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EDITORIAL NOTE

The Language of Migration

—KUSHAGR BAKSHI*

On Friday, the 15th of March, a single shooter, identified as an Australian white supremacist, opened fire in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand killing 50 people¹. He released a 74-page rambling manifesto in which he broadly states that he is committing these killings to “show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands.”² This line of thought and specifically the use of the word invaders is similar to Robert Bowers’ hate speech posted on various social media platforms before he killed 11 people in Pittsburgh³. And while the usage of such terms to describe migrants and different ethnic people might not be surprising, it becomes a lot more relevant when you learn that not long after the shooting, on the same day while issuing his first veto rejecting legislation which would overturn his declaration of national emergency to

* Kushagr Bakshi is a fifth year NUJS law student and served as an editor in the JILS 2018-19 Board.

¹ The Guardian, Christchurch mosque attacks: suspect charged with ‘terrorist act’, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/21/christchurch-mosque-attacks-suspect-charged-with-terrorist-act>.

² The Vox, The New Zealand shooter called immigrants “invaders.” Hours later, so did Trump, available at <https://www.vox.com/2019/3/15/18267745/new-zealand-mosque-attack-invade-trump>.

³ CNN world, Mass shooting at Pittsburgh synagogue, available at https://edition.cnn.com/us/live-news/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting/h_0c18of52c8d032fd47eef570cc5065c2.

fund his 'Border Wall', President Trump said that there was nothing less than an invasion of United States by migrants⁴.

One of the most important branch of linguistic studies are logical semantics. This is the art of investigating words so as to understand their sense and reference, presupposition and implication. In the study of political discourse, the study of specific words used and their semantics has gained a lot of importance. Political scientists often focus on the consequences of the use of specific language in terms of the political realities the use of specific language creates and the decisions and actions that come with said reality⁵. Linguists focus on the use of that specific language to decipher the message that it intended and how effectively it is being communicated. M.A.K Halliday proposed a method where he attempted to connect the language and vocabulary used to its context so as to arrive at the full meaning of the speech⁶. The purpose of this note then is to examine speech with specific focus on the vocabulary used in context of the current migration crisis so as to understand the approach of the western leaders and also to understand the impact of this speech on the western citizens, migrants and discourse around the world in general.

Broadly considering the language mentioned before, the use of terms such as invasion and its synonyms to describe migrants by political leaders is not uncommon. In 2015, the then Prime Minister of the UK while describing the port of Calais as safe, stated that this was despite a 'swarm of immigrants' trying to enter the UK⁷. In the same year, the then Prime Minister of Australia, while reacting to the now famous photo of a dead three-year-old Alyan Kurdi spoke about 'stopping the boats'⁸. The aim of our note here is to understand the impact of usage of these terms on political discourse and hence the necessity to change this conception of migration. We shall therefore attempt to propose alternative conceptions of language while talking about migration. We shall do this by dividing the note into three parts. First, we shall discuss the history of migration and the language associated with it. Second, we shall discuss various analyses provided of the usage of this lan-

⁴ The New York Times, Trump issues First veto after Congress reject Border Emergency, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/us/politics/trump-veto-national-emergency.html>.

⁵ Patricia Dunmire, *Political Discourse Analysis: Exploring the Language of Politics and the Politics of Language*, 6/11 Language and Linguistic Compass, pg. 735-751 (2012).

⁶ M.A.K Halliday, *Language Structure and Language Function*, New Horizons in Linguistics, pg. 140-165, Penguin (1970).

⁷ The Washington Post, Why the language we used to talk about refugees matter so much, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/07/30/why-the-language-we-use-to-talk-about-refugees-matters-so-much/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d18085f858b9.

⁸ The Sydney Morning Herald, Drowned Syrian Todler, Tony Abbot says 'tragic picture' a reminder of need to stop boats, available at <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/drowned-syrian-toddler-tony-abbott-says-tragic-picture-a-reminder-of-need-to-stop-boats-20150904-gjevxs.html>.

guage, most prominently by Slavoj Žižek and Ashis Nandy. Finally, we shall discuss a post-colonial critique to this language in context of globalization, Universal Human Rights and white guilt thereby proposing an alternative conception and new language.

