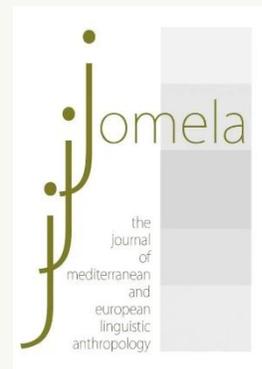


# Representations of Refugees, Traffickers, and Local People in Greek Literature during the European Migrant Crisis (2014-2018)

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## Abstract

This paper looks into Greek literature (prose and poetry) written, in its bulk, during the years of the European migrant crisis (2014-2018) for ways in which refugees, traffickers and locals are presented. Prose is looked at through insights from social representations theory, the theoretical framework of the determinants of the refugee phenomenon and the theoretical framework of social exclusion. Poetry is analyzed with the help of critical discourse analysis (CDA) according to Gee (2011), in terms of the social language, situated meanings, intertextuality, figured worlds and Discourses that the poems. Analysis, especially of prose, reveals a perception of the refugees either as a dangerous mob or as harmless individuals who have suffered greatly, and also two perceptions of Greeks: either as people embracing and trying to comfort the migrants or people who clasp around the dipole “us-them” and feel threatened by their flow and presence. The viewpoint of traffickers, who are represented as heartless slave traders, also emerges. Poetry, on the other hand, is seen to sanctify refugees and condemn the others.

**Keywords:** *Refugees, European migrant crisis, Greece, literature, CDA, social exclusion*

## 1. Introduction

The European migrant crisis, i.e., the crisis characterized by large numbers of people flooding the European Union from across the Mediterranean Sea or overland through Southeast Europe has been acutely affecting Greece, one of the main countries of their entrance into the EU.<sup>1</sup>

The arrival of around 900,000 refugees<sup>2</sup> in the period of heightened migrant flows (2013-2015), on account of the war in Syria and other conflicts (in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan etc.), helped to highlight the consequences of the European migration policy on the lives of hundreds of refugees who found themselves in Aegean waters. Their best chance to enter European ground was to travel in precarious inflatable boats from the coasts of Turkey to the Greek islands of the Aegean. Notwithstanding that, they traveled with any imaginable means available, paying illegal traffickers and legal transporters (bus and taxi drivers) to help them cross the Greek state and reach different destinations in Europe, for as long as the borders were open. Once the roads to Europe were closed, about 60,000 refugees were trapped in Greece. On the one hand, the solidarity that the inhabitants of the islands showed the exhausted people was formidable and brought emotional comfort to all Greeks who could not be there to help. On the other hand, fear gave rise to a xenophobic wave that lasts even today; the xenophobic wave included atrocities, like shouting at them “go back”<sup>3</sup> or forcing their boats away<sup>4</sup> or preventing them from going to the shelters or housing that the Greek state provided.<sup>5,6</sup>

Since real life spills over into art, it is interesting to see how not only immigrants, but also the Greek society have been presented in the literary examples that were collected, since they may reflect feelings and stances of real-life people involved.

## 2. The Literary Sample

We examined three books of prose themed around refugees. Two of them were originally written in Greek: (i) Konstantinos Tzamiotis (2016), *To perasma* [The crossing], Athens: Metaixmio, and (ii) Yannis Makridakis (2017), *Ola gia kalo* [All for good], Athens: Vivliopoleion tis Hestias. The third one was originally written in Turkish (Hakan Günday, 2013, *Daha*, Istanbul: Doğan Kitap) and was later translated into Greek (Hakan Günday, 2016, *Ki allo*, transl.: S. Vrettou, Athens: Okeanida) and into other languages, including English. Quotes in this paper are taken from the English book: Hakan Günday (2018), *More*, transl.: Z. Beler, New York: Arcade Publishing. Quotes from the other two Greek books have been translated by Christina Linardaki.

