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## Ideological Articulations of Media Discour



# Ideological Articulations of Media Discourses on Migrants and Refugees in Europe: New Racism and Othering – A Critical Discourse Analysis

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This research discusses the ideological





'It is a racism that is not just directed at those with darker skins, from the former

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The first corner of the triangulation is the notion of ideology that in the Western Marxist tradition has been long perceived as one of the embodiment of the hierarchical system of domination. Ideologies are sociological conceptions of socially-shared, foundational belief systems that organize and control individuals' attitudes within a group towards certain issues

Ergo, 'Discourse' and 'ideology' converge in that both concepts refer to the way people comprehend the social world through language and other systems of sign, this understanding has a 'hermeneutic dimension'



Althusserian concern with ideology (notably the notion of interpellation) and a Gramscian focus on hegemony (Clarke, 2015). In his own words, Hall (1985), in an interview with Larry

of one group and the subordination of the other. He also argues that media 'defines, legitimates, and manufactures ethnic and racial consensus' (Van Dijk, 1993: 243). Therefore, racism has been systematically enacted and pre-formulated in elite discourses of social institutions despite official assurances on values of inclusion and tolerance (Van Dijk, 1993). Broadly speaking, if a society is premised on an assumption of inequality, then producing an accepted hierarchy demands the configuration of a cause (or causes) of the underlings' position in some specific differences on their part that makes them less worthy than others (Tucker, 2007) . Ergo, racism as a form of ethnic dominance and inequality is in fact a social

'New Racism' transcends traditional biological conception of race onto capitalizing on certain ethnic, religious and cultural differences as decisive boundaries between social groups (Van Dijk, 2000; Toğral 2011). Racism in the traditional sense of the concept mainly led to pronounced consequences of bodily harm (slavery, segregation,...) whereas, new racism is of an covert nature on the discursive and social level (Van Dijk, 2000). Despite its symbolic

'cultural difference' as crucial composites of the media portrayals of those social groups. Gale (2004) highlights that a colonial discourse on 'race' continues to inform notions of a white Australia reflected in the media coverage of the early 2000's refugee crisis. Moreover, framing migrants as others, parasites and threats is a common practice within media discourses of British newspapers (Waters, 2015). Furthermore, Fekete (2010) highlighted the rise of Xeno-racism sentiment amid the emergence of an anti-refugee discourse demonizing asylum-seekers by portraying them as 'bogus' and 'illegal'.

Such inferior representations and framings of migrants and refugees can be theorized through the concept of 'othering'. A postcolonial concept based on Edward Said's orientalism (1979), Homi Bhabha's cultural difference (1994) and Gayatri Spivak's notion of Subaltern (1994). Said (1978) explains that Orientalism stems out of the imaginary Western vision of the orient as 'the other'. He further notes that this 'other' is constantly dehumanized, imagined as anti-democratic and barbaric through a Western canon of literary and culture

We learned that the media has a pivotal role in the reproduction of racial discourses; therefore, this section will explore the communicative functions of media discourses on an ideological and social level as well as elaborating on the discourse-processing approach adopted by this research to study products of mass media. Mediation plays a large role in the reproduction of ideological, social and political modern societies (Van Dijk, 1993). In fact, media strategically shape the processes of individual and institutional communication through providing a relevant framework for the production and consumption of mediated representations of specific social groups (Georgiou, 2012). Therefore, Van Dijk (1993) strongly argues that the media has a structural as well as ideological function of reconstructing social ideologies of racial affairs through the reproduction of racial inequalities.

An early generation of scholars (Schramm and Roberts, 1973; McCombs and Shaw, 1972 and Katz et al., 1973) have explored the immediate effects of media messages by adapting psychological models, conceiving an agenda-setting theory and outlining a uses and gratification approach to the study of mass media (Perloff, 1989). However, media messages and representations do not simply travel in a linear model from producers to consumers



Drawing on the work of Norman Fairclough, this research employed critical discourse analysis to examine a purposeful sample of media texts in a number of British newspapers. CDA was specifically chosen as a methodology for this study for reasons of relevance to the research questions and the nature of data the study is examining. This research begs to differ from other studies tackling the representation of refugees in the discursive practice as it tries to i





and Jorgensen, 2002). Furthermore, as we deal with the study of language as a social

attributes to the said social group or identities. c) Texts drawing a spatial or cultural juxtaposition to interpret the events.

