikelboom**

Wil Eikelboom is an asylum lawyer at Prakken d’Oliveira. In this article Eikelboom states that ‘de Turkije-deal heeft een lelijk gezicht’ (the Turkey-deal has an ugly face). This personification attributes human characteristics to an inanimate deal, which creates a strong personal dimension to Eikelboom’s disagreement with the implementation of the deal. This supports the theme of refugees as human beings that also prevails in the rest of the article.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

##### Desperate refugees

In the first sentence of the article it is stated that Eikelboom calls for asylum lawyers to travel immediately to Greece to provide legal assistance, before ‘de radeloze asielzoekers’ (the distraught asylum seekers) will be sent away without a trial. The adjective ‘distraught’ emphasizes the desperate refugee category that Eikelboom engages in. This also stands out in the following extract:

*Het bericht van mijn aanwezigheid ging als een lopend vuurtje rond, al snel was ik omringd door een wanhopige menigte. Uit Syrië, Irak, Afghanistan, zelfs Congo. Daaronder Koerden, yezidi's, christenen, en andere vervolgte minderheden.*

Here, Eikelboom describes that the news of his presence in camp Moria spread quickly, causing him to be surrounded by a ‘wanhopige menigte’ (desperate crowd). He emphasizes the desperation of the crowd by describing multiple groups (Kurds, Yezidis and Christians) and ‘andere vervolgte minderheden’ (other persecuted minorities). The use of the concept ‘minorities’ in combination with ‘desperate’ and ‘persecuted’ can be understood as a trigger for feelings of compassion and pity with the readership.

##### Refugees as prisoners

Eikelboom makes multiple references to the category of the refugee as prisoner. This is most clear when he states that on the Greek island of Lesbos ‘zitten duizenden vluchtelingen in gevangenenkamp Moria: barakken en tenten omringd door hekken en wachttorens’ (thousands of refugees are in prison camp Moria: barracks and tents surrounded by fences and watchtowers). Also in the rest of the article Moria is described as a ‘detentiecentrum’ (detention center) with ‘poorten op slot’ (locked gates). Eikelboom states that the refugees are ‘vast’ (locked up). The context wherein Eikelboom uses these concepts makes clear that he

does so to contribute to the refugee as human being theme wherein refugees are portrayed as unjust prisoners, as he immediately speaks about the ‘onmenselijke behandeling’ (inhumane treatment) of refugees.

### Rightful refugees

Moreover, the refugee as unjust prisoner is emphasized by Eikelboom when he adds that he travelled to Lesbos to estimate the legal assistance that every asylum seeker has the right to. Here, Eikelboom emphasizes that every asylum seeker has rights. Moreover, he illustrates his own involvement and dedication to the matter. Eikelboom explains the official procedure of submitting a case to a Greek judge and the European Court of Human Rights, but also states that violations of the refugee convention have occurred. Therefore he argues that legal assistance is necessary to guarantee access to fair procedures.

Furthermore, at the end of the article he argues:

*Nu niemand verantwoordelijkheid neemt, is het aan asieladvocaten om de bijstand zelf te organiseren. Met hulp van Europese advocatenordes proberen we advocaten naar Lesbos te krijgen. Hopelijk lukt dat vóór de radeloze bewoners van Moria worden uitgezet, op illegale wijze en met medewerking van Nederland.*

Here, Eikelboom argues that if no one takes responsibility, it is up to asylum lawyers to organize assistance. Therefore, he states, ‘we’ are trying to get lawyers to Lesbos (with the help of the European bar associations). To emphasize the need for assistance Eikelboom refers to the desperate refugee category once more by stating that ‘hopelijk’ (hopefully) this will succeed before the ‘radeloze bewoners van Moria’ (desperate residents of Moria) will be deported ‘op illegale wijze en met medewerking van Nederland’ (illegally and with the collaboration of the Netherlands). In doing so Eikelboom may trigger feelings of guilt and compassion with the readership.

### **Unwanted invaders**

Eikelboom is also aware of the theme of the unwanted invader, but speaks out against it which actually supports the theme of the refugee as human being. This becomes clear when he describes that ‘Turkije stuurt daadwerkelijk vluchtelingen terug naar gevaarlijke landen als Syrië en Afghanistan’ (Turkey actually sends back refugees to dangerous countries like Syria and Afghanistan). Here, Eikelboom implies that Turkish officials understand refugees to be

unwanted invaders, which is what he speaks out against by using the word ‘actually’ to demonstrate disbelief or disagreement.

The same situation appears later on in the article, when Eikelboom discusses ‘de zo vurig gewenste uitzetting’ (the so eagerly desired deportation) of refugees from Greece to Turkey. He expresses his disagreement by following this sentence with the statement that under Greek law things are allowed that under European law are not.

### **Dehumanized refugees**

#### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

Eikelboom combines the unwanted invader theme with that of the dehumanized refugee. He describes how refugees since the EU-Turkey Agreement are not allowed to travel from Greece (to the rest of Europe) and states that the EU wants ‘dat ze per kerende post worden teruggevlogen naar Turkije’ (that they will be flown back to Turkey by return mail).

### **Descriptors**

When discussing a process or procedure Eikelboom uses the concept ‘asylum seeker’. When talking about Moria he refers directly to those living there as ‘bewoners’ (residents), ‘mensen’ (people), and ‘wanhopige menigte’ (desperate crowd). Furthermore, with regard to the camp he refers once to the concept ‘boat refugees’, for whom the camp was previously meant to be a shelter location. In all other instances he uses the concept ‘refugee’.

### **Conclusion**

Like in the other article of NRC Handelsblad the author explicitly condemns the understanding of refugees as unwanted invaders and their treatment as objects. In constructing his argument he engages in the categories of refugees as desperate, unjust prisoners that have rights. This article therefore contributes to the portrayal of refugees as human beings.

## **5.5. Trouw**

### **5.5.1. ‘Het woord ‘oplossing’ is misplaatst bij vluchtelingendeal met Turkije’ (9 March 2016), author: editorial members and senior editors**

This article conveys the opinion of the newspaper, expressed by the members of the editorial board and senior editors. They argue that the EU-Turkey Agreement cannot be understood as the solution to the refugee crisis and that Turkey should not be given the title ‘safe third country’. In doing so they engage mostly in the theme of the refugee as human being.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

##### Victimized refugees

The editors speak about contributing to the sheltering of millions of war refugees. This can be related to the refugee as human being theme because the sheltering of war refugees implies that they should and deserve to be treated correctly. The adjective ‘war’ emphasizes that these refugees have fallen victim to war, which underlines the importance of providing shelter and can trigger feelings of sympathy with the readership.

Furthermore, the theme of the refugee as human being is also present in the main argument of the editors: ‘Turkije kan niet gelden als zogenoemd ‘veilig derde land’, waar asielzoekers zonder scrupules naar kunnen worden teruggestuurd’ (Turkey cannot be considered as a so-called ‘safe third country’, where asylum seekers can be returned to unscrupulously). Hence, the safety of asylum seekers is taken into account, which relates them to the refugee as human being theme.

##### Rightful refugees

Whereas the editors do not specifically discuss the rights of refugees, they do engage in the category of the rightful refugee when they state that ‘de wettelijke en praktische omstandigheden voor vluchtelingen schieten er ernstig tekort’ (the legal and practical circumstances for refugees are seriously flawed). In briefly referring to this category, they are able to underline the theme of the refugee as human being.

#### **Unwanted invaders**

The editors also engage in the unwanted invaders theme by discussing the implications of the EU-Turkey Agreement: ‘Zo zijn we aanbeland bij een situatie waarin Europa de vluchtelingen zover mogelijk terugduwt, vooralsnog tot aan Griekenland, maar uiteindelijk - zo is de bedoeling - tot aan Turkije’ (so we have come to a situation in which Europe pushes refugees



back as far as possible, for now to Greece, but eventually – as is intended – to Turkey). Pushing something back can be understood as it (here: refugees) being unwanted, causing refugees to be understood as invading and undesirable. This theme is supported once more when the editors talk about the ‘terugsturen’ (sending back) of asylum seekers. Another example hereof is the ‘‘op de boot terug zetten’ van duizenden mensen’ (‘putting back on the boat’ of thousands of people). Concerning the latter example, it becomes clear that the editors speak out against such deporting practices, by linking the theme of the unwanted refugee to that of the refugee as human being when speaking about ‘people’. Moreover, they talk about thousands of people, which is a number that emphasizes the refugee as human being theme. Also, the quotation marks emphasize that they do not themselves use the words that reveal the unwanted invaders theme, but rather that it is so-called by others, possibly officials (as this sentence is placed in a context of legal and practical circumstances, wherein the deal is criticized).

### **Dehumanized refugees**

#### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

The editors also discuss the ‘herverdeling van vluchteling’ (redistribution of refugees) that failed due to obstruction of the individual member states. Talking about the (re)distribution of refugees concerns the theme of the dehumanized refugee as the aspect of agency is taken away from them.

### **Descriptors**

In this article the editors distinguish between ‘refugees’, ‘war refugees’, ‘people’ and ‘asylum seekers’. It stands out that the editors refer to ‘war refugees’ and ‘people’ when they engage in the refugee as human being theme. The concepts of ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’ are used interchangeably, not taking into account the legal difference between these concepts. Moreover, there cannot be distinguished a solid characterization of each of these concepts that could explain the diverse use of these concepts.

### **Conclusion**

In this article the theme of refugees as human beings prevails. The editors portray refugees as victims that are entitled to rights. Moreover, like in NRC Handelsblad and Volkskrant, the authors condemn the understanding of refugees as unwanted invaders. In doing so, they refer

to the unjust deporting practices by which they emphasize the understanding of the rightful refugees.

### **5.5.2. ‘Hulporganisaties houden terecht vast aan Vluchtelingenverdrag’ (26 March 2016), author: editorial members and senior editors**

This article conveys the opinion of the newspaper, expressed by the members of the editorial board and senior editors. The editors argue that NGO’s that provide aid for refugees were right to withdraw. In doing so, they engage in the refugee as human being theme.

#### **Refugees as human beings**

The refugee as human being theme prevails in this article. This becomes clear when the editors put forward the question whether Turkey will ‘teruggestuurde vluchtelingen wel zorgvuldig zal behandelen’ (treat sent back refugees with care). The use of the words ‘with care’ shows the concern of the editors for the humane treatment of refugees. Furthermore, the editors argue that one cannot expect aid organizations to co-organize the measurements that ‘tegen humanitaire verdragen ingaan’ (go against humanitarian conventions). Hence, the editors engage in the refugee as human being theme in order to support their argument.

#### Rightful refugees

In mainly discussing the role of NGOs the editors cannot avoid the category of the rightful refugee. At the beginning of the article this is already visible when they state that UN-refugee organisation UNHCR had warned that the agreement (the EU-Turkey Agreement) was illegal. They explain that ‘het collectief terugsturen van asielzoekers is volgens het internationale recht verboden’ (the collective return of asylum seekers is forbidden according to international law). Referring to law and humanitarian aid emphasizes the rightful refugee category.