I. HISTORY OF MIGRATION AND ITS DISCOURSE

There remain various theories detailing the beginning of migration and its root cause. The Neoclassical theory of migration, often referred to as the push and pull theory posits an explanation for individual migration stating that each individual by virtue of being rational weighs up a considerable number of factors (all economic) while deciding whether to migrate⁹. The positive factors are the push, such as better wage, job security, standard of living and the negative factors are the pull, such as travel and relocation costs, adapting to new cultures. An individual consideration of both the factors and their popular perception is the deciding factor in migration. This micro-individual approach to understanding migration also places reliance on persons of contacts and sources of information at the destination, thus alluding to the creation of a rudimentary migration network¹⁰.

However, this conceptualization of migration based on individual choices is limited and the situation needs to be structurally examined. The macro structural approach argues that a globalized world is predicated on free trade and requires free movement of goods and capital. While it's never theorized, the rational conclusion is that this also includes free movement of labour¹¹. An analytical framework for such an approach identifies a lot of factors, including free flow of information, technology, economic and political environment and defines migration as being circular in nature. Migration within this theory is limited, as an urban phenomenon. The reorganization of industrial production, as reflected in the proliferation of sweatshops exploiting undocumented workers, and of industrial homework shows that migration is a response to the call for labour brought by globalization. This new economy produced a surge in the supply of low-wage jobs such that even the most dynamic and technologically developed sectors of the economy generate jobs that can conceivably be held by unskilled foreign-language workers. Hence, the massive arrival of immigrants from low-wage countries¹². Admittedly there have been recent attempts to outsource such cheap labour production jobs but, firstly they still lead to migration to the FTZ's where the work is outsourced and secondly as living conditions, wages and standard of living do not improve in these

⁹ Ernest Lee, "A Theory of Migration", *Demography*, 3(1), pp. 47-57 (1966).

¹⁰ J Harris Todaro, "Migration, Unemployment, and Development: A Two-Sector Analysis", *American Economic Review*, 60(1), pp. 126-142 (1970).

¹¹ Akin Mabogunje "Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration", *Geographical Analysis*, 2(1), pp. 1-18 (1970).

¹² Sarika Sassen, *The Mobility of Labor and Capital*, Chapter 5, pp. 126-170.

outsourced jobs, individuals still look to migrate towards the more developed and urban centres so as to achieve the standard of life the globalised capitalist world has promised them¹³.

And finally, while this is no approach or theory, it is pertinent to note that recently, armed conflict and war and the persecution flowing from that, be it religious or political has contributed greatly to migration. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there are 68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. 57% of these come from the conflict-ridden nations of South Sudan, Syria and Afghanistan. 51% of the world's refugees in 2014 were children and more than 10 million people are currently stateless¹⁴ thus having no access to basic civil and political rights that the various international conventions provide for us¹⁵. In the face of two broader theories of economic migration and the high number of people displaced through natural disaster and now war, acceptance of these people in their destination countries so that they can build a new life is important. And so, it is necessary that a common culture of acceptance be created and language is the first step in that direction.

There are a host of terms used to describe individuals migrating from one country to another and they range from expatriates to migrants, refugees to asylum seekers. At the outset, there are different connotations for the different terms that are used. Migrant and expatriate both describe people who have moved from one country to another, but tellingly, an expat is unlikely to be called a migrant worker, even though expats are, after all, migrants who work in a foreign country. There's clearly a class-based judgment here in the way many choose to apply these terms. An expat is more likely to be someone who has resettled while still retaining the means and the freedom to choose to return to their home country, and with that kind of agency, is perceived as being more in control, more of an individual, somehow more human. Meanwhile, the terms migrant and migrant worker, ostensibly neutral in their definitions, have already acquired a much less positive nuance in practice, bringing with them stereotypes of low-income labour taking away local jobs and the flow of indistinguishable strangers from some unfamiliar place who may not share the same values. This can also be seen from the statements of Tony Abbot who says 'stop the boats' thereby having two implications, one that those coming by planes should be accepted but those via boats should not but secondly and more importantly, that somehow the legality and actions

¹³ H.K Manmohan Singh & A. Oberoi, "Migration remittances and rural development: Findings of a case study in the Indian Punjab", International Labor Review, 119(2), pp. 229-241 (1980).

¹⁴ UNHCR, "Figures at a Glance", Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

¹⁵ UDHR and ICCPR.

of those coming via boats is criminal but not so for those arriving via plane, thereby reinforcing the class distinction¹⁶.