Apart from these prose books, we also examined 47 poetry collections that contain poems about immigrants or are dedicated to them in full (more than 170 poems in total).<sup>7</sup> However, only 85 poems form the convenience sample that was deemed appropriate for the analysis in this paper. More than one poem may have been selected from the same collection, because they

reveal different aspects of the subject in question.

The bulk of these poems span from 2014 to 2018. This is not to exclude poems written prior to 2014: Greece has been the point of entry to the EU for refugees from different parts of Asia and Africa long before the current European migration crisis. Thus, poems that were written prior to the refugee crisis may resonate very well with its circumstances. As a result, the start of the period that poetry in the sample covers is 2004.

### 3. Methodology

Analysis of prose in this paper is based on: i. social representations theory, ii. the theoretical framework of the determinants of the refugee phenomenon, i.e. the reasons for the creation of migration flows; iii. the theoretical framework of social exclusion. More specifically, social representations theory enables us to see through stereotypical representations that blur the view of current events. At the same time, the refugee phenomenon is seen in the context of functionalist approaches, namely neo-classical migration theory, which explain migration by geographical differences in the supply and demand for labor, not excluding other reasons as well. In addition to this, migrants and refugees are seen as vulnerable groups, because of the high risk of social exclusion to which they are exposed.

Analysis of poetry, on the other hand, makes use of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA focuses, inter alia, on the relations of “power, dominance and inequality and the ways these are reproduced or resisted by social group members through text and talk”.<sup>8</sup> CDA has been implemented along a number of approaches (Wodak & Meyer 2001; Fairclough 1989, 1992, 2010; van Dijk 1995, 2001, 2014, 2015). For the purposes of this paper, however, the appropriate analytical tools of poems were found in Gee (1999, 2004, 2011). Gee proposes five tools which can be used when performing CDA: situated meaning, social language, intertextuality, figured worlds and Discourse (2011:150ff). Since however, in this paper, it is social language that gives words their situated meanings and the latter is explored within the social language, a reversal has taken place: social language is examined first and situated meaning second.

### 4. Analysis of prose

#### 4.1 *Social Representations Theory*

The stances we adopt become more prominent under conditions that involve choices connected with who we are as persons. These stances are inextricably linked to social representations that exist both in the minds of people but are also within society. In other words, the meaning of what is taking place is not to be found simply inside or around it: its meaning must be constructed.

Social representations are the mechanism that constructs common images of the world.<sup>9</sup>

Immigrants, in the prose books by Tzamiotis and Makridakis, are presented as bedraggled people who went through a lot, having to abandon their home country and putting themselves in danger until they reach Greece. “Every week rowboats or motor dinghies arrived filled with desperate people, and the shipwrecks were not rare, but he had never seen such a big ship in this condition” (Tzamiotis, p. 19). “Most people reached ashore half-drowned” (Tzamiotis, p.25). At the same time, however, immigrants are presented as a mob, a disorderly crowd that moves as a collectivity and is unpredictable, even if basically justified in its reactions: “In vein did Ismael with his megaphone try, following the orders he was taking from the Port Authority officer, to persuade them that they had to stay put and that they did badly to cram themselves at the pier. Afraid that there might not be enough room for everyone on board, they continued to push one another in order to board first, not caring if those up front ran the danger of ending up in the sea” (Tzamiotis, p. 247).

In respect to locals, both Tzamiotis and Makridakis refrain from making a doxology of Greek society. By contrast, they do not avoid its darker face, i.e. the stereotypical views that lead to the polarized stance of a number of Greeks. That, notwithstanding the fact that, in Makridakis’s book the protagonist is a person who is wholeheartedly dedicated to helping the refugees and that the story often gets told from his viewpoint. But we see, for example, in this book the priest telling captain Fotis, who helps out immigrants: “You are helping illegal immigrants to enter our country and turn us all into Muslims, to destroy our religion and nation, to take up our homeland in the end” (Makridakis, p.108). Or, in a dialogue between the mayor and an officer of the army, in Tzamiotis’s book, we see the tug-of-war of thoughts between those who take a dim view of the immigrants and those who understand and help them: “- You insist on seeing them as innocent victims, when in their majority they are just a few more hundreds of illegal immigrants that enter our country. – Shame on you! As an officer, you should know that the refugee status is sacred all over the civilised world” (Tzamiotis, p.168).