#### Refugees as prisoners

The argument of the editors is supported by them portraying the refugee as prisoner. They state that ‘wat voorheen Griekse opvangkampen waren, nu detentiecentra zijn geworden’ (what previously have been Greek shelters, now have become detention centers). Moreover, they describe that ‘vluchtelingen gevangen worden gezet’ (refugees are being put in prison). The editors link this category to that of the rightful refugee by stating that the imprisonment of refugees goes against the refugee convention that ‘eenieder het recht geeft elders aan te kloppen voor asiel’ (anyone has the right to go elsewhere for asylum).

### Victimized refugees

The editors describe how refugees have become victims of the withdrawal of NGOs. They state that the NGOs found themselves in a ‘duivels dilemma’ (devilish/devil’s dilemma):

*Een duivels dilemma is het wel: deze ngo's hebben zich ten doel gesteld mensen in alle omstandigheden hulp te bieden, en het druist in tegen hun instinct zich terug te trekken. Ze blijven buiten de kampen ook wel hulp verlenen, maar weigeren het verlengstuk te zijn van een onmachtige politiek en dwingen de Europese regeringen zelf maatregelen te nemen. Dat is terecht, maar de uitkomst van die afweging is voor vluchtelingen een bittere.*

The editors state that the NGOs want to offer help to people in all circumstances, but that they refuse to co-operate in impotent politics. The editors argue that the NGOs were right to withdraw. Nevertheless, they state that the outcome of this dilemma ‘is voor vluchtelingen een bittere’ (is a bitter one for refugees). Hence, the editors portray refugees as victims.

### **Unwanted invaders**

The theme of the unwanted invader appears when the editors describe that the official prohibition on the collective return of asylum seekers did not withhold the EU to send them back. Stating that the EU continues with this plan, even though it is prohibited, portrays refugees as actively unwanted.

### **Descriptors**

The editors refer in this article to ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’. It stands out that they use the concept ‘asylum seekers’ merely when international law is explicitly discussed. In all other instances ‘refugees’ is used.

### **Conclusion**

Like in the other article in Trouw, the understanding of refugees as human beings prevails. Here, the editors also refer to the categories of refugees as victims and having rights. The editors also engage in the category of refugees as unjust prisoners, which was also the case in Volkskrant and NRC Handelsblad. This strengthens the understanding of refugees as human beings and their condemnation of the treatment of refugees as a result of the Agreement.

## 5.6. Discussion: discursive and social practices

Now that different building blocks have been distinguished that occur within the newspapers the question remains what to make of these results. Therefore, in this section the results will be discussed thematically, focussing on the main findings and differences between the newspapers in reporting on the European refugee crisis and connecting these to discursive and social practices. In short, discursive practices of journalism refer to the ‘dialectical relationship between producer and consumer,’ and social practices refer to the ‘dialectical relationship between society and journalism.’<sup>198</sup>

Discursive practices of journalism according to Phillips and Jørgensen, focus on

*how authors of texts draw on already existing discourses and genres to create a text and on how receivers of texts also apply available discourses and genres in the consumption and interpretation of the texts.*<sup>199</sup>

Hence, the discursive practices are concerned with the production of texts by journalists and the consumption, or rather understanding of these texts by the readers. Furthermore, the conceptualisation of the identified or target audience (readers, but also editors, advertisers, law, other journalists et cetera) by journalists influences the text production and can vary per newspaper and, to an extent, per article.<sup>200</sup> Moreover, each newspaper has a style guide that results in lexical and syntactic patterning. These style guides are regularly changed in response to discursive and social circumstances.<sup>201</sup> Also, what is reported on differs per newspaper and per article: it is important to consider who gets to speak and what has news value. Questions are asked concerning what sources are considered to be powerful enough to support an argument, generate press materials, or garner media attention.<sup>202</sup> To summarize, texts are constructed in accordance with particular professional practices and techniques, and are aimed at a particular audience.

Social practices are concerned with the ‘dialectical relationship of news discourse to other social institutions and wider social factors.’<sup>203</sup> This assumes that society influences journalistic practices through social (power) structures as well as the preferences and values

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<sup>198</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 112-114.

<sup>199</sup> Jørgensen and Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, 69.

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- Dwight DeWerth-Pallmeyer, *The Audience in the News* (New York and London 1997) 3-7.

- Colleen Cotter, *News Talk: Investigating the Language of Journalism* (New York 2010) 219.

<sup>201</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 97.

<sup>202</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 87-88.

<sup>203</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 113.

of the readership. This is also linked to the economic practices of journalism (and newspapers).<sup>204</sup> It is important to keep in mind that even though there exist such structured determining limits, journalistic practices are not completely controlled by them because journalists are still autonomous agents. In acting upon the world journalists can reinforce or transform social realities, public opinions and beliefs (and possibly action orientations), and they can affect relationships of power in society by resisting or reinforcing these.<sup>205</sup>

### **5.6.1. Refugees as human beings**

In existing research on the portrayal of refugees little attention has been paid to the humanization of refugees. In contrast, this theme appears frequently in this research. One study has been performed that explicitly focusses on the portrayal of refugees as human beings in UK parliamentary debate.<sup>206</sup> Whereas Kirkwood does not make any subdivisions, I argue that in Dutch newspapers that report on the refugee crisis in the context of the EU-Turkey Agreement there can be found several more explicit categorizations that support the understanding of refugees as human beings.

#### Incorrect behaviour of refugees

Incorrect behaviour of refugees is discussed in various ways: portraying refugees as either violent, criminal, or as reasonable resistance fighters. Moreover, the incorrect behaviour of refugees, and thus these portrayals of refugees, are merely discussed in Telegraaf, Algemeen Dagblad and NRC Handelsblad.

Telegraaf is the only newspaper that uses the category of ‘desperate and violent refugees’. Whereas this can be understood as consisting of two categories that are united, it is interesting that in Telegraaf they merely occur in combination with each other, resulting in a separate category. This category emphasizes the causal relationship between the occurrence of the feeling of desperation and the expression of this feeling in violent behaviour. Moreover, Telegraaf is the only newspapers that explicitly refers to violence conducted by refugees.

Algemeen Dagblad is the only newspaper that refers to refugees as criminals when stating that they get a criminal record when they enter Europe, which goes against the new

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<sup>204</sup> Cotter, *News Talk*, 219.

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- Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 115.

- Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, ‘Op-ed pages’, in: Bob Franklin (eds.), *Pulling Newspapers Apart: Analysing Print Journalism* (London and New York 2008) 67-74, 67.

<sup>206</sup> Steve Kirkwood, ‘The Humanisation of Refugees: A Discourse Analysis of UK Parliamentary Debates on the European Refugee ‘Crisis’’, *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 27 (2017) 115-125, 116.

regulations. However, *Algemeen Dagblad* is also the newspaper that explicitly emphasizes the non-criminal being of refugees. This contradiction can be explained by the way that *Algemeen Dagblad* engages in the ‘unwanted invaders’ theme; namely by discussing refugees as ‘keeping them out’, rather than ‘removing them’. When discussing ‘non-criminal’ refugees, the editor refers to refugees that are already in Europe, that are in need of help and protection. When discussing ‘criminal’ refugees this refers to those that try to enter Europe against regulation.

Hence, a dichotomy is created between those that act according to regulations and those that act against it by use of violence or other criminal behaviour. Such stigmatizing practices can have major consequences. The violent acts of refugees that result from desperation can create an impression wherein refugees are seen as unreasonable and uncontrollable, which can be perceived as threatening and something to be fearful of.

NRC *Handelsblad* also discusses incorrect behaviour of refugees, but in doing so they describe refugees as reasonable resistance fighters, rather than violent and criminal beings. Even though the editors condemn the refugees’ actions, they still describe these actions as reasonable rather than acts that result from desperation. Therefore this description in NRC *Handelsblad* can be understood as less threatening because of the presence of reason and control, which can trigger understanding rather than fearfulness with the readership. Moreover, the dichotomies that are created in *Telegraaf* and *Algemeen Dagblad* concerning the incorrect behaviour of refugees are less present in NRC *Handelsblad*. In NRC *Handelsblad* these actions of refugees are equated with the actions of member states, that would equally benefit from frustrating the system. Hence, refugees are not portrayed as the opposite party of the other parties, like European organizations, involved in this deal.

This difference in portrayal illustrates how moldable identity is.<sup>207</sup> Moreover, the idea of *othering* is interesting in this regard. This concept refers to the dichotomized thinking in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them’. Newspapers have the power to enlarge such (imagined) differences and sometimes also an interest to do so as events have to be newsworthy for the readership. In doing so there is a risk that negative characteristics are attached to ‘them’ to emphasize the dichotomy, which is the case when discussing refugees as violent. In particular popular and sensationalist newspapers do this, which in this case refers to *Telegraaf* and to an extent *Algemeen Dagblad*. Consequentially such categories can be adopted by the readership.

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<sup>207</sup> Simon Goodman, Ala Sirriyeh and Simon McMahon, ‘The evolving (re)categorisations of refugees throughout the “refugee/migrant crisis”’, *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 27 (2017) 105-114, 105.

### Victimized refugees

The category of victimized refugees occurs in all five newspapers. The victimized refugees are portrayed as those that lack the aspect of personal choice and have fallen victim to the measures that are being taken that are agreed upon in the EU-Turkey Agreement. When victimizing refugees they are portrayed as a vulnerable or disadvantaged group. This can also be understood as *othering*, but is less concerned with ascribing negative characteristics to others and more with triggering feelings of compassion with the readership.

One effect that this can have is that the category of the victimized refugees can be used to justify special treatment for the concerned victims. In the Netherlands critical sounds resonated in society concerning the intake and the ‘special’ treatment of refugees: several institutions are concerned with providing refugees with housing, school, work, and other necessities. Some Dutch citizens felt like they did not get that same support even though they did not have a home or a job resulting in them feeling subordinated and demanding similar support. In emphasizing the victimhood of refugees journalists can possibly transform such ideas and subsequently the social reality.

Another effect that the use of this category can have concerns NGO-involvement and critiquing policy. The regrettable consequences of the EU-Turkey Agreement for refugees are considered to be newsworthy by all five newspapers. In all these newspapers journalists speak out against (some of) the measures that are agreed upon by the EU and Turkey. Therefore this theme of victimized refugees can be understood as supporting critique on this policy. This critique is aimed at diverse parties, for example the EU, Turkey, the Netherlands, or specific politicians. Telegraaf has a case-specific focus, resulting in critiquing specific national authorities and situations such as the ones in Chios and Idomeni. Algemeen Dagblad is more concerned with critiquing international as well as Dutch national authorities: those behind the EU-Turkey Agreement and specific Dutch politicians in The Hague. Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw are the only newspapers that focus their critique merely on the EU and Turkey. Hence, Telegraaf and Algemeen Dagblad are more concerned with regional cases than the other newspapers that rather focus on the broader picture. This can be linked to the demands of particular audiences, as the readership of Telegraaf and Algemeen Dagblad is known for its interest in news that is characterized as popular and sensationalist. In focussing on specific cases and regional matters the content of the articles becomes more tangible to the readership.