### *Design of research tool*

Fairclough defines the aims of critical discourse analysis as:

to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (Fairclough, 1995, p.135)

The analysis would focus on reflecting the aims highlighted by Fairclough that were also used by this research as guidelines for integrating the results into the three dimensions of CDA: textual, discursive and social dimensions respectively (Fairclough, 1995). Generally, the analysis would look at the generic structure of the article, consisting of headlines, followed by the lead, the body of text and the

Data analysis involves a great deal of meticulous work on a textual, discursive and social practice levels. Yet, this research hopes to strike the right balance between uncovering dilemmas and contradictions in the discursive practice while avoiding direct or dichotomous interpretations of the media texts (Wodak, 1999; Billig et al., 1988). For that, this section will thoroughly describe, analyse and theorize the findings of the data analysis. The list of articulations identified in this analysis was derived from the most commonly recurring themes within the collected sample, nevertheless, such list is not exhaustive (Gale, 2004). The focus of analysis in the articulations identified was on the conjuncture between ideologies with the discourses used to portray migrants and refugees and how they are reflected on a textual level. Nonetheless, the analysis' other major challenge was the abundance of textual details worth examining within the discursive practice as Fairclough himself noted (1992: 74). While it was impossible to include all textual details and features in the analysis, I followed a selective analytical approach relevant to the previously outlined research design. Ultimately, as texts do not have fixed meanings (Gale, 2004), the analysis sought to identify the contrasting articulations based on a critical discourse analysis of all aspects of the articles' structure, language, overall tone and most importantly context.

representation has a logic, a history and a politics'<sup>1</sup> , the main aim of uncovering such binary representations is not just to confirm them, but rather; to contextualize and historicize them.

Constructing the 'other' on a textual level was reproduced in the sample through what Hall (1992) refers to as, 'binary system of representation' whereby, racial discourse defines



types of discourses that are applied to the representation of the Orient, thereby placing it in the position of the Other' (ibid: 63). Said criticizes Western tendencies to conceptualize any difference in relation with 'Orientals' within an essentialized repertoire of Middle Eastern cultural traditions, calling it an 'endemic of Western Neocolonialism' (Said, 1979; Akram, 2000). For that, Orientalism carries a power, as it produces knowledge about the 'orient' and 'the Orientals' as a race by providing a series of representations and vocabularies (Inokuchi and Nozaki, 2005).

This theme featured an articulation between Arab/Middle Eastern culture with violence against women, generalizing 'culture of violence' as base of identity for migrants and refugees. Gale (2004) argues that racial assumptions place an emphasis on what is seen as a threat to the national (European) culture, values and lifestyle. Therefore, racial discourse of the media might not explicitly label non-white migrants as being racially inferior, however, their cultures and values are commonly represented as 'alien' and a threat to western modern and democratic values (Gale, 2004). Therefore, the increasing cultural heterogeneity of European societies has been constructed by the media as a matter of security crisis (Rattansi and Westwood, 1994).

The studied media texts consistently

colonialism, who were similarly dehumanized, held to possess dangerous mass characteristics which justified their prosecution (Fekete, 2010). Nonetheless, referring to the perpetrators of the attacks as 'refugees' rather than migrants was plausibly employed to associate criminality and violence with the newly arriving group of Syrian refugees as the context suggests. Therefore, the consistent recurrence of certain representations of some social groups in the media reproduces stereotypes that confirm the dominant social and political hierarchies (Lippmann, 1922; Georgiou, 2012).

Unequal social relations between dominant and subordinate groups in the society allow stereotypes against particular social groups to circulate without much scrutiny (Inokuchi and Nozaki 2005). Such stereotypes are enmeshed in the working of power, and operate by suggesting particular norms as standard; constructing human beings as subjects of the power it carries (Inokuchi and Nozaki 2005). Consequently, Van Dijk notes that media is either overtly racist and xenophobic notably most right-wing press in the UK, or at the very least biased, for example, mainstream media allocating more emphasis to the criminality of the immigrant minorities while turning a blind eye to the systematic racism perpetrated by the majority (1993). Therefore, despite narratives of integration and tolerance, racial minorities

The problem with perpetuating such discourse is closely related with the main objective of this research, which is contextualizing discourses to underline their ideological stance. Therefore, this discourse removes sexual violence from its broader context as a global, gender-based systemic problem and assumes that violence against women is exclusive to a specific race. Thus such discourse ignores that these discriminatory practices against women are committed on daily basis by men of different social and racial backgrounds (Nazra for Feminist Studies).

The social dimension of this articulation stereotyped the 'rape culture' as an 'Arab' phenomena related to a foreign and alien culture carried out by those refugees into Europe.