All the above show that, lacking recent social representations that would enable Greeks to assign meaning to the experience, they were led to a process called “anchoring”. In the framework of anchoring, a new experience is ascribed to an already existing representation. Then, the new part of the representation is objectified, as it becomes widely acceptable.<sup>10</sup> If we accept that literature reflects reality, we understand that a part of Greeks cognitively included the experience of massive migrant inflows to the already existing representation of xenophobia and another part to the already existing representation of hospitality.

#### *4.2 Determinants of the refugee phenomenon*

Refugees and economic migrants are global migration types that are differentiated based on the reason/incentive for their mobility. Refugee pressure comes from high refugee potential, i.e. high numbers of people who are thinking of leaving their homeland. This also indicates the geographical areas of potential action for combating the generation of migration flows, as migration tends to occur in “socially selective and geographically strongly patterned ways” (de Haas, 2011, p.10).

The refugee phenomenon is determined, first, by factors relevant to the countries of origin. Seen in the context of functionalist approaches, namely neo-classical migration theory, migration is explained by geographical differences in the supply and demand for labour: Migrants move based on a cost-benefit calculation that promises a better life somewhere else (see e.g. Todaro, 1969). According to the specific migration theory, the countries of origin represent the supply side. For the period under review, the main reason for migration flows was, of course, the war in Syria: “It is destruction that is taking place down there. Entire countries are going empty” (Tzamiotis, p.14); “Every week, boats or small boats full of desperate people arrived” (Tzamiotis, p.19); “The goods came from the Iran border three times a month, were joined up with the ones from Iraq or Syria if there were any, and sent out to us” (Günday, p.13); “As if we had forgotten and remembered again suddenly, that these people had run from war and they were sitting at our tables as refugees” (Makridakis, p.157).

The second determinant relates to the destination or demand-side countries. Migration waves want to reach these countries for reasons of personal or family security and because they search life conditions where law and justice rules; of course, favourable economic conditions are also a desideratum: “There are reasons why some societies thrive, contrary to others that sink into misery” (Tzamiotis, p.101); “They were both crying. They also knew. They were aware they had no idea what the future held. They were taking the first steps toward darkness on a day like this, when the sun was so bright it practically lit up the insides of our mouths.” (Günday, p.383); “So we had learnt that they were Kurds and they were living in a city at the border of Syria and Turkey: she was 21 years old and Kachraman was three years older. They were heading to Germany, to find an uncle of theirs who lived there for many years” (Makridakis, p.82).

However, in the context of the latest migrant crisis, the country that the migrant does eventually reach is not the one he had been dreaming of as his final destination. Greece is simply the country that traffickers from Turkey have chosen as a transit station. The arrival of hordes of exhausted people, thousands among them drowning in the process, makes the reception society, i.e. the simple people on the Aegean islands, face them with mixed feelings: “Did we refuse help to anyone? Did we leave anyone starving? Didn’t we all do whatever we could?” (Tzamiotis, p. 16); “I can’t stand this any longer [...] it is two years now that these people keep coming and coming. I’m sick. I’m sick of seeing them miserable. I’m sick of seeing them drowning..., I’m sick

of them being protagonists in my life. [...] Neither do I intend to apologize for having a roof over my head or for not being hungry” (Tzamiotis, p. 121-122); and with the voice of a refugee “These people did nothing wrong to us. We are their guests. They save us, they are taking care of us, they are doing everything they can to help us” (Tzamiotis, p.224).