Furthermore, in most cases the category of victimized refugees is linked to NGOs. Telegraaf, Algemeen Dagblad, Volkskrant and Trouw all emphasize the need and support for NGO-involvement to help those that have fallen victim to this policy. Trouw is the only newspaper that does not refer to specific NGOs in the discussion of NGO-involvement. Also, Trouw is the only newspaper that explicitly expresses its (positive) opinion concerning the withdrawal of NGOs. Furthermore, it stands out that NRC Handelsblad refrains from mentioning NGOs in discussing the consequences of the EU-Turkey Agreement and merely focusses on governmental institutions that are involved herein, such as asylum lawyers, the European Court, and official refugee conventions. Governmental institutions that are concerned with the (human) rights of refugees are also mentioned in all other newspapers but, as explained above, in combination with NGOs. Combining the governmental and the non-governmental concerns for the results of the EU-Turkey Agreement emphasizes the weightiness of the situation, which may trigger compassion with the readership even more but can also create an uneasiness as this policy was re-enacted by authorities that the readership should be able to trust.

### Refugees as prisoners

A striking finding concerns the category of refugees as prisoners. This theme portrays refugees as people that are unjustly imprisoned against their wishes and are in need of (legal) help and protection. This category only occurs in Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw. What relates these specific newspapers to each other is that these are the three newspapers in this research that are characterized as quality newspapers (rather than popular newspapers). Moreover, the category of refugees as prisoners does not occur in similar scholarly research (of Parker, Pickering, O'Doherty and Lecouteur) that has focussed on other countries and time periods. Therefore, it can be said that this category is exclusively related to the time period that concerns the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement and the measures being taken to accomplish this. The presence of this category can be explained by the fact that it is used to support the condemnation of the theme of the unwanted refugee, a theme which in these newspapers is ascribed to the ideas and politicians behind the EU-Turkey Agreement. By portraying refugees as prisoners these newspapers engage in a discourse that critiques these ideas, but also the consequential measures of the deal that are considered to be unjust, inhumane and illegal.

### Rightful refugees

Rightful refugees is also a category that is exclusively related to the time period wherein the EU-Turkey Agreement is implemented. This category portrays refugees as people that have (legal) rights, and are in need of help and protection. Rightful refugees is a very common category in this research, which can be explained by the fact that the EU-Turkey Agreement and the measures that followed from its implementation evoked much criticism among citizens and NGOs that revolved around the notion of human rights.

One of the results of the analysis is the finding that Telegraaf does not use this category when engaging in the refugees as human beings theme. It can be said that this is related to stigmatizing practises in this newspaper as discussed above wherein a dichotomy is created between reasonable Europeans and institutions, and uncontrollable, violent refugees. To construct a coherent discourse on refugees where the newspaper acts within, it cannot portray refugees as both uncontrollable and violent, as well as rightful, as this would cause an ideological dilemma.

### **5.6.2. Unwanted invaders**

#### Keeping them out vs. removing them

In his research Parker notes a difference in the construction of the ‘unwanted invaders’ theme, namely by describing a concern for ‘keeping them out’ and ‘removing them’.<sup>208</sup> Note here the presence of *othering* and the negative portrayal of the other that is unwanted and should be removed. He concludes that in Australia the theme is described as a concern for ‘keeping them out’ and in the UK for ‘removing them’.<sup>209</sup> Whereas this distinction concerns a difference between two countries, it is a distinction that is also present between the different Dutch newspapers of this research. This, however, is not a relevant distinction to make with regard to this specific research because the manner wherein the editors engage in this theme says more about the discourses that the newspapers themselves act within. Therefore it is more relevant to note that Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw are the only newspapers that engage in the ‘unwanted invaders’ theme in order to condemn the understanding of refugees as unwanted invaders, be it related to the concern for ‘keeping them out’ or for ‘removing them’. Again, what relates these newspapers to each other is that these are the three newspapers in this research that are characterized as quality newspapers.

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<sup>208</sup> Parker, ‘Unwanted invaders’, 10.

<sup>209</sup> Parker, ‘Unwanted invaders’, 10.

### 5.6.3. Dehumanized refugees

#### Water-metaphors

Trouw is the only newspaper that refrains from the use of water-metaphors. Even though this research is focussed on two opinion articles of each newspaper, this finding is partly confirmed by the findings of previous research that I have conducted. This research demonstrated that Trouw does not refrain from the use of water-metaphors, but that it does contain the lowest frequency of water-metaphors in comparison to the other newspapers.<sup>210</sup> In the following the implications of the use of water-metaphors will be discussed.

In research on Australian and UK media the presence of water-metaphors was also identified in constructing particular accounts of refugees. Whereas Pickering identified the use of water-metaphors in constructing an account of refugees as problems, El Refaie argued that these metaphors were rather used as a warning by constructing an account of the great number of people trying to enter the country.<sup>211</sup> Luu has created a broader understanding of the use of water-metaphors. She also found that water-metaphors are used frequently in conjunction with the overwhelming quantities of refugees. On the one hand, she states, the waves and streams of refugees may generate compassion and support. On the other hand, however, these water-associated metaphors are dehumanizing concepts that depict a situation that is out of control, which can evoke fearfulness.<sup>212</sup> Hence, the use of water-metaphors can be used to support the ‘refugees as human beings’ theme as well as the ‘unwanted invaders’ theme.

The use of water-metaphors in the Netherlands, however, is debated. On the one hand, Annieke Kranenberg, like Luu, argues that one should be careful with the use of ‘water language’ as this is never value free. Moreover, she states, it can make readers feel uncomfortable. On the other hand, Herman Vuijsje argues that it is more convincing to affirm that the amount of refugees is a problem that needs to be dealt with. He states that the history of the Netherlands with water should be guiding in dealing with this problem. He explains that the Dutch language and the management practice is already saturated with water-metaphors. He argues that this can evoke different reactions: it is about withholding something that we rather do not want, therefore it is redundant and threatening. However, Vuijsje states, it can also be understood more positively: withholding water is not done alone.

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<sup>210</sup> Stoker, *The European refugee crisis*, 32.

<sup>211</sup> Elisabeth El Refaie, ‘Metaphors we discriminate by: Naturalized themes in Austrian newspaper articles about asylum seekers’, *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5 (2001) 352-371, 353.

<sup>212</sup> <https://daily.jstor.org/language-of-migrants-refugees-expats/>, Chi Luu, ‘Migrants, Refugees, and Expats: How Humanity Comes in Waves’, consulted on 19-03-2017.

Therefore, he argues, the focus should be on informing European authorities on our history with water and using water-metaphors in describing and handling the crisis.<sup>213</sup> This argument of Vuijsje, however, does not sufficiently counter that of Kranenberg as he diverts his plea from the topic in question: it is more concerned with the use of water-metaphors in policy related matters and not with ways wherein it can affect the readership of newspapers. Therefore the concerns of Luu and Kranenberg with regard to the use of water-metaphors in news coverage still stand.

#### Refugees as objects (of exchange)

The category of refugees as objects (of exchange) is used in newspapers as a building block to support the theme of dehumanized refugees, as well as the theme of refugees as human beings in some cases by speaking out against it. This category occurs in all five newspapers. This theme, in all of these newspapers, is closely linked to the explanation that is offered concerning the practical implications of the EU-Turkey Agreement. The fact that every newspaper discusses these practical implications in a dehumanizing manner, can be said to be related to the formality of the matter as it concerns a political deal wherein mechanistic terminology is used to describe the process, the parties involved, measures and anticipated outcomes.<sup>214</sup> Whereas dehumanization is often linked to conflict situations and the portrayal of enemies, Haslam distinguishes between animalistic and mechanistic forms of dehumanization, arguing that dehumanization does not merely occur in situations of conflict (other than, for example, Juergensmeyer).<sup>215</sup> It should be noted, however, that dehumanizing practices can cause readers to ascribe negative traits to the subjects in question (here: refugees) more easily. The interpretation of the reader and the discourses he or she relates to are determinative in this case.

#### **5.6.4. Descriptors**

In chapter 3 I put forward multiple complexities surrounding the definitions of ‘refugees’, ‘asylum seekers’ and ‘migrants’. The handling of these concepts differs per newspaper. This

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<sup>213</sup> Herman Vuijsje, ‘Je kunt niet dweilen met de kraan open’, in *Volkskrant* (1 September 2015) 21.

<sup>214</sup> Nick Haslam and Stephen Loughnan, ‘Animals and Androids: Implicit Associations between Social Categories and Nonhumans’, *Psychological Science* 18 (2007) 116-121, 116.

<sup>215</sup>

- Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition; Berkeley 2003) 174-175.

- Haslam and Loughnan, ‘Animals and Androids’, 120.

can be related to the style guide that is adopted, but also to inaccuracy. In the following multiple concepts will be discussed that stood out, either in their use or limited occurrence.

### Illegaal/illegalen

The concept ‘illegalen’ (illegals) is merely used in Algemeen Dagblad. When used in Algemeen Dagblad ‘illegalen’ refers to economic migrants that, after the registration procedure, have been marked as illegal refugees that are being sent home. This concept has received great amounts of critique. With regard to this issue journalist Felix Salmon states:

*The use of the term ‘illegal’ to refer to a person is a usage which is confined to exactly one group of people: Migrants. As a result, ‘illegal,’ when used as a noun, always means immigrants—people whose only crime is the victimless pursuit of liberty and prosperity.*<sup>216</sup>

Moreover, describing migrants or refugees as illegals can be understood as dehumanizing and offensive. Therefore it can support the theme of the unwanted refugees. In Algemeen Dagblad this concept is used in the title of the article which may set the tone for the interpretation of the readers for the rest of the article.

### ‘Migranten’

The concept ‘migrants’ is merely used in Telegraaf and AD. This concept refers to a group that is defined by its movement. Therefore, it can be said that this group does not per se desire to settle in a particular location and that there are feasible alternative destinations.<sup>217</sup> The use of the concept ‘migrants’ in reporting on the refugee crisis, however, can be problematic when this concept is used interchangeably with the concept ‘refugee’. This is the case in Telegraaf. As I have explained in chapter 3, the UNHCR argues that by using these concepts interchangeably attention is taken away from specific legal protections that refugees are owed under international law.

In Algemeen Dagblad the concept ‘migrant’ is distinguished from ‘refugee’ based on the legal difference between the two: a migrant is on the move by choice, whereas a refugee

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<sup>216</sup> <http://fusion.net/story/28845/the-illegal-index/>, Felix Salmon, ‘The ‘illegal’ index: Which news organizations still use the term ‘illegal immigrant’?’, consulted on 11-03-2017.

<sup>217</sup> O’Doherty and Lecouteur, “‘Asylum seekers’, “boat people” and “illegal immigrants””, 7.

cannot return home safely.<sup>218</sup> As I have demonstrated in chapter 3, however, making a clear distinction between (voluntary) economic migrants and (genuine) refugees is also problematic, as research by ODI has pointed out that both have similar motivations for leaving, which is to secure livelihood. Hence, the understanding of a migrant as being on the move by choice, does not do justice to all situations and should therefore be understood as an inaccurate umbrella term. The complexities surrounding the concept ‘migrant’ can have contributed to the fact that Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw refrain from using it.

