

## Chapter 9. Peace Journalism or War Journalism: Representation of Refugees in Turkish Media

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### Introduction

Brutal conflicts in Middle-East and Africa has created a huge flow of migration to other countries which actually cause for Europe a serious refugee crisis since the II World War. In this process, due to its geographical region Turkey has become an important destination by refugees both for living in it and for using it as a transit point. Therefore, Turkish public is now familiar with the refugee issue because Turkey is hosting almost 3 million Syrian refugees, according to UN data (<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>). By living in the same environment, refugees sometimes may face relatively little hostility and experience otherness in the public. On the other hand, there is also feeling in Turkish public which shows their philosophy of brotherhood that they have to accept the refugees in their lives because of the same cultural, religious and historical heritage. However, while it is possible to come across media contents about refugees almost every day, the mass media imposes a very dangerous picture about refugees. In the media, refugees mostly are seen as a problem, are shown with attention to the racist and intolerant events, and are not viewed with their painful living conditions. All these unfriendly approaches of media and its conflict orientation are the indicators of war journalism actually.

In this study I firstly analyzed the concept of peace journalism and war journalism which are seen as two competing frames in covering conflicts. In the study it is also indicated that content of news related to refugees in Turkish media are dealt with the approach of war journalism. This study tries to exemplify how war journalism against refugees are made and to show how refugees are mostly shown as a subject of negativity in the media.

### War Journalism vs. Peace Journalism

First of all, in this study concept of war journalism does not refer the journalism which follows the wars from the fronts and tells the stories from the war zones. As conflict does not only mean wars between or within countries, but also ethnic struggles, any kind of discrimination, gender violence and hate speech, principals of peace journalism and war journalism can be applicable in any time which means they are not valid only in war times. The difference between these two journalism is matter of approach actually. Therefore, in this study war journalism refers to “traditional journalism”, which can also be named as common journalism or mainstream journalism.

For decades, war journalism which primarily focused on conflict arenas, elite actors and the visible effects on belligerent actions has been the predominant way

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of framing wars and conflicts worldwide (Neuman and Fahmy, 2012, p.175) The notion of ‘peace journalism’ was established in the 1970s by Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung who argues that the media have a tendency to report violence and war in a way that could maintain or even escalate hostilities (Hyde-Clarke, 2011, p.43). Peace journalism was formed as the antithesis of war journalism or traditional journalism which fuels conflicts rather than diminishes them.

War journalism is violence-orientated which means it focus only on visible effect of violence like killed, wounded and material damage. It also makes “us-them” journalism and blames “them” every time. It gives importance to who threw the first stone and it waits for violence before reporting it. It isolates conflict from context and looks conflict arena to find reasons and prefers debate and polemic rather than dialogue and discussion. War journalism is elite-oriented because it uses elites and primary definers as news sources. It is also propaganda-oriented which is concerned with exposing “their” lies and secrets while protecting those of its “own”. And lastly it is victory oriented (Galtung, 2002). On the other hand, peace journalism focuses on truth on all sides instead of one-sided propaganda, voices of common people instead of elites, and a solution rather than victory-orientation (Galtung, 2006). It is also peace oriented which means it makes conflicts transparent, gives voice to all parties, see conflicts as problem, focuses on conflict creativity, takes measure before any violence occurs and focuses on invisible effects of violence like trauma and cultural damage.

In the matter of reporting, these two opponent approaches become clearly distinguishable. By focusing on nonviolence peace journalism mainly provides a new road map tracing the connections between journalists and their sources and the stories and the consequences of their reporting (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000, p. 5).

### **Components of War Journalism**

When we look at the general tendency of war journalism, we see some indicators and components in representation of refugees in Turkish mainstream media.

#### *War Journalism Ignores Refugees*

As van Dijk (1999) mentions outgroups like refugees are given rare coverage or are totally ignored by the media. For instances, trauma and sexual violence to refugee women, school problems of refugee children, unemployment issue of refugees or any kind of achievements of refugees has attracted almost no media coverage.

#### *War Journalism Represents Refugees as a Subject of Negativeness*

It can be said that if refugees are in the news, then something bad has happened because they mostly are represented as subjects of negativeness. War journalism’s understanding of news value attributes value to extraordinary events, violence, tension, accidents which causes refugees are seen in the media with disaster news. Therefore, the counter-hegemonic narratives about the problems that refugees face with like hunger, poverty, forced migration and discrimination cannot be heard in the media. News value of war journalism can be summarized with the slogan “if it bleeds, it leads.” Produce negative image on refugees and presents them as primary agents of crime environment is a common trend in war journalism. So, if refugees

are received media attention it is because of horrible things that they pass through. News with headings like “Syrian father spread terror”, “Syrian father horror” and contents of these news produce negative image on refugees. The problem here is not making news of this kind of subjects, but making refugees news only in negative contex. Also, refugees are mostly shown in the media with accident news. The problem here is war journalism takes victims as numbers only and it does not focus on stories and circumstances of refugees which forced them to move. Moreover, it does not make followed news about the condition of those injured in the accidents. War Journalism’s news value understanding causes legitimation of violence and reproduction of status quo. Representing refugees only in terms of their absolute suffering and victimization is also common trend in war journalims (Alankuş, 2016, p. 39-42).