Certain scholars have analyzed the language used while discussing the immigration 'crisis' in the United Kingdom. Two key conclusions have been drawn, firstly that irrespective of political leanings, publications use terms which describe the overwhelming numbers of migrants often using water based metaphors¹⁷. Phrases like "ever swelling numbers", "rising tide of refugees" and land based metaphors like "caravans of illegals" have been widely used thus contributing to the dehumanization of refugees that we see across various media outlets. Secondly, the language used in mainstream media such as illegal immigrants shifts the debate¹⁸. The usage of such terms obfuscates the plight of the refugees, the circumstances they are trying to escape and the horrors they have seen to a discussion on the worthiness of their asylum applications and the usage of the correct channels to immigrate or broadly the legality of their immigration. This imputes a criminal tone to these asylum seekers thus contributing to our shaded perception of these peoples. It also allows various political leaders to paint them with unfair lenses calling them terrorists and attributing problems caused by structural inadequacies upon these immigrants.

But to their credit, certain mainstream news outlets have recognized these deficiencies in public discourse that they have contributed too. Al Jazeera recognized the incorrect political baggage attached to the term migrant and how it had contributed to a growth in incorrect political discourse, they chose to not use the term anymore¹⁹. The New Yorker also recognizing the in correctness of Trump's political discourse with regards to migration has made policy changes in terms of the language they use so as to not normalize the rhetoric²⁰. And finally, the Atlantic also recognizing context and word

¹⁶ Migrants, Refugees, and Expats: How Humanity Comes in Waves, available at <https://daily.jstor.org/language-of-migrants-refugees-expats/>

¹⁷ BAKER, PAUL, et al. "A Useful Methodological Synergy? Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Examine Discourses of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK Press." *Discourse & Society*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2008, pp. 273–306. *JSTOR*, available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/42889197?mag=language-of-migrants-refugees-expats&seq=1#metadata-info_tab_contents.

¹⁸ KHOSRAVINIK, MAJID. "The Representation of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigrants in British Newspapers, during the Balkan Conflict (1999) and the British General Election (2005)." *Discourse & Society*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2009, pp. 477–498. *JSTOR*, available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/42889274?mag=language-of-migrants-refugees-expats&seq=1#metadata-info_tab_contents.

¹⁹ Aljazeera, Why Al Jazeera will not say Mediterranean 'migrants', available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/editors-blog/2015/08/al-jazeera-mediterranean-migrants-150820082226309.html>.

²⁰ The New Yorker, How the Mainstream Media Normalizes Trump's Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric available at <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/how-the-mainstream-media-normalizes-trumps-anti-immigrant-rhetoric>.

associations and the weightage of terms has decided to change the language they use to write about such issues²¹.

II. THE LANGUAGE OF THE DISCOURSE OF MIGRATION

This language of migration as used in western media has been open to criticism on various fronts. Above we have discussed the various metaphors used and their dehumanizing effect. Now we shall discuss two further criticisms, first that the language used by western political leaders and the media portrays migrants as those deprived of their agency. Second, we shall discuss how this language is similar to that of colonization and leads to a further perpetuation of the white savior and civilizer narrative. The larger argument we are attempting to make here is that, the language used in political and civil society discourse presents a picture far removed from reality and trivializes the situation of the migrants.

We have so far discussed the language used in European civil society discourse in terms of the refugees and their dehumanization. But now we must explore two other strands of thought within this discourse. The first flowing from the aforementioned language is the argument of fortressing Europe, which is the say the radical right which argues that the influx of refugees, who have different cultural backgrounds is leading to a clash of society, increase in crime and destabilization of localities where the refugees settle. This is the assimilation argument and to dismiss it lightly would be incorrect given the news reports that have come in from various nations across Europe and specifically Germany²². Slavoj Zizek, while examining the 'refugee crisis' put forth the argument of social totality, which in essence criticizes the liberal left stating that the reflexive impulse of humanitarianism towards those fleeing genocide, ethnic cleansing and unprecedented brutality ought to be subordinated to the social impact that this will have on the countries to which these refugees are fleeing, namely, in Zizek's mind, European countries²³. There are numerous criticisms of this argument put forth by Zizek²⁴, one that he has grossly misrepresented the number of refugees hosted across various countries and that this sort of argumentation from the far right is what's given rise to migrant smuggling, hundreds of deaths on sea, and the various governments across

²¹ The Atlantic, Expat and the Fraught Language of Migration, available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/10/expat-immigrant/570967/>

²² The Trumpet, How one Activist in Germany woke up to the dangers of Muslim Immigration available at <https://www.thetrumpet.com/17082-how-one-activist-in-germany-woke-up-to-the-dangers-of-muslim-immigration>.