### ‘Bootvluchtelingen’

The concept ‘bootvluchtelingen’ (boat refugees) is merely used in NRC Handelsblad. This concept, however, is used in two different contexts: one wherein the dehumanized refugees theme is supported, the other wherein the refugees as human beings theme is supported. This difference is also present in research conducted by O’Doherty and Lecouteur. On the one hand, they found that boat refugees are portrayed as problematic and should be turned around and sent home.<sup>219</sup> On the other hand, they found that boat refugees are portrayed as people arriving in boats without visas and are more desperate. Therefore, these people can be understood as in need of assistance. Hence, the construction of ‘boat refugees’ is fairly flexible and context-dependent, which is a finding that is confirmed in NRC Handelsblad.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

This chapter has provided insight into the different themes and categories that newspapers engage in when reporting on the refugee crisis in the context of the EU-Turkey Agreement. This research demonstrates the existence of three overarching themes that are prevailing in the data: the refugee as human being, the dehumanized refugee and the unwanted invader. I have distinguished several categories that support these themes, such as refugees as victims, as having rights, as unjust prisoners, and being desperate and violent beings.

When taking into account the differences in the background of the diverse newspapers, it stands out that the popular newspapers – Telegraaf and Algemeen Dagblad – have several particularities that distinguish them from the quality newspapers, for example, the occurrence of the category of refugees as criminals and non-criminals. The category of desperate and violent refugees merely occurs in Telegraaf, the other newspapers refrain from mentioning

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<sup>218</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/latest/2016/3/56e95c676/refugees-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html>, UNHCR, ‘‘Refugees’ and ‘Migrants’ – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)’, consulted on 15-06-2017.

<sup>219</sup> O’Doherty and Lecouteur, ‘‘Asylum seekers’’, ‘‘boat people’’ and ‘‘illegal immigrants’’’, 7.

violence perpetrated by refugees, which can be linked to the newspaper's aim of reporting sensational news. NRC Handelsblad does refer to incorrect behaviour of refugees, but NRC Handelsblad describes this as reasonable, which support the theme of refugees as human beings.

The influence of the former religious affiliation of the newspapers is not clear. Trouw and Volkskrant were the only conventional newspapers during the pillarization period. The only aspect in this analysis that distinguishes these newspapers from the other newspapers, is that they refrain from discussing incorrect behaviour of refugees. There is, however, no clear indication that this aspect is related to their conventional background.

Victimized and rightful refugees are categories that stand out in the discussion on refugees and the EU-Turkey Agreement. Telegraaf is the only newspaper that does not engage in the category of the rightful refugees. Refugees as unjust prisoners is a category that is only used in the quality newspapers. Moreover, in the quality newspapers these categories are explicitly used to argue against the understanding of refugees as unwanted invaders.

The use of water-metaphors stood out in all newspapers, except for Trouw. I have demonstrated that the use of water-metaphors is debated, but that the arguments that discourage the use of these metaphors make a stronger case. Furthermore, I have argued that the portrayal of refugees as objects of exchange can evoke readers to ascribe negative traits to refugees, whereas explicitly speaking out against this category actually can support the understanding of refugees as human beings.

With regard to different identity descriptors of refugees it stood out that the three quality newspapers refrain from the use of 'migrants' in reporting on refugees. I have suggested that this can be related to concerns about the complexities surrounding this concept (as can be read in chapter 3). Furthermore, I have demonstrated the risk of the use of the concepts 'illegals' (in Algemeen Dagblad) and 'boat refugees' (NRC Handelsblad) as these can be linked to the theme of dehumanized refugees.

Another striking finding in the articles is the absence of religion and in particular Islam. Even though Islam is a significant topic within the discourse on refugees in the Netherlands (see section 3.3. 'Responses in the Netherlands'), it does not appear in the opinion articles on the EU-Turkey Agreement. The binary-opposition between 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims' is absent, but a similar binary-opposition rooted in an Orientalist can be found in the articles, namely that of 'good refugees' and 'bad refugees', as

distinguished by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh.<sup>220</sup> Good refugees, here, can be understood as the refugees that have rights and are victimized or unjustly imprisoned. Bad refugees, here, are those that are described as violent, which can support the claim that they should be removed rather than protected.

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<sup>220</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 'The Faith-Gender-Asylum Nexus', 210.



## 6. Conclusion

In this research I have set out to perform a critical discourse analysis on the portrayal of refugees in Dutch newspapers during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. I have argued that there can be distinguished three overarching themes that are recurring in the data: the ‘refugees as human beings’, the ‘dehumanized refugees’ and the ‘unwanted invaders’.

In order to do research on newspaper discourse, I had to make several theoretical digressions in chapter 2 that explained the assumptions and key concepts in this research. This research is rooted in Critical Theory, Constructivism and Postcolonial Theory and assumes the subjectivity of news reporting and the power of newspaper discourse wherein language is used as a tool to construct realities. I have argued that there is an intimate relationship between the notions of language, discourse, power and identity, based on Foucault’s understanding of discourse, and that this is decidedly the case within the field of journalism and print media.

In chapter 3 I have discussed the socio-political background of this research. I have outlined the background of the European refugee crisis and problematized the conceptualization of both the crisis and those that suffer most directly from the crisis. By problematizing the conceptualization of ‘refugees’, ‘migrants’ and ‘asylum seekers’ I have demonstrated the complexities that are involved in language use by media outlets and specifically in the portrayal of refugees. Furthermore, the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin III Regulation are critically discussed by using both governmental and scholarly sources. These agreements have been found insufficient during the refugee crisis, which has resulted in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement. I have illustrated that this deal is fairly criticized by human rights organizations. Also, responses in the Netherlands on the refugee crisis have been discussed in order to outline the existing discourse on refugees in Dutch society and the significant place of religion (in particular Islam) therein. The discussion of the diverse responses on the refugee crisis and the Agreement forms the background that the press responds to in reporting on refugees.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the methodology of this research. I have argued that a Critical Discourse Analysis is the best approach for this research, because it takes into account the notions of power and discourse. Whereas similar research to mine has used a discursive psychology method, I have argued for using Fairclough’s three-dimensional method, as this

method includes the role of journalists and the background of newspapers, their relatedness to the reporting on refugees and the consequences that this has for the public sphere. Furthermore, the data of this research was described, namely ten newspaper articles from five different newspapers. Also, I have provided a contextual background of the different newspapers in the Netherlands that has contributed to their current form and style.

The analysis of the newspaper articles is described in chapter 5. I have argued that there can be distinguished three overarching themes that are recurring in the data: the ‘refugees as human beings’, the ‘dehumanized refugees’ and the ‘unwanted invaders’. Also, I have distinguished multiple categories that support these themes, such as the ‘refugee as prisoner’, the ‘desperate refugee’, the ‘rightful refugee’ and the ‘violent refugee’. Furthermore, I have critically examined the findings by relating them to discursive and social practices and concluded that there is a relation between the characterization of the different Dutch newspapers and particular portrayals of refugees. Important, here, is the presence of the ‘good refugee, bad refugee’ narrative when distinguishing the different themes and categories. Victimized and rightful refugees (good refugees) are categories that stand out in the discussion on refugees and the EU-Turkey Agreement. Refugees as unjust prisoners (good refugees) is a category that is only used in the quality newspapers, which is explicitly engaged in to speak out against the Agreement. Furthermore, Telegraaf is the only newspaper that puts forward a causal link between the desperation of refugees and violent acts (bad refugees). The other newspapers refrain from mentioning violence perpetrated by refugees, which can be linked to the newspaper’s aim of reporting sensational news.

This research supports existing theories on the subjective construction of news in newspapers. It fills a gap of knowledge concerning the portrayal of refugees in Dutch newspapers. Moreover, it adds information to existing theories by providing information on several categories that occur in (Dutch) newspapers that support the humanization of refugees. Also, existing research on the portrayal of refugees in newspapers mainly used a discursive psychology approach, whereas I have been able to provide a clear link between the socio-political background of the EU-Turkey Agreement, the characterization of the different newspapers, and the diverse and flexible characterizations of refugees in these newspapers. However, even though Fairclough’s method is concerned with the influence of language in the public sphere it is not a sufficient method in uncovering the exact effect of particular language uses in news frames on the audience’s ideas and beliefs. Therefore it would be relevant for future research to perform a mixed-method research that combines Critical Discourse Analysis with conducting interviews. The question that this research should answer

is ‘What is the effect of diverse portrayals of refugees in Dutch newspapers during the implementation of the EU-Turkey Agreement on the target audience’s thoughts on refugees?’. In order to complement the findings of this thesis, this research should focus on the same articles. Respondents (readers who belong to the target audiences of the different newspapers) should read the articles, after which interviews should be conducted that focus on thought-listing responses. By analysing the thoughts of the respondents their experience of the presence of diverse portrayals of refugees can be determined. Additionally, a semi-structured interview should be conducted to determine in what ways this influences the respondents’ mind-sets. Subsequently, the findings of this thesis and of future research should be combined in order to determine the effect of the distinguished portrayals of refugees as described in this thesis.

The analysis of this research has also provided insight into the use of different descriptors to describe those who suffer most directly from the crisis. It stood out that the three quality newspapers, Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw, do not use the term ‘migrants’. The use of this concept in Telegraaf and Algemeen Dagblad should be discouraged, because of the complexities that surround this concept. Also, dehumanizing language, such as ‘illegals’ and the use of water-metaphors should be discouraged as these are likely to evoke feelings of fear, uncomfortableness and uncontrollability with the readership, which in turn can reinforce binary distinctions in society by relating negative connotations to ‘them’ more easily.

More awareness should be raised to the implications of language use in Dutch newspapers on public discourse on refugees. In constructing particular accounts of refugees these newspapers have the position to influence opinions, beliefs and action orientations in the Netherlands. Therefore they should more carefully consider the impact that they wish to make in society, taking into account the complexities of particular – and sometimes taken-for-granted – terminology. Considering the range of responses on refugees in the Netherlands and the power of (print) media discourse, Dutch newspapers can have an important role in countering discrimination and reinforcing solidarity within society.

## 7. Appendix

### 7.1. Bibliography

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## 7.2 Newspaper articles

### 7.2.1. Telegraaf

#### 7.2.1.1. 'Advertenties' (3 April 2016), author: Caspar van Tongeren

SECTION: Buitenland; Blz. 011

LENGTH: 332 woorden

Morgen wordt de dag van de waarheid voor de EU, Turkije en vooral voor de vluchtelingen. Dan wordt het akkoord van kracht dat de EU en Turkije een paar weken terug sloten en worden de eerste vluchtelingen vanuit Griekenland weer teruggestuurd naar Turkije.

Hoopt men. Want de problemen waar men voor staat nemen met de dag toe. Zo groeit onder de vluchtelingen de wanhoop over hun gedwongen terugkeer wat zich uit in steeds meer gevechten.

Eergisteren braken 600 migranten door het scheermesjesprikkel draad rond hun kamp op het eiland Chios en ging op weg naar de nabije haven om zich in te schepen richting het Griekse vasteland. Onduidelijk is hoe men die woedende menigte in bedwang wil houden, laat staan hoe ze op een schip naar Turkije te krijgen.

Tweede probleem is dat nog lang niet alles klaar is wat betreft de registratie van de migrant. Die heeft 12 dagen om beroep aan te tekenen tegen een beslissing tot uitzetting, maar met 51.000 vluchtelingen in Griekenland is dat systeem nu al zwaar overbelast.