Finally, the third determinant of global migration are networks: communication networks, smuggling networks, support networks that either create migration flows or perpetuate existing ones. Human smuggling is an international business yielding high profits. Such networks reinforce the ambiguity between refugees and migrants, influence the decision on the final destination country by way of misinformation and smuggling costs, while also being accused many a time for exploitation of the smuggled. In Günday’s book, *More*, the world of traffickers is described through the eyes of a child, who is the son of one of them. The boy’s involvement in smuggling refugees, next to his father, gradually strips him off his childhood and sensitivity. People, the “smuggled”, become just a commodity with a price attached to it: “... they were all just lives. They didn’t turn into novels through mere divulgence. An autopsy report perhaps, at most” (Günday, p.21). Immigrants get carried by trucks from inland and are piled up in a water tank constructed for this purpose at the trafficker’s building plot. There, under desperate conditions, they await to be transferred to the beach: “Violence, as strong as the sun, was the first you saw when you looked into the techniques for smuggling people” (Günday, p.103). To the boy’s question, if they can leave together with those that look for a better life, his father answers: “...‘Our job [...] is to send the passengers on their way – not to go with them!’ As if to say that our job was to kill, not to die.” (Günday, p.56).

Empirical evidence confirms the accumulative effect of these three determinants on the creation of modern migration flows (Kontis, 2005). In the case of Greece, during the migration crisis 2014-2018, most of the people requesting an asylum came to the country through the Aegean islands that are located closer to the Turkish coast. These people come in big numbers, after having been assembled and stayed a while in Turkey. In Turkey, same as in Greece, the conditions under which they are held, the humiliations and policy brutality transform detention areas into areas of inhumane treatment.<sup>11</sup>

### *4.3 Vulnerable groups and social exclusion*

Migrants, refugees, cultural and religious groups are defined by the European Union as vulnerable groups. They are considered vulnerable because of the high risk of social exclusion they are exposed to. However, they do not constitute exclusion groups, even if they are experiencing such a process or are given such an identity (Papadopoulou, 2012).

Rashid, Yasmine, Kachraman, Hafez, Osama, Zaneb are the Muslim protagonists of the three

novels. The identification of a person, whether by themselves or by others, as “Muslim” is not neutral, as it can entail identification with a group that is at times stigmatized and demonized in public discourse. In social and public policy, Muslims are increasingly being viewed as a potential security threat or a group that is unwilling or unable to integrate.<sup>12</sup>

How do local people receive refugees? “We had just welcomed, all together, as if we were close relatives of Yasmin and Kachraman, their son, who remained patient all the way from Syria until here and was born in our little house, the daybreak of Thursday December 10, 2015” (Makridakis, p.78); “It was not at all important in which language the cries for help were uttered or to which God the pleads of people for mercy were directed” (Tzamiotis, p.22). Tzamiotis, when describing the reaction of a local girl’s, Vassiliki’s, father when migrants broke into his house in the village, shows very efficiently how the first amicable reaction of understanding can gradually evolve into hatred towards them. If the state does not protect the people who run away from war and prosecutions, if it doesn’t provide any help to refugees topped by the harsh conditions to cross the borders, this leads to the enmity of local people who feel undefended against the poverty and the exhaustion of refugees: “My father stopped being sympathetic to those [immigrants] who stole from him. To be honest, he grew hating them. But, because he couldn’t tell who exactly were those who stole from him, he grew hating them all” (Tzamiotis, p. 94).