²³ London Reviews of Books, The Non-Existence of Norway available at <https://www.lrb.co.uk/2015/09/09/slavoj-zizek/the-non-existence-of-norway>.

²⁴ Jacobin, How to Justify a Crisis, available at <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/10/refugee-crisis-europe-zizek-habermas-singer-greece-syria-academia/>

Europe making ethically concerning refugee deals²⁵. But what most critics miss is the characterization leading to the social totality argument. Žižek states that it is crucial to recognize that most of the refugees come from 'failed states', where public authority is more or less inoperative: Syria, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, DRC and so on. This disintegration of state power is not a local phenomenon but a result of international politics and the global economic system, in some cases – like Libya and Iraq – a direct outcome of Western intervention. It was Western intervention in Libya that threw the country into chaos. It was the US attack on Iraq that created the conditions for the rise of Islamic State. The ongoing civil war in the Central African Republic between the Christian south and the Muslim north is not just an explosion of ethnic hatred, it was triggered by the discovery of oil in the north: France and China are fighting for the control of resources through their proxies. It was a global hunger for minerals, including coltan, cobalt, diamonds and copper that abetted the 'warlordism' in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 1990s and early 2000s. In this context, when he argues for social totality to remove the façade of humanitarianism that the West seems to be putting up, it points to the role the west has played in the creation of this problem and their continued exploitation of it. It is perhaps pertinent to note that the Western Allied countries (due to oil) in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the Emirates have been less hospitable to refugees and less accepting of them compared to the relatively less economically successful countries (Iran, Egypt and Turkey spring to mind). We will notice that all the successful nations are theocracies where citizens enjoy high levels of power and economic benefit due to the countries oil trading and an influx of foreign migrants would create a lessening of wealth for them. We should also notice that there has been no serious international pressure on any of these nations to accept more refugees due to oil and arms deals which the western nations are relying on (US arms deal, Canadian Arms deal, Post Brexit UK's arms deals)²⁶.

Second, we must also note that the refugees who are fleeing their homes are adding to the new form of economic slavery, sweated labor, which is perhaps a requirement of global capitalism. And, while the stories in the Asian sweatshops²⁷ and the lack of basic rights in the rich middle eastern countries have gained popularity²⁸, we must also look into the Western Liberal European countries where such labour is gaining precedence. A clothing factory in Prato, near Florence burned down killing seven workers who were trapped in an

²⁵ The Christian Science Monitor, Turkey- EU refugee Deal New arrival falls as ethical concerns rise, available at <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2016/0420/Turkey-EU-refugee-deal-New-arrivals-fall-as-ethical-concerns-rise>.

²⁶ The Guardian, U.K –Saudi weapons sales unlawful Lords Committee Finds , available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/16/uks-saudi-weapons-sales-unlawful-lords-committee-finds>, <https://thedefensepost.com/2018/12/05/canada-saudi-arms-deal-hypocrisy/>

²⁷ Naomi Klein, No Logo, Knopf (1999).

²⁸ The Guardian, Modern Day Slavery in Focus, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/series/modern-day-slavery-in-focus+world/qatar>.

improvised cardboard dormitory²⁹. When refugees who are fleeing their war-torn homelands, arrive in Europe, they do so with dreams of comfortable living and a better life for themselves and their families. However, it would appear that many of these refugees now entering Europe would become a part of this growing force of sweated labour and perhaps at the cost of a local worker who is protected by the employment laws in these countries. It becomes apparent then that the refugees not only are unable to realize their dreams and have to function in abysmal conditions but also that they have to face an intolerable barrage of hate for this.

Then the humanitarian language of accepting refugees now seems particularly troubling, as it allows the Western World to obscure their role in the creation of this crisis. In addition to that, it also leads to a deprivation of agency for the refugee as they consider the favor of the western nation as a huge burden and are then shoehorned into working situations which a government could never inflict on its own people, all while having to face far right racist abuse and a lack of protection or voice to engage. This is why Žižek argues for social totality, which allows perhaps greater scope for recognition of Western failures and while the Žižekian argument is problematic on many fronts, it does highlight the benign neglect and hypocrisy of the West in this regard.