Derde probleem zijn de Turken. Ankara schijnt volgens de UNHCR niet alleen Syriërs weer terug te sturen naar hun land, maar ook Afghanen, Irakezen en Iraniërs. Zonder een deugdelijk track-and-trace systeem raken de teruggestuurde migranten ergens in Turkije 'de weg kwijt', zo luidt de niet ongegronde vrees. En het vierde probleem zijn de mensensmokkelaars. De eerste 'advertenties' voor een enkeltje Turkije-Italië zijn al op Facebook zijn verschenen.

„Overtocht begint zaterdag, vanaf Mersin richting Italië met een 110 meter lang vrachtschip voorzien van water, voedsel, reddingsvesten en medicijnen”, zo luidde de wervende tekst op Facebook.

Kosten per persoon zo'n 4000 dollar, vier keer zoveel als de overtocht tussen Turkije en Griekenland.

Een ding lijkt zeker: Het akkoord tussen de EU en Turkije over de vluchtelingen heeft het businessmodel van de mensensmokkelaars eerder goed dan slecht gedaan.

Caspar van Tongeren

Vluchtroute naar Italië

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: Telegraaf

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); International Relations (69%)

LOAD-DATE: 3 April 2016

**7.2.1.2. ‘Traangas tegen vluchtelingen: kritiek op grenspolitie Macedonië’ (11 April 2016), author: editors abroad BYLINE: Van onze redactie buitenland**

SECTION: Buitenland; Blz. 009

LENGTH: 285 woorden

Kritiek op grenspolitie Macedonië

Van onze redactie buitenland -

ATHENE - De vluchtelingenproblematiek blijft ondanks een akkoord tussen Turkije en de Europese Unie voor problemen zorgen. Honderden vluchtelingen bestormden zondagochtend in Griekenland bij Idomeni de grensovergang met Macedonië. Het kwam tot hevige gevechten met de Macedonische politie. De wanhopige mensenmassa rende over een veld naar het hek op Macedonische bodem en wierp stenen. De veiligheidstroepen aan de grens gebruikten onder andere traangas en rubber kogels om de menigte te weren. Ook werden de hen toegeworpen stenen teruggegooid.

Volgens Artsen zonder Grenzen, die bij de grens teams aan het werk heeft, vielen tientallen gewonden door het gebruik van traangas en rubber kogels. De meesten hadden last van ademhalingsproblemen. De organisatie verspreidde via Twitter foto's van gewonden die werden behandeld.

Bij de grenspost verblijven al wekenlang naar schatting 11.000 vluchtelingen en migranten. Maar de Macedonische autoriteiten houden de afscheiding strikt gesloten en laten niemand toe. De leefomstandigheden voor de verzamelde migranten in Idomeni zijn bijzonder slecht.

Griekenland had gisteren veel kritiek op het buurland. „Het gebruik van traangas, rubberen kogels en geluidsgranaten tegen een kwetsbare groep is een gevaarlijke en betreurenswaardige actie”, meende de zagsman van de Griekse regering George Kyritsis. Skopje zegt echter dat ook aan de Griekse kant traangas werd ingezet.

Idomeni is samen met de Griekse eilanden de schandvlek voor de Europese migrantenproblematiek. De voorzieningen zijn er doorgaans allerbelabberds voor de stroom mensen.

Spanning loopt op in Idomeni

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: Telegraaf

SUBJECT: War + Conflict (94%); European Union Institutions (67%)

LOAD-DATE: 11 April 2016

## 7.2.2. Algemeen Dagblad

### 7.2.2.1. 'Deal met Turkije snijdt illegalen snel de pas af' (9 March 2016), author: Frans Boogaard, Marc Guillet en Bob van Huet

BYLINE: FRANS BOOGAARD, MARC GUILLET EN BOB VAN HUET

SECTION: Nieuws; Blz. 6, 7

LENGTH: 1102 woorden

VLUCHTELINGEN | JURISTEN EN ASIELDESKUNDIGEN DENKEN DAT TERUGSTUREN IN STRIJD IS METHET EUROPEES RECHT

Na slepende onderhandelingen zijn Turkije en de EU het eindelijk eens over de aanpak van demigratiestromen. Maar het principeakkoord kent veel haken en ogen. Zeven vragen over de effecten van de moeizame deal met de Turken.

1.

Wat gebeurt er met de mensen die nu al in Griekenland zijn?

Deze groep (tegen het eind van deze maand zijn dat er waarschijnlijk 120.000) valt buiten de deal. Zij moeten zich in Griekenland registreren. Griekenland krijgt extra geld voor deze opvang. Na een schifting worden de economische migranten teruggestuurd naar huis, vluchtelingen worden volgens een met de Verenigde Naties afgesproken verdeelsleutel verspreid over de EU, inclusief de Oost-Europese lidstaten die daaraan tot nu toe geen medewerking wilden geven. Turkije is het land dat sinds enkele jaren de meeste vluchtelingen uit de wereld opvangt: 2,3 miljoen uit Syrië en 400.000 uit Irak. Ankara begon 5 jaar geleden met de bouw van opvangkampen. Nu zijn dat er 25, verdeeld over tien provincies.

2.

Is het probleem van de vluchtelingen hiermee opgelost?

Nee, want er zijn vele wegen die naar Europa leiden. Bovendien is dit nog geen uitgewerkt akkoord, dus valt er nog veel te onderhandelen voor 17 of 18 maart wanneer de deal moet zijn afgerond. De drukke 'Balkanroute' is nu feitelijk gesloten voor grote groepen migranten en vluchtelingen. Dat geeft Europa voor het eerst zicht op een uitweg uit zijn asielcrisis. De vluchteling die toch nog probeert zijn bestemming te bereiken, wordt niet alleen teruggestuurd, maar krijgt ook een kruisje achter zijn naam.

Oorlogsschepen van de NAVO gaan intensiever patrouilleren op de Egeïsche Zee. De slagkracht van Frontex - dat de buitengrenzen bewaakt - wordt versterkt met de Europese Grens- en Kustwacht. Op de Middellandse Zee zetten EU-lidstaten extra schepen in tegen smokkelaars.

3.

Hoe zullen de smokkelaars hierop reageren?

Ze zullen nieuwe routes proberen, want mensensmokkel is een miljardenindustrie. Een belangrijk alternatief is de route over de Griekse bergen naar Albanië. Na de val van het regime daar vluchtten, in de jaren '90 al, 250.000 mensen naar Griekenland en Italië. Andersom zullen de oude smokkelroutes vast en zeker weer worden gebruikt. De Grieks-Bulgaarse grens is ook kwetsbaar, al is die deels afgesloten met hekken. Vorig jaar passeerden hier 30.000 mensen. Ingewikkeld wordt de controle op smokkelroutes vanuit Turkije over de



Zwarte Zee naar Roemenië of Rusland. Estland, Letland en Litouwen zijn aan hun oostelijke grenzen begonnen met het plaatsen van hekwerken en het uitvoeren van identiteitscontroles. De Oostzeestaten vrezen de toestroom van vluchtelingen via Rusland en Wit-Rusland, nu de routes over de Balkan naar de EU steeds meer op slot gaan. Vorig jaar trokken al 6000 asielzoekers door Rusland naar Finland en Noorwegen.

4.

Wat zeggen de organisaties voor mensenrechten?

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch en ook UNHCR, de vluchtelingenorganisatie van de VN zijn niet blij en verwijten de EU dat het Turkije gebruikt als onderaannemer. Als het gaat om de mensenrechten en persvrijheid heeft Turkije een beroerde reputatie. Volgens Amnesty heeft Turkije al Syriërs teruggestuurd naar het thuisland en zou nu aan Irakezen en Afghanen het recht worden ontnomen in Europa asiel te zoeken. Volgens de Turkse autoriteiten gaat het om incidenten en is er geen sprake van beleid.

Bij de vluchtelingen zelf is er weinig reden tot juichen na deze principe-deal tussen de EU en Turkije. „Deze mensen willen helemaal niet naar Turkije, ze willen naar Europa, naar Oostenrijk, België, Frankrijk," zegt Eduard Nazarski. De directeur van Amnesty International Nederland was gisteren in het kamp in het grensgebied tussen Griekenland en Macedonië. „De grenzen zijn daar dicht, maar ondanks de erbarmelijke omstandigheden is niemand van plan daar weg te gaan. Hoe kunnen ze nu zeggen dat Turkije een veilig land is. Vluchtelingen zijn daar al eerder slecht behandeld."

5.

Hoe denken juristen over deze deal met Turkije?

Grootste vraag wordt hoe het één-op-één-principe (voor elke uit Griekenland terugkerende asielzoeker neemt Europa er één over van Turkije) zich verhoudt tot het individuele karakter van het asielrecht, en of alles wat Brussel en Ankara nu willen wel mag. Juristen en asielskundigen denken dat het terugsturen van vluchtelingen strijdig is met het Internationale Vluchtelingenverdrag van 1951 en het Europees recht.

Wel is het zo dat internationale hulporganisaties de Turkse autoriteiten prijzen voor de professionele wijze waarop het de vluchtelingen opvangt. Zo'n 90 procent van de asielzoekers woont in de grote steden.

6.

Gaat het Europees Parlement hiermee akkoord?

Het Parlement bespreekt de resultaten van de top vandaag met Commissievoorzitter Juncker en 'onze' minister Bert Koenders (namens de lidstaten). Drie onderdelen zullen vooral aandacht krijgen: de vraag of de terugstuurregeling spoort met het asielrecht en de rechten van vluchtelingen wel voldoende gewaarborgd zijn, en de koppeling van het asielvraagstuk aan het Turkse EU-lidmaatschap. Parlementsvoorzitter Schulz wil af van die koppeling. Het Parlement is beducht dat Europa Turkse schendingen van mensenrechten en democratische vrijheden door de vingers ziet.

7.

Wat vindt de Haagse politiek van de afspraken?

Grootste zorg over de vluchtelingendeal in de Tweede Kamer: de toezeggingen om te gaan praten met Turkije over toetreding. Vooral in de oppositie heerst scepsis. „Dat we Turkije nu paaien met beloftes over toetredingsgesprekken die een brug te ver lijken, daar ben ik het meest cynisch over," aldus D66-leider Alexander Pechtold. Bij het CDA hebben ze hetzelfde chagrijn. „Rutte heeft zich laten chanteren," stelt Sybrand Buma zelfs. „Met deze deal had hij nooit thuis mogen komen. De Turken spelen een machtsspel: ze willen ons laten voelen dat ze de baas zijn. Europa moet een vuist maken." Decoalitiepartijen sussen op dat punt. „Nou, dan gaan we een kopje thee met de Turken drinken over toetreding. Meer dan een kopje thee zal het nooit worden," zegt VVD'er Malik Azmani. Diederik Samsom heeft geen enkele zorg dat Turkijes toetreding tot de EU dichterbij is gekomen. „Op het gebied van mensenrechten en persvrijheid is dat juist ver weg." VVD-fractievoorzitter Halbe Zijlstra zit op dezelfde lijn: „Toetreding is juist door die problemen verder weg dan ooit."

'Rutte had met deze deal nooit thuis mogen komen'

Alternatief is de route over de bergen naar Albanië

GRAPHIC: Een van de vele vluchtelingenkampen aan de Grieks-Macedonische grens bij het dorp Idomeni.