## 5. Analysis of Poetry

### 5.1 *Social Language*

Social language is a way of using language (choice of words, intonation, style etc.) to enact a particular socially situated identity. Social language in the poems is of course poetic language, as the poets speak out their view of what is taking place. Contrary to everyday talk, poetic language is laden with figures of speech, such as metaphors, similes, hyperboles, irony, oxymorons, alliterations, personifications, etc. Other such elements are patterns of sound that are produced from the alternation of short and long syllables, metric considerations and unusual patterns in word ordering. Since the number of poems considered is not small, attention was paid to figures of speech only, especially those that contribute to the representations of concern. Here are some striking examples of such language:

In poem “Immigrant” (Skouroliakou, 2008) a migrant is seen buying a small piece of sun with a “living card” of non-specific location. This metaphor points to Greece (a sunny country most of the year) in which a migrant has no specific living circumstances.

In poem “Bulletin of incidents” (Skouroliakou, 2015) it is not temperature but shame that is hitting high degrees.

In poem “Wet grave” (Chloptsioudis, 2016) the rain is seen as a rain of nails that crucifies dreams, as justice is an underage refugee without a raincoat sitting inside an inflatable boat with holes.

Poem “Eidomeni” (Liatzoura, 2017), named after an infamous Greek refugee camp where hundreds of people are piled up under unhealthy conditions, is an ironic statement about the journey of refugees seen in the context of “refugee tourism”, promising a unique experience that will not be forgotten, offered at the bargain price of a third soul given as a gift for every other two.

## 5.2 *Situated Meanings*

Situated meaning is the specific meaning situated in the context of a word’s use; in this way, a word, a phrase or an utterance acts as a clue or cue that guides active construction of meaning in context. This can happen because words, phrases and utterances can take up more meanings than their general one; any structure in language has a certain “meaning potential”, i.e. a range of possible meanings that it can take on in different contexts. As already pointed out, it is social language that gives words their situated meanings, their usage changing in unexpected ways within the figures of speech employed. Thus, situated meaning is explored within these figures of speech. This allows symbols to be identified, as well as any added significance to certain words or phrases.

Since the sample is broad, a quantitative approach was adopted, enabling as it does the extraction of conclusions between all 85 poems in the sample. More particularly, recurring words and/or clusters of words were counted arithmetically in each poem and the occurrences were recorded in an Excel file. It soon became evident that an occurrence of a word/meaning/symbol should be counted only the first time that it was found in a poem, so as to prevent more “popular” words from overshadowing less used words. A threshold of 10 total one-time occurrences was established and only 18 words managed to pass the threshold: sea, children, death, water, boat, refugees, night/darkness, road, dreams, homeland, hope, sinking, food, Aegean/Mediterranean, migrants, shipwreck, migratory birds, tears. These were seen inside the figures of speech in which they occur, in order to identify their situated meaning. Here follow some characteristic examples:

“Sea”, a cluster of words that also includes salty water, open sea, waves, blue waters etc., refers to the sea that we all know, which however takes on different situated meanings. Thus, it becomes bitter in poem “Tonight I feel shame” (Konstantopoulou, 2014), where the poet speaks of the shame that she feels. In poem “On Christmas day” (Sidira, 2016), the sea is seen washing ashore corpses of little children inside the poet’s room. In poem “Without a talisman”

(Kolossiatiou, 2017), sea becomes a mirror of death for all those trying to cross it. “Aegean/Mediterranean” narrow down “sea”, showing locality. The Aegean features on the title of “The refugee of the Aegean” (Liatzoura, 2017) but, in the lines, the refugee is storing away his soul inside an Aegean coffin. The means by which the sea or, more specifically, the Aegean/Mediterranean are crossed, i.e. “boats” (plain, inflatable or precarious/crooked), appear in 22 poems. In poem “Memory of returning” (Dimouli, 2015), refugees are seen inside boats without sail, i.e. boats without the possibility of being guided to a destination.