We have noted the increasing use of the word 'illegal' in immigration discourse by our political leaders³⁰. The usage of this words dates back to 1882 in the United States with the Chinese Exclusion Act³¹. Perhaps ironically, due to this act, American businessmen preferred Mexicans to Americans as the labour costs were cheaper. This was politically supported by the enactment of the Bracero program which bought over 4.5 million contract laborers to America and helped them in gaining citizenship and was beneficial to the Mexicans, until overexploitation, inhuman living conditions, and misdirected native anger caused the cessation of the program³². The commonality that we can observe from immigration in the current times and the bracero program is that while a racial minority which served the corporate interests of the white man did not have enough economic and social capital, benefits such as housing, immigration et all are provided so as to maximize profit from these people but as soon as they gain a certain economic and political capital which threatens to upset the inhuman but profit making set up, terms of illegality and invasion are used. It is in this context that we will compare the language

²⁹ BBC, Italy Prato Fire kills seven in Chinese-owned Factory, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25180500>.

³⁰ The Washington Post, Trump seeks to resurrect a long dormant phrase 'Illegal Alien', available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/01/14/trump-seeks-resurrect-long-dormant-phrase-illegal-alien/?utm_term=.64834f210682.

³¹ Chinese Exclusion Act available at <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/chinex.htm>.

³² The Bracero History Archive, available at <http://braceroarchive.org/about>.

of colonization to the language of immigration with the ‘white savior complex’ being at the heart of both these languages and discourse.

The white savior complex, as explained by Teju Cole, “supports brutal policies in the morning, founds charities in the afternoon, and receives awards in the evening. The White Savior Industrial Complex is not about justice. It is about having a big emotional experience that validates privilege”³³. To tie the idea back to immigration, Europe is now considered a hot spot where, “people from places like California post their plans to fly to Greece to provide humanitarian support, they crowdsource their efforts on GoFundMe pages”³⁴. In context of colonialism, the white savior complex is ably complemented by the narrative of civilizing the savages. As Ashish Nandy explains, under the white Christian expansion, the colonizers believed themselves to be the superior species to individuals with a different cultural society and most importantly a darker skin tone. In aid of the economic goals, to legitimize the processes of brutalization and murder employed, the white colonialist described the native as a savage who lived in backward times and therefore it was the white man’s religious and civic duty to colonize the native with the aim of civilising them which is to say bring them in line with the prevalent western customs, traditions and thoughts at the time³⁵. Inherent in this is the white savior industrial complex, which dictates that the white man invest capital in the people in need of saving, get adequate returns from this investment and do all this in the name of humanity or god³⁶. You can note that this is very similar to the current discourse regarding immigration, where the migrants from different cultures and minorities are thought of as backward people who deserve the sympathy of the white man and need saving. Hence it becomes the white man’s duty to invest capital be it via housing, food, cloth or shelter but as necessitated by modern capitalism, they are also given low wage labour jobs where they are expected to toil in less than human conditions so as the repay the white man for all the saving the white man has done³⁷.

But this analogy can be stretched further, by comparing the reactions of the white man to the native absorbing the intellectual discourse of the west and gaining some social or political or economic capital that provides a base for independence. In case of colonialism, when the Indians with knowledge of

³³ The Atlantic, The White Savior Industrial Complex, available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

³⁴ Heath Cabot, *The Mediterranean Refugee Crisis*, Anthropology Today (2016).

³⁵ Ashish Nandy, The psychology of colonialism: Age, Sex and Ideology in British India, pg 179-209, 2016, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00332747.1982.11024151>.

³⁶ The 1947 Partition Archive, available at <https://www.1947partitionarchive.org/node/285>.

³⁷ Brittany A. Aronson The White Savior Industrial Complex: A Cultural Studies Analysis of a Teacher Educator, Savior Film, and Future Teachers Journal of critical Thought and Praxis Iowa state university digital press& School of education: Volume 6 Issue 3 Everyday Practices of Social Justice available at <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1138&context=jctp>.