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: ADNL

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); International Relations (72%)

LOAD-DATE: 9 March 2016

### **7.2.2.2. ‘Brussel moet druk houden op Turkije’ (4 April 2016), author: Natasja de Groot**

BYLINE: NATASJA DE GROOT

SECTION: Nieuws; Blz. 2

LENGTH: 240 woorden

opinie

De ontredde, paniek en chaos zullen groot zijn op het Griekse eiland Lesbos. Vandaag wordt een begin gemaakt met het uitzetten van de eerste vluchtelingen naar Turkije. Voor de duidelijkheid: dit zijn geen criminelen. Het zijn mensen die oorlog of armoede zijn ontvlucht en de oversteek hebben gewaagd in de hoop een veilig heenkomen te vinden. Hoe wrang het ook lijkt, de uitzetting is onderdeel van de deal die Brussel heeft gesloten met Ankara om meer grip te krijgen op de vluchtelingenstroom. Het is evident dat asielprocedures moeten worden nageleefd en Europese buitengrenzen moeten worden beschermd tegen smokkelaars. Net zo evident is dat deze vluchtelingen humanitair moeten worden behandeld. Europa heeft Turkije beloofd in ruil voor iedere teruggestuurde Syriër via een luchtbrug een andere Syriër op te nemen uit Turkije. De afspraak is dat Turkije zorgt voor adequate opvang. Nu heeft Ankara een bedenkelijke reputatie als het gaat om naleving van mensenrechten. Volgens een recent rapport van Amnesty zou het onder dwang Syriërs uitzetten naar het noorden van Syrië. Het is van groot belang dat Brussel druk zet op Turkije om afspraken na te komen en ook zelf doet wat het belooft. Europa kan geen eiland laten schoonvegen en vervolgens achteroverleunen. We hebben de morele plicht om een veilige haven te zijn voor mensen in nood.

Europa kan na schoon-vegen eiland niet achteroverleunen

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: ADNL

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%)

LOAD-DATE: 4 April 2016

### **7.2.3. Volkskrant**

#### **7.2.3.1. ‘Geen deal met Turkije’ (18 March 2016), author: Arnout Brouwers and Henk Müller**

SECTION: Opinie en Debat; Blz. 21

LENGTH: 339 woorden

New York Times: Europa, zwicht niet

De Europese leiders zijn bijeen om een deal met Turkije te bekrachtigen. Ze moeten de juridische en morele vragen daarvan goed overdenken. Volgens de deal neemt Turkije mensen die vandaar naar Griekenland reisden zonder de juiste papieren terug. In ruil neemt Europa Syrische vluchtelingen met de juiste papieren uit Turkije op. De EU zal visavrij reizen naar Europa voor Turken verruimen, het proces om lid te worden van de EU versnellen en Turkije 6 miljard euro geven.

Turkije verdient hulp, want die is met drie miljoen vluchtelingen hard nodig. Maar het geld is niet alleen voor vluchtelingen bedoeld, maar om de deal aantrekkelijker maken, zodat Turkije helpt de stroom vluchtelingen in te dammen.

De Hoge Commissaris van de VN, Human Rights Watch en Amnesty vragen zich af of de overeenkomst rechtmatig is krachtens de Conventie van Genève uit 1951, die bepaalt wat een veilig toevluchtsoord is, en krachtens het Europees Verdrag voor de Rechten van de Mens dat massale uitzettingen verbiedt.

Behalve juridische vragen roept de deal ook serieuze morele vragen op. Het is een steunbetuiging aan president Erdogan, die zich heeft afgekeerd van democratie en de fundamentele waarden van de EU. Hij heeft de oorlog met Koerdische separatisten nieuw leven ingeblazen. De bomaanslag in Ankara van zondag en het bombarderen van Koerdische rebellen in Noord-Irak op maandag zouden meer dan genoeg redenen moeten zijn voor Europese leiders om een pauze in te laten.

De vluchtelingen crisis moet dringend worden aangepakt. Er dreigt een humanitaire ramp in Europa en burgers zijn verontrust: ruim een miljoen vluchtelingen vorig jaar, en dit jaar tot nu maar liefst 150 duizend. Maar de EU zou een grote fout maken als die factoren leiden tot een twijfelachtige overeenkomst. Europese leiders moeten ervoor zorgen dat de deal zowel voldoet aan de eisen van Europees en internationaal recht als aan de morele waarden van de EU.

Met medewerking van Arnout Brouwers, Henk Müller.

GRAPHIC: Cartoon Niels Bo Bojensen

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: de Volkskrant

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); International Relations (68%)

LOAD-DATE: 18 March 2016

### 7.2.3.2. 'De prijs van duivelspact met Turkije is hoog' (11 April 2016), author: Frans-Willem Verbaas

BYLINE: FRANS-WILLEM VERBAAS

SECTION: Opinie en Debat; Blz. 18

LENGTH: 662 woorden

EU en asiel

De snelheid waarmee Europese politici de rechtsstaat overboord zetten, is beangstigend. Tot voor kort meende ik te wonen in een redelijk beschaafd land. Ja, als asieladvocaat heb ik ook wel kritiek op het Nederlandse asielbeleid. Of op politici die het verdrinken van vluchtelingen in de Middellandse Zee alleen wijten aan meedogenloze mensensmokkelaars, en niet aan westerse maatregelen om mensen te beletten naar Europa te vluchten. Maar gelukkig was er altijd nog de Europese Unie, een samenwerking tussen beschaafde landen die mensenrechtenverdragen hadden ondertekend en een Grondrechtenhandvest in het leven hadden geroepen.

De EU heeft nu een soort duivelspact gesloten met Turkije, waar het staatshoofd zich in rap tempo ontwikkelt tot een dictator in Midden-Oosten stijl, de persvrijheid afschaft en oorlog voert tegen de Koerden.

De Turkije-deal houdt in dat elke Syriër die vanuit Turkije Europa bereikt terug moet naar Turkije, in ruil voor een andere Syriër die uit Turkije naar Europa mag komen. Hoe cynisch kan het worden? Alleen als een Syriër zijn leven waagt om naar Europa te vluchten is Europa bereid om een Syriër op te nemen uit Turkije. Maar dan wel tot een maximum van 72 duizend per jaar. Van de 4.8 miljoen Syriërs in het Midden-Oosten! Aldus het not-in-my-backyard-syndroom van de rijke landen, die vinden dat vluchtelingen veel beter in arme landen kunnen worden opgevangen.

Inmiddels zijn vluchtelingenkampen op Lesbos, Chios en Kos omgebouwd tot detentiecentra waar erbarmelijke omstandigheden heersen, en een aanzienlijk deel van de gevangenen vluchtelingen bestaat uit kinderen. En waar inmiddels de media worden geweerd. Hoezo persvrijheid? Probleem is verder dat beschaafde landen vinden dat iemand niet zijn vrijheid kan worden ontnomen zonder rechterlijke tussenkomst. Dat recht ligt ook verankerd in het Grondrechtenhandvest van de EU, waar ook staat dat iemand bij zijn rechtszaak recht heeft op rechtsbijstand. Alleen zijn er nergens rechters of advocaten te zien.

Persvrijheid? Nee hoor, de media mogen niet filmen wat er in de kampen gebeurt. Op de Griekse eilanden maakt de Europese Unie haar debuut als mensenrechtenschender.

Intussen wordt de Turkije-deal razendsnel uitgevoerd. Opmerkelijk, want Griekenland zelf heeft al jaren geen functionerende asielprocedure. De eerste berichten dat er asielzoekers zijn gedeporteerd naar Turkije zonder dat een asielprocedure is doorlopen zijn al gemeld. Ook eigenaardig: een afgewezen asielzoeker heeft volgens EU-recht het recht op een beroep bij de rechter met behulp van een advocaat. Waar zijn die rechtszaken? En waar de advocaten waarop ze volgens het Grondrechtenhandvest recht op hebben? Naar verluidt zijn er op dit moment maar twee advocaten beschikbaar.

Politici stellen ons gerust. Turkije heeft immers het Vluchtelingverdrag ondertekend! Maar zij verzwijgen dat dit in Turkije alleen geldt voor Europese vluchtelingen. Ook beweren zij dat het terugsturen van een vluchteling naar een zogeheten 'veilig derde land' niet strijdig is met

het Vluchtelingenverdrag. In theorie klopt dat. Alleen wordt Turkije niet veilig door het alleen maar zo te noemen. Volgens Amnesty International heeft Turkije al vluchtelingen teruggestuurd naar oorlogsgebieden en Afghaanse asielzoekers op het vliegtuig gezet terug naar Kaboel. Turkije heeft ook al eerder de grenzen voor Syrische vluchtelingen gesloten. Om nog maar te zwijgen van het al even deprimerende Turks plan om in noordelijk Syrië veilige gebieden te creëren in door islamitische milities beheerst gebied.

De snelheid waarmee Europese politici de rechtsstaat overboord zetten en hun morele principes verlagen beangstigt mij. Dat de leiders van ons land hierin het voortouw nemen is beschamend. De wereld is er dankzij de Turkijedeal een stuk grimmiger op geworden. Premier Rutte zou zich meer zorgen moeten maken om het oordeel van de geschiedenis dan het oordeel van de PVV-achterban.

GRAPHIC: Frans-Willem Verbaas is asieladvocaat.

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: de Volkskrant

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); International Relations (66%)

LOAD-DATE: 11 April 2016

## 7.2.4. NRC Handelsblad

### 7.2.4.1. 'Realitycheck: vluchtelingen blijven vluchten (19 March 2016), authors: Maarten den Heijer, Jorrit Rijpma and Thomas Spijkerboer

BYLINE: Thomas Spijkerboer cum suis

SECTION: Opinie & Debat; Blz. NH\_NL02\_008

LENGTH: 1828 woorden

Oplossingen voor de vluchtelingen crisis - ook de deal met Turkije - zijn onrealistisch, schrijven Thomas Spijkerboer cum suis. Hun advies voor de korte termijn: op de blaren zitten. Voor de lange termijn: het asielbeleid grondig herzien.

Europese politici proberen uit alle macht het aantal vluchtelingen onder controle te krijgen - de laatste weken vooral door de deal met Turkije. De EU kraakt in zijn voegen: Schengen staat op omvallen, en een aantal landen is niet langer bereid internationaalrechtelijke verplichtingen na te komen. Toch kan het aantal vluchtelingen het probleem niet zijn. Dat bedraagt 0,3 procent van de EU-bevolking. Europa wil vluchtelingen vooral in Turkije, Jordanië en Libanon houden, maar daar verblijven naar verhouding 10 tot 100 keer zoveel vluchtelingen als in Europa. Hoe kan er dan toch een vluchtelingen crisis zijn?