“Dreams” (15 occurrences) are seen crucified in poem “Wet grave” (Chloptsioudis, 2016) and dead in poem “Birds of the east” (Papadopoulos, 2016). In poem “The last moon of spring” (Kolossiatiou, 2017), they become expendable and in poem “Voices” (ibid.) they are smuggled. “Death” (which also includes any reference to “dead”, “corpses”, “grave”, “graveyard”) is bought off in poem “We guarded ourselves” (Toumanidis, 2014) and in poem “Bulletin of incidents” (Skouroliakou, 2015) hands are seen, exchanging dead banknotes. In poem Nr.77 there is an underwater graveyard, and in poem “Dead refugee children” (Frangos, 2018) whole beaches have been turned into graveyards under a fable moonlight that lights over them as a candle. In poem “A place in Heaven” (Kopsida-Vrettou, 2018), death is seen personified, walking barefoot on the forehead of a child.

### 5.3 Intertextuality

Intertextuality is about quotes taken from other texts or about the reference or allusion of one text into another. It may also involve instances of another social language within the same context.

Poets in the sample are keen on using various elements of intertextuality. For example, some poems contain parentheses that reveal another voice commenting or speaking. Poem “Amygdaleza 2012” (Dimouli, 2015) talks about another infamous refugee camp, Amygdaleza. A mother is wondering if her child is eating properly at the camp; the parenthesis emphasizes that it is not a concentration camp “(as they say)”; this is a euphemism that only underlines the harsh conditions which are similar to a concentration camp’s, like that of the Nazi.

Other poems contain spoken statements or dialogues. These elements serve to give the poems immediacy and add intensity, but also reveal different voices and different aspects. In poem “Through their broken glass” (Toumanidis, 2014), which is about the cruelty of the Westerners, the latter are given a voice: “What refugees and immigrants, they are just signs of the times that will pass...”. Poem “News” (ibid.) shows the indifference and the annoyance of local people at the arrival of refugees: half of the population is wondering how did they get past the guardians of the borders and the other half is sending them back to their homelands.

Finally, certain poems contain rhetorical questions or phrases bearing an oral speech quality, uttered by the poetic subject or perhaps the poet him/herself. For example, poem “Lynch from Rwanda” (Skouroliakou, 2008) ends with the line “Please forgive me”, which is the poet’s/poetic subject’s appeal to a refugee child. In poem “We guarded ourselves” (Toumanidis, 2014) we see the question “[Pain’s] hungry children, aren’t they our own too?”. Such questions or phrases do more than intensifying the general point of the poem. They are a direct address to the reader, constituting a voice that rings higher than the general voice in the poems.

### *5.4 Figured Worlds*

The situated meanings of words and phrases within given social languages plus intertextuality trigger specific figured worlds, i.e., everyday theories (narratives, images, schemas, metaphors and models) about the world that tell people what is typical or normal. Children could be such a schema. But, in the poems of the sample, refugees’ children are juxtaposed to “our children” in an interesting divide. This divide, “their children” versus “our children”, challenges the universal one. The challenge is aptly used to underline the different circumstances, if not realities, pertaining to each group of children. Thus, in poem “We guarded ourselves” (Toumanidis, 2014), we don’t see children refugees, but Greek children in their homes. It is for their sake that the Greeks are shutting out of their homes migrant pain and trouble. The poem entitled “Children of war” (Vakirli, 2015) talks about children’s voices turned into screams of pain or death. It also contains an image of a child’s shirt with a bullet hole in it, while also talking about the slaughtering of children in a Syrian school. In this poem too the division between “their children” and “our children” is underlined: “their children’s” hands are dyed in blood, “ours” are holding rose petals. In poem “Bulletin of incidents” (Skouroliakou, 2015) children’s playgrounds become death-bearing omens for “their children”. In poem “The messmates of another land” (Koutsoumbeli, 2016), children’s toys include drowned bunnies and torn cuddle bears, along with a music box playing an out-of-rhythm lullaby. Happy symbols are seen wrecked, as a testimony of the hardship “their children” are going through. We see, therefore, symbols of serenity connected with “our children”, whereas “their children” are presented inside horrific circumstances.