The journalistic reporting has also been characterized with heavy reliance on an authoritative voice, overwhelmingly quoting official sources: 'police'; 'minster'; 'police president'; 'mayor



though seeking asylum was an infectious disease that needed to be quarantined.' (Fekete, 2010, p.31)

Ultimately, Cologne attacks have marked a change of public discourse on migration in the direction of articulating the securitization approach with the refugee crisis in Europe. Furthermore, different discourses around migration, for example: the economic benefits of migrants to the host country's job market or the humanitarian aspect of migration allowing safe passage to people fleeing war, have somehow ceased to exist in the public discourse and were replaced by the securitization approach to address the perceived threat of migration (Diken, 2002; Tođrn Tff [(a) -T8 ppr6 /TT8 c Tff [.ogoeend Tff [(a) -T8 Tff [.oc6 /TT8 nge of Tff4T8 dsceinogehernhesof Tff4T8 migioninheics but Tff24 r6 /ihe, t Tff24 reeseTff24 theyTff24 v of Tff13411)stf134 cssF vo(ofi Tf] TJ ET Q q 0.24 0

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communicated through media discourses as a crucial part of the media messages' 'encoding-decoding process' (Hall, 1980)

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Article 1:

Daily Mail  
12th January, 2016

- The Arabic term 'taharrush' roughly translates to 'collective harassment'
- It refers to sexual assaults carried out by groups of men in public places
- Surrounded by dozens of attackers, lone women are groped or raped
- The phenomenon was first seen in 2011 when a reporter was attacked
- Lara Logan endured an assault while reporting on the protests in Egypt
- Police say attacks in Cologne marked Europe's first instance of taharrush

Police fear a gang-rape phenomenon known as 'taharrush gamea' in the Arab world and seen in attacks on women across German cities at the New Year has now spread to Europe.

The name of the practice translates to 'collective harassment' and is carried out by large groups of men who sexually assault lone women, either by groping, or in some instances, raping them.

The men first surround their victim in circles. Some then sexually assault her, while others not directly involved watch or divert outsiders' attention to what is occurring.

Sometimes the terrified victim - in a state of shock and unable to respond - is also robbed

The 44-year-old revealed terrifying details of the 40 minute-long February attack in Cairo's Tahrir Square, including how she became separated from members of her crew after someone in the frenzied 200-strong crowd shouted 'Let's take her pants off.'

She said: 'Suddenly, before I even know what's happening, I feel hands grabbing my breasts, grabbing my crotch, grabbing me from behind. I mean, and it's not one person and then it stops, it's like one person and another person and another person.'

'And I know Ray is right there, and he's grabbing at me and screaming, 'Lara hold onto me, hold onto me'.'

It was revealed that as she was pulled into the frenzy the camera recorded her shouting 'Stop.' It was revealed that someone in the crowd falsely shouted out that she was an Israeli Jew.

Angie Abdelmonem, a doctoral candidate at Arizona State University, recently published a study into the instances of 'taharrush' seen during the Egyptian Revolution.

She said the 'violent nature of sexual harassment and assault in Tahrir Square captured global attention', but many locally initially believed the state was hiring thugs to harass women and stem public protest.

'This [perception] shifted on February 11, the day Mubarak stepped down, with the mob assault and rape of CBS correspondent, Lara Logan,' she wrote.

'Between 2011 and 2013, sexual harassment became common at protests in Tahrir Square, exemplified by a number of highly publicized violent attacks that demonstrate how women's bodies became objectified and dehumanized during the uprising.'

She goes on to conclude the lack of 'conceptual boundaries' of the term further blurred the lines of when acceptable flirtation became harassment.

German police believe it was 'taharrush' committed in Cologne and other cities at New Year by Arab and North African men that led to hundreds of police complaints in the following weeks.

German federal police told Die Welt that crimes are committed by groups of young men during large gatherings of people, such as demonstrations, and range from sexual harassment to rape.

It was the first instance of the phenomenon having reached Europe, and as the scale of the attacks in the city slowly emerged, other centres, such as Zurich and Salzburg, reported similar crimes.

A report from the Interior Ministry in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) state, where Cologne lies, said 516 criminal complaints had been registered, 237 of which were of a sexual nature.

A separate report from the Cologne police gave graphic descriptions of the crimes, listing case after case of women surrounded by gangs of men who put their hands in the victims' pants and skirts, grabbed them between the legs, on the buttocks and the breasts, often while stealing their wallets and cell phones.

A total of 19 suspects have been identified, all foreigners.

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