#### 1. Het Dublin-verdeelsysteem is oneerlijk

In de afgelopen maanden kwamen vier systeemfouten in het Europese asielbeleid aan het licht. Het eerste probleem is intern. Het Dublin-systeem verdeelt de verantwoordelijkheid voor asielzoekers over de EU-lidstaten, maar doet dat oneerlijk. Als asielzoekers conform 'Dublin' verdeeld zouden worden, zaten Griekenland en Italië met het overgrote deel opgescheept. Zij hebben er lang op aangedrongen de regels te veranderen, maar de noordelijke lidstaten voelden daar niets voor omdat de regels hen prima uitkwamen. De onmacht - en deels ook onwil - van de zuidelijke lidstaten om dit systeem in stand te houden bleek al eerder. De Griekse asielprocedure bleek uiteindelijk zó beroerd dat het in strijd met de mensenrechten is om asielzoekers erheen te sturen. Italië deed weinig moeite om asielzoekers ervan te weerhouden door te reizen. Door de succesvolle sabotage van de landen op de Balkanroute ontdekten landen als Duitsland en Zweden nu ook hoe oneerlijk het kan uitpakken. Ineens willen ze wel het verdeelsysteem heroverwegen, maar nu vinden ze de oostelijke lidstaten tegenover zich.

Ook voor asielzoekers is het systeem oneerlijk. Er zijn Europese wetten gemaakt om het asielrecht te harmoniseren. Maar de kans om als vluchteling erkend te worden is in de ene lidstaat wel twee keer zo hoog als in de andere; en de opvang is in het ene land goed geregeld, terwijl je in het andere op straat slaapt. Vluchtelingen hebben niet alleen formeel recht op bescherming. Ze hebben daar ook dringend behoefte aan. Net als de lidstaten hebben ze er vaak een groot en redelijk belang bij om het systeem te frustreren.

Dat mag niet. Regels zijn regels. Dus als lidstaten en asielzoekers zich niet aan de regels houden, moeten ze daartoe gedwongen worden. Dat is makkelijker gezegd dan gedaan. Regels die het helemaal van dwang moeten hebben omdat ze voor hoofdrolspelers onredelijk zijn - het is sowieso onbegonnen werk.

## 2. Waterdichte grenzen zijn een illusie

De tweede systeemfout is dat de verwachtingen van het verschijnsel grens te hoog gespannen zijn - zowel feitelijk als juridisch. Grenzen zijn niet in staat om elke vluchteling tegen te houden. De grens tussen Noord- en Zuid-Korea is redelijk waterdicht, maar stopt behalve mensen ook alle economisch verkeer. Europa heeft enorme belangen bij soepele circulatie van kapitaal, goederen en mensen. Het systematisch controleren van alles en iedereen is mogelijk, maar dat kost geld en principes. Wie dit voorstelt, moet er bij melden hoeveel tientallen procenten de netto-inkomens gaan teruglopen. Bovendien geldt het waterbed effect: wanneer de ene route wordt gesloten, opent er een andere. Die is vaak langer en gevaarlijker. En hoe strenger de grenzen worden gecontroleerd, hoe meer vraag er ontstaat naar mensensmokkel. Ook juridisch zijn grenzen niet in staat vluchtelingen tegen te houden. Mensen aan de grens terugsturen mag alleen als (1) het buurland veilig is en (2) de gelegenheid wordt geboden om asiel aan te vragen in individuele (beroeps)procedures.

In het verleden is wel geprobeerd om aan deze rechtsregels te ontkomen, zoals mensen in internationale wateren uit zee vissen en terugsturen ('pushbacks'). Deze trucs zijn van het zelfde kaliber als Guantanamo Bay of de Russische geheime dienst die vindt dat een opponent met polonium vermoorden in Londen wél mag. De Grote Kamer van het Europese Hof voor de Rechten van de Mens heeft zulke trucs dan ook unaniem verworpen. Een staat moet zich buiten zijn eigen grondgebied even netjes gedragen als daarbinnen.

## 3. Ontmoediging leidt tot mensensmokkel

De derde systeemfout: vluchtelingen krijgen asiel als ze eenmaal in Europa zijn, maar uit alle macht wordt gepoogd te voorkomen dat zij hier kunnen komen: visumverplichtingen, luchtvaartmaatschappijen moeten vóór vertrek documenten controleren, doorreislanden worden onder druk gezet om ook visumverplichtingen in te voeren. Inmiddels hebben ook Jordanië, Libanon en Turkije een visumplicht voor Syriërs ingevoerd. Dat leidde niet tot een afname van het aantal vluchtelingen, maar wel tot levendige mensensmokkel, omdat Syriërs niet bleven wachten tot ook hun huis in puin lag. De mensensmokkel werkte dusdanig goed dat ook bijvoorbeeld Eritreërs die al decennia in Soedan zaten, dachten: nu of nooit. Het werd vluchtelingen dus verboden hun land te verlaten, waardoor een chaotischer en waarschijnlijk grotere migratiestroom op gang kwam dan als Syriërs wel de gelegenheid was gegeven te ontkomen. Daar bovenop raakte de opvang in de buurlanden volstrekt overbelast, en werd die zwaar ondergefinancierd - de afgelopen jaren is slechts de helft van het benodigde geld bij elkaar gebracht.

## 4. Een gedeelde visie van de EU ontbreekt

De eerste drie systeemfouten gaan over de inhoud van het beleid. De laatste systeemfout is dat de gekozen vorm van samenwerking het midden houdt tussen volledige Europeanisering en klassieke intergouvernementele samenwerking. Het asielbeleid is gebaseerd op minimum-harmonisatie en wederzijdse erkenning van (afwijzende) beslissingen. Maar de implementatie van de wetgeving waarmee dat bereikt moet worden, is volledig in handen van de lidstaten. De EU heeft geen uitvoerende bevoegdheden. Een dergelijke vorm van samenwerking werkt alleen als lidstaten echt willen samenwerken omdat zij een gedeelde visie op een bepaalde kwestie hebben. Die wil en gedeelde visie ontbreken bij asiel volstrekt.



De Syrische vluchtelingen zijn de eerste stresstest voor het Europese asielsysteem. Waaruit bestaat de Europese reactie? Met betrekking tot de eerste, interne systeemfout gebeurt er vrijwel niets. Het herverdelen van asielzoekers vanuit Italië en Griekenland is in onwilligheid blijven steken. Het Dublin-systeem wordt herzien, zonder dat de fundamentele oneerlijkheid wordt opgelost. Er komen wat marginale extra regels bij die het misschien een tikkeltje minder oneerlijk, maar zeker een stuk ingewikkelder maken. Lidstaten blijven er belang bij hebben het systeem te saboteren. Dat geldt ook voor asielzoekers, omdat de ongelijkheid van de nationale asielsystemen blijft.

Voor de tweede en de derde systeemfout is de deal met Turkije illustratief. Per kerende post moeten bootvluchtelingen worden teruggestuurd, in ruil waarvoor sommige Europese landen sommige Syriërs uit Turkije zouden opnemen. Zolang de EU de visumplicht voor Turken niet laat vervallen, is volstrekt onduidelijk waarom Turkije er belang bij heeft hieraan mee te werken. Bovendien is Turkije van geen kanten veilig. De laatste keer dat Turkije werd veroordeeld voor onmenselijke behandeling van een asielzoeker, dateert van 15 december vorig jaar.

Vluchtelingen blijven dus een legitiem belang hebben bij doorreis naar andere landen. Het hoofdprobleem in Turkije is niet een gebrek aan geld, maar het ontbreken van een behoorlijk rechtstatelijk systeem en de vermenging van de vluchtelingenproblematiek met vitale politieke issues, waaronder de Koerdische kwestie. En waarom zou het verdelen van vluchtelingen vanuit Turkije over Europese landen lukken, terwijl de teller voor verdeling vanuit Griekenland en Italië al bij een paar honderd blijft steken? Ook gaan vluchtelingen natuurlijk proberen via andere routes Europa binnen te komen.

De reactie op de vluchtelingenproblematiek bestaat dus uit het voortborduren op systeemfouten waar de problematiek nu juist uit voort komt. Het verbod op vluchten blijft het uitgangspunt; er zijn onrealistische verwachtingen van wat aan de grens kan en mag; en de oneerlijkheden in het systeem voor lidstaten en vluchtelingen blijven. Ook de vierde systeemfout - een onduidelijke vorm van samenwerking die alleen werkt als landen echt willen - blijft.

Hoe moet het dan wel? Zoals de bankencrisis van 2008 niet in een paar weken of maanden kon worden opgelost, zo kan ook het aantal vluchtelingen niet snel onder controle worden gebracht zolang de oorlog in Syrië voortduurt. Voor de korte termijn zal Europa op de blaren moeten zitten. Twee zaken zijn daarbij van belang. Er moet, ten eerste, rekening gehouden worden met blijvend hoge aantallen vluchtelingen - niet omdat we Gutmenschen zijn, maar je maar beter op de werkelijkheid voorbereid kunt zijn. Ten tweede moeten zonder voorwaarden vooraf in de EU een groot aantal Syriërs worden opgenomen uit (in volgorde van urgentie) Libanon, Jordanië en Turkije. Daardoor vermindert de vraag naar smokkel en worden die landen in staat gesteld een stevig aantal vluchtelingen wél goed te herbergen.

Voor de langere termijn moet Europa het asielbeleid grondig heroverwegen. De interne onevenwichtigheden, de overspannen verwachtingen van de grens, en het reisverbod voor vluchtelingen moeten van tafel. Voor welke onderdelen van het beleid welke juridische samenwerkingsvorm wordt gebruikt moet samenhangend beoordeeld worden, en niet in losse deals op detailniveau. Een omvattend vluchtelingenbeleid moet gebaseerd zijn op de volgende uitgangspunten:

- vluchtelingen hebben niet alleen het recht om geweld en onderdrukking te ontvluchten, ze zullen dat (of we dat nou leuk vinden of niet) feitelijk ook doen;
- buurlanden zijn bijzonder geschikt voor opvang, en moeten daarvoor ruimhartig worden gefinancierd; er moet grootschalig herverdeeld worden als het er zo vol wordt als in Libanon of Jordanië;
- grenzen zijn geschikt om te controleren wie er binnen komt, en om te beoordelen wie er niet naar binnen mag; wie meer van grenzen verwacht, lokt illegale migratie uit;
- het Europese asielsysteem moet voor lidstaten en voor vluchtelingen redelijk zijn.

Met deze uitgangspunten zou een einde komen aan het onrealistische maakbaarheidsdenken waarop het beleid nu gebaseerd is. En ze zorgen ervoor dat de beginselen waarop Europa gegrondvest is niet bij het grofvuil hoeven te worden gezet.

EU borduurt voort op systeemfouten die de crisis veroorzaken

Maarten den Heijer, universitair docent internationaal recht, Universiteit van Amsterdam;

Jorrit Rijpma, universitair hoofddocent Europees recht, Universiteit Leiden; Thomas

Spijkerboer, hoogleraar migratierecht Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: NRC Handelsblad

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); Political Asylum (70%); Immigration (66%)

LOAD-DATE: 19 March 2016

#### **7.2.4.2. ‘De Turkije-deal heeft een lelijk gezicht’ (31 March 2016), author: Wil Eikelboom**

BYLINE: Wil Eikelboom

SECTION: opinie; Blz. NH\_NL01\_016

LENGTH: 808 woorden

Wil Eikelboom roept asieladvocaten op direct af te reizen naar Griekenland om rechtsbijstand te verlenen aan vluchtelingen, voordat de radeloze asielzoekers zonder proces worden uitgezet.