“Syrian father torture his son”

Cumhuriyet-17.04.2016



“Syrians spread terror”

Vatan-02.05.2013



“Immigrant tragedy in the Eagean!  
30 bodies were removed”

Sabah-11.03.2016

## War Journalism Creates Refugee Stereotypes

War journalism creates some refugee images and circulates them as refugees are homogenous group. The image of dead refugees in their ‘illegal’ journey or poor ones crying for their dead or lost relatives are very common images that the mainstream media spread. Beside this, beggar refugees in the streets with their ‘unlike’ clothes and culture is also a common image which also brings the concern of what if they settle permanently in our lands. This also brings the threat that “they get our jobs away”, “they make our strees dirty”, “they get paid with our taxes”, “they change our demographic structure” and so on. However, refugees are not living in the same condition and they are not homogenous group as the media mentioned. There are also refugees who make contribution to economy, art, culture

and social life. Making these contributions visible and underlines harmony of refugees to the society is the right tendency and also one of the principles of peace journalism. (Alankuş, 2016, p. 46-47).



"Again refugee drama, again baby"  
Sabah-05.10.2015

### War Journalism Use Hate Speech Towards Refugees

The term hate speech shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin (Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Recommendation on hate speech, 1997).

War journalism's approach is to use discriminatory language in the news which causes discussions and polarization in public opinion. Hate speech is such a dangerous attitude that may causes undesired results such as lynch, looting, violent protest and riots if it is used repeatedly. In war journalism it is also very common to see refugees are shown as directly guilty of the case, are marked as an economic threat and pointed as a target, are encoded as a cause of discomfort and are marginalised. The news with hate speech does not give any chance to developing empathy to refugees and put them in a target by increasing the existing prejudgement to them (Çelenk, 2010).

## İşsizde vermedikleri maaşla Suriyeliye iş öğretecekler

AKP hükümeti, işsiz vermeye kıyamadığı İşsizlik Fonu'ndaki parayla Türkiye'deki yabancılara meslek öğretmek için çalışma hayatına salacak

**YABANCI LARCI TÜRİSİZİ**  
2 milyon 733 bin 704

**YABANCI LARCA YANILANLAR**  
1 Ocak'tan itibaren 2015 yılında işsizlik fonuna toplam 290 bin 200 kişi kaydedildi. Bu rakamın 200 bin 324'ü yabancılar oldu. 2015 yılında işsizlik fonuna toplam 2 milyon 733 bin 704 kişi kaydedildi. Bu rakamın 200 bin 324'ü yabancılar oldu.

**Çalışmak isteyen yıllık 191 lira ödeyecek**

İşsizlik fonuna kaydedilen yabancıların işsizlik fonuna yıllık 191 lira ödeyecekleri bildirildi. İşsizlik fonuna kaydedilen yabancıların işsizlik fonuna yıllık 191 lira ödeyecekleri bildirildi. İşsizlik fonuna kaydedilen yabancıların işsizlik fonuna yıllık 191 lira ödeyecekleri bildirildi.

"They will teach job to Syrians with the money that they did not give unemployed"  
Sözcü- 3.5.2016

## 400 BİN ÖĞRETMEN ATAMA BEKLERKEN SURIYELİLER ATANDI

İktidar, atanamayan öğretmenlere üveyi sadeleri tutmadı. Üstüne üstlük gençlerimi kendi ülkelerinde üveyi evlat muamelesi görüyor

**Atanamadı**  
Polis oldu şehit düştü

**Atanamadı**  
Polis oldu şehit düştü

**Atanamadı**  
Uzintüden kanser oldu

**Atanamadı**  
Çalışığı etekle ölü

**Atanamadı**  
İşsizlikten canını kaybetti

**Atanamadı**  
Enamam karbam oldu

**Atanamadı**  
Lakantacak işine girdi

**Atanamadı**  
İnsatlarda amele oldu

**Atanamadı**  
Çorbacılık yapıyor

**Suriyeli mültecilere tarımınat verincez**

"Syrians are appointed while 400 thousand of teachers waiting for appointment"  
Sözcü- 18.12.2015

## Hürriyet

GÜNDEM ►

### Şanlıurfa'da 1 saatte 50 Suriyeli konsomrta yakalandı

SONRA OKU



Ömer ŞULUL/ŞANLIURFA, (DHA) 07 Aralık 2015

**Suriye'de yaşanan insanlık dramında yüz binlerce insan öldü, milyonlarca ise başka ülkelere kaçtı. Umut yolculuğunda da binlerce Suriyeli hayatını kaybetti.**

"50 Syrian bar girls are captured in a hour in Şanlıurfa"  
Hürriyet- 07.12.2015

## 7 Yaşındaki Kızı Kaçırmaaya Çalışan Suriyeli Mülteciye Meydan Dayığı!

Uşak'ta Batikent yakınlarında küçük kız çocuğunu kaçırmaaya çalışan 68 yaşındaki mülteci mahallelinin fark etmesi sonucunda yakalanarak sinirlenen kalabalık tarafından dövüldü.