Another notion that is challenged is the one of “peace”. In poem “Reportage II” (Stamboglis, 2014), “peace” is seen to mean something alien to its nature, “an extraordinary condition above the facts”, i.e. unplugged from reality; godly feelings only help to nurture “the ethics of fear”. This is also the case with “sorrow”. Sorrow is being bought at a bargain price through the images of distressed children in poem “Without remorse” (Karakokkinos, 2017), only to be sold as cheap, empty rhetoric about truth and justice.

### 5.5 Discourses

Finally, Discourse is a manifestation of how meaning goes well beyond human language to involve objects, tools, technologies etc. used in enacting a specific identity. It involves all the conventions that people use when they talk and act not just as individuals, but as members of various social and cultural groups. Discourses sum up all the previous elements, thus they signify the poets' position relevant to refugees. From what we have already seen, we understand that Greek poets see in refugees a heroic part of humanity and a manifestation of the human struggle and will to live; thus, they are sanctifying them, presenting them as martyrs. By contrast, Greek poets see locals and Westerners as villains who are after the refugees' eradication. This is obviously a distorted and hyperbolic point of view, which however may hide true aspects of reality in its exaggeration.

Poems do not just describe the situation of refugees in third (an observer's) person, but sometimes in first (the subject's) person too. An example can be seen in the following excerpt, where the poem speaks of traffickers from the viewpoint of refugees in first person plural:

HOPE (excerpt, Dimouli 2015)

Noiselessly they drowned us; like the diver's last Breath  
We were standing in queue  
For them to count us.  
City animals  
Had brought us next to saltiness.  
All day long the azure craved for us  
So fiercely that they told us – they will drown us...

By contrast to refugees, Westerners in general are presented cold-hearted, indifferent and eventually maleficent towards them:

Amok (excerpt, Ganelis 2017)

I find your flesh on the rails  
[...]  
You came last in a refugee caravan  
Walls standing erect  
Two steps before Heaven  
Behind barriers  
Innocence in the mincer.

I find your blood on the rails  
Europe of racist amok.

Ultimately, refugees are seen to have arrived to help Westerners see through the rotten foundations of their civilization:

Birds of the East (Papadopoulos 2016)

The East yesterday  
Sent us its birds  
Millions  
They cleared the landscape  
From our dead dreams.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has looked into Greek prose and poetry written, in its bulk, during 2014-2018, i.e. the years of the heightened European migrant crisis, for ways in which refugees and locals are presented. Prose books were analyzed along three analytical tools: i. social representations theory, ii. the theoretical framework of the determinants of the refugee phenomenon, i.e. the reasons for the creation of migration flows; iii. the theoretical framework of social exclusion.

Social representation theory has shown that, lacking recent social representations that would enable Greeks to assign meaning to the massive inflow of refugees, they were led to a process called “anchoring”, whereby a new experience is ascribed to an already existing social representation. If we accept that literature reflects reality, we understand that a part of Greeks cognitively included the experience of massive migrant inflows to the already existing representation of xenophobia and another part to the already existing representation of hospitality.

The theoretical framework of the determinants of the refugee phenomenon involved a neo-classical approach and examined the three novels under consideration along three axes: i. the countries of origin, ii. the destination countries, iii. the various networks that create or perpetuate migration flows. Finally, the theoretical framework of social exclusion showed how migrants and refugees are considered vulnerable because of the high risk of social exclusion they are exposed to. The fact that they are Muslims can entail identification with a group that is at times stigmatized and demonized in public discourse. In social and public policy, Muslims are increasingly being viewed as a potential security threat or a group that is unwilling or unable to integrate. Reception by locals was also scrutinized.

Regarding poetry, the 85 poems that constitute the sample of the paper were analyzed in the framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in terms of situated meaning, social language, intertextuality, figured worlds and Discourses, i.e. along the analytical tools provided by Gee (2011). Since, however, it is social language that gives words their situated meanings, a reversal

has taken place: social language was examined first and situated meaning second.