Op het Griekse eiland Lesbos zitten duizenden vluchtelingen in gevangenenkamp Moria: barakken en tenten omringd door hekken en wachttorens. Zie hier het resultaat van de 'deal' die Europese regeringsleiders met Turkije sloten over het terugsturen van vluchtelingen. Daags na ingaan van de deal op 20 maart reisde ik af naar Lesbos om een inschatting te maken van de rechtsbijstand waar iedere asielzoeker recht op heeft. Ik was de eerste advocaat in Moria sinds het een detentiecentrum is. Het bericht van mijn aanwezigheid ging als een lopend vuurtje rond, al snel was ik omringd door een wanhopige menigte. Uit Syrië, Irak, Afghanistan, zelfs Congo. Daaronder Koerden, yezidi's, christenen, en andere vervolgte minderheden. Mensen die, als ze in Nederland asiel zouden aanvragen, zonder al te veel moeite een verblijfsvergunning krijgen. Nu zitten ze vast en worden ze, als het aan de EU ligt, uitgezet.

Veel vluchtelingen in het kamp woonden daar al toen de poort nog openstond. Het werd gebruikt als opvanglocatie voor bootvluchtelingen die vanuit Turkije waren overgestoken. Na registratie reisden ze door naar het Griekse vasteland, vandaar verder Europa in. Op 20 maart gingen de poorten plotseling op slot. Uit protest hebben diverse hulporganisaties zich teruggetrokken uit het kamp en het lijkt er niet op dat de overheid - Grieks of Europees - de rol van deze organisaties overneemt. Bovendien komen er nog steeds boten aan op Lesbos en loopt het kamp in snel tempo vol.

Tot 20 maart konden vluchtelingen doorreizen vanaf Lesbos, omdat Griekenland door de rest van Europa wordt gezien als land waar de omstandigheden zo slecht zijn dat van asielzoekers niet wordt verwacht dat ze er asiel aanvragen. In 2011 oordeelde het Europees Hof zelfs dat in Griekenland sprake is van „onmenselijke behandeling". De 'Dublinverordening', die Europese staten de mogelijkheid geeft asielzoekers terug te sturen naar het eerste EU-land van aankomst, wordt daarom niet toegepast op Griekenland. Sinds 20 maart is alles anders.

Vluchtelingen mogen niet meer doorreizen vanuit Griekenland. De EU wil dat ze per kerende post worden teruggevlogen naar Turkije; het land dat ze met gevaar voor eigen leven in een bootje waren ontvlucht. Juristen in Brussel moesten nogal wat kunst- en vliegwerk uithalen om dit, althans op papier, juridisch mogelijk te maken. Immers, een vluchteling terugsturen naar een land buiten de EU kan alleen als dat een „veilig derde land" is. Turkije voldoet niet aan de voorwaarden. Voor niet-Europeanen is het daar onmogelijk om te worden erkend als vluchteling en Turkije stuurt daadwerkelijk vluchtelingen terug naar gevaarlijke landen als Syrië en Afghanistan.

Tot voor kort werd Turkije door geen van de EU-landen als veilig derde land gezien. Om die reden zal Nederland, ook vandaag nog, geen Syriërs terugsturen naar Turkije. Toch hebben de Europese regeringsleiders Griekenland ertoe bewogen Turkije de kwalificatie 'veilig' te

verlenen. Dit opent de deur voor de zo vurig gewenste uitzetting naar dat land. Onder Grieks recht kan dan wat onder Europees recht niet mag. Een rechter kan vaststellen of dit juridisch houdbaar is, in een procedure aangespannen door een asielzoeker tegen uitzetting naar Turkije. Voor de mensen in Moria betekent dit dat ze hun zaak moeten zien voor te leggen - eerst aan een Griekse rechter en daarna, zo nodig, aan het Europees Hof voor de Rechten van de Mens. De EU beloofde toegang tot procedures, maar niemand weet hoe, wanneer en volgens welke regels. Intussen wordt gezegd dat de eerste uitzettingen naar Turkije reeds zijn uitgevoerd; een schending van het Vluchtelingenverdrag.

Met de deal zijn miljarden euro's Europees geld gemoeid, maar het heeft er alle schijn van dat daarvan niets is gereserveerd voor rechtsbijstand. De reden daarvoor laat zich raden: volgens de deal moeten alle vluchtelingen van na 20 maart terug. Juridische procedures die kunnen leiden tot uit- of afstel zijn juridisch verplicht, maar in de praktijk niet gewenst. De Nederlandse bijdrage in Moria richt zich uitsluitend op bewaken en uitzetten. Om toegang tot eerlijke procedures te garanderen, moeten er snel rechtsbijstandverleners naar de Griekse eilanden.

Nu niemand verantwoordelijkheid neemt, is het aan asieladvocaten om de bijstand zelf te organiseren. Met hulp van Europese advocatenordes proberen we advocaten naar Lesbos te krijgen. Hopelijk lukt dat vóór de radeloze bewoners van Moria worden uitgezet, op illegale wijze en met medewerking van Nederland.

Onder Grieks recht kan dan wat onder Europees recht eigenlijk niet mag

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PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

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## 7.2.5. Trouw

### 7.2.5.1. 'Het woord 'oplossing' is misplaatst bij vluchtelingendeal met Turkije' (9 March 2016), author: editorial members and senior editors

SECTION: Opinie; Blz. 21

LENGTH: 428 woorden

De mening van de krant, verwoord door leden van de hoofdredactie en senior redacteuren. Het voorgenomen akkoord tussen de Europese Unie en Turkije over de vluchtelingencrisis is de uitkomst van een lange en ontluisterende glijvlucht; het heeft dan ook alle kenmerken van een laatste wanhoopspoging om tot een oplossing te komen.

De komst van honderdduizenden vluchtelingen uit met name Syrië en Irak naar Europa werd mede in gang gezet door de weigering van westerse landen adequaat gehoor te geven aan herhaalde oproepen van de VN om bij te dragen aan de opvang van de miljoenen oorlogsvluchtelingen in Jordanië, Libanon en Turkije.

Vervolgens werd het probleem bij de zuidelijke EU-landen neergelegd, totdat de vluchtelingen zich in noordelijke richting begonnen te bewegen en bondskanselier Merkel liet weten dat zij - mits afkomstig uit conflictgebieden - welkom waren in Duitsland.

De keten van massale grensoverschrijdingen die dat teweegbracht, zette het Schengenverdrag, zo niet de gehele EU-samenwerking, op losse schroeven. Een plan voor Europese herverdeling van vluchtelingen mislukte door obstructie van de afzonderlijke lidstaten, waarna het ene na het andere land de poorten sloot.

Zo zijn we aanbeland bij een situatie waarin Europa de vluchtelingen zover mogelijk terugduwt, vooralsnog tot aan Griekenland, maar uiteindelijk - zo is de bedoeling - tot aan Turkije. Om daarna via een luchtbrug een beperkt aantal alsnog toe te laten tot de EU. Dit gebeurt in de wetenschap dat Turkije noch gebonden noch in staat is te voldoen aan de dezelfde verdragsverplichtingen als de Europese landen.

Op zichzelf is het juist Turkije te beschouwen als een belangrijke schakel in deze crisis, maar de Europese leiders - opgejaagd door populistische stemmingmakers in eigen land - vergissen zich als ze denken dat alles in kannen en kruiken is als de vluchtelingen daar zitten in plaats van hier.

Turkije kan niet gelden als zogenoemd 'veilig derde land', waar asielzoekers zonder scrupules naar kunnen worden teruggestuurd. De wettelijke en praktische omstandigheden voor vluchtelingen schieten er ernstig tekort. De vraag is ook waarom alleen over Syriërs wordt gesproken, en niet over vluchtelingen uit andere oorlogsgebieden. Om nog te zwijgen over de praktische vragen rond het 'op de boot terug zetten' van duizenden mensen. Of een betere constructie politiek haalbaar was, is de vraag, maar het woord 'oplossing' is niet de juiste term voor wat nu op tafel ligt.

Turkije kan niet gelden als zogenoemd 'veilig derde land'

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: Trouw

SUBJECT: European Union Institutions (94%); International Relations (68%)

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**7.2.5.2. 'Hulporganisaties houden terecht vast aan Vluchtelingenverdrag' (26 March 2016), author: editorial members and senior editors**

SECTION: Opinie; Blz. 27

LENGTH: 433 woorden

De mening van de krant, verwoord door leden van de hoofdredactie en senior redacteuren. Toen begin deze maand duidelijk werd wat de inhoud zou zijn van de 'vluchtelingendeal' tussen de Europese Unie en Turkije, waarschuwde VN-vluchtelingenorganisatie UNHCR dat de overeenkomst illegaal zou zijn. Het collectief terugsturen van asielzoekers is volgens het internationale recht verboden, aldus de organisatie.

Dat weerhield de EU er niet van het plan door te zetten en met Turkije af te spreken dat alle vluchtelingen die zich melden op de Griekse eilanden teruggestuurd zullen worden - waarna Syriërs alsnog via reguliere kanalen naar de EU kunnen komen. Consequentie hiervan is dat wat voorheen Griekse opvangkampen waren, nu detentiecentra zijn geworden. En dat de UNHCR, gevolgd door andere hulporganisaties, de samenwerking met de autoriteiten heeft gestaakt.

Deze non-gouvernementele organisaties (ngo's), die onder meer het vervoer van de vluchtelingen verzorgden, doen hun naam eer aan en weigeren mee te werken aan beleid waarvan ze menen dat het nooit in werking had mogen worden gezet.

Hun voornaamste grief is dat vluchtelingen gevangen worden gezet, hoewel het Vluchtelingenverdrag - ondertekend door de landen die nu de stroom 'tot nul' willen reduceren - eenieder het recht geeft elders aan te kloppen voor asiel. Zo'n verzoek kan geweigerd worden, maar niet zonder individuele toetsing; daarvan is nu geen sprake. Verder is het de vraag of Turkije teruggestuurde vluchtelingen wel zorgvuldig zal behandelen en wat de status is van vluchtelingen uit landen als Irak, Afghanistan en Eritrea.

De Europese regeringsleiders hebben genoeg genomen met deze tekortkomingen. Sommigen deden dat tegen heug en meug, in het besef dat een betere oplossing niet bereikbaar was, anderen deden het omdat het Vluchtelingenverdrag hen in feite gestolen kan worden. Maar hulporganisaties hebben hun eigen verantwoordelijkheid en men kan onmogelijk van hen verlangen dat zij mede uitvoering geven aan maatregelen die tegen humanitaire verdragen ingaan.

Een duivels dilemma is het wel: deze ngo's hebben zich ten doel gesteld mensen in alle omstandigheden hulp te bieden, en het druist in tegen hun instinct zich terug te trekken. Ze blijven buiten de kampen ook wel hulp verlenen, maar weigeren het verlengstuk te zijn van een onmachtige politiek en dwingen de Europese regeringen zelf maatregelen te nemen. Dat is terecht, maar de uitkomst van die afweging is voor vluchtelingen een bittere.

Het is een duivels dilemma en de uitkomst is bitter voor de vluchtelingen

LANGUAGE: DUTCH; NEDERLANDS

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Krant

JOURNAL-CODE: Trouw

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