freedom of man and political sovereignty as advocated by European scholars (Voltaire, Rousseau, Grotius) argued for Indian independence, they were met with stiff resistance, brutality and murder which would last for over 200 years until India finally won her independence. The same blatant-ness cannot be observed now but what we can notice is that in furtherance of Western capitalism and need for cheap labour, under a humanitarian guise, the west has accepted a lot of refugees. There has obviously been a clash of cultures with the West deciding that the refugees must accept the culture of the country they have assimilated into and then the industrial exploitation so characteristic of colonialism has begun. This forces the refugees into less than human conditions and the west treats them as children so to speak who require saving from themselves and civilization to bring them up to modernity which forces them to give up their own culture³⁸. They are also met with hate from the local community on account of them working for lower wages which they are forced into, which takes away jobs from the locals. This fuelling of the far-right rhetoric of hate when added to the mental pressure of refugees having left their homes and living in uncertain conditions is comparable to brutality of colonialism. And so, the point remains in that the west uses this narrative to hide their systematic insufficiency and creation of a neo-colonist economic order.

III. THE POST-COLONIAL APPROACH: THE VALUE OF LANGUAGE

The majority media discourse in relation to the migrant crisis has played a pivotal role in the creation of the 'us' and 'them' distinction, which capitalizes on paranoid nationalism, abundant in Europe societies. This 'politics of naming', could be seen as having perpetuated problematic beliefs and stereotypes of refugees and migrants in order to reify colonial legacies and reinforce a racialized 'other' that harks back to Derrida's "anthropological war' between dominant and marginalized cultures, the 'naming and leaving unnamed'³⁹. Through their representations of refugees and their societies, media discourses reproduce orientalist constructions, which in turn inform public debates and state policies. From a postcolonial perspective, the creation of the 'third space', the opening up of alternative discourses to the Western hegemonic characterizations of refugees is crucial in order to denounce Western produced discursive binaries and break down the underlying power that the West possesses as creator of these representations and distinctions. As discussed by Spivak, 'representation is not only a matter of speaking about but also speaking for'⁴⁰ and therefore the postcolonial enquiry attempts to write against, over and from

³⁸ Nandy, Ashis. "History's Forgotten Doubles." *History and Theory*, vol. 34, no. 2, 1995, pp. 44–66. Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/2505434?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

³⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, John Hopkins University Press (Trans. Gayatri Spivak, 2018).

⁴⁰ Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak*, Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, ed. Cary Nelson & Lawrence Grossberg, MacMillan, (1988).

below these representations to present a new history of knowledge, in a bid to challenge the residual aspects of colonial discourse that seem to have survived beyond the colonial age and continue to color perceptions of the non-Western world. The postcolonial enquiry of refugee and migrant representation during the current crisis is important in terms of understanding the direction that Europe is heading in, and also how to change this direction away from a Europe predicated on its 'singularity and exceptionality'⁴¹ but to also include the Other⁴². With this shift in terms of who can speak, the postcolonial turn envisages that the gaze will therefore no longer be upon the actions of the colonized (migrants), but of the actions of the colonists (Europeans) who hold the tools for change that will allow this to happen.

However, European state's bordering practices and exclusionary narratives have left this postcolonial imagining of another Europe, as just that, an imagining, which will only be realized when we can open up the silence of the 'subaltern'. It is interesting to note the distinct absence of voices in academic literature and journalistic enquiries of a standpoint approach, exploring refugee and migrant's subjectivities and experiences when analyzing the current migrant crisis. The invisibility of the subaltern allows for the continuation of their 'marginalization from mainstream culture' and consequently their silence detains them in the subordinated capacity of the Other, to be 'named and unnamed, ignored or vilified in the public arena' according to the political agendas of the signifier⁴³. In this sense, their identities are essentialised by a white Western application of their voices. In the present expression of this essentialism in migration, not only can the migrant not speak due to its inferior position, but also as a result of the securitization of the Arabic language. Along with other signifiers of difference such as dress, skin color and facial hair, a post 9/11 preoccupation that terrorism is borne of a brown face and looks and behaves in a certain way, has manifested into the creation of suspect communities and an 'unrelenting impulse to sort and rank refugees and migrants, in particular Muslims, as good or bad'⁴⁴ and in doing so has created racial hierarchies and propagated the colonial stereotypes of migrants as a problem, that need to be 'controlled'.

Language is often a central question in postcolonial studies. During colonization, colonizers usually imposed or encouraged the dominance of their native language onto the peoples they colonized, even forbidding natives to speak their mother tongues⁴⁵. Many writers colonially educated recount how

⁴¹ Sandra Ponzanesi, *Of Digital Crossings in Europe*, 5(1) Journal of Migration and Culture (2014).