**68 Yaşındaki Suriyeli Mülteci 7 Yaşındaki Küçük Kızı Saldırdı**

Türkiye'nin bir çok iline olduğu gibi Uşak'a da getirilen Suriyeli mültecilerden çeşitli konularda zaman zaman şikayetini dile getiren vatandaşlar Batikent'te yaşanan bir olay üzerine kendilerine hakim olamamaları bir mülteciyi dövdü.

Edinilen bilgi göre: Cumhuriyet Mahallesi'nde Batikent olmuş duraklarında bekleyen 7 yaşındaki küçük kızla konuşarak kızını yere götürmek istediğini söyleyen 68 yaşındaki bir mülteci kız gelmek istemeyince saçlarından tutarak zorla götürmeye çalıştı. Küçük kız duruktan sürükleyerek 100 metre civarındaki boş bir araziye götürülen 68 yaşındaki mülteciyi çevre sakinlerinin farketmesi üzerine kalabalık bir grup adamı yakaladı. Yakalanan mültecinin kalabalık grup tarafından polisler gelinceye dek dövüldüğü öğrenildi.

"Public beating to Syrian refugee who tried to kidnap 7 years old girl!"  
<http://www.usakhabermerkezi.com/13.06.2013>

## War Journalism Unnecessarily Uses Refugees' Races

In war journalism, refugees are sometimes subjected to news with their race even if there is no relation with news. When disadvantageous groups like refugees are seen in the news with negative event, a direct relationship established between the event and refugees' race which is discriminatory qualifications of them (Çelenk, 2010). Unnecessarily using refugees' races in the news produces a negative image on refugees who has higher probability of being exposed to discrimination in their daily lives. If any refugee suspect's national identity pushes to forefront both in the title and content, this points Syrian refugees or any other refugees as a target by linking them with crime. Also, if the ethnic identity is underlined unnecessarily, it may link whole people of the same race with crime. Therefore, words which show

the ethnic identities should not be used in the news because it may cause hostilities in the society.

### **War Journalism Ignores Refugees as Sources**

As war journalism is elite-oriented, it uses official sources like government authorities, police chiefs, mayors, presidents of unions just because the idea of these official people are much more reliable than the ordinary people and they surely provide accurate information. By using all these primary definers, war journalism causes restriction of refugees' voices. And also, as the media is secondary definer, it is just carrying primary definers' voices and make a reality production in the perspective of powerful fraction of the society (Alankuş, 2016, p. 57).

### **Conclusion**

Peace journalism and war journalism differs eachother in terms of news sources, news value, news discourse and news narrative. Peace Journalism does not restrict its new sources only with authorities and elites, it also takes opinions of victims and right organization representatives to develop different point of views. It discovers personal-human stories about refugees but do not marginalize them and do not cause to product learned helplessness on refugees. It also hands the microphone to refugees and make their voices heard.

Media may explain any event with many different words. In respect to refugee issue, refugees who run away from the war and live in Turkey can be named as "guests", "refugees", "invaders". Surely, peace journalism prefers positive names to create harmony. Moreover, peace journalism does not use identities as elements of humiliation and it avoids generalisation, any kind of discrimination, hate speech, polarisation, labels, offending metaphors and adjectives. In brief, it disarms language. Also, it avoids using statements which describes refugees as a problem and as they are spending 'our' wealth (Alankuş, 2016).

Peace journalism aims to give news reports about the events which includes tension, conflict and contrasts without any provocativeness. It is also a party to peace and people who experience otherness in the society like refugees because peace journalim is right oriented. Peace journalism draws attention to problems of refugees and respects for human rights.

All in all, peace journalism does not ignore refugees and does not treat like they are second-class citizen or worse they are invaders. It does not report refugees as news when something bad happaned. It does not attribute news value only to abnormality like natural disasters, fatal accidents, and conflicts. It also shows the problems of refugees and also underlines their harmony to society. And surely it does not create refugee stereotypes and does not create horrible refugee images in oter people's minds when they hear about them. Refugees may be in the focus of hate and ethnocentrismar, therefore peace journalism does not point them as a target with hate speech and it does not serve to xenophobia. It defuzes any conflict between refugees and public and tries to build bridge of peace in the society with its approach on news related with refugees.

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