Social language in the poems is of course poetic language. Contrary to everyday talk, poetic language is laden with figures of speech, such as metaphors, similes, hyperboles, irony, oxymorons, alliterations, personifications, etc. Attention was given to those figures of speech that contribute to the representations of concern. The most striking examples were written down and explained. Situated meaning is the specific meaning situated in the context of a word's use. In the paper, situated meaning was explored within the figures of speech. This allowed any added significance to certain words or phrases to emerge. Since the sample was broad, a quantitative approach was undertaken, enabling as it did the extraction of conclusions between all 85 poems in the sample. A word/notion was counted only the first time it was found in a poem, so as to prevent more "popular" words from overshadowing less used ones. Then, a threshold of 10 total occurrences was established and 18 recurring words were identified: sea, children, death, water, boat, refugees, night/darkness, road, dreams, homeland, hope, sinking, food, Aegean/Mediterranean, migrants, shipwreck, migratory birds, tears. The situated meaning of some of them was then analyzed.

Intertextuality is about quotes taken from other texts or about the reference or allusion of one text into another. It may also involve instances of another social language within the same context. Elements of intertextuality in the poems were: parentheses, dialogue, spoken statements, rhetorical questions and phrases having an oral speech quality. These constitute examples of a different social language pervading the poems and a voice that rings higher than the general voice in the poems; one that appeals to the reader directly.

Figured worlds are a reflection of everyday theories (narratives, images, schemas, metaphors and models) about the world that inform people about what is typical or normal. Children could be such a schema. But, in the poems, refugees' children were juxtaposed to "our children" in an interesting divide that challenges the universal schema. The challenge is aptly used to underline the different circumstances, if not realities, pertaining to each group of children. The same was the case with "peace" and "sorrow". Finally, Discourses is the totality of all the previous elements, thus they show the poets' position relevant to refugees. Greek poets see in refugees a heroic part of humanity and a manifestation of the human struggle and will to live; thus, they are sanctifying them, presenting them as martyrs. By contrast, Greek poets see locals and Westerners as villains who are after the refugees' eradication. This is obviously a distorted and hyperbolic point of view, which however may hide true aspects of reality in its exaggeration. Some excerpts from the 85 poems of the sample were presented, corroborating to this fact.

The approaches employed allowed the social perspective to emerge from the literary sample, as reflected in the writers' or the poets' views of the situation. These views may be hyperbolic at times, but nonetheless echo the opinion of at least a part of the Greek population. Art is once

again reflecting reality, even in its exaggeration, and draws attention not only to what has been happening to refugees, but to the very content of contemporary European identity.

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/mapping\\_migration#](https://www.ecfr.eu/specials/mapping_migration#) (accessed on 17.3.2019).

<sup>2</sup> See Petracou et al. (2018), p. 13; also <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/statistics> and <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179> (accessed on 16.3.2020).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BadznLzhbs> (accessed on 15.7.2020).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEYA6yqkjrI> (accessed on 13.8.2020).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/24586/greece-locals-set-fire-to-hotel-for-asylum-seekers> (accessed on 15.7.2020).

<sup>6</sup> <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/greece-locals-stop-migrants-camps-reaching-housing-70533257>

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<sup>8</sup> van Dijk, T. A. (1995), 18.

<sup>9</sup> Wetherell (1996).

<sup>10</sup> Op.cit., 207.

<sup>11</sup> "Nouvelles formes de confinement aux portes de l'Union européenne". Actes de la conférence de Migreurop Madrid, 8 juin 2019. Available at: <https://www.lacimade.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Actes-confe%CC%81rence-de%CC%81tention-Madrid-8-juin-2019-Migrp-ok.pdf> (last accessed: 16.3.2021).

<sup>12</sup> *Muslims in Europe: A report on 11 EU Cities*, New York, Budapest, London: Open Society Institute, 2010.