⁴² Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, Indiana University Press (1992).

⁴³ R. Harindranath, *Transnational Lives and Media*, Palgrave MacMillan (2007).

⁴⁴ Nicholas De Genova, *"The Borders of Europe: Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering"*, Duke University Press (2017).

⁴⁵ Dennis Lee, *Cadence, Country, Silence: Writing in Colonial Space*, 2(3) Boundary (1974).

students were demoted, humiliated, or even beaten for speaking their native language in colonial schools⁴⁶. In response to the systematic imposition of colonial languages, some postcolonial writers and activists advocate a complete return to the use of indigenous languages. Others see the language (e.g. English) imposed by the colonizer as a more practical alternative, using the colonial language both to enhance inter-nation communication (e.g. people living in Djibouti, Cameroon, Morocco, Haiti, Cambodia, and France can all speak to one another in French) and to counter a colonial past through de-forming a “standard” European tongue and re-forming it in new literary forms⁴⁷. I explain this approach to language, as I wish to use the latter option which is to use the language of the colonizers, in terms of the discourse on globalization and universal human rights, and reform it to prove the hypocrisy of the west and the new approach needed towards the migration crisis that we face now.

Postcolonial scholars have always critiqued the West’s eagerness towards a globalized economy. A globalized economy, apart from freedom of movement for capital has also led to freedom of movement for labour. Therefore, the debate in current western nations regarding migration, started earlier due to the movement of people from less affluent countries of Asia, Africa and South America. In the early times, when nations were still in the process of industrializing, these immigrants were welcome as they provided a low-cost labour source and did not have the same rights or expectations as the local labour. The roots of this process of globalization go back to colonial times, starting from slavery to setting up of factories in the colonized land and making the indigenous people provide no-cost labour⁴⁸. As we moved into the modern era, the ideology and practices of capitalism has been widely accepted and has led to this neo colonialist manner of exploitation of labour either through migration or even through free trade zones and economic exploitation. It is however important to note that postcolonial theory is not always the sole theoretical inroad to the study of migration: many migrants, especially those who are skilled, economically secure, and welcome in their host countries, do not share the struggle or the deep historical dislocation of the postcolonial. But for those who do, we must remember the postcolonial is about dislocation⁴⁹.

The postcolonial posit here is that, looking at migration through this lens we see that the immigrant and the colonized are the same. Both have been displaced due to the interference of the colonizer and now find themselves in foreign surroundings. The immigrants are now trying to immerse

⁴⁶ Chinua Achebe, *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays* 1965-1987, Doubleday (New York, 1988).

⁴⁷ Achilles Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, University of California Press (2001).

⁴⁸ Simon During, *Postcolonialism and Globalization*, 14(4) *Journal of Culture Studies* (2000).

⁴⁹ Parvati Nair, *Postcolonial Theories of Migration*, *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*, Blackwell (2010).

themselves into a foreign culture, denying their own origins and traditions in an attempt to be absorbed by the all saving other. This was the situation amongst the colonized that were forced to accept the western culture while being constantly told and made to accept the barbarity and backwardness of their ways so as to integrate with their colonial masters and serve them better. However, as Bhabha notes⁵⁰, this condition of being positioned in marginality gives immigrants immense creative energy. The marginal found the latest expression in the subaltern existence of immigrants. Imperialism, in course of its history, marginalized the colonized, and from that marginal existence emerged immense potential and subverted itself into arrays of post-colonial literature with its new found expression of liberation and coexistence. Immigrants use of the marginalized energy has come with new subversions/themes that call for the attention of readers in the West and the East.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the late 1940s and 1950s citizens of English colonies in the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent arrived in the United Kingdom. These British citizens were seen as exterior to the nation and constructed as immigrants⁵¹. In France in the 1950s a similar situation occurred when citizens from the French North African colonies arrived in France⁵². The presence of these (former) colonial subjects in the seat of empire challenged the public myth that European nation-states were cut off from the circuits of colonialism and imperialism. In the 1960s and 1970s labour migration shaped the Fordist state in Germany, France, Britain, the Netherlands, and the Benelux countries, through the recruitment of workers from the disenfranchised territories of Southern Europe, Turkey, Morocco, and other postcolonial territories. Despite these migratory movements, Europe's memory about its own history of transatlantic settler colonialism-migration and exile was not brought to the fore⁵³. Nonetheless, the 1980s reaffirmed that the movements of people due to political persecution, poverty, war, austerity, social constraints, cultural restrictions, lack of employment, study, leisure, or just because of their wish for change, constituted the fabric of current societies. It is within this postcolonial context that migration and border control measures, technologies, devices, and tropes have been engineered in the last three decades. Migration regulation ensures that the Other of the West is reconfigured in racial terms. The logic generated in this context constructs and produces objects to be governed through restrictions, management devices, and administrative categories such as "refugee," "asylum seeker," or a variety of migrant statuses (terms we have

⁵⁰ Homi K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge (1994).

⁵¹ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, Princeton University Press (1993).

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precolonial Discourse, Ethnographic Acuity, and Cross-Identification in German Colonialism*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 1 (2003): pg 41–95.

discussed previously). The coloniality of migration operates within this matrix of social classification on the basis of colonial racial hierarchies. While the construct of civility isn't as blatant wherein the Other isn't considered inferior any longer, the fundamental assumption has changed to one of inassimilability, which is to say the Other is considered foreign⁵⁴. Similarly, while current EU migration and asylum policies do not operate explicitly within a framework of racial or ethnic difference, by coupling nationality and the right to asylum, they construct hierarchies in the recognition or rejection of asylum in terms of nationalities. This places people in zones of recognition or rejection of the human right to liveability. This coupling follows from the foundation of racialized notions of the Other. While the entry of Syrian refugees to Germany was being accepted in the autumn of 2015, for instance, people from Kosovo, Albania, and Montenegro were being deported. On October 24, 2015, these latter countries were declared "safe countries of origin." However, those affected by these deportations were primarily Roma families who had fled from racist violence in their countries of origin. The perception and categorization of this group was determined in Germany not only by their national origin. As the result of Western European racism against Roma and Sinti, deeply rooted since the Middle Ages and articulated anew, they have become the objects of securitization measures⁵⁵.

At this point, it is important to note that the modern international law regime of human rights is based upon three important documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁵⁶. Even when these conventions were being drafted there was huge split with the US and other western states being in support of political and civil rights and the USSR and its allied nations being in favor of a system of social and economic rights. Now the capitalist construct ensured that the focal point of international law operations was the state and the other structures of international law placed a greater reliance on civil and political rights as it was decided that the ideal model of government was a capitalist democracy. The irony that I'm trying to point out here is that despite advocating for civil and political rights which are centered in citizenship and statehood, the West now seems particularly comfortable with having over 12 million people currently stateless which rids the, from the power to achieve either one of the fundamental rights so upheld by the West.

⁵⁴ Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, edited by Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon, Sage(1997).

⁵⁵ Ana Nichita Ivasiuc, *Provincializing Citizenship: Critical Anthropological Notes on the Uses and Usefulness of "Citizenship" in the Context of the Roma Political Subject*. available at https://www.academia.edu/11754903/Provincialising_Citizenship._Critical_anthropological_notes_on_the_uses_and_usefulness_of_citizenship_in_the_context_of_the_Roma_political_subject.

⁵⁶ Christopher N.J. Roberts. "William H. Fitzpatrick's Editorials on Human Rights (1949)". *Quellen zur Geschichte der Menschenrechte*(2017).

From the beginning of this paper, we have seen that due to growing disparity in standard of living, wars and instability, terrorist threat and increased natural disasters, migration of humans is at an all-time high. Migration as it always has been, remains a clash of cultures but more importantly a clash of wages, as poor immigrants are willing to take up unskilled labour jobs at much lower rates than the native, which leads to all jobs being given to these poor unskilled immigrants. This leads to anger amongst the natives while the poor immigrant continues to live in despair. But the media and politicians for their own gain exploit the clash here, by running a deplorable and incorrect narrative of refugees. We have seen through the course of this paper how this narrative dehumanizes the refugee. It also removes agency from the refugee and the patronizing language adds to the white savior and native barbarian narrative. On top of all that, it hides the faults of the west in terms of their role in contributing to the creation of this migration crisis. Finally, we have explored the value of language to a post colonial theorist and how it can be used to effect change. Upon analysis of the situation of the migrants through a post-colonial lens we have realized that the evils of global capitalism and its contribution to the outlook of the west and their hypocrisy in the migration crisis. Ultimately, we find similarities between the situation of the colonized and the refugee but also realize the unique strength in the space the marginal has found. The utilization of this space is where change can be effected.

